

Velma Gratch & the Way Cool Butterfly

by Alan Madison

With colorful, meticulous illustrations and an entertaining story, children will delight in the journey the first grader takes as she steps out of her older sisters' shadows.



Read

Before:

Introduce the book and tell the children a little bit about it. Follow that with a comment or question that is related to the story such as, *If you were surrounded by butterflies, which butterfly would be your favorite?* Encourage a discussion so the children can comment, ask questions, and express their feelings. Set the stage for listening by asking an "I wonder" statement based on the cover illustration.

- I wonder what kind of butterfly is flying about Velma Gratch?

During:

Encourage the children to comment on the illustrations, ask questions, and predict what will happen next in the story. Children gain confidence and a sense of achievement through being able to correctly predict how a story will end. Point out "rare words" (e.g., those words that are not commonly used in every day conversation) and help the children relate the meaning in a way that makes sense to them.

Rare Words in *Velma Gratch & the Way Cool Butterfly*

- chorus: large group of singers or performers
- miraculous: extraordinary
- spectacular: remarkable
- cooed: make a sound like a pigeon
- fabulous: amazing
- chrysalis: an insect at the stage of changing from larva to adult, insect cocoon
- metamorphosis: change of physical form
- conservatory: a room with glass walls and roof where plants are grown or displayed
- aquarium: container for fish
- bedecked: to make something look pretty, to decorate
- slathered: spread something thickly
- gurgled: make bubbling noise
- migration: movement from one place to another
- antennae: a thin movable sensory organ found in pairs on the heads of insects
- perched: a temporary resting place for a person or thing
- lamented: express sadness or grief about something

After:

Discuss the story. Ask questions...

- What grade was Velma Gratch in?
- What kind of things were her sisters remembered for?
- Why was she sent to the principal's office?
- What subject did Velma love the most?
- Which butterfly was her favorite?
- Where did the class go on their field trip?
- Where did the butterflies land?
- What happened to the Monarch butterfly when Velma was leaving the conservatory?
- How did Velma finally get the butterfly to fly off her hand?



Do

Symmetry

You will need: an assortment of colored construction paper, white paint and paint supplies.

Hand out one piece of colored construction paper to each child. Help them fold the paper in half and demonstrate how to paint only on one half of the paper. Allow the children enough time to paint $\frac{1}{2}$ the paper. Fold the other half over on top of the painted portion. Rub gently to transfer the painted image to the clean side. Gently open the folded paper to reveal the picture's perfect symmetry.