Kindergarten Comprehensive Lesson Plan

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

Overview

This 3-day comprehensive lesson plan uses "Bella Brown—Grandma's Missing Butterfly Locket" to engage kindergarten students (ages 5-6) with butterflies, simple geography concepts, family relationships, and memory skills. The plan balances structured learning with movement opportunities and incorporates kindergarten-level math, literacy, science, and social-emotional learning standards.

Learning Objectives

- Students will identify and describe butterflies from the story using color words
- Students will distinguish between "nearby places" and "faraway places" on a simple map
- Students will sequence the events of the story using temporal words (first, next, last)
- Students will count and create patterns using butterfly-themed materials
- Students will identify beginning sounds in butterfly-related words
- Students will connect the story to their own family experiences
- Students will use their senses to explore story elements

Materials Needed

- "Bella Brown—Grandma's Missing Butterfly Locket" book
- Simple world map showing continents (not individual countries)
- Story sequence cards (3-4 main events from the story)
- Pictures of the 4 butterfly types labeled by color:
    - Red butterflies
    - White butterflies
    - Blue butterflies
    - Orange and black butterflies
- Chart paper and markers

- Butterfly counting cards (1-10)
- Art supplies for butterfly craft:
    - Coffee filters
    - Watercolor markers
    - Spray bottles with water
    - Clothespins
    - Pipe cleaners
- Sensory materials in bins:
    - Red fabric pieces
    - Small wind chimes
    - Blue cellophane
    - Orange and black tissue paper
- Drawing paper and crayons
- Butterfly pattern cards
- Letter cards for beginning sounds (B, F, W, L)
- Butterfly life cycle picture cards
- Simple butterfly graphing activity sheet
- Music for movement breaks

Vocabulary Focus

- Butterfly colors: red, blue, orange, black, white
- Positional words: first, next, last
- Geography terms: near, far, map, world
- Family terms: grandmother, special, gift
- Descriptive words: flutter, colorful, soft
- Locket and keepsake

Day 1: Butterflies and Story Introduction

Morning Meeting (15 minutes)

1. Gather students in a circle and introduce the topic of butterflies.
2. Quick sound game: "Butterfly begins with /b/. Let's think of other words that begin with /b/."
3. Show pictures of butterflies from the story, focusing on colors.
4. Count butterfly wings together: "Each butterfly has how many wings? Let's count: 1, 2, 3, 4."
5. Movement activity: "Let's be butterflies! Curl up small and then stretch out your wings!"

Read-Aloud (20 minutes)

1. Show the book cover and read the title: "Bella Brown—Grandma's Missing Butterfly Locket."
2. Picture walk through the book, asking students to notice the butterflies.
3. Read the story, pausing occasionally to check comprehension:
    - "What is Bella looking for with her grandma?"
    - "What color butterfly did they see here?"
4. After reading, create a simple chart of the butterfly colors from the story.
5. Count how many different butterfly colors they saw.

Movement Break: Butterfly Colors (5 minutes)

1. Assign different movements to different color butterflies:
    - "Red butterflies fly high!"
    - "Blue butterflies fly low!"
    - "Orange butterflies spin around!"
    - "White butterflies flutter in place!"
2. Call out colors for students to move accordingly.

Near and Far Places (15 minutes)

1. Using a simple world map, point to your location: "This is where we live."

2. Point to other continents: "These are places far away, like where Bella and Grandma Yetta saw butterflies."
3. Play a simple game: "Stand up if you think this place is near; sit down if you think it's far away."
4. Show pictures of local landmarks and places from the story to sort into "near" and "far."

Butterfly Math: Counting and Patterns (15 minutes)

1. Set up butterfly cards (1-10) in mixed order.
2. Have students help arrange them in counting order.
3. Create simple ABAB patterns with different colored butterfly cutouts.
4. Have students continue the patterns and identify what comes next.
5. Count butterflies in small groups.

Closing Circle (10 minutes)

1. Review what we learned about butterflies today.
2. Play a quick memory game: "What color was the butterfly in China? In Japan?"
3. Preview tomorrow's activities.

Day 2: Story Sequence and Sensory Exploration

Morning Meeting (15 minutes)

1. Welcome students with a butterfly greeting.
2. Review yesterday's learning with a quick "turn and talk": "Tell your partner one thing you remember about butterflies from our story."
3. Butterfly syllable clapping: but-ter-fly (3), lock-et (2), grand-ma (2)
4. Movement activity: Butterfly life cycle movements (egg, caterpillar, chrysalis, butterfly).

Story Sequencing (20 minutes)

1. Re-read portions of the story, focusing on the main events.
2. Show 3-4 large picture cards of key moments from the story.

3. Mix them up and ask students to help put them in order.
4. Use a pocket chart to arrange the cards with word cards: "First," "Next," "Last."
5. Have students practice retelling the story using the sequence words.
6. Create a class chart with simple sentences describing each event.

Sensory Exploration Stations (20 minutes)

Set up 4 simple sensory stations in the classroom:

Station 1: Red Butterflies

- Red fabric to touch
- Red butterfly pictures to count
- Activity: Sort red items by size

Station 2: Sound Station

- Small wind chimes to listen to
- Activity: Draw what the sound makes you think of

Station 3: Blue Butterflies

- Blue cellophane to look through
- Activity: Sort blue items by light and dark

Station 4: Orange & Black Butterflies

- Orange and black tissue paper
- Activity: Create simple patterns with the colors

Divide students into 4 groups and rotate through stations (5 minutes each).

Butterfly Graphing (15 minutes)

1. Give each student a small butterfly cutout.
2. Ask: "Which butterfly color is your favorite? Red, blue, white, or orange/black?"
3. Have students place their butterfly on a class graph.
4. Count each column together.

5. Discuss: "Which color has the most? Which has the least? How many more red than blue?"

Movement Break: Butterfly Dance (5 minutes)

Play music and have students move like different butterflies around the room.

Closing Circle (10 minutes)

1. Review the sensory experiences from the stations.
2. Practice the sequence words again with butterfly movements.
3. Preview tomorrow's butterfly craft.

Day 3: Butterfly Crafts and Family Connections

Morning Meeting (15 minutes)

1. Welcome students and review butterfly colors and story events.
2. Beginning sounds game: Show pictures of butterflies, flowers, lockets, wings. "Which begins with /f/? Which begins with /w/?"
3. Quick count: "How many students are here today? How many are absent?"
4. Movement: "Fly" to different areas of the classroom based on instructions.

Butterfly Art Project (25 minutes)

1. Demonstrate how to make coffee filter butterflies:
    - Color coffee filters with watercolor markers
    - Spray with water to create a color-blending effect
    - Pinch in the middle with a clothespin
    - Add pipe cleaner antennae
2. Students choose colors based on butterflies from the story.
3. While working, reinforce counting: "How many colors did you use? How many butterflies are we making?"
4. Label each butterfly with the student's name and their chosen color.

Family Keepsakes Discussion (15 minutes)

1. Return to the story and discuss the butterfly locket.

2. Ask: "What made the locket special to Grandma Yetta? Why did she give it to Bella?"
3. Invite students to share about special items from their families.
4. Draw pictures of special family items or people.
5. Take dictation from students about their drawings: "This is special because..."

Movement Break: Butterfly Life Cycle (10 minutes)

1. Review a simple butterfly life cycle with pictures.
2. Guide students through movements for each stage:
    - Egg: curl up small
    - Caterpillar: crawl on the floor
    - Chrysalis: stand still wrapped in arms
    - Butterfly: spread arms and fly

Literacy Connection: Beginning Sounds (15 minutes)

1. Create a chart of important words from the story: Butterfly, Locket, Grandma, Memory.
2. Emphasize the beginning sound of each word.
3. Have students sort picture cards by beginning sounds.
4. Play a simple "I Spy" game focusing on butterfly words.

Closing Celebration (15 minutes)

1. Display all student work from the three days.
2. Have students "fly" with their coffee filter butterflies.
3. Review key concepts: butterfly colors, story sequence, special keepsakes.
4. End with a final reading of a favorite part of the story.
5. Take a class photo with everyone posed as butterflies.

Assessment

Observational Assessment

- Note student participation in discussions

- Observe ability to sequence 3-4 story events
- Watch for recognition of butterfly colors
- Note ability to create and continue patterns
- Document use of sequence words (first, next, last)
- Observe counting skills during activities

Performance Tasks

- Butterfly color identification
- Near/far sorting activity
- Pattern continuation
- Beginning sounds identification
- Butterfly life cycle sequence

Documentation

- Collect photos of sequence cards arrangement
- Save graphing activity results
- Gather dictated sentences about family keepsakes
- Take photos of butterfly crafts
- Record anecdotal notes about discussions

Differentiation Strategies

For Students Needing Additional Support

- Provide picture cues for butterfly colors and story events
- Use hand-over-hand guidance for crafts as needed
- Simplify patterns to AB only
- Focus on just 2 sequence words (first, last)
- Pair with supportive peers for activities

For Advanced Learners

- Extend patterns to ABC or AABB

- Encourage writing their own labels/words
- Add counting beyond 10 with butterfly cards
- Discuss more details about butterfly habitats
- Create more complex sequences with 5-6 events

For English Language Learners

- Use consistent gestures with key vocabulary
- Provide picture cards for all key concepts
- Allow for physical responses (pointing, moving)
- Label classroom items in multiple languages
- Use repetitive language structures

Home Connection

Family Activity Letter

Send home a simple note with:

- A picture of a butterfly to color together
- 3 key vocabulary words from our learning
- Suggested questions to ask about the story
- Optional activity: "Look for butterflies in your neighborhood or in books at home"

Follow-Up

- Invite families to share photos of any butterflies they spot
- Send home students' butterfly crafts with a note about what we learned
- Suggest visiting a local park to look for butterflies

Additional Resources

Book Connections

- "The Very Hungry Caterpillar" by Eric Carle
- Simple non-fiction books about butterflies
- Books about family relationships and grandparents

Classroom Extensions

- Add butterfly puzzles to math center
- Create a butterfly observation station
- Add butterfly lifecycle sequencing cards to literacy center
- Include butterfly-colored items in the sensory table

Teacher Reflection Questions

After implementing the lesson, consider:

1. Which butterfly concepts engaged students most effectively?
2. How did students respond to the sequencing activities?
3. Were the sensory experiences meaningful and connected to the story?
4. Which math concepts (counting, patterns) were most successful?
5. How well did students connect the story to their own families?