

The Spider Web

Not all spiders spin webs, but they can all make silk. Spiders spin their silk through organs called spinnerets. The silk starts as a sticky liquid which hardens to form a very light but very strong thread. If you make a steel thread as fine as a thread of a spider silk, the silk would be just as strong as the steel. Each kind of web-building spider builds its own kind of web. The moment a spider hatches from its egg, it knows how to spin a certain pattern by instinct.

How a spider spins a web

It takes a spider about an hour to spin an orb web.
The fine silk thread looks delicate but it can hold 1,000 times the spider's own weight!

After finishing its web, the spider usually waits out of sight with one leg on a 'signal thread'. When an insect lands in the web, the thread shakes. Instantly the spider pounces. Parts of the orb are made of a special sticky silk, so insects can't escape before the spider arrives.

Glossary	
orb	rounded shape
organ	part of body
instinct	by nature/ not learnt



Firstly, the spider spins a thread between two supports – helped, perhaps, by a breeze that carries the thread. Then it spins another and dangles down from it.



Secondly, it drops a new thread to make a Y-shape, and spins more threads from the centre to the edge.



Then, the spider spins round and round in a spiral, working slowly out from the middle.



Finally, it spirals back into the centre. The web is then ready for the spider to catch its prey.

2.

Choose the correct option to complete each sentence below.

- (a) On pages 1 and 2 you can find out how a garden spider spins a web. It takes the spider about

one day **1000 minutes** **one hour** **three hours**

to spin a web.

1 mark

- (b) Spiders know how to spin their webs and catch flies

by learning from their mothers **by watching other spiders** **by instinct** **by practising a lot**

1 mark

- (c) When it has finished its web, the spider

waits in the centre of the web **starts making another web** **has a rest** **hides itself**

1 mark

- (d) Once an insect is caught, it cannot get away because

it sticks to the web **the spider ties it up** **the spider bites it** **the web is covered in poison**

1 mark

2. The information tells us how a spider spins a web.

Below is a summary of the four stages.

Number each stage (1-4) to show the correct order.

spins third thread downwards.

returns spinning from outside to middle

spins thread to join two supports

spins from inside to edge

1 mark

3. Write down **two** things from the text which show that spiders' silk is very strong.

1. _____

2. _____

2 marks

4. ...helped, perhaps, by a **breeze** that carries the thread. (page 2)

Give the meaning of the word *breeze* in this sentence.

1 mark

5. These questions are about the way in which the information is presented.

(a) ***The Spider Web***

Why have these words been made to stand out?

1 mark

(b) ***How a spider spins a web***

Why are these words smaller, but still in **bold** print?

1 mark

(c) (i) What is a glossary?

1 mark

(ii) Why are some words in the glossary printed in italics, *like this*?

1 mark