

## Butterflies and Their Chrysalises (for age 7)

Butterflies start life as tiny eggs, become hungry caterpillars, then make a chrysalis, and finally come out as butterflies. Let's look step by step at what happens when a butterfly comes out and why the garden looks so pretty.

### 1. Inside the chrysalis

The chrysalis is like a cozy sleeping bag for the caterpillar. Inside, the caterpillar quietly changes. It looks different on the outside, but inside it is turning into a butterfly.

### 2. Time to come out

1. The butterfly wiggles and pushes until the chrysalis shell cracks open.
2. The butterfly carefully pulls itself out. At first its wings are soft and crumpled.
3. It hangs upside down and pumps a watery fluid into the wings so they unfold and get strong.
4. It waits quietly while the wings dry and harden. This can take a little while.

### 3. First flight and finding flowers

When the wings are ready, the butterfly flaps them and flies to flowers. Butterflies drink sweet nectar from flowers with a long straw-like mouth called a proboscis. While they sip, they carry tiny bits of pollen from flower to flower. This helps plants make seeds and new flowers.

### 4. Why butterflies make the garden pretty

- Butterflies add color with their wings — orange, blue, yellow, and more.
- They visit many flowers, helping the plants grow more flowers and fruits.
- Seeing butterflies makes a summer garden feel lively and happy.

### How you can watch and help

- Watch quietly and don't touch the butterfly when it first comes out.
- Plant butterfly-friendly flowers like milkweed, zinnias, lavender, marigolds, and buddleia (butterfly bush).
- Put out a shallow dish with a sponge soaked in sugar water or some fruit for them to drink from.
- If you find a chrysalis, keep pets and little hands away. Let the butterfly come out on its own.

### Fun idea

Draw the life cycle: egg, caterpillar, chrysalis, butterfly. Color the butterfly with bright patterns you like — imagine it visiting the summer flowers in your garden.

Remember: butterflies are delicate. Watching them quietly helps them grow and keeps the garden full of color.