

The Great Migration

“We’re not going to make it!” Meena shouted above the roar of the wind.

“Yes we are!” Mondo shouted back. “Keep flying! Not long now!”

Another strong gust hit Meena, knocking her off-course. For a moment, she lost sight of her best friend. “Mondo!” she cried out.

“I’m here,” he replied, swooping between the other butterflies.

Meena’s right antenna reached out to touch Mondo’s wing. “I’m so tired,” she said. “I don’t know if I can go on much longer.”

They had been travelling north for weeks now, while searching for a safe place for Meena to lay her eggs. The elder butterflies had said it was important to leave their Mexican home in the Michoacan Mountains as there would be nothing for her babies to eat when they hatched. The entire colony – over 100 million monarch butterflies – had set off on an incredible journey: a migration her ancestors had been doing for thousands of years. She knew deep inside that the elders were right, but she never wanted to leave the safety of Michoacan - especially after they had flown all those hundreds of miles to get there in the first place during the autumn. Now, as the rain fell and her wings became heavy, she longed to return.

“There!” Mondo suddenly shouted.

His antennae were pointing down through the misty rain and cloud. Meena took a sharp intake of breath as she saw the green land below. “Milkweed!” she laughed as thousands of monarchs parted from the main colony gliding towards their species’ favourite plant.

Meena fluttered from leaf to leaf, laying her precious eggs. “It’s been a long journey,” she sighed, eventually coming to rest on a large tree.

“So sleepy...” Mondo agreed, yawning. They snuggled up together. They were so tired and now all the eggs were safely laid all they wanted to do was to fall into a deep, deep sleep. “I’m so proud of you,” Mondo whispered. Meena smiled, nuzzling her head into his wings, and the two monarch butterflies, having fulfilled their role in the cycle of life, drifted slowly away...



1. Where had Meena and Mondo flown from?



2. How many butterflies were in the colony?



3. ‘For a moment, she lost sight of her best friend. “Mondo!” she cried out.’ How do you think Meena was feeling at this point in the story?



4. At the end, it says the two butterflies ‘drifted slowly away’. What do you think the author means by this?
