

The Life Cycle of a Butterfly

The life cycle of a butterfly is amazing.

The Egg

A butterfly will lay its eggs on a leaf.



The Caterpillar

A tiny caterpillar eats its way out of the egg. They eat lots of leaves and grow very quickly.



The Chrysalis

The caterpillar turns itself into a chrysalis. The chrysalis turns hard over time.



The Butterfly

A butterfly comes out of the chrysalis. It waits until its wings have dried before it can fly.

Fun Facts!

- A caterpillar will shed its skin four or five times before it changes into a chrysalis.
- Caterpillars have 16 legs.
- Butterflies actually have four wings!

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Questions

1. Where does a butterfly lay its eggs? Tick one.

- ☐ in the water
- ☐ on a leaf
- ☐ in the soil

2. What does a caterpillar eat lots of? Tick one.

- ☐ leaves
- ☐ flowers
- ☐ wood

3. What do caterpillars turn themselves into? Tick one.

- ☐ a leaf
- ☐ a chrysalis
- ☐ an egg

4. What creature comes out of a chrysalis? Tick one.

- ☐ a fly
- ☐ a caterpillar
- ☐ a butterfly

5. How many wings do butterflies have? Tick one.

- ☐ two
- ☐ three
- ☐ four

Answers

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- ☐ in the water
- ☒ **on a leaf**
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- ☒ **a butterfly**

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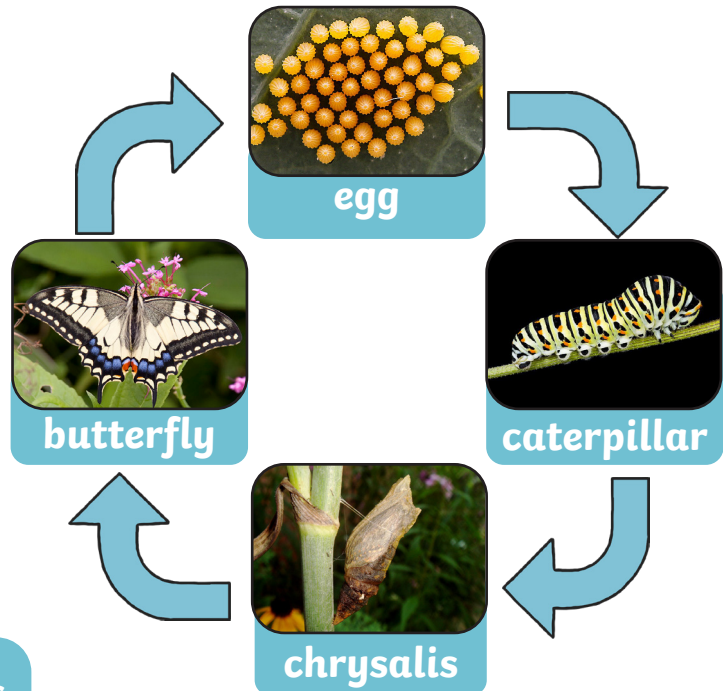
- ☐ two
- ☐ three
- ☒ **four**

The Life Cycle of a Butterfly

The life cycle of a butterfly is amazing.

From Egg to Caterpillar

- A butterfly lays her eggs on a leaf or the stem of a plant.
- Tiny caterpillars grow inside the eggs.
- When a caterpillar is ready, it eats its way out of the egg.



From Caterpillar to Chrysalis

- When the caterpillar is fully grown, it changes itself into a chrysalis.
- A chrysalis is the stage that happens to the insect after it is a caterpillar, but before it becomes a butterfly.
- The caterpillar changes into a butterfly inside the chrysalis.

From Chrysalis to Butterfly

- When the butterfly is ready, the chrysalis splits open and the butterfly crawls out.
- The butterfly needs to wait until its wings are dry before it can fly.
- The butterfly will find a mate and the life cycle will start again!

Fun Fact!

- Butterflies drink, rather than eat.
- They will drink nectar from flowers and sweet liquid from fruit.

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Questions

1. Where do butterflies lay their eggs? Tick one.

- ☐ on a leaf or stem of a plant
- ☐ on the ground
- ☐ on a tree trunk

2. How does a caterpillar get out of its egg?

3. When the caterpillar is fully grown, what does it do? Tick one.

- ☐ it turns into a butterfly
- ☐ it sheds its skin
- ☐ it changes itself into a chrysalis

4. Draw a line to complete the sentences.

The caterpillar changes
into a butterfly

• inside the eggs.

Butterflies drink,

• inside the chrysalis.

Tiny caterpillars grow

• rather than eat.

5. Complete this sentence.

The butterfly needs to wait until its wings are dry before it can

_____.

grow

fly

hatch

Answers

1. Where do butterflies lay their eggs? Tick one.

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- ☐ on the ground
- ☐ on a tree trunk

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The caterpillar eats its way out of its egg.

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- ☐ it turns into a butterfly
- ☐ it sheds its skin
- ☒ **it changes itself into a chrysalis**

4. Draw a line to complete the sentences.

The caterpillar changes into a butterfly	•	•	inside the eggs.
Butterflies drink,	•	•	inside the chrysalis.
Tiny caterpillars grow	•	•	rather than eat.

5. Complete this sentence.

The butterfly needs to wait until its wings are dry before it can **fly**.

The Life Cycle of a Butterfly

The life cycle of a butterfly is amazing. Read on to find out how a butterfly goes from an egg to a butterfly!

The Egg

The life cycle of a butterfly starts when a female butterfly lays her eggs on a leaf or the stem of a plant.

The eggs are very tiny, and different types of butterflies will lay eggs in different shapes, sizes and colours. Tiny caterpillars grow inside these eggs.



From Egg to Caterpillar

When a caterpillar is ready, it eats its way out of its egg. Caterpillars are always hungry and they will start to eat leaves straight away!

As the caterpillar eats more and more, it gets bigger and bigger. The caterpillar will need to shed its skin because it becomes too tight. A caterpillar may shed its skin four or five times as it grows!



From Caterpillar to Chrysalis

When a caterpillar is fully grown, it changes itself into a chrysalis. A hard case then forms around the chrysalis. Inside the case, the caterpillar starts to change into a butterfly.



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The Butterfly

When the butterfly is ready, the casing of the chrysalis splits open and the butterfly emerges (comes out).

The butterfly cannot fly straight away as its wings are soft, wet and wrinkled. The butterfly needs to wait until its wings are dry before it can fly.

The butterfly spends its time feeding from the nectar of flowers. It will also drink sweet liquid from fruit.

When it is ready, it will look for a mate and the whole life cycle of the butterfly will begin again!



Fun Facts!

- Most caterpillars have 16 legs.
- Caterpillars sometimes have tiny hairs on their bodies. This helps to protect them from predators.

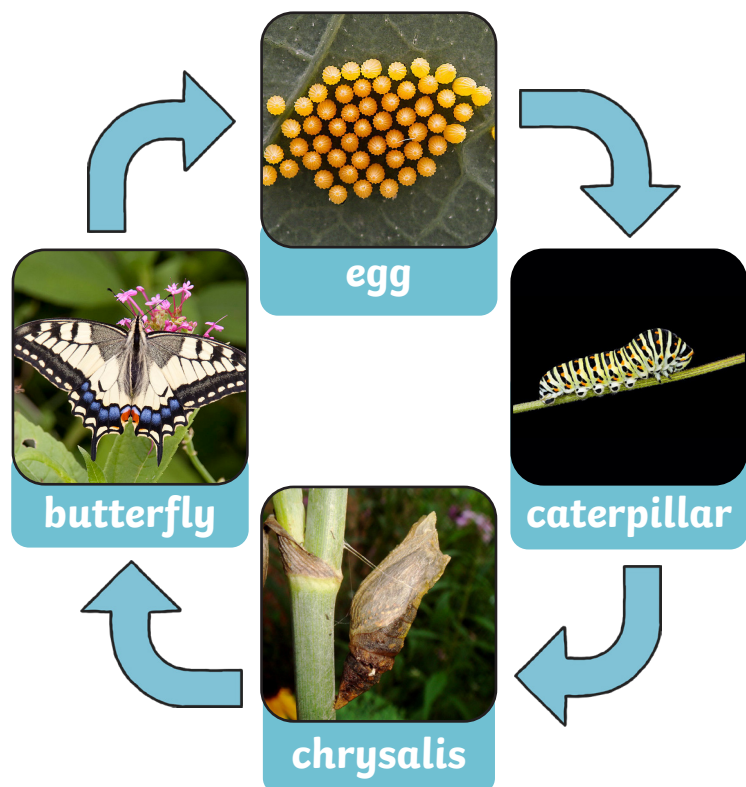


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Questions

1. Where does a female butterfly lay its eggs? Tick one.

- ☐ on a leaf or the stem of a plant
- ☐ in a nest
- ☐ underground

2. How does a caterpillar get out of its egg?

3. Draw a line to match each word with its description.

emerges

move out of something and become visible

nectar

an animal that hunts another animal or creature

predator

a sugary liquid found in flowers

4. In your own words, describe what a chrysalis is.

5. Which three adjectives are used to describe a butterfly's wings when it first emerges from its chrysalis?

- 1.

- 2.

- 3.

6. Why do you think that butterflies lay their eggs on leaves or stems of plants?

Answers

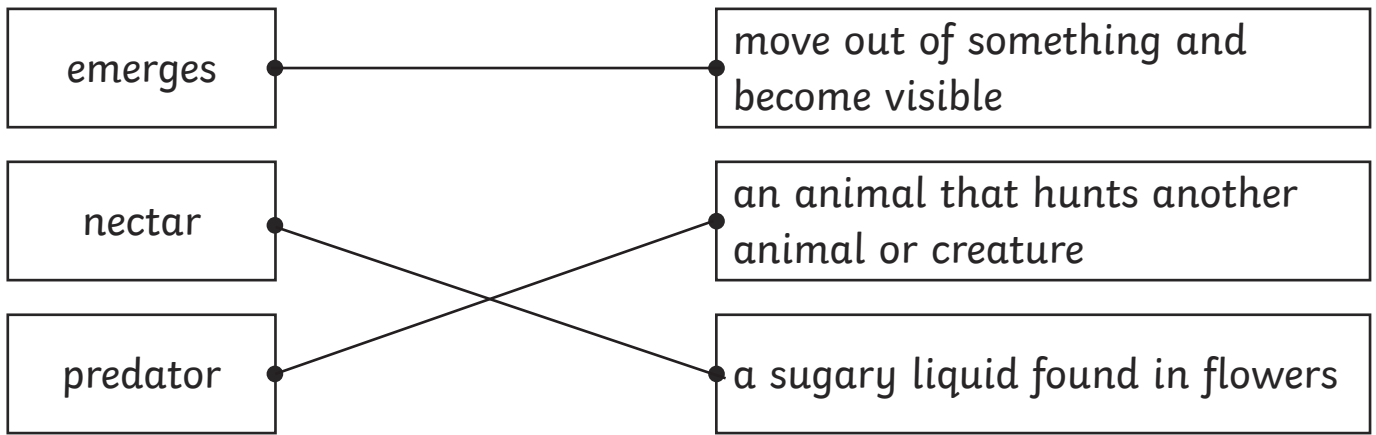
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- ☒ **on a leaf or the stem of a plant**
☐ in a nest
☐ underground

2. How does a caterpillar get out of its egg?

A caterpillar eats its way out of its egg.

3. Draw a line to match each word with its description.



4. In your own words, describe what a chrysalis is.

Children may phrase this in different ways.

A chrysalis is what a caterpillar changes into when it is ready to become a butterfly.

5. Which three adjectives are used to describe a butterfly's wings when it first emerges from its chrysalis?

Soft, wet and wrinkled

6. Why do you think that butterflies lay their eggs on leaves or stems of plants?

Answers should make reference to the importance of butterflies laying their eggs on leaves so that when the caterpillars hatch, they have food already available for them.