

Butterfly Lion - Michael Morpurgo

Information Gap Activity

1. What do you know about butterflies?	2. How do species become endangered?	3. Why is it important to remember the First World War?
5. How have people made permanent memorials?	6. What was the worst feature of trench warfare?	

Designed as a pre activity to reading to clarify the themes of the book.

Butterflies

White Lions

Trench Warfare

Chalk Downland

Boarding Schools



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This activity was developed as a prequel to reading or as an encouragement to reading this transition text.

The webaddress for this activity is: <http://www.collaborativelearning.org/butterflylion.pdf>

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COLLABORATIVE LEARNING PROJECT

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Supporting a cooperative network of teaching professionals throughout the European Union to develop and disseminate accessible teaching materials in all subject areas and for all ages.

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BRIEF SUMMARY OF BASIC PRINCIPLES BEHIND OUR TEACHING ACTIVITIES:

The project is a teacher network, and a non-profit making educational trust. Our main aim is to develop and disseminate classroom tested examples of effective group strategies across all phases and subjects. We hope they will inspire you to use similar strategies in other topics and curriculum areas. We run teacher workshops, swapshops and conferences throughout the European Union. The project publishes a catalogue of activities plus lists in selected subject areas, and a newsletter available by post or internet: "PAPERCLIP".

*These activities were influenced by current thinking about the role of language in learning. They are designed to help children learn through talk and active learning in small groups. They work best in mixed classes where children in need of language or learning support are integrated. They are well suited for the development of speaking and listening . They provide teachers opportunities for assessment of speaking and listening and other formative assessment.

*They support differentiation by placing a high value on what children can offer to each other on a particular topic, and also give children the chance to respect each other's views and formulate shared opinions which they can disseminate to peers. By helping them to take ideas and abstract concepts, discuss, paraphrase and move them about physically, they help to develop thinking skills.

*They give children the opportunity to participate in their own words and language in their own time without pressure. Many activities can be tried out in mother tongue and afterwards in English. A growing number of activities are available in more than one language, not translated, but mixed, so that you may need more than one language to complete the activity.

*They encourage study skills in context, and should therefore be used with a range of appropriate information books which are preferably within reach in the classroom.

*They are generally adaptable over a wide age range because children can bring their own knowledge to an activity and refer to books at an appropriate level. The activities work like catalysts.

*All project activities were planned and developed by teachers working together, and the main reason they are disseminated is to encourage teachers to work effectively with each other inside and outside the classroom. They have made it possible for mainstream and language and learning support teachers to share an equal role in curriculum delivery. They should be adapted to local conditions. In order to help us keep pace with curriculum changes, please send any new or revised activities back to the project, so that we can add them to our lists of materials.

Butterfly Lion Jigsaw Activity - Notes for Teachers

Collaborative Reading Materials with an information gap.

There are four different texts with a common question sheet. The principle here is that readers will be unable to complete the questions by simply using the information in their version, but will have to collaborate with other readers, asking questions and eliciting information, possibly arguing and negotiating. Some of the questions are factual but others try to be open ended. There is also a good opportunity for reading to draw on previous knowledge. The answer space on the question sheet is deliberately cramped to encourage notes rather than whole sentences. You may decide to produce your own version of the answer sheet and your pupils could help you.

We have outlined the following procedure, but you can reorganise things in a variety of ways. You can possibly arrange to pair slower readers with faster ones etc. You could start with threes rather than pairs etc. It depends on your knowledge of the class.

The class can work first in pairs or threes or fours. To start the activity only the question sheet is handed out and groups are encouraged to see what questions they may have some answers to. Each group member then is given a text sheet: within groups they have copies of the same text. The important thing is that the texts are equally spread across the class. E.g. A quarter of the pupils have Sheet A, another quarter Sheet B etc. . Pairs/groups can read the text silently first, and then to each other, and then work together to answer as many questions as they can. They all have to produce a sheet with answers.

You will need to number the individuals in each group or give them an identity e.g. an animal card so that they can move to meet up with other pupils with different texts to form a group of four; i.e. they jigsaw. Each participant has either Sheet A, Sheet B etc. They need to take their partly filled question sheets with them. If you print each text on a different colour you will find organising things easier. You can easily see whether they have got into the correct groups. They can then go on to complete the questions by interrogating each other.

If you are thinking about producing your own information gaps, and I hope you do, you may find it easier if you try this method. Find a suitable whole single text containing the information you wish to teach. Formulate a series of questions for the text. Produce three or four texts where the factual and inferential information is shared between them. Some overlapping of information is fine. You can of course, where appropriate, include visual material, graphs, maps etc.

Butterfly Lion Text A

Boarding School

Would you like to go to boarding school? Most children who went did not have much choice. Sometimes they were orphans and were sent there by relatives or guardians. Sometimes parents believed that their children needed to develop strength and independence. Sometimes families lived in the British colonies, in India or Africa, and decided to send their children to school in England.



In the early nineteenth century boarding schools were harsh places. Dickens described one in *Nicholas Nickleby* called Dotheboys Hall. It was based on a real school. Boarding schools improved, but they were never going to be like home. Pupils did everything at the same time. They ate every meal in a large dining room. The food was often boring and overcooked. They did 'prep' together. They slept in dormitories. Children that lived abroad often spent some holidays in school. They also spent time with relatives or strangers rather than travel a long way home.

In many schools the big children were expected to look after the small ones. Often they bullied them instead. Many children had bad memories of their boarding schools.

Michael Morpugo has written about a child called Bertie, who was sent to boarding school. His family lived in Africa and he had raised a white lion from a cub. He hated school and ran away one day.



Butterfly Lion Text B

White Lions

White lions are considered by some to be a different species of lion. Others consider them to be a genetic variant. They are very rare and only found in Timbavati which is now part of the Kruger National Park in South Africa.

The last white lion in the wild died in 1994. They were first discovered in 1938 and then hunted and killed. They are now preserved and bred in captivity. Some people believe that their whiteness does not help them to hunt for food, and that it would be impossible for them to survive in the wild.

Many other animals are endangered species. They are kept going by special breeding projects. In many cases the environment they lived in exists no more, so they will never be able to live in the wild again. Lions live longer in captivity and are larger than those in the wild. They are not aggressive and make friends with their keepers.

Animals have been kept in captivity for centuries. Kings and queens used to give each other lions and other wild animals. The Tower of London had a menagerie for six hundred years. Circuses used to specialise in training animals to entertain audiences



Butterfly Lion Text C

Trench Warfare

Trench warfare developed very rapidly during the First World War. The two armies stopped in one area and dug in. They then shot shells at each other. After a shelling men rushed across no man's land to capture the enemy trench. Gas was also sent across. Many lives were lost and very little movement took place.

Trenches were wet and cold. They were full of rats and other vermin. Shells destroyed all forms of life and left large holes which filled with water. Behind the trenches there were field hospitals. Some were in tents and some in large houses. You reached them by crossing mud on duckboards and walking for miles past ruins.

Many men were shell shocked. They may only have been slightly injured, but their minds were destroyed by the noise and horror. Their memories of life and death in the trenches stayed with them all their lives.

Michael Morpurgo has written several stories about the First World War. He wrote about Private Peaceful, a man who was shot for refusing to obey an order which would have killed his comrades. He also wrote about Bertie Andrews who was injured in France while helping to save the lives of other soldiers. As a result found an old friend near his hospital.



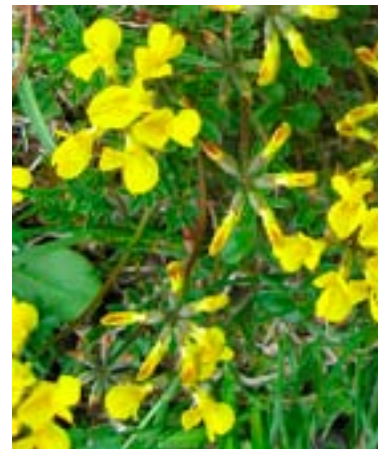
Butterfly Lion Text D

Butterflies, Chalk Downland and White Horses

Adonis Blue butterflies eat only one plant: the horseshoe vetch. The males have brilliant sky-blue wings, while the females are brown and far less conspicuous. Both sexes have distinctive black lines that enter or cross the white fringes to the wings. Despite its restricted distribution, the butterfly can be seen in many hundreds on good sites. They stay together in flocks and from a distance look like patches of blue.

The horseshoe vetch grows on chalk downland. The white chalk is near the surface and for thousands of years people have used it to leave reminders of their presence. The white horse of Uffington is a famous one and the Greenwich dog is a less famous one. At the moment the internet is full of chalk memorials to dead pop stars.

In the Butterfly Lion, Michael Morpurgo combined these ideas. Bertie and his wife made a chalk memorial to their white lion. After rain the blue butterflies descended to drink and the lion appeared to turn blue. The movement of the butterflies made the lion look alive.



Butterfly Lion - Question sheet with spaces for answers in note form.

1. What do you know about butterflies?	2. How do species become endangered?	3. Why is it important to remember the First World War?	4. Name two bad and two good aspects of boarding school.
5. How have people made permanent memorials?	6. What was the worst feature of trench warfare?	7. Why do people like lions a lot?	8. How does Michael Morpurgo construct a story?
9. Should animals be kept in captivity?	10. Why do writers write about war?	11. Why do some people prefer other animals to humans?	12. Do we treat animals in a different way nowadays - better or worse?