

Monarch Madness

Incorporating a butterfly garden to attract Monarch butterflies in a playspace provides opportunities for education and enrichment.

Age Appropriateness:

2-5, 5-12, 13 and up

Key Topics:

Life cycle,
Migration,
Symmetry,

Skills:

Recalling details,
Compare and Contrast,
Fact or Opinion,
Sequencing

Materials:

Booklets, scissors, glue,
chart paper, milkweed,
potting soil, containers,
maps of US and Mexico,

Time Considerations:

2-3 hours

Resources:

Video: "The Incredible Journey"

Tiny Caterpillar by: Arabella Miller & Hurry and the Monarch by Antoine Ó Flatharta

[Abcnews.go.com](http://abcnews.go.com)
(search for Monarch Butterflies)

OBJECTIVES

- To understand the lifecycle of the Monarch.
- To determine the migratory path of the Monarch.
- To learn what the caterpillar eats and understand its growth cycle.



Preparation

- Show a picture of a Monarch butterfly and ask the kids if they know what kind it is.
- Talk about why butterflies are so important.
- Review the butterfly lifecycle with the youth. Also discuss what the butterfly eats.
- Discuss the migratory pattern of the Monarch.
- Discuss the winter habitat.

Action

- Have youth make a flip book of the lifecycle stages— egg, caterpillar, chrysalis, butterfly.
- Have the students research and then plant their own milkweed from seeds to begin their own butterfly garden.
- Have students map out the migration pattern of the Monarch (flies 50 miles a day to a town near Mexico City).
- Create a project to show deforestation— list things we use wood for, explain problems of deforestation, make posters and banners to save the forest and the Monarchs. Show video "The Incredible Journey."

Reflection

Ask students what they learned about Monarch butterflies. Have them share their projects or display them in their school/community. Students can grow their own butterflies and release them into their new butterfly garden.