



Caterpillar to Butterfly Theme

Children are enchanted by butterflies and caterpillars, making this a theme that will surely interest them. What a great topic for them to study to learn more about the wonders of the natural world.

Language & Literacy

Books

The Crunching Munching Caterpillar
by Sheridan Cain

Charlie the Caterpillar
by Dom DeLuise

Gotta go! Gotta go!
by Sam Swope

The Very Hungry Caterpillar
by Eric Carle

The Butterfly Kiss
by Marcial Bao

Butterfly House
by Eve Bunting

Butterfly Count
by Sneed Collard B. Edwards
by Keith Graves

Ten Little Caterpillars
by Bill Martian Jr.

Waiting For Wings
By Lois Ehlert

Read ***Waiting for Wings*** by Lois Elhert, have the children recreate Lois Elhert's fabulous paper collage techniques to make their own pictures of butterflies and caterpillars. Have them dictate a story to you about what their caterpillar would do while it was waiting for wings.

Activities

Read the poem ***Caterpillar*** and let the kids do actions.

Use the poem in a pocket chart and have the kids predict the rhyming words that will fill in the last word of each stanza. *Older kids maybe able to put the words creeping, crawl, climbing, in also, maybe with picture prompts on the word cards to help them.

Read the poem ***Color Butterflies*** give each child a different colored butterfly cut from felt. Tell them to hold up their butterfly when it is mentioned and then place it on the felt board. After the poem is over count how many butterflies are on the felt board.

Songs, Poems, & Finger-plays

Caterpillar

Caterpillar creeping,
Caterpillar crawl.
Caterpillar climbing
All along the **wall**.
Caterpillar spinning,
Caterpillar snug.
Caterpillar changing,
What have you **become**?

by Beverly Qualheim

Color Butterflies

The first to come to the garden bed
Is a lovely butterfly of brilliant red.
Then in comes another and that makes two,
Fly right in, my friend of blue.
"The garden is fine, the best I've seen,"
Says the butterfly of springtime green.
Our garden needs a sunshiny fellow,
Fly in, butterfly with wings of yellow.

Little friend of purple, fly in too,
This garden is waiting for a color like you.
Orange, orange you've waited so long,
Fly right in where you belong.
Butterflies, butterflies you're such a sight,
Flying in together-a springtime delight!

by Susan M. Paprock

Math & Number Concepts

Butterfly Counting Hunt: Each child gets a butterfly net or a bug jar and everyone goes around the room looking for butterflies. (Ahead of time hide butterfly pictures or plastic butterflies all over the room) The kids can count how many bugs they have found. ***For older kids turn it into an alphabet activity by programming paper butterflies with the letters of the alphabet, and challenge the kids to find the entire butterfly alphabet.**

Butterfly Match-Up: Played like concentration for the older kids or lay them all face up for younger kids. Purchase or make cards. To make cards draw or use stickers to make matching cards. Laminate or cover with contact paper to make them last longer.

Caterpillar Counting: Print copies of the Caterpillar Counting Activity page and provide children with dot stickers. Invite them to place the correct number of stickers in each space to give the caterpillar the correct number of body segments.

Butterfly Patterns

Use the butterfly cards from *Butterfly Match-Up* and make different patterns for the kids to finish. For example line up a purple butterfly a red butterfly a purple butterfly and ask the kids to pick what butterfly would come next. Other patterns could be by size or other features depending on the kind of butterfly pictures used.

Art

Tissue Paper Butterfly

Supplies: (for each butterfly) three rectangle pieces of tissue paper each one a little smaller than the first (to get a layered look). A fuzzy pipe cleaner, two wiggly eyes, and glue.

Directions: Place tissue papers one on top of the other starting with the largest, then med., then smallest. Pinch the center together and bend a pipe cleaner around it to make a butterfly body. Glue the wiggly eyes on toward the top of the butterfly body. (Attach a piece of fishing line to hang it from or maybe put a magnet on it)

Egg Carton Caterpillars

Supplies: Egg cartons, paint/paint brushes, wiggly eyes, pipe cleaners, glue, and scissors.

Directions: Ask kids how many sections their caterpillar should have three or four. Let them help you count out the sections and cut their caterpillar out of the egg carton. Let the kids paint their caterpillar however they would wish. When they are dry help them glue eyes on and poke holes through the egg carton to add legs and antennae with pipe cleaners.

Collage Butterflies

Supplies: Tissue paper scraps in all kinds of colors, a butterfly outline drawn on tag board, and glue.

Directions: Have kids glue tissue paper all over the butterfly picture...show them the pictures in Eric Carle's book *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* and talk about how he makes his pictures with tissue paper.

Find more info on his website:

<http://www.eric-carle.com/>

Paint Blob Butterflies

Supplies: Different colored paints, and an outline drawing of a butterfly on a large white piece of paper.

Directions: Have kids blob paint on only one side of the butterfly. Then fold the picture in half and squish down. Open it up to see a lovely butterfly that looks the

same on each wing. (opt. have kids cut out their butterflies after they dry or pre-cut them before they paint) Hint: don't let the kids blob too much paint on or it will take forever to dry.

Dramatic Play

Set up an Entomology Lab!

Entomologists are the scientists that study bugs. Set up an area with books, lab coats, magnifiers, microscopes, child safe tweezers, bug containers, note books, etc. For the kids to pretend they are studying the butterflies.

Music & Movement

Butterfly Dance

Play some bouncy classical music and have the children dance to it with streamers. Encourage them to move as if they were butterflies bouncing from flower to flower.

Science & Sensory

Show the kids some of the butterflies common to your area. You can contact your local DNR for this information and sometimes they may have pictures or other items to send to you. Ask the kids which butterflies they have seen. Ask them what butterflies eat, how? (A: Nectar, straw like mouth called a Proboscis) Why don't birds eat butterflies? (A: They taste bad!)

Butterfly Life Cycle Chart

Print copies of the **Butterfly Detective Activity Pages** from the **Theme Enhancement Pages**. Consider purchasing caterpillars for the children to observe their life cycle. Print the Butterfly Journals for children to draw their observations in on a daily basis.

Blocks & Building

Add plastic butterfly toys to the block area and see what kind of houses the children create for them!

Technology

Check out the web site...

<http://www.mesc.usgs.gov/butterfly/Butterfly.html>

...coloring pages to download and loads of info on butterflies

<http://www.insectlore.com/>

They have tons of resources on insects and they sell live caterpillars and other insects for classrooms!

Cooking & Snacks

Butterfly Sugar Cookies

Let kids decorate them with different colored frosting!

Caterpillar Food... let kids sample some of the foods the caterpillar ate in *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* by Eric Carle.

Butterfly Toast

Cut toast out in the shape of a butterfly (use a butterfly cookie cutter) and let kids spread jelly on it or paint it with milk colored with food coloring before it is toasted. This makes vibrant colors on the bread that look great after toasting, and it is completely edible!

Bulletin Boards

“Soaring to New Heights”

Have the children paint their hands using all kind of colors of tempera or finger paint. Then have them press their handprints down one at a time with their finger spread out with the palms touching in the middle to resemble the wings of a butterfly. Cut around them and hang them on the Bulletin Board under the title, "Soaring to New Heights at Preschool!" *(or use your program name)*

Write your ideas here...