



## A teacher's guide

**created by Marcie Colleen  
based on the picture book  
written by Michelle Meadows, illustrated by  
Bill Mayer**

This classroom guide is designed for students in kindergarten through second grade. It is assumed that teachers will adapt each activity to fit the needs and abilities of their own students.

It offers activities to help teachers integrate *Super Bugs* across the curricula.

All activities were created in conjunction with the Common Core and other relevant content standards.

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*Super Bugs* text © 2016 by Michelle Meadows, illustrations © 2016 by Bill Mayer

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## Before You Read...

Before reading *Super Bugs*, show entire book. Help students identify the basic parts of a picture book: front cover, back cover, title page, dedication page, spine, jacket, and jacket flap.

The Front Cover ~

- Describe what you see.
- Can you predict what the story might be about based on the title and the cover illustration?
- Who is the author? What is her job?
- Who is the illustrator? What is his job?

The Endpapers ~

- How many different fun facts about insects and bugs can you find on the endpapers?
- List three of your favorite fun facts.
- Do the fun facts change the way you think or feel about bugs and insects? If so, how?
- Stand up and pretend to be one of the insects or bugs on the endpapers. How so you think he/she feels? How does this pose make you feel?

The Title Page, Copyright Page, and Dedication Page ~

- Describe in your own words what the Super Bugs are doing.
- How would you describe each of the Super Bugs? How do you think they are related to each other? Can you describe their individual relationships?
- In groups of three, stand up and pretend to be the Super Bugs. How so you think each bug feels? How does this pose make you feel?

## Language

Action! Learning about Verbs

*Super Bugs* is a story of action! The Super Bugs help other insects when they are in danger. They act! Here are some activities to help introduce action words, or verbs, to your class.

## Verb Detectives

There are so many fun verbs throughout *Super Bugs*, and readers will have fun trying to find them all.

Re-read *Super Bugs* aloud and ask students to listen carefully for verbs.

- As soon as they hear a verb, they should raise their hand.
- Repeat the phrase using the verb. What might it mean, based on context?
- Look up the verb in the dictionary. (*Depending on the level of your students, a student volunteer can do this or the teacher can.*) Read the definition.
- Get up on your feet and act out the verb! *Using Total Physical Response, students can create an action that symbolizes the word and helps them remember it.*
- Create a list of the verbs and hang it on the wall. Revisit it again and again.

## Simon Says Verbs

The Simon Says Verbs game is a fun verb activity that will help students both identify verbs from other parts of speech and distinguish action verbs from state of being verbs. The students will also get some healthy exercise while playing this game.

Have the children all stand up in an area large enough for each child to move around safely such as in the school gym or outside on the playground.

The teacher will stand in front of the class and say, "Simon says..." followed by a verb. You may refer to the list of verbs from *Super Bugs* for examples to start with. The students should then do or be what Simon said. For example, if the teacher says, "Simon says jump," then all the children should jump. If the teacher says, "Simon says be dance," then the students should dance. The teacher can also include some words that are not verbs to show children the difference between verbs and other parts of speech. For example, if the teacher says, "Simon says table," the students should stop moving because table is a noun, not a verb.

Optional: Instead of the teacher making all the commands, individual students can take turns playing Simon.

## Writing

### Write a Superhero Story!

The Super Bugs have powers that help them save other insects. The endpapers provide examples of many other powers that insects have.

Create your own superhero story. Give your superhero some verbs that make him or her extraordinary. Can the superhero fly? Leap high? See through walls? Start with 3 verbs and then write a story about your superhero.

*Optional Story Starter:* "Here I come to save the day! I am so strong I can do anything on Earth! I can..."

OR

Create the superhero story as a class and then have each individual student draw a picture of the superhero in action!

### Use Your Imagination and Create Dialogue

*Super Bugs* is written entirely in narration. The text tells a story and shows the reader what happened. This provides a great springboard to discuss narrative. *Super Bugs* does not include dialogue. Use your imagination to create dialogue for this story.

Narrative ~ An account of connected events -- often through a narrator who

gives information on the feelings and actions of the story.

Speech/Dialogue ~ The written conversational exchange between two or more characters.

Rewrite *Super Bugs* using the following:

- Write a version of the story using only dialogue. For example, "Help, Super Bugs. I am going to be squashed!" Continue through the entire story like this, describing the action on each page with only the use of speech.

### **Use Your Imagination and Write a Scene**

Choose one of the fun moments when the Super Bugs save the day and create the scene. For example, what happens when the cricket choir's stage catches fire? What starts the fire? How are the Super Bugs alerted? What do they say? What do they do? How do they make everything better? Be sure to include a beginning, middle, and end.

## **Social Studies**

### **Anyone Can Be a Hero**

What is a hero? First, ask your students what they think a hero is.

- A hero is anyone who can and does make a difference in their communities.
- A hero chooses to help the community.
- A hero is open to the differences between community members and is willing to listen to other ideas.
- A hero is a positive role model for others in the community.
- A hero does the right thing.

#### Examples of Heroes

Batman and Superman/other "heroes" – Batman has no superpowers, but chooses to help the community.

Did you know that many insects and bugs also help the community?

#### Examples of insect or bug heroes

- Ladybugs eat many pests which harm gardens and crops.
- Pollinators such as bumble bees, wasps, flies, and some beetles fertilize flowers, which allows them to make seeds and fruit.
- Bees make honey.
- Silkworms make silk that can be woven into cloth.
- The maggots of blowflies are sometimes used by doctors to heal people's wounds.
- Scientists have studied six-legged insects to learn how robots can move on the rough surfaces of other planets.
- Many insects and bugs are eaten by animals and humans alike.

#### Activity

Using the above "bug heroes" and *Super Bugs* as inspiration, write a thank you letter to an insect or bug that provides help in some way.

The letter should include

- a brief re-cap of what the bug or insect does that is helpful.
- a thank you
- a closing

How will you treat one of these bugs or insects differently the next time you see one?

# Science

## Insect Research Project

There are several insects and bugs mentioned in *Super Bugs*.

- Stinkbugs
- Mosquitoes
- Crickets
- Ants
- Termites
- Roaches
- Beetles
- Flies
- Fleas
- Bumblebees
- Cicadas
- Caterpillars
- Butterflies
- Moths
- Dragonflies
- Fireflies

(NOTE: Although daddy longlegs and spiders are mentioned in the book, they are not insects. Discuss how daddy longlegs and spiders are arachnids with 8 legs, whereas insects have 6 legs).

Assign each student or pairs of students an insect or bug from the list above to research on the Internet.

Information to be gathered must include:

- Type of insect or bug
- What it eats
- Where it lives
- Draw a picture of the insect or bug.
- Write 3 words that describe your insect or bug.
- Interesting fact #1
- Interesting fact #2
- Interesting fact #3

Once all the needed research is done, students must create a poster visual with all the necessary information and present their findings to the class.

OR

Make a book. Cut and paste or draw the insect and include the researched facts.

### **Insect or Bug or Both?**

Not all insects are bugs, but bugs are insects with the following characteristics:

- Have a piercing and sucking mouth.
- Mouths that are beak-like.
- Usually warm blooded parasites.
- Thick, leathery front wings with colored parts near their bodies and clear parts at the end of the wings.
- Hind wings which are clear and are located under their front wings, or they may lack hind wings altogether.
- Only three life stages: First, they begin their lives as eggs, then become nymphs or larva which can live on dry land or in the water, and then finally develop into winged adults.

Using a list of insects and bugs found in *Super Bugs*,

1. Students will be given 20 minutes to search the Internet or library and find out if they are insects or bugs or both.
2. Speed counts! At the end of 20 minutes, searching stops and the student or group of students with the most correct answers wins.