

Building a Butterfly Barn

Discover caterpillar magic by watching caterpillars become butterflies right before your eyes! Your students can observe first hand the magic of metamorphosis with just a few simple steps. A butterfly barn is simple to construct. A large barn in the classroom is perfect on your science table or in your corner. Our students liked making their own butterfly barns at school, too. Whether you are building a classroom model or individual student barns, the steps are just the same.

Materials

aquarium OR a large clear plastic food container
(Our students each brought their own container from home. It had to be BIG, CLEAR, and ALL CONTAINER LABELS REMOVED)

damp soil

twigs

small pebbles

rock

small jar with lid

spray water bottle



Procedure

1. Make sure your container is nice and clean. Fill the bottom of the container with damp soil and a layer of pebbles.
2. Place inside a few twigs and a larger sized rock so the caterpillars have something to crawl on.
3. Have an adult poke several small air holes in the lid of the container. Also, make a few larger holes in the lid of the jar. Fill the jar with water, replace the lid. Put the jar inside the container.
4. If you are making a butterfly barn for each student, copy the following label on adhesive paper. Cut the labels out, record each child's name for identification, and stick the label to their barn. Now you are ready for a caterpillar or cocoon hunt!

Hunting For Caterpillars and Caring For Them

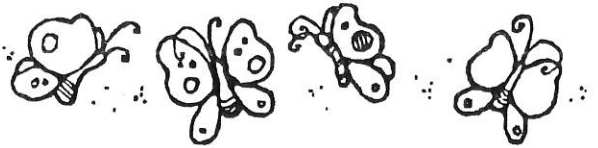
Take a walk in a garden or encourage students to go on a caterpillar hunt at home. Before you go out, talk about what caterpillars look like, their different colors, and how they protect themselves by camouflage. Look very closely and very carefully at the leaves! You might even find a chrysalis or cocoon while on your hunt! These should be handled with CARE and can also be placed inside your butterfly barn. When you have found a few visitors to put inside your barn, remember to feed them a fresh batch of leaves each day. Feed them the same type of leaves as they were feeding on when you found them. This is quite important! Collect a few stems with leaves from the plants and stick the stems through the holes in the jar lid with the water. The water will keep the stems fresh for about one day. Add fresh stems and spray gently with water daily.

Watch your caterpillars grow! Make sure they always have enough food. Soon, the caterpillars will change into a chrysalis or a cocoon. This may happen quickly or take up to several weeks. After they have emerged, release them in the cool morning time. Remove the lid and watch as they dry their wings and fly away.

ZIP...FLIP...FLY...BUTTERFLY!



Butterfly Barn



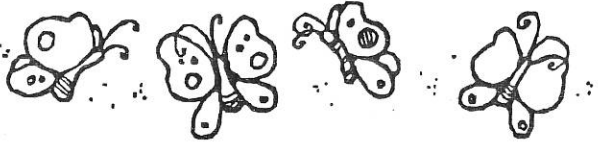
Butterfly Barn



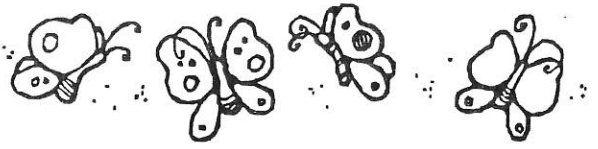
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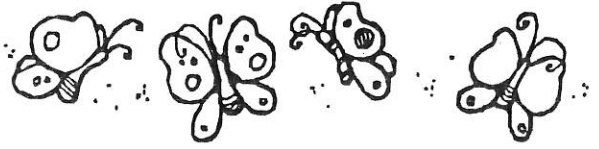
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These can be enlarged to any size you want!
Avery Label makes a full-sheet size label that makes it very convenient.