

ELINOR WONDERS WHY

120A: BUTTERFLY BABIES

Written by
Rosemary Mosco

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

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SECOND DRAFT: August 15, 2019

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RECORD DRAFT: October 8th, 2019

1. EXT -- PARK

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.

1 MR. BAT 1
What a beautiful day for a walk in
the park!

2 OLIVE 2
It's more of a ROLL in the park for
Miri.

Everybody <SFX: GIGGLES>.

3 ARI 3
Are you having fun, little Miri?
Who's the cutest little sister in
the world? You are! Yes, you are!

Ari makes funny faces at his little sister, who <SFX: GIGGLES
AND LAUGHS>.

4 ELINOR 4
Miri is so cute. She looks like a
tiny version of you and your dad,
Ari.

5 OLIVE 5
(good-natured)
Yeah, but the smallest and the
cutest.

6 MR. BAT 6
(mock anger) Hey, I'm adorable too!

The kids have a <SFX: LAUGH>.

7 MR. BAT (CONT'D) 7
You know, kids, I love visiting the
park with Miri because the whole
world is new to her. Look around
and pretend you're new to the world
- what do you notice?

The kids look around. A monarch butterfly flutters in and
hovers above the stroller.

<https://images.app.goo.gl/aBSqLrSE6PPKiEjW8>

8 ARI 8
I see a butterfly!

<SFX: OOOHH> as the kids follow the butterfly. The butterfly flies low over Miri. Miri waves her arms at it. <SFX: BABY GIGGLES>

9

~~ARI~~ (CONT'D)

9

It looks like Miri thinks
butterflies are pretty cool.

PAN: The butterfly flutters over Miri's stroller and lands on a milkweed plant that's growing nearby.

The kids follow the butterfly as Mr. Bat settles on a bench and plays with Miri in the background.

CU: The kids cluster close to observe the butterfly.

10

~~ARI~~ (CONT'D)

10

I like butterflies. They have
wings, just like me!

Ari flaps his wings and they all <SFX: GIGGLE>.

11

~~ARI~~ (CONT'D)

11

I know! Let's do some butterfly-
watching today.

12

~~ELINOR~~

12

Great idea.

At that moment, Olive notices a stripy monarch caterpillar on a lower milkweed leaf.

13

~~OLIVE~~

13

Wait, look. There's a caterpillar
on this plant, too. Caterpillars
are my favorite. Maybe we should
watch caterpillars instead.

14

~~ELINOR~~

14

Hmm. Butterflies and caterpillars
are BOTH pretty interesting.

CLOSE UP: The butterfly, fluttering over the flowers. Ari tries to sell butterfly-watching.

15

~~ARI~~

15

Yeah, but butterflies can fly.
Flying just adds a little extra
coolness, you know?

BACK ON: The kids. Ari hovers a little and they all <SFX: GIGGLE>.

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

16 OLIVE 16
Well, a caterpillar can't fly, but
I love the way it crawls.

17 ELINOR 17
I only have TWO legs and I still
trip sometimes.

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

18 OLIVE 18
Elinor, you are so funny!

19 ELINOR 19
What else is interesting about
butterflies and caterpillars?

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

20 ARI 20
Well, butterflies have awesome
patterns on their wings. They're so
colorful! I wish I had a shirt like
that.

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

21 OLIVE 21
True. But just LOOK at the
caterpillar's cool stripes. I wish
I had a pair of pants with stripes
like that!

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

22 ELINOR 22
They're both very fancy!

BACK ON: The butterfly. As Ari talks, it lifts up from the flower and flutters into the air.

23 ARI 23
Well, a butterfly-

PAN OUT TO: The butterfly flying overhead.

24 ARI (CONT'D)
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.

25 OLIVE 25
<GASP!> It landed on Miri's 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: Olive looking at Miri.

26 OLIVE (CONT'D) 26
Butterflies are great, but baby
bats are pretty amazing, too.

ZOOM OUT to all the kids clustered around the stroller. Elinor has a curious thought.

27 ELINOR 27
You know, I don't think I've ever
seen a *baby* butterfly.

The kids all look thoughtful.

28 ELINOR (CONT'D) 28
I've seen bat babies, bird babies,
bunny babies... but no butterfly
babies!

A beat as Olive considers.

29 OLIVE
You're right, Elinor. I don't think
I've ever seen a baby butterfly
either.

ARI
I wonder what baby butterflies look like?

31 ELINOR
Hm. Well, Miri looks a lot like
you and your dad, only smaller.
Maybe baby butterflies look just
like grown-up butterflies, but
tinier.

THOUGHT BUBBLE showing a parent monarch butterfly holding a smaller, cuter butterfly. The bubble pops and Elinor has an idea.

32 ELINOR (CONT'D) 32
I know what we should do today.
Let's look for baby butterflies.
Olive, is that okay? I know you
wanted to see caterpillars.

33 OLIVE 33
(thinking)
That's true, but now I'm really
curious about baby butterflies.
Let's do it!

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

34 ELINOR 34
Let's follow that butterfly to see
if it has any babies.

The butterfly begins to fly away.

35 ELINOR (CONT'D) 35
It's getting away! C'mon! We need
MORE OBSERVATIONS!

With a <SFX: GIGGLE>, the kids run off after it. Mr. Bat, who's been watching this whole exchange with benign amusement, waves them goodbye.

36 MR. BAT 36
Happy exploring, kids!

2. EXT FOREST PATH -- CONTINUOUS

The kids enter the forest, walking along a path, following the butterfly as it flutters here and there.

37 OLIVE 37
That butterfly sure flies a lot. I
wonder where it's going.

The kids jokingly come up with ideas.

38 ELINOR 38
Maybe it's late for butterfly
school?

39 OLIVE 39
Or maybe it's going to a butterfly party!

40 ARI 40
Or maybe it's going to a baseball game. Because it's a BATTER-fly.

The kids <SFX: LAUGH>. They keep following the butterfly 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>

41 ARI 41
Olive, you were right! It's like a butterfly party.

ANGLE ON: The butterflies, enjoying their milkweed.

42 ELINOR 42
Ok, 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.

43 OLIVE 43
(to herself) Hmm. No butterfly babies here.

ANGLE ON: Elinor, looking at a different patch of the clearing with blue flowers. All the butterflies look like full-size adult butterflies.

44 ELINOR 44
(to herself) Any babies here? Nope.

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

45 ARI 45
(to himself) Just more grown-up butterflies over here. They sure are cool, though.

The kids regroup.

46 ELINOR 46
Did anyone find any baby
butterflies?

47 OLIVE 47
I just saw a bunch of those orange
butterflies, and they're all about
the same size.

48 ARI 48
Same here.

Elinor looks thoughtful.

49 ELINOR 49
I wonder where all the baby
butterflies are?

50 ARI 50
Maybe baby butterflies are too tiny
to see?

51 OLIVE 51
Well, if they're really small,
we'll need our magnifying glass to
see them.

Olive reaches into her satchel, pulls out a magnifying glass
and offers it to Elinor.

52 OLIVE (CONT'D) 52
Do you want to look through,
Elinor?

53 ELINOR 53
Sure! Thanks, Olive.

Elinor and Olive use the magnifying glass to look around on
the nearby leaves. CU on the view through their magnifying
glass. There's a tiny spider and an adult spider.

54 ELINOR (CONT'D) 54
I see a baby spider standing next
to a grown-up spider. Awww cute,
but it's not a baby butterfly.

The magnifying glass view moves to a nearby group of snails.
There's a large one and two little ones.

55 OLIVE 55
And here are some snails. There's a
big grown-up snail and two baby
snails. They're very interesting...
But no baby butterflies.

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

56 OLIVE/ELINOR 56
Aah!

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

57 ELINOR 57
Ari!

58 ARI 58
Sorry!

<SFX: LAUGH>.

59 ELINOR 59
Hmm, we didn't see any tiny baby butterflies.

60 OLIVE 60
What if we can't see them because they're all inside their houses?

Ari looks around.

61 ARI 61
I don't SEE any little houses around.

The kids all look around.

62 OLIVE 62
Me neither.

63 ELINOR 63
I don't think butterflies live in houses. I think they live OUTSIDE.

64 ARI 64
Yeah. Besides, how would they even build a house? They'd need a really tiny hammer.

Ari mimics holding and using a tiny little hammer. <SFX: LAUGH>.

65 ELINOR 65
Hmm, we can't seem to find any baby butterflies. I wonder why not. That is SO INTERESTING!

At that moment, Olive glances at one of the nearby milkweed plants and notices it has a caterpillar on it.

66 OLIVE 66
Hey, look. It's a caterpillar!

67 ARI 67
It's got those fancy stripes like
we saw before.

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

68 OLIVE 68
Wait, what's the caterpillar DOING?

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

69 ARI 69
Whoa, what's happening?

70 ELINOR 70
It looks like it's turning green.

TIME LAPSE (or other effect) of the butterfly becoming a pretty green chrysalis (in reality, this can happen over the course of 3-4 minutes: https://youtu.be/JkWr5k2H_Y). DESIGN NOTE the chrysalis is under the old skin. The old skin splits and the new (green) skin bursts out as the old skin is bunched up and pushed up to the top. You don't need to show the old skin in detail but make sure you don't show the caterpillar just fading from stripy to green.

71 OLIVE 71
It turned into something new. It
looks a little like a green pea
pod.

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

72 ELINOR 72
And now it's just hanging there.

73 ARI 73
This is. So. Awesome.

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

74 OLIVE 74
Oh! I see another one of those
green pod-things over here.

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

75 OLIVE (CONT'D) 75
And there's one over here, but it's darker. Wait. This one is 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.

76 ELINOR 76
It's breaking open!

77 ARI 77
What IS that? Is it an alien?

78 OLIVE 78
It can't be an alien... Can it?

The butterfly begins to pump up its wings.

79 ELINOR 79
Wait. I don't think that's an alien. I think that's a... a...

80 ELINOR/OLIVE/ARI 80
Butterfly!

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

BACK ON: The kids.

81 ARI 81
What just happened?

82 OLIVE 82
Hmm. Let's think about what we saw.

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

83 OLIVE (CONT'D) 83
First, we saw a caterpillar.

84 ELINOR 84
And then we saw it turn into a kind of pod.

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

85 ARI 85

But then we saw one of those pods
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.

86 OLIVE 86
But what does this MEAN?

The kids think <SFX: HMMM>.

87 ELINOR 87
I think... I think that the
caterpillars turn into butterflies.

BACK ON: the kids. <SFX: GASP> They're amazed. On the notepad, Elinor traces the steps again.

88 ELINOR (CONT'D) 88
First the caterpillar turns into a
pod, and then after a while, it
turns into a butterfly.

89 Ohhhh... ARI 89

Elinor has a thought.

90 ELINOR 90
But that would mean...

91 OLIVE 91
The butterfly babies weren't
missing. They were right in front
of us this whole time.

92 ELINOR 92
Caterpillars ARE baby butterflies!
That's SO INTERESTING!

93 ARI 93
 (dramatically)
I can't believe it! Baby
butterflies are caterpillars?

Olive mock-glares at the caterpillars.

94 OLIVE 94
And caterpillars turn into
butterflies?

95 ARI 95

Wait. Olive, I just realized something. If caterpillars turn into butterflies, then that means...

96 OLIVE 96
That the animal I like...

97 ARI 97
And the animal I like...

98 ARI/OLIVE = 98
Are the SAME ANIMAL.

Ari and Olive high five and hug, sharing the excitement.

99 ELINOR 99
You both sure know how to pick cool
animals to watch.

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.

100	ELINOR/OLIVE/ARI	100
	Caterpillars change	
	As they grow.	
	They turn into butterflies	
	Now we know.	

OLIVE: He's a caterpillar, watch it climb up. It wiggles and wiggles and turns into a pod.

ALL: Caterpillars change
As they grow.
They turn into butterflies
Now we know.

ARI: The pod sits still
Then it opens wide
What comes out?
A grown-up butterfly!

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

As the song ends, the kids stand or sit in the middle of the clearing, surrounded by butterflies.

101

ARI

101

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

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

4. PARK -- DAY

Mr. Bat and Miri are hanging out at the small bridge in the park, watching fish in the water below. The kids run up to meet them.

102

ARI

102

Dad! Dad! - guess what? We went
looking for baby butterflies, but
we couldn't find any!

103

OLIVE

103

Yeah, that's because we were
looking for tiny butterflies. But
then we found out...

104

ELINOR

104

CATERPILLARS are the baby
butterflies!

105

ARI

105

They change into a pod, and then a
butterfly comes out!

106

MR. BAT

106

Wow, you figured that out by
yourselves?

107

ARI

107

Yeah, we did it by making
OBSERVATIONS!

108

MR. BAT

108

What smart scientists you are!

<SFX: EXCITED YEAH WALLA>.

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

109

ELINOR

109

Mr. Bat, it's amazing that baby
bats like Miri look a lot like
grown up bats. But caterpillars
look really different from
butterflies!

110 MR. BAT 110
Yes, Elinor! Some animals have
babies that look just like their
parents, and some animals have
babies that go through a big
change. When an animal makes a big
change, it's called metamorphosis.

111 OLIVE 111
Me-ta-MORPH-o-sis. I like that
word.

At that moment, the same butterfly from the beginning returns
and flutters about before landing on Miri's little head.

112 ARI 112
You know, with Miri all snuggled up
in her blanket, she kiiinda looks
like a caterpillar. I wonder what
would happen if SHE turned into a
butterfly...

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 up
and down trying to catch her.

113 MR. BAT 113
Well, if she did, she'd still be
adorable, just like her brother...
and their Dad.

The kids all <SFX: LAUGH>. We follow the butterfly up and
over the trees as we...

FADE OUT.

SEGMENT 2.

1. EXT PARK -- DAY

Open on Ari flying in the sky next to a few monarch
butterflies, all flying in the same direction. He flies down
to land by Elinor, Olive, and Señor Tapir, who sits with his
guitar on a tree stump. A butterfly lands on each kid's head
and on Señor Tapir's nose.

114 ARI 114
Look at the butterflies!

115 OLIVE 115
And they're all flying in the same
direction!

Elinor giggles as butterflies land on the tips of her ears.

116 ELINOR 116
Where are they all going?

117 SEÑOR TAPIR 117
Good question, Elinor. I have a
song about two scientists who
figured that out.

Señor Tapir starts to sing. After a line or two, we
transition to a simpler style of animation that describes
what he is singing.

118 SEÑOR TAPIR (CONT'D) 118
Fred and Norah Urquhart were
husband and wife,
Who both really loved being
outside.

2. EXT TORONTO -- DAY

We see a map of North America, and a star appears on the city
of Toronto. We zoom in quickly to that spot on the map, to
see Fred and Norah Urquhart (who are Eastern cottontail
rabbits; Fred has a distinct mustache), holding hands as they
stand in a field [reuse from Dog Smells], where many
monarch butterflies fly around the skies and land on plants
around them.

119 SEÑOR TAPIR (CONT'D) 119
They lived up north in Canada,
where bright summer skies,
Were filled with monarch
butterflies,

Stylized silhouette of a crowd of monarch butterflies fly (in
the same direction) through the sky over the trees, whose
leaves have turned from green into fall colors. Fred and
Norah look up curiously at the butterflies flying over their
heads, as the last bunch of butterflies fly away, leaving the
sky with zero butterflies.

120 SEÑOR TAPIR (CONT'D) 120
But every year before it would
freeze,
The butterflies all flew away in
the breeze.
So Fred and Norah decided to find
(MORE)

SEÑOR TAPIR (CONT'D)

Where butterflies,
spent their wintertime.

121 Fred and Norah walk around the same scene, looking for any
sign of the butterflies.

Fred carefully wraps a small sticker-like tag (the kind used
to put price tags on products) with a few numbers on it
around the lower wing of a butterfly. He lets the tagged
butterfly fly free.

121 SEÑOR TAPIR (CONT'D)
They tagged lots of butterflies and
told lots of folks,
If you see where they went, please
let us know!

121

A pair of elephants [from Dog Smells] point at two tagged
monarch butterflies on a milkweed plant. A dog [from Dog
Smells] points at a tagged monarch butterfly that lands on
its finger.

We see the same map of North America, and this time we see
some question marks appear in different parts of the United
States (including a few question marks in southern California
and Texas, because the Urquharts looked there). Fred and Nora
drive around in a car along the map.

122 SEÑOR TAPIR (CONT'D)
Fluttering butterflies, where are
you flying?
Where are going? Where could you
be?
Fred and Nora never stopped trying
To solve the butterfly mystery.

122

Fred and Norah stand among a forest absolutely packed with
monarch butterflies on every surface. Fred inspects a tree
trunk covered monarch butterflies. We see a map of North
America, with a path from Toronto down to the Sierra Madre
mountains of Michoacan Mexico. Fred and Norah happily hug
each other as a stylized cloud of butterflies flutter around
them.

After most of their lives, they
finally found them!
Millions of monarchs on the side of
a mountain!
Way down in Mexico! So far away!
They finally figured it out,
hooray!

3. EXT PARK -- DAY

Señor Tapir finishes singing the song in front of the kids.
All the butterflies on the kids' faces start to fly away in
the same direction and join the butterflies in the sky.

123

SEÑOR TAPIR (CONT'D)

123

Adios butterfly amigos!

124

ELINOR

124

Have fun in Mexico!