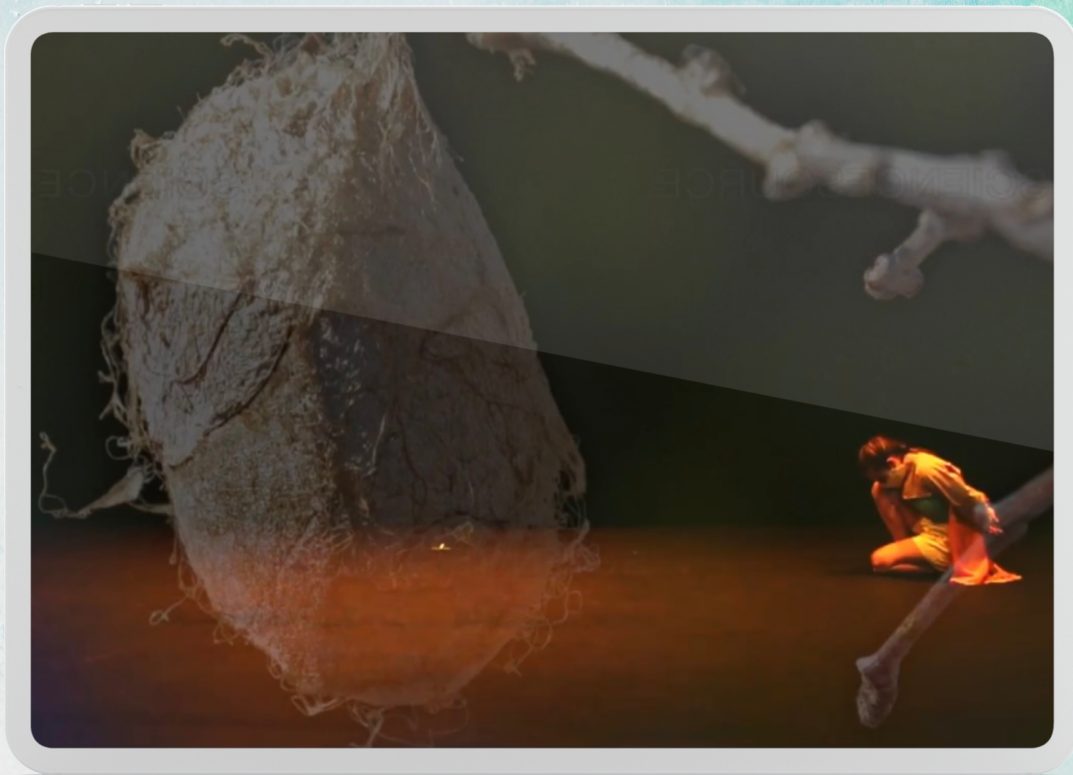

MOTH



GRADE: FIRST

SUBJECTS: ELA, SCIENCE, MATH, VISUAL ARTS

Earth Songs is made possible by the Cities of Charleston and North Charleston Lowcountry Quarterly Arts Fund, the Joanna Foundation, the John and Susan Bennett Memorial Fund of the Coastal Community Foundation, the Post and Courier Foundation, and the South Carolina Arts Commission

THE STORY OF THE MOTH

I remember once, when I was about ten or eleven, my friend Judy and I found a moth cocoon and brought it in to school. It was January and there were doily snowflakes taped to the windowpanes. Teacher kept the cocoon in her desk all morning. She brought it out right before recess, when we started to get restless.

In a book we found that it was the cocoon of a Polyphemus Moth and we saw what the adult moth would look like. It would be beautiful. It would have a wingspan of six inches, much larger than a swallowtail butterfly. The wings would be a velvet brown edged in bands of blue and pink, and in the center of each hind wing, there would be a big blue and yellow eyespot. It would be beautiful.

We passed the cocoon around; it was heavy. As we held it tightly in our fists, the creature inside began to warm. The cocoon began to squirm and then jerk violently. I can still feel it thumping against the curve of my palm.

We kept passing it around. When it came to me again, it was so hot; it jumped half out of my hand. The teacher took the cocoon from me and put it in a mason jar. It was coming. There was no stopping it now, January or not. Teacher fades... classmates fade... I fade... I don't remember anything but that thing's struggle to be a moth or to die trying.

It emerged at last, all wet and crumpled up. It was a male. He stood still, but he breathed.

But something was wrong. He couldn't spread his wings. You see, there was no room in that jar. And the chemical that coats a moth's wings like varnish... it dried and hardened his wings as they were, all stuck to his back, as useless and as wrinkled as dirty tissues. I remember how hard he struggled to free them. I can still see that so clearly, how hard he struggled.

The next thing I remember, it was recess. I was standing on the driveway, alone, shivering in the cold. Someone, it must have been the teacher, had let the moth go. Someone had given the moth his freedom... and he was walking away.

He heaved himself down that asphalt driveway by tiny degrees. His crumpled wings glued to his back were still now. Yet he heaved himself on. The bell rang. I was glad I had to go. I had to get away from him. I left. I ran inside.

I dream about him now. And in my dream, I never see him as he could have been. Big and beautiful and flying free. In my dreams, he is always crawling down that driveway, all hunched up and deformed. And I think to myself... if I had just let him alone, ya know? What if I had just thought about it first, and let him be.

MOTH

AUTHOR: KELLY JAMES

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STANDARDS

ELA

Standard 9: Interpret and analyze the author's use of words, phrases, and conventions, and how their relationships shape meaning and tone in print and multimedia texts.

- 9.1 Identify the literary devices of rhythm, repetitive language, and simile and sound devices of rhyme, onomatopoeia, and alliteration; explain how the author uses each.
- 9.2 Identify how an author's choice of words, phrases, conventions, and illustrations suggest feelings, appeal to the senses, and contribute to meaning.

SCIENCE

Students develop an understanding of how plants and animals use their external parts to help them survive, grow, and meet their needs as well as how behaviors of parents and offspring help the offspring survive. Students also use mimicry to design solutions to a human problem.

VISUAL ARTS

I can use and combine materials, techniques and processes to make art.

MATH

CCSS.1.G.A.3 Partition circles and rectangles into two and four equal shares, describe the shares using the words halves, fourths, and quarters, and use the phrases half of, fourth of, and quarter of. Describe the whole as two of, or four of the shares. Understand for these examples that decomposing into more equal shares creates smaller shares.

MATERIALS

- informational text read-alouds (for teachers and students)
- white construction paper
- tempera paint (any color)
- thin black sharpie markers

INTRODUCTION

1. The teacher will ask the students to listen for sound words when they watch the dance [video](#) about the Moth

OBJECTIVE

- The students will identify new vocabulary words that will help them describe and visualize the meaning of actions in the life cycle of animals.

LESSON

1. The students will begin by watching a [video](#) about the life cycle of a butterfly.
2. The teacher will read "Charlie the Caterpillar," by Christopher Santoro.
3. The students will recall the life cycle stages of a butterfly.
4. The students will watch a [video](#) with Jack Hartman to learn about the author's/narrator use of words; onomatopoeia (described in the video; squirm, thump, jerk). The teacher will discuss the meaning of each of these words and will build tables to represent these new terms.

5. The teacher will instruct students on the meaning of symmetry and students will watch a [video](#) about science and the art of symmetry.
6. The teacher will read aloud "It looked like Spilt Milk" by Charles Shaw.
7. Students will fold the white paper in half and the teacher will place a drop of tempera paint onto the folded line of paper. The students will fold the paper over and press out the paint. The teacher will allow the students' paper to dry.
8. The students will then discover what animal their symmetrical paint dot has turned into and will add details with pencil then trace with the black marker to show the details of this animal.
9. The students will write a life cycle story about their personal animal paint design using onomatopoeia words and that animal's life cycle stages.

CLOSURE

Students will present their symmetrical artwork to their peers and share the life cycle of that animal.

ASSESSMENT

In this informal assessment the teacher will observe students' completed artwork for math standards. The students will share at least three of their onomatopoeia words from their story with the class. The teacher will create an anchor chart that can remain in the classroom for students to use for future reference during writing.

RESOURCES

Butterflies - BrainPOP Jr., YouTube, 5 Mar. 2020, www.youtube.com/watch?v=as1_MdEqi2g&ab_channel=amf.

DeLuise, Dom, and Christopher Santoro. Charlie the Caterpillar. Scholastic, 2005.

Shaw, Charles Green. It Looked like Spilt Milk. HarperFestival, 2014.

"The Onomatopoeia Alphabet | Onomatopoeia for KIDS | Jack Hartmann." The Onomatopoeia Alphabet | Onomatopoeia for Kids | Jack Hartmann, YouTube, 4 Jan. 2019, www.youtube.com/watch?v=FBQCgjo1QTU.

"The Science of Symmetry - Colm Kelleher." YouTube, YouTube, 13 May 2014, www.youtube.com/watch?v=3drtbPZFgyc&ab_channel=TED-Ed.