

Erina discovers the secret world of MOSQUITOS



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ERINA DISCOVERS THE SECRET WORLD OF MOSQUITOS

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Erina was a girl with a very special superpower: curiosity.

She loved going to school and discovering the world by asking questions about everything she saw around her.

“Where do the stars go during the day?”

“Why do bees love flowers so much?”

“Why are plants green?”

Of all her subjects, biology was her favorite. Her teacher told fascinating stories about animals, plants and the human body. Every class felt like a new adventure, full of wonderful mysteries from nature.

One week, the teacher gave the class a very special homework assignment.

“I want you to tell me a story next class,” the teacher said with a smile, “about something that is important for the health of people and animals.”

Erina was thrilled. She loved learning about health and helping others understand it too. Excited about her new mission, she knew that her curiosity would guide her toward discovering a great story.



The next day, Erina woke up happy and full of energy. It was Saturday and she was ready to play for a while before thinking about Monday's homework.

As soon as she finished breakfast, she ran out to the garden. She loved being among the plants, watching butterflies and all the tiny little bugs that visited her flowers.

Suddenly, something caught her eye. A tiny insect was hovering in the air near her flower pots.

"Hello! I'm Erina. Who are you?" the girl asked, surprised and curious about the unexpected visitor.

"I'm *Aedes albopictus*, but everyone calls me the tiger mosquito," answered the little mosquito. "That's because of my black body and white stripes." The mosquito stretched out its legs so Erina could see them clearly. "And look at my back, I have a big white stripe! Do you like my design?"

"Yes! I love it," Erina said with a smile. "You're very small, but easy to recognize."

"I may be as small as a lentil," said the mosquito proudly, "but I'm one of a kind! When you see another mosquito with the same stripes, you'll know it's a tiger mosquito."

"White-striped legs and a white line on the back, got it!" said Erina. "Now tell me more curious things about yourself," she added, eager to learn more.



"Well, every day I wake up very early so I can be active from morning until afternoon. I don't like flying very far and I prefer to stay close to the ground. If you ever see a mosquito trying to hide between your legs, it's probably me," the little mosquito said playfully.

Erina listened, fascinated.

"What else? Oh, yes! Humans think I'm exotic because my ancestors came from Asia. But many of us were born here, so Europe is our home now."

"Asia is very far away!" Erina replied, surprised. "How did you get here if you don't like flying far?" she asked, puzzled.

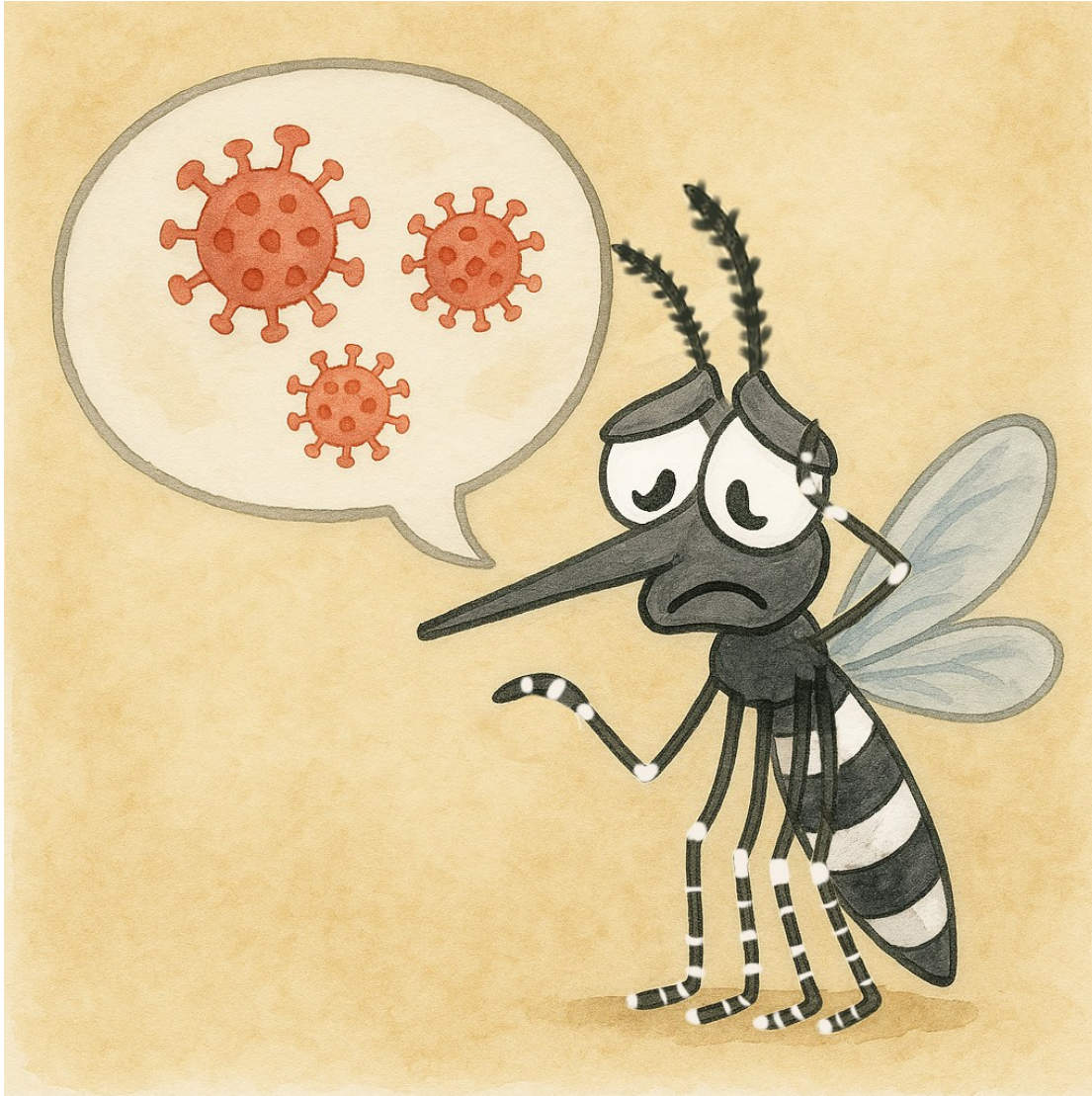
"Good question!" said the little mosquito, winking. "We travel with humans on airplanes, boats and cars. Sometimes we even send our eggs hidden inside tires and plants. We're tiny stowaways and that's how we've reached so many countries!"

"But it's getting harder and harder for us," the little mosquito went on. "Humans have discovered our secret and now you keep everything under much closer control. Haven't you noticed there are more and more campaigns against us? It's a shame you're so afraid of us..."

"And why is that?" the girl asked, her eyes wide with excitement. She knew she was about to discover the perfect story for her homework.

WANTED





"I don't want to scare you, but I'll be honest," said the little mosquito sadly. "We're made to bite humans and sometimes that can be dangerous because, without meaning to, we carry tiny germs that can make people sick.

"Our bites are also very itchy and annoying. I'm really sorry... we really can't help it!" the little mosquito added.

"That's why there are campaigns to control the tiger mosquito... now I understand," Erina thought.

"And can we do something to protect ourselves without hurting you?" the girl asked.

"Well... yes, there are some things you can do," the little mosquito replied shyly. "For example, if you don't leave water sitting around in pools, buckets, or toys, then we won't have anywhere to grow our babies."

"Oh! Like the little dishes under flower pots," Erina said, thinking about her garden.

"Exactly! Without standing water, it's much harder for us to live near you."

"Then it's very important to take good care of our environment," the girl said, finally understanding.

The little mosquito nodded quietly.

"Thank you for telling me all about yourself, tiger mosquito!" Erina said as she waved goodbye.

As she ran back to her room, she decided that from then on, she and her family would take good care of their garden so that no water would collect anywhere.



Erina went into her room and hurried to find a pen. She didn't want to forget a single detail of her chat with the little mosquito in the garden. She sat down at her desk, ready to start her homework... when she suddenly noticed a strange shadow on the wall.

"What is that?" she whispered, reaching out to touch it.

"Ow! Careful, you're hurting me!" a tiny voice cried out.

The girl jumped in surprise.

"Who are you and what are you doing in my room?"

"Don't be scared. I'm a *Culex pipiens* mosquito, but you can call me the common house mosquito. I was taking a nap and you woke me up!" the mosquito replied, rubbing its little legs crossly.

"I'm sorry, I didn't mean to. I didn't know mosquitoes needed to rest too," Erina said shyly.

"It's okay," said the little mosquito, yawning and stretching its wings. "I still have the rest of the day to keep sleeping."

"You're not active during the day?" the girl asked, tilting her head with curiosity.

"Not at all... I don't like getting up early," the little mosquito replied cheerfully. "I prefer to fly at night. I leave the daytime to the tiger mosquito."



Tiger mosquito (*Aedes albopictus*)

Common house mosquito (*Culex pipiens*)

"You don't have white stripes like the tiger mosquito I met in the garden," Erina said as she carefully moved closer. "You're brown and yellow. If you don't all look the same, how can I tell you apart?"

"Very easily," said the little mosquito, pointing to her long nose. "Look at this long, straight, thin part on our face. It's like a tiny Straw and we use it to drink our food. If you don't see it, it's probably a different kind of insect."



"And what do you eat?" Erina asked.

"The male mosquitoes drink nectar from flowers," the little mosquito replied. "We females do too, but we also need one extra ingredient... a tiny bit of blood that gives us the energy to lay strong, healthy eggs."

"Where can we find your eggs?" the girl asked again, her eyes wide with curiosity.

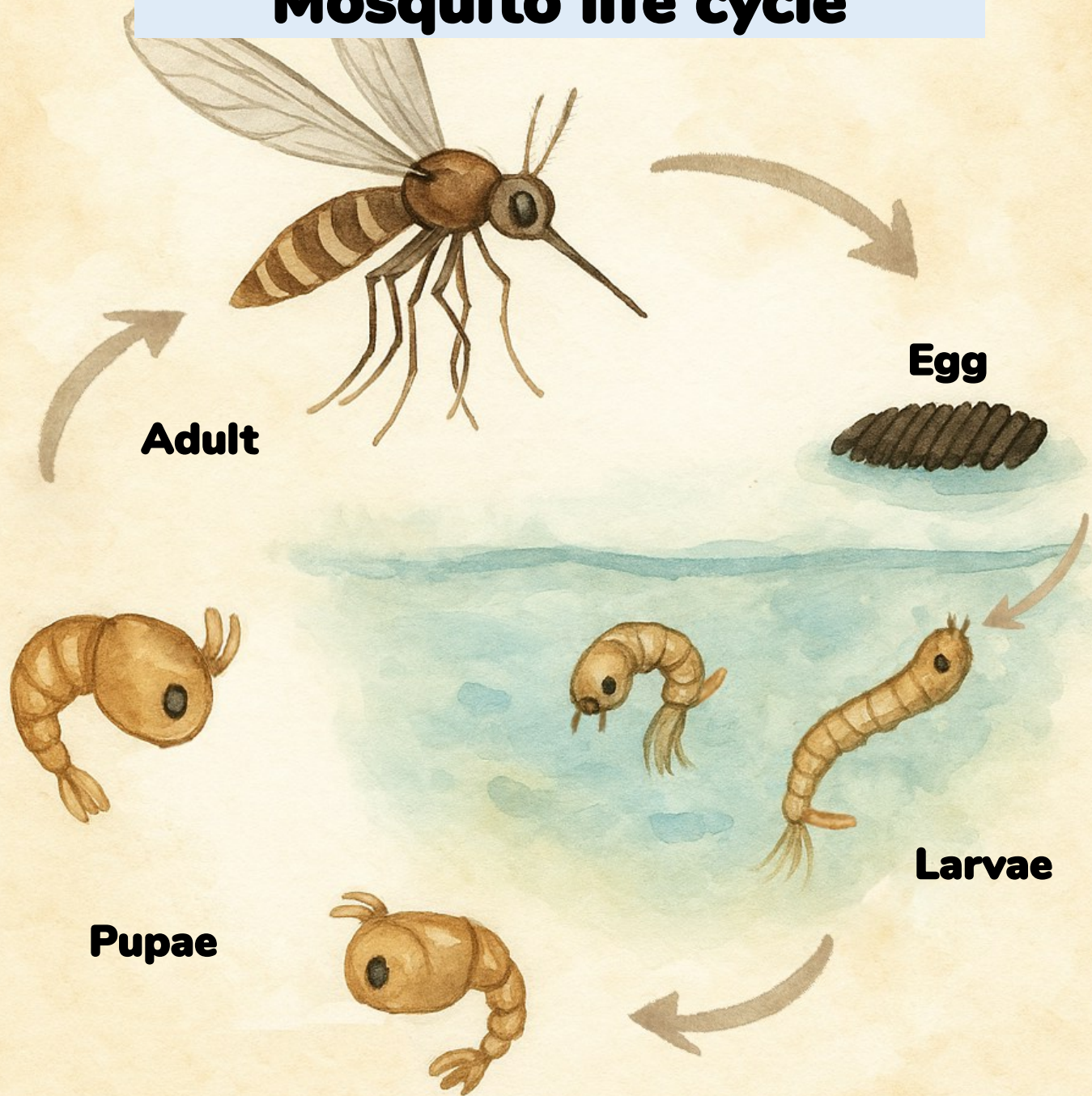
"You really are curious!" the little mosquito laughed. "You can find our eggs in looooots of places. But we always need water that stays still for several days. That way, our eggs can grow in the best conditions and have time to change. First into wriggly larvae, then into pupae and finally into adult mosquitoes ready to fly."

"I understand that you need blood, but when you bite... it can sometimes be dangerous, right?" Erina asked thoughtfully.

"Ohhh... sadly, yes," sighed the little mosquito. "We have caused some problems without meaning to. I am sure you have heard of the West Nile virus, which can make people and some animals sick."

"Let me explain it this way," the little mosquito continued. "Imagine mosquitoes are like tiny flying buses. Sometimes, when we bite a person or an animal, very tiny passengers, like certain viruses and parasites, hop on the bus without us noticing. Then, when we bite again, some of those tiny passengers hop off, and that is when people and animals can get sick. But do not be scared of me. Not every bite causes harm, okay?"

Mosquito life cycle



The little mosquito lowered her gaze, as if what she had just said weighed on her.

"I understand... and what can people do to protect themselves from your bites?" Erina asked, a little worried.

"I do not usually tell this to anyone..." said the little mosquito nervously. "But I like you."

The little mosquito leaned close to Erina's ear to share her secrets.

"Mosquito nets on windows bother us because they do not let us enter your homes. And the smell of the repellents that humans and pets use scares us away. We also do not like fans. That moving air makes us dizzy, and we cannot fly properly."

The little mosquito came a bit closer to share her last secret.

"If you wear clothes that cover your arms and legs, especially very early in the morning and in the afternoon during spring and summer, it is much harder for us to bite you."

Satisfied that she had shared all the tricks to help the girl protect herself, the little mosquito fluttered her wings and said goodbye as she headed back to her nap.

"Now I really have everything I need to tell a great story..." Erina thought as she wrote in her notebook with a big smile.

Erina discovers the secret world of mosquitos



MIST

That day, Erina learned many wonderful things about the secret world of mosquitoes.

Not all mosquitoes are the same. Tiger mosquitoes have white stripes on their dark bodies and like to fly during the day and at dusk. Common house mosquitoes, on the other hand, do not have stripes. They are brown and usually come out at night.

But all mosquitoes have a long, thin little proboscis that they use like a straw to feed. Only the females bite, and even though they do not want to hurt anyone, sometimes they can carry tiny germs that cause sickness. That is why protecting ourselves from bites helps keep both people and animals healthy.

Mosquitoes spend a big part of their lives in standing water, the kind that gets left behind in buckets, flower pots, or puddles. That is why a great way to keep them from living nearby is to keep everything clean and free of trapped water.

As she reviewed her homework, Erina realized how important it is for everyone to help take care of the environment so we can all live in a healthier world. Then she closed her notebook and went down to the garden with her family to check every corner for any forgotten little puddles.

She was excited and could not wait to share her discoveries with her class. And who knows, maybe she would even turn all her classmates into true puddle hunters.

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Final creation note: This story was born from human imagination. It received only a small help from artificial intelligence for the initial creation of the images. The entire process was guided and carefully overseen by its author.

