

# The Classroom Caterpillars

PM Level 13

Green

**Text Type** Narrative

**Running Words** 220



## Preparing for Guided Reading

### Orientation to the Text

- Bring a swan plant (milkweed) into the classroom and talk about the monarch butterfly's life cycle. Discuss photographs that show the four stages of the cycle.

### Prior Knowledge

- A problem arises when Katie, and her friend Anna, find some very hungry caterpillars have eaten all the swan plant leaves. Problem solving helps young readers think critically about how meaning is conveyed.

### Key Language Structures

- Adverbs and adverbial phrases add meaning to the nouns in the text, e.g. *now*, *On Monday morning*, *from home*, *one day*.

## Building the Balanced Reader

### Vocabulary

#### Key High-frequency Words

*Miss, more, them, under*

#### Content Words

*caterpillar, chrysalis, nibbled, pumpkin, swan*

### Decoding

- Encourage automatic recognition of high-frequency words. Remind students that this allows them to focus on meaning.
- Build upon students' phonemic awareness and their knowledge of letter-sound relationships. Ensure they are transferring this knowledge when decoding or confirming unfamiliar words.

### Fluency and Phrasing

- Observe the strategies students are using to integrate meaning, language structures and visual information as they read. Explicitly teach students who require further support to crosscheck, confirm or self-correct when meaning needs to be regained.
- Emphasise reading with fluency that encompasses understanding. Remind students to adjust the pace of their reading when they encounter new vocabulary.

## Focusing on the Book – Guided Reading

- Read the title and discuss the cover illustration. Identify Katie from previous **PM Plus** stories.
- Talk about the illustration before reading the text. Discuss the need to care for living things.
- Talk about the beginning of the life cycle. Observe the tiny white eggs under the leaf.
- Notice how Katie's caterpillar is much bigger than the others. Observe how their sizes change and the swan plant becomes bare! Are students able to offer Katie solutions?
- Discuss the meaning of the word *chrysalis*. Talk about the satisfactory ending to the story and the anticipated completion of the life cycle.
- Revise the names for days of the week.
- Encourage self-monitoring by using the illustrations to check meaning.
- Discuss the plural: *leaf*, *leaves*.
- Make a list of adjectives that describe size, e.g. *big*, *bigger*, *little*, *tiny*.
- Make a vocabulary list of key words from the story, e.g. *caterpillar*, *swan plant*, *chrysalis*, *butterfly*.

## Comprehension

- What did Katie bring to school in a box? (*Literal*)
- What happened to the caterpillars after a few weeks? (*Inferential*)
- What was Katie's caterpillar doing at the end of the story? (*Inferential*)

## Follow-up Activities

- Discuss how the text confirms the three stages of the monarch butterfly's life cycle. Discuss the fourth stage together. Show students how to record the stages on strips of paper folded into four.
- Bring a swan plant (milkweed) into the classroom. Ensure that monarch butterflies have laid eggs on the leaves. Watch the hungry caterpillars grow bigger and bigger! Count the number of days it takes for a chrysalis to turn into a butterfly. Observe how the butterflies dry their wings before flying away.
- Study photographs of butterflies. Identify the symmetrical designs. Have students draw butterflies with symmetrical designs on their wings.
- Grow some swan plant seeds in containers and observe their development.

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## Learning Intentions

- We are learning to use speed, volume and pitch to correctly interpret the text when reading aloud.
- We are learning to think beyond what we are reading.

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## Success Criteria

- I can make changes to my speed, volume and pitch to indicate my understanding of the text.
- I can make predictions and justify them with evidence from the text and/or prior experiences.

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## Guided Reading Notes

Student's name	Reading focus	Observations/notes	For follow-up