



The Very Hungry Caterpillar Lesson Plan

By: Lily Ng

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The Very Hungry Caterpillar Lesson Plan

Target Group: Primary Two Students

Objectives:

- To review the days of the week
- Teach names of food
- Encourage students' critical thinking and creativity
- To develop an interest in reading.

Learning Targets:

Interpersonal Dimension

- To establish and maintain relationships and routines in carrying out classroom activities.
- To converse about feelings, interests and experiences.
- To obtain and provide information in simple classroom situations and through activities such as interactive games.

Knowledge Dimension

- To provide or find out and present simple information on familiar topics.
- To interpret and use simple given information through processes or activities such as matching, sequencing, describing; and to follow simple instructions.
- To state opinions using information and ideas in simple spoken and written texts.
- To recognize some obvious features of the English language in simple spoken texts (i.e. the sound patterns of English), and apply this awareness to one's initial learning and use of the language.

Experience Dimension

- To develop an awareness and an enjoyment of the basic sound patterns of English in imaginative texts through activities.
- To respond to characters and events in simple imaginative and other narrative texts through oral and performative means such as: making predictions, making simple evaluative remarks, describing one's related experiences and participating in the telling of stories.

Language Functions and Focuses:

Examples:

• Use nouns to refer to days of the week	On Friday,... It was Sunday again.
• Use adjectives to describe conditions	He was still hungry.
• Use adjectives to describe conditions and objects and to show quantities	He was a big, fat caterpillar. He ate three plums.
• Use simple past tense to express feelings.	He was still hungry. He felt much better after that.
• Ask open-ended questions to obtain opinions, more elaborate answers, and to support teacher-student interaction	What do you think the very hungry caterpillar will eat?

Materials Used: The big book *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* by Eric Carle, one copy of laminated cards for each day of the week, two small whiteboards, a small copy of a caterpillar picture, laminated copies of phrases *On _____* and *he ate _____*, laminated food picture cards (i.e. one apple, two pears, three plums, four strawberries, five oranges, chocolate cake, ice-cream, a pickle, swiss cheese, salami, a lollipop, cherry pie, a sausage, a cupcake, a slice of watermelon and a leaf) and two whiteboard markers.

For the extra activity (optional): body parts of a caterpillar, food cards of what the caterpillar ate each day (same as above) and 4 pairs of chopsticks (for the legs of the caterpillar). To see a photo of the materials required for this extra activity, please refer to Appendix A.

Procedure

1. Review the days of the week in sequential order. (approx. time: 5 mins.)
2. Do a warm-up activity, *The Days of the Week Game* (a modified version of *Duck, Duck, Goose*):
 - Arrange for students to sit in a circle.
 - Demonstrate how the game is to be played.

Details of the game:

 - Choose one student to be 'it'.
 - The chosen student walks around the outer side of the circle in a counter-clockwise direction.
 - As the 'it' student passes by a student, he/she calls out a day of the week in sequential order. For example, when he/she passes by Student A, he/she calls out, "Monday", when he/she walks by Student B, he/she calls out, "Tuesday", etc.
 - The 'it' student continues this pattern until he/she taps a classmate of his/her choice on the head.

- The student whose head gets tapped must then stand up and race against the 'it' student around the outer side of the circle in opposite directions (i.e. clockwise vs. counterclockwise).
- The first to get back to the seat of the student whose head was tapped wins. The one left standing without a seat is now 'it'.
Note: If the person left standing was just 'it', he/she must be 'it' again and needs to start the game over from the beginning until he/she wins a race. However, if the same person is 'it' after two rounds, the teacher should replace the student with a volunteer.
- Play the game for about four to six rounds, depending on how well the children play (i.e. they can play more if they need more practice recalling the days of the week), and depending on how much time is remaining in the lesson.

(approx. time: 13-15 mins.)

Additional remark:

Encourage the entire class to recall the days of the week together with the 'it' student simultaneously.

3. Stop the game and ask students to go to the designated area for the shared reading session. (approx. time: 2 mins.)
4. Do a shared reading activity with the big book *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*.
 - Introduction:
Let the students know that the class will share a story and introduce the cover of the book. Tell students the title and author of the book. Discuss the pictures on the cover. For example, ask them, "What can you see on the cover?", "Have you ever seen a caterpillar?", "Where do you think the caterpillar is?", etc.
 - Tap into students' background knowledge:
Ask students what they eat if they're very hungry.
 - Ask prediction questions:
Pose the question, "What do you think the very hungry caterpillar will eat if he's very hungry?"
 - Write down students' predictions on the whiteboard so that they can refer back to them throughout the story, and compare their answers at the end of it.
 - Start to read the story.
Note: Teacher should read with an expressive voice so as to draw out students' emotions in joint anticipation during the story.
 - Throughout the reading, ask more prediction questions such as the following:
 - What do you think the caterpillar ate on Tuesday?
 - How many did he eat?
 - What happened to him the next day?
 - What happened to him after he came out of the cocoon?
 - Finish the story. (approx. 7-8 mins.)

5. Follow-up activity: *Sequencing the Story*
 - Elicit students to recall the story, focusing on the targeted language structures, such as: On (day), he ate (food), etc.
 - Place the sequencing picture cards on the whiteboard as the students provide the details of the story to the teacher. (approx. 5 mins.)
6. Consolidation:
 - Re-tell the story together. (approx. 3-4 mins.)
7. Summarize the lesson and provide feedback and/or praise the class. (approx. 1 min.)

Note:

If there is any extra time remaining, the following activity may be done:

Role-play

- Choose fourteen students to participate in the activity.
- Distribute one prop (i.e. either a part of the caterpillar's body or a picture card of the food he ate on one of the days) to each student (as mentioned earlier, please refer to Appendix A).
- Ask the fourteen students to stand at the front of the class.
- As the class re-tells the story, have the student helpers act out their corresponding part. Alternatively, the student helpers may re-tell the story on their own as they act out their parts (please refer to Appendix B).

A Reflection on The Very Hungry Caterpillar Lesson

Overall I believe that the lesson turned out to be quite successful and I was pleased with the results. A few reasons why I felt it was a positive experience for both my students and I, include: that the children were interested and motivated throughout the lesson, they participated actively, there was a lot of interaction between the students and the teacher, and they practiced not only the target language (and its structures), but also developed their critical thinking skills and stimulated their creativity.

When I began the lesson, I was not surprised that they seemed to be familiar with the days of the week because they had just recently learned about them in their textbook. However, because the textbook offers limited practice on speaking skills, I felt that they could benefit by practicing how to say and pronounce the days of the week correctly in this lesson. Therefore, after we placed all cards of the days of the week on the whiteboard, I asked them to practice reading them with me. I particularly focused on days like Thursday and Friday because from my experience, I know that many students have difficulty pronouncing the [-th] sound and that they often say 'Fiveday' instead of 'Friday'. Sometimes I would ask the students to repeat the targeted vocabulary a few times but because I do not support the idea of drilling (i.e. I believe there are other more effective and definitely motivating methods), and because of the fact that their performance was quite good, I only asked them to repeat the words after me once. Besides these points, I knew that they would get sufficient practice saying the words from the game that followed (i.e. the modified version of Duck, Duck, Goose).

I was surprised yet happy at how well the students played the Days of the Week game. I was expecting to have to continuously remind them to say the days of the week aloud together, but to my delight, I found that most of them not only remembered to do so, but also enjoyed it. (In fact, I can't recall for sure whether I even asked them to do that or if they just naturally sensed to do it on their own. Anyway, if I didn't ask them to do it, I would have definitely prompted them to do so if they didn't.) Besides practicing the vocabulary, the objective of the game was to serve as a warm-up activity in order to arouse their interest, and from their reactions, the objective was met.

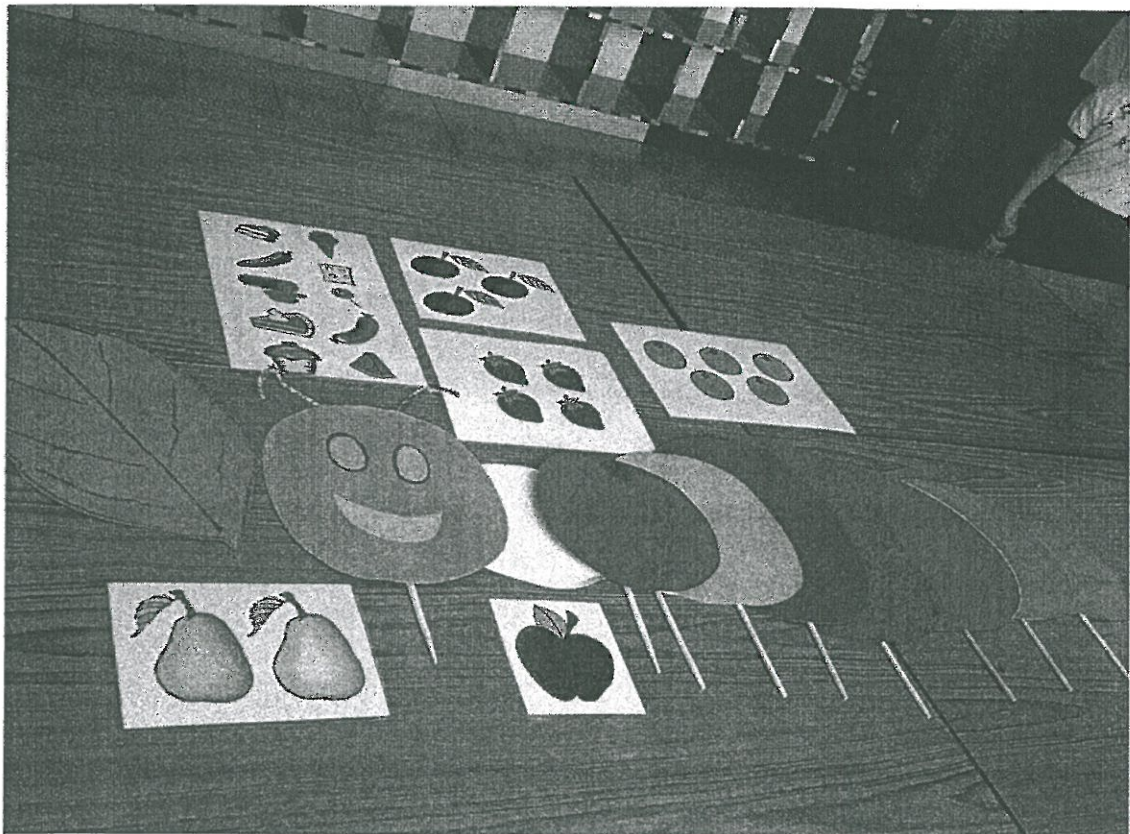
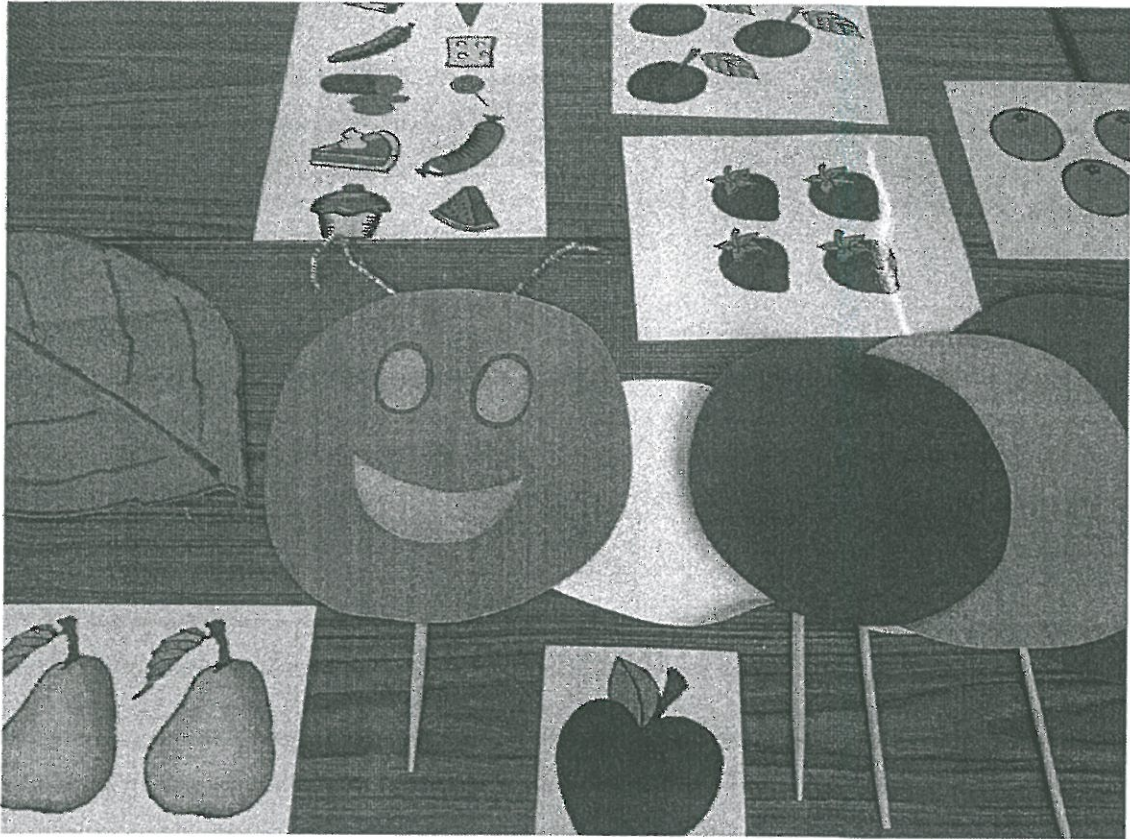
Then it was time to share the story *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*. It is my usual practice to start off by introducing the cover. Perhaps because I was a bit nervous about the fact that we were on camera and that we only had forty minutes to record the video, I may have felt a bit pressed for time so I didn't ask as many questions about the cover as I had planned. However, I did manage to ask the key questions to get them thinking about the story and to prepare them for it, such as, "What do you like to eat when you are very hungry?" and "What do you think the very hungry caterpillar will eat?". Upon receiving their answers, I made a point to write down their predictions on the board in order to allow them to see their ideas and make them feel more involved, as it was a shared reading session. Another reason why I wrote down their answers was so that they could check their answers throughout the progression of the story and furthermore, to ensure that they paid attention consistently. Although I had planned to go over the list of their predictions at the end of the story, I forgot to do so.

However, I know that they knew to check on their own and that they did do that during the story because I could hear their reactions as they learned what the caterpillar actually ate each day. For example, I could hear some of them say, "Yes!" when they realized that they had predicted correctly. Throughout the story, I was more than satisfied with their behaviour and performance in that I knew they were very interested because they paid close attention and expressed gestures of excitement.

Lastly, we summarized the lesson via a sequencing activity. Again, the children participated actively. Most of the time, the students were able to recall what the caterpillar ate each day. I purposely made plastic cards of the phrases *On _____* and *he ate through _____* in order to help them recognize the sentence pattern. As they provided the answers to me, I placed the corresponding picture cards on the board and then asked them to read the sentences with me along the way. I should have also asked them to read the story again when we finished the sequencing activity but I was afraid that we would exceed the permitted time for the video, so I decided to end the lesson soon after. I also do not believe in rushing through any activities, and this case was no exception. I did not want to 'squeeze in' an extra activity just for the sake of the video because I would have had to rush through it, and if I did that, it probably would not have been able to provide much educational value anyway. Having said this, I plan on asking them to go through the sequence of the story at the beginning of my next lesson with them, then have them practice sequencing in their own groups and finally, they will be writing their own version of the story, *The Very Hungry Student* (please refer to Appendix C).

At the end of the lesson, I made sure to praise the students on a job well done because I truly felt that they performed wonderfully! However, even if they didn't do very well, I always like to provide positive feedback to my students. I believe that providing this kind of support and encouragement are of utmost importance and necessary to pupils in order to help build up their confidence and to develop a lifelong positive learning attitude.

APPENDIX A



APPENDIX B

