1st Grade Activity: Butterfly Life Cycle

Some animals, such as the butterfly, go through a transformation in their life cycle. Some animal babies do not look like the adults. (NGSS Disciplinary Core Ideas 1.LS3.A Inheritance of Traits)

Pre-Activity Questions

- What are some animal babies that look similar to their parents? What about some that look different?
- What are the different stages of human life?
- Can you name the different stages of life for a butterfly?

Activity

- A butterfly goes through metamorphosis during its life. Metamorphosis means the transformation between an immature form to an adult form. All insects go through a metamorphosis.
- All insects start out in an EGG. Once the egg hatches, the immature, or LARVA form of the insect emerges. In butterflies, we call this stage the caterpillar! To go through metamorphosis, the larva becomes a PUPA. This is when the caterpillar becomes a chrysalis. Once the metamorphosis is complete, the ADULT form emerges. The butterfly is out!

Illustrate a butterfly's life cycle with food!

Materials

- 1-3 dry beans or rice grains
- 1 elbow pasta, or other straight dry pasta
- 1 pasta shell
- 1 farfalle pasta, or other bow-shaped dry pasta
- Markers
- Elmer's glue
- 1 piece of paper or paper plate

Steps

1. Use your marker to draw a line down the middle of your paper or plate from top to bottom.
2. Use your marker to draw a line across the middle of your paper or plate from one side to the other.
3. Label the 4 different parts of your paper or plate: EGG, LARVA (caterpillar), PUPA (chrysalis), ADULT (butterfly)
4. Use your markers to decorate different parts of your paper with a plant.
5. Use Elmer's glue to glue the pasta into the correct parts of your paper
   a. Rice or beans on the EGG section
   b. Elbow pasta on the LARVA section
   c. Shell pasta on the PUPA section
   d. Farfalle (bow-shaped) pasta on the ADULT section

6. Let dry

Post-Activity Questions and Resources

- Challenge: Go out into your backyard or local park and see what stages of the butterfly's life cycle you can find.
- Can you identify the different stages of a butterfly's life cycle in this video?
- Many adult butterflies are happy eating many different kinds of flowers, but most caterpillars, like the monarch caterpillar, need a specific host plant to feed on when they're young. What can you do to help monarchs and other butterflies survive? Butterfly Gardening in the Bay Area.