

Name: _____

Date: _____

The Butterfly's Ball

By R.M. Ballantyne



It was very early one delightful morning in summer, when the trumpeter Gadfly sounded his horn, inviting all the insects in the forest to the Butterfly's ball and the Grasshopper's feast. The sun shone brightly, the air was mild and soft, and the scent of the wild flowers delicious, so that not one of the insects thought of staying at home. Butterflies, Beetles, Bees, Wasps, Snails, Grasshoppers, Ants, all put on their best coats and frocks, all, put on their sweetest smiles, and all hurried off, in little bands, to the ball, talking and laughing, and humming and buzzing, by the way, as if they were the happiest creatures in the wide world. Even the old Beetle, that had been run over by a cart-wheel and squeezed nearly to death, got out of bed when he heard what was going on, and limped along with the rest, though he had been **confined** to the house for six months before. One or two Butterflies, that were never known to go out except in the very finest weather—and even then, carefully

wrapped up—determined to **venture**. They were long in making up their minds about it. One thought it looked a very little like rain; another feared that the light breeze might give them a cold. However, they put on a great many cloaks, and went.

From all directions they came, and assembled on a smooth, grassy spot, under an old oak-tree, where the **revels** were to take place. Some crawled slowly along the ground, some bounded quickly over hill and dale, some came running and tumbling, jumping and hitting against things in their **haste**; some came swiftly through the air, and **alighted** so suddenly as to tumble head over heels; others flew quietly to the scene and fluttered lightly about, admiring the joyful company they were about to join.

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Answer each question below.

1. Describe the setting in which this story takes place.

2. Why do you think the butterflies, who "were never known to go out," decided to attend the ball?

3. **The insects were in a hurry to get to the ball.**

Highlight a sentence in the text that supports this statement.

Match each vocabulary word to its definition.

frocks

travel or journey

confined

come down from flight and settle

venture

excessive speed or urgency; hurry

revels

dresses

haste

lively and noisy celebrations

alighted

restricted in space; cramped

Write three questions you have about the story.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____