



Butterfly Life Cycle

Goal

Teach students about insect life cycles through a close look at butterflies.

Curriculum Alignment

Find a list of which Common Core State Standards and NC Essential Standards this lesson plan aligns with on the lesson plan page at www.growing-minds.org.

Materials

- Butterfly life cycle book pages (one set per student)
- Construction paper for cover and back
- Colored pencils or markers
- Stapler



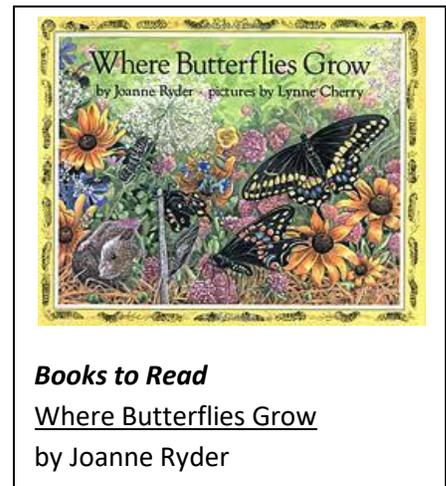
Vocabulary

Life cycle: A series of stages and changes that animals go through during their life.

Activities

Read a Book

Read Where Butterflies Grow by Joanne Ryder or another book about the life cycle of a butterfly. This book takes students through the steps of a butterfly's full life cycle, from an egg to a caterpillar to butterfly, asking students to imagine what they would feel or smell or see during the transformation. The colorful, realistic illustrations offer opportunities to teach students about other plants, wildflowers, and insects.



Books to Read

Where Butterflies Grow
by Joanne Ryder

Optional

After you read the book ask students to act out the motions of the butterfly's life cycle. They can start as eggs curled up and slowly emerge as a caterpillar to climb up a leaf and crawl. They can then become still again and pretend they are in a cocoon, and finally stretch out and fly like a butterfly, etc.

Make a Butterfly Life Cycle Book

Give each student a packet of four butterfly life cycle pictures. Show the image of the butterfly life cycle. Ask them to put the cards in the correct order according to the life cycle (egg, caterpillar, chrysalis, butterfly). Students can color the pages or write a sentence about the life cycle stage. Students can also use the blank



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pages to make additional pages that represent other stages in the life cycle, such as the larva stage (between the egg and the full grown caterpillar), or the butterfly breaking free of the chrysalis. They can make covers for their books using construction paper. When the students have completed their life cycle books, staple them on the left hand side.

Learning Through Comparisons

Ask students to research other insect life cycles. Choose a “class insect.” Look up that insect’s life cycle and share it with your students. What are the differences and similarities of the life cycles? Are any stages the same? Which stages are different?

Garden Exploration

Take students to the garden. Ask them to observe butterflies or insects in the garden. What does the insect look like? Does it fly, hop, or walk? Is it fast or slow? What does it eat? Where does it land? Does it behave in a particular way? What does the habitat around it look like (shady, sunny, shrubby, open, etc.)? In answering these questions, the students will sharpen their observation skills.