This spiderweb sure is sticky. Maybe we shouldn’t stick around.

Wait, Arnold. This wonderful web is made of spider silk. You should see all the things spiders can do with silk.

Spiders Trap Food With Silk
This spider weaves a web with silk. A grasshopper jumped into the web and got caught.

Spiders Build Burrows With Silk
This spider lines its burrow, an underground home, with silk. The silk makes the walls of the burrow strong.
Spiders Make Safety Lines With Silk
This spider spins a line of silk as it jumps. If the spider falls, it can hang from its line of silk.

Spiders Keep Babies Safe in Silk
This spider weaves an egg sac with silk. The egg sac keeps the eggs safe. Spiderlings crawl out when they hatch.

Fact File
• All spiders make silk. They make silk inside their bodies.
• When a spider feels vibrations in its web, it runs to the trapped prey. Some spiders bite the prey to stop it from moving. Other spiders wrap the prey in silk right away.
• Spiders trap prey with silk in other ways. The bolas spider swings out a line of silk with a sticky drop on it. The prey sticks to the drop!

Spiderlings Fly Away
by Keesha
Some spiderlings climb to a high place. Then they spin lines of silk. The wind blows the spiderlings, like balloons, to a new home. This is called ballooning.

Spider silk is super strong. It stretches, too. So scientists like Randy Lewis want to use it in new ways. “Spider silk could be used to make ropes, seat belts, and clothes for firefighters,” says Dr. Lewis.

Spiders don’t make enough silk for people to use, though. Dr. Lewis is finding out how scientists can make silk like spiders do.

Dr. Lewis shows his golden silk spider to a class of second-graders and third-graders.
Spiders

Fill in the circle next to the correct answer.

1. Spiderlings are ____________.
   - A  mother spiders
   - B  grasshoppers
   - C  baby spiders
   - D  spider webs

2. How does the black widow spider’s egg sac keep the eggs safe?
   - A  Enemies cannot see the eggs to eat them.
   - B  The baby spiders cannot get out.
   - C  It’s big.
   - D  It’s small.

3. Why do you think a spider’s web is sticky?
   - A  To keep trapped insects from falling off
   - B  To help the web stay up
   - C  Because it’s made of silk
   - D  Because it’s made of gum

4. Which sentence is true?
   - A  All spiders live above the ground.
   - B  Some spiders live underground.
   - C  Spiders cannot jump from one place to another.
   - D  Spider silk is not strong.

5. Circle the names of four spiders in the article.
How Spiders Use Silk

In each part of the web, write one way that spiders use silk. Then add details about each way that spiders use silk.

Write About It!

If you could make silk like a spider, what would you make? Why?