The Very Hungry Caterpillar

By Eric Carle

A hungry caterpillar eats his way through many different foods before turning into a beautiful butterfly.

BEFORE READING:

- Show the children the front of the book. Ask them to guess what the book is about.
- Ask them what they see on the front cover and if they have ever seen one before.

WHILE READING:

- Stop at any time if there is something you or the children would like to talk about.
- Ask them questions so that they can connect what is happening in the book to things they already know about. Try some of these ideas:
    - What foods did the caterpillar eat?
    - Which of these foods do they like to eat?
    - How does your stomach feel when you eat too much food?
    - What color butterflies have you seen before?

AFTER READING:

- Spend some time talking about the story. Ask the children things like:
    - Why do you think the caterpillar got a stomachache?
    - What happened after the caterpillar came out of the cocoon?
    - Can you say the days of the week with me?

Read this book several times to the children. Hearing the same story again and again helps them learn new words and understand the ideas they hear better. Each day, pick a different ac- tivity to do with the children after reading "The Very Hungry Caterpillar."

MATH AND SCIENCE

Point to each piece of fruit on the pages of the book and count them aloud together as you read. Count how many different foods the caterpillar eats on Saturday. Together, make a list of the different foods the children have eaten that day. Help the children figure out who ate more, the caterpillar or them.

THINKING SKILLS

Mix up your forks and spoons and ask the children to sort them into groups that belong together. Ask them to tell you why they sorted them that way.

READING READINESS

Read the story again, and ask the children to rub their bellies and shake their heads every time they hear the words "but he was still hungry."

PRETEND PLAY

Pretend to be a caterpillar and crawl around like a caterpillar would. Roll up into your cocoon and then work your way out as a butterfly. Use your arms as wings and flutter around together as butterflies would.

ART

Rip up pieces of colored paper or colored tissue paper into small shapes and glue them onto a bigger piece of scrap paper to look like a colorful butterfly wing.

MUSIC AND MOVEMENT

Sing the "Apples and Bananas" song, which practices vowel sounds. The words are "I like to ate ate ate apples and bananas. I like to eat eat eat eeples and beneenees. I like to ite ite ite ip- ples and bininii's. I like to oat oat oat opples and bonoonoo's. I like to ute ute ute upples and bunuunuu's."

MOTOR SKILLS

Pack a picnic lunch to share with the children. Have them put food into containers, fold nap-kins, sort out silverware, fold up a blanket, or anything else they can do to be helpful. Put everything into a basket or brown paper bag. If you don't want to go outside, have your picnic inside.

For more information, visit: http://msue.anr.msu.edu/topic/info/early_childhood_development