

Picture book maths

Using picture books in mathematics enables...

...the introduction of a concept that may be trickier with other resources. For instance, 'The Hungry Caterpillar' by Eric Carle has a link to counting, sequencing numbers and addition of different amounts.

...mathematical thinking to develop from an early age. Picture books provide an opportunity to build on any concepts encountered in context – much as Maths is used in our daily lives. It is about making the connection between home and school. Story-time is that ideal time to share at home that makes reading relaxing and fun, so drawing this into school brings the focus of fun and relaxation into mathematics teaching even when children may think they are not mathematical.

The Very Hungry Caterpillar by Eric Carle

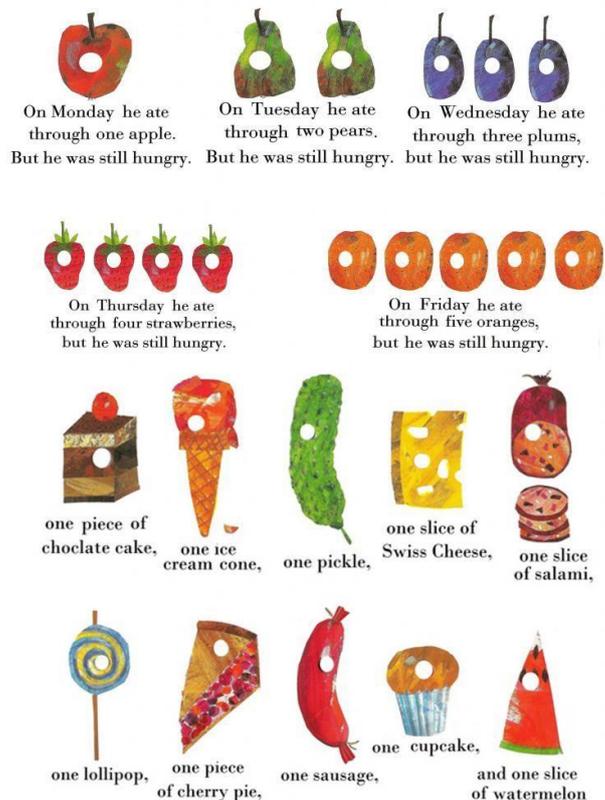
This book links counting with addition as well as looking at the days of the week. It is also a good source for looking at comparative sizes. For instance, what happens to the caterpillar as he eats the objects?

Numbers as labels for counting

Start reading and pause at each day of the week. Ask specific questions: How many of the different pieces of fruit has the caterpillar eaten? How many did the caterpillar eat on Wednesday etc...? Have pictures of each piece of fruit at the ready, (real pieces of fruit would be even better) which can be moved around by the children and linked to the days of the week. At each day of the week children can count the objects.

Calculating (adding/ taking away)

Counting then makes a connection with addition and also links to subtraction. How many pieces of fruit does the caterpillar eat on a Monday and Tuesday altogether? How many pieces of fruit does he eat altogether for the whole week? How many different pieces does he eat to make ten? For example he could eat fruit on a Monday through to Thursday to make ten. Is there any other way to make ten? The children could also make their own addition and subtraction calculations using fruit and other objects in the book.



Shapes, space, and measure

Display the days of the week and get the children to order them. What happens if we start at a Tuesday? What comes next? What comes after Thursday, Friday, and Saturday? Link the days of the week to the caterpillar and what he is eating. Can the children order the objects with the days of the week?