

Metamorphosis and Variation in Life Cycles

READ ALOUD PASSAGE

Some animals go through a dramatic change in their body during their life cycle. This is called metamorphosis. Butterflies and moths go through four stages: egg, larva, pupa, and adult. The larva, which is a caterpillar, looks completely different from the adult butterfly. Inside the pupa, the body completely reorganizes itself into the adult form.

Frogs also go through metamorphosis. A frog starts as an egg, hatches into a tadpole that breathes through gills and swims like a fish, and then gradually grows legs and loses its tail as it develops into an adult frog that breathes air.

Within any group of animals, every individual is a little different from the others. No two frogs, butterflies, dogs, or people look exactly alike. These differences are called variations. Offspring look similar to their parents, but they are not identical. Variation within a species means that some individuals will be better suited to their environment than others.

Variation is very important in nature. It is the reason why some animals survive better than others, which over many generations can lead to changes within a species.

Activity 1

Fill in the blank with the correct word from the word box.

WORD BOX

metamorphosis larva pupa variation offspring

1. A dramatic change in an animal's body during its life cycle is called _____.
 2. The caterpillar stage of a butterfly's life cycle is called the _____.
 3. Inside the _____, the caterpillar's body reorganizes into an adult butterfly.
 4. Differences among individuals of the same species are called _____.
 5. _____ look similar to their parents but are not identical to them.
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Activity 2

Because / But / So Complete each sentence three different ways.

No two animals in a species look exactly alike because

.....

No two animals in a species look exactly alike but

.....

No two animals in a species look exactly alike so

.....

Activity 3

Combine the short sentences below into one smooth sentence.

1.
 - Butterflies go through four stages.
 - These are egg, larva, pupa, and adult.
 - This is called complete metamorphosis.

Combined sentence:

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2.
 - No two animals in a species look exactly alike.
 - Each one has slightly different traits.
 - This variation is passed down from parents.

Combined sentence:

.....

Activity 4

Circle True or False for each statement.

1. **True / False** Metamorphosis is a dramatic change in body form during a life cycle.
2. **True / False** Frogs go through complete metamorphosis just like butterflies.
3. **True / False** A caterpillar is the larva stage of a butterfly.
4. **True / False** All members of a species look exactly identical to one another.