

# DWe Williams | Session 2:

## The Mighty Monarch Butterfly

### List of Required Supplies:

1. Watercolor or tempera paint (nontoxic/water-based)
2. Paint brushes
3. Paper towels
4. Water containers
5. Watercolor paper (one sheet per student)
6. Monarch butterfly templet
7. Pencils
8. Paint shirts
9. Scrapes of paper or aluminum foil for mixing paint

**Space/Facility Requirements:** Running water, table, chairs, table covering

**Student Time Required:** 45-60 minutes

**Additional Links:** <https://youtu.be/5LSM1xZxcBk> (video instruction)

The mighty monarch butterfly is one of many pollinators. Their “job” is to carry pollen from one plant to another. Without their help, flowers would not bloom.

The monarch butterfly is orange, black, and white. In order to paint the monarch butterfly we must mix paint to make orange.

Which two primary colors mixed together make orange?

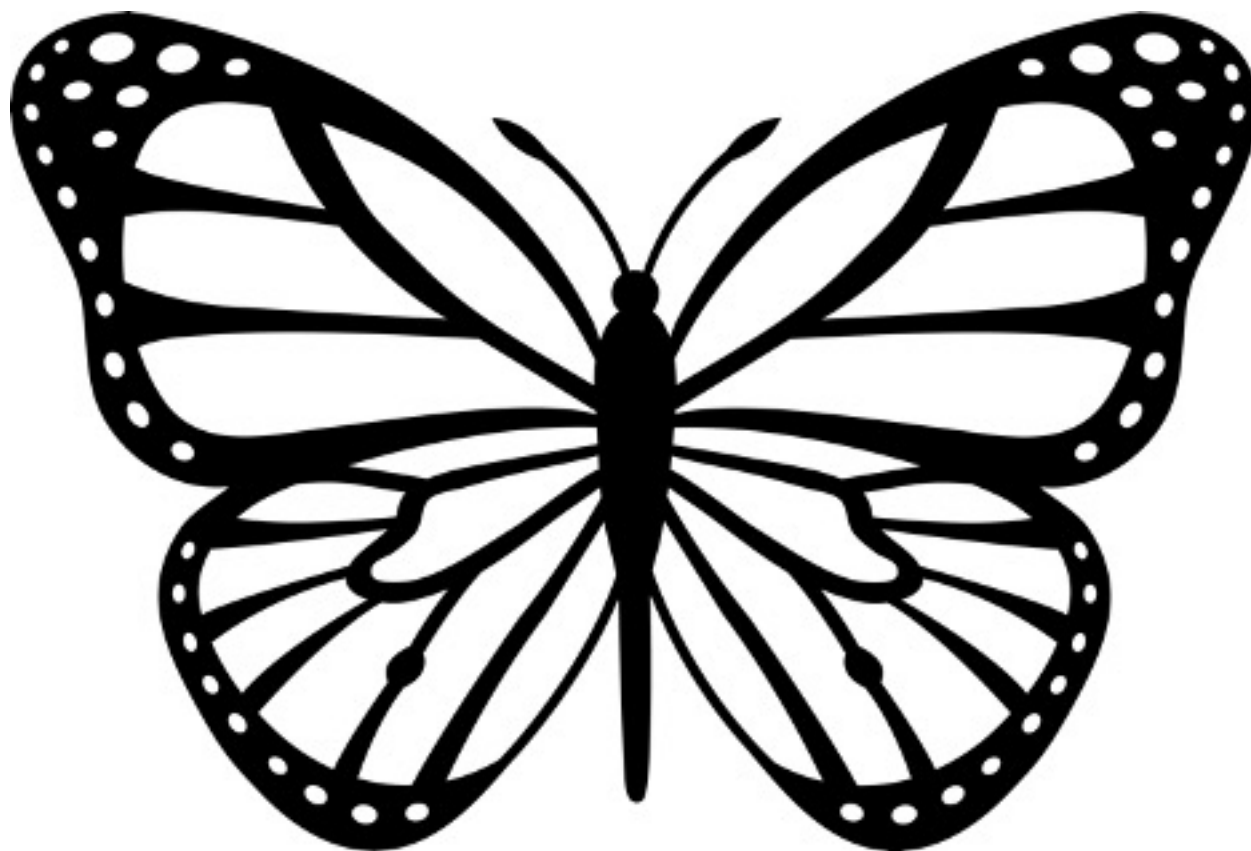
*\*When mixing color do not mix too much. Both original colors and the new color should be visible. Do not use too many colors in a mixture.*

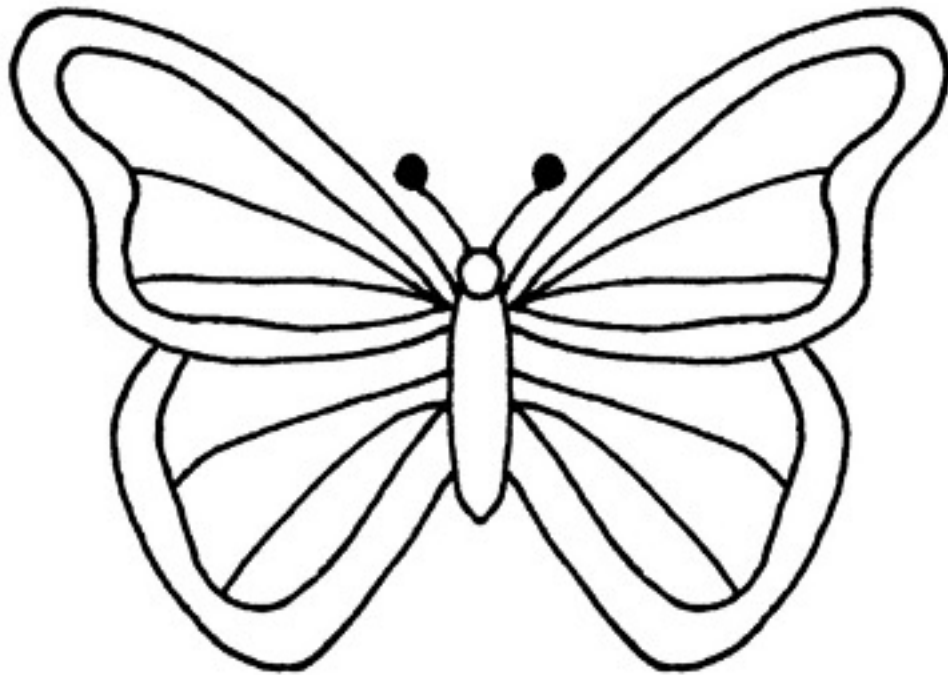
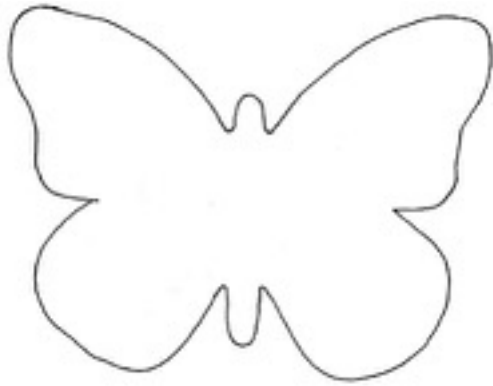


Discuss: Pollinators: How many pollinators can you name?

## Step-by-step Instructions:

1. Provide watercolor set to include red, yellow, blue, black, white
  - You may also use tempera paints (nontoxic/water-based)
    - Paint brush
    - Watercolor paper: one sheet per student
    - Paper towels
2. Mix paints until student arrives at the orange he/she likes
3. Paint monarch butterfly templet
4. When the monarch butterfly is dry, you may choose to laminate, attach a magnetic strip to the back, and place it on the refrigerator.





The job of the mighty, magnificent monarch butterfly and other insects, birds, bats, and even some animals, is to pollinate the flowers. If not for the monarch butterfly and other pollinators, Georgia O’Keeffe would not have had so many flowers to choose from for her flower paintings. Her first flower painting was *Petunias*.

### ***Petunias*, 1924 by Georgia O’Keeffe**



O’Keeffe not only used her natural surroundings at Lake George as a source of inspiration, she also mined the garden she maintained on the Stieglitz farm for fresh motifs and themes. In the summer of 1924, she began planting beds of blue and purple petunias in order to study their subtle, radiant hues. The growing of petunias that pivotal summer provided the impetus for her first enlarged floral painting, *Petunia No. 2*, an extraordinary prelude to the artist’s flower paintings, long considered her most original contribution to 20th century art. O’Keeffe’s preoccupation with petunias culminated in this 1925 canvas.

“Nobody sees a flower, really, it is so small. We haven’t time - and to see takes time like to have a friend takes time. If I could paint the flower exactly as I see it no one would see what I see because I would paint it small like the flower is small. So I said to myself - I’ll paint what I see - what the flower is to me, but I’ll paint it big and they will be surprised into taking time to look at it - I will make even busy New Yorkers take time to see what I see of flowers. ...Well, I made you take time to look at what I saw and when you took time to really notice my flower you hung all your own associations with flowers on my flower and you write about my flower as if I think and see what you think and see of the flower - and I don’t. <https://www.georgiaokeeffe.net/images/paintings/petunias.jpg>

### ***Red Hills with Flowers, by Georgia O’Keeffe***



Image via [georgiaokeeffe.net](https://www.georgiaokeeffe.net)





***Black Hollyhock, Blue Larkspur, 1929 by Georgia O'Keeffe***

During her first stay in Taos, New Mexico, from April to August 1929, O'Keeffe was the guest of socialite Mabel Dodge Luhan. She felt alive in her new surroundings and immediately set to painting the flowers that lined the path outside her guesthouse studio.

<https://metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/487764>. Oil on canvas. Location:Tate  
Added on December 1, 2017, by Suzan Hamer. Source: : [metmuseum.org](https://metmuseum.org)



### ***Red Poppy, 1927 by Georgia O'Keeffe***

As another of her series, Georgia O'Keeffe has produced a total of seven paintings of poppies. The most famous ones are *Red Poppy* from 1927 and *Oriental Poppies* from 1928. A perfect example of her close-ups that fill the entire canvas, *Red Poppy* is marked with vibrant red and orange tones that pull the viewer directly into the artwork. Peering into the bright orange petals, the artist reveals the velvety dark interior, creating a drama by the juxtaposition of vivid color and intrusive close-up. The absence of context in the painting presents the flower in a new light as a pure abstract. This stunning Georgia O'Keeffe flower painting was declared a groundbreaking art masterpiece, and in 1992, the U.S. Postal Service decided to pay tribute to it by making a series of stamps based on this very painting.

Written by Eli Anapur and Elena Martinique.  
Featured image: *Red Poppy*, 1927, via [wikiart.org](http://wikiart.org)



### ***Calla Lilies*, 1924 by Georgia O'Keeffe**

Following her first depiction of the calla lily in 1923, O'Keeffe created a series of eight compositions in both oil and pastel. One of two paintings of the subject in 1924, *Calla Lilies* show three blooms in a single composition. Regarded as one of the most sophisticated and modern of her explorations of the subject, it shows the ideal combination of the organic subject and formalist design. A sophisticated meditation on color, form, and line, the provocative composition is the genesis of her interest in the blossom. Having a certain cool detachment to the plant, she focused on its physical attributes, capturing the flower at various angles and settings. White flowers are punctuated by their yellow stamen and set against a background of similar whites and grays in order to blur the distinction between the flower and the background.

Featured image: *Calla Lilies*, 1924, via [sothebys.com](https://www.sothebys.com)





***Hibiscus with Plumeria, 1939 by Georgia O’Keeffe***

Following the fame that surrounded her flower paintings, Georgia O’Keeffe was invited by Dole Pineapple Company to Hawaii in 1939 to create paintings for the island’s advertising campaign. After visiting Maui, Oahu, Hawaii, and Kauai, she created around 20 canvases of the rich nature of the archipelago depicting dramatic gorges, waterfalls, and tropical flowers. A part of this series, the painting *Hibiscus with Plumeria* shows pink and yellow petals towering against a clear blue sky, transforming the delicate blossoms into monumentality. As opposed to her other flower pieces where the artist has used around 50 colors in multiple shades, this painting has at most five colors used – the blue, white, yellow, orangey-brown, pink, and dark blush. Flowers are rendered in a rather simple way, just detailed enough that they can be identified.

Featured image: *Hibiscus with Plumeria, 1939*, via [americanart.si.edu](http://americanart.si.edu)