

# Monarch Butterflies, Day of the Dead, and Climate Change: Culture and Awareness in the World Language Curriculum



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## Introduction

New Jersey Schools are encouraged to implement new standards to develop interdisciplinary units focused on climate change that include authentic learning experiences, integrate a range of perspectives, and are action oriented. A lesson plan on the topic of the Monarch Butterflies migration and the Day of the Dead is a great example to accomplish these objectives.

### Word Language Performance Expectations

"New Jersey became the first state in the nation to include climate change across content areas. These standards are designed to prepare students to understand how and why climate change happens, the impact it has on our local and global communities and to act in informed and sustainable ways."

1 Interpretive	2 Interpersonal	3 Presentational
7.1.NM.IPRET.5: Demonstrate comprehension of brief oral and written messages found in short culturally authentic materials on global issues, including climate change.	7.1.NM.IPERS.6: Exchange brief messages with others about climate in the target region of the world and in one's own region using memorized and practiced words, phrases, and simple, formulaic sentences.	7.1.NM.PRSNT.6: Name and label tangible cultural products associated with climate change in the target language regions of the world.

Source: <https://www.nj.gov/education/standards/climate/learning/gradeband/>

### Learning outcomes

After this lesson students will be able ...

1

To identify the importance of pollination and learn the four stages of butterfly metamorphosis: egg, caterpillar, pupa, and adult.

2

To understand the meaning and significance of Monarch butterflies in Mexican culture and their relationship to indigenous Day of the Dead beliefs.

3

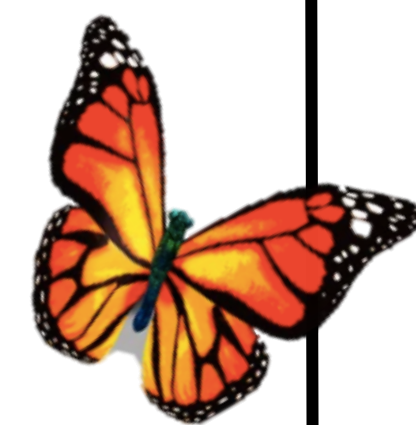
To talk about the dangers that put Monarch butterflies at risk and the impact on the broader natural ecosystem in which we live. Students can make an action to create awareness in their community.

## Why Monarch Butterflies?

1. They pollinate plants in our gardens.
2. They serve as an indicator of a healthy environment.
3. They are very sensitive to habitat and climate change. Their extinction can affect the entire ecosystem.
4. Their presence stimulates positive effects in mood and mental health.

## Connecting Culture and Climate Change

- Monarch butterflies have a high dispersal ability and a short generation time, making them vulnerable to a changing climate.
- Monarchs are highly sensitive to weather & climate, and face a decline in milkweed abundance and an increasing frequency of extreme weather events.



- The returning migration route from U.S.A. and Canada to the north of Mexico coincides with the Day of the Dead celebration.
- We can use the Day of the Dead celebration to increase awareness about climate change through a lesson plan that explains the Monarch's migration, life cycle, and threats.
- Indigenous believe holds that the spirit of their beloved departed ones return in the form of a butterfly.
- It is important to explain that indigenous knowledge regarding the conservation of Monarchs were developed over hundreds of years.

## Create lesson plans

- Due to the collaborative affords between Mexico-Canada-U.S.A, there are available online numerous videos and website with information. Take advantage!
- A lesson plan can be delivered in many days and with the participation of science classes.
- Invite local organizations and advocates to participate in your lesson plan. For example Rutgers has the Pollinator Garden. <https://rutgersgardens.rutgers.edu/education-resources/>
- Scan my QR code for lesson plan!



Scan me!

### Un jardín en la escuela para las mariposas ( Step 1)

#### Prepárate / Infórmate con especialistas locales

1. One of the ways to protect butterflies is to create a pollinator garden with native plants. We have several in New Jersey.
2. Talk to your teacher and see if it is possible to make a garden with native plants.
3. Rutgers University has information on native plants. Learn more from <https://nps.rutgers.edu/fstac/>.
4. Participate in workshops organized by the Native Plant Society of New Jersey on how to maintain a native plant garden <https://npsnj.org/>.
5. Invite local organizations to your school to give talks so you can start your own garden.



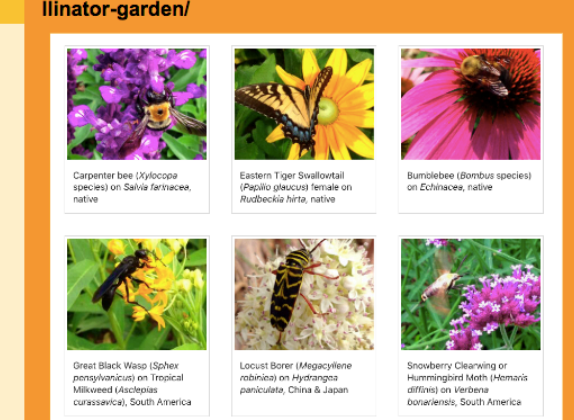
### Un jardín en la escuela para las mariposas ( Step 2)

#### Star your garden

1. Properly select the plants you are going to plant. Only use those that are native to the area. Talk to a specialist.
2. Invite organizations to your school to help you start the garden.
3. Buy organic compost.
4. A garden is a commitment. You must promise to water it regularly, care for it and maintain it year-round.
5. Monarch butterflies may come between October and November.

#### Native Plants in New Jersey

Source: <https://rutgersgardens.rutgers.edu/gardens/pollinator-garden/>



### Un jardín en la escuela para las mariposas ( Step 3)

#### Build you Butterfly Garden

Always have a LOCAL specialist to guide you. Here are some tips to get you started:

1. From HIPLatina <https://hiplatina.com/pasos-para-construir-un-mariposario/>.
2. Build a habitat for your Monarch Butterflies <https://youtu.be/zks2qtdcX6A?feature=share>



Video: <https://www.youtubeeducation.com/watch?v=GI-Gf8dVcG4>

