LESSON 2: THE LIFE CYCLE OF A MOSQUITO

MOSQUITO LIFECYCLE:

Insect **metamorphosis** (Definition: Change in Shape) occurs in two different ways, depending on the kind of insect. In the first type, "gradual"

metamorphosis, the immature stage or nymph, looks similar to the adult stage. An example of this is the grasshopper lifecycle. Look at the grasshopper lifecycle. Notice how the grasshopper gradually gets bigger and bigger. Also, notice there is no pupal stage. With "complete" metamorphosis, the



immature stage, or larvae, looks **completely** different from the adult stage. An example of this, is the mosquito.



The mosquito lifecycle has 4 stages, the egg, larva, pupa, and adult. The **egg** contains a growing embryo and the nutrients it needs before hatching. A mosquito **larva** hatches out of the egg and into water. The larva will feed on algae and small organisms. Sometimes the larva are called wigglers, because they are worm like and wiggle in the water. Although

the larva lives in water, it breathes through a long tube or siphon that reaches to the surface of the water. As the larva continues to grow, it molts 4 times. In the last molt it becomes a **pupa**. The pupa does not eat, but can swim to avoid predators. A few days later, the **adult** emerges from the pupa. Both the males and females will feed on nectar. Only the female ingests blood, which she needs for her eggs to develop. **Complete Metamorphosis:** Often times when insects have complete metamorphosis, the different stages have different needs. What do each of these stages feed on? Where do they live? You have been given a container with the different stages. Observe the behavior and answer the questions.

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