

Mermaid Theatre of Nova Scotia's *A Brown Bear, A Caterpillar and A Moon* Treasured Stories by Eric Carle

Thursday, May 9 and Friday, May 10
9:45 a.m. and 1:00 p.m.
Pre-K – 2nd grade

LIED CENTER OF KANSAS

Mermaid Theatre of Nova Scotia's returns to the Lied Center with their much-anticipated **new production, *A Brown Bear, A Caterpillar And A Moon: Treasured Stories By Eric Carle***. This production brings together old favorites and new friends. Featuring evocative music, stunning visual effects and innovative puppetry, the triple-bill highlights three of Eric Carle's most beloved tales.

This **Teacher's Activities Guide** provides information about the production and activities shared by teachers from all over North America relating to Eric Carle stories and Mermaid Theatre productions. You will find activities for all three Eric Carle Stories, ***The Very Hungry Caterpillar, Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See? & Papa, Please Get the Moon for Me.***



Mermaid Theatre Company of Nova Scotia

Founded in 1972 in Wolfville, Nova Scotia, Canada, is currently celebrating its 40th season of continuous operation. Their extensive headquarters encompass production studios, administrative offices, rehearsal quarters, a versatile studio, and an elegant 400-seat performance facility known as The Mermaid Imperial Performing Arts Centre.

Still images from several Mermaid shows. (Clockwise from top left: Leo Lionni's "Swimmy" ; Margaret Wise Brown's "The Runaway Bunny" ; Eric Carle's "Very Hungry Caterpillar," and Anita Jeram's "I Love My Little Storybook"

Mermaid Theatre is best known for their unique stage adaptations of children's beloved literary classics. Their innovative puppetry, striking scenic effects, evocative original music and gentle storytelling have been applauded by five million spectators in fifteen countries.

Each year the theatre presents more than 400 performances for 200,000 spectators – many of them new to the theatre experience. Mermaid regularly crosses Canada and the United States, and has represented Canada in Japan (nine times), Singapore (six times), South Korea (four times), Mexico (three times), Australia, England, Ireland, Northern Ireland, Scotland, Wales, Holland, Hong Kong, Macau, Vietnam and Taiwan. Taped narration featuring outstanding international artists facilitates performances in English, Spanish, Korean, Japanese, French, Cantonese and Mandarin.

This will be Mermaid Theatre's fifth visit to the Lied Center of Kansas!



***The Very Hungry Caterpillar* Classroom Activities**

Submitted by Lindsay

I am a student in the College of Education at Arizona State University with specialization areas in both French and German. I am required to volunteer at local high schools in order to gain experience. Last spring, I was in a second-year German class. I used *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* (*Die Kleine Raupe Nimmersatt*) to teach students the words for several food items. Before I read the story to students, I asked them to write down all of the German words that they understood (along with their English equivalents). This was an excellent way to test the students' comprehension. As I read, I did not show the pictures of the book to the students, so they could not cheat (unless they already knew the story and the majority did not). It was a fun activity, and it could easily be used with other languages.

Submitted by [Marisa](#)

I used this book with my insect theme and also in a Grade 2 math class. We read the book and then I had the children graph the amounts of food that the caterpillar ate on each day of the week. To extend this work, I created a set of Hungry Caterpillar Word Problems. For example, on Monday 6 hungry caterpillars ate through 4 apples each. Students then had to graph the amount of fruit the hungry caterpillars ate each day of the week. The students loved it.

Submitted by [Jaime Stewart](#)

I am student teaching in a kindergarten class and we are learning beginning sounds. To help learn the letter and sound of "Cc" I had the students make a class caterpillar after reading *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*. I made a circles of green paper and had each of the students draw a picture of something that begins with the letter "Cc." Each of the circles represented a piece of the caterpillar's body. I told students that our caterpillar was very hungry and needed lots to eat I made the face using a paper circle with wiggly eyes and pipe cleaners as antennae. This was a great way to assess whether students could correctly pull up "Cc" words. The students really loved seeing their caterpillar displayed in the hall with their "Cc" words.

Submitted by [Nicole Power](#)

I am a speech pathologist in Oklahoma. I use *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* to teach my students the

concept of before and after. Because of the graduated pages in the book, the child can view all the fruits the caterpillar eats at the same time. Then I ask the student “What did he eat after the pear?” “What did he eat before the strawberry?” I do the same thing on the page with all the junk food. This book is also great to teach sequencing.

Submitted by [Patricia](#)

I use the book *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* with young children with language disorders. I created a very detailed unit to be used in short therapy sessions with a small group of children. The objective of the unit is to teach the children the basic components of a story: beginning, problem, action, outcome, & end. Before reading the book, we take one or two sessions to prepare for the book. I do an activity where the children color the four life stages of a butterfly and then glue them to a picture of a tree on construction paper. This picture is displayed in the classroom. We then discuss the book in stages and with each stage we have an interactive activity to help the child remember and restate the stage. The activities include art projects. Many concepts are integrated in each lesson of the unit. Some of these concepts are: sequencing, syntactic forms (e.g. plurals, past tense, etc.), following verbal commands, answering questions, vocabulary building, descriptive language, using complete sentences, classification, etc. I spend two or more months with this book twice a week for twenty minutes at a time. Many of the ideas given on this website can be incorporated in the lessons—in fact I will incorporate some of them. Thank you for sharing your ideas, and if anyone would like more details on how I implement this language unit or communication goals that may be targeted, please e-mail me.

Submitted by [Shanon Lutz](#)

I teach 3rd grade and use *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* when teaching about life cycles. I first read the story and then go through each of the stages of a butterfly's life cycle with my students: 1) Egg 2) Caterpillar (Larva) 3) Pupa (Inside of the cocoon) and 4) Adult Butterfly. I give my students a circular piece of construction paper divided into four parts. They use yarn, Q-tips, tissue paper, and scraps of construction paper to make a 3D collage of a butterfly's life cycle. The kids love it and they never forget the life cycle of a butterfly!

Submitted by [Rose Smart](#)

My Kindergarten class loves to hear *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*. For an art experience, we paint caterpillars with biocolor and several color drops. Then, we use a wedge of plastic to fan the colors into a vibrant rainbow caterpillar. When dry, we insert this creature into a large painted fruit. Of course, the children all refer to this as *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* by Eric Carle as they are learning about authors and illustrators in their Language Arts program. Thank you for such a lovely story and please continue to inspire our children to create with such love of language and art.

Submitted by [Lisa Carter](#)

I created my own mini version of *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* for my 4 and 5 year-old students to color, cut and sequence. On each page is written the day of the week and includes a drawing of the food the caterpillar ate that day. Each page is progressively longer, just as in the book. The children draw in the caterpillar on each page and the cocoon and butterfly on blank pages in the back. Then the children punch a hole in each food item using a hole puncher which is great for fine

motor development and lots of fun for the kids! I ask the parents to have their child retell the story using the pictures as clues. This helps reinforce days of the week, counting, and sequencing skills, and the kids love being able to “read” it all by themselves!

Submitted by [Zeder Pough](#)

I am a preschool teacher involved with 3 and 4 year olds. I used *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* to teach the preschoolers how Caterpillars and Butterflies grow, change, and eat. The following is a list of things we did in class:

1. I read the book using flannel board pieces to represent the items in the book. Then I gave each child a flannel board piece and as I read the book, that child placed their piece on the flannel board as it was mentioned in the story.
2. I had the children paint several paper plates different colors. After they were dry, I stapled the plates together, punched a hole in the top of plates, attached fishing line to it, and hung it from the ceiling of the classroom. By stringing the plates together, you can make the caterpillar as long as you want. I attached two pipe cleaners for the antennae and a large black construction paper circle for the eyes.
3. For this next activity, you will need two paper towel tubes per child. Let each child paint two empty paper towel tubes any color they want. After the paint has dried, slit each tube down one side and have children use a hole puncher to punch two to three holes on each side of the slit. These holes will be used to attach the tube to the child’s lower arm. Lace elastic through the holes, then tie. Have children to glue crepe paper streamers to the top of the paper towel tubes. For the antennae, staple a strip of construction paper around the child’s head, use hole puncher to punch two holes in the front of the headband, and insert one pipe cleaner into each hole. After wings and antennae are prepared, have the children go outside and run. The crepe paper streamers will fly from their arms like butterfly wings.
4. Cut out flower shapes from construction paper that will cover paper cups. Fill paper cups with fruit juice, insert a straw into the middle of the paper flowers and let children drink “nectar” from the flowers. I used this after letting the children “fly” like butterflies outside.

Submitted by Amy D.

I am a children’s librarian and have noticed that children love to be involved in the story. I had some volunteers cut construction paper fruits and junk food for each child. A green piece of ribbon with a bead tied to the end serves as the caterpillar. We have 25 ziploc bags prepared to hand out before the story. The children love to have their caterpillar eat the fruits and other foods while the story is going on.

Submitted by [Debbie Nysewander](#)

My kindergarten class learned to recognize their names with the book *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*. Instead of eating foods, the students made a caterpillar from green circles, and he ate one letter per

circle. When they finished they could see the letters that were in their own name.

Submitted by [Cathy Furlong](#)

This is an idea for *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* that I got from a workshop many years ago. I glued wiggle eyes on a bright green sock and then used felt to make all of the foods in the story. Each food has a slit cut out of the middle. As the story is read, I wear the sock caterpillar on my hand and the children feed the food to the caterpillar by putting it over the sock. The caterpillar and food then go into a plastic bag and magically appear as a felt butterfly. (I tuck the butterfly into the palm of my hand inside the sock before I start). I made this about 15 years ago and assumed it would last a year, maybe two. It is still around! The children absolutely love this activity.

Submitted by Mrs. Claypool's Creative Class

First, we read *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*. Next, we painted three pieces of construction paper using marbles, Q-Tips, spoons, sponges and our fingers! We traced circles and feet and cut them out. Mrs. Claypool taped the caterpillar together, put goggle eyes on it, and hung it up. For the butterfly, Mrs. Claypool cut an outline of a butterfly. The children ripped tissue paper and taped it on. Mrs. Claypool laminated each butterfly and hung them up for a beautiful display!



Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See? Classroom Activities

Submitted by [Penelope Tramell](#)

I have an idea I would like to share. I am a kindergarten teacher at Union Elementary. The second week of school we use the book *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?* to learn our colors. We dedicate one day for each color in the book, then one for our school colors. On that day we wear that color to school. (Mon. = Brown, Tues.= Red, Wed. = Yellow, etc.) The whole school does it so the K kids get really excited to see everyone helping them learn colors!

Submitted by [Courtenay Garver](#)

We use many Eric Carle books (*Brown Bear, Brown Bear, Polar Bear, Polar Bear, The Very Hungry Caterpillar*) to teach a unit on writing pattern books in second grade. Almost all of his books have a pattern or repeating lines. First, the children read the books in groups of 3 and find the pattern or repeating lines in each book. We use Eric Carle books as touchstone texts that the children can grab at any time to help them write their own pattern book. Some children do their own version *Brown Bear, Brown Bear* but change the things he sees, some children write a different version like *Black Cat, Black Cat* and some children write completely original pattern books. It is a great way for teachers to differentiate and for children to work at their own level. During Writers' Workshop the rest of the year they can go back to writing pattern books as they finish other projects. Their pattern/repeating line books get more sophisticated as the year goes on.

Submitted by [Shannon Sullivan](#)

We read *Brown Bear* to our special needs preschoolers in speech therapy group time. The children sequenced the animals in the order they were seen in the book, and used their own names to ask other children what animal they saw. They also placed the animals on a large picture scene according to where the animals live. For example, they could place the Bear in the tree, under the

tree, or in the woods, and the cat in the barn, in the house, or next to the house. The children communicated their ideas through sign language, picture symbols, and verbal language.

Submitted by [Theresa](#)

I used Brown Bear with my first graders. I read the book to them twice and then prepared an activity for them. I typed out "Brown Bear, _____ Bear What Do You See? I see a bird looking at me." They were able to fill in all the missing words. This helped them to become better readers and spellers.

Submitted by [S. A. Ellison](#)

This year in our preschool class, we decided to use bears as our classroom theme. We decorated all our boards with the bear theme in mind. Our students love it! In fact we are known as the Pre- K Bears. This site gives me so many ideas I can use this year. I think I am going to change our five senses board to: Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See, Hear, Smell, Feel, and Taste? Thank you!

Submitted by Judi Taylor

Our Kindergarten teachers took the Brown Bear text and adapted it to make monthly take-home books. For example, in December we created "Christmas Tree, Christmas Tree." We then took our illustrations, enlarged them, and laminated for the language center. We used this format to create take-home books for almost every month, season, or topic of study. Since the children learn the chant so easily, even our non-readers were able to "read."

Submitted by [Kim](#)

I begin each Kindergarten year with the book Brown Bear, Brown Bear. We expand on the book throughout the seasons by making the following class books:

"Jack-O-Lantern, Jack-O-Lantern, What Do You See?" is made with the symbols of Halloween and ends with "I see a trick-or-treater looking at me;"

"Santa Claus, Santa Claus, What Do You See?" is put together with images of Christmas and ends with "I see Christmas looking at me;"

"Red Flower, Red Flower, What Do You See?" is written with flowers of different color and ends with "I see a rainbow garden looking at me."

Submitted by [Robbie Morgan](#)

I am preparing to use Brown Bear in a Family Learning Day to help parents put together literacy boxes for their special needs child. The box will contain stick puppets of the animals from the book, colored paper for the child to make a personal book, and textured materials (red glitter, green paper scraps, yellow feathers, fabric, etc.) to be glued onto drawings of each animal. The literacy box will also contain either the sign language for each picture in the book, or a braille translation of each picture. Parents will learn to use these different tools with their child as they read Brown Bear with their child.

Submitted by [Susan Sawyer](#)

I work with a Head Start program that serves children in multi-age classroom settings. For an interactive group activity for my students (ages 3-5), I have created a flannel set of each animal. The children enjoy putting the animals on the flannel board, both when we read the story at group time, and as a sequencing activity during center time.

Submitted by [N. J. Stapp](#)

I am a substitute teacher in Grades K-12. For all my classes I read *Brown Bear, Brown Bear in American Sign Language* when we have a moment of free time. I initiate a discussion on how not all people are alike, on the people who are challenged physically, mentally, or both. Then I teach the students some basic Sign Language. When I substitute teach in a class again, the students almost always ask, "Do we get to learn more sign language if we get our work done?" They seem to enjoy the book and the Sign Language. You might like to try this if you work with multi-age groups of children.

Submitted by [Nicole Charlton](#)

I teach severely handicapped students in an elementary school. We use *Brown Bear* to teach reading as well as to teach sign language. The words are easy to learn for both the staff and students. The verbal, the non-verbal, and the deaf students can "read" the same book and all the students practice their signing. They not only love the book, but it also does wonders for their self esteem when they go home and teach their parents something new.

Submitted by [M. Jones](#)

I use *Brown Bear, Brown Bear* the very first day of Kindergarten with a new class. So often children come to school thinking they will learn to read on the FIRST day. As I read the story, I turn the page immediately after "what do you see?" Very quickly, the children can "read" and everyone goes home feeling successful.

Submitted by [Deborah Leighnor](#)

I teach preschool, and each week I have a preschooler take home a backpack with either the book *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?* or *Polar Bear, Polar Bear, What Do You Hear?* I include a small bear and a notebook for photos and drawings in each backpack. The bag is sent home with the child at the end of the week. Upon returning to school, the child has the chance to share their weekend bear adventures with the class. The students really enjoy the special time with their bears.

Submitted by [Julie Iverson](#)

To get to know each other at the beginning of school, I take a photograph of each child in my class. I begin a class book with *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, who do you see?* On the next page I add a picture of a student and the caption "I see Aaron looking at me." I create a page for each student in the class in this way. I even include adults such as the principal and the secretary. Each page can be pulled out and replaced as students move or are added to our classroom. It has been very helpful for new students to quickly learn one another's names.

Submitted by [Lynn Churchill](#)

After reading the book *Brown Bear, Brown Bear* to my class, we created a book about our school called *Northeast, Northeast, What Do You See?* Before the school year had begun, I took pictures of all the adults in the school for our book. This was a way to introduce the children to all of the adults that they would be coming into contact with during the year. The children and their families loved this book!

Submitted by [Kirsten Haugen](#)

Brown Bear, Brown Bear gives my young students with disabilities many opportunities to find or match colors, animal names, and animal sounds. We have small quilted animals to go with the book, and the students love to match the animal with each page. The children use a talking word processor to rewrite the story by combining the colors and animals in any way they choose, in any order. We might get, "Purple Frog, Purple Frog..." or "White Bear, White Bear..." The kids love it!



Papa, Please Get the Moon for Me **Classroom Activities**

Submitted by [Frances Dixon](#)

As librarian, I have to find ways to link books with the real world. With *Papa, Please Get the Moon for Me*, I actually had each student observe the moon. I put the students into small groups and they did research on the phases of the moon. We spent at least 3 weeks on the moon and the fourth week we all watched, at home, as the moon become full again.

Submitted by [Linda Helgason](#)

Creative Art project for kindergarten:

1. Finger paint an 11X17 paper with dark blue paint.
2. Using a small paper plate, cut out a phase of the moon.
3. Color or paint the moon.
4. Cut out stars from shiny gold or silver paper.

5. Draw and cut out a ladder, a father, and a little girl.
 6. When the finger paint is dry, glue all items on the paper.
 7. Attach lick and stick stars over the picture.
- * This is an excellent creative art activity because each student's creation is so unique.

Submitted by [Tracy Porter](#)

After reading *Papa, Please Get the Moon for Me*, my second graders and I had a discussion about the myth of "the man in the moon." The kids then took a piece of black construction paper and glued a crescent moon onto it. We added faces to our moons and glued tiny stars all over the black paper. We then wrote letters to the man in the moon. The children thought of questions they might want to ask the moon if they could. Their letters were very creative and it helped reinforce writing questions and using question marks. We stapled them together and each child had a book to keep.

Submitted by Gretchen Pitts

For a primary mathematics class at Oklahoma State University we decided to use Eric Carle books for a thematic unit to be embedded in primary (k-3) math. I used *Papa, Please Get the Moon for Me* as my selection and after reading the book, we built a human ladder in our classroom by sitting face to face/back to back. It was great fun and other topics used while creating the ladder were estimating how many students it would take to complete the ladder, we talked about the pattern that we were making, we counted ourselves, we counted by twos, (could also count by other numbers), then as extensions, I planned a center activity of building ladders and estimating materials such as toothpicks, craft sticks, pipe cleaners, etc. Also, we would make a graph of the student's estimates of too many, not enough or just right. This activity covered many of NCTM's standards and was very active. Hope you can try it!.

Submitted by [Debbie O'Shea](#)

I use *Papa, Please Get the Moon for Me* for an art project. Using blue tempera paint, the students completely paint a 9X12 sheet of white construction paper. After it dries, the students use flat toothpicks to make a ladder to the moon. Instruct the students to start by laying toothpicks for one side, then the steps, and finally the other side. This should help eliminate the problem of some toothpick steps being too long. A gray construction paper moon is glue to the paper. Using a sheet of white construction paper, draw and color Papa climbing the ladder to the moon. Glue Papa to the ladder. Add self-adhesive stars to finish the sky.

Submitted by [Hillary Theyer](#)

I use *Papa, Please Get the Moon for Me* for dance and creative movement. First we read the story, and as we come to the movement we act it out reaching for the moon, climbing the ladder, etc. After the story is finished, all the kids get white cardboard circles, and I play music and have the kids "dance" with the moon. The boys are usually too shy, but I enlist a couple of story time regulars to be helpers and start dancing. We dance for a few minutes, and I take suggestions on movements we can all do such as spinning, holding the moon above our head, etc. It is very pretty to watch, and kids often "dance" their books out of the library that day.

