Revised First Grade Comprehensive Lesson Plan

"Bella-Brown—Grandma's Missing Butterfly Locket" by J.W. Zarek

Overview

This comprehensive lesson plan utilizes "Bella-Brown—Grandma's Missing Butterfly Locket" to engage first-grade students in cross-curricular learning. The plan integrates literacy, science, social studies, mathematics, and art while exploring the themes of butterfly diversity, global awareness, family relationships, and memory. Activities are designed to match the developmental capabilities of typical first graders (ages 6-7) with appropriate scaffolding and challenge opportunities.

Learning Objectives

Literacy Objectives

- Students will identify main story events and sequence them correctly
- Students will make predictions and connections to the text
- Students will practice using descriptive words in simple sentences
- Students will identify story elements (characters, setting, problem, solution)
- Students will apply phonics skills to butterfly-related words

Science Objectives

- Students will identify basic parts of a butterfly (wings, antennae, body)
- Students will describe the butterfly life cycle in simple terms
- Students will compare butterfly characteristics (color, size, habitat)
- Students will make observations and simple predictions

Social Studies Objectives

- Students will locate continents on a world map
- Students will identify 1-2 countries from the story with visual support
- Students will explore family traditions and keepsakes
- Students will connect personal experiences to those in the story

Mathematics Objectives

- Students will collect and represent data with simple graphs
- Students will measure using non-standard units
- Students will practice skip counting by twos (butterfly wings)
- Students will identify and extend patterns

Art/Creative Objectives

- Students will create butterfly art using various techniques
- Students will design their own special "locket" with meaningful images
- Students will use descriptive words in their creative expressions

Materials Needed

Books and Reading Materials

- "Bella-Brown—Grandma's Missing Butterfly Locket" by J.W. Zarek
- Simple non-fiction books about butterflies at various reading levels
- Leveled readers about butterflies for guided reading groups

Classroom Supplies

- Chart paper and markers
- Student journals/writing notebooks
- First grade lined writing paper with drawing space
- Drawing paper and art supplies
- Scissors, glue sticks
- Butterfly word wall cards
- Simple world map focused on continents
- Butterfly life cycle diagram

Craft Materials

- Construction paper in butterfly colors
- Tissue paper in various colors
- Pipe cleaners

- Craft sticks
- Watercolors and brushes
- Small paper plates (for locket craft)
- Yarn
- Butterfly templates for students who need support

Science Materials

- Magnifying glasses
- Butterfly picture cards showing different species
- Life cycle sequence cards
- "Butterfly Observation Journals" (pre-made booklets)

Math Materials

- Butterfly counting cards
- Pattern blocks in butterfly colors
- Simple graphing templates
- Non-standard measuring tools (cubes, paper clips)
- Butterfly measurement activity sheets

Day 1: Story Introduction and Butterfly Exploration

Morning Meeting (15 minutes)

1. Introduce the book "Bella-Brown—Grandma's Missing Butterfly Locket"
2. Activate prior knowledge: "What do you know about butterflies?"
3. Record responses on a KWL chart (Know, Want to learn, Learned)
4. Introduce key vocabulary with pictures: locket, butterfly, journey
5. Phonics connection: Identify the blend "fl" in butterfly words (fly, flutter)
6. Movement break: Butterfly stretches

Read-Aloud and Discussion (20 minutes)

1. Read the first part of the story (through the phone call and first memory)

2. Model making predictions: "What do you think will happen next?"
3. Focus on the Red Wing butterflies in China
4. Discussion questions with visual supports:
    - "Why is Grandma Yetta's locket important to her?"
    - "What was special about the butterflies in China?"
5. Create a simple anchor chart: "Butterflies in the Story"

Guided Reading Groups (15 minutes)

While other students work at butterfly centers:

1. Meet with small groups based on reading levels
2. Use leveled texts about butterflies
3. Focus on first grade reading skills (phonics patterns, sight words)
4. Practice retelling with beginning, middle, end

Butterfly Life Cycle Science (15 minutes)

1. Introduce the butterfly life cycle with simple diagram
2. Discuss how all butterflies start as caterpillars
3. Model sequencing life cycle cards
4. Students work in pairs to sequence their own life cycle cards
5. Vocabulary focus: egg, caterpillar, chrysalis, butterfly

Butterfly Map Introduction (15 minutes)

1. Show a simple world map with clear continents
2. Locate your state/region
3. Introduce just two locations from the story:
    - Asia (focusing on China) for Red Wing butterflies
    - North America (focusing on Arkansas) for Monarch butterflies
4. Use visual butterfly markers on the map
5. Simple discussion: "Are these places near or far from where we live?"

Butterfly Writing (15 minutes)

1. Model a simple sentence about butterflies
2. Provide sentence frames with visual supports:
    - "The _____ butterfly is _____."
    - "I like the _____ butterfly because _____."
3. Students write 1 sentence and draw a picture
4. Support for early writers: word bank with butterfly colors and simple descriptive words
5. Extension for advanced writers: "Write another sentence about where this butterfly lives."

Closing Circle (10 minutes)

1. Review what we learned about butterflies today
2. Quick share: "Tell your partner one thing you remember about butterflies."
3. Preview tomorrow's activities

Day 2: Sensory Exploration and Story Continuation

Morning Meeting (15 minutes)

1. Review yesterday's learning with a quick butterfly fact recall
2. Phonics game: Sort butterfly words by beginning sounds
3. Add to the KWL chart: "What have we learned about butterflies?"
4. Introduce simple sensory words with actions:
    - Sound: "tink-tink" (pretend to ring chimes)
    - Touch: "soft" and "heavy" (demonstrate with objects)
5. Movement: Butterfly migration movements

Read-Aloud Continuation (20 minutes)

1. Quick review of story so far using picture cues
2. Continue reading about Japan and Colombia adventures
3. Create a simple story map with pictures and words:

    - Characters: Bella, Grandma Yetta
    - Settings: Places they saw butterflies
    - Problem: Missing locket
4. Discussion with partner talks: "How were the butterflies different in each place?"

Butterfly Problem-Solving Challenge (15 minutes)

1. Present a simple design challenge: "How could Bella carry her butterfly pictures?"
2. Model brainstorming ideas
3. In small groups, students draw or build a solution
4. Share ideas with the class
5. Connect to the locket in the story: "The locket was a way to keep something special."

Sensory Butterfly Stations (20 minutes)

Set up four stations with clear visual directions:

Station 1: Color Station

- Materials: Red and blue tissue paper, markers
- Activity: Create butterfly wing patterns
- Simple question prompt: "Which colors did you use?"

Station 2: Sound Station

- Materials: Small wind chimes, listening center with butterfly sounds
- Activity: Draw what the sounds make you think of
- Simple question prompt: "What did you hear?"

Station 3: Touch Station

- Materials: Various textured materials (silk, rough fabric)
- Activity: Sort materials by how they feel
- Simple question prompt: "How do these feel?"

Station 4: Pattern Station

- Materials: Orange and black pattern blocks
- Activity: Create and extend butterfly color patterns
- Simple question prompt: "What comes next in your pattern?"

Rotate students through stations (5-6 minutes each)

Butterfly Math: Skip Counting and Measurement (15 minutes)

1. Show a butterfly picture
2. Count butterfly wings together: "2, 4, 6, 8"
3. Demonstrate measuring butterfly pictures using linking cubes
4. In pairs, students measure 2-3 butterfly pictures
5. Simple recording sheet: "This butterfly is ___ cubes long."

Phonics Connection (15 minutes)

1. Create a list of butterfly words from the story
2. Circle targeted phonics patterns (blends, digraphs)
3. Practice sorting words by patterns
4. Students create their own butterfly word cards for word work center

Closing Circle (10 minutes)

1. Share observations from stations
2. Review vocabulary with movement cues
3. Preview tomorrow's activities

Day 3: Story Conclusion and Projects

Morning Meeting (15 minutes)

1. Review what we've learned about butterflies
2. Quick phonics warm-up: Clap the syllables in butterfly words
3. Movement activity: Act out butterfly life cycle
4. Preview the day's activities

Read-Aloud Conclusion (20 minutes)

1. Review story events with picture cues
2. Read the final part of the story (Arkansas butterflies and surprise ending)
3. Complete the story map with:
    - Final setting: Butterfly garden
    - Solution: Grandma found the locket and gave it to Bella
4. Discussion with think-pair-share: "How did Bella feel at the end? How do you know?"
5. Create a 3-part story sequence (beginning, middle, end) with class

Guided Reading Groups (15 minutes)

While other students work at centers:

1. Meet with small groups based on reading levels
2. Focus on comprehension strategies
3. Practice retelling events in sequence
4. Connect butterfly facts to story events

Butterfly Comparison Science (15 minutes)

1. Show pictures of two butterfly types from the story
2. Model comparing: "This butterfly is red. This one is blue."
3. Create a simple class Venn diagram with pictures and words
4. In pairs, students complete a simplified comparison worksheet:
    - "Butterfly 1 is _____"
    - "Butterfly 2 is _____"
    - "Both butterflies _____"

Family Traditions Discussion (15 minutes)

1. Return to the story: "Why was the locket special to Grandma Yetta?"
2. Show examples of special family items (photos)
3. Think-pair-share: "Do you have something special in your family?"

4. Draw a picture of a special family item or tradition
5. Label drawing with words or simple sentence
6. Extension option: Write about why it's special

Butterfly Locket Art Project (25 minutes)

1. Demonstrate how to make a simple paper "locket":
    - Fold paper plate in half
    - Decorate the outside with butterfly designs
    - Draw something special inside
2. Provide clear step-by-step visual directions
3. Offer pre-cut shapes for students who need support
4. As students work, circulate and ask about their designs
5. Partner share: "What did you put in your locket? Why is it special?"

Butterfly Data Collection (15 minutes)

1. Simple class survey: "Which butterfly from our story do you like best?"
2. Students place their name card on a pictograph
3. Count the results together
4. Ask simple analysis questions:
    - "Which butterfly did most students choose?"
    - "Which butterfly did fewest students choose?"
    - "How many students chose the red butterfly?"

Closing Celebration (15 minutes)

1. Butterfly parade with locket projects
2. Share in small groups: "My favorite part of the butterfly story was..."
3. Complete the "L" section of our KWL chart
4. Read a favorite passage from the book one more time

Assessment Strategies

Formative Assessment

- Observation during discussions and activities
- Quick checks during station rotations
- Review of simple written responses
- Partner sharing observations
- Thumbs up/down comprehension checks

Summative Assessment

- Butterfly comparison simple worksheet
- 3-part story sequence activity
- Butterfly life cycle ordering
- Simple labeled drawing of family tradition
- Locket project completion

Documentation

- Collection of butterfly drawings and writing
- Photos of station activities and projects
- Anecdotal notes during guided reading
- Simple self-assessment: "I can..." checklist with butterfly facts

Differentiation Strategies

For Students Needing Additional Support

- Provide sentence frames and word banks for all writing
- Offer picture supports for vocabulary
- Use pre-drawn templates for art projects
- Reduce the number of tasks at stations
- Provide step-by-step visual instructions
- Use teacher proximity during independent work
- Pair with supportive peers

For Advanced Learners

- Encourage writing multiple sentences
- Introduce additional butterfly facts
- Provide more complex pattern activities
- Offer research opportunities with simple butterfly books
- Create a butterfly fact book
- Add measurement with standard units
- Design additional butterfly habitat features

For English Language Learners

- Preview key vocabulary with pictures and gestures
- Provide native language support when possible
- Use consistent visual supports
- Accept drawing and pointing as valid responses
- Pair with supportive peers
- Model language structures repeatedly
- Incorporate realia and hands-on experiences

Cross-Curricular Connections

Technology Integration

- Use simple drawing apps for butterfly designs
- Listen to recorded butterfly sounds
- View short butterfly video clips
- Take photos of completed projects

Music and Movement

- Butterfly life cycle movements
- Songs about butterflies with motions
- Cultural music from story locations as background during art

Social-Emotional Learning

- Discuss family relationships
- Explore the concept of special memories
- Practice describing feelings
- Make connections to personal experiences
- Discuss how Bella felt throughout the story

Home Connection

Family Engagement

- Send home a simple family interview: "What is special in our family?"
- Share photos of classroom butterfly activities
- Suggest looking for butterflies at home
- Provide a list of simple butterfly books at the library
- Send home butterfly word cards for practice

Extension Activities

- Simple butterfly observation sheet for home use
- Family butterfly coloring activity
- Invitation to share family traditions or keepsakes

Additional Resources

Book Connections

- "The Very Hungry Caterpillar" by Eric Carle
- "Butterfly House" by Eve Bunting
- "Where Butterflies Grow" by Joanne Ryder
- Simple non-fiction butterfly books

Online Resources

- Age-appropriate butterfly videos (1-3 minutes)
- Simple interactive butterfly activities

- Virtual butterfly garden tours

Community Connections

- Local butterfly gardens or nature centers
- School garden butterfly plants
- Local library butterfly book display

Teacher Reflection Questions

After implementing the lesson, consider:

1. Which phonics connections were most effective?
2. How did students respond to the simplified geography concepts?
3. Was the writing support sufficient for all learners?
4. Which sensory experiences most engaged students?
5. How well did students make personal connections to the story?