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Students Learn 'Butterflies Are Free'

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A ShowMe Times Report

Sometimes the lessons that stay with a person the longest are the ones they learn with their head, hands and heart.

The youngsters in first grade at Southwest Elementary School in Dexter had such a learning experience this spring as they raised, nurtured, watched grow and then released into the world a flutter of butterflies.

Butterflies have four stages to life: four parts, egg, larva, pupa and adult.

The first graders received the butterflies when they were still in the the larva stage – or as caterpillars. They lived in butterfly houses – screened tubes that stood a tad less than some of the students.

“We watched them eat and grow, moving their way up to the top to form a chrysalis. After about a week in that state, they hatched into beautiful butterflies,” said first grade teacher Shannon Putnam.

The ones Putnam’s class helped raise were Painted Ladies, one of the thousands of varieties of butterflies.

“We watched them and fed them in our Butterfly Pavilion for about a week,” Putnam said. “Then, when the temperature was right, we released them.”

Fellow teacher Kristina Twaddell said her students attached to the growing and maturing butterflies. “My kids yelled wait before we let ours go because they had to say goodbye,” Twaddell said. “Then, back in the room one of the boys got very upset worrying about the butterflies. The other day when it was storming one of the kids said, out of the blue – ‘I hope, our butterflies are okay,’”

Sometimes the hardest lesson is the lesson the one that you have to let butterflies - and even young children - grow and be free.

Butterflies Photo Gallery

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