

THE BUTTERFLY EFFECT

EVERYTHING YOU DO MATTERS

By Linda Cooper (lindacooper971@gmail.com)
(209-765-3850)

The book is by Andy Andrews. I was inspired to do this activity by my granddaughter, Emma, who has NF (Neurofibromatosis). She loves butterflies and when I ran across this book, I knew I had to share her story and this book with my students. You can buy this book almost anywhere. Any story that you use that is personal and you can relate to you and your students is a very powerful discussion.

Discussion. They discuss this at their table and then they answer the questions below.

How significant is my life? Do I make a difference? When I move, when I act, when I do something... does the universe notice?

Do I really matter?

Then I read the following:

Do I make a difference? When I move... when I act... when I do something... Does the universe notice? Do I really matter?

In 1963, Edward Lorenz presented a hypothesis to the New York Academy of Science. His theory, stated simply was that: A butterfly could flap its wings and set molecules of air in motion, which would move other molecules of air, in turn moving more molecules of air ---eventually capable of starting a hurricane on the other side of the planet. Lorenz and his ideas were literally laughed out of the conference. What he had proposed was ridiculous. Science has shown the butterfly effect to engage with the first movement of any form of matter – including people.

Everything you do matters. Every move you make, every action you take....matters.
Not just to you, or your family, or your business, or hometown
Everything you do matters to all of us forever.

Discussion: What does this mean to you?

Then I read the following:

**YOU HAVE BEEN CREATED IN ORDER THAT YOU MIGHT MAKE A DIFFERENCE
YOU HAVE WITHIN YOU THE POWER TO CHANGE THE WORLD
KNOW THAT YOUR ACTIONS CANNOT BE HOARDED, SAVED FOR LATER, OR USED
SELECTIVELY.**

**BY YOUR HAND, MILLIONS – BILLIONS – OF LIVES WILL BE ALTERED, CAUGHT UP IN A CHAIN
OF EVENTS BEGUN BY YOU THIS DAY. THE VERY BEATING OF YOUR HEART HAS MEANING
AND PURPOSE. YOUR ACTIONS HAVE VALUE FAR GREATER THAN SILVER OR GOLD.**

YOUR LIFE...AND WHAT YOU DO WITH IT TODAY MATTERS FOREVER.

YOUR ASSIGNMENT IS TO:

WRITE ON YOUR BUTTERFLY ON EACH OF THE WINGS:

1. What will you do to affect one life this year?
2. What will you do to affect leadership this year?
3. What will you do to affect your life this year?
4. What is one word that will describe you and how you will accomplish the first 3 questions.

All along the way, you can stop and discuss – in groups and ask for feedback and give examples so that by the time they get to filling in their butterfly, they have a good idea of what you want and can fill it out.

One of my students drew a butterfly. We made copies of it on different colored paper and cut them out. We let the student choose their color and when everyone was finished, we made a bulletin board and put up all the butterflies. It makes a nice display in the classroom and helps remind us of our goals. At the end of each quarter, I had them look at their butterfly to see if they had accomplished the goal. They had to write up what they did, how they did it, and the answer to the question. This paper (writing across the curriculum) also became a part of their leadership scrapbook. At the end of the year, I gave each student their butterfly and had them reread the things they wrote on the wings of their butterfly. I asked them if they had accomplished their 4 items. They had to share with partners, then a group of 4, then a group of 8 and finally the entire class. We had tears, hugs, and an incredible discussion about the difference they had made in others lives as well as their own.