Ants live almost everywhere in the world. There are about 12,000 kinds of ants. They live and work together in underground cities called colonies. Every colony has three types of ants: the queen, the drone, and the worker. Each ant does a job to help the entire colony.

Characteristics of the Text

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Genre</th>
<th>Informational Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Text Structure</td>
<td>Five sections with headings, each two to five pages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content</td>
<td>Characteristics of ants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Specific jobs that each type of ant does</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Life within the ant colony</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Themes and Ideas</td>
<td>Ants have jobs, just like people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The world of ants is very complex.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Some animals live and work together in communities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language and Literary Features</td>
<td>Conversational language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sentence Complexity</td>
<td>Several sentences with nouns or verbs in series: It has a sharp lower jaw called the mandible that cuts, tears, digs, and carries things.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary</td>
<td>Terms specific to ants: antennae, mandible, abdomen, thorax, colonies, anthill, tunnels, chambers, larvae, drone, foragers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Words</td>
<td>Compound words: anthill, anteaters, everywhere</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Many words with three or more syllables</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Multi-syllable words that are challenging to take apart or decode: antennae, abdomen, mandible, colonies, foragers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illustrations</td>
<td>Photographs closely linked to text on each page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book and Print Features</td>
<td>Thirteen pages of text; five section headings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Information in captions and diagram labels</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Lives of Ants by Elizabeth Dana Jaffe

Build Background
Help children use their knowledge of ants. Build interest by asking questions such as the following: What do you know about ants? Where have you seen ants? Read the title and author’s name and talk about the cover photograph. Tell children that this book is informational text, so the words and photos will give factual information about ants and how they live.

Introduce the Text
Guide children through the text, noting important ideas, and helping with unfamiliar language and vocabulary so they can read the text successfully. Here are some suggestions:

Page 2: Explain that this is a book of information about ants.
Suggested language: Turn to page 2. Look at the section head: “Ants Are Everywhere.” Read the caption: Ants often look for food at picnics, even if they aren’t invited! Have you ever seen ants suddenly appear near food? I wonder how they know where to find it.

Page 4: Have children read the section head and look at the diagram. Read the labels as children point to the body parts. Explain that the antennae are a pair of long, thin parts on the ant’s head that help it to touch, taste, and smell. How do you think antennae could help an ant touch or smell things?

Page 6: Have children read the caption and look at the illustration. Explain that ants build underground cities, called ant colonies, and that the rooms in the colonies are called chambers. What are the ants carrying into the chambers of their colony?

Page 11: Have children look at the photo of three ants working together. Explain that these ants have found food for the colony. Do you think one ant could carry this big piece of bread alone? It seems like ants need to work together to find food to eat.

Now turn back to the beginning of the book and read to find out how different ants work together in ant colonies.

Expand Your Vocabulary

- **antennae** – a pair of slender movable organs of sensation on the head of an insect, p. 5
- **colonies** – populations of plants or animals in particular places that belong to one species, p. 6
- **chambers** – enclosed spaces or compartments, p. 6
- **drone** – a male ant that has wings, p. 8
- **nursery** – a place where children are temporarily cared for in their parents’ absence, p. 10
Read
Have children read *The Lives of Ants* silently while you listen to individual children read. Support their problem solving and fluency as needed.

Remind children to use the Question Strategy and to think of questions as they read.

Discuss and Revisit the Text

Personal Response
Invite children to share their personal responses to the book.

Suggested language: *What did you learn about ants that you didn’t know before?*

Ways of Thinking
As you discuss the text, help children understand these points:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thinking Within the Text</th>
<th>Thinking Beyond the Text</th>
<th>Thinking About the Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Ants live together in underground cities called colonies.</td>
<td>• Different types of ants have different jobs that help the whole colony survive.</td>
<td>• The photographs show different kinds of ants at work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Every colony has three types of ants: the queen, the drone, and the worker.</td>
<td>• Some animals live and work together in communities.</td>
<td>• A diagram shows the parts of an ant’s body.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Each type of ant has its own kind of work to do.</td>
<td>• Ants go to work every day at a job, just like many people.</td>
<td>• The author includes lots of details about different kinds of ants and what they do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Different types of ants have different jobs that help the whole colony survive.</td>
<td></td>
<td>• The section headings give a good idea of what information will be covered.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Choices for Further Support

• **Fluency** Invite children to choose a page from the text and demonstrate phrased fluent reading. Remind them to use rising and falling tones to show the meaning of the text.

• **Comprehension** Based on your observations of the children’s reading and discussion, revisit parts of the text to clarify or extend comprehension. Remind children to go back to the text to support their ideas.

• **Phonics/Word Work** Provide practice as needed with words and word parts, using examples from the text. Have children take apart and make a full range of plurals, including irregular plurals and plurals that require spelling changes (*antenna/antennae, larva/larvae, colony/colonies, body/bodies, enemy/enemies, branch/branches*).
Writing about Reading

Critical Thinking
Have children complete the Critical Thinking questions on BLM 6.9.

Responding
Have children complete the activities at the back of the book. Use the instruction below as needed to reinforce or extend understanding of the comprehension skill.

Target Comprehension Skill

Text and Graphic Features
Remind children that they can think about how words work with photos. Model the skill, using a “Think Aloud” like the one below:

Think Aloud
How are the photos in this book useful? To fill in the chart on page 15, I have to think about what they show. How does the photo on page 11 help me understand more about the text on that page? The photo of forager ants shows me how ants work together to carry food. That’s what I’ll write in the chart.

Practice the Skill
Have children choose two photographs from the book and write two sentences about how each photo helped them better understand the words on that page.

Writing Prompt: Thinking About the Text
Have children write a response to the prompt on page 6. Remind them that when they think about the text, they reflect back on the text. They notice and evaluate language, genre, literary devices, and how the text is organized.

Assessment Prompts
• Which words on page 9 help the reader understand the meaning of the word pupa?
• What is the author’s purpose for writing the section titled Homes in the Ground?
Think About It

Read and answer the questions.

1. How many body parts do insects have?
   They have three body parts.

2. Why do you think there are no ants on Antarctica?
   Possible response: It is probably too cold for them there.

3. What two ways do ants communicate with each other?
   Possible response: Ants touch antennae to communicate.
   Also, worker ants leave a trail of smella for other ants to follow.

Making Connections
Both ants and gophers live under the ground. What other animals live under the ground? Why do you think they live there?

Write your answer in your Reader’s Notebook.
The Lives of Ants

Thinking About the Text
Think about the question below. Then write your answer in one or two paragraphs.

The author divided this book into five sections and gave each section a heading. How did that help you as you were learning information about ants? Do you think any of the sections should have been longer or shorter. Why?
Think About It

Read and answer the questions.

1. How many body parts do insects have?

2. Why do you think there are no ants on Antarctica?

3. What are two ways that ants communicate with each other?

Making Connections  Both ants and gophers live under the ground. What other animals live under the ground? Why do you think they live there?

Write your answer in your Reader’s Notebook.
The Lives of Ants • LEVEL 0

The Lives of Ants
Running Record Form

You are having a picnic by a peaceful pond.
The branches of the nearby trees sway in the warm breeze. You throw bread to the birds, who snatch it up with their beaks. Everything is perfect ...
except that now there are ants everywhere. They are busy searching for food. Your food!

Ants live almost everywhere, except on the continent of Antarctica. There are about 12,000 kinds of ants. They are black, blue, brown, red, yellow, green, and even purple!

Most ants are tiny—between 1/16 of an inch and one inch long.

Comments:

Accuracy Rate
(# words read correctly/93 × 100)
% Total Self-Corrections

Behavior Code Error

Read word correctly ✓ 0
Repeated word, sentence, or phrase @ 0
Omission cat 1
Substitution cut cat 1
Self-corrects cut@ cat 0
Insertion the cat 1
Word told the cat 1

Grade 2
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