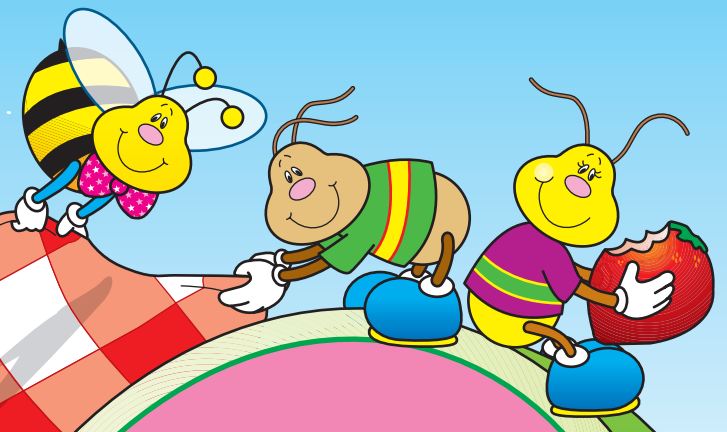


Lovely Day For a Picnic

It's a bright, warm summer day—a perfect time for a picnic! Pack your baskets, grab your sun visors, and head outdoors for some picnic-centered fun.



Did You Know?

In the 1800s, a picnic was an indoor gathering where people brought their own food to eat.

Watermelons, a popular picnic food, are sometimes called August hams because of their size and the time they are harvested.

Ants, a common (and uninvited) picnic guest, can carry over 100 times their weight!



Literature Selections

● **Once Upon a Picnic** by Vivian French: Candlewick Press, 1996. (Storybook, 32 pg.) Characters from several fairy tales take a young boy on a picnic.

● **One Hundred Hungry Ants** by Elinor J. Pinczes: Houghton Mifflin, 1993. (Picture book, 32 pg.) A group of ants tries to come up with a new way to get to a picnic.

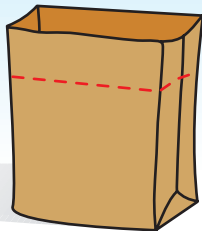
● **Picnic with Piggins** by Jane Yolen: Harcourt Brace, 1993. (Picture book, 32 pg.) A mystery develops during a relaxing picnic in the country.

● **Watermelon Day** by Kathi Appelt: Henry Holt & Co., 1996. (Picture book, 32 pg.) A little girl waits all summer for a watermelon to grow.

Bring Your Own Basket

Make picnic-perfect baskets for your class! Follow these steps to make picnic baskets from paper bags, then save the finished projects for a class picnic!

1. Cut off the top portion of a paper grocery bag.



2. Fold out the top edge of the bag to make a basket.



3. Cut a strip from the top half of the bag. Fold it in half lengthwise and staple it together. Staple it to the sides of the bag to make the handle.



4. Provide basket and ant patterns (page 85), construction paper, crayons, and markers, and let students decorate the baskets with outdoor scenes.





Sunny Day Visors

Let the sun shine brightly on your picnic, but keep it out of students' eyes with paper plate sun visors. Cut out the centers of white paper plates, leaving the rims intact. Let students place their plates on their heads to be sure that they fit. Cut several plates in half, and let students personalize them using markers and crayons. Staple each plate half to the rim, creating a sun visor. Let the class wear the visors for outdoor (or indoor) picnic activities.

Drink in the picnic Fun!

Picnicking on a hot summer day can make for thirsty children. You bring the lemonade and let children bring the special picnic cups. Allow each student to use acrylic paint and small paintbrushes to add a design to a plastic cup. Make sure to paint only the bottoms and middles of the cups if they are used for drinking. On picnic day, bring lemonade made from a mix or from your favorite recipe for a refreshing way to cool off!



Pack Your Picnic Lunch

Pack your bags—lunch bags, that is—for a class picnic. Provide small paper lunch bags, several colors of paint poured onto paper plates, and sponges cut into picnic shapes. Gently press the sponges into the paint, then press the sponges onto the bags. Use markers to add details to the dry paint. Send finished bags home with notes explaining that children should pack picnic lunches from home in their bags for a class picnic.

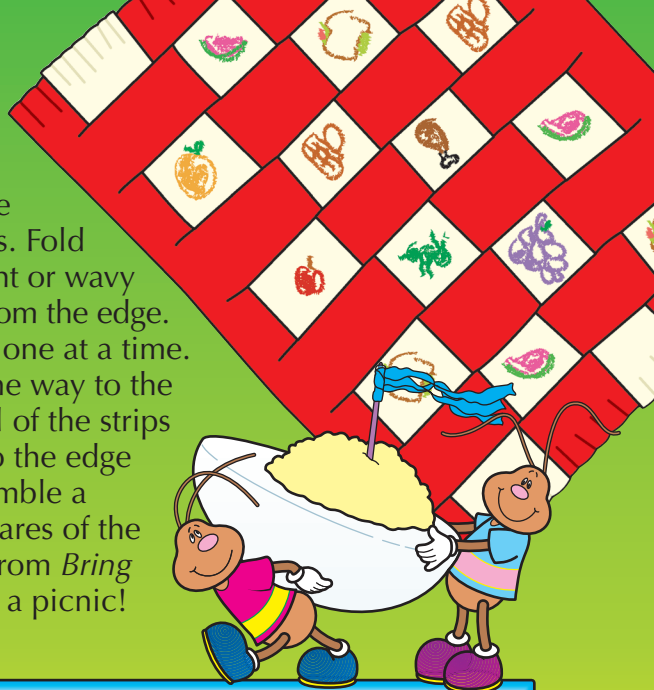
A Place to Gather

What's a picnic without a blanket? Create a picnic blanket from a plain bedsheet. Spread the sheet over several layers of newspaper on top of a table. Let the class use fabric markers, fabric paint, shape sponges, and pieces of fabric and fabric glue to decorate the picnic "blanket." Copy the ant, basket, and watermelon slice patterns (page 85) onto oaktag to trace and color on the sheet. Use the finished blanket for picnics, storytime, independent reading, and small group activities.



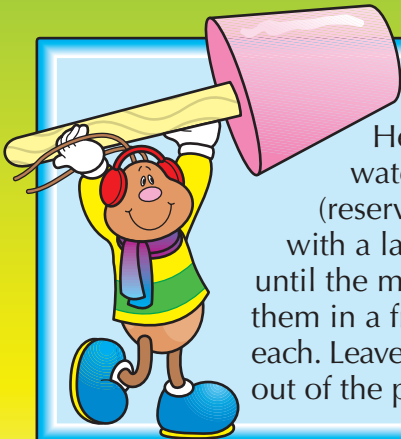
A Place "mat" for a Picnic

Woven mats make any place a perfect place for a picnic. Have each child cut a sheet of construction paper into 2"-wide strips. Fold another, different-colored sheet of paper in half, and cut straight or wavy slits in the paper, beginning at the fold and stopping about 1" from the edge. Open the sheet of paper and weave the strips through the slits one at a time. Begin by weaving a strip first over, then under, then over, all the way to the edge. Weave the next strip under first, then over, etc. When all of the strips have been woven into the paper, glue the edges of the strips to the edge of the sheet of paper. Then, cut fringes along the edges to resemble a placemat. Finally, draw ants or picnic foods on the woven squares of the construction paper. Store the placemats in the picnic baskets from *Bring Your Own Basket* (page 82) and you'll always have a place for a picnic!



Icy Watermelon Pops

Here's a new idea for an old picnic favorite: watermelon pops! Bring a large watermelon to class and cut it into slices. Remove the seeds with craft sticks, (reserve them for *Ready, Set, Pinch!*, below). Scoop the melon out of the rind with a large ice cream scoop. Place a few scoops at a time into a blender and blend until the mixture is smooth. Fill paper cups with the blended watermelon and place them in a freezer. When the pops begin to freeze, place a craft stick in the center of each. Leave the treats in the freezer until they are completely frozen. Pop the "meloncicles" out of the paper cups for everyone to enjoy.



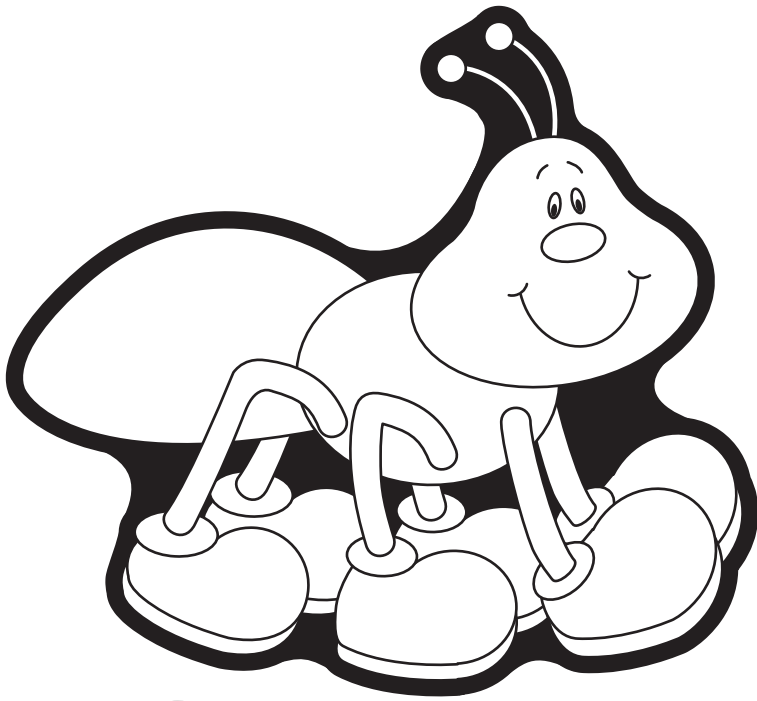
Ready, Set, Pinch!

Find a use for watermelon seeds and create a fun outdoor game at the same time! Treat the class to watermelon. Place the seeds in a small paper cup. (Be sure to play this game while the seeds are still slippery.) Place a plain sheet outside on a flat surface. Mark a chalk or tape line a few feet from the sheet. Let students stand on the line and pinch seeds until they pop out. Write each child's name on a piece of masking tape and place it on the sheet where her seed lands. When everyone has taken a turn, give a prize, such as an extra *Icy Watermelon Pop* (see above) or a piece of watermelon-flavored gum to the child whose seed went the farthest. Let students measure to find out how far the winning seed traveled.

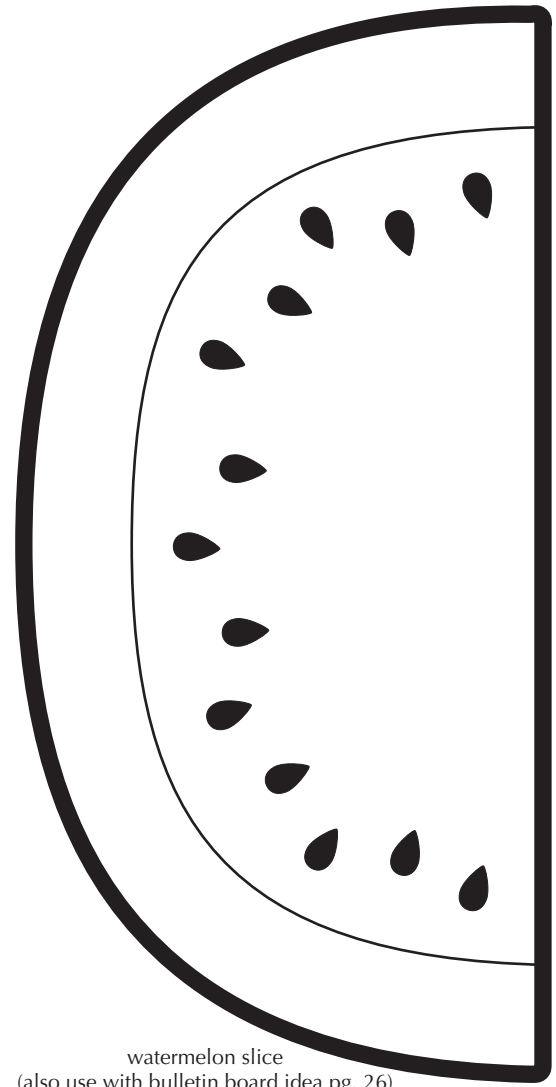
On the Trail of an Ant

Let students use their writing skills to follow the paths of mischievous picnic ants. On butcher paper, have each student draw a picnic scene, complete with a hungry ant, picnic foods, a picnic basket, and a nearby anthill. Use a pencil to lightly draw a line from ant to anthill, going under, over, around, and near different objects in the picture. Then, following the path of the line, write a short story about where the ant must travel to get a morsel of food to its home, using as many position words (over, above, etc.) as possible. Let children read each others' stories and share in ant-chasing adventures.



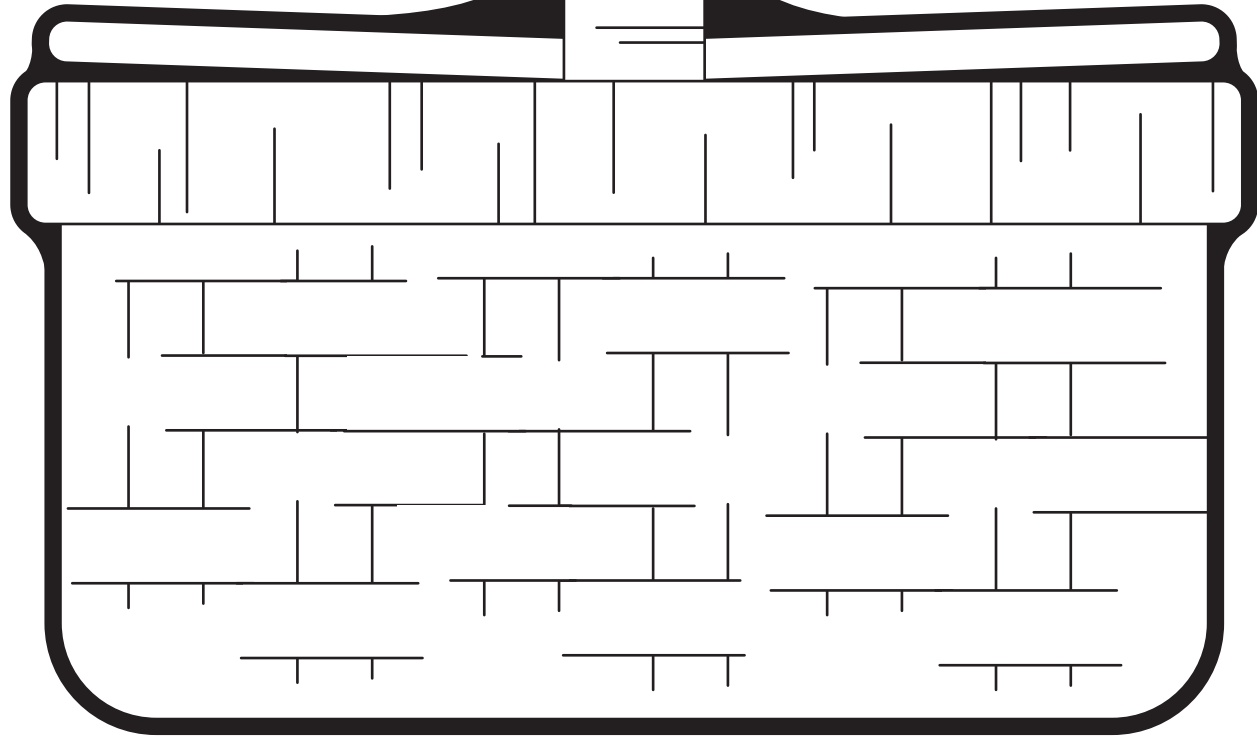


ant



watermelon slice
(also use with bulletin board idea pg. 26)

COPY and CUT



basket
(also use with bulletin board idea pg. 27)