

Hey, Little Ant

Summary:

A young boy talks to an ant trembling in the shadow of his sneaker. The ant makes a case with the boy that its life is important too. This story brings up questions about ethics and peer pressure, and in the end asks the readers to decide for themselves: to squish. . . or not to squish. Written first as a song in 1992 by Phillip Hoose and his then 9-year-old daughter, Hannah.

Materials:

- Copies of giant kid picture (pages 5 & 6) and giant ant picture (pages 19 & 20)
*Note: each fits on two 8 ½ x 11 pages
- Copies of ant and kid (pages 6 and 20)
*Blackline masters are provided

Questions and answers:

1. Look at the 'giant' pictures. Who is taller, the kid or the ant?

Students should use the giant kid and giant ant copies and line up the feet (or top—do we count the antennas? That's a discussion and call for the class to make!) Either way, the ant shown is larger!

2. Look at the 'small' pictures of the ant and the kid. Who is smaller in these images?

The ant is smaller here. There is an opportunity to talk about how tall the ant is compared to his shadow here.

3. How tall is the kid (giant picture) in ant units?

Students use cut outs of the small ant to measure how many times the ant stacks to reach the height of the kid. Including antennas, the kid is about 47 (48) ants tall. The ant is very small for young hands. It may be helpful to offer students a strip of five or ten ants stacked vertically (strips have been provided), or even a strip 50 ants tall that they can line up and count like a tape measure. The goal here is to count in a non-standard unit of measure and to assign that unit to the result.

4. How tall is the giant ant in small kid units?

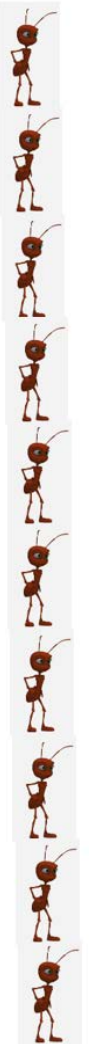
Students go through the same process of stacking kid units to measure the ant's height. The kid is a little bigger so students may be able to manage that measurement in single units after experiencing the measuring process with the ant units. Some students may benefit from having stacked versions of the kid available. This offers the opportunity to differentiate by having all students use some number of stacked ants in #3 then offering single or stacked ants in #4. The ant is about 11 kid units tall.

5. Compare the measurements. Is the kid a bigger measurement in ant units or is the ant a bigger measurement in kid units?

The kid is many more ant units than the ant is in kid units.

6. Even though the giant ant is bigger than the giant kid, the ant measures fewer units. Why is this so?

The ant units are smaller than the kid units so it takes more to measure. Talk about how the size of units matters. Examples: 4 feet is much more than 6 inches. 3 dollars is more than 50 cents. 4 hours is more than 30 minutes.



Math Standards: (Standards descriptions may have been shortened to clarify the applicable skills.)

Grade	Standard	Description
K	K.CC.1	Count to 100 by ones and by tens
	K.CC.4	Understand the relationship between numbers and quantities; connect counting to cardinality
	K.CC.6	Identify whether the number of objects in one group is greater than, less than, or equal to the number of objects in another group.
	K.MD.1	Describe measurable attributes of objects, such as length or weight.
	K.MD.2	Directly compare two objects with a measurable attribute in common and describe the difference.
1	1.NBT.2	Understand that the two digits of a two-digit number represent amounts of tens and ones.
	1.MD.2	Express the length of an object as a whole number of length units, by laying multiple copies of a shorter object end to end.

