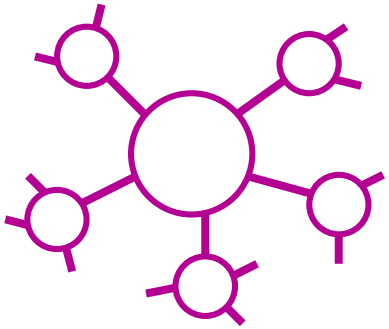
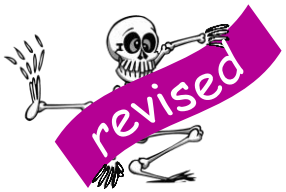
# The advanced report book

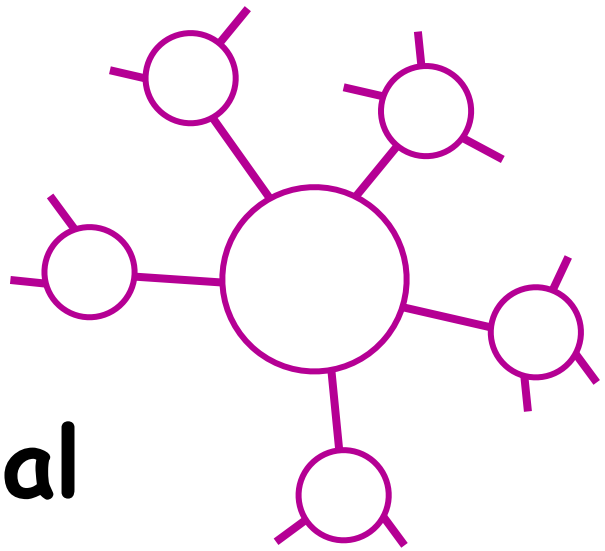





Sue Palmer

# Non-chronological report text

describes the characteristics of things, animals, places or people.



It is not in chronological order. The information is organised in categories.

These texts are often 'report text'…

# Report genres

# Report writing needs

## Purpose

- to provide factual information
- to organise the facts so they are easy to access and understand
- to interest the reader.

The genre of text can also affect the purpose.

- a title that draws the reader in
- introductory paragraph defining the subject matter
- a clear layout (e.g. sections, paragraphs) showing how information is organised
- perhaps 'structural signposts' (e.g. subheadings, boxes)
- paragraphs that open with a topic sentence

A topic sentence sums up what the paragraph is about.

- maybe labelled picture(s) or diagram(s)
- a satisfactory conclusion (e.g. a neatly-composed final sentence).

# Report writing

## Audience

- think about the audience for the genre
- how much do you know about them (age, interests, prior knowledge)?

Use what you know about your audience to decide

- how much background detail is needed
- appropriate level of formality.

Where should your text sit along these continua?

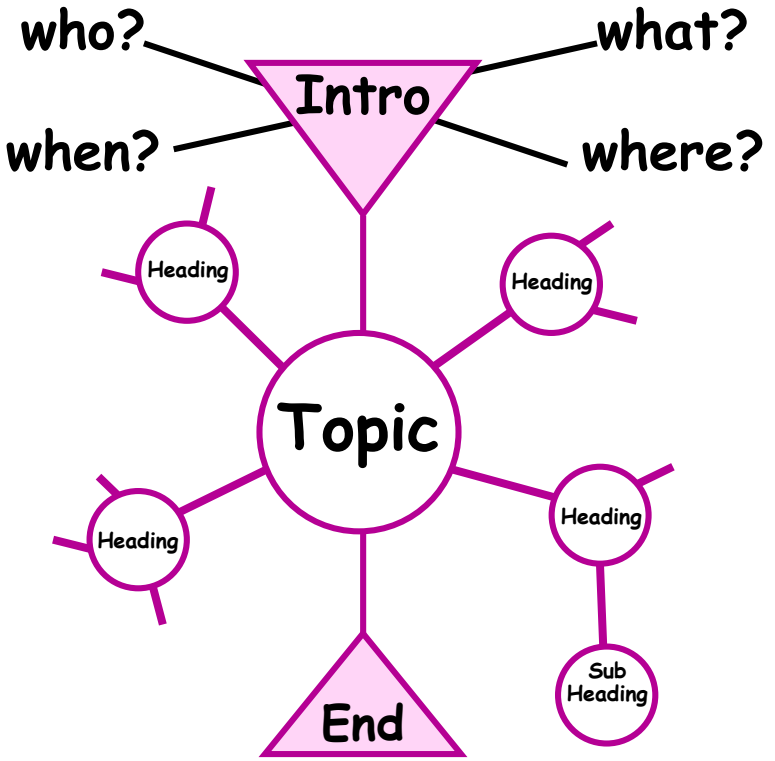
informal ← - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - → formal

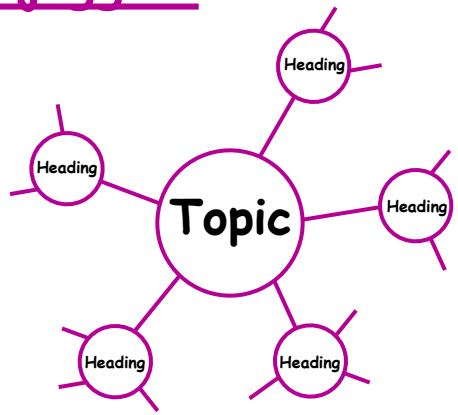
personal ← - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - → impersonal

The position on each continuum may be different. Impersonal texts are sometimes written informally, and personal texts may be formal.

# Planning and organising reports 1

- **BRAINSTORM** what you know
- **ORGANISE** your information under headings (find out more facts if you need to).
- Make a **SPIDERGRAM** skeleton
  - write the **topic** in the middle blob
  - write your **headings** in the outer blobs
  - jot your **memory-joggers** round each heading.



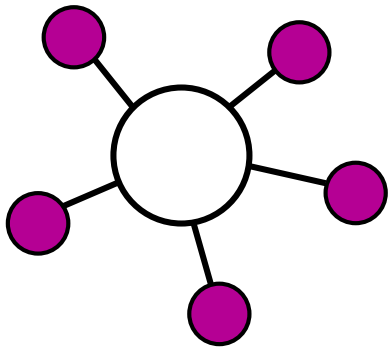




When you have made your spidergram skeleton, each spider-leg gives you one paragraph (or section in your writing.

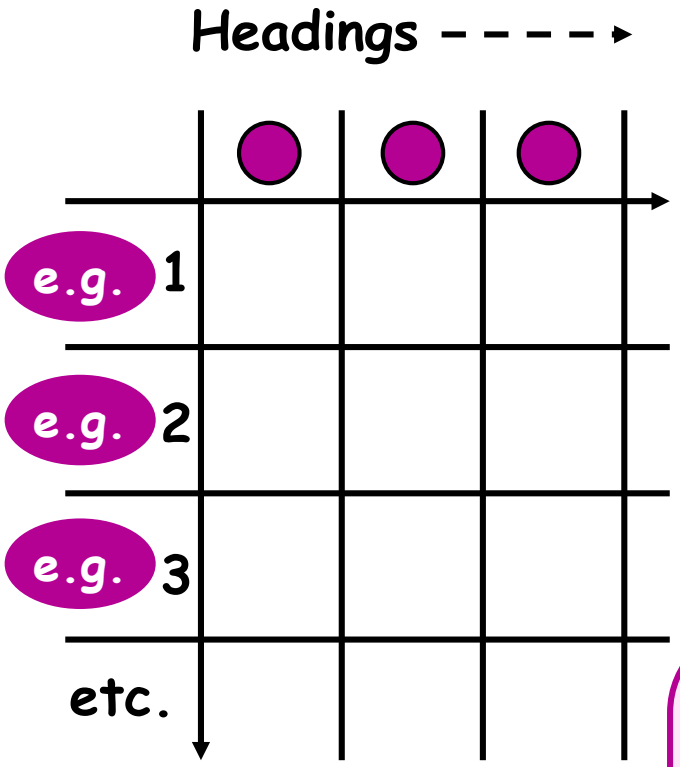
# Planning and organising reports 2

If your report is about more than one thing it might help make a grid.

1. Make a spidergram skeleton to decide the headings.



2. Make a grid, with your headings across the top axis.




Put the things you're comparing down this axis.

3. Put memory-joggers in the boxes of the grid.

When you've made your grid skeleton you could write a paragraph (or section)

- about each heading
- about each e.g.

# Report language features

- present tense verbs
  (except historical reports)
- factual, impersonal style
- clear, factual description
- examples where appropriate
- generalised language
- technical vocabulary
- 'structural signposts', such as subheadings.

- third person
- occasional use of passive
- statements based on fact, not value judgements.

e.g. such as... including for instance for example

# Generalised language

Most reports are general, and writing is in

- the plural, e.g. *Snails have a protective shell.*
- the 'generalised singular', e.g. *The snail's shell protects its body.*

To cover exceptions, use 'weasel words'. e.g.

generally usually
tend to be may be
on the whole

# Technical vocabulary

Most reports involve technical vocabulary, which may need defining, e.g.

...a flange, which is a protruding rim... .

...the protruding rim, known as a flange,... .

...a protruding rim called a flange... .

...a flange, (a protruding rim)...

If there are many words to be defined, you could include a glossary.

# Alternative 'skeleton' note-taking frameworks

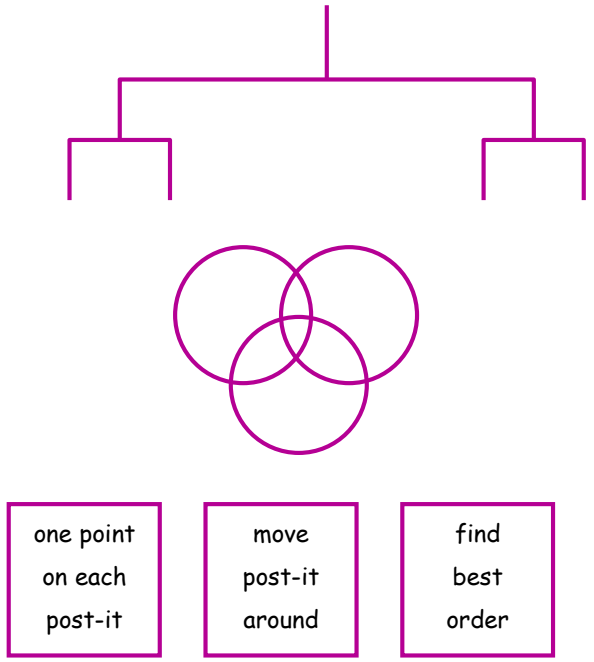
* labelled diagram

* tree diagram (hierarchy)

* Venn diagram

* mobile post-it notes

* map or plan



# Examples of 'skeletons' in use

Taken from 'How to teach Writing Across the Curriculum' (KS1/2) by Sue Palmer, with many thanks to David Fulton Publishers

# Butterflies

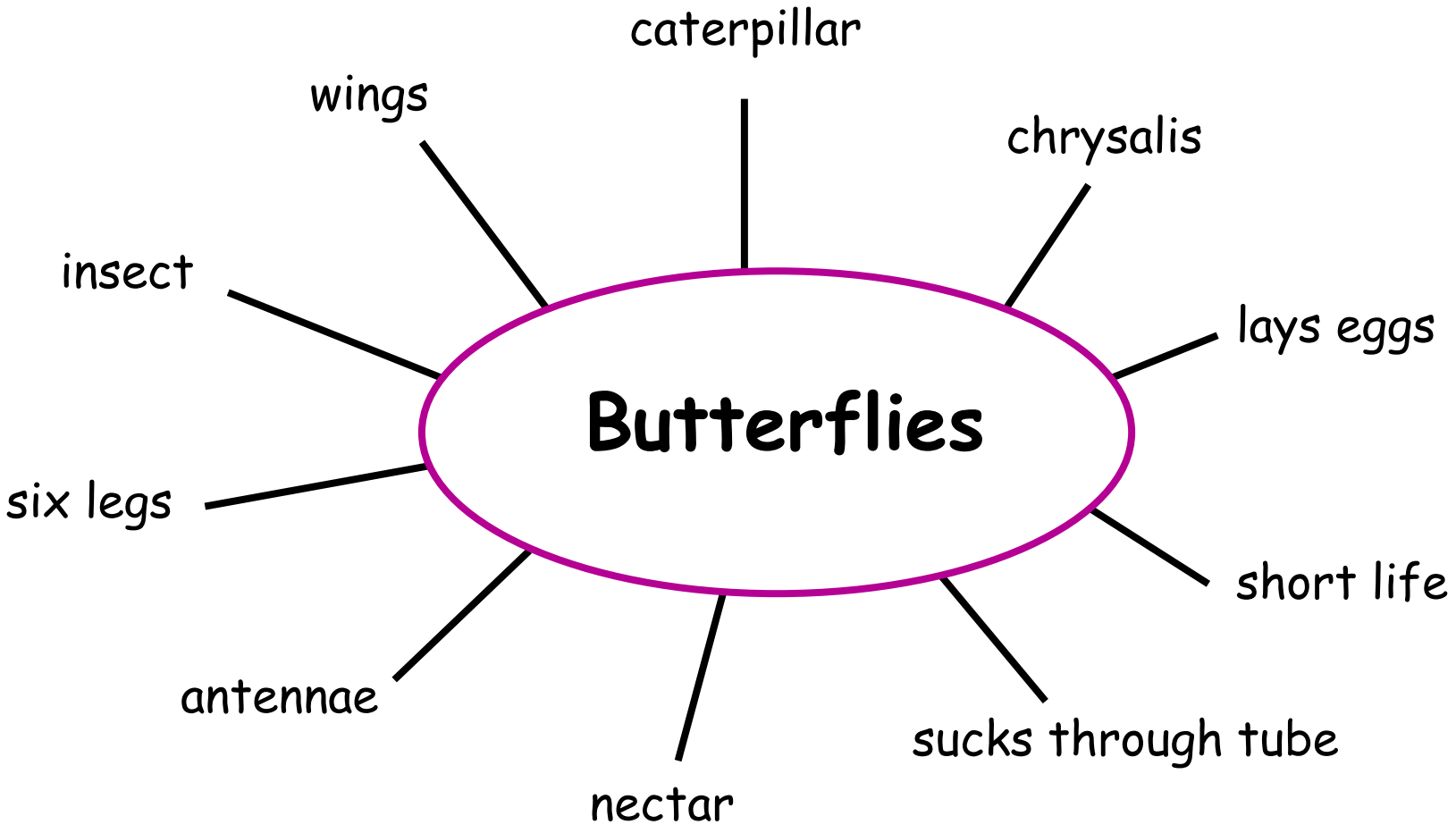
Butterflies belong to the order of insects known as Lepidoptera. This means they have scaly bodies and wings, and a feeding tube on the front of the head called a proboscis, coiled up when not in use. Their wings may be large, brightly coloured and patterned. Butterflies are found in most parts of the world and different species are adapted to the environments in which they live.

Like all insects, the butterfly's body is divided into three parts: head, thorax and abdomen. On the head are a pair of antennae, used for smelling, and two large compound eyes. Three pairs of legs and two pairs of wings – fore and hind – grow from the thorax. The wings are made of a very thin membrane, stretched over a network of 'veins', in the same way as the skin of an umbrella is stretched over the frame. Tiny overlapping scales on the membrane give the wings their pattern and colour.

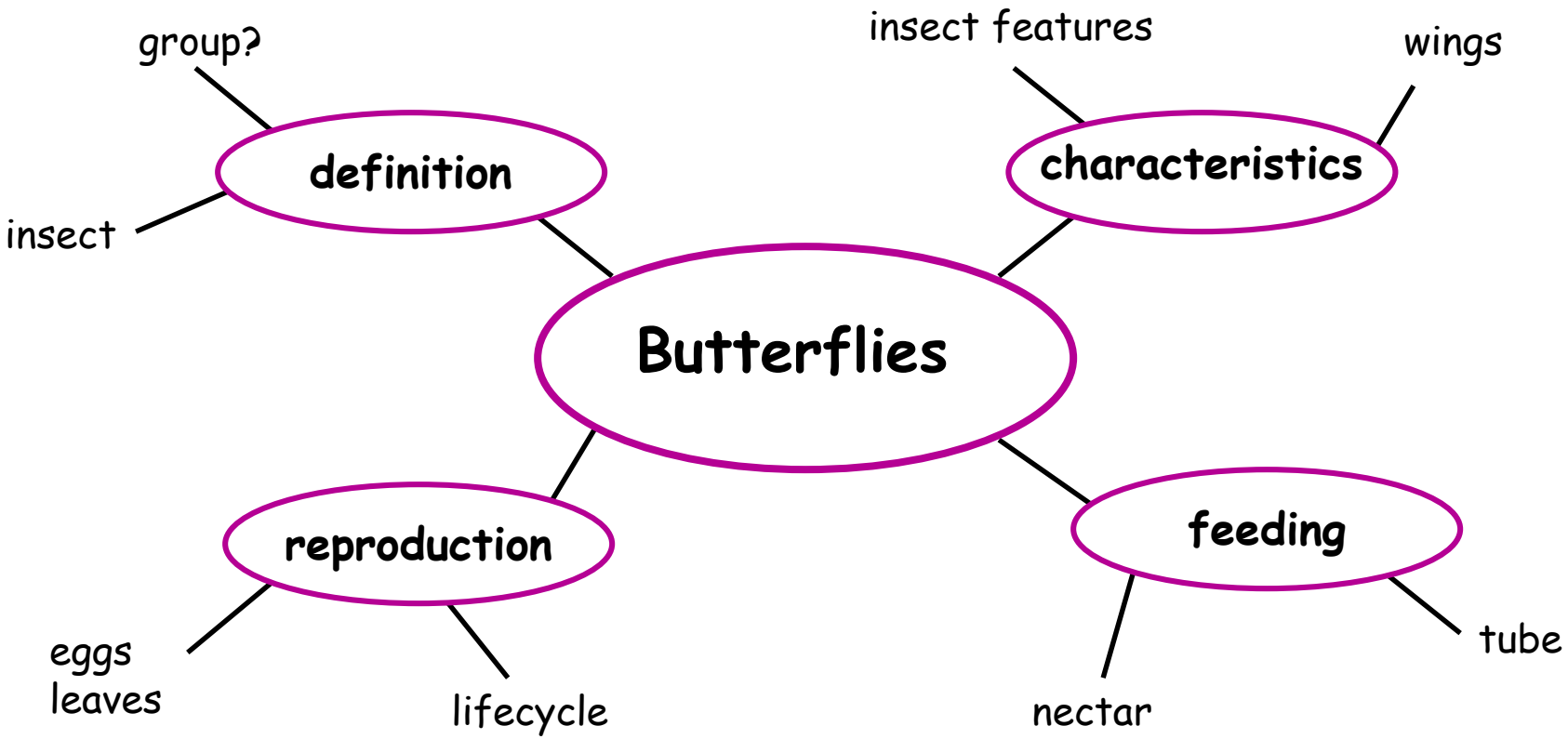
Male butterflies tend to be more brightly coloured than the females but the females are larger. They also have bigger wings, enabling them to fly even when they are carrying a heavy burden of eggs. A female butterfly may lay up to 3,000 eggs, always choosing an appropriate plant for the caterpillars to feed on. However, usually only one or two eggs out of a hundred hatch out and many others die as they grow through the stages of larva (caterpillar) and chrysalis (pupa) to become an imago (adult butterfly).

The imago usually has a lifespan of only a few weeks. It feeds on nectar from flowers or other sweet food, such as over-ripe fruit, which it sucks up through the proboscis. This food provides energy to fly and reproduce, but most butterflies do not need any body-building foods to see them through their short lives. In fact, a few species have mouthparts that do not open so they cannot feed.

# 1. Brainstorm

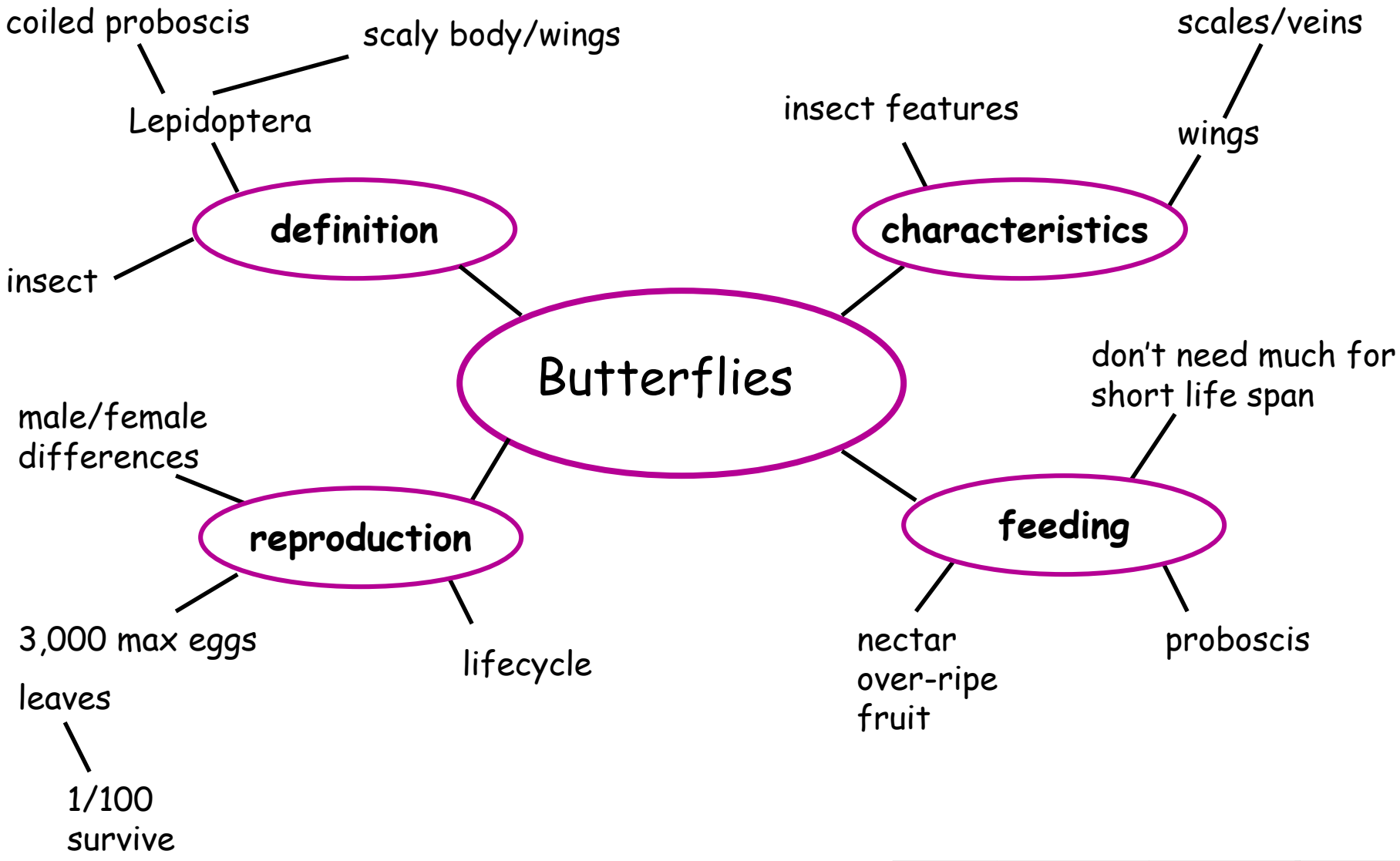


# 2. Organise into categories



# 3. Spidergram

(adding to information from 2 though further readings)

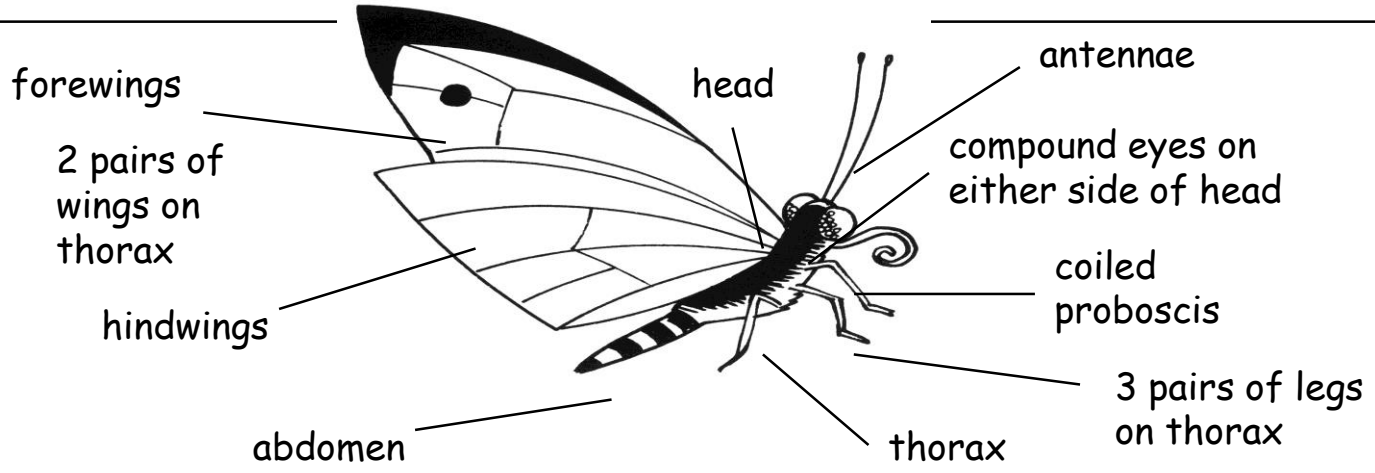


# BUTTERFLY

Scientific name: Lepidoptera

Butterflies are insects with two pairs of brightly coloured, patterned wings. Their bodies and wings are covered in tiny scales – it is the scales that give the wings their pattern. They feed through a tube on the head called a proboscis, which is coiled when not in use.

By travelling from flower to flower to such up the nectar, butterflies help with pollination. They pick up the pollen on their abdomen in the flower and it brushes off on another.




## Habitat

Meadows, woodland, gardens

## Feeding habits

Herbivorous: nectar from flowers; ripe fruit

## Life Cycle

100s of eggs
→ caterpillars
→ pupa
→ adult (imago)

## Predators

Birds, bats, spiders, lizards, etc.

| | Classification | Key facts | Habitat | Feeding habits | Life cycle | Predators |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Butterfly | Insect Lepidoptera | 1. scales and coiled proboscis 2. helps pollination | Meadows woodlands gardens | Herbivorous – nectar ripe fruit | 100s of eggs → caterpillars → pupa → adult (imago) | Birds, bats, spiders, frogs, lizards, small mammals |
| Worm | | | | | | |
| Woodlouse | | | | | | |

# The End