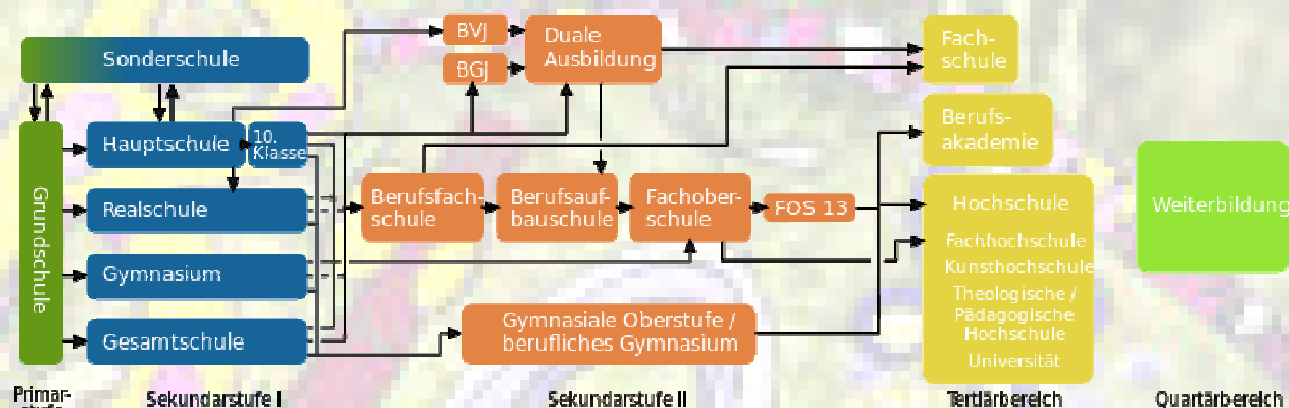


## General information about the education system



The school system in German is slightly different in each federal state. So we want to present you the Northrhine-Westfalian system.

The pupils start at the age of 6 at Primary School where they stay for 4 years. After that they can choose according to their abilities between the Hauptschule, the Realschule, which they both attend for 6 years or the Gymnasium, a Grammar School, for 8 years.

They can also go to a Comprehensive School, like our school, where they can do all qualifications depending on their level of efficiency. So they can attend the Comprehensive School for a minimum of 6 years up to 9 years if they want to do the A-level.

There are also special schools for mentally or physically handicapped pupils with special education trainers.

The Northrhine-Westfalian school system at the moment undergoes a lot of changes and there are a lot of school project that intend to fuse the Hauptschule and the Realschule.

Those pupils who leave school after year 10 with a Certificate of Secondary Education can either start working and do an Apprenticeship or they can continue their school education at a professional school or go to the Gymnasium. On both school types they can either get an advanced (technical) college entrance qualification or do the A-level. Both qualifications allow the students to go to a college of higher education (a kind of Polytechnic) or to university if they have got the A-level.

### Our school

Our school is a comprehensive school which means that we go to school for at least 6 years or for a maximum of 9 years if you want to do the A-level. The Gesamtschule Hemer is a relatively new school in Hemer that was founded 5 years ago.

Before you start at our school you have to choose one of our profiles, which are: Europe, Art; Physical Education and Health, Technology and MINT. Each week we have two lessons for our profile.

- The Europe-class learns special things about Europe, like countries, capitals, inhabitants, money, politics and has additional language lessons in English or Spanish.
- The Art-class has more music lessons. Most pupils play an instrument, for example the keyboard or the flute.
- The Technology-Class works in the craftsroom and learns e.g. to build things made of wood. One class made the furniture for the pupils' recreation room. But pupils also learn about different materials and electricity.
- The PE-class does a lot of sport as for example handball, wave-, skateboarding, rope skipping and learns about a healthy life
- The MINT-class works a lot with computers. Each student has a notebook and learns how to use it. There are also additional Maths lessons.

Each class has two class teachers and our headmistress is Mrs Koller.

Our school day starts each day at 7.45 and we usually finish at 15.30, except on Tuesdays and Fridays we only have 6 or 7 lessons. Each lesson lasts 45 minutes. At lunchtime we have got a long break to eat something and relax. Then we can go to our canteen ("Mensa") and eat a hot meal or we can buy something like sandwiches, drinks and sweets at our kiosk. At lunchtime we can also go to a playroom, to the library or to the computer room.

We also have extracurricular activities on Thursdays, for example Circus, Music, Judo, Steeldrum, Football, Computer, Chinese and some others. You can choose what you like to do.

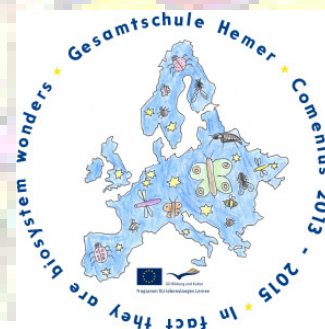
### Our Comenius Project Group

We are the Comenius project team. We are 17 children from 10–13 years. In the group there are 13 girls and 4 boys and our teachers are Mrs. Michel-Schuler and Mrs. Klüter-Klein.



We meet every Tuesday in the 7th lesson and work on our topic: insects. It's a bilingual lesson which means that we speak English and German. We have already learned about the features of insects and found out which animals, for example spiders aren't insects. There are some beautiful and useful insects we like and others that aren't very popular because they bite and sting.

We take part in the project because we are interested in the topic and in speaking English. We also want to learn about other countries and meet the pupils from the other schools of the Comenius project. We're looking forward to May when the other schools come to visit us in Germany and work with us in project groups.





## What we think about insects?

### Why we like insects:

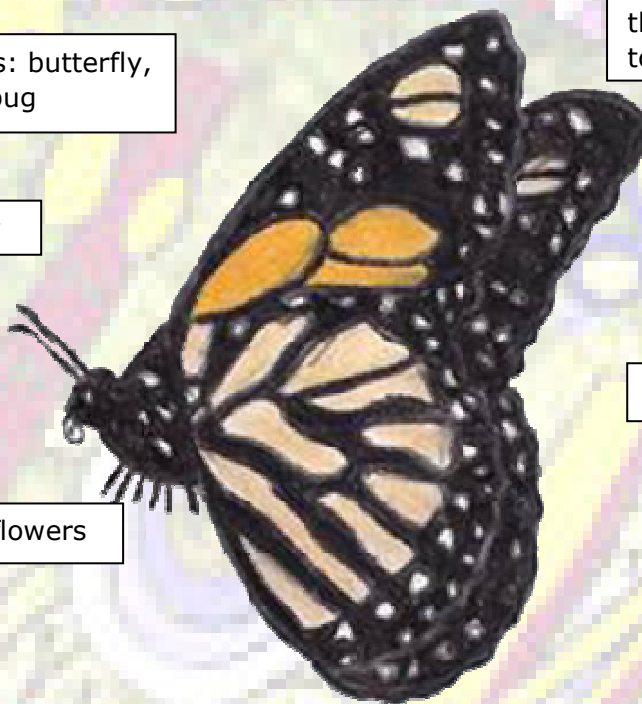
favourite insects: butterfly,  
dragonfly, ladybug

bees produce honey

important for the flowers

they are interesting  
to observe

they help the nature



### Why we don't like insects:

dangerous

ugly

crawl fast

fly into the mouth or  
the nose

scary

can hurt: bite  
and sting

noisy at night



## What is an insect?

Insects are small animals but the largest group in the animal kingdom. In Germany live more than 30.000 different kinds of insects. On our planet there are over 1 million species.

They are very successful because they can live everywhere on land, in the water and in the air as well as in cold and hot areas. Because they are very small they don't need much food and they can live in very small places.

## Which insects do we know?

We know ants, butterflies, bugs, beetles bees, caterpillars, grasshoppers, flies, gnats, ladybugs, wasps ...

## What do they look like?

### 3 body segments and no backbone:

- head
- chest
- abdomen

### 6 legs

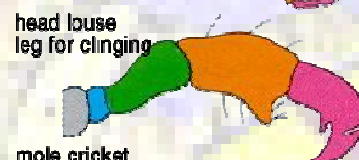
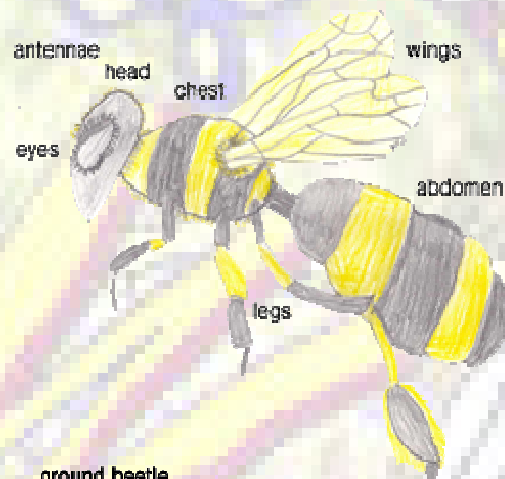
(three pairs of jointed legs attached to the thorax)

Insects have three pairs of legs, but different insects have different kinds of legs. They need them for running and jumping, but some of them need them for digging or climbing.

- because insects are so small we think that they are slow but they move very quickly
- if an ant is as big as you it would be four times faster than an Olympic athlete
- if a flea is as big as you it could jump over 40 floors

### chitin shell

chitin shell surrounds the body to protect the internal organs; the chitin is covered with scales, bristles and hairs



### touch, smell, and hearing

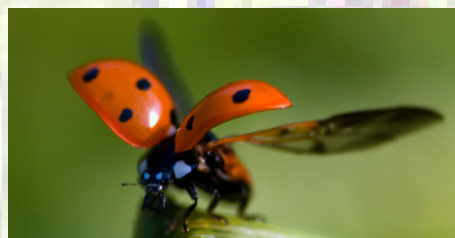
- most have antennae (sensors)
- smells and tastes
- insects have eyes
- insects have an antenna
- sight not so important



antenna of a butterfly

### wings

- a lot of insects have wings
- Insects have four wings
- Insects have sensitive wings
- When the ladybird flies, it opens its wing cases
- All the insects can fly, because they have lots of muscles in their middle body.



### the Insects' Eyes

the eyes of insects consists of ommatidia

(single eyes)

### simple eyes

- the insects have two main eyes that consist of complex eyes
- they have simple eyes and compound eyes

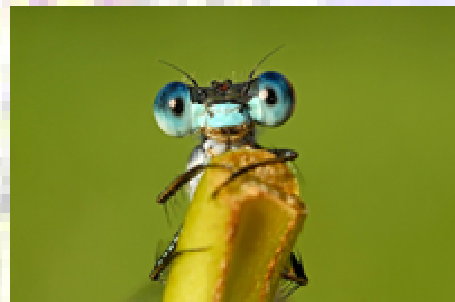


### circumferential visibility

- it is not easy to approach a dragonfly because it can look all in all directions

### big eyes

- the dragonfly has additional to the circumferential visibility very big eyes that have up to 5.000 ommatidia (single eyes)



### These are not insects

Spiders, scorpions, worms, prawns and centipedes for example are not insects because they have a different structure

- they have four pairs of legs or more
- their head and body doesn't have 3 segments but only one
- no antennae
- they don't have wings
- small, simple eyes





## In fact they are biosystemwonders

### Our First Comenius magazine – April 2014

## Our meeting in Belgium

In November 2013 we (Mia, Mia, Philipp, Daniel and Hendrik) went with our teachers to Belgium where the first school exchange of the Comenius project took place.

For the four days we stayed in host families which were very nice and friendly. With the children of the families we went to school on the following days and had lessons with them or worked in project groups on our topic *Insects*. We did a lot of different activities as for example drawing insects, a quiz on insects, filling insect hotels and – what was really great – planting a tree for each country.



We also learned about the Belgium culture especially the food on the last evening when all the host families and their children, the teachers and all the exchange students met at the school for a presentation and a to celebrate the exchange. There was an international buffet with especially Belgium delicacies. All the children and adults had a lot of fun and got to know each other. Everybody tried to talk to each other although not everybody could speak English.

Besides working on the topic we did some sightseeing. In Namur we visited the Chateau and went shopping for example Belgian chocolate for our families.





## **In fact they are biosystemwonders** **Our First Comenius magazine – April 2014**

On our last day we went to Brussels where we first visited the Museum of Natural Science which was very interesting and informative. The presented animals were very impressive.



Then before we took the train home we went to the city centre and visited the Grand Place and walked around to get some impressions of the Belgian capital.



We arrived home very late in the evening. It was an exhausting but very good exchange and we especially like to have found new friends and made a lot of new experiences. We enjoyed our stay very much.

*(Report by Mia and Mia with the help of Mrs Klüter-Klein)*



### Our meeting in the Netherlands

In March we went to Nieuw-Namen in the Netherlands for our second Comenius school exchange. Four pupils of the Comenius group (Leonie, Sara, Joshua and Tim) had the opportunity to visit St-Josef-School and to live in host families where they stayed for three days.

On our first day after a warm welcome we visited an area in Nieuw-Namen where it is possible to see different layers of earth that developed in the last million years of Earth's history. The pupils could look for fossils and shells there.



In the afternoon the children worked together in project groups and also had a lot of opportunities to get to know each other while playing together in the schoolyard. The boys especially enjoyed playing football with the other children.

On Thursday we visited Hulst in the morning. We went up the tower of Netherland's most beautiful church and had a great view of the surrounding area.

We enjoyed our freetime in the city centre. Here we bought some typical Dutch sweets and some other souvenirs for our families. The old market place with the little cafes was really nice.

We liked Hulst a lot. There is a wall around the city. And you can even see an old cannonball in one city gate. Hemer is really different.



In the afternoon we went to a nature reserve "saeftinghe" where we had a guided tour through the landscape. We learned a lot about the tides, and in the evening there was a farewell party with a kids disco where everybody had a lot of fun.



# In fact they are biosystemwonders

## Our First Comenius magazine – April 2014



On our last day we visited the zoo in Antwerp and then we already had to go home.

We all enjoyed our stay and the Dutch hospitality very much and were very sad to leave.

Leonie: "I stayed in a host family with Sara. Our guest sister was Dara who is 10 years old and we became friends. She showed us everything and on our first day her mother who comes from Germany made tasty waffles with caramel for us. We were surprised that they could speak German.

The school is very small. There are only 60 students at the school but everybody was very nice.



At the school we worked in different project groups. I, for example, made a logo for the Comenius Group.

We also went to a nature resort and had a disco on our last evening. That was great."

We all agreed that our stay in Nieuw Namen was a great success. A big Thank you to our lovely Dutch partners.