

# The life cycle of the butterfly - 'Nelly, the small caterpillar'

Class	A' class
Age	6 year olds
Time	3 hours
Objectives	Develop listening/speaking skills
Vocabulary	Caterpillar, butterfly, ant, cricket, fruit words (pear, cherry, etc.), adjectives about feeling (happy, sad, etc)
Subjects	Science, Art, Drama, English

## Content

The activity is based on Eric Carle's story "A very hungry caterpillar". The story is about a sad caterpillar, Nelly, which lives in the forest with her friends (a cricket, an ant and a spider) and one day turns into a butterfly.

## Language objectives

- To revise greetings (Hello / Hi / Good morning / Goodbye / How are you today? I'm fine / very well, thank you), numbers, colours and foods.
- To learn additional vocabulary related to animals (caterpillar, butterfly, ant, cricket), foods (pear, strawberries, cherries, green beans), nature (leaf, forest, sunny, sky) and adjectives (big, small, sad, hungry, ugly, beautiful, happy)
- To listen to the narration of a story and participate in it
- To develop listening and speaking skills through repetition and drills
- To comprehend a story based on its linguistic and paralinguistic features
- To become familiar with vocabulary related to the life cycle of a butterfly (egg, caterpillar, cocoon, butterfly)

## **Pedagogical objectives**

- To become familiar with ways to express sequence and differences) (numbers, colours, sizes and feelings)
- To explore the life cycle of a butterfly and recognize the various stages of this transformation process
- To reinforce their understanding of a healthy diet

## **Materials:**

- The pictures of the story ([P1](#), [P2](#), [P3](#), [P4](#), [P5](#), [P6](#))
- A picture of the life cycle of a butterfly ([P7](#))
- Scissors
- Markers
- Glue
- Paper plates
- Rice, different kinds of pasta
- CD ([CD1](#), [CD2](#))

## **Equipment**

- CD player , a P/C and internet connection

## **Student Worksheets: [W1](#)**

## **Suggested online material:**

- Caterpillar to Butterfly real footage  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rS1A34hfHPM>
- The video of the story "The very hungry caterpillar" on YouTube  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HpISHA8Fs4w>
- Craft ideas  
<http://www.dltk-kids.com/crafts/insects/caterpillars.htm>  
<http://www.enchantedlearning.com/crafts/butterfly/lifecyclemobile/>

## Teaching procedure:

**Step 1** We show the first picture of the story ([P1](#)) and ask students to tell us what they can see. We can print the pictures and plasticize them. In order to make this process more attractive for the children, we can show half of a picture (covering the rest of it with our hand) and have students guess what it shows. When they have guessed that it's a caterpillar, we introduce her ("This is Nelly, the caterpillar"). We ask them if they have seen caterpillars before and what they look like.

- Is a caterpillar big or small?
- (It's) small.
- What colour is it?
- (It's) green.

Then, we present the rest of the characters (Annie, the ant, Crick, the cricket and Speedy, the spider). We tell them the title of the story (Nelly, the small caterpillar) and we ask them to guess the plot.

**Step 2** We tell them the story ([P1 - P6](#)) using a variety of narrating techniques. We keep eye contact with our students, use the appropriate tone of voice, frequently change our body posture, use gestures and stress the important points in the story. We listen to the story again, on the CD this time and we try to "act out" the story as we listen ([CD1, script](#)). Then, we have the children participate in the narration. Using the first two pictures, we narrate the first part of the story (the first day of Nelly's life). At times, we stop the narration and invite the students to continue.

e.g.:

- It's a sunny morning. Crick, the cricket, ...
- Annie ...
- ... the ant and ...
- Speedy (the spider) ...
- ... (the spider) are under a big tree in the ...
- ... forest, etc.
- "Hi, what's your name?" asks Annie, the ant.
- (I'm) Nelly, etc.

After completing the first part of the story, we can address questions to the students while showing the relevant picture, such as:

- What's this?

- An ant / a cricket / a spider / a caterpillar.
- What's his / her name?
- Crick / Annie / Speedy / Nelly.
- What colour is it?
- (It's) green, etc.
- Is it big or small?
- (It's) small.
- Is Nelly happy?
- No, (she's sad), etc.

**Step 3** Then, we ask children to role play the story. Children act the part of the story in which the characters meet and we narrate the rest of the story.

**Step 4** In the next lesson, we narrate the story again while showing them the pictures. We stop the narration at some points encouraging the children to complete it with words or language chunks of the story. We try to elicit vocabulary using various gestures and movements (small, big, sad, hungry, etc.). After narrating the story, we can ask some questions again pointing at the pictures, such as:

- How many strawberries / carrots, etc. does the caterpillar eat?
- Two / three, etc.
- What colour are the cherries / carrots / beans, etc.?
- (They are) red / orange / green, etc.
- Is Nelly still a caterpillar?
- No, (she is a beautiful butterfly).
- Are the friends sad now?
- No, (they're happy).

We shouldn't ask too many questions so that students won't lose interest.

**Step 5** We give children a worksheet ([W1](#)) with pictures of the foods in the story and ask them to cut and paint them. Then we say the names of the foods and ask children to point at them in the pictures ("Show me the cookies"). We ask them if each food is healthy. We draw two columns on the board (one for healthy food and one for unhealthy food) and ask children to put each food on the board with blue tack, in the right column. Anticipated dialogue:

- Are pears good for you / healthy?
- Yes.
- Are chips good for you / healthy?
- No, etc.

**Step 6** We ask children to play the roles of the characters and the teacher takes the role of the narrator.

We assign the roles to different students in each scene to make sure that all children have taken part in the dramatization of the story.

Children act the part of the story in which the characters meet on the first day, greet on the second day, give the food to the caterpillar and the last part in which they say what they can do, and we narrate the rest of the story. We encourage children to feed the caterpillar using drills ("Here are five tomatoes / six cherries", etc.). Finally, we sing and dance the butterfly dance (Flutter, flutter butterfly [CD2, lyrics](#)).

**Step 7** In the next lesson, we narrate the story again, inviting children to participate. We encourage the students to produce more words each time we narrate the story. Then, we ask them what they know about the life cycle of the butterfly. We elicit answers and describe the life cycle of the butterfly in plain English while showing them the picture of each stage ([P7](#)).

Anticipated speech:

First, it's an egg. (We point at the egg)

Then, it's a small caterpillar. (We point at the caterpillar)

It eats a lot of food. (We mime the action of eating)

And, then, it turns into a cocoon. (We point at the cocoon)

It sleeps and sleeps and sleeps. (We roll our hands around our body and pretend we are sleeping)

And ... then... it's a beautiful butterfly. (We make a butterfly with our hands).

If it is possible, we show the "Caterpillar to Butterfly real footage" video (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rS1A34hfHPM>) .

**Step 8** Then we play the pantomime. We tell children that they are caterpillars which are going to transform into butterflies. We give directions and they make the movements.

Be an egg. (Children bend, touch their ankles and form the shape of an egg)

Wiggle like a caterpillar (Children move like caterpillars)

Go to sleep, little caterpillar (They pretend they enter a cocoon to sleep)

Wake up, beautiful butterfly (They pretend they wake up and pop out of the cocoon)

Fly, butterfly (They pretend they are flying)

### Step 9

We can make the life cycle of a butterfly on a paper plate together with the children. We explain to the children that they have to divide the plate into four parts and use a rice grain (or a bean) for an egg and different kinds of pasta for the caterpillar, the cocoon and the butterfly. Then, children use their markers to colour the pasta/plate. Finally, they show their plate and say: "This is an egg. This is a caterpillar. This is a cocoon. This is a beautiful butterfly". We can also ask questions like: "What colour is the butterfly? And the cocoon?" etc.



**Step 10 Wrap up/Before we leave** We can make crafts using ideas from the following sites

<http://www.dltk-kids.com/crafts/insects/caterpillars.htm>

<http://www.enchantedlearning.com/crafts/butterfly/lifecyclemobile/>

## \*EXTRA MATERIAL\*

### Pictures



P1



P2



P3



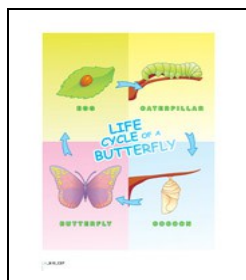
P4



P5



P6



P7

### Worksheet

W1



## Acoustic Material

- **Nelly, the small caterpillar**

### Script

#### Picture 1

It's a sunny morning. Crick, the cricket, Annie, the ant, and Speedy, the spider, are under a big tree in the forest. Suddenly, a small caterpillar comes up to them.

"Hi, what's your name?" asks Annie, the ant.

"I'm Nelly, the caterpillar", answers the caterpillar.

"I'm Crick, the cricket", says Crick.

"I'm Speedy, the spider", says Speedy.

#### Picture 2

The caterpillar is sad.

"Why are you sad?" asks Annie.

"I'm very small and ugly", says Nellie.

"Don't be sad. We're your friends", says Speedy.

The caterpillar isn't sad now. She eats through a green leaf, says goodbye to her new friends and goes home to sleep.

#### Picture 3

The next day, Nelly, the caterpillar meets her new friends again. They're having a picnic under the tree.

"Good morning, everyone", says Nelly. "How are you today?"

"I'm fine, thank you", says Annie.

"I'm very well, thank you", says Crick.

"I'm just fine", says Speedy. "How are you?"

"I'm hungry, very hungry", answers Nelly.

"Here's a pear" says Annie, the ant, and gives it to the caterpillar.

"Here are two strawberries", says Crick, the cricket, and gives them to the caterpillar.

"Here are three cakes", says Speedy, the Spider, and gives them to the caterpillar.

#### Picture 4

"Thank you, my friends", says the caterpillar and eats through one pear, two strawberries, three cakes, four carrots, five small tomatoes. She takes a deep breath and goes on to eat through six cherries, seven pink sweets, eight chips, nine chocolate cookies and ten green beans. She isn't hungry now. She says goodbye to her friends and goes home to sleep.

#### Picture 5

The next morning, Crick, Annie and Speedy are under the tree. They're waiting for their new friend.

"Where's Nelly?" asks Annie.

"I don't know", says Crick shrugging his shoulders.

They're sad.



## Picture 6

Suddenly, a beautiful butterfly flies up to them.

"Good morning", says the butterfly.

"Good morning", say the three friends.

"Who are you?" asks Speedy.

"I'm Nelly, your friend", says the butterfly.

"Nelly, you're so beautiful", says Annie.

"And so big!", says Speedy.

"Look! I can fly!", says the butterfly. "Can you fly?"

"No, but I can jump", says Crick, the cricket.

"I can run fast", says Annie, the ant, happily.

"And I can climb", says Speedy, the spider.

The four friends are very happy. They sing all together.

Flitter flutter butterfly

Flying in the big blue sky

Flutter high and flutter low

Flutter fast and flutter slow

Flitter flutter butterfly

Flying in the big blue sky

Flutter high and flutter low

Flutter fast and flutter slow

## Butterfly song:

### • 'FLITTER FLUTTER BUTTERFLY'

#### (Lyrics)

Flying in the big blue sky

Flutter high and flutter low

Flutter fast and flutter slow

Flitter flutter butterfly

Flying in the big blue sky

Flutter high and flutter low

Flutter fast and flutter slow