

Spider and Grasshoppers (1948)

Charles Burchfield (1893-1967)



I spy...

Can you spot the **2** insects in this painting by Charles Burchfield?

Let's Look Together...

Did you spot the spider? Or the moth? How about the grasshopper? (*Where are they hiding? You may not be able to see them in the painting, but they're there!*)

The moth is called a *Scarlet Underwing*. And the spider is a *Miranda* spider. Sometimes spiders are called insects... Do you think that spiders are a type of insect? **They are not!**

While both spiders and insects are invertebrates, spiders are not insects. A spider is an **Arachnida** - while the moth is an **Insecta**.

Here's the difference:

A spider has two body parts, four pairs of legs, eight eyes, no antenna or wings.

An insect has three body parts, three pairs of legs, two eyes and two antenna.



Compare and Contrast

Look at these two versions of Burchfield's
Spider and Grasshopper.

Find all the ways these two images are the **same**.

How many are there?



Now find all the ways these two images are **different**.

Did you find more, or less?

Which version do you prefer? Can you describe why you like one better than the other?

Real or Imaginary?

Think about the way Burchfield drew and painted these works. Is it realistic? Or is it more imaginary?

Look for patterns in the background of the painting. **Now answer these questions:**

Have you ever seen anyone paint sounds?

Could these patterns be images of sound? If so, why?

If you think they might be, what kinds of sounds did Burchfield paint?

How would you paint the sounds you hear?

Activities!

Create your own Insect!

Using any art supplies you like, create your own insect. An insect must have three parts: a head, thorax and abdomen. You can look at pictures of real insects, and then take the head of one, thorax of another and the abdomen of a third and make a new insect! Just add six legs and some other features and you've got it! OR you can look at Burchfield's insects and create your own version. OR just make one up out of your very own imagination! Have fun with this. Create an environment to place your creature.

Examples and pictures starting on page 6

Create your own Spider!

Follow the same instructions as the insect. Except, your spider will have two body parts. Remember the legs and eyes, no antenna or wings.

Examples and pictures on page 11

Play with Patterns

Create a work of art based on the patterns you've found in the Spider and the Grasshopper paintings. First, draw shapes on a sheet of paper with a black crayon or sharpie. Fill the shapes in with different patterns from the Burchfield painting. - or, make up some of your own! Then, color or paint the shapes in with color.

Write a Poem

Write a poem about your creative insect. Try to make it silly. Try to make the last word of each line rhyme, like Douglas Florian.

Poems on page 13

Create your own Insect!



Grab some scrap paper



Cut out your insect parts



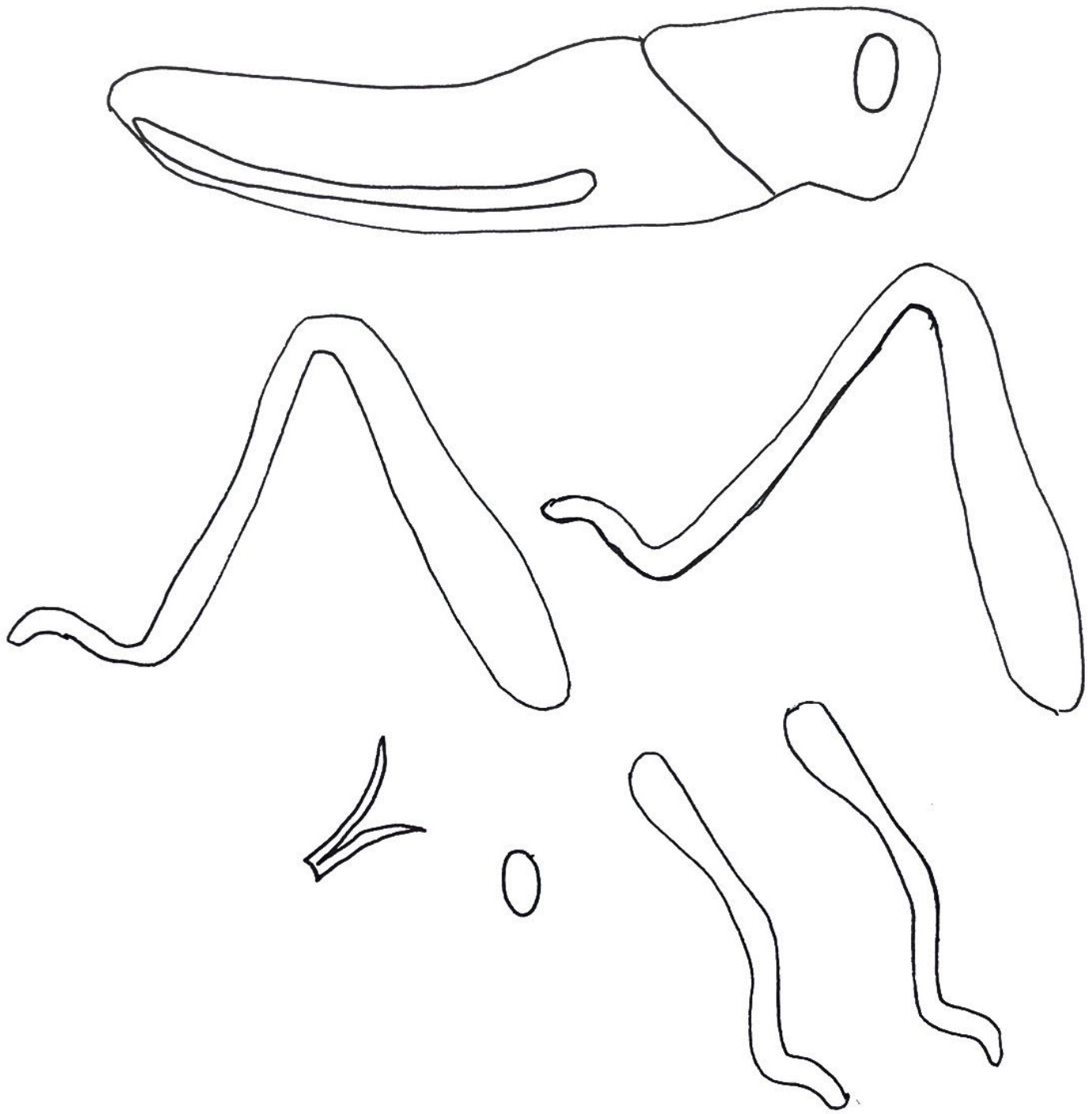
Assemble your insects parts



Glue them all together! Now time to add some color or patterns.

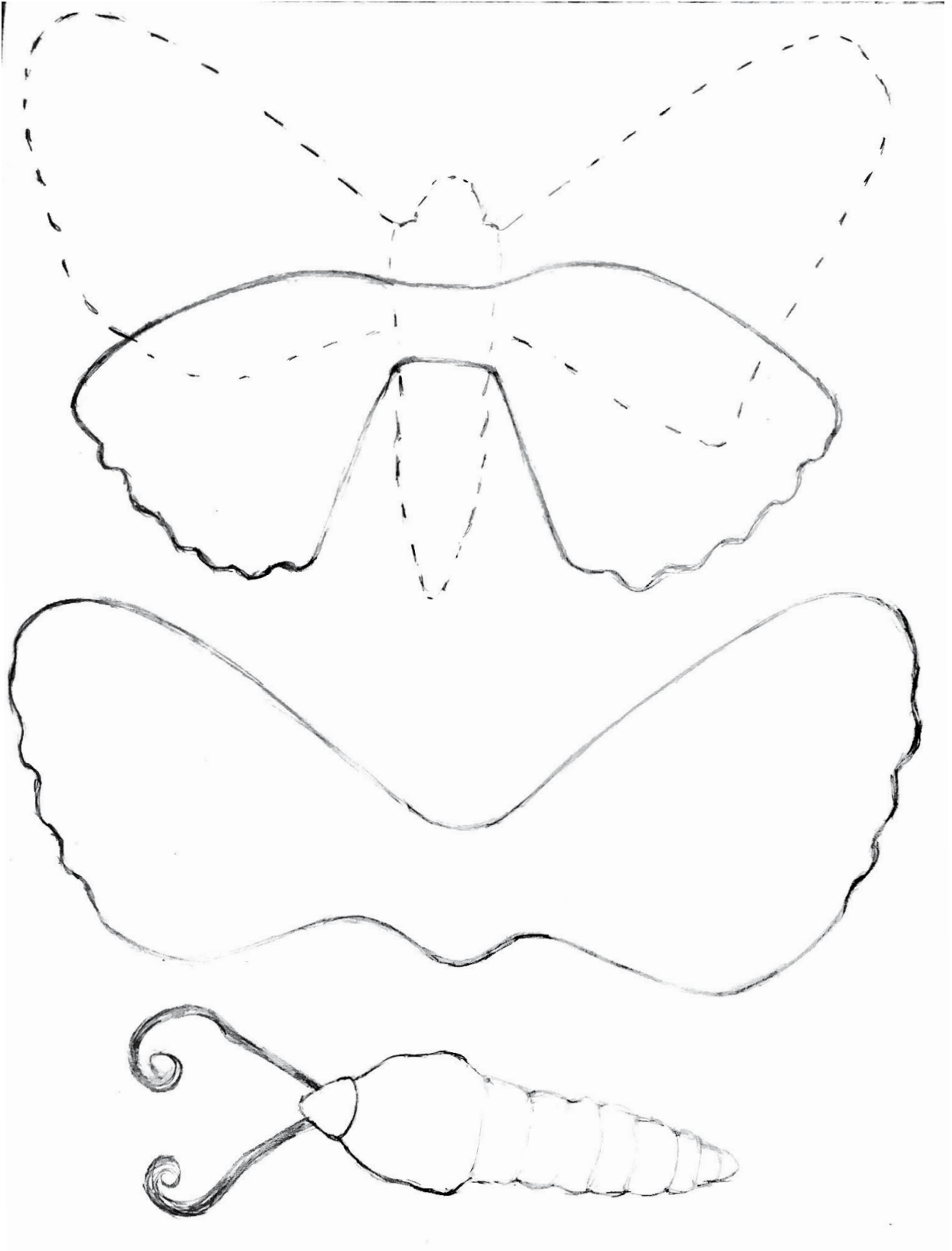
Grasshopper Template

Use this template to trace or make a copy of this page to cut out the shapes.



Create your own Moth!

Use this template to trace or make a copy of this page to cut out the shapes.



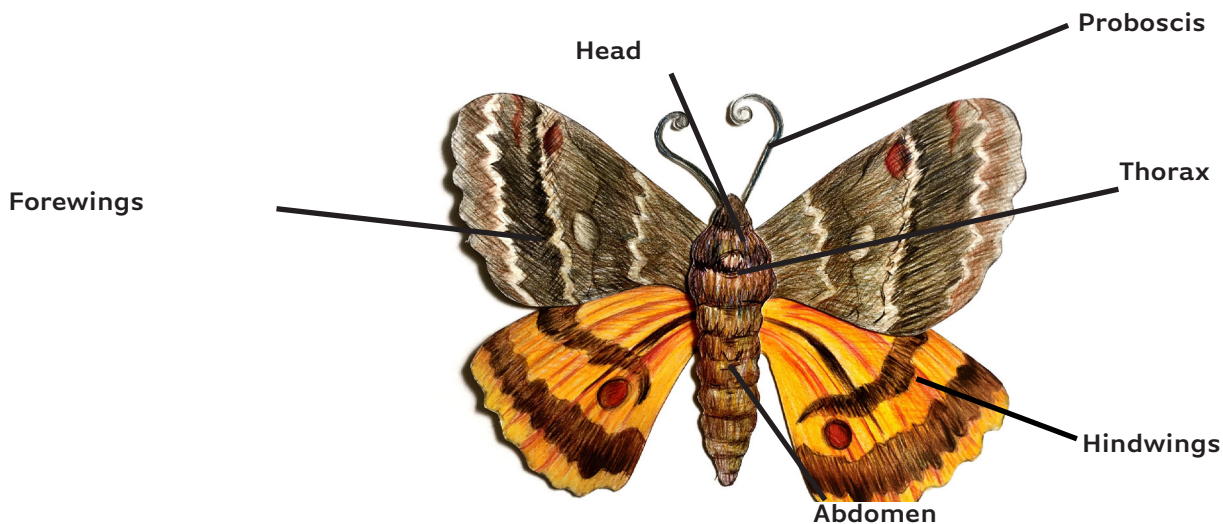
Once you've cut out your moth parts, color them in with colored pencils, crayons, paint, or any other materials you have available.



What is an Underwing moth?

An Underwing moth is an insect belonging to the Noctuidae superfamily; Its genus is called Catocala, or a large group of closely related moths know as "underwings".

These clever little fellows are active at night, while spending their days resting upside down against the bark of a tree. With their dull (brown and gray wavy-lined) forewings spread wide-open, they are almost invisible. This camouflage protects them from any would-be predators. If bothered by a bird, or another insect, they pop open those brightly colored underwings and frighten the pest away.



What's in a name?

Noctuidae comes from the Latin word for little owl. Just like owls, these moths are most active during the night

Catocala is a combination of two Ancient Greek words that together mean beautiful lower ones. And, aren't those colorful hindwings beautiful?

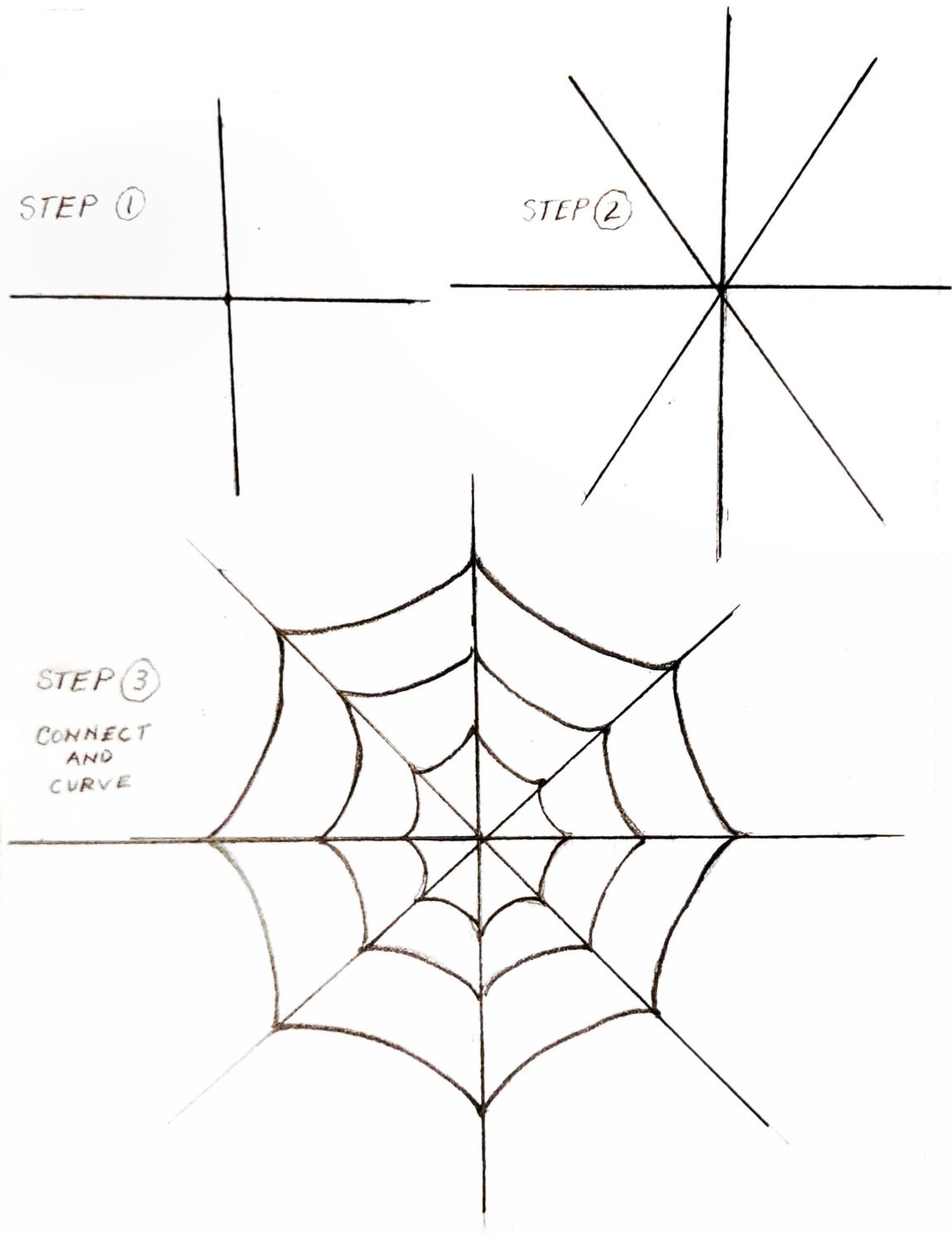
Do you know the meaning of these two words?

Proboscis is a Latin word, derived from two Greek words: pro- (before) and boskein (to feed). Just as you might imagine, the proboscis is their mouth!

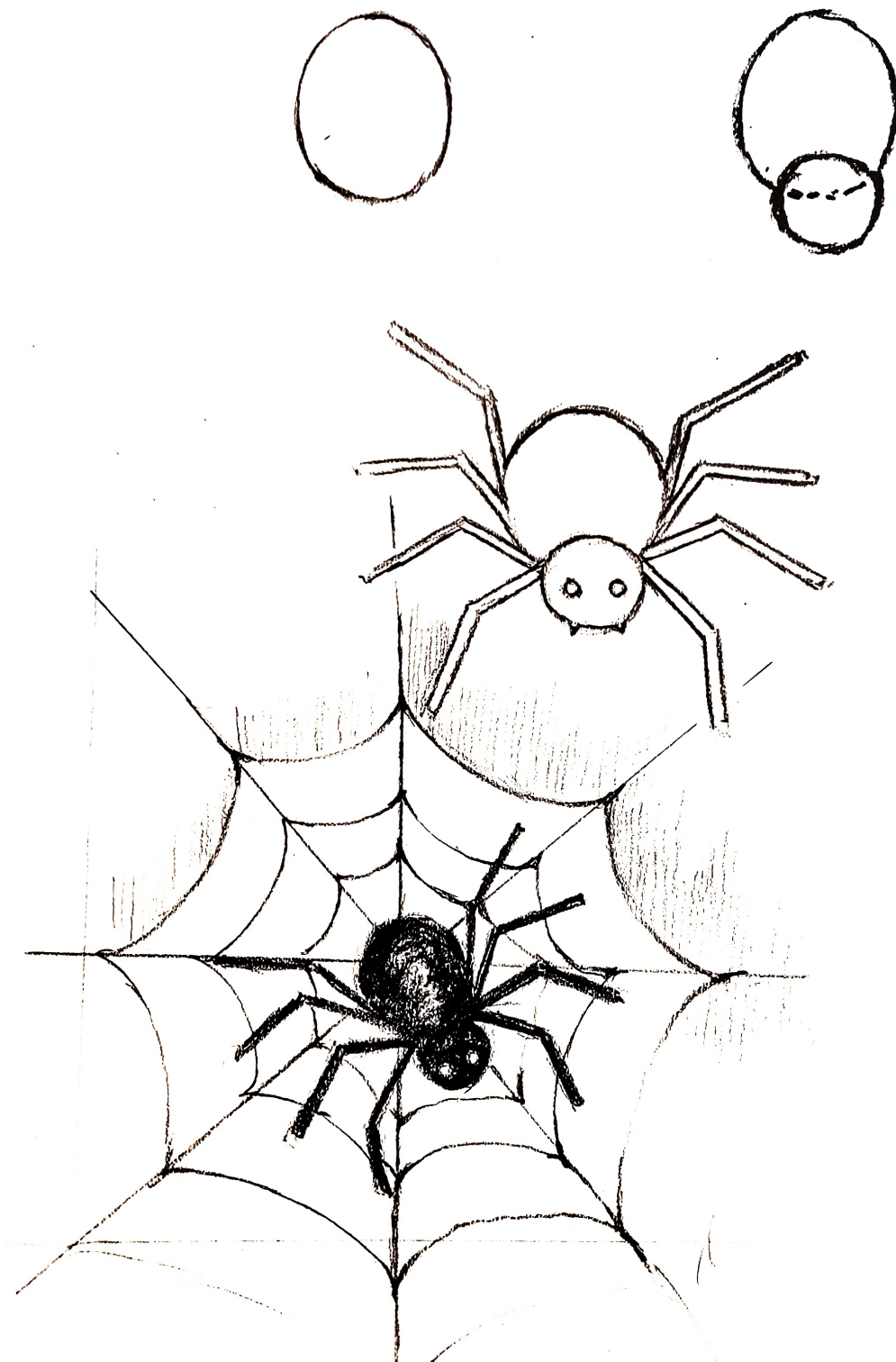
And the **thorax** the part of the body between the neck and abdomen.

Create your own Spider!

Follow the steps below to create the web for your spider.



Draw your own spider! Use this template as a guide.



Poems by Douglas Florian: Insectlopedia

The Daddy Longlegs

O Daddy
Daddy O
How'd you get
Those legs to grow
So very long
And lean in size?
From Spiderobic
Exercise?
Did you drink milk?
Or chew on cheese?
And by the way,
Where are your knees?
O Daddy
Daddy O
How'd you get
Those legs to grow?

The Black Widow Spider

I am a widow-
I always wear black
From my eight dainty legs
To my shinny round back,
Do not disturb me.
My fangs carry venom.
I am a widow.
I am a widow-
I don't wear denim.

The Io Moth

The io moth
Has mammoth eye
That are not real-
That ward off birds
And other creatures,
Like garter snakes
And science teachers.

Journal Entries by Charles E. Burchfield
Journals, Volume 49, August 24, 1948, p. 133:

To Zimmerman Rd. to do the grasshopper picture. An ideal day for it – hot, dry, the air full of insect sounds.

Set up my easel first, on the edge of the swampy pasture at the north side of the woods. – then ate lunch.

All afternoon on the painting – unpremeditated was the introduction of a yellow and black spider (Miranda) feeding on a grasshopper. I found it to be an ideal way of working – i.e. on one day to work out the conventionalizations & abstract motifs, then the next to work on the spot, so as to give life to the forms invented. I worked boldly & with great absorption.

About 6:30 finish, & for walk at the south end of the woods for a bouquet of cardinal flowers, boneset & vervain. Then pull the car up a bit so as to see the sun go down L& ate lunch. Hardly had I parked, when a small spider chose the front fender as an anchor for one of his hives & started in to build a web. He almost had it complete when I was ready to go on. I hated to break his web! – From where I sat, I counted seven Miranda spiders in the ditch plants.

Drove on to more open territory – parked again, & for a walk eastwards. The sound & the feel of small flowered cinquefoil strands broken by my feet very intriguing. —

Journals, Volume 61B, August 24, 1963, p. 218:

August 24 – Saturday —

Cool and cloudy until late P.M. when the sun came out full and strong —

Remounted and enlarged the "Spider and Grasshoppers (1948) which I intend to change considerably (yesterday made a tracing of it for historical record) – I will have the spider eating a scarlet underwing.

**Special Thank You to Docent Contributors:
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BURCHFIELDCONNECTS