

# Make Creepy Crawly Pretzel Snacks

Food, science and art — a perfect recipe for learning! This activity combines all three in a unique, kitchen-based science lesson.

After kids make a tray of reasonably wholesome creepy crawlies, you'll count legs together and sort them into spiders (8 legs) and insects (6 legs). Along the way, kids learn new insect vocabulary, and then wrap up the fun lesson with a yummy snack!

## What You Need:

- 1 cup semi-sweet chocolate chips
- 1/2 cup heavy cream
- Blender or food processor
- Saucepan
- 2 spoons
- Paper and pen
- 1/4 cup pecan halves
- 1/2 cup pretzels
- Decorating candy or sprinkles
- Book about spiders and insects with photos
- Baking sheet
- Cupcake papers

## What You Do:

1. Make the ganache the night before. If your child is comfortable in the kitchen, invite him to help out where he can. First, crush the chocolate chips in a blender or food processor.
2. Next, heat the cream in a saucepan on low for about one minute, then turn it up to medium.
3. Just when it begins to boil, pour the cream over the crushed chocolate and quickly stir with a chopstick until the chocolate melts. Chill overnight.
4. Next, get your materials ready. For your chart, draw a vertical line on the paper, and write "Insect" on the top of one side and "Spider" on the other. To make insect legs, break round pieces off the pretzels and set aside. Pick through the nuts, choosing intact pieces to reserve.
5. Before you start cooking, it's a good idea to sit down with your child and take a look at an insect book. Look at pictures of spiders and insects together and ask him how you can tell the difference between the two. If he doesn't know, explain to him that the answer is in the number of legs. Spiders always have eight legs, and insects have six. Take a look at the different pictures and start counting to determine whether each creature is an insect or a spider.
6. When you're done reading, it's time to get sticky! Wash your hands, then have your child scoop a small spoonful of ganache and use his fingertips to model a body while it's on the spoon.
7. When he's satisfied with the body, have him decorate it. He can poke pretzel bits into the sides for legs and add a pecan on top for a carapace. Explain to him that a carapace is a shield that covers the back of the insect, and insects aren't the only ones who have them! They also show up on turtles and crabs.
8. Have him finish decorating his critter with candy sprinkles or dots.
9. When he's all done, use the second spoon to push the critter onto a cupcake paper and have him re-set the legs if needed. Repeat; five or six are plenty for the follow-up activity. As he works, move the critters to the refrigerator in cupcake papers to chill.
10. When all the creepy crawlies are done, bring your chart and critters to the table. Choose one, count its legs together, and invite him to place it under the correct label on the chart. Too few, too many, or an odd number of legs? He can easily add or remove them.



After sorting, take a photo! These cute critters are worth remembering. And when you're all done, don't forget to

enjoy your creepy crawly snack!