



INSECTS

BIG IDEA

Exploration of living organisms helps children learn about their world. Children investigate in order to describe, organize, classify, and compare characteristics of insects.

Content objective(s):

The child will describe and sequence the life cycle of a butterfly.

Materials needed:

- ♦ Unit book: *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*, by Eric Carle
- ♦ Story picture cards (Handout 1)—copy and cut out
- ♦ Glue



Lesson vocabulary:

- ♦ caterpillar—oruga
- ♦ cocoon—capullo
- ♦ chrysalis—crisálida
- ♦ butterfly—mariposa
- ♦ leaf—hoja
- ♦ egg—huevo

Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines (Revised) domains addressed:

Language and Communication:

II.A.1. Child shows understanding by responding appropriately.

Emergent Literacy, Reading:

III.D.1. Retells or re-enacts a story after it is read aloud.

Science:

VI.B.2. Child describes life cycles of organisms.

Physical Development:


IX.B.1. Child shows control of tasks that require small-muscle strength and control.

Technology: (extension)

X.A.5. Child recognized that information is accessible through the use of technology.

Activities:


1. The home educator models and demonstrates for the parent.

 *Today we'll learn more about insects. We are going to learn about caterpillars. Have you seen one? **(Pause)** Tell me what you know about caterpillars. **(Pause)** (Allow the child to examine the cover of the unit book, *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*, if he/she needs assistance answering the question.) Yes! A caterpillar is a long round insect, like a worm. Sometimes they look fuzzy or furry.*



First, we will read a story about a very hungry caterpillar.

Model for the parent how to introduce the book and pique the child's curiosity. Show the book cover.


 *This book is one of my favorite stories. It is about a caterpillar changing into a beautiful insect. Do you know what that insect might be? **(Pause)** Let's find out.*

Read the story with enthusiasm, asking questions throughout and encouraging comments and discussion. Invite the child to join in and "read" the repetitive pattern of the story ("But he was still hungry").

After finishing the story, say,

 *Remember, the story began with a little egg on a leaf.*

Show the picture of the egg on a leaf at the beginning of the book. Define the words "egg" and "leaf" in child-friendly terms:

 *An egg is where baby insects and animals grow. A leaf is the green, flat part of a plant or a tree. Do you remember what hatched from or came out of the egg? **(Pause)** A caterpillar!*

This caterpillar was very hungry and ate a lot of food until he became big and fat. He then made a little house around his body called a cocoon. A cocoon is a cover that protects the caterpillar; a cocoon with the caterpillar inside is called a chrysalis. (Show the picture near the end of the book.)

*He stayed inside his cocoon for a couple of weeks until... Do you remember? **(Pause)** Who came out at the end of the story? **(Pause)** The butterfly! A butterfly is an insect with large colorful wings. It also has six legs and antennae. (Show the butterfly picture from Handout 1.) Can a butterfly fly? **(Pause)** How do you know? **(Pause)** The caterpillar turned into a butterfly. This was the beautiful insect.*

Now, let's learn a poem about the life cycle of the butterfly. It's called "Caterpillar."

You may introduce the word "metamorphosis" when discussing the life cycle of a butterfly, if appropriate. However, because this word is not a vocabulary word, do not emphasize it. Initial exposure to the term is all that is necessary.

 *I want you to repeat what I say and do. (Repeat the chant as necessary.)*



Caterpillar

(Do actions as the lines indicate.)

Caterpillar creeping,
Caterpillar crawl.
Caterpillar climbing
All along the wall.

Caterpillar spinning,
Caterpillar snug.
Caterpillar changing,
What have you become?

(Say, "A butterfly!" and pretend to fly around the room.)

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 *We will review the life cycle of the butterfly once again.*

Show the pictures of the life cycle (Handout 1). Discuss the pictures.

 *First, the egg was on a leaf.*

Next, the caterpillar hatched from the egg.

Then, the caterpillar ate a lot and made a house or cocoon around itself; that's called a chrysalis.

Finally, a butterfly came out of the chrysalis/cocoon—the caterpillar had changed into a butterfly.

This is the life cycle of a butterfly.



Ask the child to color the pictures as you discuss them. After they are colored, the pictures can be cut out and glued, in order, in a small booklet (the booklet can be made by folding a page of paper in half, then folding it accordion style). The pages can be numbered in the correct sequence.

2. The parent works with the child.

The parent will review the life cycle of the butterfly once again, using the booklet that the child made.

 *First, the egg was on a leaf. (Show the picture.)*

Next, the caterpillar hatched from the egg. (Show the picture.)

Then, the caterpillar ate a lot and made a house or cocoon around itself; that's called a chrysalis. (Show the picture.)

Finally, a butterfly came out of the chrysalis/cocoon—the caterpillar had changed into a butterfly. (Show the picture.)

This is the life cycle of a butterfly.

3. The child works with the parent's help.

The child will describe each stage of the life cycle reading each page of the booklet with the parent's help.

 *First, the egg was on a leaf.*

Next, the caterpillar hatched from the egg.

Then, the caterpillar ate a lot and made a house or cocoon around itself; that's called a chrysalis.

Finally, a butterfly came out of the chrysalis/cocoon—the caterpillar had changed into a butterfly.

This is the life cycle of a butterfly.

4. The child works independently as the parent and home educator watch for learning.

The child will describe and sequence the life-cycle pictures. Watch for comprehension and vocabulary use.

5. The home educator summarizes the lesson.

Finish by reviewing the content objective and talking about what the family learned today.

Follow-up questions to deepen the child's thinking:



1. *What other animals also hatch from eggs?* (chickens, turtles, birds, some snakes, etc.)
2. *In this story, the caterpillar turned into a butterfly. Do you think you could turn into a butterfly?*
3. *What was your favorite part of the story? (Pause) Why?*

Ways to extend the lesson concepts:



1. Explain that caterpillars are early forms of insects (larvae) that will eventually turn into adult insects with three body parts, six legs, and feelers. Talk about how other babies develop (frogs, chickens, etc.). Explain that children grow into adults but won't change into something else.
2. Create coffee-filter butterflies. Paint or color coffee filters in a colorful pattern. Sprinkle a small amount of water on it so the colors run together. Tie the middle with a pipe cleaner or twist tie. Form pipe cleaner into butterfly antennae. Example: <http://crafts.kaboose.com/butterfly1.html>



3. Explore the Internet to find out about life cycles of other animals (frogs, chickens, etc.)



4. Go to the public library and check out *The Life Cycle of a Butterfly*, by Bobbie Kalman.

Modifications:

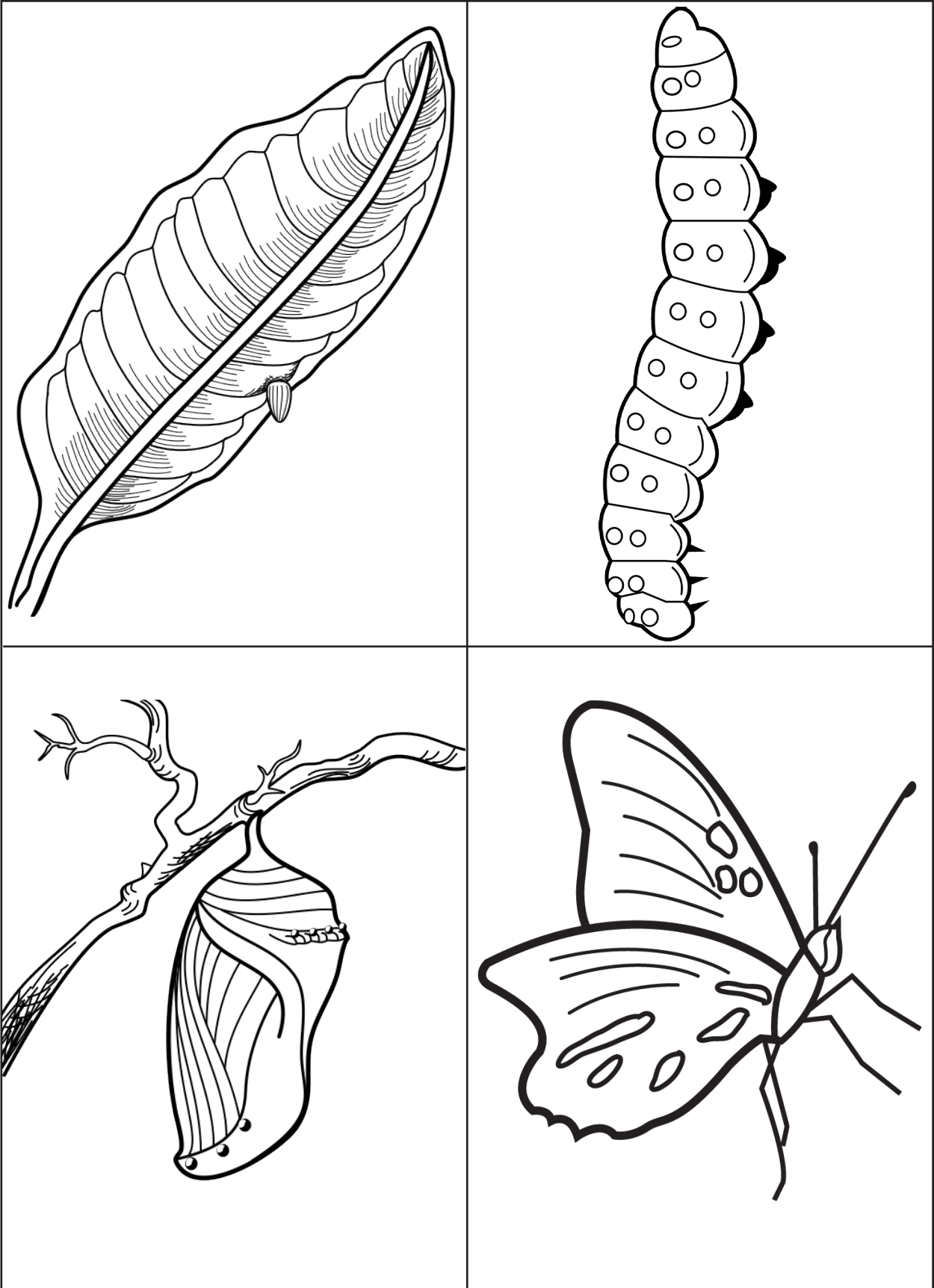
If the lesson activity is too hard—

1. Provide repeated exposure to the poem.
2. Provide additional support with the life cycle activity (use the book and the booklet).
3. Discuss only three stages of the cycle (egg, caterpillar, and butterfly).

If the lesson activity is too easy—

1. Encourage the child to teach the life cycle of the butterfly to other family members, using the materials provided.
2. Write or dictate a description or label for the pictures on the pages of the booklet.

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INSECTS (LESSON 3)

PARENT PAGE

What we are learning:

Your child will describe and sequence the life cycle of a butterfly.

Words to know:

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|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| ♦ caterpillar— <i>oruga</i> | ♦ butterfly— <i>mariposa</i> |
| ♦ cocoon— <i>capullo</i> | ♦ leaf— <i>hoja</i> |
| ♦ chrysalis— <i>crisálida</i> | ♦ egg— <i>huevo</i> |



What to ask:

1. *What other animals also hatch from eggs?* (chickens, turtles, birds, some snakes, etc.)
2. *In this story, the caterpillar turned into a butterfly. Do you think you could turn into a butterfly?*
3. *What was your favorite part of the story? (Pause) Why?*

What else to do:

1. Explain that caterpillars are early forms of insects (larvae) that will eventually turn into adult insects with three body parts, six legs, and feelers. Talk about how other babies develop (frogs, chickens, etc.) Explain that children grow into adults but won't change into something else.
2. Create coffee-filter butterflies. Paint or color coffee filters in a colorful pattern. Sprinkle a small amount of water on it so the colors run together. Tie the middle with a pipe cleaner or twist tie. Form pipe cleaner into butterfly antennae. Example: <http://crafts.kaboose.com/butterfly1.html>
3. Explore the Internet to find out about life cycles of other animals (frogs, chickens, etc.)
4. Go to the public library and check out *The Life Cycle of a Butterfly*, by Bobbie Kalman.

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