

Reading Comprehension Worksheet: Cause & Effect

Read the short story and answer each question.



How a Caterpillar Becomes a Butterfly

The life of a butterfly is full of amazing changes. These changes happen in a special order, and each one helps the insect grow and survive.

The first step begins when a butterfly lays eggs on a leaf. Inside each egg is a tiny caterpillar waiting to hatch. When the egg opens, the caterpillar (also called a larva) comes out and starts eating right away.

The caterpillar eats and grows for several days. As it grows, it sheds its skin many times. This is called molting. Eventually, it finds a safe place to hang upside down and forms a hard case called a chrysalis.

Inside the chrysalis, a big change begins. The caterpillar's body breaks down and reorganizes into something completely new. After about 10 days, the chrysalis opens, and a butterfly comes out.

The new butterfly rests, pumps fluid into its wings, and waits for them to dry. Then, it flies off to find flowers and continue the cycle.

Each stage of this process has a purpose. Without the right order, the butterfly could not develop or survive.



Name: _____

How a Caterpillar Becomes a Butterfly

1. What is the second stage in a butterfly's life cycle?

- A. The caterpillar hatches and starts eating
- B. The butterfly lays an egg
- C. The chrysalis breaks open
- D. The caterpillar grows wings

2. Why does the caterpillar shed its skin several times?

- A. Because it is growing quickly and needs more space
- B. To become colorful like a butterfly
- C. To help it fly
- D. Because it eats too many leaves

3. Fill in the blank:

The hard case a caterpillar makes before becoming a butterfly is called a _____.

4. What are two stages in the butterfly's life cycle that involve big changes?

5. How do these steps work together to help the butterfly survive and grow?



Parent and Teacher Guide

Guide Reading Level: O

Lexile Level: 590L-740L

Grade Level: 3rd Grade, Middle of the Year

Genre: Informational / Life Science

Introducing the Text

"Today we'll read about the life cycle of a butterfly. As we go through the passage, we'll focus on the order of events and how each stage causes the next one to happen. Understanding this process will help us better describe how living things grow and change."

Vocabulary: larva, chrysalis, molt, hatch, transformation

Before Reading Discussion Questions

1. What do you know about caterpillars and butterflies?
 2. Have you ever seen a chrysalis in real life?
 3. Why do you think some insects go through big changes as they grow?
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During Reading Discussion Questions

1. What happens right after the butterfly lays an egg?
 2. Why does the caterpillar need to eat so much?
 3. What changes happen inside the chrysalis?
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After Reading Discussion Questions

1. What is the purpose of each step in the butterfly's life cycle?
 2. How do cause and effect help explain the transformation?
 3. Why must each part of the cycle happen in the right order?
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Activity Idea

Have students create a life cycle wheel showing the four main stages of a butterfly's life. They will label and illustrate each stage, then write 1–2 sentences to explain how each step leads to the next. Encourage use of transition words like *first*, *next*, *then*, and *finally*.

