



2020/2021
SEASON

**INTERACTIVE
EDUCATOR'S GUIDE**

**TAKE A LOOK AT
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metroplays.org

**THE VERY HUNGRY
CATERPILLOR™**

SHOW
CREATED BY JONATHAN ROCKEFELLER BASED ON ERIC CARLE'S BOOKS

A bilingual production

**LA ORUGA MUY
HOMBRIENTA™**
ESPECTÁCULO



ERIC CARLE

THE VERY WONDERFUL ARTIST



Eric Carle is acclaimed and beloved as the creator of brilliantly illustrated and innovatively designed picture books for very young children. His best-known work, *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*, has eaten its way into the hearts of literally millions of children all over the world and has been translated into more than 66 languages and sold over 50 million copies. Born in Syracuse, New York, in 1929, Eric Carle moved with his parents to Germany when he was six years old; he was educated there, and graduated from the prestigious art school, the Akademie der Bildenden Künste, in Stuttgart. But his dream was always to return to America, the land of his happiest childhood memories. So, in 1952, with a fine portfolio in hand and forty dollars in his pocket, he arrived in New York. Soon he found a job as a graphic designer in the promotion department of The New York Times. Later, he was the art director of an advertising agency for many years.

One day, respected educator and author, Bill Martin Jr., called to ask Carle to illustrate a story he had written. *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?* was the result of their collaboration. This was the beginning of Eric Carle's true career. Soon Carle was writing his own stories, too. His first wholly original book was *1, 2, 3 to the Zoo*, followed soon afterward by the celebrated classic, *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*.

Eric Carle's art is distinctive and instantly recognizable. His artwork is created in collage technique, using hand-painted papers, which he cuts and layers to form bright and cheerful images. Many of his books have an added dimension—diecut pages, twinkling lights as in *The Very Lonely Firefly*, even the lifelike sound of a cricket's song as in *The Very Quiet Cricket*—giving them a playful quality: a toy that can be read, a book that can be touched. The themes of his stories are usually drawn from his extensive knowledge and love of nature, an interest shared by most small children. Besides being beautiful and entertaining, his books always offer the child the opportunity to learn something about the world around them.

With many of my books I attempt to bridge the gap between the home and school. To me home represents, or should represent, warmth, security, toys, holding hands, being held. School is a strange and new place for a child. Will it be a happy place? There are new people, a teacher, classmates—will they be friendly? The unknown often brings fear with it. In my books I try to counteract this fear, to replace it with a positive message. I believe that children are naturally creative and eager to learn. I want to show them that learning is really both fascinating and fun.

- Eric Carle

Q&A WITH JONATHAN ROCKEFELLER

What made you create *The Very Hungry Caterpillar Show*?

I have a great fondness for picture books. When they're done well, they distill very complex ideas down to their simplest visual form. Great stories told well at the right age instill a love of reading for life, and for me *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* was the first book I remember reading. I still actually have my copy, albeit it's very dog-eared right now.

Look at *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*. A lot of readers will think it's about a caterpillar getting fat, but the book encapsulates the days of the week, counting, nutrition, metamorphosis—all with very simple repetition and striking illustrations. I loved the challenge of bringing four of Eric Carle's stories to life with all their complexity.

What was the journey or process into creating a show?

There were a lot of sketches and illustrations: we began with storyboards to communicate with Eric Carle what we wanted to do, then sketches of every puppet interpreting Eric's illustrations into three-dimensions. These sketches were used so the puppet builders could interpret and work out mechanisms to make the puppets move.

There are 75 puppets in the show and each one has different abilities—some of our birds have wings that “flap,” others have beaks that open and close, and others have a “gliding” motion. From an artistic perspective we worked out the primary function that the animal needs to have in the story and designed the puppet around that.

The most critical thing was assembling the right team of creatives to go on this journey: composers, set designer, lighting director and puppet builders, all of whom were able to use their own abilities to push the show even further. The puppeteers are amazing too—they really bring to life all the characters.

Were there any difficulties constructing a stage production such as this one?

Our biggest challenge was to ensure what we created was faithful to the books. Eric Carle's illustrations are iconic, and children are relentlessly unforgiving when you meddle with something they love! Our role was to take two-dimensional characters and find what they look like outside of the pages of the book. For the hungry caterpillar, we had to create what he looks like from the front and the back—perspectives that are never seen in the book. And Brown



Bear is drawn in a very “Picasso-esque” fashion which meant we could see many perspectives at once, so we had to round out the image to make it a believable puppet. Our other challenge was geographic: the show debuted in Australia, Eric Carle lives in Massachusetts and the puppets were built in New York.

Q&A WITH JONATHAN ROCKEFELLER CONT.

How did you decide on the order of the stories in the show?

The Hungry Caterpillar is our grand finale—the show's namesake and the perfect finish to the show as the magnificent butterfly. The beginning of *Hungry Caterpillar* starts with “In the light of the moon...” so it was a perfect transition from the night scene in *The Very Lonely Firefly*. I thought *Brown Bear* was an excellent beginning to the show as it introduces each animal one at a time—a fun story where everyone knows the words. That left the more traditional story of *10 Little Rubber Ducks* to take the second place.

What do you hope audiences will get out of seeing *The Very Hungry Caterpillar Show*?

For so many people, this is their very first chance to go to the theater EVER, just as *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* was their first book. I believe each audience member will see that theater is a great way of telling stories. I also think everyone will love the other three stories presented: *Brown Bear*, *10 Little Rubber Ducks* and *The Very Lonely Firefly* and I hope the show will foster a love of theater and a love of books. We place great emphasis on being faithful to the books and want to further everyone's appreciation for storytelling.



Photo by Carol Rosegg



Photo by Jonathan Rockefeller

ENGLISH AND SPANISH

Metro Theater Company's production of *The Very Hungry Caterpillar Show, La Oruga Muy Hambrienta Espectáculo* is bilingual. Bilingual means that a person speaks two languages fluently. While we are exploring this story in English and Spanish, Eric Carle's stories have been translated into over 60 languages! Explore the following words in English and Spanish with the young people in your life.

[Click here](#) to watch.

NUMBERS

1	uno	oo-noh
2	dos	dohs
3	tres	trays
4	cuatro	kwah-troh
5	cinco	seen-koh

DAYS OF THE WEEK

Monday	(el) lunes	loo-nays
Tuesday	(el) martes	mar-tays
Wednesday	(el) miércoles	mee-air-coh-lays
Thursday	(el) jueves	hway-vays
Friday	(el) viernes	vee-air-nays
Saturday	(el) sábado	sah-bah-doh
Sunday	(el) domingo	doh-ming-oh

ENGLISH AND SPANISH CONT.



ANIMALS

Caterpillar	La Oruga	Lah-Or-oo-gah
Brown Bear	Oso Pardo	Oh-soh-Par-doh
Butterfly	Mariposa	Mar-ee-poh-sah
Little Rubber Duck	Patico de Goma	Pah-ti-co-deh-goh-mah
Firefly	La Luciérnaga	Lah-Loo-thee-air-nah-gah

MISSOURI STANDARDS

ELA, R.1.B.K: With assistance, develop an understanding of vocabulary.

The Very Hungry Caterpillar by Eric Carle has been translated into dozens of languages and has enchanted young readers around the world for more than 50 years. As we dreamed of bringing this play to St. Louis, Metro Theater Company decided to celebrate Eric Carle's universal appeal, and to welcome even more young people and families into this experience, by performing these stories in more than one language. MTC has many community partners who serve students and families whose first language is Spanish. How wonderful it would be, we thought, to make the performance as accessible to those young people as it is to their friends. We are delighted to present this first-ever, Spanish-English bilingual version of the play!

- **Julia Flood,**
Artistic Director, Metro Theater Company



I SPY...

In *Brown Bear Brown Bear, What Do You See?* each character describes the color of the animal they see. Try a game of eye spy to give your students an opportunity to work on their describing words!



Look around the room and pick an object that is a specific color. Then tell the rest of the group “I spy with my little eye something _____ (insert color).” You can think about different describing words too, for example, is the object bumpy or smooth? Once someone has guessed your object they can pick the next thing to describe!

MISSOURI STANDARDS

K.PS1.A.1: Make qualitative observations of the physical properties of objects (i.e., size, shape, color, mass).

VA:CN10A.PK: Explore the world using descriptive and expressive words and artmaking.



CATERPILLAR, CATERPILLAR, BUTTERFLY

This activity is designed for virtual learning, however, it can be adapted to safely play in-person. The facilitator says: “Caterpillar, Caterpillar, Butterfly.” On “butterfly,” participants will step into role as butterflies, and safely and quickly fly and touch the door or entryway closest to them, then fly back and return to their place on camera. Play around with your words to see who is really focused. For instance: “Caterpillar, Caterpillar, Banana!” The goal is not for any person to get out, but rather to share in a fun activity that encourages creative movement, listening, and invites laughter.

NATIONAL CORE ARTS STANDARDS

THEATER (TH) PR6.1.PK: With prompting and support, engage in dramatic play or a guided drama experience.

DANCE (DA) CR1.1.K: Respond in movement to a variety of stimuli.



DO IT YOURSELF- BUTTERFLY PUPPETS!

Did you know there are 75 puppets in our show?

Bring your own puppet to life using these simple supplies: a paper towel or toilet paper roll, paper, markers or crayons, scissors, and tape or glue. Check out this video for step by step instructions!

[Click here](#) to watch.

MISSOURI STANDARDS

VA:CR2A.K Through experimentation, build skills in various media and approaches to artmaking.

MA:CR1A.PK: Engage in exploration and imaginative play with materials.

BUTTERFLY LIFE CYCLE STRETCH

Try the relaxation exercise below to explore the butterfly life cycle with your little butterflies! Use the prompts or follow along with our video.

[Click here](#) to watch.

- 1. Ask** your student or child to make the shape of an egg with their bodies low to the ground.
- 2. Encourage** them to hatch slowly from the egg, stretching their bodies to become caterpillars. Invite your caterpillar to lay on their back and stretch their arms and legs out to relax.
- 3. Next** have them tense all of their muscles by pulling their arms and legs towards their tummy and hold that pose. Go back and forth between tense and relaxed.
- 4. Create** a cocoon by having your caterpillar stretch out, close their eyes and hug their bodies with their arms. Count out ten deep breaths together.
- 5. The caterpillar is ready to break out of their cocoon!**
First one butterfly wing emerges and then the other. Invite your butterfly to flap their wings slowly as they stand up on two feet. Let the butterfly fly around and land gently by your side.

MISSOURI STANDARDS

DA:PR5A.K: Move body parts in relation to other body parts and repeat and recall movements upon request.

TH:CR2A.K With prompting and support, contribute through gestures and words to dramatic play or a guided drama experience (e.g., process drama, story drama, creative drama).

ON THE GO BINGO

Take this card on an adventure to see what you can find around your school, home, and neighborhood. You can even take pictures as you go! When you find BINGO, take a picture and share it on instagram. Make sure you use the [#metroplays](#) and tag Metro Theater Company.

Butterfly	Flower	Watermelon	Dog	Cat
Tree	Moon	Squirrel	Grass	Bunny
Bug	Caterpillar	Free	Ice Cream	Light bulb
Child	Leaf	Candle	Cocoon	Sunset
Owl	Strawberry	Bird	Rubber Duck	Firefly

MISSOURI STANDARDS

K.PS1.A.1 Make qualitative observations of the physical properties of objects (i.e., size, shape, color, mass).

QUESTIONS FOR THE CAR

These questions are great to use on the car or bus ride home, or any time after you have watched the performance!

1. What was your favorite puppet?

2. Why did the Caterpillar eat so many different foods? What foods do you like to eat and why?



3. How did the firefly feel when he was alone?



4. Why do you think the puppeteers spoke English and Spanish?

5. Which creature from the play would you want to be and why?



RESOURCES

- Go see real butterflies in action at the Butterfly House: missouribotanicalgarden.org/visit/family-of-attractions/butterfly-house
- See how many animals from *Brown Bear Brown Bear, What Do You See?* you can find live at the St. Louis Zoo: stlzoo.org
- Hunger Relief Support: operationfoodsearch.org
- Books in Spanish: penguinrandomhouse.com/books/spanish-language-books-childrens

MORE BOOKS YOU MAY ENJOY:

- ***Among a Thousand Fireflies***
Helen Frost
 - ***Flutter, Butterfly!***
Shelby Alinsky
 - ***I Went Walking***
Sue Williams
 - ***Monsters Love Colors***
Mike Austin
 - ***Pete the Cat: I Love My White Shoes***
Eric Litwin
 - ***Press Here***
Hervé Tullet
 - ***Summer Birds: The Butterflies of Maria Merian***
Margarita Engle
 - ***Waiting for Wings***
Lois Ehlert
 - ***Butterfly, Butterfly***
Petr Horáček
- Books by Eric Carle:
- ***10 Little Rubber Ducks***
 - ***The Very Lonely Firefly***
 - ***The Very Hungry Caterpillar***
 - ***Mister Seahorse***
 - ***The Artist Who Painted A Blue Horse***
- Books by Bill Martin, Jr. & Eric Carle
- ***Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?***

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MISSION

Inspired by the intelligence and emotional wisdom of young people, we create professional theater, foster inclusive community and nurture meaningful learning through the arts.

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