

**Benchmarks: MU.A.1.1/MU.B.1.1/MU.E.2.1/LA.A.1.1/LA.C.1.1/LA.D.2.1/LA.E.2.1**

**Learning Objectives:**

The students will:

- Identify the life cycle of a caterpillar.
- Create and perform repeating, stepping & skipping patterns to demonstrate movement of each life stage of a caterpillar.
- Perform a short musical that depicts the life stages of a caterpillar.

**Materials:**

- The Very Hungry Caterpillar by Eric Carle
- Simple rhymes that describe the 4 life stages of a caterpillar.
- A teacher constructed “book” with five pages. A cover page and a page dedicated to each life stage in correct sequence. Leave plenty of blank space for drawing at the top and write the simple rhymes that you created at the bottom of each page.

*I’m an egg, small and round.  
On a leaf is where I’m found.*

*I’m a caterpillar, fat and long  
Chewing a leaf and singing my song.*

*I’m a cocoon with a surprise to hide  
Just wait till you see what I’ve got inside*

*I’m a beautiful butterfly ready to fly  
Just watch me go as I flutter by.*

- Materials for drawing/coloring.

**Connecting To Past Experience:**

- Have you ever seen a caterpillar or a butterfly? How do those animals move?

**Key Vocabulary:**

- Repeat/ Same
- Step
- Skip

**Teaching Procedures:** The students will:

1. Look at the cover of the book The Very Hungry Caterpillar. Have students guess what the story may be about.
2. Read the book to the students.
3. Discuss what happened to the caterpillar in the story. Highlight the four life stages of the caterpillar that are shown in the book (egg, caterpillar, cocoon, butterfly).
4. Give each student their own book that you have created.
5. Have students draw a cover page and a representation of the 4 life stages in the correct sequence as shown in The Very Hungry Caterpillar.
6. Act out the life stages of the caterpillar together as a class. Direct movement and help students discover that the caterpillar moves in different ways during each stage.
7. Relate the body movement that they have experienced to vocal movement.
8. Teach students the simple rhymes that you used to describe each life stage in the student book. Then have the class create a melody (tune) based on class discussions. For example:
  - *I’m an egg, small and round.  
On a leaf is where I’m found.*  
(Remind students of their performance as the egg. How did they move? (They were still, they were stuck in one spot). Lead students in a class discussion to determine how they would like to sing the rhyme.
  - Repeat process with the other 3 stages. Through their experiences the students will probably determine that a voice that stays the same or repeats is a good vocal model of the egg and cocoon stage, a stepping voice that creeps up and down is a good vocal model for the caterpillar stage and a skipping voice that swoops and flutters is fitting for the butterfly.
9. Students always have their own unique ideas and this is a great activity to encourage creative thinking. You never can tell what wonderful ideas and thoughts will be inspired by this popular story.
10. Now perform the entire piece as a class. Divide students into groups and assign them each a life stage to perform. Have students move and sing their rhymes to demonstrate the stages creatively.
11. Take your show on the road! Invite a guest or take your class on a short tour to show off your hard work. It is an incredibly powerful experience for your students to be acknowledged by others as creators and performers.

*Option: Instead of creating melodies, the children can chant the*

**Indicators of Success:**

- Students are able to identify the four stages of a caterpillar as outlined in the book The Very Hungry Caterpillar.
- Students are able to demonstrate understanding of the life stages through body movement.
- Students are able to identify and perform repeating, stepping and skipping patterns.
- Students will confidently perform their melodies and movement for an audience.

*rhymes. Use a monotone chant for the Egg Stage, a slow low and high chant for the fat Caterpillar, A slow, draggy monotone chant for the Cocoon, and a fluttery high and low chant for the Butterfly.*

**Including All Children:**

1. For children with disabilities, teach the body movements for each stage and practice thoroughly before moving to the next stage.

**Egg Stage**

*“Sit on the floor. Now, turn on your imagination. You are a little egg sitting on a leaf. Curl yourself up in a little ball and wait till you hatch. Tuck your head down and make yourself very, very small.”*

**Caterpillar Stage**

*“Sit on the floor. Turn yourself in a little egg sitting on a leaf. Now, slowly uncurl yourself and turn into a caterpillar. Put your hands on the floor. Get up on your knees. Now crawl like a caterpillar very slowly.”*

**Cocoon Stage**

*“Get on your hands and knees. Crawl slowly like a caterpillar. Stop and eat a leaf. Crawl some more. Eat another leaf. You are getting fatter and fatter. Now you are so fat, you can’t move. Tuck down your head. Move your body to the floor. Be very still. You are now a cocoon waiting to be a butterfly.”*

**Butterfly Stage**

*“Be a cocoon. Get on your hands and knees. Tuck your head down. Move your body to the floor. Be very still. Now slowly lift up your head. Stretch out your arms. Move them up and down to dry them and get the wrinkles out. Stand up and flutter your arms. Move slowly around in your personal space. Be a beautiful butterfly. Flutter quietly to the windows. Be careful not to touch any other butterflies. You are so beautiful fluttering softly to the windows. Now flutter back to your personal space.”*

2. Teach the rhymes by echoing. You say each line, the children echo it.

3. Add the rhymes to the movements for each stage. Coach children who forget how to do the movements by repeating the directions above. Practice until the movements are in sync with the rhyme. You may need to continue having the children echo the rhyme.

	<p>4. Assist children with disabilities by preplanning melodies or chants for each stage. Offer choices that are clearly different. For example, offer two melodies or chants for the Egg Stage: One is repetitive and moves up and down very little; the other moves up and down slowly like a caterpillar walking on a leaf.</p> <p>5. Practice each song or chant with the body movements to make the connections among the melody, the rhyme, and the body movements.</p> <p>6. Children who use wheelchairs can adapt the stages by moving up and down as much as they are able.</p> <p>7. Children with visual disabilities may flutter as a butterfly in their personal space, changing their directions from high to low and up and down.</p> <p>8. Children who are deaf or hard-of-hearing may sign the rhymes.</p>

### **Extending the Experience**

The students may:

1. Create a picture of their favorite life stage in the style of Eric Carle (tissue paper collage).
2. Research and create a play based on the life stages of another insect.
3. Grow your own insects. Caterpillars are very accessible and easy to maintain in your classroom. Information is readily available via the internet on how to care for them or order a kit that includes everything you need.
4. Snack time the caterpillar way! What kinds of food did the caterpillar eat? Make lists and categorize the foods. Discuss which foods are best for the caterpillar and best for us. Share some fun and healthy snacks.