



What happens next?

The Very Hungry Caterpillar

Adventures in Reading:

Family Literacy Bags from Reading Rockets

Contents:

- Two books – one fiction, one nonfiction
- Parent information sheet
- Three activity sheets
- Bookmark
- Parent survey

for teachers and librarians



*This Reading Rockets Activity Packet has been designed to support reading activities at home. In honor of the 40th Anniversary of Eric Carle's picture book, **The Very Hungry Caterpillar**, we've chosen some related books and created activities to encourage some hands-on fun and learning. The packet has been designed for you to assemble and send home with your pre-kindergarten and kindergarten students. The books and instructions should all fit in a two gallon zip top bag.*

Reading Rockets carefully chose books that are widely available and appealing to young readers. The titles selected should be available in your school library. If the suggested titles are not available, or you prefer another title, please feel free to substitute books related to the theme.

You'll find our list of suggested titles included in bookmark format. The list includes both nonfiction titles about caterpillars and butterflies and fiction books that emphasize concepts such as counting, days of the week, or how things happen in sequence. When assembling your Very Hungry Caterpillar Activity packet to send home, simply include a copy of **The Very Hungry Caterpillar** by Eric Carle and one of the nonfiction or concept books suggested.

The parent information sheet includes an introductory note that you can personalize, instructions about how to use the packet, and tips for sharing fiction and nonfiction books with children.

The activities were designed to encourage further exploration and learning at home:

- >> The Creativity activity is a hands-on craft project.
- >> The Imagination activity encourages imaginative play, writing, or drawing.
- >> The Get Real activity focuses on real-world experiences a child and parent can have together.

The bookmark lists both the featured title and additional titles.

Putting it all together

Print out copies of the parent information sheet, the activities, the survey, and a master for making bookmarks from your computer. Cut the bookmark page into strips. You may wish to print the activity pages and bookmark on card stock for durability.

Into a two gallon zip top bag, place:

- >> the two books—**The Very Hungry Caterpillar** and one nonfiction or concept book,
- >> the parent information sheet,
- >> the three activity pages,
- >> the bookmark, and
- >> a survey for parents to complete when they have finished using packet with their child.

Send the packet home with your student. Encourage parents to keep the parent information sheet, the activities, and bookmark, and return the books and survey to you by the date you specify.

Let Reading Rockets know what you think of the family activity packets by e-mailing us through our website: www.readingrockets.org/sitecontact. Click on "Family Activity Packet feedback."

ADVENTURES IN READING!

Welcome

Dear _____

Exploring new ideas and enjoying books with you sends a powerful message to your child: Reading and learning are fun, and happen everywhere—not just at school. This Reading Rockets Activity Packet about ***The Very Hungry Caterpillar*** was created to help you and your child enjoy reading and learning together.

Start your learning adventure by reading some books with your child about this popular topic. Then explore the topic with three activities. Enclosed you'll find what you need:

- >> two books to share with your child,
- >> three related activities,
- >> a bookmark with a list of other books to extend the fun, if you wish, and
- >> a short survey to tell me if you enjoyed using the packet.

The simple steps on the back explain how to use the packet.

The bookmark, this parent information sheet, and the activities are yours to keep.

When you've finished with the materials, please return the books and the completed survey to school in your child's backpack. Please return the Reading Rockets Activity Packet by _____.

I hope you'll enjoy reading and learning together!

Teacher signature here:

Bring the fun of learning home with a Reading Rockets Activity Packet!

ADVENTURES IN READING!

Instructions

How to use your Reading Rockets Activity Packet

Getting ready

1. Before you read the books to your child, be sure to read them yourself. The first book is *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* by Eric Carle. This book is fiction — a “make-believe” story — but it also teaches counting, the days of the week as well as about sequence and food. The other book is either nonfiction—or informational and true — about how caterpillars grow into butterflies, or a fiction book that features counting, the days of the week, or sequencing. Reading the books first will give you the “inside scoop” to the twists and turns of the story, the interesting information inside, and the parts of the books that will appeal most to your child.

2. Next, read the three activities to see which of them you think your child will enjoy most, and which one you have the time and materials on-hand to do right away. Chances are, after you read one (or both) of the books with your child, he or she may want to do an activity right away.

Start the fun

3. When you know you’ll have at least enough time to read and talk about one of the books, grab your child and a book, and dive right in. Start with *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*. Talk about the cover of the book with your child — can they guess what it is about? Have they ever read a book by Eric Carle or a book about caterpillars?

Read the book to your child. Take time to ask and answer questions, explore the pictures, and wonder what will happen next. Read it again, if your child asks you to. Then, try the other book or one of the activities.

4. If you read a nonfiction book, take a moment to explain to your child the difference between the two types of books. *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* told a made-up, make-believe story, but a nonfiction book is about real butterflies and caterpillars. The information in nonfiction books can answer lots of questions.

5. Feel free to pick and choose from the activities, or change them to suit your child’s interests. Read the books again over the next few days and try different activities. Most important: have fun!

When you’re done...

6. Keep the bookmark, the activities, and this page. Complete the survey and return it with the books to your child’s school. Visit a library and look for some of the other books on the bookmark.

Make the most of the excitement the books create, and try some hands-on learning or make-believe fun. Exploring new ideas along side you lets your child see you learning — and reading — too, and gives your child personal experiences to support his or her growing knowledge.

Tips for reading fiction books with kids:

- >> *Take your time and talk about the story with your child. Ask your child questions.*
- >> *Explore the pictures with your child.*
- >> *Read with expression. Change your voice or how fast you read to create excitement. Ham it up!*
- >> *You don’t need to read every word. Keeping your child interested is the goal.*

Tips for reading nonfiction books with kids:

- >> *Wonder out loud. As you are reading, or afterward, talk about facts you find interesting or questions you have.*
- >> *Show your child how to use the table of contents, section headings, index, glossary or word list to find the answer to a specific question.*
- >> *Don’t be afraid to jump around, reading pages that especially interest your child. You don’t have to read a nonfiction book straight through.*



make a collage picture

Eric Carle made his Very Hungry Caterpillar using collage. He makes the pictures for his books using special paper he creates by painting colors on tissue paper. After the paper dries, he cuts the paper into shapes and glues them together to make a picture. You can see how he does this at his website:

www.eric-carle.com/slideshow_collage.html

Create your own butterfly out of cut paper collage using the outline of your child's hands.

Supplies

- >> paint
- >> paper
- >> pencil
- >> scissors
- >> glue
- >> pipe cleaner
- >> markers or crayons

Instructions

1. With paint, make 3 sets of your child's hand prints, or simply trace around your child's hand on several pieces of colored paper.
2. Cut around the outline of your child's hand to produce 6 separate hand prints; these are the butterfly wings.
3. Now draw the outline of a butterfly's body on a dark piece of paper (a long oval with a small circle on the top).
4. Cut out the butterfly body and glue the body down on a plain sheet of paper.
5. Glue 3 hand prints fanning out from each side of the butterfly with the fingers facing out.
6. Bend the pipe cleaner in half to create the antenna and glue it down, or simply draw the antenna with a marker or crayon.
7. Add eyes and decorate the wings with the markers or crayons.

Explore other cut paper collage illustrations in the nonfiction book *I'm a Caterpillar* by Jean Marzollo. It also tells the story of a caterpillar turning into a butterfly.

Variation: Create a cut paper collage of your favorite foods using pictures of food cut out from magazines. Or, draw and color pictures of your favorite foods to be cut out. Glue the pieces down on a plain sheet of paper, filling the page with a colorful display of your child's favorite foods.

Read Feast for 10 by Cathryn Falwell or **Growing Vegetable Soup** by Lois Ehlert. They are also books illustrated with cut paper collage and both are filled with different foods.

Talk with your child about the different foods in his/her collage. Which foods are vegetables? Which are fruit? Discuss foods that are healthy that make us bigger and stronger.

growing, changing...
and learning!

Every day your child grows and changes a little bit — just like the Very Hungry Caterpillar. And every day he learns something new too! Explore numbers, days of the week, caterpillars, and the idea of beginning-middle-and-end in the real world, and bring the Very Hungry Caterpillar to life.

Make every day count

Practice counting and naming the days of the week with your child. Count items you see every day — like pieces of toast, shoes on your feet, or wheels on the car. Try reading **Ten Black Dots** by Donald Crews and then let your child count and arrange ten checkers, pennies, or buttons to make pictures like Crews does. Read **Feast for Ten** by Cathryn Falwell and count while you cook! Read **Cookie's Week** and talk about your family's schedule. "On Mondays we visit Grandma. On Tuesdays, we go to the library."

One thing leads to another

Explore the idea of beginning, middle, and end — or sequence — with your child. Stories follow a sequence, so does the life cycle of a butterfly, and even doing laundry.

- >> Make your own butterfly life cycle. Have your child glue a dry grain of rice (egg), a piece of dry spiral pasta (caterpillar), a dry pasta shell (chrysalis), and a dry piece of bowtie pasta (butterfly) to a piece of paper and add arrows to show the sequence. Encourage them to draw leaves, twigs and flowers for their growing butterfly to explore.
- >> Look for examples of beginning, middle, and end throughout the day with your child (breakfast, lunch, and dinner, getting dressed, sunrise and sunset, doing laundry), and talk about how the sequence repeats or changes.
- >> Talk about the beginning, middle, and end when you read a story with your child. **Try Growing Vegetable Soup** by Lois Ehlert, **The Snowy Day** by Ezra Jack Keats, **Inch by Inch** by Leo Lionni., or **Waiting for Wings** by Lois Ehlert.

Grow a butterfly garden!

Butterflies are attracted to certain plants and flowers. Put some in your own garden and watch the butterflies and caterpillars come to you! <http://www.thebutterflysite.com/gardening.shtml>

Search your neighborhood or the internet for butterflies and caterpillars.

National Geographic

<http://kids.nationalgeographic.com/Animals/CreatureFeature/Monarch-butterflies>

The National Wildlife Federation's Ranger Rick

<http://www.nwf.org/kidZone/kzPage.cfm?siteID=3&departmentId=107&articleId=185>
click on butterflies

Caterpillars

<http://www.whatsthisaterpillar.co.uk/>



be a caterpillar or a butterfly

Explore more with *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* by pretending

You write the story:

What would you eat if you were *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*? Create your own storybook titled "The Very Hungry **CHILD'S NAME**". Create one page for each day of the week. Write the day of the week on each page. Have your child make up his/her own story by telling what foods he/she would eat each day of the week. For example, "On Monday I ate one apple, on Tuesday I ate two quesadillas." Have your child draw pictures of the food on each page to illustrate. Encourage your child to retell the story using the pictures as a guide.

Act it out:

Have your child act out the different life stages of the butterfly. Curl up in a ball like an egg, inch across the floor and munch like a caterpillar, wrap yourself up in a towel like a caterpillar spinning a cocoon, flap your wings and flutter around like a butterfly.

Ask your child if he/she would prefer to be a caterpillar or a butterfly and why.

When I grow up:

The Very Hungry Caterpillar grows up to be a beautiful butterfly. What will you grow up to be one day? Maybe a scientist, a nurse, or even the President! Have your child draw a picture of him/herself when he/she grows up.

Could that really happen?

The Very Hungry Caterpillar is fiction — or make believe. Talk about the parts of the story that are real (i.e. caterpillars and butterflies do exist) and the parts that are make believe (i.e. caterpillars don't really eat ice cream cones!). Try reading *Inch by Inch* by Leo Lionni. Encourage your child to identify what parts of the story are real and what parts are make believe.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?
The Very Hungry Caterpillar



Featured titles

Fiction
The Very Hungry Caterpillar by Eric Carle

Nonfiction
Born to be a Butterfly by Karen Wallace
From Caterpillar to Butterfly by Deborah Heiligman, illustrated by Bari Weissman, a Let's-Read-And-Find-Out Science book

I'm a Caterpillar by Jean Marzollo, illustrated by Judith Moffatt
See How They Grow: Butterfly by Mary Ling
Monarch Butterfly by Gail Gibbons

Concept and Sequencing titles

Cookie's Week by Cindy Ward, illustrated by Tomie DePaola
Feast for 10 by Cathryn Falwell
Growing Vegetable Soup by Lois Ehlert
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