



Dear Teacher,

Learning about ants is fun! With a little creativity there is no end to the learning opportunities which may be based around the theme of ants. Maybe it's their amazing societal structure, feats of strength or ability to survive almost anywhere on the planet that have caused children (and many adults!) to be fascinated by ants.

Fire ants are a hot topic! They are just one of thousands of species of ants now found in Australia and are equally as fascinating as other ants yet have the potential to destroy Australia's outdoor lifestyle, environment and agricultural production. In order to eradicate this new pest we need community support and your interest in raising fire ant awareness is appreciated.

To get you started, included in this kit are a range of activities and worksheets which may be used and adapted to your classroom situation. If you would like more ideas, information and pictures or would like to Email us your good idea, go to the DPI website listed below and follow the appropriate links or call us.

Website: [www.dpi.qld.gov.au](http://www.dpi.qld.gov.au)

DPI Call Centre: **13 25 23** (ask for the Fire Ant Control Centre Education & Training Officer)

**INCLUDED IN LOWER PRIMARY TEACHER KIT:**

- How to make a really cool ant hat
- Suggested Lesson Plan and activities
- Find-a-Word
  - Find-a-Word Answers
- Ant words
- Connect the Dots
- Maze
- 2 x Colour-Ins



# How to Make a Really Cool Ant Hat



## *What you need:*

- A cap (make sure it has two small sewing holes at the front)
- 2 pipe cleaners
- 2 small pom-poms (optional)

Note: Pipe cleaners and pom-poms are available at most craft shops and discount stores (eg. Overflow, Dollars & Sense)

## *What to do:*

1. Push the two pipe cleaners through the sew-holes on the cap
2. On the inside of the cap, tie the two ends of the pipe cleaners together
3. Bend the pipe cleaners to taste and wrap their tips around a pom-pom (optional)



## SUGGESTED LESSON PLAN AND ACTIVITIES FOR SCHOOLS

### ***Preparation and Materials needed:***

Note: To request any of the worksheets and other materials listed below contact the DPI Fire Ant Control Centre on 13 25 23 and ask to speak to the Education and Training Officer.

1. Various worksheets (with answers) included in this pack
2. Brochures and posters of fire ants.
3. Games Materials: Popcorn; plastic buckets, pots or large cups, soil, plants or material (to represent transported materials); lollies/ prizes, whistle
4. *Optional*: CD-Rom developed by Windaroo Valley High School and DPI for follow-up/ research activity
5. *Optional*: "Chip Test" materials: - Chips and other types of food.  
- Graph paper  
"Ant Trails" materials: - Chips and other types of food.  
- Mud maps and/or instruction sheets to be made by teacher to suit location  
- Fire ant (or general ant) fact cards (included in this pack)
6. *Optional*: Take photos of activities for use in school newsletter.

### THREE FIRE ANT GAMES

1. Find the Fire Ant ... students find hidden items (badges or rubber ants) placed around room or playground by teacher. Prize awarded to best individuals or team.
2. Don't spread the fire ant. Called "Red Fire Ant Rover". A variation on the game where there are two teams. The object of the game is for each team in turn to deliver as many buckets of "high risk material" (eg. pot plants, sand, soil or objects to represent pot plants or soil – say cotton material, balls or scrap paper – use a bit of imagination and artistic licence if necessary) from one side of a field to the other without getting tagged by members of the opposite team. So each team may have (say) 3 turns at attempting to "spread" fire ant infested material from the original line to a bucket or bin at the other side. If a team member is tagged they must go to the side, then to the original line and wait for the next turn. If a team member is not tagged, they firstly deposit their "soil" into the bucket, then return to the original line for the next attempt at crossing. The winning team is the one which allowed the **least** delivery of materials by the opposing team to the other side.

3. **Kill the fire ant.** Students divide into different teams (say 2 – 6 teams). Teacher spreads uncooked popcorn around the playground and “Workers” from different teams find and collect “bait” (popcorn) to deliver back to the queen (“team leader”). Winner is the team with the most popcorn in bucket.

End of Games: Give out prizes.

### Suggested structure for DISCUSSION:

**Teacher:** Tell me what you know about fire ants.  
(Teacher then writes student comments on board)

**\*Why are Fire Ants a problem?** Social, Environmental, Agricultural, Industrial impacts. Discuss impact of other introduced species (eg. cane toad).

**\*Where did they come from?** South America, where they are not really a problem as they are in their own environment. Discuss natural balance, predators, and competitors.

**\* The DPI Three point strategy:** (Relate to 3 games)

1. **Find the Fire Ant.** \*What do they look like and how do they behave? (Show samples and pictures in brochures or on OHP)
  - Where are they in Brisbane? (Show Distribution Map in brochure or on website)
  - Keep on the look out ... this is where KEEN YOUNG nature-lovers can really help!!  
What do you do if you find a suspect nest? ... ask parents to call DPI on 13 25 23 and ask parents to collect samples (if possible), state location found, contact details...
2. **Don't Spread the Fire Ant.** Ways they spread... how to prevent spread
3. **Kill the Fire Ant.** How they reproduce; what DPI is doing... surveillance, baiting, management plans with high-risk business and Govt organisations; Should you spray a nest yourself? Should you disturb the nest? Why not?

(**Note:** This is a suggested format. For more info and ideas, read the DPI Fire Ant brochures and view the DPI website: [www.dpi.qld.gov.au](http://www.dpi.qld.gov.au) or call us on **13 25 23**)

**Question Time...**

**Complete worksheets** (Included in this teacher pack)

**Conclusion:** Fire ants will affect ALL Australians. We need your help in **finding** fire ants and in helping to **stop their spread**. If you find any suspect ants, tell your parents and ask them to call 13 25 23. If you would like more info go to the DPI website:

[www.dpi.qld.gov.au](http://www.dpi.qld.gov.au)

### *Optional Activities:*

1. **"Chip Test"**: In advance, set out some food sources (eg. chips, fruit, bread, meat) in the playground to attract ants, then go and collect samples with the class, noting which types of ants are attracted to different foods sources. **Caution !** This activity requires supervision as some ants inflict nasty bites and stings.

Optional Extra: Design a data table and record the numbers and types of ants in different locations and attracted to different food sources. Graph the results.

2. **"Learning on the Run - Ant Trails"**: Like a Treasure Hunt. Teacher hides cards with fire ant facts along a trail, then provides students with a mud-map and/or set of instructions to travel from point to point. Students have to find cards and record facts in order to earn points. Bonus points for first, second, third group to finish. (Note: Fire Ant Fact Cards are included in teacher kit).

3. **"Ant Stories"**: Write a story (or a poem) about fire ants (eg. "The adventures of Anton the Fire Ant"). **Challenge**: Include as many "ant" words as possible in your story.

4. **Fire Ant and General Ant Research Project**: Teacher may set a research topic, utilising the Fire Ant CD-Rom and DPI website as resources.



## HELP FIND FIRE ANTS: FIRE ANTS FIND-A-WORD

Were all on the same team when tackling fire ants.



Find each of the following words:

Abdomen	Machinery	EntryHole	Solenopsis	Allergic	ReddishBrown
Attack	DPI	SouthAmerica	Blisters	Honeycomb	Environment
Painful	FireAnts	Compress	Invicta	Spread	Native
PottingMix	Dome	Aggressive	Various	Agriculture	Sting

A	B	E	N	V	I	R	O	N	M	E	N	T	F	F	I	D	G	Z	Y
B	F	R	F	M	A	C	H	I	N	E	R	Y	D	X	N	R	X	B	F
N	D	U	S	X	G	Y	I	Z	B	V	F	S	R	F	V	F	R	Y	A
W	E	T	R	S	B	N	F	X	F	I	R	T	X	N	I	Z	F	B	R
O	V	L	E	X	E	B	I	F	F	T	S	N	S	R	C	B	S	S	A
R	I	U	T	S	S	R	B	T	B	A	F	A	B	C	T	R	Y	B	S
B	S	C	S	F	E	B	P	X	S	N	Q	E	Z	I	A	X	D	X	T
H	S	I	I	R	M	S	B	M	R	S	X	R	Y	G	B	O	A	F	R
S	E	R	L	S	O	L	E	N	O	P	S	I	S	R	M	R	E	B	L
I	R	G	B	R	D	S	E	B	S	C	R	F	S	E	B	L	R	S	U
D	G	A	S	B	M	O	C	Y	E	N	O	H	N	L	E	X	P	Z	F
D	G	I	P	D	R	S	S	P	B	F	R	H	X	L	Y	Z	S	B	N
E	A	S	R	S	A	B	F	D	S	X	D	Y	Z	A	S	R	B	R	I
R	S	E	N	T	R	Y	H	O	L	E	Z	S	R	K	C	A	T	T	A
B	D	N	X	F	Y	A	C	I	R	E	M	A	H	T	U	O	S	R	P
S	P	O	T	T	I	N	G	M	I	X	X	S	U	O	I	R	A	V	T

Now find the answer to this riddle: *What is the largest type of ant in the world?*

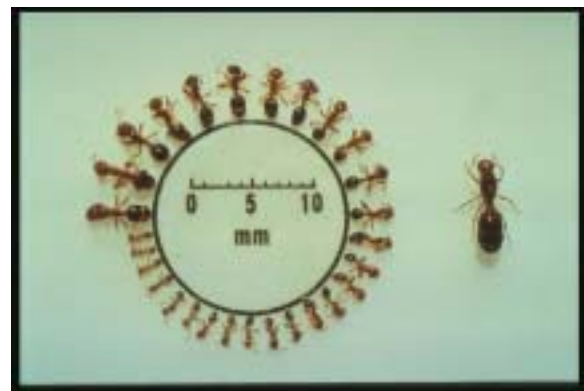
First, colour in all the words that you have found.

Next, colour in all the letters B,D,F,R,S,X,Y,Z

Read the leftover letters to find the answer !!



Microscopic close-up of a fire ant



One of the key features of fire ants is that *the workers come in a VARIETY of sizes.*  
*Pictured above are workers on the left and a queen on the right*



(Football comic character and size variety photo courtesy Texas A & M University. Close-up photo courtesy BioTrack.)



## HELP FIND FIRE ANTS: FIRE ANTS FIND-A-WORD ANSWERS

Abdomen	Machinery	EntryHole	Solenopsis	Allergic	ReddishBrown
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PottingMix	Dome	Aggressive	Various	Agriculture	Sting

a		E	N	V	I	R	O	N	M	E	N	T			I		g			
		R		M	A	C	H	I	N	E	R	Y			N					
N		U	S		G		i			V		S			V				a	
W	E	T	R	S		N				I		T		n	I					
O	V	L	E		E		I			T		N			C				A	
R	I	U	T			R		T		A		A			C	T			B	
B	S	C	S		E		P		S	N	Q	E			I	A		D	t	
H	S	I	I		M			M				R		G		O	A			
S	E	R	L	S	O	L	E	N	O	P	S	I	S	R	M		E		L	
I	R	G	B		D		e			C		F		E		I	R		U	
D	G	A		B	M	O	C	Y	E	N	O	H	N	L	e		P		F	
D	G	I	P	D				p				h		L			S		N	
E	A				a									A					I	
R		E	N	T	R	Y	H	O	L	E					K	C	A	T	T	A
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	P	O	T	T	I	N	G	M	I	X		S	U	O	I	R	A	V	t	

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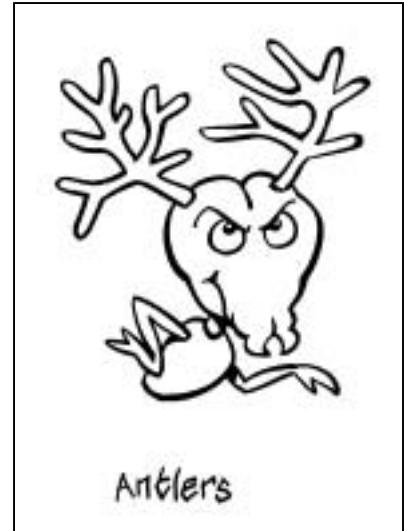
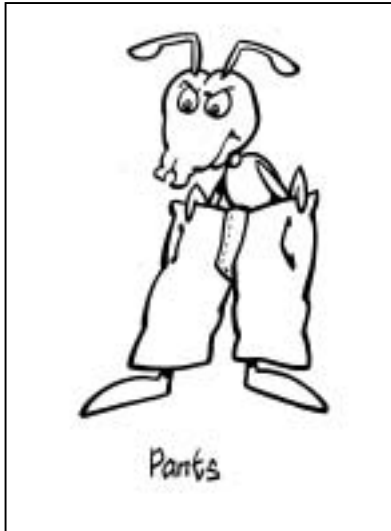
Read the leftover letters to find the answer !! **Answer: A giant elephant**





# ANT WORDS

Name: \_\_\_\_\_



1. Write down a list of at least 10 "ant" words. Be careful not to include any "ent" words (such as bent). The first two are done for you.

fantastic \_\_\_\_\_

giant \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Select at least two of your "ant" words and draw funny pictures to go with them. Use the examples above to give you an idea of what to do.

3. Make an "Ant Words" book as a whole class. Put all of your ant words and funny pictures together in one book. See if your class can include in the book at least one word beginning with each letter of the alphabet! Your teacher will help the class do this.

4. On a separate page make a word find puzzle using your "ant" words. Try to make the page look good by including a page border and some pictures. Try to do a top job !! Your teacher may photocopy some good puzzles to give to the rest of the class.

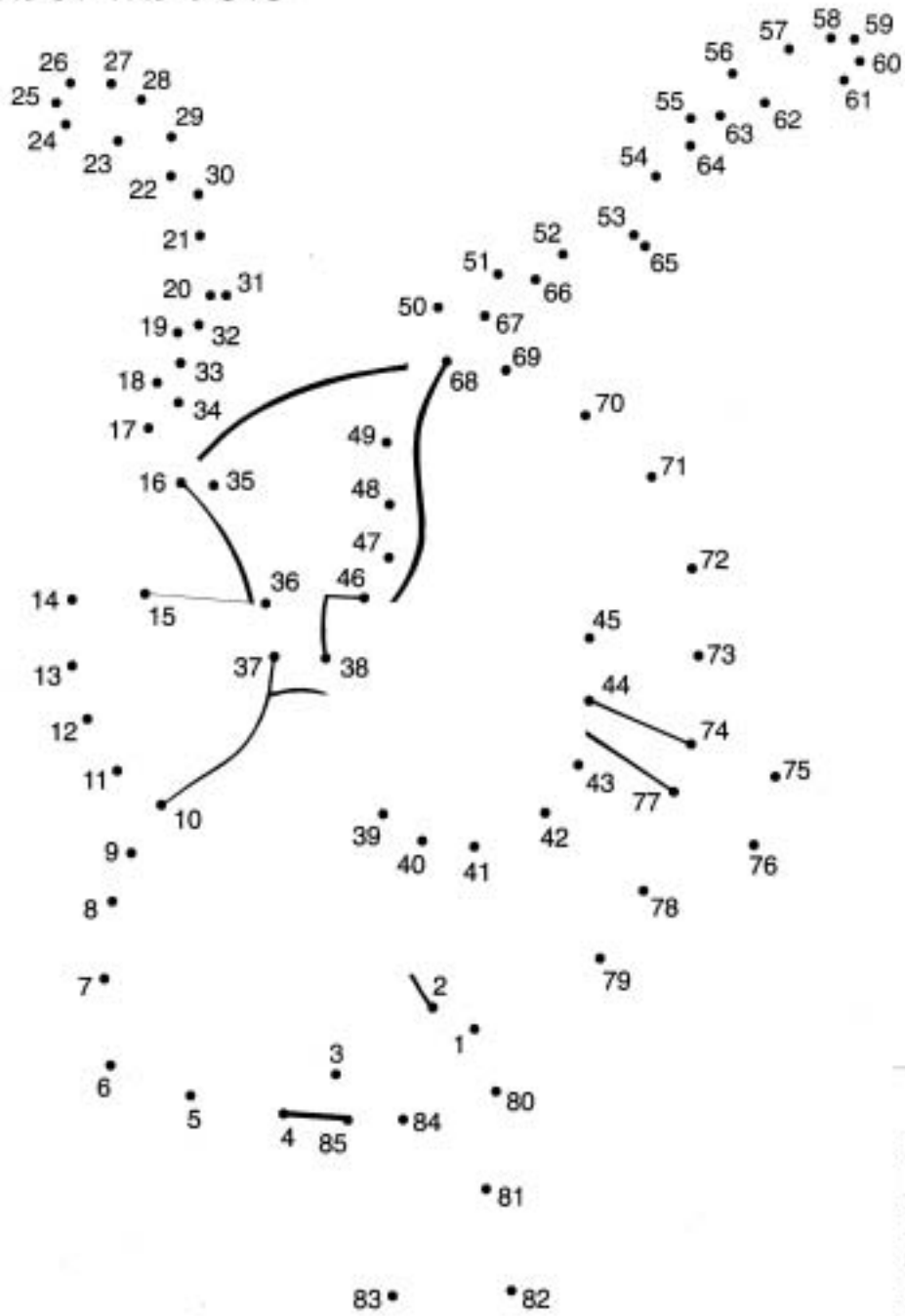
**Did you know? A queen fire ant is like an egg factory !!  
She can lay around 800 eggs per day!**





# CONNECT THE DOTS

## CONNECT THE DOTS



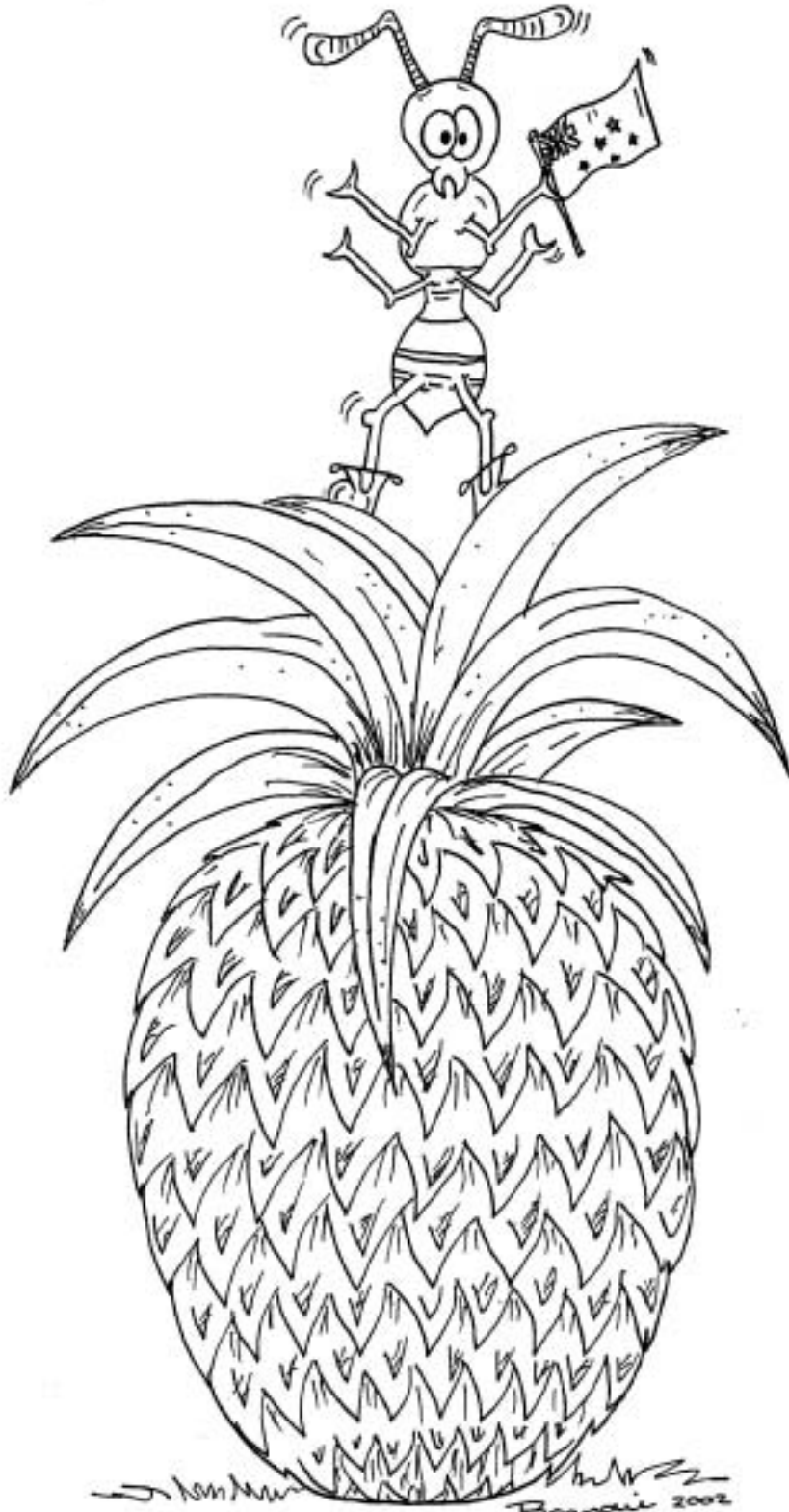
MAZE

“Help me find my way to the Queen!”



*Courtesy University of Arkansas*

COLOUR-IN



COLOUR-IN

