

Secret World of Butterflies

by Courtney Sina Meredith

Actively engaging children and families in shared reading experiences is an essential part of story time in libraries. Using specimens from Queensland Museum kits will enable early learners to develop STEM skills and science literacy. Here are some ideas to get you started

Before reading

- **Use** one of the butterfly specimen trays as a stimulus to share the book. Point out the many variations
- **Show** children the front cover of the book and share the title. Link to the specimen tray by telling children that the book will talk about all the different variations
- **Ask** children what they notice about the different butterflies in the illustrations
- **Ask** the group why they think the author has used the word “secret”?
- **Discuss** with families how there are lots of occasions during the story when they will be able to join in and give their thoughts and ideas on all the different butterflies in the book.

During reading

Choose 1 or 2 of these ideas

- **Invite** children to tell you the things that they noticed about the butterflies after sharing each page.
- **Point out the use of labels** on most pages. Explain to the group that labels are used to provide information about a picture. Sometimes it’s an explanation other times a specific butterfly name. Show children how labels are used on the Museum Kit specimens to provide specific information.
- **Stop and talk about interesting words** as you come across them. Invite children to tell you what they might mean first then explain using examples. E.g. Chrysalis (*it’s similar to*

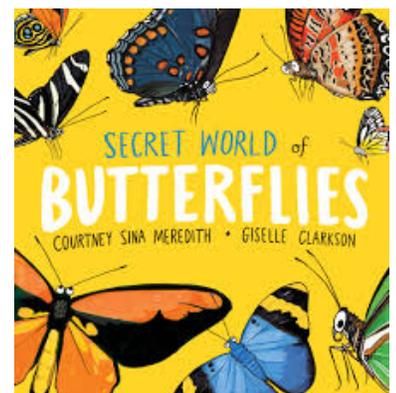
a cocoon – butterflies hatch out of a chrysalis, moths come out of a cocoon) iridescent (Let’s use the illustrations to help us work out what it means – are these butterflies a dull, dark colour or are they bright and shiny? Compare to the dark coloured butterflies on the opposite page), camouflage (see the butterflies hiding in the plants that are the same colour as them).

- **Discuss** some of the interesting concepts in the book and invite children to give their thoughts – how do you think the butterfly gets out of the chrysalis? How do you think the Julia butterflies drink crocodile tears? How do butterflies taste with their feet?

After reading

- **Ask** the children “what were some of the interesting things you learned about butterflies from reading the book?” You could record the children’s ideas on a whiteboard or piece of paper.
- **Explore** the specimens in the Museum Loan Butterfly kit to find any butterflies that are similar to any represented in the book.
- **Revisit** some of the different butterflies – talk about the shapes, colours, patterns and sizes of the wings. Encourage children to identify similarities and differences
- **Discuss** the “glossary” and factual information presented at the back of the book.

Key messaging for families – “Did you notice how I stopped and explained words and talked about sounds the children could hear? It’s ok to stop and explore different parts of a story as it helps increase children’s understanding of vocabulary and alphabet sounds



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Story response activities following library story time encourages families and children to interact, talk, play and create together. Below are some ideas for **Secret Life of Butterflies**. Choose any of the activities or add your own.

This is a great opportunity to also talk with families about what STEM learning looks like in the early years. During the story response activities children and families will be engaging with STEM when they:

- Explore and describe objects by attributes
- Record observations and share ideas
- Observe and describe scientific phenomena meaningful to children
- Observe, describe and represent seasonal changes for plants animals etc
- Investigate, describe/demonstrate various ways objects can move
- Explore and use simple tools and materials
- Build and create with loose parts and recycled materials

Idea	Stimulus
<p>Butterfly Loan Kit exploration</p> <p><i>Use the museum notes provided with the kit to guide your exploration. You could invite children to look for:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wings • Eyes • Legs • Body • Antennae 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observe, record and talk about the similarities and differences between the butterfly specimens • Did you know butterfly wings are covered in scales? Use the magnifying glass to look at the butterflies in the loan kit and see if you can see the scales. What are some other animals that have scales? How are they different to butterfly scales? • Butterflies have thousands of eyes – what do you think you would be able to see with a thousand eyes? • Some butterflies are coloured so that they can camouflage or blend in with the things around them – draw/create a butterfly that would camouflage with what you are wearing • Materials: Butterfly loan kit, magnifying glasses, coloured pens or pencils, clipboards if available
<p>Explore JNF books to explore different butterflies and moths</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talk about the difference between Picture books and JNF. Using items from the collection to show families. • Show children where the collection is kept. Go on a 'hunt' to find them and have others available for children/families to select. • Using the pictures in the JNF books, look for the similarities and differences between butterflies and moths. • Materials: Selection of Junior Non-Fiction books for children to explore
<p>Collage story play</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite children to create their own butterfly using collage materials • Talk about how butterfly wings are the same on each side – encourage

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	<p>children to think about how they can make the wings of their butterfly the same on both sides.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite children to cut around the outside of their butterfly if they would like to and attach string or wool to make them “fly”. • Provide a copy of the text for families to refer back to as they retell. • Materials: selection of collage materials, heavy card or paper, pictures of or books about butterflies, glue
<p>Butterfly drawings/paintings</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the Secret Life of Butterflies we were told that butterflies have thousands of eyes. Invite children to think about what they would be able to see with a thousand eyes? • Invite children to paint or draw how or what they could see with this many eyes. • Encourage parents/carers to talk with children about what they are representing in their colour artwork and write down their story. • Materials: Paper, felt pens/paints, pencils

Songs and rhymes to share during your story session:

Butterfly Butterfly

Tune: Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear

Butterfly, butterfly, flutter around,
Butterfly, butterfly, touch the ground,
Butterfly, butterfly, fly so free,
Butterfly, butterfly, land on me!
Butterfly, butterfly, reach the sky,
Butterfly, butterfly, say goodbye.

Flutter Flutter Butterfly

Tune: Twinkle Twinkle

Flutter, flutter butterfly,
Floating in the Autumn sky,
Floating by for all to see,
Floating by so merrily,
Flutter, flutter, butterfly
Floating in the Autumn sky.

You can change the season according to the time of the year.

Video of song [here](#)

Here Fly Go Up, Up, Up

Tune: Looby Loo (example in First 5 Forever dropbox [here](#))

Here we fly up, up, up,
Here we fly down, down, down,
Here we fly up, up, up,
Here we fly round and round.

Two Little Butterflies

Tune: Two Little Dickie Birds

Two little butterflies sitting on a hill
One named Jack, one named Jill
Fly away Jack, fly away Jill,
Come back Jack, come back Jill.

Two little butterflies sitting on a cloud
One named Soft, one named Loud
Fly away Soft, fly away Loud,
Come back Soft, come back Loud.

Video of rhyme [here](#)

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