

ELINOR WONDERS WHY

140: BUTTERFLY BABIES

Written by
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Elinor's Question: *What do baby butterflies look like?*

Logline: *When the kids go searching for baby butterflies in the forest, they're surprised to discover that caterpillars are baby butterflies.*

Curriculum goals: LS3. Understand that all animals need food in order to live and grow, that they get their food from plants or from other animals, and that plants need water and light to live and grow. [The kids watch caterpillars eat the leaves of certain plants]

LS4. Understand that all animals and plants have a life cycle, can reproduce, and change and grow over time. [The kids observe caterpillars turning in to chrysalises and then into butterflies]

LS7. Understand that young animals and young plants are very much, but not exactly like their parents. [The kids discover that caterpillars share some similarities with butterflies, but also look very different]

LS8. Begin to understand that there are many different kinds of living things and how they may be the same or different. [The kids observe different species of butterflies]

SEP3b. Compare and contrast objects and events by describing similarities and differences in detail. [The kids compare large and small butterflies, and compare caterpillars and butterflies]

SEP8b. Obtain information using various age-appropriate texts, text features, and other media to help answer a question and/or support an explanation. [Olive looks in a nature book to learn about butterfly species, chrysalises, and metamorphosis]

SEP8e. Use basic science and engineering content vocabulary when investigating and describing observable phenomena. [The kids learn and use the term "metamorphosis"]

Main Characters: Elinor, Olive, Ari, Mr. Bat

Secondary Characters: Miri

Props: Monarch butterflies, caterpillars, flowers, magnifying glass

Locations: Park, Forest Path, Forest Clearing

FIRST DRAFT: 24-Jul-19

It's a beautiful summery day. ELINOR, OLIVE, and ARI are walking down a path in the park with MR BAT, who is pushing MIRI in a stroller. Miri is all snuggled up in a blanket.

2 ARI 2
For Miri, it's more of a ROLL in
the park.

3 MR BAT 3
You know, kids, I love visiting the
park with Miri because the whole
world is new to her. It helps me
see things with new eyes. There's
so much she's never seen before.

4 MR BAT (CONT'D) 4
Like that butterfly.

5 ARI 5
I love watching butterflies.
They're so cool. Hey, maybe we
should spend today checking out
butterflies.

6 OLIVE 6

Wait, look. There's a caterpillar
on this plant, too. Caterpillars
are my favorite. Maybe we should
spend today looking at
caterpillars?

7 ELINOR 7
 Hmm. Butterflies and caterpillars
 are BOTH pretty interesting.
 (MORE)

ELINOR (CONT'D)

But which one should we explore?
Maybe we should try comparing them.

CLOSE UP: The butterfly, fluttering over the flowers.

8	ARI	8
	Well, a butterfly can fly. I like any animal with wings. Wings just add a little extra coolness, you know?	

BACK ON: The kids. Ari flaps his wings and they all <SFX: GIGGLE>.

CLOSE UP: The caterpillar is crawling along the leaf, its legs moving in a cool wave.

9	OLIVE	9
	Well, a caterpillar can't fly, but I love the way it crawls. How does it keep track of all those legs at the same time?	

10	ELINOR	10
	I only have TWO legs and I still trip over them sometimes.	

Elinor does an exaggerated fall backwards. <SFX: GIGGLE>

11	OLIVE	11
	Elinor, you are caterpillarious!	

12	ELINOR	12
	What else is interesting about butterflies and caterpillars?	

BACK ON: The butterfly landing on a flower and extending its proboscis to drink nectar.

13	ARI	13
	A butterfly can land on a beautiful flower and sip nectar with its own straw. How smart is that? More like BETTER-fly, right?	

<SFX: GIGGLE> BACK ON: The caterpillar munching on a leaf.

14	OLIVE	14
	But a caterpillar can munch on leaves with its little jaws.	

15	ELINOR	15
	Hmm. I do love a good leafy salad.	

BACK ON: The butterfly, slowly opening and closing its wings as it drinks.

16 ARI 16

But a butterfly has an amazing
pattern on its wings. Wish I had a
t-shirt with like that.

THOUGHT BUBBLE shows Ari wearing a fancy monarch-patterned shirt, looking proud of himself. BACK ON: The caterpillar, still munching.

17 OLIVE 17

True. But just LOOK at the
caterpillar's incredible stripes. I
wish I had a pair of pants with
that pattern!

THOUGHT BUBBLE shows Olive wearing a pear of ranciness, caterpillar-striped pants, looking proud of herself.

18 ELINOR 18
They're both pretty snazzy!

BACK ON: The butterfly. It lifts up from the flower and flutters into the air.

19 ARI 19
Well, a butterfly-

PAN OUT TO: The butterfly flying overhead.

20 ARI (CONT'D) 20
Hey, come back here! I was TRYING
to tell my friends how cool you
are.

<SFX: GIGGLE> The kids follow the butterfly back to the stroller as it flutters over to Miri and lands on her nose.

CLOSE UP: Miri stares at the butterfly, eyes crossed. She makes a tiny, cute <SFX: BABY SNEEZE>. The kids <SFX: GIGGLE>

PAN OUT to the kids. The butterfly rises up to fly around the kids' head.

ANGLE ON: Elinor looking at Miri.

21 ELINOR 21
Butterflies are great, but baby
bats are pretty amazing, too.

ZOOM OUT to all the kids clustered around the stroller.

22 OLIVE 22
You know, I don't think I've ever
seen a baby butterfly.

The kids all look shocked.

23 ELINOR 23
Me neither. I've seen bat babies,
bird babies, bunny babies... but no
butterfly babies!

24 ARI 24
I wonder what baby butterflies look
like?

25 ELINOR 25

Hmm. Well, Miri looks like a tiny,
more adorable version of you and
your dad.

26 MR BAT 26
(mock anger) Hey, I'm adorable too!

The kids <SFX: GIGGLE>.

27 OLIVE 27

Maybe baby butterflies are like
baby bats. They look like grownup
butterflies, but tiny.

THOUGHT BUBBLE showing a parent monarch butterfly pushing a smaller, cuter butterfly in a carriage.

28 ELINOR 28
I know what we should do today.
Let's look for baby butterflies.

After an <SFX: EXCITED YEAH WALLA>, the kids look at the butterfly fluttering over their heads.

29 OLIVE 29
I wonder if that butterfly has
babies somewhere?

The butterfly begins to fly away.

30 ELINOR 30
It's getting away! Let's follow
that butterfly.

With a <SFX: GIGGLE>, the kids run off after it.

31 MR BAT 31
Happy exploring!

2. EXT FOREST PATH -- CONTINUOUS

The kids enter the forest, walking along a path, following the butterfly.

32 OLIVE 32
 That butterfly is one fast flyer.

33 ARI 33
 Where's it going?

34 OLIVE 34
 Maybe it's late for school?

35 ELINOR 35
 Or late for a butterfly party?

36 ARI 36
 Or maybe it's late for a baseball
 game? Maybe it's a BATTER-fly.

<SFX: LAUGH>

37 ELINOR 37
 Only one way to find out.

They keep following it down the path, and it leads them to...

3. EXT. SUNLIT FOREST CLEARING -- CONTINUOUS

The monarch butterfly flies into a beautiful sunlit clearing that isn't too far down the path. The space is full of monarch butterflies, plus multicolored flowers, including lots of common milkweed plants. The kids are awed by this pretty place. <SFX: WHOOA WALLA>

38 ELINOR 38
 I've never seen this place before.

39 OLIVE 39
 Me neither. It's so pretty.

40 ARI 40
 And look! A butterfly party.

ANGLE ON: The butterflies, enjoying their milkweed.

41 ELINOR 41
 Let's see if we can find any baby
 butterflies.

The kids split up. ANGLE ON: Olive examining one patch of the clearing where a few butterflies are flying around some yellow flowers.

42 OLIVE 42
 (to herself) Hmm. No butterfly
 babies here.

ANGLE ON: Elinor, looking at a different patch of the clearing with blue flowers.

43 ELINOR 43
(to herself) Any babies here? Nope.

ANGLE ON: Ari, who is flying, hovering above a patch of milkweed with some butterflies.

44 ARI 44
 (to himself) Just more of those
 orange butterflies over here. They
 sure are cool, though.

The kids regroup.

45 ELINOR 45
Did anyone find any baby
butterflies?

46	OLIVE	46
	I just saw a bunch of those orange butterflies, all about the same size.	

47 ARI 47
Same here.

Elinor looks thoughtful.

48 ELINOR 48
That's SO INTERESTING! Where are
all the baby butterflies?

49 ARI 49
Maybe baby butterflies are too tiny
to see?

THOUGHT BUBBLE shows a dad butterfly pushing a baby butterfly in a stroller, but the baby shrinks down until we can't see it. The dad looks down into it: Huh?? Where's the baby?

50 OLIVE 50
Well, if they're really small,
we'll need some help to see them.

Olive reaches into her satchel and pulls a magnifying glass. She uses it to look around on the nearby leaves. CU on the view through her magnifying glass. There's a tiny beetle.

51 OLIVE (CONT'D) 51
I see a tiny beetle. It's really
cute, but it's not a baby
butterfly.

The magnifying glass view moves to a nearby tiny ant.

52 OLIVE (CONT'D) 52
And there's a tiny ant. It's very
interesting... But no baby
butterflies.

The magnifying glass view continues to move around, until an enormous eye appears!

53 OLIVE (CONT'D) 53
Aah!

BACK ON: The kids. Olive jumps backward, startled. We see that Ari has bent down to look too, and Olive saw his magnified eye.

54 OLIVE (CONT'D) 54
Ari!

55 ARI 55
Sorry!

<SFX: LAUGH>

56 OLIVE 56
Okay, so we can't find any tiny
baby butterflies. What if we can't
see the babies because they're all
inside their houses?

THOUGHT BUBBLE shows a small house sitting on a tree branch. Through a large picture window, we see the dad butterfly giving a small baby butterfly a bottle, while several other baby butterflies flutter around.

Ari looks around.

57 ARI 57
I don't SEE any little houses
around.

The kids all look around.

58 OLIVE 58
Me neither.

59 ELINOR 59
I don't think butterflies live in
houses. I think they live OUTSIDE.

60 ARI 60
Yeah. Besides, how would they even
build a house? They're way too
small to lift a hammer.

THOUGHT BUBBLE with a butterfly straining to lift a normal-
sized hammer. Sweat drops are flying off the butterfly. <SFX:
GIGGLE>

61 ELINOR 61
We need MORE OBSERVATIONS!

Olive glances at one of the nearby milkweed plants. It has a
caterpillar on it.

62 OLIVE 62
Hey, look. I see another one of
those fancy stripy caterpillars.

<SFX: OOOH> The kids cluster around the caterpillar. As they
watch, it climbs under a stem and forms a J shape.

63 OLIVE (CONT'D) 63
Wait, what's the caterpillar DOING?

64 ELINOR 64
Maybe it's having a nap? But I
don't see a caterPILLOW.

<SFX: GIGGLE>

CU: The caterpillar begins to shed its skin and form a
chrysalis. <SFX: GASP>

65 ARI 65
What's happening?

66 ELINOR 66
It looks like it's getting rid of
its old skin.

TIME LAPSE (or other effect) of the butterfly becoming a
pretty green chrysalis.

67 OLIVE 67
It turned into some kind of green
pod.

NOTE: we can't say cocoon because only moths make cocoons.

68 ELINOR 68
And now it's just sitting still.
This is really weird.

BACK ON: Ari has turned to look at some of the other milkweed plants.

69 ARI 69
Oh! I see another one of those
green pods over here.

ANGLE ON: Olive notices another pod, but it's darker and it's twitching.

70 OLIVE 70
And there's one over here, but it's
darker colored. Wait. This one's
MOVING.

The kids cluster around the moving chrysalis. CU: The chrysalis opens and the butterfly emerges, its wings wrinkled at first, so it looks pretty strange.

71 ELINOR 71
It's breaking open!

72	ARI		72
	What IS that thing? Is it an alien?		

73 OLIVE 73

Wow. I guess I didn't think that
aliens would be so TINY.
(whispering) Welcome to Earth, tiny
alien.

The butterfly begins to pump up its wings.

74 ARI 74
Wait. I don't think that's an
alien. I think that's a...

75 ELINOR/OLIVE/ARI 75
Butterfly!

The kids <SFX: GASP> as the butterfly finishes pumping up its wings. It flutters into the air.

BACK ON: The kids.

76	ARI	76
	What just happened?	

77 OLIVE 77
Hmm. Let's think about what we saw.

Olive gets out her notebook. CU: Olive's notebook. She draws a caterpillar.

78 OLIVE (CONT'D) 78
We started with a caterpillar.

79 ELINOR 79
But then it turned into a kind of pod.

Olive draws an arrow coming from the caterpillar and connecting to a pod.

80 ARI 80
But then we saw a pod break open,
and an alien - I mean, a butterfly -
came out.

Olive draws an arrow coming from the pod and connecting to an adult monarch butterfly.

81 ELINOR 81
But what does this MEAN?

The kids think <SFX: HMMM>

82 OLIVE 82
I think... I think that the
caterpillar turned into a
butterfly.

BACK ON: the kids. <SFX: GASP> They're amazed.

83 ARI 83
But that would mean...

84 ELINOR 84
The butterfly babies weren't
missing. They were right in front
of our eyes this whole time.

85 OLIVE 85
Caterpillars ARE baby butterflies!

86 ARI 86
Hey Olive, that means that the
animal that I like...

87 OLIVE 87
And the animal I like...

88 ARI/OLIVE 88
Are the SAME ANIMAL.

Ari and Olive high five, sharing the excitement.

89 ELINOR 89
My friends have pretty good taste
in animals.

<SFX: GIGGLE> Then, Olive crouches down to take a closer look
at a caterpillar.

90 OLIVE 90
But the caterpillars don't look
anything like butterflies.

Elinor and Ari crouch low with her. CU: Either a butterfly
and a caterpillar on the same leaf, or switching between a
butterfly and a caterpillar to compare their anatomy.

91 ELINOR 91
You know, they aren't TOTALLY
different. A caterpillar has lots
of legs... and a butterfly has lots
of legs. And they don't trip over
them!

92 OLIVE 92
A caterpillar has a long, thin
body. A butterfly does too.

93 ARI 93
Caterpillars love hanging around
plants. So do butterflies.

94 OLIVE 94
In some ways, they're the same. But
they're mostly different.

95 ELINOR 95
I guess that some animals change a
lot as they grow.

The kids sing a song. While they sing, the camera switches
between Olive taking close looks at caterpillars, Elinor
looking at the chrysalises, and Ari looking the butterflies.

96 ELINOR/OLIVE/ARI 96
Caterpillars change
As they grow.
They turn into butterflies
And now we know.
OLIVE: Here's a caterpillar.
(MORE)

ELINOR/OLIVE/ARI (CONT'D)

It changes until
It turns into a pod
And stays really still.

Caterpillars change
As they grow.
They turn into butterflies
And now we know.

ARI: A crack appears
What comes out?
A grown-up butterfly
Flying about.

Caterpillars change
As they grow.
They turn into butterflies
And now we know.

97

ARI

97

Hey let's go tell my dad and Miri
what we figure out.

With an <SFX: EXCITED YEAH WALLA>, the kids run off.

4. PARK -- DAY

The kids have returned to the part of the park where Mr Bat
and Miri are waiting.

98

ARI

98

Dad - guess what? Baby butterflies
are CATERPILLARS!

99

MR BAT

99

You figured that out by yourselves?
What smart scientists you are!

<SFX: EXCITED YEAH WALLA>

ANGLE ON: Elinor looks down at Miri. <SFX: BABY GIGGLE>

100

ELINOR

100

It's amazing that Miri looks just
like a little bat, but caterpillars
change so much as they grow into
butterflies.

101

MR BAT

101

Yes! When animal's body makes a big
change as it grows, it's called
metamorphosis.

102 ELINOR 102
That's a fantastic word. Me-ta-
MORPH-o-sis.

103 OLIVE 103
Me-ta-MORPH-o-sis.

104 ARI 104
Right. You know, with Miri all
snuggled up in her blanket, she
kiiinda looks like a caterpillar. I
hope she won't have her own
metamorph-o-what-is...

THOUGHT BUBBLE showing Mr Bat pushing Miri in a stroller.
Miri bursts from the blanket and unfolds huge butterfly
wings. She flies into the air, giggling as Ari's dad jumps
trying to catch her then takes off after her.

105 MR BAT 105
Well, she'd still be adorable, just
like her Dad.

The kids all <SFX: LAUGH>

THE END.