

Name: ..... Date: .....

Read the following myth carefully.

**How the orange-barred sulphur butterfly got its wings**

A long, long time ago, O Best Beloved, when the animals of the rainforest were in a bit of a pickle and everything was a little muddled, deep in the Amazon, was a rather sad butterfly. Sluggishly and slowly, she flew from branch to branch ashamed of her dull, brown wings. One humid, hot day, she decided that enough was enough!

First, she fluttered over to Poison Dart Frog and asked, “Why are you so red and colourful and I am so dull and brown?” But the frog just croaked angrily, spat some poison (which luckily missed her) and jumped off.

Next she flew over to Toucan and questioned, “Why are your feathers so beautifully coloured when I look so miserable and plain?” The Toucan glared at her, ruffled his feathers and flew off without another word.

After that, the butterfly glided over to Peafowl, summoned up all her courage and blurted out, “O lovely Peafowl, O Peafowl so lovely, please tell me why your tail is so stunning, dazzling and sparkling?”

Now, everyone knows that Peafowls are very mean and proud creatures, and this Peafowl was no exception. She replied, “Go away!”

Finally, and rather sadly, she flew to Blue Morpho Butterfly and asked the same question. Blue Morpho Butterfly was very kind and caring, so decided to show her something rather special.

So they flew and they flew and they flew high into the blue sky. The cool wind swirled around them. Suddenly the sad, brown butterfly’s wings began to turn a beautiful shade of blue. She gasped in delight!

At that moment, an angry gust of wind separated them and the two friends found themselves lost, high in the clouds. The brown butterfly realised that she was getting higher and higher and closer and closer to the burning sun. She screamed!

Immediately, she began to feel her poor wings burning with the heat of the sun. Crashing down to the forest floor, she whimpered and then collapsed.

Waking up, she found that her brown, dull wings were the most stunning shade of burning yellow and sunset orange you could ever wish for. And so it is to this very day, Dear Reader, that you can still see where the orange-barred sulphur butterfly flew too high to the sun.

Answer the following questions about the myth *How the orange-barred sulphur butterfly got its wings*.

1. Find and copy a word in the first paragraph that means the same as 'embarrassed'.

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2. The word 'humid' is closest in meaning to...

Tick one:

- cold
- muggy
- arid
- dry

3. How do you think the butterfly felt when the Peafowl told her to go away?

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4. Why do you think the other animals were so mean to the butterfly?

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5. What is the effect of the phrase 'higher and higher and closer and closer'?

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6. What might the butterfly be thinking and feeling when she wakes up and sees her wings have turned orange and yellow?

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7. What do you think the moral of this myth is and why?

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8. What might the butterfly have learnt by the end of the story?

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Suggested answers

1. Ashamed
2. Muggy
3. Depressed and dejected. The butterfly had summoned up all her courage to ask peafowl for advice.
4. The other animals were; selfish, proud, mean, arrogant.
5. It builds up tension and emphasises the threat of danger.
6. She was no longer ashamed of her dull brown wings; or she felt foolish because she had almost died to change the colour of her wings.
7. Children may come up with different ideas including the following:
  - a. Be careful what you wish for.
  - b. Don't be in such a rush to achieve your goals.
  - c. Don't give up on your dreams. (i.e. the butterfly didn't give up when the animals were rude to her.)
8. One lesson could be that, although the Blue Morpho Butterfly may have had the best of intentions by helping the brown butterfly, it nearly killed her.