



What to do with the Class Animals at the End of the Unit

Butterflies - Regrettably, APHIS (Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service) does not allow the butterflies to be set free into the wild. Therefore, if possible, let the adult Painted Lady Butterflies die a natural death in the classroom or in another room outside of the classroom. This typically happens within 3 weeks after pupating. Then place their bodies along with any materials exposed to the butterflies into a plastic bag and place the plastic bag in the freezer for at least 3 days. After 3 days, throw the bag out with the trash.

Crayfish - Release crayfish into water at the edge of a local pond or marsh. This can be done as late as October 30th. Crayfish will immediately bury themselves into the mud along the pond's banks and overwinter.

Toads (*From Eggs to Toads*) - Release young toads into a marsh or into a woodland near water. If students wish to take baby toads home as pets, let parents know that the American toad has paratoid glands behind its eyes. These glands can secrete a milky liquid called *bufotoxin* if a toad feels threatened by a predator. Bufotoxin is not extremely toxic to humans but can irritate mucous membranes and should not be ingested. Bufotoxin can, however, make the family pet dog or cat sick should that pet try to make a meal of the toad.

Earthworms – Empty the entire contents of the compost bin (worms and compost) into an area with leaf litter. Use leaves or dirt to cover the compost.

Super mealworms (*Meet the Creatures*) - The Teacher's Guide asks that teachers ship the super mealworms back to ESP. But now we ask that you please do not ship them back to ESP. Teachers can dispose of the super mealworms by placing them back into the deli container in which they were shipped and then place the deli-container into a plastic bag. Place the plastic bag in the freezer for at least 3 days before disposal in the regular trash.

Milkweed bugs (*Plant and Animals Life Cycles*) - At the end of the unit, place the culture vessel containing the milkweed bugs into a plastic bag. Place the plastic bag into the freezer for at least 3 days before disposal in the regular trash.

Mealworms (*Plant and Animals Life Cycles*) - Place mealworms, darkling beetles and all materials exposed to the mealworms into the deli container(s) in which they were shipped or into a plastic bag. Put the plastic bag or deli container into the freezer for at least 3 days before disposal in the regular trash.