Using Baby Bear, Baby Bear, What Do You See? in the Classroom

Because the Bear books all have a similar structure you can use many of the activities and questions from the previous page with the other Bear books as well. Here are some more book specific suggestions:

In *Polar Bear, Polar Bear, What Do You Hear?* all the animals make different sounds. Ask your students to listen closely to the words Bill Martin, the author, used to describe the animal sounds and then ask them to make that sound.

*Panda Bear, Panda Bear, What Do You See?* features animals that are endangered or threatened species. Ask older students to choose an animal from the book and do some research about it. What is its natural habitat? Why is it in danger of becoming extinct?

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**BILL MARTIN JR.** an elementary-school principal, teacher, writer, and poet, held a doctoral degree in early childhood education. His many books, among them the bestselling classics *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?*, *Polar Bear, Polar Bear, What Do You Hear?*, *Panda Bear, Panda Bear, What Do You See?*, and *Chicka Chicka Boom Boom*, are a testament to his ability to speak directly to children.

**ERIC CARLE** was born in the United States, but spent his early years in Stuttgart, Germany. His many innovative books have earned him a place in the canon of classic children’s literature. *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?* was the first book he illustrated; he then went on to write and illustrate *The Very Hungry Caterpillar, The Very Busy Spider*, and *The Very Quiet Cricket*, as well as many other books for children. Mr. Carle works in a studio near his home in western Massachusetts.

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Read the first part of each new spread of the book that identifies the animal on that page. Ask your students how they know by looking what the animal is. What parts of the animal do they recognize? What is the animal doing that helps them to recognize it? Ask students to support their ideas with visual evidence from the pictures.

In some of the pictures we can see the animals in an environment (like the goat on rocks or the prairie dog digging in dirt). In pictures where an element of the environment is included ask students to describe it and make connections between what they see and what they know about the environment that animal lives in.

For pictures in which there is no environment depicted (like the flying squirrel or the blue heron) ask students what they know about the animal and where it lives. Then ask them to imagine the environment they might create for this animal. Eric Carle, the illustrator of this book, used very few clues to create the environment for the animals. Ask students what clues they would use.

Tell your students that Eric Carle creates animal images through collage—a process by which he pastes down paper in different shapes next to each other to form an animal. Before pasting the papers down on board, he paints them using tools like brushes, carpet or his fingers to create different textures. Tell students that texture is how something would feel if you could touch it. Ask students to look closely at the pictures and describe the textures they see. Ask older students if they can tell by looking how the texture was created. Have your students cut out different shapes and collage them into animals. Ask them to think about the shapes before they paste them onto the paper. What shape will make a good head for the animal they are making? What shapes will make good ears, etc.?

Each of the animals in the book is doing a different activity. Ask older students to come up with different verbs to describe what the animal might be doing (i.e. instead of “flying” the blue heron might be “soaring”).