

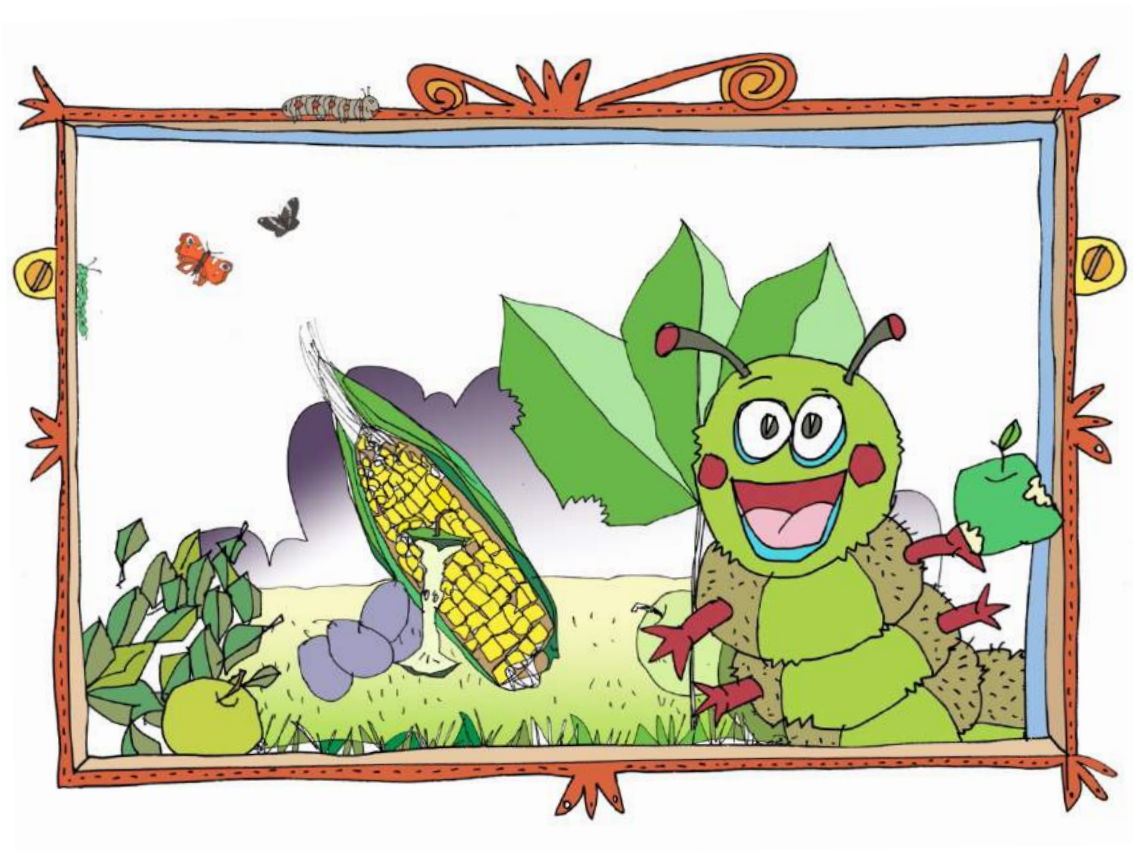


Caring for life
on our planet

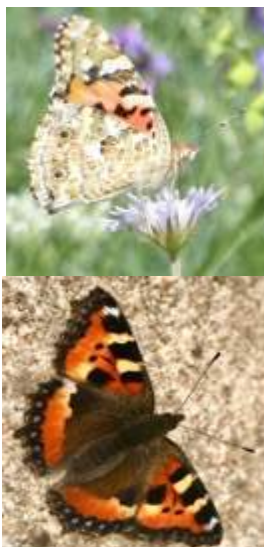
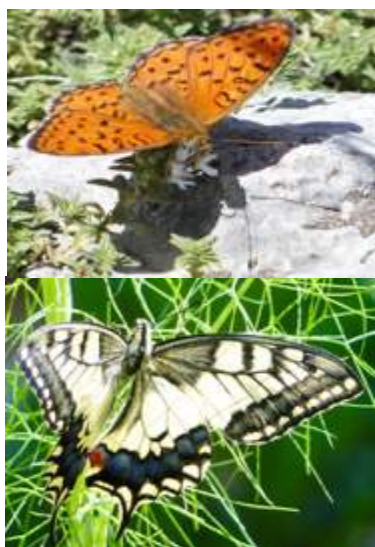


Talk4Writing

Part 1: The Very Hungry Caterpillar



Part 2: Butterfly facts



Introduction

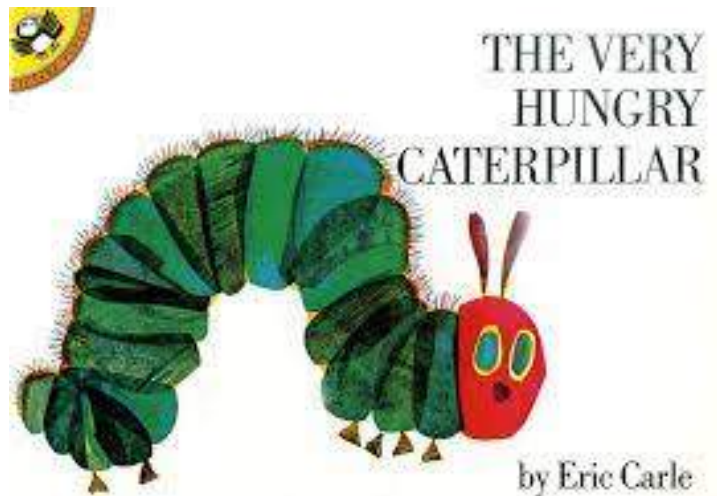
Children are usually fascinated by how caterpillars turn into butterflies and by the beauty of butterflies so, they are a great way to help children value the natural world and become interested in protecting it.

By the end of this two-part Talk for Writing English unit the pupils should:

- know that caterpillars and other insects need protecting to survive
- be able to recite the story of *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* and innovate on it as well as being able to provide key information about butterflies
- be able to say and perhaps write more interesting sentences using more adventurous vocabulary
- love the story and be interested in helping butterflies survive!

Reading & website recommendations to support parts 1 & 2 of the unit

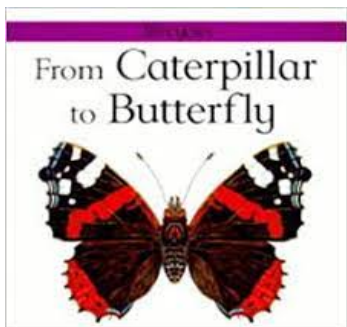
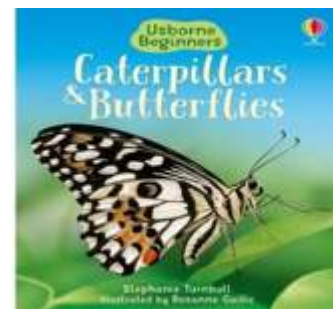
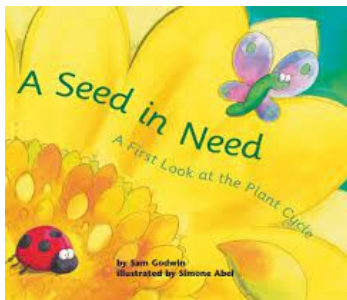
The star of the show:



- https://www.insectlore.co.uk/butterflies.html?gclid=EAlaIQobChMI06iAn6D28AIVjeR3Ch1rlgBJEAAAYASAAEgLfD_BwE
- <https://butterfly-conservation.org/our-work/education/childrens-resources>
- Animated film: [The Very Hungry Caterpillar - Animated Film - YouTube](#)
- <https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/blog/2019/05/minibeast-facts/>



More stories, poems and non-fiction books to support the unit:



Hook ideas to grab the children's interest: parts 1 & 2

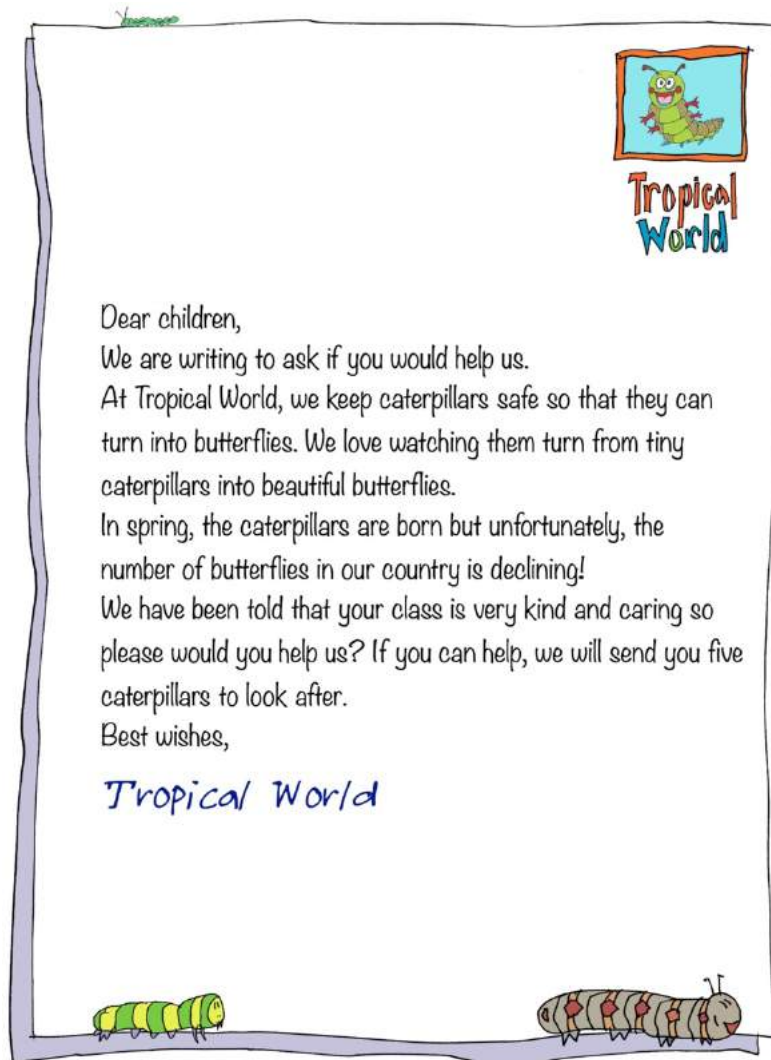


- Organise the arrival of real caterpillars in the classroom, from a company like Insect Lore, telling the children that caterpillars are in decline and their help is needed.

Find out more here:

https://www.insectlore.co.uk/butterflies.html?gclid=EAlaIQobChMIz5yawMP48AIVA Z_VCh20KAtHEAAYASAAEgJW4vD_BwE

- Visit a butterfly farm, either real or virtual: [Inside The UK's Largest Butterfly Farm | Lewis Nunn - YouTube](#)
- Go on a minibeast hunt in the locality of your school. Get a Butterfly Farm to write to the children asking them to look after caterpillars:



- **Plus an additional hook for part 2 only:**

Watch the programme below on minibeasts. The butterfly and caterpillar section is from 5:00 – 8:50 mins: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JuHg5oWF_mo



Warming-up activities for the first week (part 1)



- **Sentence maker** – have items in a feely bag related to the story, for example a leaf, a caterpillar, an apple etc. Children pick an item and see if they can put it into a sentence – develop the sentence work by expanding the sentence with adjectives. Give lots of opportunity for children to orally rehearse their sentences.
- Use photographs of caterpillars and butterflies to engage curiosity. Ask the children:
 - What do you notice?
 - What do you know about caterpillars?
 - What would you like to know?
- Make a list of their guiding questions and display them.
- **Create a list of the key words** to teach the children related to the unit, and make these words become part of daily classroom life (e.g. *caterpillar, butterfly, cocoon, nibbled, declining, chrysalis, pupa, emerge/emerging, species, proboscis, life cycle.*)
- Add the words to a sheet of paper for the washing line, add pictures and photographs to deepen understanding.



- Create a **Likes/Dislikes/Puzzles and Patterns grid** about the story.

- **Sentence-of-three activities** – using pictures of the food from the story. Lay out pictures of the food from the story. Model how to create a sentence of three: *“The caterpillar ate through one red apple, four ripe strawberries and a sticky lollipop!”* Orally rehearse this with the children using the visual prompts. Then ask the children to come and create their own sentence of three. Get all the children to orally rehearse each sentence as it is made.



The imitation stage

Internalising the tune of the model text

For those of you familiar with the TFW approach, you will know that the best way to help children to tell a story for themselves is to internalise a text using a text map. This gives them the words and phrases that they need for the telling. If you are not familiar with this, but want to know how to do it, then look at this film of Pie Corbett explaining it: www.youtube.com/embed/p_NI2jD-5Es or buy *Talk for Writing in the Early Years* from <https://www.talkforwritingshop.com/product-page/talk-for-writing-in-the-early-years-with-33-online-video-clips>

Mapping the story of *The Very Hungry caterpillar*

Read through the story and start to draw the story map. Ask children to think of actions as you build up the story with clear, confident voices. Map out the story on a story ‘S’ map either on a flip chart or using objects on the floor as illustrated here. Help the children talk and walk through the story map.





Then create a simple text map of the story of *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* like the one below and read the story map with the children daily to internalise and embed the story thoroughly.



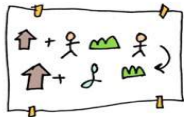


As the story builds up, model using a clear confident voice and expression using actions to help the children memorise the text. As the children's expression improves, gradually start to withdraw so that they take ownership of the story.

Once they've begun to internalise it, have fun with the text – split the class in half so they can listen to the other half tell the story. What do the children do well? What could be improved? Ask the children to give their recommendations.



Mime a line from the text – can the children guess what the line is? The children then have a go with their talk partner miming lines from the text to help them internalise it.



Ask the children to draw their own version of the story map and then tell it to an adult who will scribe it for them. Get the children to write part of the story if they are able to do so.

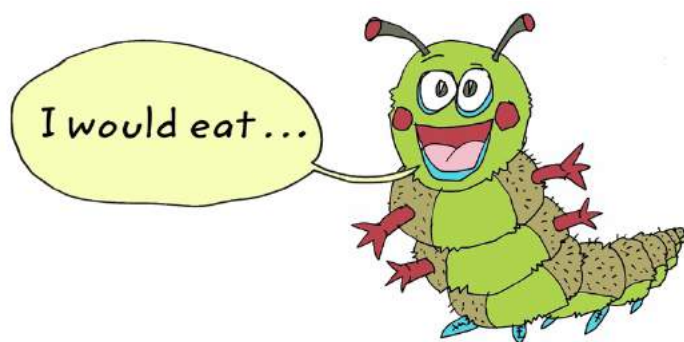
Developing understanding week 1

Embed the daily reading of the story with activities like these:

- Look at a photograph of a caterpillar and a butterfly. Ask: What do you notice? What would you like to know? Add the children's guiding questions to the washing line. These can be added to/revisited throughout both the fiction and non-fiction sections.
- Recite the days of the week. Develop understanding of which day comes next: "*If today is ... , tomorrow will be ...*" Look at the pattern of the days of the week in the story.
- Add to the "Likes. Dislikes, Puzzles and Patterns" grid as the week progresses.
- **Sentence maker.** Lay the *days of the week* cards on the carpet. Model how to use a day of the week in a sentence. Talk partners – ask children to tell their partner something they do on a day of the week. e.g., *On Monday, I walk to school with my friend.* Listen to their examples.
- Re-read the letter from the Tropical World. Talk about how we could look after the caterpillars, what we might need and how we need to treat them.

- Ask the children, *“Which day did the caterpillar make the cocoon?”*
Watch the video of a monarch butterfly making a chrysalis. Add any vocab and guiding questions to the washing line.
- Watch the time-lapse metamorphosis of a monarch butterfly and discuss what they have seen, adding words to the word bank.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ocWgSgMGxOc>
- The caterpillars arrive in class with another letter from Tropical World reminding the children how to look after the caterpillars. (It takes about 5 weeks for the whole process to happen so they are released during the non-fiction unit.)

Developing understanding week 2



- **Literacy warm up:** *“If I was a very hungry caterpillar, I would eat ...”* As yesterday, ask the children to think about their favourite foods – What would they like to eat if they were a very hungry caterpillar? Add adjectives to improve your sentence e.g., *sweet, juicy strawberries*. Model how to say the whole sentence so the children can repeat it back.
- **Shared write:** Write a sentence about the caterpillar with the children. Take their suggestions and choose one to write about: e.g., *“The caterpillar felt sick! Then he ate one nice green leaf and after that he felt much better.”*
- Ask the children to help you make a list of all the things in the story and tell the children these are called nouns. It is the name we give to something for example, *leaf, sun, caterpillar, apple* etc. Help them understand that noun is a word that names something. Take a noun to



expand on. Write **The** _____ (then the noun e.g., **sun**). Can the children think of a word to describe the sun – explain these are **adjectives**. Now ask children to think about another noun in talk partners e.g., **apple** – get them to say their own sentence: **The juicy apple is red**. Orally rehearse the sentences the children create. Scribe them on the flip chart.

- **Sentence maker** – revisit the sentence-maker activity. Develop sentences with adjectives and extend sentences using the word “but.” For example, **The caterpillar ate one rosy apple but he was still hungry!**

End the imitation stage by **performing the story for parents** using clear confident voices, and add the performance to the school website, etc.



The innovation stage

Warming up activities for the innovation stage:

- **Sentence jumble**: write a sentence and cut up each word. **The caterpillar ate one red apple but he was still hungry**. Ask the children to put the sentence in the right order. How do they know which word comes first. Discuss which word might come next and why? Orally rehearse the sentence to make sure it makes sense.
- Use **shared writing** to build the children’s sentence writing skills. Show the children a picture of an insect or bug next to a shed. Shared write a sentence e.g., **The red bug hid next to the shed**. Use the reading finger to re-read and check the sentence.
- Repeat the sentence jumble activity with a new sentence not taken from the story: e.g., **After two weeks, the butterfly will emerge from the cocoon**.
- Create jumbled sentences about a different minibeast, for example a spider. This will help the children start to think about different insects and mini beasts they can use to innovate on the story. Use “my



turn/your turn” for children to orally rehearse the sentences. Can the children improve the sentences they created?

- Use short-burst writing to create a spine poem about the spider. Present a great image of a spider and ask the children to look at it closely. List the features you are going to describe as the spine of the poem.

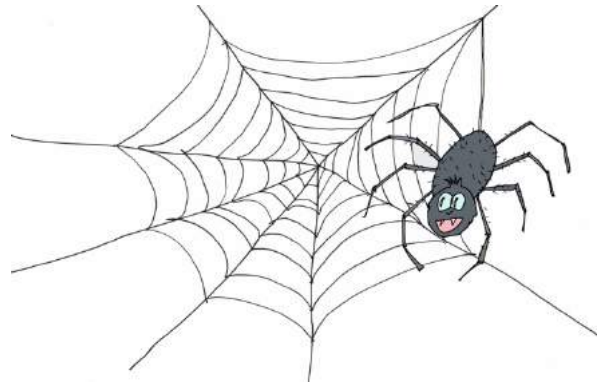
For example:

legs

eyes

body

Gather ideas from the children about the features they notice and use these to create your spine poem. For example:



The spider sits

Long legs spinning

Dark eyes peering

Black body bristling

The spider sits.

Now the children have internalised the story, they can innovate on it by changing some of the key characters or events. Cover parts of the story map with Post-it notes so the children can see what you are going to change. The picture here shows classroom provision – using the map to create our own innovated versions.



Provide a stimulus for the innovation. For example, go on a minibeast hunt to find an alternative insect or watch an online video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VdsagGvMKMo>

Have pictures of different minibeasts for children to look at, discuss and draw. Take their ideas and create a grid like the one below so that the whole class can then decide on an idea for the class to innovate with. Add the grid to the washing line so that children can magpie ideas from it when they write their own innovated version of the story.



How it starts Life	What it transforms into	Home it builds
lots of little eggs	woodlouse	piles of dry leaves
lots of little eggs	spider	cobweb
eggs	bees	beehive made of wax
lots of little eggs	ladybird	shelters under leaves or grass

Using ideas from the grid, change the text map like the example below for a very hungry ladybird. The more the children can see what you are changing, the more they will understand what to do when they come to make up their own version. (Post-it notes are great for substituting new ideas as long as they don't fall off!)



Adult-led activities

The children draw their own version of the innovated class story map or they do their own innovation and then tell it to an adult who will scribe it for them. Get the children to write part of the story if they can.

Activities to deepen understanding

- Add relevant fiction and non-fiction books to the classroom provision.
- Create an “interest table” or “curiosity cube” as pictured here.
- Add photographs of the life cycle of a butterfly alongside relevant non-fiction books and leaflets plus magnifying glasses ready for the arrival of the caterpillars!
- Add photographs of caterpillars and butterflies to art for observational drawing. The picture here of a child painting a butterfly is from a reception class in Briar Hill Primary, Northampton, another Talk for Writing training school.
- Provide blank story maps for children to write the story.
- Add to the interest table by creating the “information station” as pictured here.
- Encourage children to add diagrams/pictures they create of real facts about caterpillars and butterflies.



- Add labelled diagrams and photographs of butterflies – ask children to “look at them like a scientist” and create their own labelled diagrams.

- Ask them to observe the butterflies 'like a scientist' to produce accurate drawings. Talk about the shape of the wings to improve their detailed drawings.
- Add small minibeasts to small world to encourage ideas for innovating next week.
- Go on a minibeast hunt outdoors to find insects to develop ideas to innovate with.
- Add small-world items and blank story maps for children to create their own innovated story.



Independent application

Encourage the children to initiate their own independent work on the topic like the girl pictured here. She is using her map to write her story. (It was pyjama day!)

Others, like the girl pictured in the middle photograph, may choose to invent their own stories in classroom provision

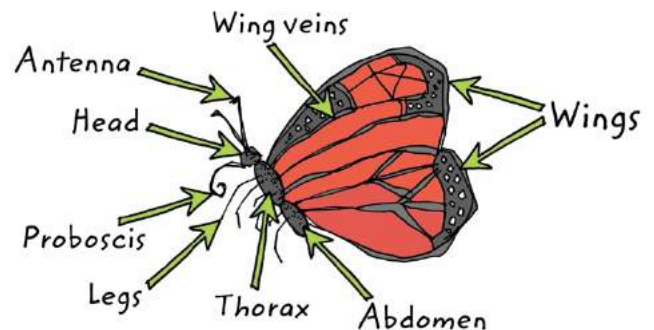
And, of course, what they have learnt can be applied across the curriculum – here you can see more scientists at work!

Celebrating their work

Read the innovated story, discuss the changes and celebrate the children's work. Share examples of the children's own work too and get the children to act out their stories.

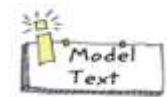


Part 2: Butterfly facts



Below is the information text that forms the heart of the second part of the unit. It will be introduced to the children as a text map (see page 20).

Butterflies



Butterflies are a type of insect.

What are they like?

Butterflies are beautiful, winged insects with six legs, four wings and two eyes.

What do they eat?

Did you know, butterflies do not eat, they drink? They use their proboscis like a straw to sip nectar.

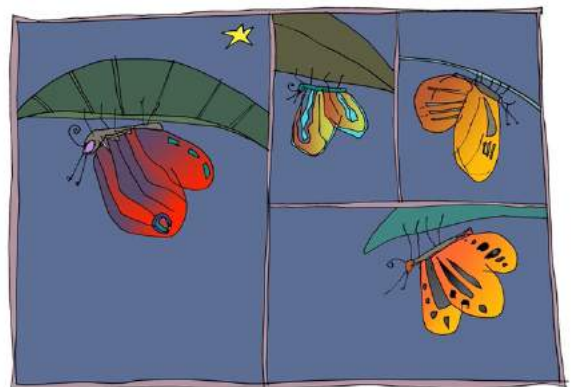
Where do they live?

At night, most butterflies perch underneath a leaf, crawl beneath blades of grass or hide under a rock to find shelter.

Did you know?

Butterflies do not have eyelids so they fall asleep at night with their eyes open!

Amazingly, butterflies do not have a nose! They use their antennae to smell where the flowers are.



See the reading & website recommendations on page 3.

Create an information station and interest table of non-fiction books, as illustrated below, to spark the children's enthusiasm so that they can find information about butterflies and other insects too!



Warming-up activities for part 2


antennae wings DECLINING
abdomen PROTECT VEINS

- Look back at the lists created at the start of the unit:
 - What did they know about caterpillars?
 - What did they notice?
 - What did they want to know?



- Create a list of the additional words to teach the children for this part of the unit; words that will need to become part of daily classroom life. Add the words to a sheet of paper for the washing line, adding pictures and photographs to deepen understanding.



- Help the children find the **key features of non-fiction texts**. Look at the text and how the facts have been divided up using subheadings. Read through the text and discuss the subheadings. Show the children an action for subheading.
- **Text jumble**. Cut up the different sections of the text, read each section in isolation – does it matter which order we read them in? Link this to how a contents page works in a non-fiction book. We don't always have to read it in order.
- Watch a video about butterflies then draw and label the parts of a butterfly. Can children tell you the different parts – *wing, head, antennae, proboscis, thorax, abdomen, feet*.
- Teach key **sentence starters/sentence signposts**: “*First, ... Next, ... Then, ... After that, ... and Finally,...*” so that these could be used in the innovation section. This could be done through news telling or through discussing the school day. For example, “*First, we will do our phonics. Next, we will play outside. Then, we will do some activities. After that, we will have lunch and finally, we will listen to a story.*”
- Use three pictures from the classroom visual timetable. Ask children to put them in the order of your school day. Orally rehearse the sequence using *First, ... Next, ... and Then, ...* to encourage full sentences.
- Teach vocabulary related to protecting butterflies. For example, *protect, declining, conservation, endangered*. Use the words in sentences and get the children to repeat the phrase. 
My turn – “*The number of butterflies is declining.*”
Your turn – children repeat the sentence to internalise the vocabulary. They can then choose to use this in their own compositions.
- Teach tier three vocabulary such as *pupa, chrysalis* and *metamorphosis*. Then play a game such as **Professor Know-it-all**. Children can put on a scientist's white coat and be Professor Know-it-all to tell the other children a fact about butterflies.
- Sentence starter games using the word *Amazingly*. Look at the sentence in butterfly facts which starts with *Amazingly, ...* as an example. Explain this is a great word to use in our writing. Ask children to think about what was amazing about our caterpillars. Take some ideas then shared write a sentence on the flip chart. Model the thought process as you sound out *a-maz-ing-ly* to spell it:

Amazingly, the caterpillar can build its own chrysalis!

Amazingly, the caterpillar changed into a butterfly!

- Sentence starters like *Amazingly* can also be used with something the children know well, for example – Spiderman! *Amazingly, Spiderman can scale the side of a building!*”
- Create a spine poem. Look at a close-up picture of a butterfly like this peacock butterfly.



What do you notice? Talk about the colour.

Give the children the sentence starter:

A butterfly's wing is ...

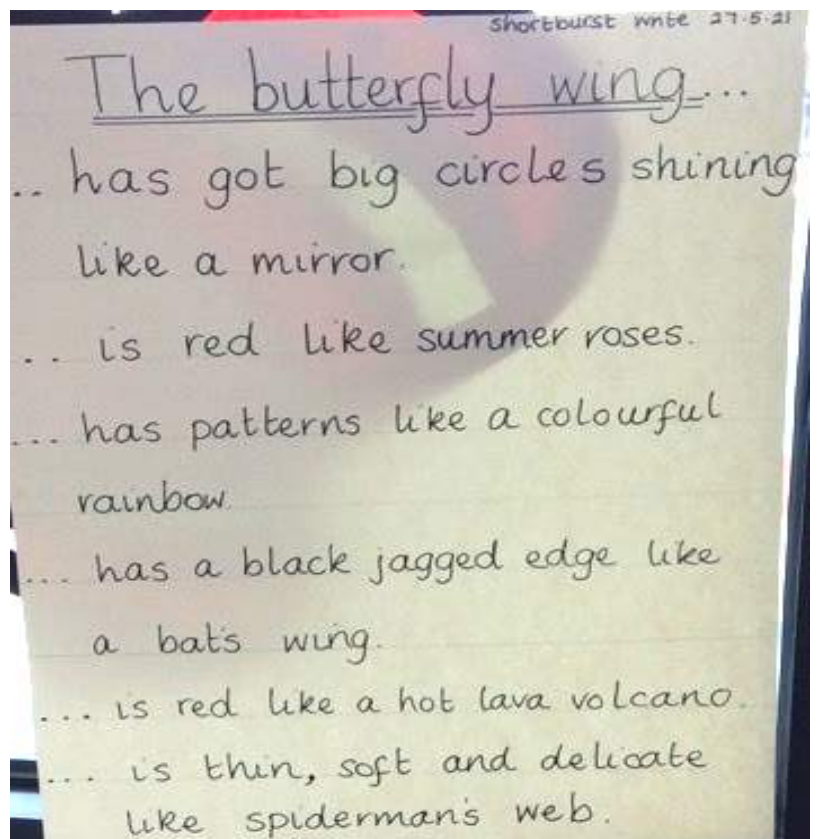
Then make a list of things that are colourful eg a rainbow, felt tip pens, smarties, flowers etc.

Now finish the sentence –

A butterfly's wing is as colourful as a rainbow.

A butterfly's wing is like a box of smarties.

Put all the ideas together as a poem and celebrate the children's achievement. See the example here.



Short-burst, spine-poem writing



Look at photographs of a dragonfly.
Do the children know what it is?
What do they notice e.g., *eyes, wings, body*.

Make a list of the features they notice – continue to discuss what insect it is before telling them it is a dragon fly.

Watch this short clip
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lw2dfjYENNE>

Then make a list of the features of the dragonfly to form the spine of your poem.

... *wings* ...

... *eyes* ...

... *body* ...

Get the children to suggest adjectives to describe each feature and what it is doing:

Beautiful wings like colourful lace

Huge round eyes look like they are wearing goggles

Its elongated body like a lollipop stick

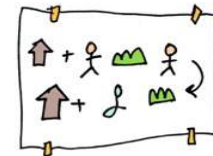
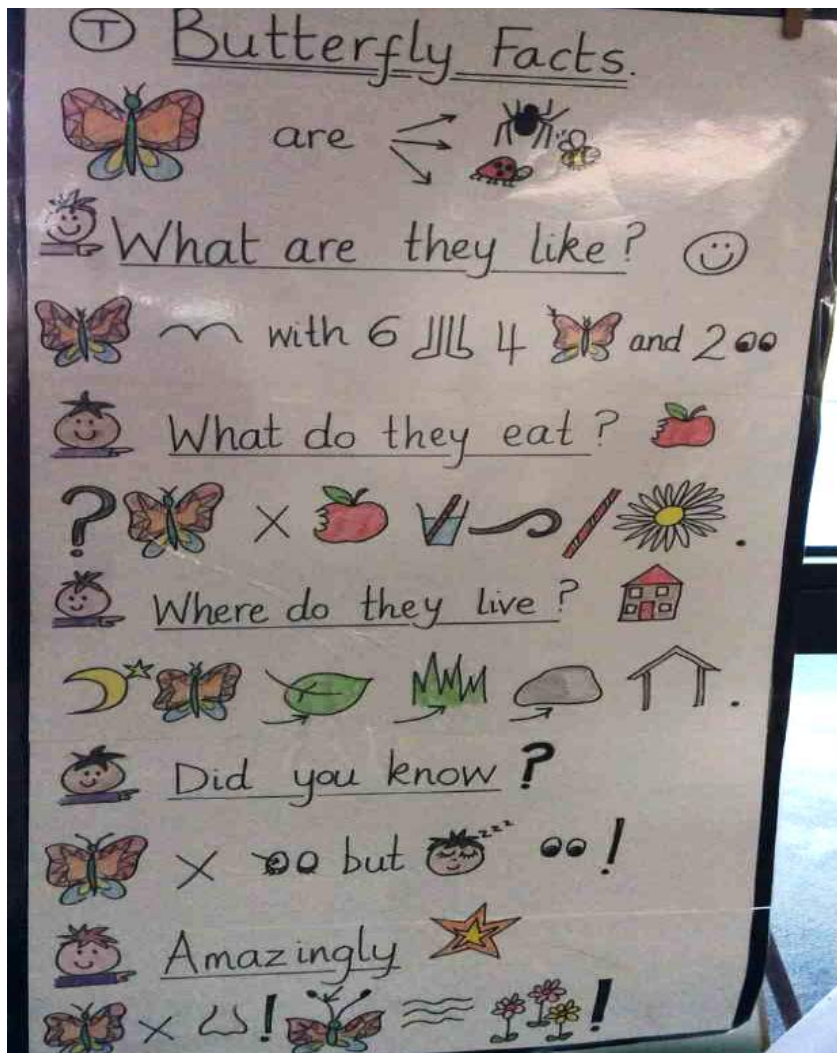
Then add *The dragonfly flies ...* as the first and the last line.
Finally, read out the spine poem the children have created.



The imitation stage

Internalising the tune of the model text

Here is the text map for our model text that we showed you at the start of this half of the unit (see page 15). Use the same internalising-the-tune approach as you used for the model text in the first part of the unit.



Read the text map with the children daily to internalise it and embed it thoroughly.

Encourage them to use a clear, confident voice.

Have fun with the text – split the class in half so they can listen to the other half tell the story. What do the children do well? What could be improved? Ask the children to give their recommendations.

Mime a line from the text – can the children guess what the line is? The children then have a go with their talk partner at miming lines from the text to help them internalise it.

Ask the children to draw their own version of the information text map and then tell it to an adult who will scribe it for them. Get the children to write down some of the information if they are able to do so.

Deepening understanding week 1

(See all the ideas on pages 13/14 and use any of the ideas you did not use earlier or adapt those that worked well to suit the new context.)

Other ideas for deepening understanding

- Add clipboards, magnifying glasses and insect viewing pots so children can be scientists and gather their own information about different minibeasts and insects.



Provide opportunities to learn about other minibeasts. Snails in a glass tank make great classroom pets as these pictures illustrate!



- Draw and label the parts of a butterfly. Can children tell you the different parts – *wing, head, antennae, proboscis, thorax, abdomen, feet.*

Deepening understanding week 2

- Find out about plants – grow flowers so the butterflies will be able to find some nectar.





The innovation stage - adding in information

Recap what we know about butterflies – what do we know that is missing from our report? Create a table so the children can see what they could add to the report.

Butterflies - what we know	Is this information already in our report?
What they look like	yes
What they eat	yes
Where they live	yes
How they protect themselves	no
Different types of butterfly	no
The life cycle of the butterfly	no
An interesting fact	Yes, but we could add a different fact

Decide as a class what information to add to the report. Keep all ideas on the washing line so that the children can write their own innovation later. Help the children internalise any new text from a text map as illustrated here.

The life cycle of a butterfly

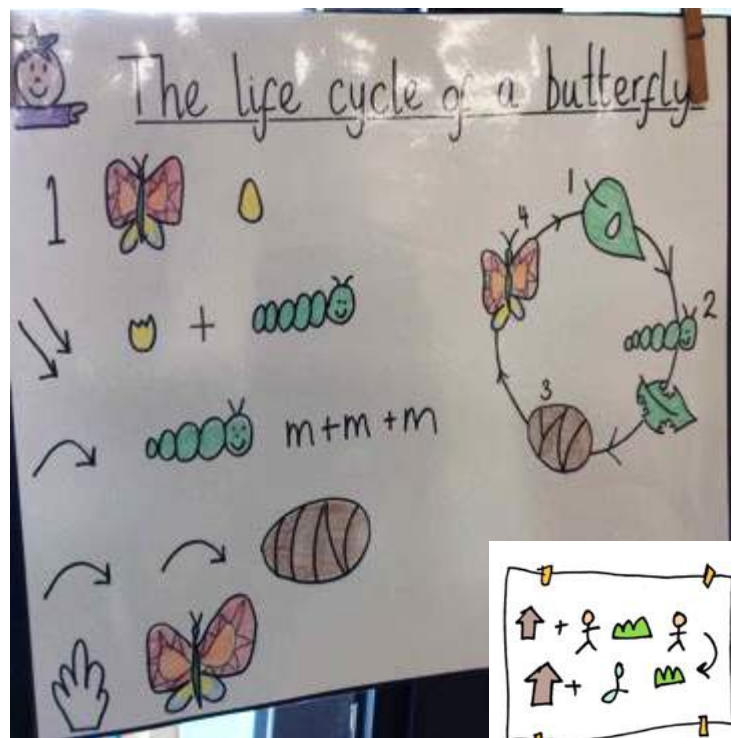
First, the butterfly lays an egg.

Next, the egg hatches and out comes a tiny caterpillar!

Then, the caterpillar munches and munches and munches.

After that, the caterpillar builds a chrysalis.

Finally, after two weeks, a beautiful butterfly emerges.



Adult-led innovation activities

The children draw their own version of the innovated information map or they do their own innovation and then tell it to an adult who will scribe it for them. Get the children to write part of the information if they are able to do so.

Deepening understanding week 3

- Model how to make and label a life cycle of a butterfly. Focus on the language of *First, Next, Then, Finally*. Provide lots of time to talk and embed understanding.



Celebrating their work



Share examples of the children's work. Revisit the questions the children wanted to know about butterflies – see page 5. Have we answered the questions? What do we know now? Flipchart what we have discovered and get them to draw pictures celebrating their new understanding.

Finally, celebrate the release of the butterflies back into their natural habitat. Create a sense of awe and wonder: this is a magical moment!



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