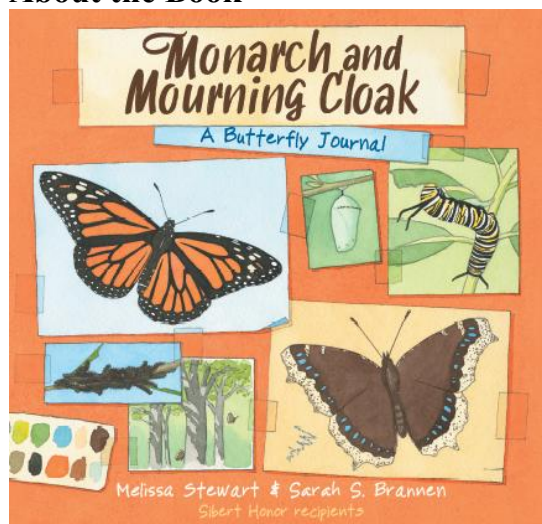


Monarch and Mourning Cloak: A Butterfly Journal

By Melissa Stewart

Illustrated by Sarah S. Brannen

About the Book



Meet the monarch and the mourning cloak—two common North American butterflies that are about the same size, but have their own special ways of surviving. Compelling free-verse poetry and rich, detailed illustrations showcase the butterflies' similar body structures and life stages as well as their different habitats, food choices, and strategies for avoiding enemies and surviving winter weather.

Flutter into the pages of this stunning nature journal to gain a deeper understanding of these two beautiful butterflies—and to celebrate the joy of creativity inspired by the natural world.

Reading to Young Children

Monarch and Mourning Cloak: A Butterfly Journal features two kinds of text. When sharing the first part of the book with young children, read the poems on each double-page spread first. Then, as you discuss the art on that spread, share some of the labels and notes in smaller type. Don't feel that you need to read them all. You may choose not to read the second part of the book, called Butterfly Notes, at all. Or you could read just a few sections to show how they provide additional information about the poems.

Before You Read

Invite children to look closely at the art on the cover. After reading the title, let them know that the orange butterfly is a monarch and the brown butterfly is a mourning cloak. Then ask the following questions:

- What do you think this book will be about?
- What is a journal?
- How are the two butterflies different? How are they the same?
- What do you think the colorful dots on the lower left represent?
- Do you think the book will be fiction (a made-up story) or nonfiction (true information)?

As You Read

Point out that, on some spreads, the art includes pencil sketches as well as painted pieces. Let children know that the illustrator is showing the process of creating art. Similarly, the layers of paper under the poems indicate that the writing has been revised again and again as the author tried to make it better and better. Both writing and creating art are processes that take time and patience and practice.

After You Read

- Work with the children to create a Venn diagram showing how monarchs and mourning cloaks are similar and different. Are they surprised by how different the two butterflies are?
- Take the children outdoors or bring some natural objects into the classroom. Invite students to choose an object they'd like to draw. They should begin by looking at it closely. Then they can sketch it with pencil and add color with paint or crayons. Encourage the children to label parts of their object or add notes about their observations. When the art is complete, encourage volunteers to share their pictures to the rest of the group.

Extension Activity

Purpose: To help students get a sense of the process a nonfiction picture book author goes through when they review sketches created by an illustrator.

Process:

1. After your students write nonfiction about a topic of their choice, invite children in another classroom at the same grade level to create one or more illustrations for the text. Like professional authors and illustrators, the students don't meet or don't speak to one another.
2. Your students review the artist's work to make sure everything in the art is accurate.
3. Students write a polite letter asking the artist for any necessary changes. They can comment on accuracy only. They can't make any comments about the style of the art.

Questions:

- Are you surprised that the author and illustrator work in this way?
- Do you think it would be helpful if they could talk to one another?

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