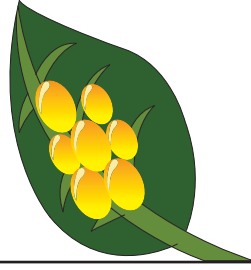


Name : _____

Life Cycle of a Butterfly

A female butterfly lays eggs on leaves or stems of plants. The shape, texture, and the hatching time vary depending on the type of plant. The eggs can be round, oval, cylindrical, and smooth or wrinkled. Inside these eggs are tiny baby caterpillars that hatch slowly.

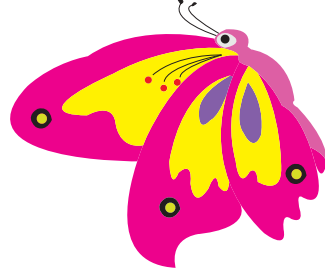


Eggs

The caterpillar breaks out of the egg. Its first meal is the eggshell. The caterpillar eats the leaves of plants around it. Its job is to eat and eat. As it keeps growing bigger, its skin becomes too tight and splits open, revealing a new, larger skin underneath. The caterpillar sheds its skin four to five times during this stage.



The butterfly that breaks out of the chrysalis has a head, thorax, and abdomen. It has six legs and two antennae, and prolegs that feed on nectar. It is not ready to fly until its wings are wet, soft, and hangs upside down all day long. The wings dry and the butterfly is ready to fly into the wings. Once flying, the butterfly forages for nectar, and is ready to start the cycle all over again!



Butterfly (Adult)

When the caterpillar is fully grown, it stops eating. It crawls to a safer place, under a leaf or a stem of a plant. The caterpillar attaches itself to the plant and turns into a chrysalis or pupa by forming a shell around itself. The hardened shell protects it from predators and extreme weather conditions while the tissue, limbs, and organs are developing inside.

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Chrysalis (Pupa)