

## Very Hungry Caterpillar Program Ideas

There is so much in Eric Carle's VERY HUNGRY CATERPILLAR to build a library program around...caterpillars, butterflies, the idea of metamorphosis, nutrition and/or food, color, collage art style, movement, the concept of days of the week, sequencing first, middle and last....the list just goes on and on.

As 2009 is the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the publication of Very Hungry Caterpillar, it is a great time to devote a program to this classic. The program could be a traditionally formatted story-time with stories, fingerplays and songs. But why not go all out and focus on MANY (if not all) of the themes suggested by the book? Host a Birthday Party for the Caterpillar. Present a VERY HUNGRY CATERPILLAR carnival. Why not big blow-out with stories and lots of activity stations/booths?

### Stories to share:

Carle, Eric	Very Hungry Caterpillar
Cain, Sheridan	The Crunching Munching Caterpillar
Sowler, Sandie	Amazing animal disguises
Savage, Stephen	Animals Under Cover
Horacek, Peter	Butterfly, Butterfly
Lionni, Leo	The Alphabet Tree
Kent, Jack	The Caterpillar and the Polliwog
Stewart, Georgianna	Animal Walks
Jarrett, Clare	Arabella Miller's Tiny Caterpillar
O'Connor, Jane	Bonjour, Butterfly
Falwell, Cathryn	Butterflies for Kiri
Leedy, Loreen	The edible Pyramid
Ehlert, Lois	Eating the Alphabet
Palatini, Margie	Sweet Tooth
Sharmat, Mitchell	Gregory, the Terrible Eater
King, Penny	Amazing Animals (collage art)

### Carnival Booths for kids and their families:

#### Food:

Perhaps the Cooperative Extension or other community group could offer fruit/vegetable recipes for parents and kids to create at the program or to create together at home.

Creating a cupcake caterpillar would be an easy treat for the day. Serve at end of celebration instead of throughout the day.

Create caterpillars out of string licorice with round colored cereal.

### Crafts and Activities:

Remember the emphasis for the crafts and activities should be on fun and on the process of creating. Don't only offer pre-cut activities or line drawings to color. Let the kids be creative and explore the process of coloring, gluing, cutting etc. Don't be critical of their work, even if you think their caterpillar looks like a toad—it is THEIR caterpillar and they had fun creating it.

Create cardboard fruits and vegetables (like the caterpillar ate) for a ring toss game.

Or, create a game board on the floor/ground. Use cut-outs of fruits, vegetables and other things eaten by the Very Hungry Caterpillar spread out around the Hit-the Food area. Kids throw bean bags or some sort of game piece onto the food pieces. Kids who 'hit' a piece of food—win a prize.

Involve the all attendees or all visitors to the library by inviting them to create a 'caterpillar segment' in order to create a GIANT very hungry caterpillar.

Make tissue paper collage butterflies.

Assemble the Caterpillar Game and Craft:

Toss a die to win parts of a caterpillar. Perhaps make it a rule that kids must throw in sequential order. Must roll a 6 first. Win a 'head'. Next must roll a 5 to win another piece of the caterpillar. Then a 4, then a 3 etc. [This may be too cumbersome with very young children or in a carnival type setting.]

Give attendees a line drawing of a butterfly. Ask kids to choose various shapes (squares, circles, triangles, stars etc) to glue to butterfly wings. This will make a butterfly collage of shapes.