



Millie Loves Ants

by Jackie French and Sue deGennaro

The world of ants is a fascinating place and this book cleverly examines animal behaviour in a fun and friendly way! The text is fun to read, with a steady beat. The illustrations are gentle and informative, depicting the fascinating and colourful world of these small creatures! *Millie Loves Ants* is the perfect book for nature lovers!



Key Message for Parents

Children are Born Ready to Learn

Parents can help young children develop their natural mathematical abilities in the following ways:

- Mathematical concepts are all around us, and found in our everyday lives! Experiences like getting dressed, eating, cooking, shopping and even walking provide opportunities to count together and have fun with numbers
- Sing nursery rhymes that have numbers, counting and lots of repetition such as *Hickory Dickory Dock*, *1,2,3,4,5 Once I Caught a Fish* and *The Ants Go Marching*
- Share books together. Choose stories about; number, size, shape, colours or movement
- Play number games together – can you spot 3 clouds? Count the red cars, or how many peas can you find in the mashed potato!

Learning Outcomes

Outcome 4: Children are confident and involved learners

We help toddlers become confident learners by:

- Creating conditions in which children are inspired to participate and learn, with sensory-based resources, toys and books!
- Providing play activities which develop cognitive skills and social skills
- Posing questions that challenge and extend thinking, “What other animals do we find in the garden?”
- Providing creative activities which engage fine motor skills. The craft activity for this learning time is perfect for developing fine motor skills and hand/eye coordination

Find booklists, tip sheets, nursery rhymes and activity and learning time sheets @

thelittlebigbookclub.com.au     



Themes within this story

- Insects
- Australian Animals
- Getting Out & About

Welcome

Ask carers to write nametags for themselves and their children.

Welcome everyone, introduce yourself, remind adults to turn their mobile phones off and that there will be time for adults to chat after the story and songs.

Welcome Song (or your preferred song)

Have the words available as a handout or written on a board or butcher's paper for the adults to read and join in.

Good Morning

Good morning to you

Good morning to you

Good morning everybody

and welcome to you!



Song

Five Hungry Ants (a number chant by The Kilboomers)

5 hungry ants, marching in a line

Came across a picnic where they could dine

*They marched into the salad, they marched into the cake, they marched into the pepper-Oooh!-
that was a mistake!!*

AAAACHHHOOOO!! (Pretend to sneeze, and then hide an ant by tucking one finger down)

How many ants are there now? Four!

Four hungry ants marching in a line....etc

Continue till there are no ants!

This number chant works well if you use sticky dots on your fingers for the ants! Have a pretend bowl of salad, a cake and some pepper! Encourage all the children to join in with a big achoooo each time!



Before Reading

Who loves to go into the garden and explore? What kinds of things do you find in the garden? What kinds of animals and insects might you find and where?

Today's story is called *Millie Loves Ants*! Let's look at the front cover of the book! Who do you think Millie is? Is it the little girl? Or perhaps the animal! Let's find out! Sitting ready, eyes this way ready to listen to *Millie Loves Ants* by Jackie French and Sue deGennaro.

During Reading

Jackie French uses some interesting words and phrases which will probably require some explanation in *Millie Loves Ants*-“Ants that live in hollow trees” Do the children know what hollow means? Or a “sunlit tussock” might be? Do the illustrations give us any clues?

Millie finds ants in all sorts of places! On the bed, in the kitchen, in the shed, beneath the bath...have the children ever found ants in these places? Where else have they found ants?

There is a gorgeous double spread which depicts a cross section of an ant nest, showing *ants in tunnels, ants in mounds, and dragging down debris to their towns*. What can your listeners see in the ants' tunnels? Explain that debris is small waste matter! For an ant though these objects or materials are big! Ants can carry 20 times their own weight-they are incredibly strong!

After Reading

What was the picture of on the last page? Do you know what a baby echidna is called? It is called a Puggle! The little puggle has a very full tummy...I wonder what it has just eaten?

Share thoughts and feelings about the story! Ask some open-ended questions like:

- Who can remember where Millie found the ants?
- What sort of a creature was Millie? What do we know about echidnas? What did the story tell us they like to eat and where they live?
- What do we know about ants? How many legs do they have? Where do they live?

There is a lovely informative poster, which can be downloaded at www.sciencekids.co.nz/sciencefacts/ant.html

This is a wonderful song called Ants in Your Pants by The Hooley Dooleys. With its simple actions and words, it's a lot of fun for this age group!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CqNftTzVjlw>

Activity Time

Puggle Fun – A simple and easy idea for small hands

What you need:

- Playdough
- Small paper plates to put your puggle on
- Googly eyes
- Craft sticks (coloured matchsticks)





What to do:

- Firstly form a ball with the playdough. Next pinch a pointy nose on one end, and then add lots of coloured sticks for the spines! Place it on a small plate; you could draw some ants onto the plates beforehand.
- Can the children think of a name for their little puggle?

Extension Activities / Other Ideas

- Make ants using finger prints and then draw on the legs
- Go on an insect/ant hunt outside
- Teachers notes from the publisher, Harper Collins, can also be found at:
www.harpercollins.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/9781460751787-h.pdf
- Make “Ants on a Log” snack (see picture and recipe attached)
www.kidspot.com.au/kitchen/recipes/ants-on-a-log-707

This recipe uses peanut butter but this can be replaced with cream cheese and other toppings could be added like blue berries or small pieces of dried apricot etc.

Goodbye

Conclude the session with some suggestions of books that parents might want to share with their children. The Little Big Book Club suggests the following books to support learning in this area:

- *Diary of a Wombat* by Jackie French and Bruce Whatley
- *Wombat Big, Puggle Small* by Renée Trembl
- *Snow Wombat* by Susannah Chambers and Mark Jackson

Goodbye Song

Depending on the size of your group, you may wish to insert each child’s name in the place of ‘you’ as it develops a more personal relationship between yourself, the child and the family.

Sung to the tune of (*Here We Go Round the Mulberry Bush*) **or** your preferred choice.

Goodbye

This is the way we say goodbye (use a waving action) Say goodbye, say goodbye

This is the way we say goodbye

To all our library friends (or) (to our friend.....)!

