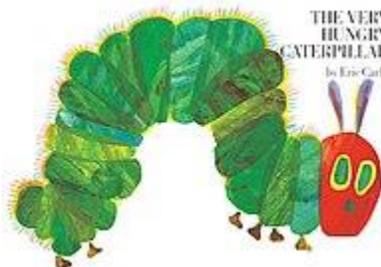


# The Very Hungry Caterpillar

## A Parent's Guide to Using an Experience Box



Experience boxes provide a way for children with limited formal communication skills to share in the experience of literacy while developing vocabulary and concepts. Using real objects or object symbols, children with limited communication skills can explore, match, and share these objects as they refer to the story with others. Experience boxes can be used with children of all ages and abilities.

### Recommended Lesson Plan

- Allow your child to first explore the items in the box, let them become familiar with the shapes and textures of the items. Familiarity is important for learning.
- Select The Very Hungry Caterpillar on [www.dbcentral.org](http://www.dbcentral.org) – Or choose to read the enclosed book with your child on your own.
- Utilize objects in the experience box to have a conversation about the pictures and the words in the book. Allow your child to handle the object, play with it, learn and come to understand the shapes and textures of the objects. If available, provide a real life example of the item. For example, if you have real fruit available, use that; or there is a cocoon outside or at a local museum, see if you can explore it in some way with your child.
- As you watch the “Story Time Video”, or read the book together, pull objects from the experience box as they are presented in the story. Allow your child to try to find objects that match the pictures and identify objects by practicing vocabulary. Mutually explore the object, if possible, talk, have a conversation about the objects and the story. Remember that touching the object together is a simple conversation. The objects in this box allow for dramatic play and reenactment of the story. Allow your child to maneuver the caterpillars around the food objects to mimic eating them. Point out the small versus big caterpillars.
- Conversation starters
  - Did you like the story?
  - What did you like about the story?
  - What is your favorite object?
  - Did the objects help you understand the story better?
- After the video is finished, continue to talk and interact with the objects. Communicate with your child about the objects throughout your day.
  - For example, Do you like cake like the caterpillar did? Do you remember the cake? What is your favorite kind of cake?

NOTE: The objects in these particular boxes are all SYMBOLS for real items. If you can collect and provide the real and actual item (for example provide a real red strawberry compared to the plastic strawberry for your child to feel, taste, smell, etc.) the concept will be more understood and broadened to the greater environment.

## A Parent's Guide to Accessing Story Time Videos and Vocabulary

- Log on to [www.dbcentral.org](http://www.dbcentral.org)
- On the right side, click on the "Literacy" tab
- Scroll down to "DB Central's Story Time Virtual Book Readings"
- Or Select "Vocabulary Slides"
- If your child utilizes sign language or you would like to learn more, select the "Video" of the vocabulary. This video allows for exploration of American Sign Language

## A Note on the ASL Vocabulary Video

The vocabulary presented in this video clip is American Sign Language in its most beautiful and pure structure. Meaning there are sometimes several signs used to describe one concept or phrase. For example: Salami = "Meat" + "Slice, Slice, Slice". If there are questions or you need clarification on any of these vocabulary words, please contact DB Central for assistance at [dbcen@cmich.edu](mailto:dbcen@cmich.edu).

## DB Central Can Help

Project staff are able to schedule a meeting to help brainstorm how to use the experience box with your child and/or to teach them new vocabulary and concepts. Signs can be learned using vision and/or touch.

## When You Are Finished with this Experience Box

Please collect all of the listed items (see back of plastic lid) and place them back into the provided container. Contact DB Central at [dbcen@cmich.edu](mailto:dbcen@cmich.edu) for mail pickup at your front door.