Ultimate Butterfly Activity

Time: **20 minutes**
Setting: **Whole Group**

Students will understand the life stages of the butterfly through a movement activity where they compete as butterflies to complete their own life cycle.

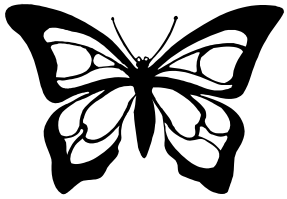
This activity is modeled after the game Rock, Paper, Scissors. Explain to students the 4 life cycle stages of a butterfly or moth. Each of these stages is represented by a movement or posture for this activity.

- Egg – holding your knees huddled near the ground
- Larva – crouching a bit taller than egg wiggling fingers like a caterpillar
- Pupa – hold hands palms together over your head in a pupa shape
- Butterfly – flap arms like wings

Practice the posture or movement for each life stage and then add the name of the stage – repeating it over and over again – i.e. egg, egg, egg…larva, larva, larva…pupa, pupa, pupa
Once students understand the stages and how they can show what stage they are in, review the rules of Rock, Paper, Scissors. Rock, paper, scissors, shoot!

All students begin the activity as eggs. Students must pair up with a similar life stage to play Rock, Paper, Scissors – egg with egg, larva with larva, etc. The winner advances into the next stage and searches for a new partner in that new life stage. The loser continues in the same stage and searches for another matching partner to play against until he wins and advances to the next life stage. Activity continues until all or most students have reached the butterfly stage.

Example: All students begin as eggs

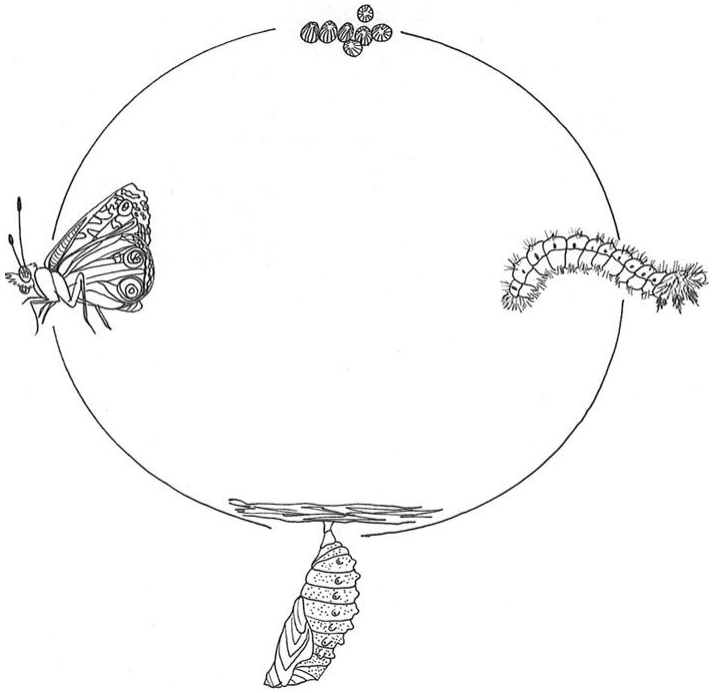


Round 1
Student A (egg) vs. Student B (egg) – A wins by chance
Student C (egg) vs. Student D (egg) – D wins by chance
Round 2
Student A (larva) vs. Student D (larva) – A wins by chance
Student B (egg) vs. Student C (egg) – C wins by chance
Round 3
Student D (larva) vs. Student C (larva) - D wins by chance and becomes the ultimate butterfly
Student A (pupa) finds another pupa
Student B (egg) finds another egg

To extend the activity length, once students become butterflies have them simulate laying eggs and then becoming that egg again (emphasizes the complete life cycle).

Journal:

- Ask students if everyone became a butterfly? If not, discuss if all real butterfly eggs become butterflies? (approximately only 2% of all eggs survive to adulthood)
- Was it harder for some students to advance to the next life stage? What challenges might a real butterfly face when undergoing metamorphosis? (predation, natural selection, tough environmental conditions, migration)



Painted Lady Butterfly Life Cycle
Drawing by Deborah Brooks