Monarch butterfly

Observe

Choose 1–3 tasks. Point, say or draw; writing is optional.

1 · Look

Point to black veins and white spots. What looks similar on the two sides?



An adult monarch illustration, not a field identification.

2 · Choose

Name the stages from the egg. After the caterpillar, is there a pupa or an adult?



Egg, caterpillar, pupa, adult; different scales.

Pupa first | Adult next

3 · Choose

Caterpillars eat milkweed; adults drink nectar. Do they need the same food?

The same | Different

4 · Write

Find “Caterpillar” on the knowledge card. Say it; write it if you wish.

Caterpillar

5 · Draw

Draw two stages. Link them with an arrow and label one change.

6 · Record

A change I notice: ____
Food at two stages: ____
I wonder: ____ (or draw/say)

Monarch butterfly

Discover

A monarch’ s life

The monarch butterfly is Danaus plexippus. Its larva and adult have different forms.

Recognize the adult



Individuals vary · Illustration is not a measurement

- Orange wings; black veins and borders; white spots
- **Similar species:** color alone cannot identify one
- **Wingspan:** spread tip to tip; individuals vary
- **Wingspan range:** 8.5 to 12 cm

Reproduction · the next generation

Mature adults mate → Female lays eggs → Caterpillars hatch

- **Egg site:** milkweed, often underneath leaves
- Adult ≠ ready to breed; some migratory generations delay
- **Diagram scope:** No fixed timetable; fertilised eggs begin the next generation

Monarch butterfly

Discover

Living conditions

- **Meadows, gardens:** host plants + nectar
- **Local occurrence:** check first

Two foods

- Caterpillar ← milkweed
- Adult ← nectar from many flowers
- **Other butterfly larvae:** different foods

First half





Egg → **Caterpillar**

- Hatch → eat milkweed → grow → pupate

- **Diagram scope:** Four stages; sizes and times not to scale

Complete metamorphosis





Pupa → **Adult**

- Body changes inside pupa → emergence → nectar feeding

- **Partly known:** Two feeding links

- Different image scales; no fixed timetable
- Feeding links only, not a complete food web
- Watch with an adult; no catching, touching eggs/pupae or tasting plants

Sources: Florida Museum • USFWS • MJV