

# The Very Hungry Caterpillar & Other Eric Carle Favorites



Streaming Performances  
for Schools



## TEACHER RESOURCE GUIDE

# The Very Hungry Caterpillar & Other Eric Carle Favorites

### TABLE OF CONTENTS

About Playhouse Square	3
About the Show	4
Key Terms & Events	6
Pre-Show Activities	7
Post-Show Activities	13
Resources	16
Curriculum Standards Index	17
Early Learning & Development	17
English/Language Arts	17
Fine Arts	18
Physical Education	19
Science	19
Social & Emotional Learning	20
Social Studies	20



# EDUCATION



The lessons and activities in this guide are driven by the Ohio Learning Standards in Early Learning & Development (2022), English Language Arts (2017), Fine Arts (2024), Physical Education (2015), Science (2018-2019), Social & Emotional Learning (2019) and Social Studies (revised 2019).

21st century skills of creativity, critical thinking and collaboration are embedded in the process of bringing the page to the stage. Seeing live theater encourages students to read, develop critical thinking skills and to be curious about the world around them.

This Teacher Resource Guide includes background information, questions and activities that can stand alone or work as building blocks toward the creation of a complete unit of classroom work.

The lessons and activities in this guide are created and adapted by Playhouse Square's Education Department.



The Ohio Arts Council helps fund this organization with state tax dollars to encourage economic growth, educational excellence and cultural enrichment for all Ohioans.

Playhouse Square is supported in part by the residents of Cuyahoga County through a public grant from Cuyahoga Arts & Culture.



# ABOUT PLAYHOUSE SQUARE

Playhouse Square is an exciting field trip destination! The not-for-profit Playhouse Square attracts more than one million guests to 1000+ shows and events each year. Five of Playhouse Square's 12 venues are historic theaters that first opened in the early 1920s. By the late 1960s, they had been abandoned. A group of volunteers saved the theaters from being turned into parking lots. Now, all five historic theaters are fully restored.

You'll find Broadway, concerts, comedy, dance and family shows on Playhouse Square's stages, along with performances and events held by Playhouse Square's eight resident companies: The City Club of Cleveland, Cleveland Ballet, Cleveland International Film Festival, Cleveland Play House, Cleveland State University's Department of Theatre and Dance, DANCECleveland, Great Lakes Theater and Tri-C JazzFest.

When you visit, be sure to check out the retro Playhouse Square sign with its 9-foot-tall letters and the largest outdoor chandelier in North America – the Playhouse Square Chandelier generously presented by GE Lighting, a Savant company.





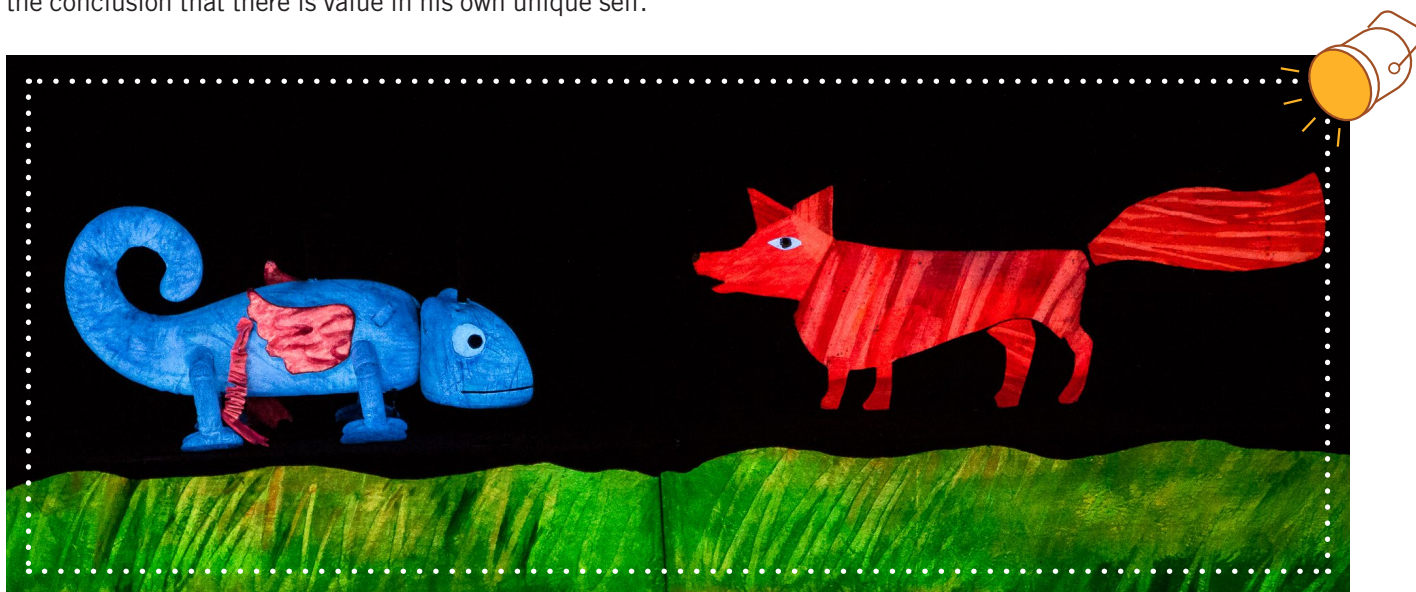
## ABOUT THE SHOW

Three beloved stories by Eric Carle, award-winning children's book illustrator and author, are retold on stage through the magic of black light and fanciful puppets.

*The Very Hungry Caterpillar* follows the wonderful adventures of a very tiny and very hungry caterpillar as he eats his way through an amazing variety of foods on his path to becoming a beautiful butterfly. High up in the sky, *Little Cloud* playfully transforms himself into various creatures, including a sheep, an airplane, a shark and more. *The Mixed-Up Chameleon* is bored with his life, sitting about predictably changing color all day. Following an adventurous trip to the zoo, he attempts to emulate the beautiful animals he sees before coming to the conclusion that there is value in his own unique self.

## ABOUT THE PRODUCTION

The production uses innovative puppetry to bring Eric Carle's stories to life. Utilizing rod and hand puppets, the show employs black light, making the puppeteers, dressed in black, nearly invisible while fluorescently painted puppets glow. This creates captivating visual illusions. Two puppeteers manipulate all puppets and scenery, enhancing the magic. Gordon Pinsent's narration and Steven Naylor's music accompany the visuals. The production has reached over two million viewers in 13 countries and over 3,500 performances, presented in multiple languages.



## ABOUT MERMAID THEATRE OF NOVA SCOTIA

Founded in 1972, Mermaid Theatre has captivated over four million young audiences worldwide with its unique staged adaptations of children's literature. The company tours across North America and has also represented Canada in countries like Japan, Australia and England. Mermaid has received several awards, including Export Excellence Awards from Nova Scotia and the Government of Canada, as well as recognition as Best Performing Group by the Canadian Arts Presenting Association and the Crystal Tourism Ambassador Award from Nova Scotia's tourism leaders. To learn more, visit [mermaidtheatre.ca](http://mermaidtheatre.ca)



# ABOUT THE STORIES

## ***Little Cloud***

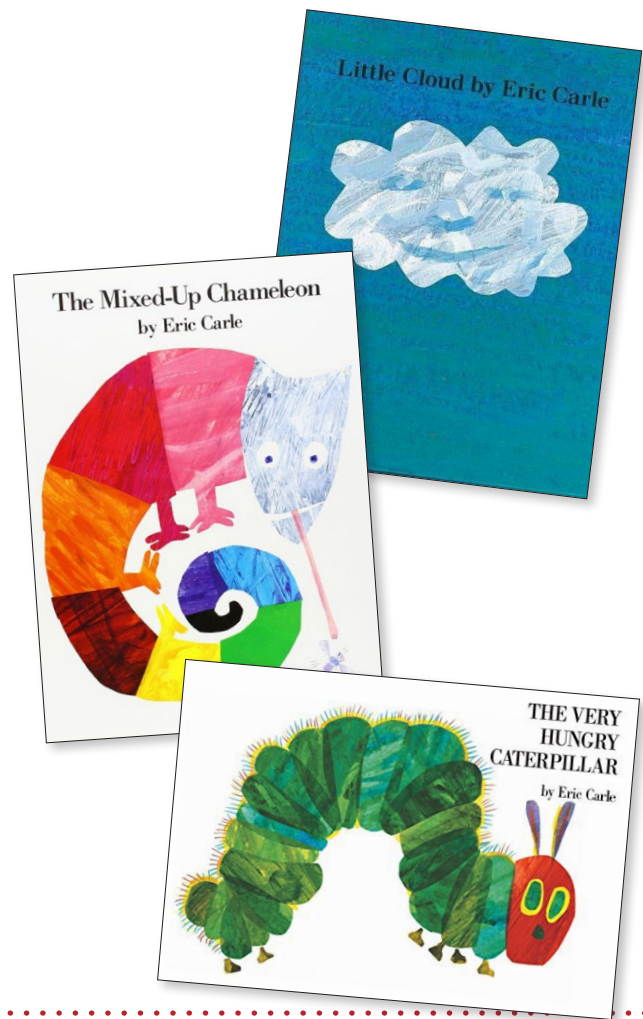
High up in the beautiful sky, Little Cloud slips away from the rest and transforms into various shapes of things it sees – a sheep, an airplane, a shark and more.

## ***The Mixed-Up Chameleon***

A little chameleon is bored with its life – sitting about predictably changing color all day. So, it decides to embark on an adventurous trip to the zoo. Upon seeing the beautiful animals there, the little chameleon tries changing to look like each one of them. The poor chameleon gets so mixed up; it is no longer able to catch a fly when it gets hungry. The little chameleon learns to appreciate its own life, and happily changes back to normal.

## ***The Very Hungry Caterpillar***

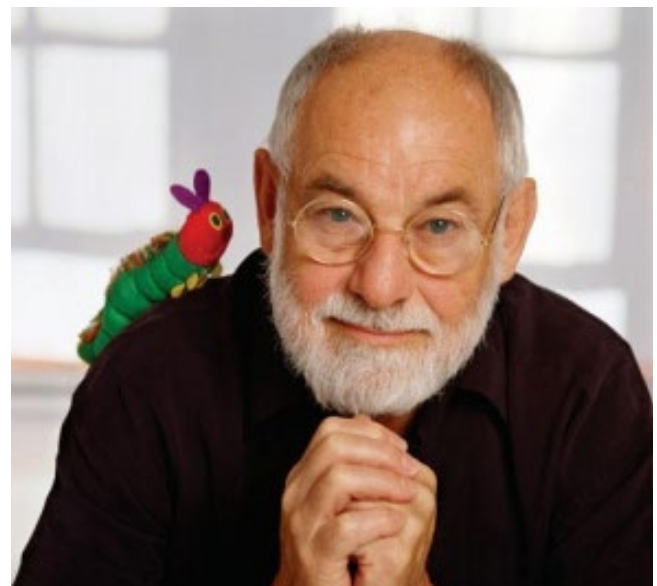
This is Eric Carle's 224 word story about a caterpillar who nibbles through apples, strawberries, chocolate cake, lollipops and more. *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* follows the wonderful adventures of a very tiny and very hungry caterpillar that progresses through an amazing variety of foods towards his eventual metamorphosis into a beautiful butterfly.



# ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Eric Carle, born in 1929, is a renowned children's author and illustrator, famous for *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* which has sold over 46 million copies and been translated into 65 languages. After art school in Germany and a graphic design career in New York, Carle began illustrating children's books, starting with *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?*

He developed a distinctive collage style using hand-painted paper, creating vibrant and recognizable images. His books often incorporate interactive elements, blending playful design with educational content about nature. Carle's work, including over 70 books and 145 million copies sold globally, reflects his deep understanding of children's curiosity and fosters their intellectual growth.



Eric Carle



# KEY TERMS & EVENTS

**butterfly** – a flying bug with four large wings

**caterpillar** – a long, round bug with six legs that will transform into a butterfly

**chameleon** – a reptile with skin that can change color

**cocoon** – a covering made by a caterpillar to protect themselves as they transform into a butterfly

**drift** – to be carried along, such as by wind

**flamingo** – a pink tropical bird with long legs

**giant** – very great in size

**handsome** – having a good-looking and healthy appearance

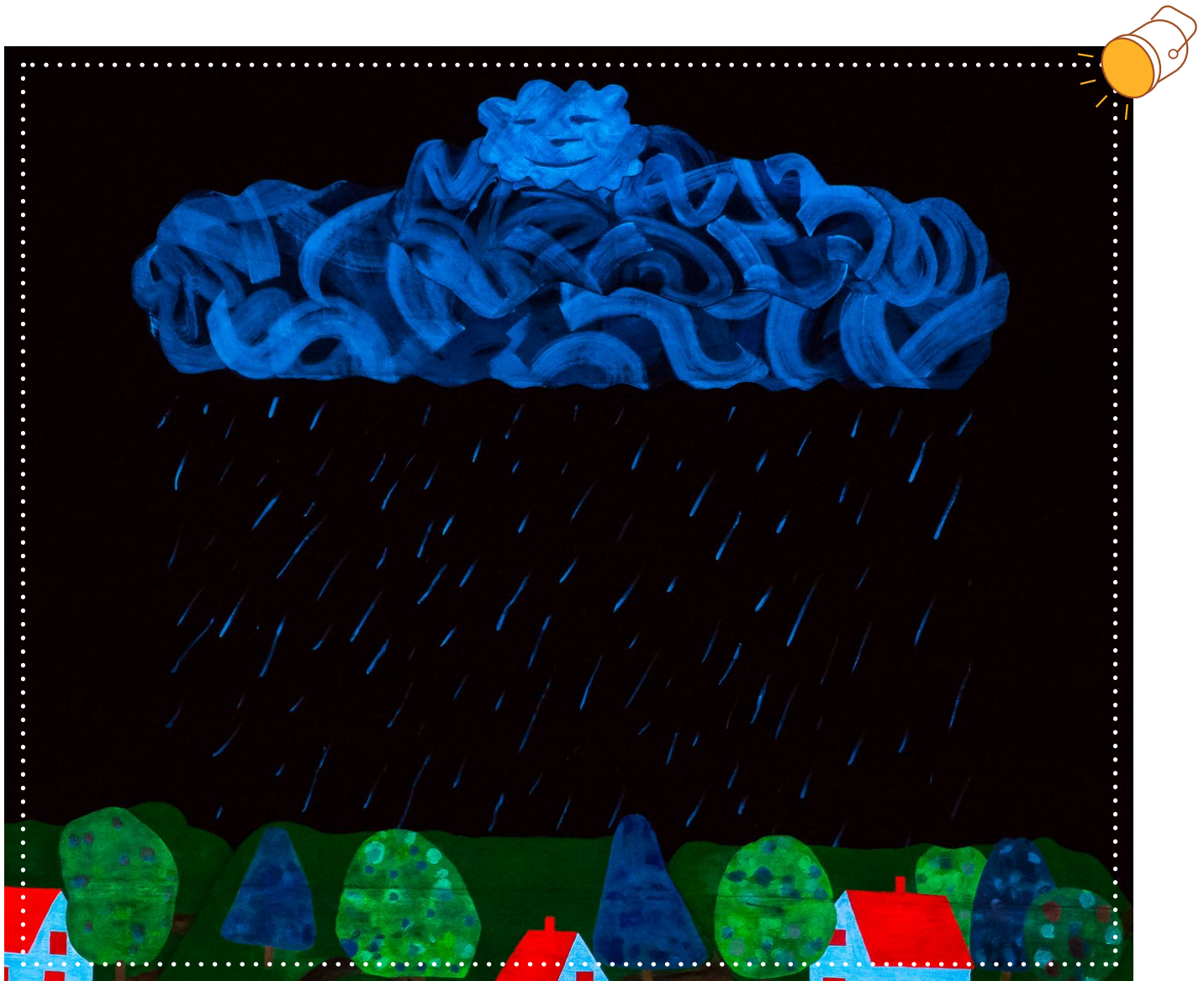
**huddle** – to gather closely as a small group

**meadow** – an open and growing field

**nibble** – to eat in small, gentle bites

**plum** – a sweet purple fruit with a big seed

**seal** – a sea mammal with flippers



## ■ PRE-SHOW ACTIVITIES

# Classroom Connections Video Workshop (Grades PreK-2)

The Ohio Learning Standards listed below are addressed in the following Pre-Show Activity:

**Early Learning & Development:** AL.1.a, AL.1.b, CR.1.b, CR.2.a, PW.1.a, PW.1.d

**English/Language Arts:** SL.K.1, SL.1.1, SL.2.1

**Fine Arts:** Dance: K.2CR, 1.2CR

**Physical Education:** 1A.1.3, 3B.1.4, 3B.2.4

**Social & Emotional Learning:** C3.1.a, D2.2.a



Playhouse Square teaching artists design workshops to actively explore and connect with the art forms and themes students will see during the performance. Join AJ and Molly as they lead a physical warm-up, explore what it means to transform and talk about the beauty of our differences.

**Run time:** 11:07

### Additional Terms .....

**balance** – to hold steady and remain standing, because weight is equally distributed

**transform** – to completely change

### Discussion Questions

- What are some things that transform?
- What changes from one thing into something else?
- Imagine you are in a garden:
  - What different plants do you see?
  - What animals are in the garden?
  - Why shapes of clouds pass by?
  - What will you transform into? What will you become?



# Vocabulary Cards (Grades PreK-2)

The Ohio Learning Standards listed below are addressed in the following Pre-Show Activity:

**Early Learning & Development:** LL.1.a, LL.1.b, LL.1.d

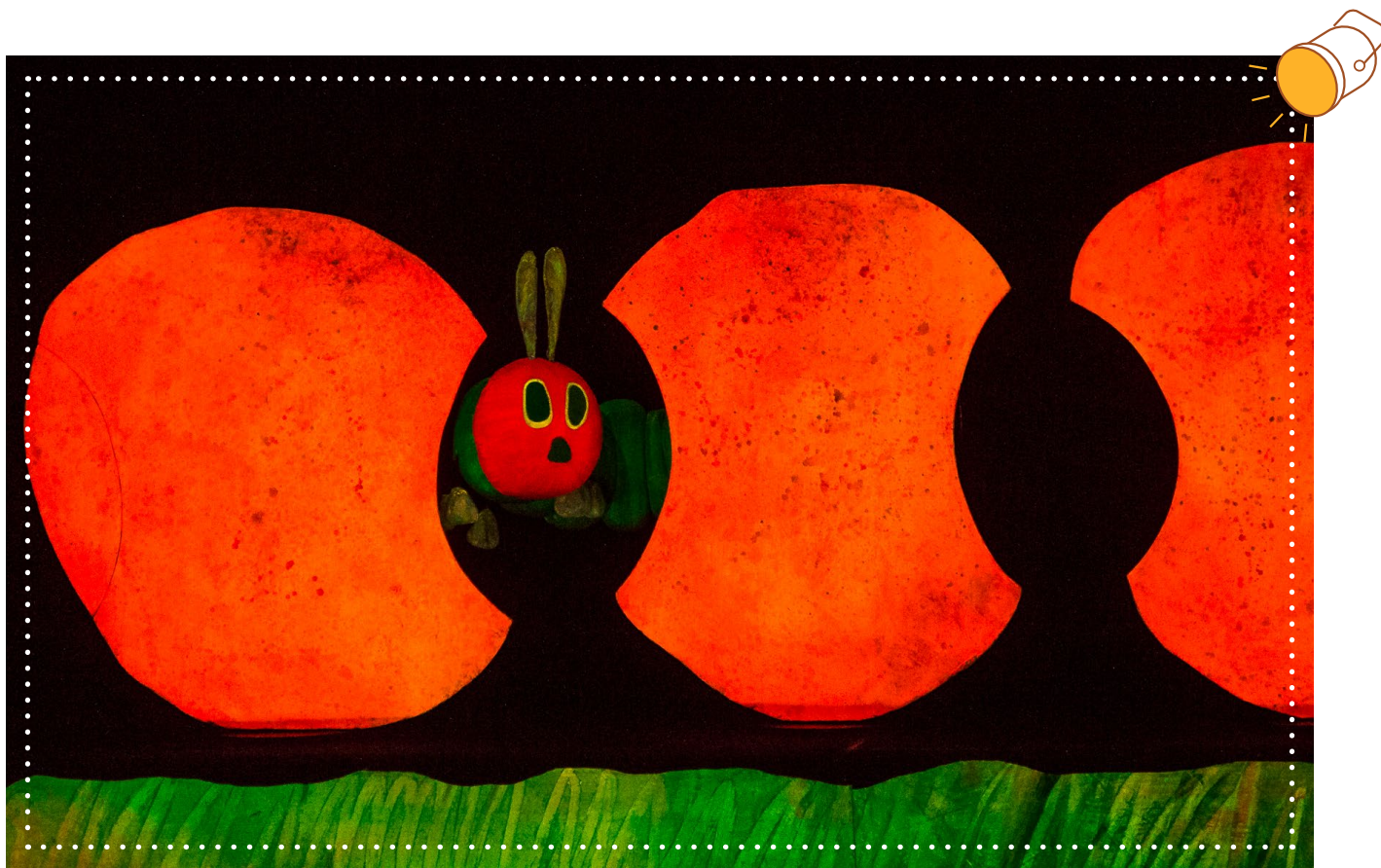
**English/Language Arts:** L.K.4, L.K.5, L.1.4, L.1.5, L.2.4, L.2.5

As a class, go over the vocabulary listed in the Key Terms & Events on page 6. These words will help students prepare for the streaming performance.

Cut out the vocabulary cards on the next page. For at least a week, display the word cards in the classroom by either pinning them on the board or placing them in a pocket chart.

Here are some ideas for increasing use of these vocabulary words:

- During journaling, encourage students to use at least one word from the board
- Reinforce the use of a few of these words by incorporating them into any prompting questions during class discussions
- Have students alphabetize or sort the words into categories (Ex: animals, words that start with C etc.)





## Vocabulary Cards (PreK-2)



butterfly



flamingo



caterpillar



meadow



chameleon



plum



cocoon



seal

# Days of the Week (Grades PreK-2)

The Ohio Learning Standards listed below are addressed in the following Pre-Show Activity:

**Early Learning & Development:** CO.1.a, CO.2.a, LL.1.a

**English/Language Arts:** L.K.4, L.K.5, L.1.4, L.1.5, L.2.4, L.2.5

**Social Studies:** K.HIS.1, 1.HIS.1, 2.HIS.2

Students will learn the days of the week, establish the sequential order of days and connect days to their experiences.

Read *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* to the class (or a read-aloud video is noted in Resources on page 16). As the story unfolds, emphasize the food the caterpillar eats each day of the week. Write the day (ex: Monday) and draw an image of the food eaten on that day (ex: apple). Continue as the story goes on.

After the story, ask, “What day is it today?” Have students take turns stating and drawing what they ate today on the board.

Sing the “Days of the Week” song and have the class join in the singing. An example song can be found in Resources or any preferred version can be used.

Present a large classroom calendar and highlight how the days are arranged in order. Highlight the order of the days and explain the repeating weekly pattern. Utilize the calendar to count days and reinforce sequence.

Introduce “yesterday,” “today,” and “tomorrow.” Use a future event (ex: a school assembly) on the calendar and count backward to determine the number of days until the event.

<b>Yesterday</b>	The day before today
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<b>Today</b>	The current day
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<b>Tomorrow</b>	The day after today
-----------------	---------------------

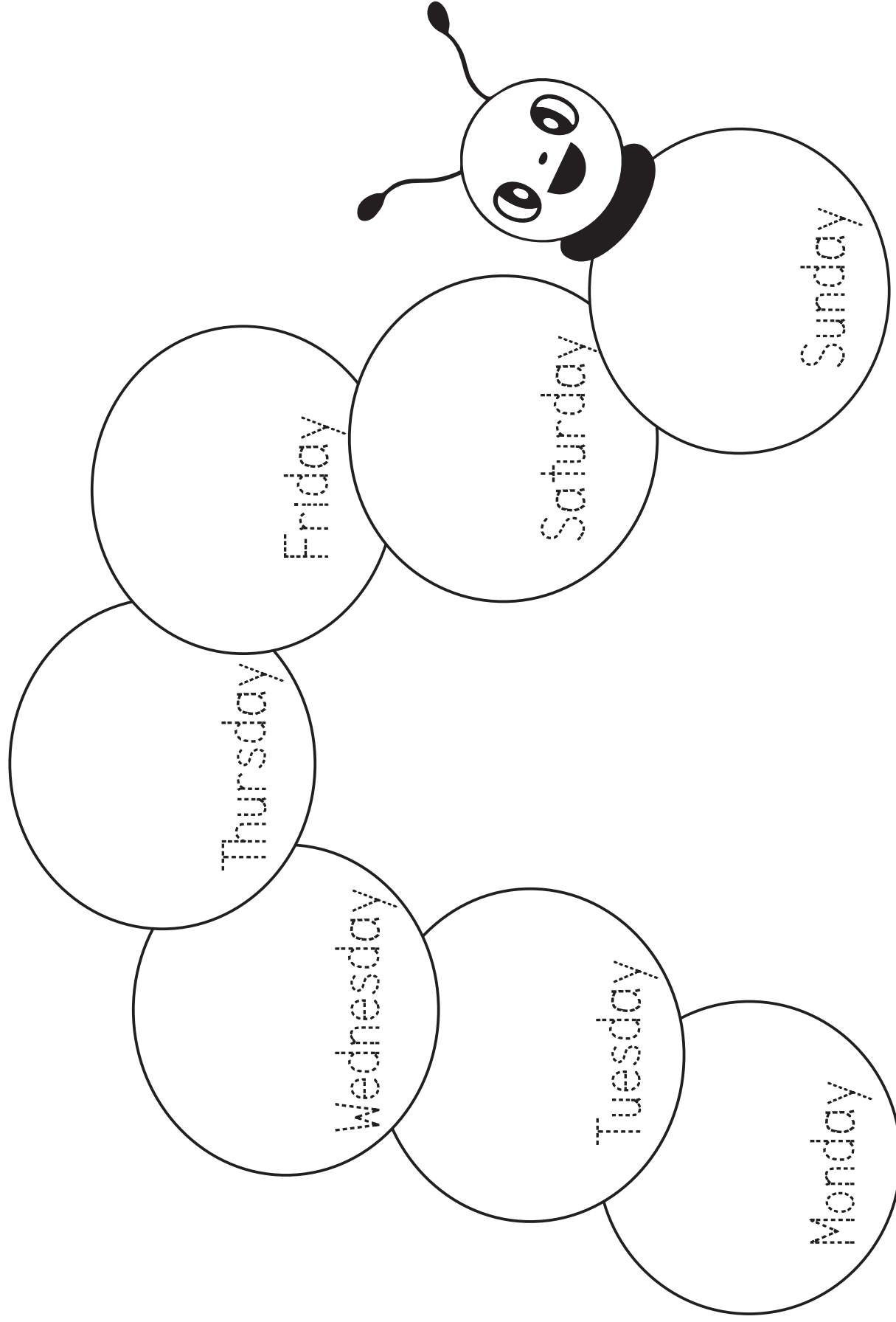
To assess learning, distribute the worksheet on the next page. Students should trace each day and draw a picture of something eaten that day. Complete one entry each day, finishing the worksheet by the end of the week. This worksheet can either be completed individually or together as a class.



## Days of the Week Worksheet

11

Name: \_\_\_\_\_



# Camouflage Collage (Grades PreK-2)

The Ohio Learning Standards listed below are addressed in the following Pre-Show Activity:

**Early Learning & Development:** CR.1.a, SC.1.a

**English/Language Arts:** RL.K.1, RL.1.1, RL.2.1

**Fine Arts:** Visual Arts: K.1CO, K.3PE, 1.3CR, 1.3PE, 2.1CO, 2.3CR, 2.3PE

**Science:** K.LS.1 K.LS.2, 1.LS.2, 2.LS.1

Eric Carle crafted his special style of illustrations by using a collage technique. He artfully arranged pieces of tissue paper, painted with various acrylic hues and then adhered them to an illustration board to make the beloved pictures. In this activity, students will learn the scientific concept of camouflage and make a collage creation of their own.

Read *The Mixed-Up Chameleon* to the class (or use the read-aloud video noted in the Resources on page 16). Explain how many animals in the wild use camouflage to blend in with their surroundings. For example, chameleons can change their colors to hide from predators. Ask the students to think about different animals they know that use camouflage.

Introduce *Red Eyes or Blue Feathers: A Book About Animal Colors* and read it aloud to show how animals use colors to blend in. Ask the students:

- What animals did you see in the book?
- What colors were these animals?
- How did these animals use camouflage to hide or blend in?



Display images of camouflaged animals from the National Geographic website around the classroom. Discuss each animal and how its camouflage contributes to its survival. Have each student choose an animal from one of the provided images. Have them use magazine clippings, construction paper, tissue paper or other recycled materials to craft the animal's habitat as a collage. On separate paper, have them draw the animal and cut it out. The animal cutout should be integrated into a background that simulates its natural habitat. The animal will need to blend in with its surroundings in the final creation.

For example, if a student picks an owl, they will cut out an owl shape, then glue small pieces of brown or gray paper to make it look like the owl's feathers. The owl should then be glued onto a background of paper decorated to look like tree bark, effectively helping the owl blend in.

Once the students have finished their projects, have them share their collages with the class. Ask them:

- How did you make your animal blend in?
- What materials did you use to help your animal camouflage?

If permitted, photos of completed creations can be shared with Playhouse Square by sending them via email to [schoolprograms@playhousesquare.org](mailto:schoolprograms@playhousesquare.org).





## ■ POST-SHOW ACTIVITIES

# Reflection (Grades PreK-2)

The Ohio Learning Standards listed below are addressed in the following Post-Show Activity:

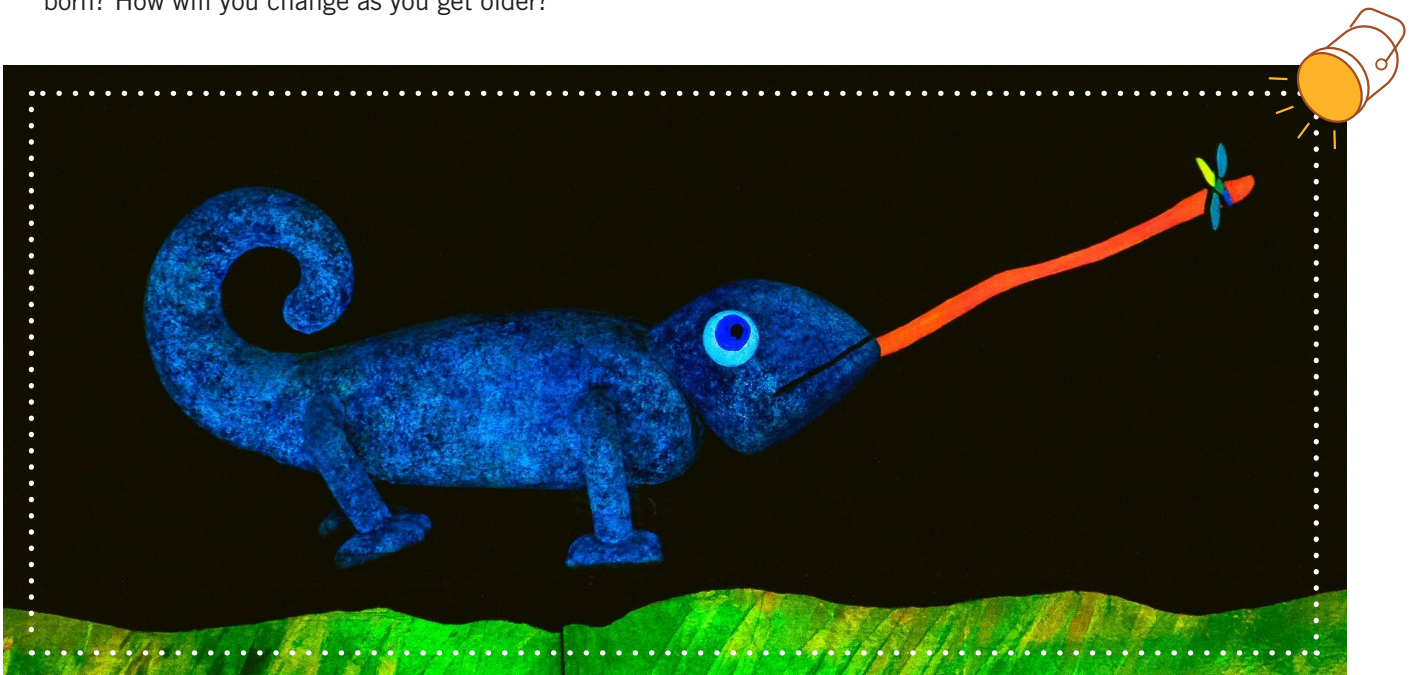
**Early Learning & Development:** CO.1.a, LL.1.a, LL.1.b, LL.1.d

**English/Language Arts:** SL.K.1, SL.1.1, SL.2.1

**Social & Emotional Learning:** A2.1.a, D1.1.a, D3.3.a, E4.3.a

After viewing the performance, have students sit in a circle to discuss and reflect together on what they saw using these questions:

1. What was your favorite puppet?
2. How did the puppets move? Did they walk, jump or fly?
3. Did you see the puppeteers? Did that change how you watched the show?
4. What was the most exciting part of the show for you?
5. What did the show sound like?
6. Describe your favorite character from the story. What qualities do they have that you admire?
7. All of these stories had characters that changed or transformed. How have you changed since you were born? How will you change as you get older?
8. If you could change to become anything you want, such as a puddle, a ladybug or a truck, what would you become? What new things could you do in that form?
9. Imagine you are floating on a cloud. What does it feel like? Describe it.
10. If you had to describe how you are feeling today as a color, what color would you choose and why?
11. Reflect on the lessons the chameleon learns throughout her journey. How can these lessons be applied to your own life experiences?
12. If you could tell someone who hasn't seen the show one thing about it, what would you say?



# Cloud Watching (Grades PreK-2)

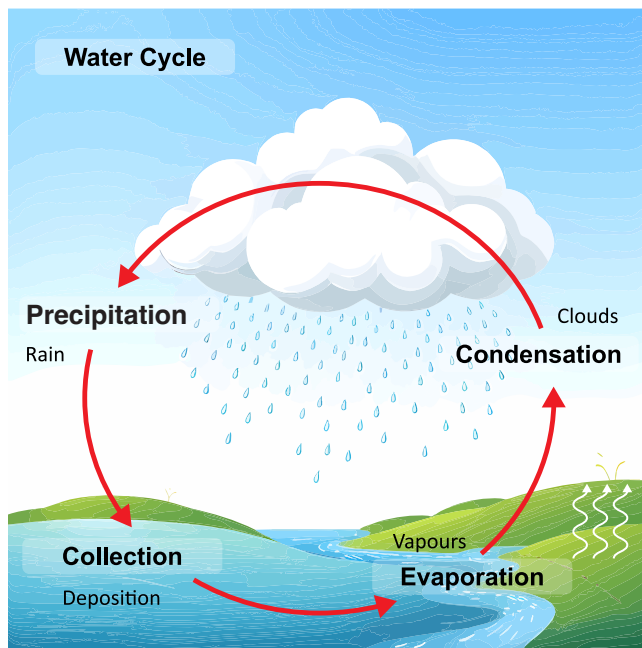
The Ohio Learning Standards listed below are addressed in the following Post-Show Activity:

**Early Learning & Development:** SC.1.a, SC.1.b

**Science:** K.ESS.1, 1.ESS.2, 2.ESS.2, 2.ESS.3

Gather students on the carpet or in the reading area. Read *The Little Cloud* (or a read-aloud video is noted in Resources on page 16), showing pictures and pausing to ask questions like:

- What do you think the cloud is going to turn into next?
- How would you describe this cloud? Is it fluffy? Big? Light?



Remind students how clouds are formed. Prompt them with questions about the water cycle like: “Have you ever left a wet beach towel out and found it dry later? Where did the water go?” Explain that water goes into the air (evaporation), and when it cools up in the sky, it forms tiny droplets that make up clouds (condensation).

Make a chart like this on the board to help students describe the different types of clouds:

CLOUD TYPE	ADJECTIVES
Cirrus	thin, wispy, high up
Cumulus	puffy, fluffy, cotton-like
Cumulonimbus	tall, dark, stormy, heavy
Stratus	flat, gray

To further illustrate these cloud types, display photographs or simple drawings of each cloud type. Then, each student will receive a worksheet to complete independently. The worksheet (next page) will require students to observe a cloud and match it with its corresponding type.



# Cloud Watching Worksheet

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:** Go outside and look up at the clouds. Complete the worksheet below, remembering what you learned.

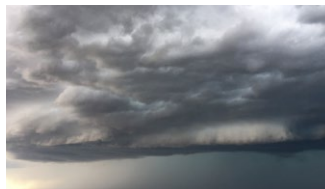
1. Pick a cloud you see in the sky. Circle the cloud it looks most similar to.



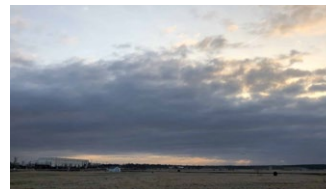
Cirrus



Cumulus



Cumulonimbus



Stratus

2. In the box below, draw your cloud.

3. On the lines below, describe your cloud using a full sentence.

4. Can you see the sun today?      Yes      No

5. In the box below, draw other things you see in the sky.

6. Is it windy today?      Yes      No

7. Use your imagination! What is another object your cloud looks like? \_\_\_\_\_

# RESOURCES

## BOOKS



*Little Cloud*, by Eric Carle

*Red Eyes or Blue Feathers: A Book About Animal Colors*, by Patricia M. Stockland

*The Mixed-Up Chameleon*, by Eric Carle

*The Very Hungry Caterpillar*, by Eric Carle



### Recommended reads curated by Cleveland Public Library

- *Bee-bim Bop!*, by Linda Sue Park

A lively, rhythmic book about a Korean American girl helping her mother prepare a traditional Korean dish.

- *Dreamers*, by Yuyi Morales

The story of a mother and son immigrating to America, finding hope and a future in the public library and the transformative power of imagination.

- *Thank You, Omu!*, by Oge Mora

A story about generosity, Omu shares her delicious stew with everyone in her community but soon finds that she has nothing left for herself.



**CLEVELAND  
PUBLIC  
LIBRARY**

For more information,  
visit CPL Youth Services  
or go to [cpl.org](http://cpl.org).

## WEB



### Classroom Connections Workshop Video

*The Very Hungry Caterpillar & Other Eric Carle Favorites* Pre-Show Workshop Video. Password: 3cloud23 <https://vimeo.com/1066019514/5c4734382d>

“Camouflage Images,” *National Geographic Education*. <https://education.nationalgeographic.org/resource/camouflage>

“Days of the Week Song featuring the Super Simple Puppets,” YouTube, uploaded by Super Simple Songs – Kids Songs, <https://youtu.be/vcMmiR7jWQc>

“Little Cloud Read Aloud” YouTube, uploaded by Cozy Corner Books 4 U, <https://youtu.be/m7eirS67Nw4?si=JhD1QTP81jOCJani>

“The Mixed-Up Chameleon Read Aloud” YouTube, uploaded by World of Eric Carle, <https://youtu.be/PzQ9m2FN2aU?si=uYYCH-lbvHsDJ6Mj>

“The Very Hungry Caterpillar Read Aloud” YouTube, uploaded by LolliPop Animated Book, <https://youtu.be/Jr-SJj290xg?si=63I8LFKFG7hSUy3I>



# CURRICULUM STANDARDS INDEX

## Early Learning & Development

Standard	Description	Grade	Activity	Page
AL.1.a	Engages in new and unfamiliar experiences and activities.	PreK	Pre-Show Video Workshop	7
AL.1.b	Completes activities with increasingly complex steps.	PreK	Pre-Show Video Workshop	7
CO.1.a	Develops the ability to recall information about objects, people, and past experiences.	PreK	Days of the Week Reflection	10 13
CO.2.a	Demonstrates increasing ability to think symbolically.	PreK	Days of the Week	10
CR.1.a	Expresses ideas and feelings through visual art.	PreK	Camouflage Collage	12
CR.1.b	Expresses self creatively through music and dance.	PreK	Pre-Show Video Workshop	7
CR.2.a	Develops ability to express new ideas through imaginative and inventive play.	PreK	Pre-Show Video Workshop	7
LL.1.a	Demonstrates understanding of increasingly complex language.	PreK	Vocabulary Cards Days of the Week Reflection	8 10 13
LL.1.b	Develops and expands understanding of vocabulary and concepts.	PreK	Vocabulary Cards Reflection	8 13
LL.1.d	Participates in conversations with increasing application of turn-taking skills.	PreK	Vocabulary Cards Reflection	8 13
PW.1.a	Develops competency in a variety of locomotor and non-locomotor skills.	PreK	Pre-Show Video Workshop	7
PW.1.d	Uses senses to guide movement and interactions with objects and other people.	PreK	Pre-Show Video Workshop	7
SC.1.a	Explores and investigates objects and events in the environment.	PreK	Camouflage Collage Cloud Watching	12 14
SC.1.b	Develops ability to reason about cause and effect.	PreK	Cloud Watching	14

## English/Language Arts

Standard	Description	Grade	Activity	Page
L.K.4	Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on kindergarten reading and content.	K	Vocabulary Cards Days of the Week	8 10

L.K.5	With guidance and support from adults, explore word relationships and nuances in word meanings.	K	Vocabulary Cards Days of the Week	8 10
RL.K.1	With prompting and support, ask and answer questions about key details in a text.	K	Camouflage Collage	12
SL.K.1	Participate in collaborative conversations about kindergarten topics and texts with diverse partners in small and larger groups.	K	Pre-Show Video Workshop Reflection	7 13
L.1.4	Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 1 reading and content, choosing flexibly from an array of strategies.	1	Vocabulary Cards Days of the Week	8 10
L.1.5	With guidance and support from adults, demonstrate understanding of word relationships and nuances in word meanings.	1	Vocabulary Cards Days of the Week	8 10
RL.1.1	Ask and answer questions about key details in a text.	1	Camouflage Collage	12
SL.1.1	Participate in collaborative conversations about grade 1 topics and texts with diverse partners in small and larger groups.	1	Pre-Show Video Workshop Reflection	7 13
L.2.4	Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 2 reading and content, choosing flexibly from an array of strategies	2	Vocabulary Cards Days of the Week	8 10
L.2.5	Demonstrate understanding of word relationships and nuances in word meanings.	2	Vocabulary Cards Days of the Week	8 10
RL.2.1	Ask and answer such questions as who, what, where, when, why, and how to demonstrate understanding of key details in a text.	2	Camouflage Collage	12
SL.2.1	Participate in collaborative conversations about grade 2 topics and texts with diverse partners in small and larger groups.	2	Pre-Show Video Workshop Reflection	7 13

## Fine Arts – Dance

Standard	Description	Grade	Activity	Page
K.2CR	Explore ways to use imagination when engaged in dancing.	K	Pre-Show Video Workshop	7
1.2CR	Explore structured improvisations and movement phrases within a central theme.	1	Pre-Show Video Workshop	7



## Fine Arts – Visual Arts

Standard	Description	Grade	Activity	Page
K.1CO	Connect ideas, stories, and personal experiences to works of art.	K	Camouflage Collage	12
K.3PE	Communicate an idea using the elements of art.	K	Camouflage Collage	12
1.3CR	Experiment with various elements of art to communicate meaning.	1	Camouflage Collage	12
1.3PE	Convey ideas and emotions using the elements of art.	1	Camouflage Collage	12
2.1CO	Recognize and discuss the different ways in which art communicates ideas and serves many purposes.	2	Camouflage Collage	12
2.3CR	Investigate ways to organize elements of art to express meaning.	2	Camouflage Collage	12
2.3PE	Produce works that intentionally incorporate the elements of art.	2	Camouflage Collage	12

## Physical Education

Standard	Description	Grade	Activity	Page
1A.1.3	Use non-locomotor skills in exploratory and controlled settings and in response to verbal and non-verbal (e.g., mirroring or matching a partner) stimuli.	1	Pre-Show Video Workshop	7
3B.1.4	Identify ways to stretch muscles in the upper and lower body.	1	Pre-Show Video Workshop	7
3B.2.4	Identify ways to stretch muscles in various parts of the body.	2	Pre-Show Video Workshop	7

## Science

Standard	Description	Grade	Activity	Page
K.ESS.1	Weather changes are long-term and short term.	K	Cloud Watching	14
K.LS.1	Living things have specific characteristics and traits.	K	Camouflage Collage	12
K.LS.2	Living things have physical traits and behaviors, which influence their survival.	K	Camouflage Collage	12
1.ESS.2	Water on Earth is present in many forms.	1	Cloud Watching	14
1.LS.2	Living things survive only in environments that meet their needs.	1	Camouflage Collage	12
2.ESS.2	Water is present in the atmosphere.	2	Cloud Watching	14
2.ESS.3	Long- and short-term weather changes occur due to changes in energy.	2	Cloud Watching	14
2.LS.1	Living things cause changes on Earth.	2	Camouflage Collage	12

## Social & Emotional Learning

Standard	Description	Grade	Activity	Page
A2.1.a	Identify personal interests and qualities.	K-2	Reflection	13
C3.1.a	Discuss how people can be the same or different	K-2	Pre-Show Video Workshop	7
D1.1.a	Identify and engage in positive communication skills	K-2	Reflection	13
D2. 2.a	Recognize the need for inclusiveness	K-2	Pre-Show Video Workshop	7
D3.3.a	Apply listening and attention skills to identify the feelings and perspectives of others.	K-2	Reflection	13
E4.3.a	Identify examples of transitions and how they are a necessary and appropriate part of school and life.	K-2	Reflection	13

## Social Studies

Standard	Description	Grade	Activity	Page
K.HIS.1	Time can be measured.	K	Days of the Week	10
1.HIS.1	Time can be divided into categories (e.g., months of the year, past, present and future).	1	Days of the Week	10
2.HIS.2	Time can be shown graphically on calendars and timelines.	2	Days of the Week	10