Teaching with *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?* by Bill Martin Jr. and Eric Carl
Using Felt-Board Finger Puppets to Raise the Level of Engagement

The book begins with the narrator asking "Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What do you see?". Brown Bear answers saying "I see a redbird looking at me." Then the narrator asks the redbird what he sees introducing the early learner with each turn of the page to a different color and a different animal. After a sequence of nine different colored animals, a mother is asked what she sees. And in an esteem building response, "I see beautiful children looking at me.", she brings the reader right into the sequence! The children, in turn, are asked what they see. This gives the reader(s) a built-in learning opportunity to repeat and sequence each colored animal. This exercise not only brings them right into a literary moment, but gives them one of their first “full circle experiences”. This active participation is further enhanced with the subtle and brilliant way the author and illustrator use different colored animals and a double page of multi-ethnic children to create a mental image of diversity for this impressionable age group. These reasons and the following suggestions make it obvious, why this literary gem, has remained at the very top of the stack of early childhood favorites.

**Need:** *Brown Bear, Yellow Duck, Green Frog, Blue Horse, Purple Cat, White Dog, Black Sheep, Gold Fish* finger puppets

**INFANT AND TODDLER:**
- The catchy, sing-song chant of this book is a perfect attention keeper for this age group. The rhythm and repetition is comforting.
- This book gives this age group one of their first encounters with two favorites, colors and animals.
- Presenting the color appropriate finger puppet as you read raises the level of engagement!

**PRESCHOOLER:**
- This book provides the perfect animal and color identification lesson!
- Simplistic, repetitive word patterns, give the preschooler a chance to match up the words said with the words read.
- Children love matching each finger puppet with each page and then again at the back of the book where all the animal characters are together.

**KINDERGARTENER:**
- Emergent readers enjoy this book as each repeated word becomes a permanent part of their reading vocabulary.
- Have each reader use the repetitive format to create his/her own pattern book.
- This age group enjoys the challenge of recalling the sequence.
- Have them take turns putting each finger puppet onto the felt board in the sequence presented in the book.

**OTHER SUGGESTIONS:**
- Use the repetitive word format to introduce children to one another on the first day of school.
- Use the repetitive word format to introduce children to all of the other senses: What do you hear? What do you smell? What do you feel? What do you taste?
- If reading in a classroom environment, use the class to represent the children and exchange the teacher for the mother. “Goldfish, goldfish, What do you see? “I see a teacher looking at me.” “Teacher, teacher, What do you see?” “I see all the beautiful children in my class looking at me.” “Class, class, What do you see?” The class all together recounts the sequence of animals either by memory, by prompt with the felt-board finger puppets on the felt board or by looking at the last page of the book ending with “a teacher looking at us. That’s what we see.”

---

Judy Woodworth ©2006