

# Equity 8™

The gender-equity rating

## The Very Hungry Caterpillar (picture book)

Written and illustrated by Eric Carle, Copyright 1969

Rating: 0 out of 8 stars



Met criterion = 1

Did not meet criterion = 0

Egregiously did not meet criterion = - 1

What to look for	Example(s)	Rating	Explanation of rating and recommendations
<p><b>Did the author tell the entire story without mentioning gender? (Just by mentioning gender we communicate that it's someone's most important quality and activate stereotypes.)</b></p>	<p>No gendered words, such as she, he, girl, boy, mommy, daddy, etc.</p>	-1	<p>The author uses gendered pronouns excessively, and only for one gender. "He" is used 21 times, "himself" one time, and "his" one time.</p>
<p><b>Did the artist illustrate the entire story without contributing to gender stereotypes?</b></p>	<p>No pink, bows, or exaggerated eyelashes, etc. on girls. No blue, ball caps, etc. on boys, (Length of hair alone is not enough to exclude a book from this criterion. Authors often want/need to differentiate between characters. Hair is one way to do so that is less loaded with negative stereotyping.)</p>	1	<p>There are no gendered accessories on the caterpillar.</p>

<p><b>Is there counterstereotyping?</b> (Note: not mentioning gender counters stereotypes as it puts gender in the background.)</p>	<p><b>Are stereotypes challenged by showing the opposite?</b> Examples are showing a boy happily cuddling a baby or a girl swinging a bat with expert skill.</p>	0	<p><b>Not enough. Having a male be the main (and only) character of a book perpetuates stereotypes (that boys and men deserve the spotlight over girls and women).</b></p> <p>Calling a male butterfly “beautiful” is a small example of countering stereotypes.</p>
<p><b>Are characters with different gender representations interacting with mutual respect, skill, and admiration?</b> (Or are the characters neutrally drawn so we can create the above dynamic ourselves?)</p>	<p><b>Are girls and boys both shown using tools while building something? Do they smile at each other? Do they treat each other like a peer (and not an/a inferior or superior)?</b></p>	0	<p><b>There is only one caterpillar.</b></p>
<p><b>Does the girl character have agency?</b></p>	<p><b>Is her body shown in motion? Is she making something happen through her efforts? Can you see her straining her muscles in active movement?</b></p>	0	<p><b>No girl character.</b></p>
<p><b>Does the book’s story represent any of the Guiding Principles?</b></p>		0	

<i>Are girls the main characters or do they share the spotlight equally with boy characters?</i>		0	<i>No girl characters.</i>
<i>Is the writer and/or illustrator a woman?</i>		0	



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