

NAME: _____

DATE: _____



1. What is the lecture about?

ants working together for a common goal

ants defending themselves from predators

ants building fortifications

ants engaging in brutal conflicts

2. What is territorial aggression in ant warfare?

ants releasing alarm pheromones

ants attacking other insect species

ants fighting over territory

all of the above

3. How do ants communicate during territorial aggression?

through physical barriers

by building fortifications

by releasing alarm pheromones

by stealing eggs from other colonies

4. How are physical barriers used in ant warfare?

to mark ant territory

for ants to communicate with each other

to keep intruders out

all of the above

5. What is the purpose of slave-making behavior in ants?

to maintain their colonies

to defend their territory from predators

to mark their territory

none of the above

6. How are ants described in the world of insect warfare?

as insignificant combatants

as small and weak opponents

as powerful fighters

as slow responders

Discuss these questions with a friend or classmate.

1. What information from this lecture did you find the most interesting? Why?
2. Are you afraid of ants? Why? / Why not?
3. When was the last time you saw an ant? Where did you see it? What was it doing?
4. Why do some people study ants?
5. Is there such a thing as a pet ant? What is a good name for a pet ant?
6. In what ways is ant behavior similar to human behavior?

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Audio Script

Ant warfare is a fascinating, but often overlooked, aspect of the natural world. These small insects are known for their highly organized societies, and their ability to work together in large numbers, to achieve a common goal. However, they are also capable of engaging in brutal and bloody conflicts, with other ant colonies.

One of the most common forms of ant warfare is territorial aggression, in which one colony will seek to defend its territory from invaders. They will often go to great lengths to protect the resources within their territory, and use a variety of tactics, to try to drive the intruders away.

One tactic that ants use is chemical warfare. Many species of ants secrete chemicals, called pheromones, that they use to communicate with one another, and mark their territory. When an ant colony is threatened, the ants will release alarm pheromones, that signal, to the rest of the colony, that danger is present. This can lead to a rapid response from the ants, who will swarm the intruders, and attack them with their mandibles.

Another tactic that ants use in warfare is the use of physical barriers. Some species of ants build elaborate fortifications around the perimeter of their territory, using sand, rocks, or other materials, to create a defensive line. These fortifications can be extremely effective at keeping intruders out, as they are often too large or too difficult to breach.

In addition to territorial aggression, ants are also known to engage in slave-making behavior, in which they raid the nests of other ant colonies, and steal their eggs and larvae. These eggs and larvae are then raised as workers in the invading colony, allowing the ants to expand their workforce, and increase their chances of survival. This behavior is particularly common in species of ants known as slave-makers, which are named for their reliance on slave labor, to maintain their colonies.

Despite their small size, ants are formidable opponents in the world of insect warfare. While their conflicts may seem insignificant to us, they are a crucial part of the natural world, and have evolved over millions of years, to become incredibly effective at what they do.

ANSWER KEY

1. ants engaging in brutal conflicts
2. ants fighting over territory
3. by releasing alarm pheromones
4. to keep intruders out
5. to maintain their colonies
6. as powerful fighters