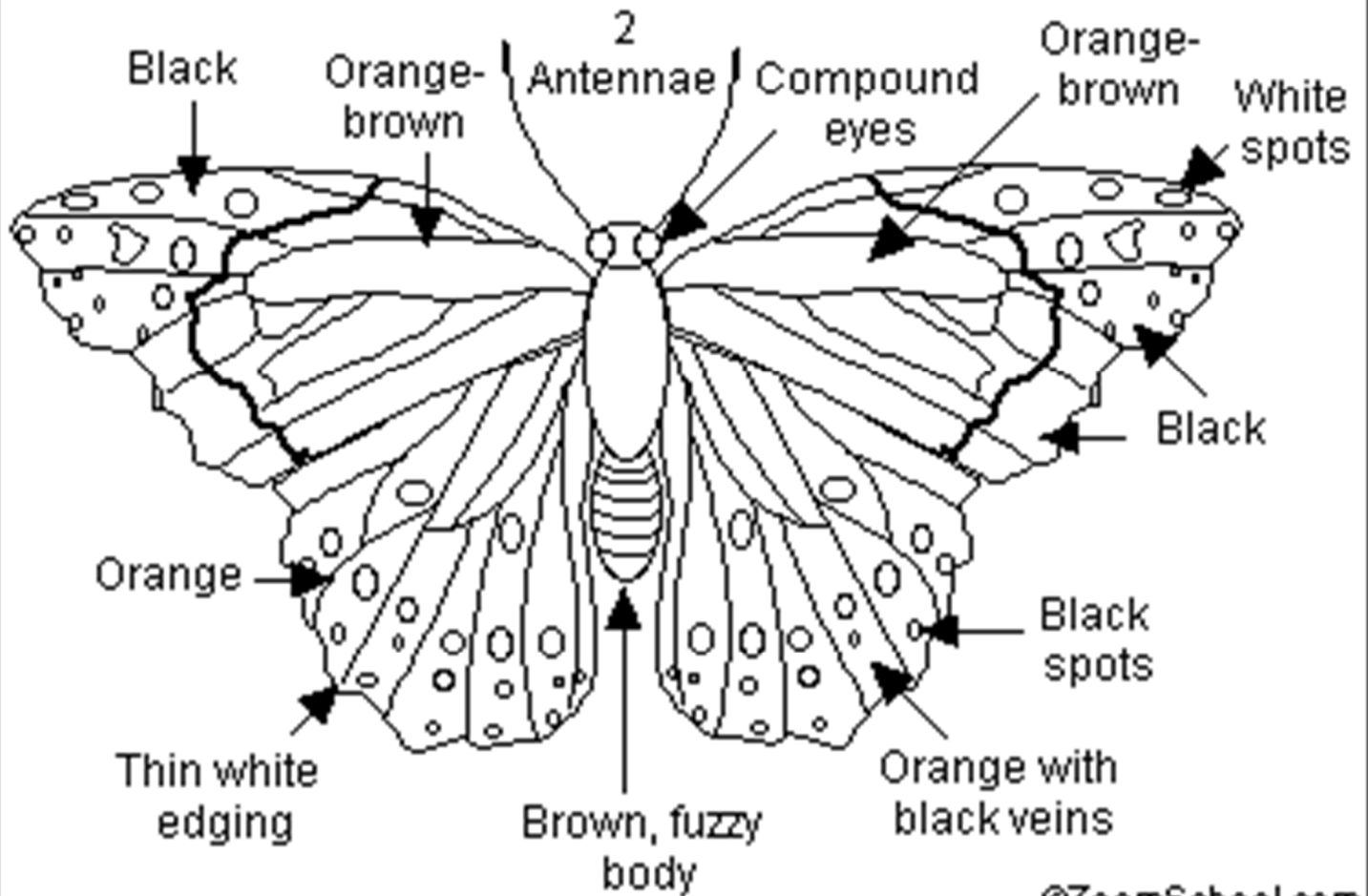


Painted Lady Butterfly

Vanessa cardui



©ZoomSchool.com

The Painted Lady may be the most widespread butterfly in the world. It also known as the thistle butterfly and the cosmopolitan (because it is so widespread, occurring in North and South America, Europe, Asia and Africa).

Painted ladies arrive from the south in late March and fly until November. There are multiple broods in Missouri. They frequently lay eggs on host plants within patches of nectar flowers even if those plants don't provide for optimal caterpillar growth. Increasing a female's sugar consumption increases her longevity and the total number of eggs she lays. Painted ladies lay a large number of small eggs in a lifetime, opting for quantity over quality.