

# Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?

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These activities are taken from *Teaching Reading With Bill Martin Books* available from Scholastic Professional Books.

*Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?* by Bill Martin Jr., illustrated by Eric Carle

"Brown Bear, Brown Bear, what do you see? I see a red bird looking at me." This celebrated classic is a favorite for all ages. Readers first meet Brown Bear, followed by Red Bird, Yellow Duck, Blue Horse, Green Frog, Purple Cat, White Dog, Black Sheep, Goldfish, Teacher, and Children. Rhyming and predictable text combined with tissue paper collage illustration makes this a delight for young readers.

## Before Reading

### Brown Bear Patterns

Introduce the story by taking a quick class poll. Ask: "Who knows this book?" It's likely that many children not only will be familiar with it but will rank it among their favorites. While browsing the book with children, invite them to share what they see. Do they notice a pattern in the book? Is it easy for them to read? What clues can they use to decode the words in the book? Encourage children to join in as you read.

## During Reading

Invite students to chime in while you read the predictable text. They will have fun predicting and naming each animal that comes next. As children follow along, invite them to use voices that sound like the different animals on each page. For example, Brown Bear might have a very loud, growly voice, and Purple Cat may "meow" as she says, "I see a white dog looking at me."

Divide the class into color groups to match each animal in the book. For example, anyone wearing red represents Red Bird; anyone wearing yellow would represent Yellow Duck. (If there are colors missing, children can hold colored construction paper.) Retell the story focusing on the color words. When children hear the color they represent, invite them to stand and join in.

## After Reading

Ask the following questions to encourage children to use their predicting skills:

- Did you know which animal was coming next in the text? What were some clues that helped you know?
- Do you think Bill Martin Jr. should have included a picture clue on each page to help the reader identify the next animal? How would the book be different then?

## Poetry Pause (Language Arts)

Give each child a copy of the poem "[Rhinos Purple, Hippos Green](#)" (PDF). Read the poem together. Encourage a discussion about depicting animals in silly colors, as Eric Carle does in *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?* and as Michael Patrick Hearn does in the poem. Why do authors depict animals in nontraditional colors? When is it a good idea to do this, and when is it a better idea to use the natural colors of animals?

## **Brown Bear, Brown Bear, All Mixed Up! (Language Arts)**

Brown Bear's all mixed up! Strengthen children's sequencing skills and vocabulary for time order by putting events from *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?* in order.

- Write each sentence from the book on a sentence strip. Place in random order in a pocket chart.
- Tell children that the story *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?* is all mixed up and needs to be put back together in the correct order.
- Have children place the sentence strips in order to retell the story. Look for opportunities to teach retelling strategies—for example, using the pictures in the book as sequencing clues. For additional sequencing support, color-code each sentence strip (by using the corresponding color marker or gluing a square of construction paper on the sentence strip) to match the characters' colors.
- Invite children to draw pictures of each character to match the sentence strips.
- Display the sentence strips and pictures as a learning center for children to use independently or with partners.

## **A Brown Bear Necklace (Language Arts, Art)**

Children love to make necklaces. Here's one they can make to help retell this favorite story.

- Cut tagboard into 3- by 3-inch squares. Each child will need 11 squares.
- On each square, have children draw an event/animal from the book. (They can write a number on the back of each square to correspond to the sequence of story events.)
- Punch a hole at the top of each square and have children string their pictures on yarn in the order they appear in the book. (A bead in between each square helps to make the necklace more attractive and easier to read and use.)
- Tie the yarn to secure.
- Children can use these necklaces to help retell the story, reinforcing sequencing and oral language skills!

## **Brown Bear Character Graph (Math, Language Arts)**

Use *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?* to explore characters and reinforce graphing skills.

- Invite children to name the characters in *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?* Use the names to set up a bar graph.
- Cut construction paper into squares. Choose colors that match those in the book (brown, red, yellow, blue, green, purple, white, black, and gold).
- Invite students to choose a construction paper square in the color that represents their favorite character. Have them write their name on the paper and place it on the graph in the appropriate section.
- When the graph is complete, stretch students' mathematical thinking by asking questions, such as "How many more people liked Red Bird than Purple Cat? Which character did our class like the most?"

## **Where Do You Live? What Do You See? (Language Arts, Social Studies)**

Use *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?* to begin a study about your community.

- Make or obtain a large map of the state (or city/town/county) where your students live. Take field trips and invite guest speakers into the classroom to learn more about your community and its focal points.
- Read aloud informational books and articles to help children learn more about their community. Discuss what makes your community special.
- After gathering information, fill in the map of the area, marking points of interest.
- Using interactive writing, create a class book about your community. Use *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?* as a model.
- Incorporate Brown Bear into your curriculum all year long. Start the year by making a book that features your new class, for example, “Kindergartners, Kindergartners, What Do You See?” Place a photo of a student on each page with a caption that follows the Brown Bear text pattern. (“Cole, Cole what do you see?” and on the next page “I see Emily looking at me.”) Continue this theme to support a study of the seasons (“Pumpkin, Pumpkin, What Do You See?”) and topics of special interest (“Penguin, Penguin, What Do You See?”).

- Part of Collection:

[Bill Martin Jr. Author Study](#)

- Subjects:

Charts and Graphs, Arts and Crafts, Plot, Character, Setting, Story Elements, Math through Literature, Colors, Early Math, Early Reading, Communities and Ways of Life, Environmental Print, Maps and Globes

- Skills:

Decoding Words, Print Awareness, Plot, Character and Setting, Sequence of Events, Charts and Graphs, Maps