

Stories

Three Butterflies...

You could use this story in a **Flyers** class.

A girl who was called Clare told me a fantastic story last week.

She said,

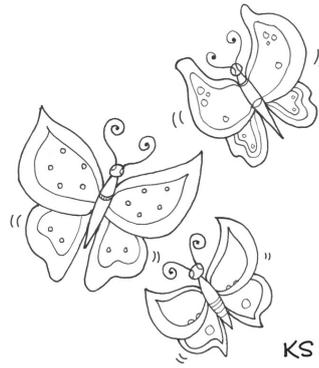
'Last month, I had lots of fun thinking about my twelfth birthday party, but on the day before my birthday, (and my birthday party) I didn't feel excited. I felt sad. My best friend, Julia, was in hospital because she had a broken leg (she LOVED skateboarding but she often fell over). My other best friend, William, had to go with his older brother to visit his uncle for three days. His uncle lived in another city. I wanted both my best friends, Julia AND William, to be with me at my party. But they couldn't come.

When I woke up on the morning of my birthday, I looked across the room and saw a butterfly on the inside of my bedroom window. I love butterflies and I know a lot of their names. This one was called a 'Holly Blue'. They have blue and silver wings with small black spots on them.

I got out of bed and picked up my phone. Then, very slowly and quietly I put my left hand on the window quite near to the Holly Blue. I think the butterfly was interested in my hand because it flew on to one of my fingers and just stayed there for a minute. I was so surprised. With my other hand, I carefully opened my phone and took a photo of it. The Holly Blue was really beautiful. I've never seen one before. Then I opened the window and it flew away.

Julia was listening to some music on her phone in hospital at the same time. Suddenly (she told me later) a butterfly flew through a window that was near her bed. Then it flew to some flowers that were next to someone else's bed and stopped there. Julia did a quick search online and found out that the butterfly was a 'Small White'. Their bigger, front wings are white. Their smaller, back wings are white and grey with a big black spot on each of them. The colour under their wings looks more yellow than white.

Julia watched the butterfly on the flowers and then whispered, 'Hello! You're lovely!' When she said that, the butterfly flew to her bed and landed on her left arm. It just stayed there. Julia took a photo of it. Then the butterfly flew to her foot and then out of the window again.



Karen Saxby

Creative teaching material for young learners

At the same time, my friend, William, was arriving at his uncle's house. He was walking from his older brother's car to the front door, when suddenly (he told me later) he saw a butterfly, too. It flew from a small tree near his uncle's gate on to William's shoulder. William loves animals and knows the names of lots of butterflies. The butterfly that he saw was a Painted Lady. Painted Ladies have wings that are orange and black. They have white spots on their bigger wings and black spots on their smaller wings.

William takes lots of photos so he carefully opened his tablet. William had his tablet because he wanted to show his uncle some pictures of his family's new pet - a kitten. It was lucky because his tablet takes better photos than his phone.

The butterfly flew from William's shoulder to his right hand and just stayed there quietly. 'I think it wanted to tell me something,' William said the next day. He couldn't take a photo of it because he didn't want to move his hand or the butterfly to feel frightened. So, very slowly, he gave his tablet to his brother and asked him to take a picture of the Painted Lady, instead.

That evening, after my party, I sent both my friends a text with the photo of the Holly Blue on my finger. I wrote:

I'm so sad that you weren't here with me today. But another kind of friend visited me this morning. I was so happy. It's a 'Holly Blue'. Have you ever seen one? Here's a photo! See you soon! Clare X

Two minutes later, Julia sent me this message:

Happy birthday, Clare! I've got some good news! The doctor says I can go home tomorrow. Come and see me! We'll be skateboarding together again VERY soon. GREAT photo of your Holly Blue! Oh and it's really strange. A butterfly visited me today, too. It was so pretty. It landed on my hand and then on my foot. Here's the picture. Julia XOXO

And she sent me her photo of the Small White.

William's text arrived one minute later.

Hi! Happy birthday. I'm sorry I wasn't at your party, too. But let's go roller skating in the park on Saturday. AND look at my photo. An orange Painted Lady flew on to my shoulder and then on to my hand, today. I hope you like the photo! It's your birthday present from me to you! It's strange that you saw a butterfly today too.... Bye, W

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Creative teaching material for young learners

I looked at the three photos of our three butterflies. I couldn't believe it.

Perhaps, I thought, butterflies understand about birthdays AND about best friends. Perhaps... Perhaps.... Perhaps.

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I really liked Clare's story. Perhaps the next time that YOU see a butterfly, you'll remember it.

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Teaching notes

Not on the YLE Flyers wordlist: 'Holly Blue' and 'Painted Lady'! I've also used 'time' here in slightly different ways, 'at the same time' and 'the next time'. All the other vocabulary and all the grammatical structures are on the YLE syllabus though.

You might like to:

- *review / teach the Flyers and Movers ed/ing adjective pairs: interested and interesting, excited and exciting, boring and bored, exciting and excited, interesting and interested, frightening and frightened. You could then add new adjective pairs to their word list. The unknown words are shown here in bold: amazing and **amazed**, surprised and **surprising**, worried and **worrying**. I do wish that **disappointed** and **disappointing** and **annoyed** and **annoying** were on the word lists too! It can be difficult to explain the difference but you can use sentences to help you, eg I'm bored because this book is so boring. I'm interested in history because it's so interesting. I'm excited because London is such an exciting place. Ask "Were you surprised or surprising that the three friends saw three different butterflies at the same time?"*
- *do a visualisation. Ask learners to close their eyes for a minute and silently imagine that a butterfly has landed on their hand. When they open their eyes, in pairs, learners take turns to describe their own imagined butterfly. What colour were its wings? Did their wings have spots or stripes on them? What might its name be? (they could, of course, invent the name).*
- *give learners the opportunity to go online (if possible) and choose a butterfly to write a fact file about.*
- *ask learners to imagine they are Clare's third friend. What did they write to Clare on the evening of her birthday? Explain, if they didn't know that XOXO means kiss, hug, kiss, hug!*
- *ask a few questions after reading the story. Pairs or small groups imagine answers. How did Julia break her leg? What was William's older brother's name? What colour was William's kitten? How many people went to Clare's party? What did they do at the party? The great thing about an activity like this is that ALL their answers will be right! That's great for class confidence.*
- *ask learners about birthday parties. What do they like doing / eating? Do they think parties are usually exciting or boring? Why?*