

A BROWN BEAR, A MOON,  
& A CATERPILLAR:  
TREASURED STORIES  
BY ERIC CARLE

MERMAID THEATRE OF NOVA SCOTIA





## ABOUT MERMAID THEATRE

Founded in 1972, Canada's Mermaid Theatre of Nova Scotia is renowned for their charming stage adaptations of beloved classics of children's literature, featuring innovative puppetry, striking scenic effects, evocative original music, and gentle storytelling. Their headquarters, in Windsor, Nova Scotia, includes production studios, administrative offices, rehearsal space, production studios, and the Mermaid Imperial Performing Arts Centre, a 400-seat theater. In 1998 the company launched the Institute of Puppetry Arts, offering classes, workshops, and demonstrations for theater professionals as well as the general public.



Mermaid Theatre's *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* has been in continuous production since it debuted in 1999. Since then, it has had nearly four thousand performances, playing to well over two million people in 13 countries in North America, Asia, Europe, and the Middle East. The show has been performed in English, Spanish, French, Dutch, Japanese, Mandarin, and Korean!

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*State Theatre New Jersey—creating extraordinary experiences through the power of live performance.*

Mermaid Theatre of Nova Scotia's *Treasured Stories by Eric Carle* features three classic Eric Carle stories: *Papa, Please Get The Moon For Me*; *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?*; and *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*. The creative, visually striking production makes it seem as if the pages of the books have come to life right on the stage!

Here are some special theater techniques to look for during the performance.

## PUPPETRY

*Treasured Stories by Eric Carle* employs a variety of puppetry styles—including rod, hand, and jointed puppets—to tell the three stories. Amazingly, all of the puppets and scenic elements are manipulated by just two puppeteers!

## BLACK LIGHT

Part of the visual magic of this production comes from the use of black light, which allows only certain elements onstage to be seen by the audience. The puppets and scenery are painted with fluorescent paint, which glows in the dark under ultraviolet light (also called black light). Under black light, anything black becomes invisible. During the show, the puppeteers will be on stage as they work with the puppets. They wear black clothing and black masks and perform in front of a black wall. This makes them almost invisible to the audience and allows them to execute all kinds of visual illusions with the puppets; they can make them seem to float, fly, disappear, shrink, grow, and more.

## NARRATION

Along with the visual storytelling, the show employs a pre-recorded narration of Eric Carle's text for the three stories.

## MUSIC

Music - Original music, composed by Steven Naylor especially for this production, adds to the whimsical, magical atmosphere.



Top: A Mermaid Theatre puppeteer demonstrates how to make the Very Hungry Caterpillar walk.  
Bottom: Set for *Papa, Please Get the Moon for Me*.

## OBSERVATION CHECKLIST

Instruct your students to pay special attention during the show to these elements to guide post-performance discussion.

- How was the performance different from the books? How was it the same?
- Which story was told first? Second? Last?
- What did the music sound like?
- What did the puppets look like? How do you think they were made?
- Could you see the puppeteers during the show? Why or why not?

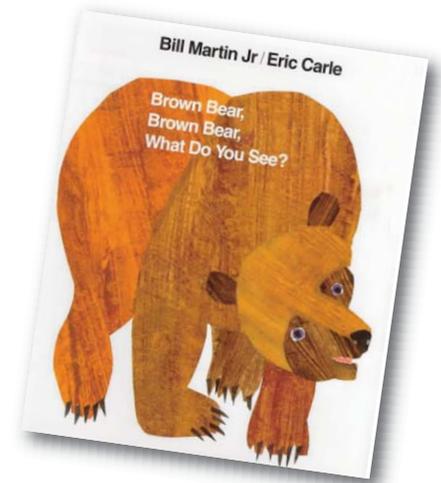


## BROWN BEAR, BROWN BEAR, WHAT DO YOU SEE?

Written by Bill Martin Jr. and illustrated by Eric Carle, *Brown Bear* introduces a world of colorful animals. In each scene, we meet a new animal of a different color. Each animal helps the audience discover which creature will show up next. The text employs rhyme and repetition: “Brown Bear, Brown Bear, what do you see? I see a red bird looking at me.” As this pattern is repeated over and over, students can easily predict the next lines. The fun increases as the animals become stranger and stranger (a purple cat!?).

Visit Bill Martin Jr.'s website: <http://billmartinjr.com>

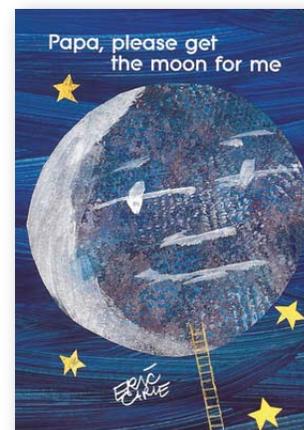
See teachers' ideas for using this book in the classroom:  
<http://eric-carle.com/bb-bb.html>



## PAPA, PLEASE GET THE MOON FOR ME

Every night before she goes to bed, Monica wishes she could play with the moon instead of just watching it grow larger from her bedroom window. As much as she stretches, she can't reach it. She asks her father for help. Papa uses a ladder to reach the moon. The moon says that every night he gets smaller. When he is small enough, Papa can come and take him. When the moon is finally small enough, Papa gives it to Monica to play with. But the moon keeps shrinking until it entirely disappears! One night, the moon appears once again outside Monica's window, getting bigger and bigger.

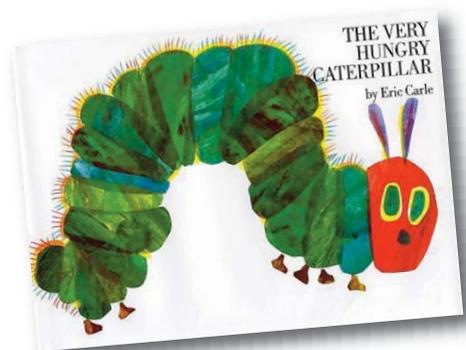
See teachers' ideas for using this book in the classroom:  
<http://eric-carle.com/bb-papa.html>



## THE VERY HUNGRY CATERPILLAR

One sunny Sunday, a little caterpillar is hatched out of a tiny egg, and he realizes he is very hungry! On Monday, he eats his way through one apple; on Tuesday, he eats through two pears—and he is still hungry. As the week continues, this very hungry caterpillar goes on an amazing journey and through a lot of different foods. Full at last, he makes a cocoon around himself and goes to sleep. A few weeks later, he wakes up to find himself transformed into a beautiful butterfly!

See teachers' ideas for using this book in the classroom:  
<http://eric-carle.com/bb-VHC.html>

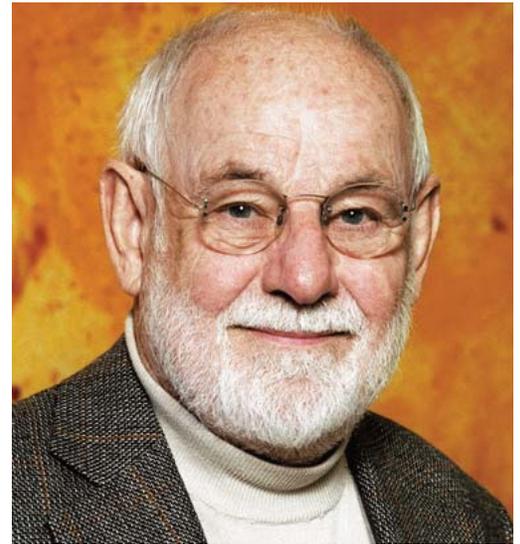


Eric Carle, the creator of brilliantly illustrated and innovatively designed picture books for young children, was born in Syracuse, New York in 1929 and moved to Germany when he was six. He returned to New York in 1952 and got a job as a graphic designer for *The New York Times*. A few years later, he met Bill Martin, Jr., who asked him to illustrate his first book—*Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?*—and Carle’s career in children’s literature was born. Since 1969, Eric Carle has written and illustrated more than 60 books. His most popular ones, such as *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*, have been translated into more than 25 languages.

In these excerpts of an interview with Eric Carle, he discusses his artistic technique and the sources of inspiration for his books.

*My pictures are collages. I didn’t invent the collage. Artists like Picasso and Matisse and Leo Lionni and Ezra Jack Keats made collages. Many children have done collages at home or in their classrooms. In fact, some children have said to me, “Oh, I can do that.” I consider that the highest compliment. I begin with plain tissue paper and paint it with different colors, using acrylics. Sometimes I paint with a wide brush, sometimes with a narrow brush. Sometimes my strokes are straight, and sometimes they’re wavy. Sometimes I paint with my fingers. Or I paint on a piece of carpet, sponge, or burlap and then use that like a stamp on my tissue papers to create different textures. These papers are my palette and after they have dried I store them in color-coded drawers. Let’s say I want to create a caterpillar: I cut out a circle for the head from a red tissue paper and many ovals for the body from green tissue papers; and then I paste them with wallpaper glue onto an illustration board to make the picture.*

*When I was a small boy, my father would take me on walks across meadows and through woods. He would lift a stone or peel back the bark of a tree and show me the living things that scurried about. He’d tell me about the life cycles of this or that small creature and then he would carefully put the little creature back into its home. I think in my books I honor my father by writing about small living things. And in a way I recapture those happy times.*



## ERIC CARLE RESOURCES

At Eric Carle’s official website, find more information about the author, a list of his books, video of him at work, a teacher bulletin board for sharing ideas and activities, and more.

Here are some books that teachers will find useful:

*The Art of Eric Carle*, by Eric Carle

*The Artist Who Painted a Blue Horse*, by Eric Carle

*You Can Make a Collage: A Very Simple How-To Book*, by Eric Carle

*Teaching with Favorite Eric Carle Books*, by Joan Novelli



## BROWN BEAR, BROWN BEAR, WHAT DO YOU SEE?

In this book, we follow along as Brown Bear spots different animals. Read the book with your class, then work together to continue the story. Ask your students to suggest other items and colors to add to the story, and put them in the familiar pattern of the text. Encourage your students to use items from the classroom to continue the story—for example: yellow pencil, orange crayon, blue rug, etc.



## PAPA, PLEASE GET THE MOON FOR ME

**Phases of the Moon.** Use the Moon Journal on page 8 to track the phases of the moon. Lead a discussion about what students observed.

**Measuring and Math.** Monica's father uses a very tall ladder to climb up to the moon. Tell your students just how long that ladder would have to be to reach the moon: about 238,857 miles! As a class, figure out how many school buses it would take to get there, with each school bus being about 40 feet long. Next, figure out how many trips you would have to make around the equator (circumference: 24,901 miles) to equal the distance to the moon. With your students brainstorm other ways to measure the distance to the moon.



## THE VERY HUNGRY CATERPILLAR

**Counting.** With your class, write down the number of items the caterpillar eats in one week. In all, how many items did the caterpillar eat?

**Life Cycle of a Butterfly.** Discuss the life cycle of a butterfly: egg, larva (caterpillar), pupa, and butterfly.

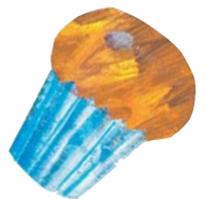
**Eating a Healthy Diet.** The very hungry caterpillar eats his way through a lot of different foods. With your students, create a list of all the foods the caterpillar eats. Then ask:

- Were all of the foods that the caterpillar ate healthy foods? Which ones were and which ones weren't?
- What foods would you eat if you could eat anything you wanted?
- Were the foods you picked healthy or unhealthy?

Discuss the food pyramid with your students and explain which foods they should eat to grow up healthy and strong. (Instead of the pyramid, you can use the link below for the simpler MyPlate icon.) Have students create a healthful food book by drawing or cutting out and coloring pictures of foods they should incorporate into their diet.

Visit the US Department of Agriculture's MyPlate pages:

[www.choosemyplate.gov](http://www.choosemyplate.gov)





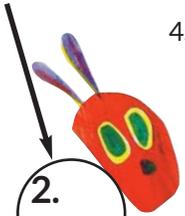
# CATERPILLAR CROSSWORD

Use the clues to fill in the words from the list. One of the words has been filled in to get you started.

APPLE  
BUTTERFLY  
CATERPILLAR  
FRIDAY  
LEAF

SATURDAY  
STRAWBERRIES  
TUESDAY  
WEDNESDAY

2. On \_\_\_\_\_, the hungry caterpillar ate three plums.

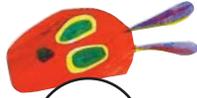


2.

4. On \_\_\_\_\_, the very hungry caterpillar ate some cake, cheese, ice cream, pickle, sausage, and more!



4.



1. F

R

I

D

A

Y

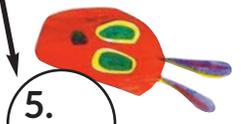
1. On \_\_\_\_\_, the hungry caterpillar ate five oranges.

3. This story is about a very hungry \_\_\_\_\_.



3.

5. On \_\_\_\_\_, the very hungry caterpillar ate two pears.

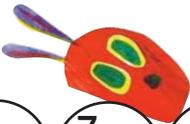


5.



6.

6. On Thursday, the very hungry caterpillar ate four \_\_\_\_\_.



7.

7. On Monday, the very hungry caterpillar ate one \_\_\_\_\_.



8.

8. On Sunday, the very hungry caterpillar ate one \_\_\_\_\_.



9.

9. Soon the very hungry caterpillar will turn into a beautiful \_\_\_\_\_.

Crossword grid with pre-filled letters: F, R, I, D, A, Y



Going to see a show at the theater is not the same as going to a movie or watching TV. The performers will be right there with you and the rest of the audience, which makes it very exciting! It also means you have a special

responsibility to respect the performers and the rest of the audience so everyone can enjoy the show.

Here are some important rules for being a good audience member:

- When the show starts, give the performers all your attention.
- Don't talk during the show.
- Stay in your seat.
- If you have a phone, make sure you turn it off before the show starts. Keep it off until the show is over.
- Don't take pictures or video of the show.
- Don't eat or drink in the theater. And no chewing gum, please!
- If you liked the show, let the performers know by applauding when it's over.



## BOOKS

*Moon Child*, by Nadia Krilanovich. In this playful children's story, three curious animal babies play with the full moon.

*The Life Cycles of Butterflies*, by Judy Burris

*Making Puppets Come Alive*, by Larry Engler and Carol Fijan

*A Show of Hands: Using Puppets with Young Children*, by Ingrid M. Crepeau and M. Ann Richards

## VIDEO

*Eric Carle Picture Writer: The Art of the Picture Book*. Video documentary about Eric Carle, his life, and his paper painting and collage techniques. Available from Scholastic Books.

Eric Carle discusses Bill Martin, Jr. and their collaboration on *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?*

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=yAeC2IFMSiY](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yAeC2IFMSiY)

## WEBSITES

Eric Carle  
[www.eric-carle.com](http://www.eric-carle.com)

Mermaid Theatre  
[www.mermaidtheatre.ns.ca](http://www.mermaidtheatre.ns.ca)

Information about black light  
[www.howstuffworks.com/question59.htm](http://www.howstuffworks.com/question59.htm)

The Puppetry Home Page  
[www.sagecraft.com/puppetry](http://www.sagecraft.com/puppetry)

The Children's Butterfly Site  
[www.kidsbutterfly.org](http://www.kidsbutterfly.org)



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