



The Very Hungry Caterpillar

Children explore food, nature, math, and color concepts through storytelling and creative arts.

START

- The goal of this activity is for children to explore math and color concepts as they participate in an interactive story time, featuring *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*.
- Set up the table with the paper and crayons.
- Create a cozy read-aloud area.
- Introduce the activity by asking Who would like to hear a story about a very hungry caterpillar that gets very, very big? And who would like to do a colorful project afterward?

NEXT STEPS

- Ask the children to gather around the read-aloud area for story time.
- For younger children, you can use the animal puppet to invite them by saying [the animal's sounds]! Who would like to come and hear a story about being very hungry? Yum, yum, come and listen!
- Let the children know that after the story they can go to the art table and do a colorful project.
- Throughout the story, include the children by asking questions like On Monday morning, he ate through one . . . what is this? What kind of fruit is it? Or How many of these red strawberries did he eat? For the food picture, you could ask What would you eat for lunch? What would you eat for dessert? And what could you have for either? Why do you think the caterpillar had a stomachache?
- After the story, invite the children to go to the art table and make a picture of whatever they would like.
- For younger children, drawing scribbles and dots is fine.
- For older children, you can suggest that they pick 3–5 crayons and try to make a picture using just those colors. This is a great opportunity for them to think about color and to do some creative decision making.

- As the children work, talk with them about their pictures and the colors they're using, for example, What color is your sun? It's so nice and bright! Introduce math concepts as well by asking such questions as How many legs does your caterpillar have? How many colors did you use to make this flower?

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MATERIALS

- * 8½ x 11" paper
- * Crayons or markers
- * Scissors
- * *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* by Eric Carle
- * Any animal puppet

Learning Guideline:

English Language Arts:
Engage actively in read-aloud activities by asking questions, offering ideas, and predicting or retelling important parts of a story or an informational book.

Tip Sheets:

Think, Write



(continued from side 1)

FINISH UP

- When the activity is done, ask the children if they'd like to show their work to the group and talk about it; see if there is a story or another interesting thing they would like to share.
- You can also encourage the adults to sit with their children and look through the book again or read it aloud to a small group.

EXPAND YOUR ACTIVITY

- For a more detailed art project, you can provide the children with a butterfly outline, glue, scissors, tissue paper, ribbon, and a hole punch for the antennae, and they can create a very colorful collage.
- For a color and math game, you can ask the children to show their pictures and describe which colors are on them. On a whiteboard, you can record how many of each color is represented. Then have the children help to add up how many times each color appears, and create a list in order of frequency to show which colors were used the most by the whole group. If you are doing this activity with more than one group, it would also be interesting to keep a record of the previous group's numbers and compare them.

TAKE IT HOME

- Play a game at home where you ask your child to assemble a collection of toys or objects based on a particular criterion. For example, Find all of your toys that are red, or Find all of your animals that have 4 legs.
- Help your child create a favorite foods book. Fold 8½ x 11" paper in half and staple the pages together as a binding. Have the children color or cut out food pictures from magazines for each of the pages. Help them to write, or write for them, the name of the food, what meal or part of a meal it is for, and what the colors are. Have them do as much of the naming and writing as they can, but jump in as needed.

BOOKS

- *Elmer* by David McKee
- *Count on Math: Activities for Small Hands and Lively Minds* by Pam Schiller and Lynne Peterson
- *Curious George Learns to Count from 1 to 100* by H. A. Rey
- *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* by Eric Carle

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