**Life Cycle of a Butterfly**

Let's take a look at how our Caterpillars are doing today! Remember how little they were yesterday? They have tripled their size in two days! If you grew as fast as a caterpillar - you'd be as tall as your Mommy and Daddy by Friday --- two days from now! Do you think that's possible for you?? NOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!!! It's a good thing children don't grow as fast as caterpillars!

A Life Cycle means all the parts of an animal's life -- that go around in a circle - or cycle from being born through growing up! So let's talk about Butterflies.

A Butterfly is not born as a butterfly!

A butterfly lays her eggs on a leaf. The eggs hatch and CATERPILLARS are born! Tiny little caterpillars eat ALL THE TIME for 5-10 days and they grow and grow and grow!!! They are shedding their skin all the time as the grow.

Once they are a full-grown caterpillar, they spin themselves into a cocoon or chrysalis. They hang from a leaf, or a tree branch, or just about anyplace for 7-10 days!

Inside the chrysalis, the caterpillar is changing through a process called METAMORPHOSIS!

Metamorphosis is when an insect or animals changes into a completely new type of insect or animal. So while the caterpillar is inside the chrysalis -- it is growing wings, front and back legs and longer antenae!

After the 7-10 days inside the chrysalis, you can see the butterfly's wings inside and you might even see the butterfly wiggling around a bit. Once it is ready, the butterfly pokes his wings out of the chrysalis and hangs upside down for a while to stretch-out his wings! The butterfly needs a little time for his wings to get used to flying! The wings on a butterfly are "symmetrical" -- meaning they are EXACTLY the same on both sides of the body.

THEN - the butterfly flies away and starts her job flying from flower to flower to drink the nectar from the flowers and spread flower pollen from plant to plant so more flowers will grow.

The Butterfly then prepares to start the life cycle all over again by laying her eggs on a leaf and producing more caterpillars!!

Classwork: The Life Cycle of a Butterfly --- color, cut and paste the life-cycle pieces together in the circle. Color the other pictures of butterflies! Be sure you make the butterfly wings match on both sides!