

BUTTERFLIES AND CATERPILLARS

One day during recess I was especially attentive to a young student on his first day of school. Samuel was the only 3-year old in the playground and he spent his morning checking things out with his eyes wide open. A white butterfly crossed the air and landed in a rosemary bush next to us. “Look,” he said, “a butterfly!” He just stared at the insect, somehow knowing that this moment wouldn’t last long. I didn’t dare interrupt that magic moment. When the butterfly was gone I asked him, “Why do you like butterflies?” “They are pretty and soft. If you try to grab them you can break their wings.” Butterflies are one of the most diverse type of insects and are attractive not only to the entomologist who studies them but to children young and old. Delicate and dynamic, butterflies can inspire us to compose poems and music, to sing and to move.

“La mariposa en la cocina” is a Spanish chant and clapping game with various versions throughout Latin America. The butterfly here is personified as a generous character, making delicious chocolate to share with her neighbors.



Avery, 4 years old

I also use butterflies for teaching poetry composition. I start the session with “The Butterfly Alphabet,” a poster by the naturalist and photographer Kjell Sandved, and other books that show details of insects: proboscis, wings, antennae, etc. We observe the combination of colors and the symmetry in the wings and details of the patterns. The students get a printed copy of the ‘Butterfly Alphabet’ letters to compose an acrostic poem that will be set into music and movement.*

* Sandved, Kjell Block. The Butterfly Alphabet.

FINGER GAME

Two Little Bluebirds

- Make a wall with your hands, hiding thumbs.
- On “Peter” right thumb pops up, standing on the wall. On “Paul” left thumb does the same.
- On “fly away Peter” right hand goes behind the back. On “fly away Paul” left hand does the same.
- On “Come back Peter” right hand returns to the wall shape with the thumb upright. On “Come back Paul” left hands does the same.
- Both thumbs hide when the rhyme is over.
- Play the game with a partner combining 2 hands. One person plays with the left and the other with the right.



LANGUAGE

Two Little Bluebirds

Perform each part of the rhyme with contrasting characters:

- High/ low
- Loud/soft
- Fast/slow
- Happy/sad
- Young/old
- 2 instruments



MOVEMENT

Two Little Bluebirds

- Two children representing Peter and Paul stand together in a “nest” or “wall” (hula-hoop, chairs...). They fly in and out according to the text. In their adventure:
- They have to touch a particular piece of furniture in the room, or a particular color...
- One flies fast and the other slow
- They fly to the same place in the room

LANGUAGE

Two Little Bluebirds

Variation—Create different text on the same idea.

2 little fishies swimming in a pond

One named Pling

One name Plong

Jump up Pling

Jump up Plong

Dive in Pling

Dive in Plong

BLUEBIRD

ENGLAND

Blue - bird blue - bird through my win - dow blue - bird blue - bird

through my win - dow blue - bird blue - bird through my win - dow

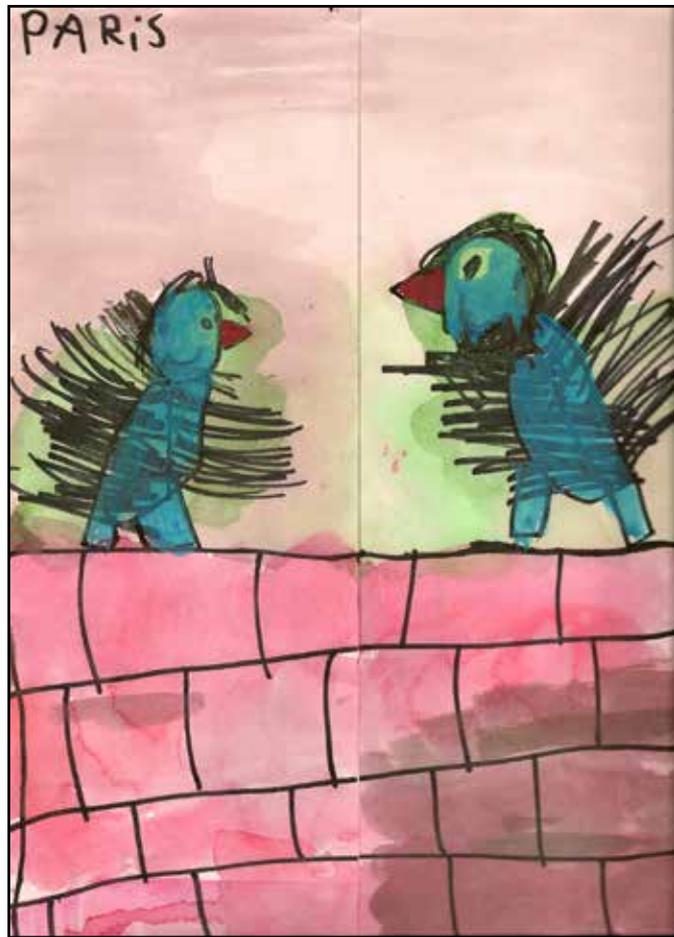
Won't you be my part - ner? tip - py - tip - py tap tap on my shoul - der

tip - py tip - py tap tap on my shoul - der tip - py tip - py tap tap

on my shoul - der Won't you be my part - ner?



Javyn, 5 years old



Paris, 5 years old