



A BEETLE IS SHY

AUTHOR: DIANNA HUTTS ASTON

ILLUSTRATOR: SYLVIA LONG

See a video of the book read aloud here: [A Beetle is Shy](#)

**** REMEMBER: HAVE FUN AND THE KIDS WILL TOO! ****

OVERVIEW

ABOUT THE BOOK

From flea beetles to bombardier beetles, an incredible variety of these beloved bugs are showcased here in all their splendor. Poetic in voice and elegant in design, this carefully researched and visually striking book is perfect for sparking children's imaginations in both classroom reading circles and home libraries. ([goodreads.com](#))

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dianna Hutts Aston, is the author of many picture books for children. She manages a non-profit foundation, The Oz Project, and has established an annual Teen Writer's Workshop, both of which serve underprivileged Mexican teens.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Born in Ithaca, New York, Sylvia Long is a mother of two and a graduate of Maryland Institute of Art, B.F.A., who likes nature and bird watching.

THE READ ALOUD

BEFORE READING

Use these before reading the story to help students activate background knowledge and make predictions:

- (cover) What do all of these insects have in common?
- How can you tell which insect on the cover is a beetle?

DURING THE STORY

Use these while reading the story to help students interpret the action and content:

- (p. 3-4) How long does it take for a beetle egg to hatch?
- (p. 5-6) When I read the words on page 6, I learned what "kaleidoscopic" means. Can you figure it out?
- (p. 6) What do you think "iridescent" means? (Reader: find something that is iridescent to show students) Can you think of anything else that is iridescent?

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TOPICS & THEMES:

- Beetles
- Insects

Tips for every book!

POWER PHRASES:

I WONDER...

I NOTICE...

TELL ME MORE...

DIGGING DEEPER:

"Tell me more, why do you think that?"

"How do you know that?"

"Why do you think they feel like that?"

"Interesting, did you notice anything else?"

- (p. 7-8) (Reader: bring in a ruler and a needle to demonstrate these pages.) Do you think that there could be medium-sized beetles? Why?
- (p. 9) Has anyone ever eaten a beetle? Why do you think people in different parts of the world eat them?
- (p. 16) How do beetles communicate with each other? How can this help?
- (p. 19-20) If I had a garden, would I want to have beetles on my plants? Why or why not?

AFTER READING

Use these after reading the story to help students understand what they just read:

- I found that many things surprised me in this book. Did anything surprise you?
- Can you tell me a fact that you learned from this book?
- Looking at the illustrations, tell me what body parts a beetle has.

BRINGING THE BOOK TO LIFE!

- If you were a scientist, what would you want to study?
- What else would you like to learn about beetles?

COOPERATIVE LEARNING

- Turn to your neighbor and tell him/her which beetle is your favorite and why. Did you both have the same favorite beetle?

SMALL-GROUP IDEAS

1. DISCUSSION ACTIVITY

- There are a lot of adjectives used in this book, words that describe some thing. What adjective would you use to describe yourself?
- I notice that the illustrator uses cursive to write the words describing the beetles. What else could he have done to make these words stand out?
- Is this book fiction or nonfiction. How do we know?
- When is a beetle shy? When is a beetle bold?
- Choose your favorite page in the book.

Suggested Optional Activity:

- Beetles are being eaten in other places than those listed on pages 9 and 10. Let's look at the globe to find all of the places where beetles are eaten. (Mexico, Madagascar) Let's put a small sticker circle on these places.

2. WRITING ACTIVITY

- Write a paragraph about what it would be like if you were a beetle. Begin with, "If I were a beetle." Illustrate.

3. EXTENSION ACTIVITY

- Supply children with crayons, colored paper, sparkles, pipe cleaners and glue, let them create their favorite beetle and write a fact about the beetle or why they chose that particular beetle. They have the option of combining beetles and thus, combining characteristics.

COMMON CORE LINKS

CCSS.ELA-Literacy. RL 3.1, 3.3, 3.4,3.6, 3.7