

# WAITING FOR WINGS

## WAITING FOR WINGS

by Lois Ehlert

Themes: Animals, Growth and Change, Seasons and Nature

Grade Level: preK–3 (ages 3-8)

Running Time: 7 minutes

### SUMMARY

This program is a single poem in celebration of the butterfly's life cycle, illustrated with bold, brightly colored drawings that help build suspense and create excitement. The poem begins with butterfly eggs and follows the eggs as they hatch to caterpillars. We then see different kinds of caterpillars cover themselves with hard cases, hibernate and emerge as butterflies. Beautiful butterflies then head for a brilliant garden, where they feed on nectar until it is time to lay their eggs. After the end of the poem, the book contains a short science section, with paintings of common North American butterflies, facts about how and what butterflies eat and tips on how to grow a butterfly garden.

### OBJECTIVES

- Children will watch and listen to a visual poem about nature.
- Children will identify the stages in the life cycle of a butterfly.
- Children will identify common North American butterflies and flowering plants.

### BEFORE VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Read the title of the program out loud and ask children to speculate on what it means. Have children share what they already know about butterflies. If someone speculates that caterpillars are the ones

who are waiting for wings, suggest that everyone listen very carefully to see if that's where the title comes from. With very young children, you might also want to define a few key words from the poem: eggs, caterpillar, case and nectar.

### AFTER VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Ask children to recall the life stages of the butterfly as described in the poem. Replay the program to check if children remembered correctly. As you replay, point out visual details that might have been missed on the first viewing, especially what is happening to the various kinds of butterflies.

Connect the story to science by introducing the words life cycle, metamorphosis and habitat. Have children relevant sections of their science textbooks that show life cycles of butterflies and other insects. Then replay the program, this time without the sound. Challenge children to give scientific descriptions of how eggs turn into butterflies. Using the butterfly identification sections of the book (after the poem) compare the art to photographs in nature guides. If possible, raise caterpillars in the classroom so that children can observe the process in detail. Make arrangements with a local nature museum, botanical garden or commercial garden center in order to introduce children directly to plants that attract butterflies, including the flowering plants that are featured in the program. After children learn to identify some plants common to your area, have them find and identify similar plants in the neighborhood of your school. If possible, have children plant and care for a small butterfly garden.

Use the art in the program to motivate children to

use similar techniques. Have them make garden and butterfly pictures by cutting out shapes from colored paper, gluing them on white backgrounds, then shading the paper shapes with water colors, markers and colored pencils. For butterflies, leaves and flowers, show children how to fold paper in half before cutting, to achieve symmetry in the design.

For an amusing outdoor activity, challenge children to play a butterfly game. To play, you need a piece of chalk, an open playground area, and a whistle. The object of the game is to see how many butterflies can fly inside a "garden" without touching each other. Draw a fairly small chalk circle (about 12 feet across) to represent a garden. Inside the circle, draw several clusters of flowers, each cluster about 1-2 feet across. Show children how to pretend they are butterflies by flapping their arms and hopping from cluster to cluster. Players can rest their arms when they are on flower clusters, but must flap their arms and fly to another cluster when they hear the whistle. Have them line up and enter the garden one at a time, until the circle is full. If two players touch, they are both out of the game and a new butterfly can fly in.

Other videos and films about seasons and nature available from Weston Woods include:  
IN THE SMALL, SMALL POND, by Denise Fleming  
IN THE TALL, TALL GRASS, by Denise Fleming  
TIME OF WONDER, by Robert McCloskey

**CALL 1-800-243-5020 TO ORDER THESE AND OTHER WESTON WOODS VIDEOS!**

This guide may be photocopied for free distribution without restriction