



MINIS AT HOME

volume 1, issue 7

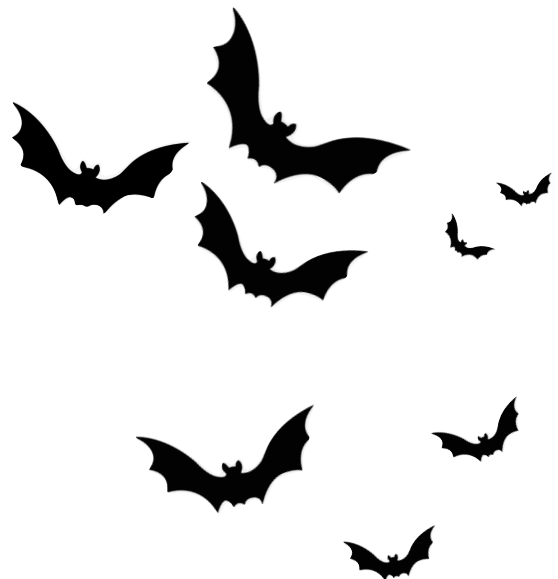
Greetings kids, parents, grandparents, guardians, friends and neighbors!

Welcome to issue 7 of Minis at Home newsletter. Each newsletter will feature a special theme and offer pertinent information, a craft, and recommended reading.

Grownups: please work on projects together with your children. Your pARTicipation is important! We will offer hints and tips for ways to create art as a twosome or a family.

This week's theme = BATS

It's not a bird...it's not a bug..it's a BAT! Bats are amazing creatures. You may see them flying around your backyard at dusk when the sun is setting. When birds head to bed, the bats come out to play, swoop and eat lots of delicious insects. We sometimes think of bats around Halloween because bats can seem spooky. That's because they come out at night and fly around silently. They also have big ears and sharp teeth. Their large skin-like wings might look like a big black cape wrapped around them...like Dracula. But spookiness aside, bats are incredibly important to humans for many reasons...and they can really look cute!



Hey, did you know...

There are over 1000 different kinds of bats in the world. Maryland is home to 10 different species.

Bats are **mammals**, like you and me, which means they have body hair and babies who drink milk from their mothers. Baby bats are called “pups.” The little bat below looks a lot like a puppy.



Baby Fruit Bat - [pinterest.com](https://www.pinterest.com)

Bats wrap their wings around their food to help hold it in place while they eat.

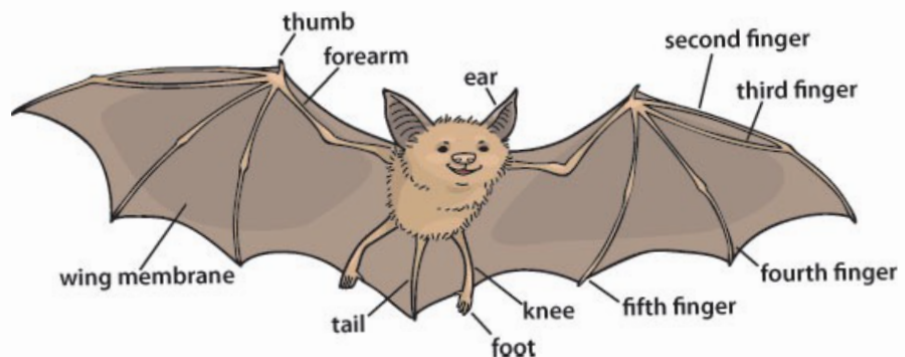
They also wrap their wings around their bodies when they sleep.

Don't the bats below look cozy? Hug yourself and imagine being a bat!



Bats have five fingers, just like people, but their hands are very different from ours. Their fingers form the main structure of their wings, and they are as long as their forearms (the part of the arm between the elbow and the hand). Take a look at your forearms. Imagine what it would be like if your fingers were that long! What would you be able to do with such long fingers??

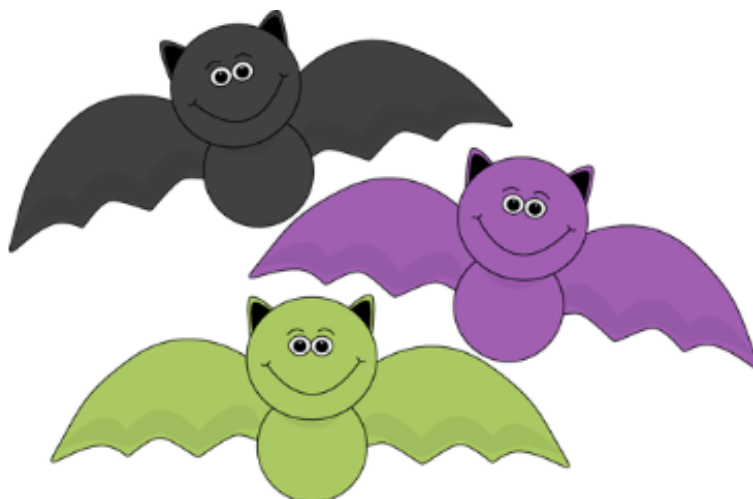
Look at the picture below to see the fingers of a bat against its wings:



A group of bats is called a **colony**, **cloud** or **camp**. Bats are nocturnal, which means they come out at night to hunt and eat, and they sleep during the day.

When they sleep, they hang upside down with many other bats in caves, trees, old barns and buildings, under bridges and sometimes in bushes.

They **LOVE** their friends and family.



Astounding Fact: Bats are the only mammals that can fly! They are also the only animals that can flap their wings and fly **non-stop** (except when they choose to rest). While birds will flap for a while and then soar, bats can flap and flap and flap and flap.

Astounding Fact: Sometimes people who cannot see well say they are “blind as a bat.” It’s true that bats do not see well, but they are **not** blind. And they can hear very well indeed. In fact, bats use a very special navigation system called **echolocation**. Just like dolphins, bats use echolocation to find their food and to locate everything in their surroundings. These animals use echolocation to make noises that cannot be heard by humans. (This is lucky for us because if we could hear the noises they make, they would be as shocking to our ears as a smoke alarm! **EEEEEEKKK!!!**) The sounds that bats make bounce onto objects and then bounce back to them, as if they were hearing an echo. If the sound does not bounce back to them, then there is nothing in their way and they can keep flying. Bats can even tell just how far away an object is.

Some people who build robots study bat echolocation because they think it could come in handy in the future.

Astounding Fact: Bats can eat up to 4,000 insects each in one night! If we didn't have bats, we'd have way more mosquitoes! And I hate mosquitoes, don't you?? It's WAY better to have bats around than to use dangerous and unhealthy sprays to kill unwanted insects!

Go Bats!! Bats are so good for our planet. They pollinate flowers and plants (including cocoa trees) to help our forests grow. If you like chocolate, thank a bat.

Bats scatter seeds by pooping them out from fruit that they eat. These seeds populate the world's rain forests! More bats = more new trees and plants in the rain forests = more animals = better for everyone. **Yay!**



Activity: Armchair Naturalist

Ask your grownup to Google different kinds of bats and look at their pictures together. Talk about what you see: Bats can be as tiny as a bumblebee. In fact, one kind is called a **bumblebee bat** and it is the world's smallest mammal.

The biggest bat is a **golden-crowned flying fox**. Their wingspan (that means the width of their wings when they are spread out wide) is about five feet, the size of a small adult.

Then there is the **vampire bat**. Vampire bats are the only mammals whose entire diet consists of blood!

Look closely at the faces of various kinds of bats. What looks the same? What is different? Look at the teeth of various kinds of bats. Why do you think their teeth look the way they do? Learn about the different kinds of foods that bats eat.

Look at https://dnr.maryland.gov/wildlife/Pages/plants_wildlife/bats/index.aspx to read all about Maryland's bats.



Hairy-legged Vampire Bat - Photograph by Merlin Tuttle

Craft: BAT FRIENDS**Materials:**

Toilet paper roll

Black or brown paint

Googly eyes

White paper for teeth and/or eyes
OR white or silver pen for drawing these details

Black or brown construction paper for wings and ears

Glue stick for gluing small paper details

Alene's Tacky Glue or glue dots for attaching googly eyes and wings

Procedure:

- 1) Paint the toilet paper roll black or brown and let dry
- 2) Draw and cut out black triangles for ears. Make the bases a little extra long so you will have room to add glue at the bottoms. Attach with glue stick to the front inside of the toilet paper roll.
- 3) Draw and cut out 2 white "vampire" teeth for your bats (optional) OR add mouth details with a white or silver pen
- 4) Draw and cut out bat wings (about a 6-inch wingspan) on black or brown construction paper. Here's one way to create the wings:

Trace your hand on a folded piece of paper with your palm up against the fold. Keep your fingers just a little spread apart, and cut out the hand print without dipping all the way down in between the fingers (careful not to cut the fold). Open the paper and you'll have a set of "handprint" wings!

Attach with glue.

- 5) Glue on eyes
- 6) If you want your bat to hang upside down, punch a hole on the inside bottom of the toilet paper roll and string through yarn or pipe cleaners.

Attach to the bottom of a coat hanger. Surely you don't want your bat to be lonely, so make a whole colony of bats!



IDEA! You can add to your **colony** each time a new toilet paper roll becomes available.

Activity: MOVEMENT

FLAP AND FLIP LIKE A BAT

Bats Are Sleeping (Sung to the tune of Frère Jacques)

(Grownups: ask your children to pretend to be sleeping bats while you sing the song. At the end of the song they will wake up and fly around until you start the song again)

**Bats are sleeping,
Bats are sleeping,
Upside down,
Upside down.
Sleeping in the morning sun.
Waiting for the night to come.
Then they'll fly all around.
Then they'll fly all around.**

(from Kidssoup.com)

FIVE LITTLE BATS

Five little bats hanging upside down, (Squat, wrap your arms around your body and tuck your head down.)

The first little one didn't make a sound. (Make a shushing motion with your finger in front of your mouth.)

The second one said, "I'll fly far tonight." (Stay squatting but flap your arms.)

The third one said, "I don't like sunlight." (Shield your eyes with one hand as if the sun were really bright.)

The fourth one said, "I want to eat some bugs." (Pretend to eat yummy bugs! Maybe you could share some gummy bugs or raisins. You can also rub your tummy.)

The fifth one said, "Let me give you a hug." (You don't need directions for this one!)

Five little bats hanging upside down. (Repeat directions for #1.)

Shhh! It's daytime, don't make a sound! (Repeat directions for #2.)

(Adapted from CanTeach)

Literacy: POEM TO SHARE**Betting on Bats**

By Constance Del Nero

I bet a bat
would not enjoy
trying on a great big hat.

I bet a bat
would not enjoy
sharing dinner with a cat.

I bet a bat
would not enjoy
visiting granny for a chat.

But I bet a bat
would *really* like
eating mosquitoes
and then a gnat.



Just for Fun: Look/Listen to Sesame Street's Batty Bat, featuring Count von Count: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N7yAe2MBIpE>



Literacy: **RECOMMENDED BOOKS**

Snuggle up in a big comfy chair and read together

Stellaluna by Janell Cannon

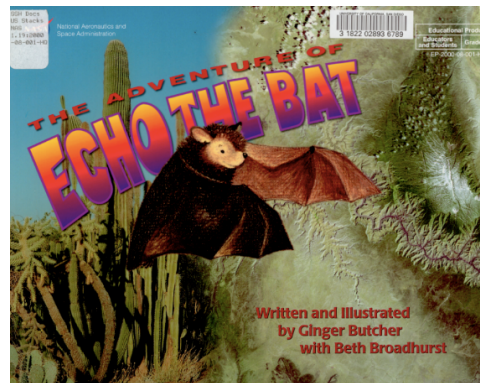
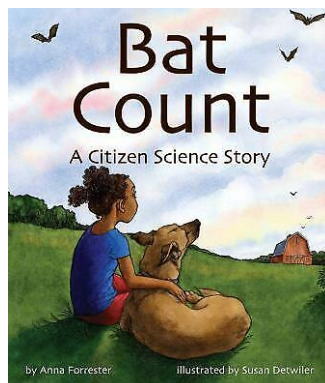
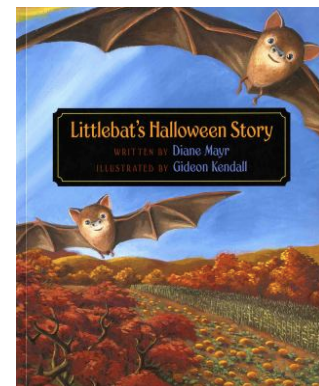
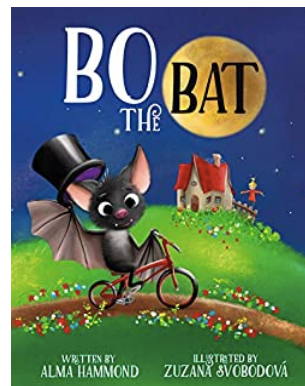
Nightsong by Ari Berk

Bo the Bat by Alma Hammond

Littlebat's Halloween Story by Diane Mayr

Bat Count by Anna Forrester

Adventure of Echo the Bat by Ginger Butcher



Creatively yours,

Ann Hansen,
Director of Mini Masters at
the Academy Art Museum

ahansen@academyartmuseum.org

Constance Del Nero,
Director of Children's
Education and Community
Programs

cdelnero@academyartmuseum.org

See you next week with issue **8** of **Minis at Home!**

Share your work on <https://www.instagram.com/minimastersaam/>

or email pictures to **Ann Hansen** ahansen@academyartmuseum.org

or **Constance Del Nero** cdelnero@academyartmuseum.org

Please Like us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/minimastersacademy>