



Teacher Resource

Insect of the Year

Focus Questions

Discuss the BTN story as a class and record the main points of the discussion. Students will then respond to the following:

1. What percentage of animal species on Earth are insects?
 - a. 10%
 - b. 50%
 - c. 90%
2. Fill in the gaps. About 75% of flowering plants need insects to spread their _____ so they can reproduce.
3. Why did the ABC start the Insect of the Year poll?
4. What is one of the finalists for the Insect of the Year 2026?
Describe the insect in 1-2 sentences.
5. What's your favourite insect? Why?

Activity: Class Discussion

Students will discuss the BTN Insect of the Year story in pairs and then share their thoughts with the class.

- What do you **THINK** about what you saw in this video?
- What does this video make you **WONDER**?
- What did you **LEARN** watching the story?
- Think of three questions you have about the BTN story.



Activity: Q&A

All scientific discoveries start with a question! As a class, come up with some questions you think entomologists ask and solve about insects.

Organise the questions into common themes. As a class, make a list of questions that you would like to ask an entomologist. Use the internet to find answers to your class questions.

An **ENTOMOLOGIST**
is a scientist or
researcher who
studies insects!

EPISODE 29

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KEY LEARNING

Students will investigate different insect species, and the important role insects play in ecosystems.

CURRICULUM

Science – Year 4

Living things have life cycles.

Living things depend on each other and the environment to survive.

Science – Year 5

Examine how particular structural features and behaviours of living things enable their survival in specific habitats.

Science – Year 6

Investigate the physical conditions of a habitat and analyse how the growth and survival of living things is affected by changing physical conditions.

Activity: Key Words

Students will brainstorm a list of key words that relate to the BTN Insect of the Year story. Here are some words to get them started.

POLLINATION	SPECIES	INSECTS
CONSERVATION	POPULATION	INVERTEBRATES

Ask students to write what they think is the meaning of each word (including unfamiliar words). They will swap definitions with a partner and ask them to add to or change the definition. Check these against the dictionary definition.

Further activities for students:

- What other words relate to this topic? Students will choose additional keywords and concepts to add to their class glossary. For example, hexapod, ecosystem, biodiversity, common name, scientific name. Students will find a definition and add to their 'insect glossary'.
- What is the difference between a vertebrate and an invertebrate? Give some examples.
- Who explores insects? To learn more about what entomologists do, visit [The Australian Museum](https://www.australianmuseum.net.au/)!

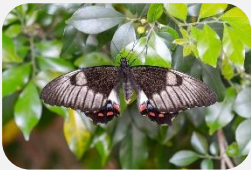
Activity: Insect of the Year

Students will investigate the six finalists in the [ABC's Australian Insect of the Year Competition](https://www.abc.net.au/australianinsectoftheyear/). They will research their favourite insect, including its unique features and why it's important. Students will then develop a persuasive argument explaining why it deserves to win.

Explore the six finalists

Students will begin by exploring the six finalists before selecting their favourite. Students will record one interesting observation and one question about each insect.

Insect Name	My interesting observation about this insect...	My question about this insect...
Gold Christmas beetle 		
Mallee Bronze Azure butterfly 		

Orchard swallowtail butterfly 		
Otway glow-worm 		
Stalk-eyed signal fly 		
Tortoise-shelled ladybird 		

My Vote!

Students will then choose one of the six finalists they believe should win the competition. Encourage students to select the insect based on an interesting adaptation, ecological importance, conservation needs, and their own curiosity. Explain that the ABC competition celebrates insects and raises awareness of their importance and conservation.

Students will think about the following before selecting an insect:

- Which insect catches your attention first?
- Which insect looks the strangest, most beautiful or has an unusual adaptation?

Inquiry research questions

Once students have selected an insect they will develop inquiry questions to guide their research, for example:

- What is unique about this insect? List some of its unique features.
- Where does it live?
- Does it have unusual adaptations?
- Does it face any threats? What is its conservation status?
- Why should we care about this insect?

Insect Research

Name of Insect Common name: Scientific name:	
Fact 1	
Fact 2	
Fact 3	
My strongest reason for voting for this insect	

Students will gather information using a range of reliable sources, for example:

- Museums – The Australian Museum, Queensland Museum
- Scientific organisations – CSIRO
- Conservation websites – Invertebrates Australia
- Databases – Atlas of Living Australia

Persuasive Poster

Students will create a persuasive poster based on their research, turning the facts they researched into persuasive arguments. Students will aim to persuade others to agree with their choice.

Useful Websites

- [Scutter or flutter? Who wins your vote for the 2026 ABC Australian Insect of the Year?](#) – ABC News
- [Choose your Insect of the Year for 2026](#) – ABC News
- [Insect Extinction](#) – BTN
- [Bogong Moth Tracker](#) – BTN
- [Insects](#) – Australian Museum
- [Entomology](#) – Australian Museum
- [Australian Insects](#) – ABC Education