




A LEARNING GUIDE FOR

When the Butterflies Came

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By Kimberley Griffiths Little

Synopsis

Everybody thinks Tara Doucet has the perfect life. But Tara's life is anything but perfect: Her dear Grammy Claire has just passed away, her mom is depressed and distant, and she and her sister, Riley, can't agree on anything. But when mysterious and dazzling butterflies begin to follow her around after Grammy Claire's funeral, Tara knows in her heart that her grandmother has left her one final mystery to solve. Tara finds a stack of keys and detailed letters from Grammy Claire. Note by note, Tara learns unexpected truths about her grandmother's life. As the letters grow more ominous and the clues harder to decipher, Tara realizes that the secrets she must uncover could lead to grave danger. And when Tara and Riley are swept away to the beautiful islands of Chuuk to hear their grandmother's will, Tara discovers the most shocking truth of all, one that will change her life forever.

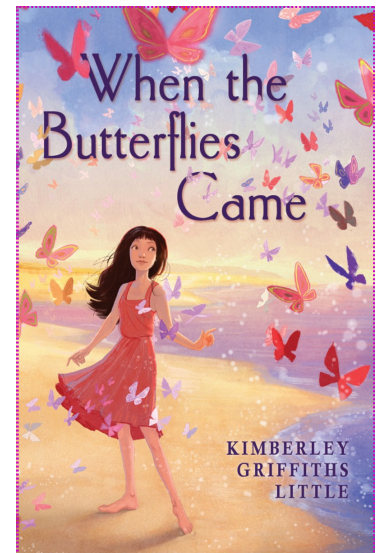


Critically acclaimed author Kimberley Griffiths Little weaves a magical, breathtaking mystery full of loss and love, family and faith.

www.goodreads.com

Pre - Reading/Prediction Questions

- ◆ Where is the girl on the front cover? Have you ever been to a beach before? Where? When? What was it like?
- ◆ What can you tell about the girl whose picture is on the cover? How old do you think she is? Why do you think there are butterflies all around her?
- ◆ In this story, the main character's grandmother, who she was very close to, has just died. Have you ever lost someone who was close to you? What kind of feelings did you have? (This may be a sensitive subject for some children, so proceed with the discussion carefully.)
- ◆ Because this book has a lot of butterflies in it, start a KWL chart about butterflies (What Do I Know; What Do I Want to Know; What Did I Learn). Fill in the K and W columns with the students. Add any important details not mentioned such as: some butterflies migrate, butterflies are found all over the world except Antarctica, and there are over 24,000 species of butterflies. As you read the book and/or at the conclusion, fill in the L column with anything the students learned about butterflies.



When the
Butterflies
Came



Group Discussion/Journal Questions

Before every chapter, there is a quote about butterflies. In a journal, record each saying as you come to it. Think about how it relates to the chapter it precedes and record that in your journal. You can also draw pictures of the different butterflies as they are introduced in the book.

Chapter 1

Make a spider or bubble map to describe each of the characters introduced in Chapter 1 using clues from the chapter.

Chapter 2

Compare and contrast Riley and Tara using a Venn Diagram or other organizational chart. Do you think the author is portraying a realistic portrait of how an older and younger sister might act toward each other? Why?

Why do you think Tara is so upset about Riley killing the butterfly?

What happened to Tara's father?

Where do you think their mother is?

Tara is surprised when an envelope is delivered to her. Who do you think it is from?

Chapter 3

Who comes to Tara's door and where are her and Shelby going? What are some reasons that Tara is nervous? How would you feel if you were her?

Chapter 4

Tara receives another envelope from Grammy Claire and it contains a key. Tara says she knows exactly what door it will open and she feels better. What do you think it will open?

Chapter 5

Using the information from the chapter, describe the behavior of Tara's mother. How does Tara feel about her mother? Use clues from the story.

Who is Miz Landry?

What do you know about the Doucet's financial situation from this chapter?

Chapter 6

Riley suddenly decides not to go to Grammy Claire's house. Where is she going instead? How does Tara react to this news?

Why is Tara feeling like her world is falling apart?

Chapter 7

Who is Madame Erial See?

What did the key open? Why doesn't Tara tell Butler Reginald about it?

What is on the fourth floor and what did Grammy Claire tell Tara about it?

Chapter 8

What do you think *nipwisipwis* means? Why do you think Tara is seeing so many butterflies?

Chapter 9

Why didn't Riley go to California? What does Tara tell Riley that surprises both of them?

What does *nipwisipwis* mean and what language is that?

Grammy Claire lived on an island in the Pacific Ocean doing some secret research. What kind of research do you think it was?

Chapter 10

What do you think the danger is that Grammy Claire keeps warning Tara about? What might the butterflies have to do with it?

Chapter 11

In this chapter, Tara and Riley fight about what is happening to them. If you were Tara, would you trust Riley and share all of the letters and keys? Why or why not?

Teaching Tip

Have students talk to a partner before writing their responses to the questions or sharing them orally.

Chapter 12

What is the difference between how Riley and Tara both react to the butterflies?

Chapter 13

Madame See is up in the middle of the night when Tara is in the closet finding the \$2,000 that Grammy Claire left for her. Do you think Madame See is someone Grammy Claire is warning her about? Why?

Chapter 14

Who do you think murdered the Giant Pink Butterfly and why?

Chapter 15

Reread the note for the clue to what key number seven unlocks. Can you guess what the key might open and where the next note might be?

Chapter 16

Find Micronesia and the islands of Chuuk on a map. How far is that from Louisiana?

Write the names on Grammy Claire's list in your notebook. As you continue reading, take notes on each person to see if you can figure out who Grammy Claire cannot trust. Also add any other names you think were left off.

What secret do you think the butterflies hold that the world is not ready for?

Chapter 17

What does Tara hope the *traiteur* can help her with?

Chapter 18

Do you think Madame See took the \$2,000? If not her, then where did it go or who took it?

Chapter 19

Do you think Tara really saw Madame See at the airport? If she did, why would Madame See be there?

Add details that you learned about Alvios and Eloni to your suspect list you made in Chapter 16.

Chapter 20

What is the "Beautiful Empty" that Tara sees on the map in Grammy Claire's laboratory?

Chapter 21

What does Tara notice about Grammy Claire in the photographs displayed in her bedroom? What do you think the secret of the butterflies could be?

Do you think someone oiled the stairs deliberately? If so, who and why would they want to hurt Riley or Tara?

Chapter 22

Make notes on your suspect list from Chapter 16 about the people introduced in this chapter. Who do you think Tara should not trust?

What changes do you think are in Grammy Claire's new will?

Where do Eloni and Tara go and what do they see?

Chapter 23

What happened that made Tara decide to finally share all of the letters with Riley?

Tara finally recognizes the clue in the letter to help her know what key number ten opens. Where do you think she is going in the dune buggy?

Chapter 24

There are several people who could have fired the shot that almost hit Tara. Who do you think it is and why? Give evidence from the book to support your claim.

Chapter 25

What is the secret that the butterflies hold? What else does Tara learn from Grammy's last letter?

Chapter 26

Looking back, what are some of the clues in the story that indicated Butler Reginald was not to be trusted?

Grammy Claire tells Tara that each butterfly "species has its own uniquely special ability. They follow those with a pure heart. Those who love unconditionally." What does Tara discover are her unique special abilities through this experience and how did it change her?



Curriculum Connections

Teaching Tip

Students can feel a new connection to When the Butterflies Came by doing a project that correlates with the setting, plot or characters in the book. Have the students pick one or more of the projects below to do either while they are reading the book or as a culminating project after finishing the novel. The idea is to have them choose something that interests them and have fun! These can be completed at school or at home. When the projects are finished, have the students share it with the class. They could also be shared at a parents' night or Open House.



HISTORY

People lived on the islands of Micronesia 4,000 years ago. Research the history of Micronesia until its independence in 1979. Write a report of your findings.

GEOGRAPHY

Research the geography of the two settings in the book: the Louisiana bayou and the islands of Micronesia. Compare and contrast the two settings including the location, landscape, climate, and the food. What is the same and what is unique about these locations. Where would you rather live? Why?

SCIENCE

Butterflies are classified as hemimetabolous insects which are animals that go through metamorphosis. Draw and color four labeled diagrams that show the stages of metamorphosis that a butterfly goes through.

ART

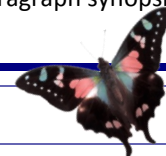
Make a tissue paper butterfly! You will need heavy craft paper, colored tissue paper cut into 1/2" squares, and white glue. Search the internet for a free butterfly pattern and print or trace it onto the heavy craft paper. Next, crumple a piece of tissue paper into a tight ball. Dip into white glue and place onto pattern. Continue crumpling and gluing until the entire pattern is filled. You could make several and use them to decorate your bedroom or classroom.

WRITING

In the book, Grammy Claire communicates with Tara through letters. With the advances in technology today, cell phones and email are used more commonly than hand-written letters. Think of someone that you would like to send a hand-written letter to through the mail. First, research the proper format when writing a personal letter. Then, over the course of one month, write a letter to this person at least once a week. Lastly, after the month is over, write a one paragraph synopsis of the experience comparing it to sending emails or calling.

BIOLOGY

Be a lepidopterist like Grammy Claire! A lepidopterist is a person who studies butterflies. Research the different types of butterflies found in Micronesia such as the skipper (Hesperiidae), the swallowtails (Papilionidae), whites and sulfur (Pieridae), blues (Lycaenidae), brush-footed (Nymphalidae), satyrs (Satyridae), and milkweed (Danaiidae). Draw and color a picture of each one and describe it. Label each one with their scientific and common name, and then compile your drawings and descriptions into a butterfly book.





Final Activity

Teaching Tip

This activity can be held during the school day or invite families of your students to join you for an evening celebration. Involve your students and parents in the fun!

HAVE A MICRONESIAN CELEBRATION!

The climactic ending of the book begins when Tara and Riley attend Eloni's family celebration. In Micronesia, the most important festival of the year is represented by the Yap Day Festival held on the first weekend in March. It is a celebration of cultures, dance, and traditional costumes. People bring different versions of foods such as rice, meat, or seafood, but it is essential to have national dishes like lumpia, adobo, sinigang, bistek and lechon.



Plan the Celebration

Recreate a Micronesia celebration in your classroom. Decorate it with a faux beach and palm trees. Have students dress in colorful clothing and serve some common foods found in Micronesia such as those listed above. Play Micronesian music, do a traditional dance, or play a traditional game such as the one described below. The possibilities are limited only by your students' imaginations!

Game—Stuck in the Mud

Imported from Australia, *Stuck in the Mud* is a game similar to the well-known American game of *Tag*. To play, one child is "it", and when he manages to tag someone, they must stand still with their legs apart and can become unfrozen only if someone crawls between their legs. The game ends when everyone has been successfully frozen, with the last tagged player becoming the new "it".



About the Author

Kimberley Griffiths Little is the author of *Circle of Secrets*, *The Healing Spell* and the critically acclaimed novels *Breakaway*, *Enchanted Runner*, and *The Last Snake Runner*. She is the winner of the Southwest Book Award and the Whitney Award for best Juvenile Novel of 2010.

She grew up reading a book a day and scribbling stories, while dreaming of one day seeing her name in the library card catalog. In her opinion, the perfect Louisiana meal is sausage gumbo and rice, topped off with warm beignets, although crawfish etouffee runs a close second.

Kimberley lives in a solar adobe house near the banks of the Rio Grande in New Mexico with her husband and their three sons.

Books by Kimberley

When the Butterflies Came, Scholastic Press

Circle of Secrets, Scholastic Press

The Healing Spell, Scholastic Press

The Last Snake Runner, Random House

Enchanted Runner, Avon Books

Breakaway, Avon Books



Come visit her at www.kimberleygriffithslittle.com