

# MoNA

Museum of Northwest Art

## Caterpillar to Butterfly Painting

A HANDS-ON ART ACTIVITY  
DESIGNED BY MONA  
EDUCATORS

**Age:** Pre-Kindergarten

**Lesson Duration:** One Hour

**Subjects:** Insects, Butterflies & Painting



Student example

Image Source: Museum of Northwest Art

### Description

This activity allows students to explore the transformation of a caterpillar to a butterfly. After engaging in a class discussion and reading Eric Carle's *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*, students will complete a hands-on activity with paper, paints and popsicle sticks. Use the artwork, *Butterfly* by Eric Parnell (Haida Gwaii Nation), to encourage learner's observation of symmetry and bold colors as they begin the lesson!

### Materials

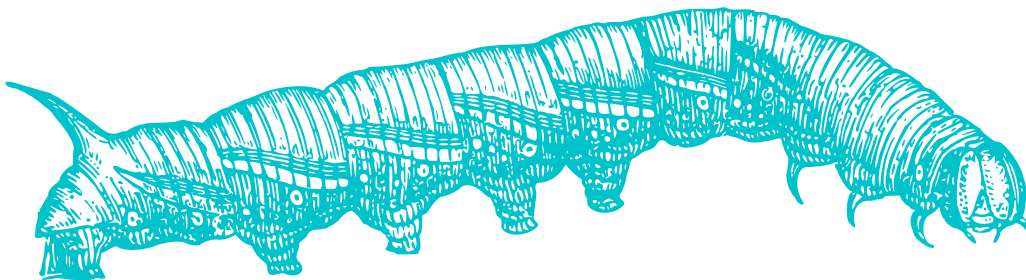
- Butterfly shaped paper (one per student, precut & folded, template included)
- Butterfly life cycle chart (included)
- Markers
- Popsicle sticks (one per student)
- Tempera paint in primary colors
- Paint dot brushes or paint brushes
- Glue
- *Butterfly* by Eric Parnell image (full size version included at the end of this lesson)
- Optional: Paint smocks or table covers.



Eric Parnell (Haida Gwaii Nation), *Butterfly*

## Instructions

- 1) Start discussion by asking for student's prior knowledge of caterpillars and butterflies. Here, you may want to reference the Butterfly Life Cycle Chart (included in this lesson).
- 2) As a class, read *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* by Eric Carle.
- 3) Have students create a 'caterpillar' using their markers and popsicle stick, then set aside.
- 4) Review color mixing by explaining how to mix two primary colors to make a secondary color.
- 5) Give each student their pre-cut and folded butterfly paper.
- 6) Using the dot or paintbrushes, apply paint to **one** wing of the butterfly. Do not go past the middle fold of the paper.
- 7) Gently fold the butterfly, pressing both sides together to transfer the paint from one wing to the other.
- 8) Open the butterfly, and add symmetrical dots to the butterfly's wings if desired.
- 9) After the paint dries, glue the caterpillar popsicle stick to the center of the butterfly.

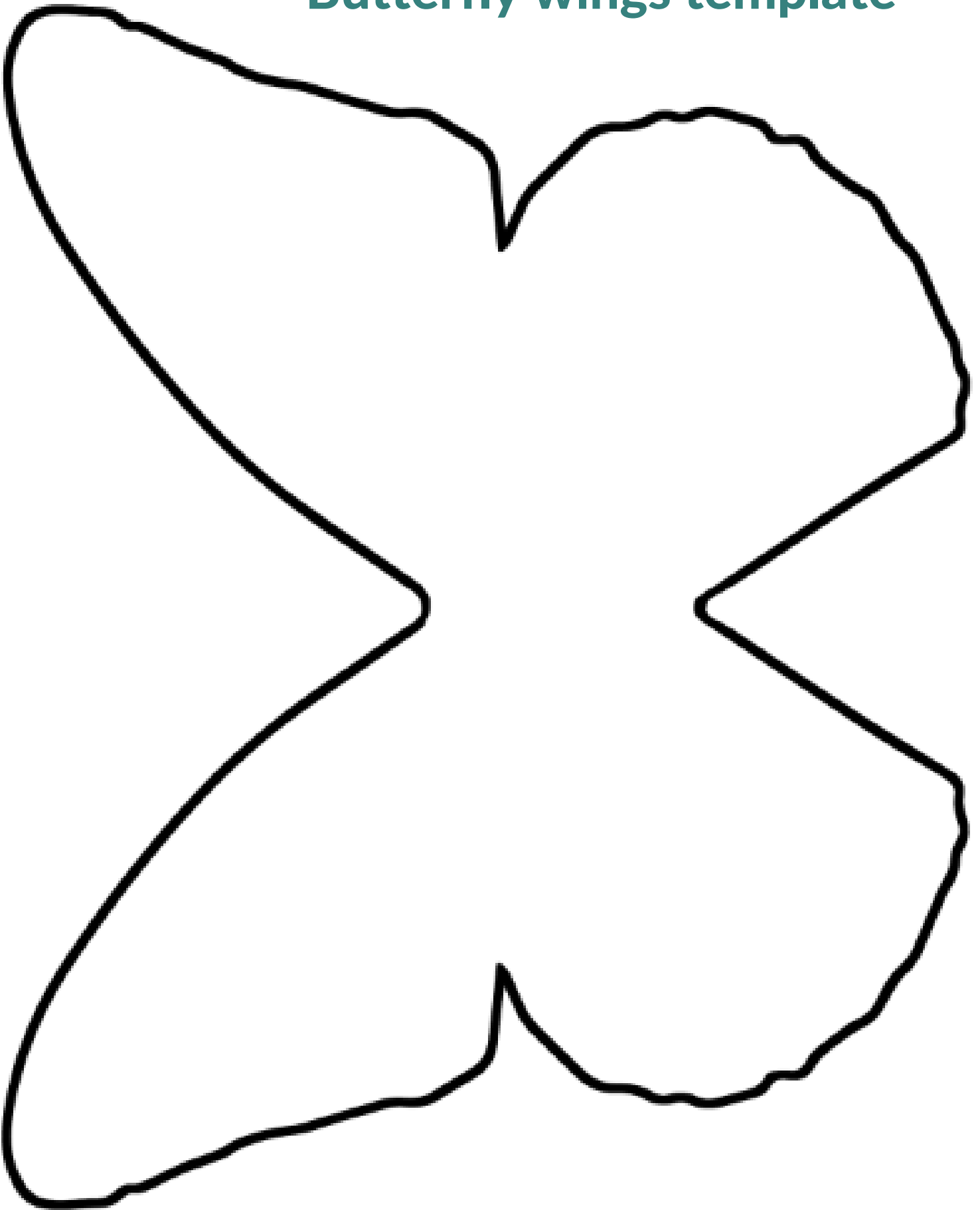


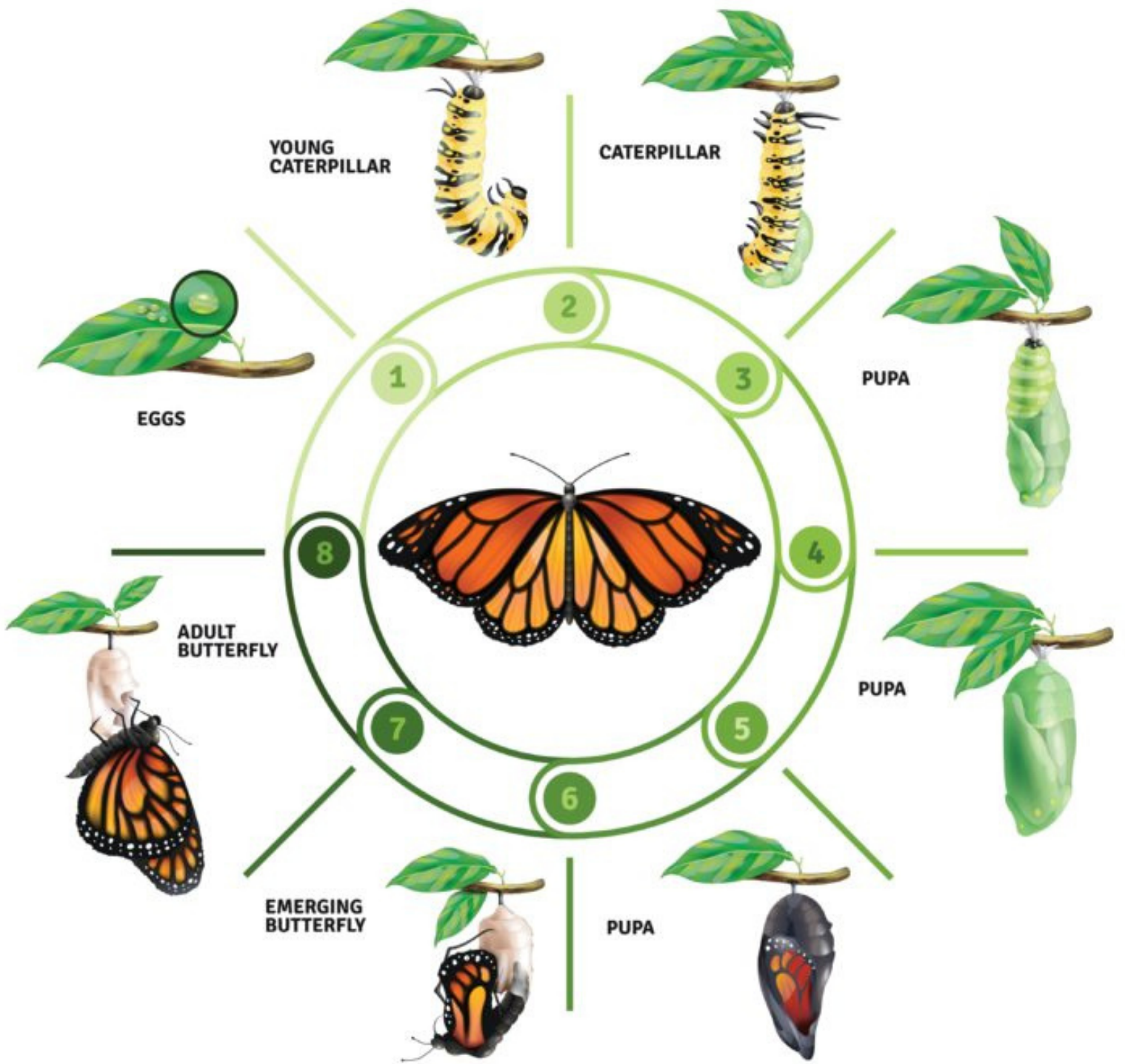
## Learning and State Standards

Fulfills **Washington State Arts Learning Standards:**

- **VA:Cr2.1.K:** Through experimentation, build skills in various media and approaches to art-making.

# Butterfly wings template





Butterfly life cycle

Image credit: <https://www.waxpolhotels.com/tag/butterfly-life-cycle/>



Eric Parnell (Haida Gwaii Nation), *Butterfly*

Image credit: <https://gallery.urbanaboriginal.org/butterfly-13834079.html>