

## 1 Overview

Walter is a very important man in his little town. That is until an unfortunate mishap one morning forces him to change his regular recipe causing an uproar. The duke and duchess give Walter an impossible ultimatum he must reach or be banished forever. Will Walter have to leave his home? Read this tale based on a true story to find out.

## 2 Author & Illustrator

Eric Carle was born in New York but moved with his family to Germany as a child where he went to school and graduated from art school there. He returned to America and worked at a newspaper in graphic designing and then in advertising as an art director before beginning his children's book illustrating career. *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?* a collaboration with Bill Martin Jr., was his first work in children's literature. He soon wrote as well as illustrated his own stories, all in his unique style. *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* was one of his first and his best-known works which has been translated into more than 50 languages and sold over 33 million copies worldwide.

Eric Carle's artwork is created in the collage technique using bright colors and is easily recognizable. The themes in his writings display his love of nature.

## 3 Before You Read

- Notice the red, white and blue pages at the beginning and ending of the book. This artwork is similar to stamping only with paint. See how the pattern repeats? What do you think he used to stamp the paint with?
- Remember the unique art style of Eric Carle.
- Look at the cover art together. Do you think the story takes place today or in past times? Why? Talk about breads. Do you like them? What kind is your favorite? Does a place that makes bread smell different than a place that sells flowers or a lumberyard? Recall different places and how they smell. Are the smells pleasant or stinky?

## 4 Vocabulary

- encircled** — surrounded by, circled around by
- duchy** — area ruled by a duke and dutchess
- tarts** — pastry that is crusty on top and filled with something sweet or savory (flavorful but not a sweet flavor)
- resist** — keep away from
- drifting** — floating on the wind
- Duke** — leader appointed by the king to rule a small portion of the kingdom
- Duchess** — wife of a Duke, she has special duties as well
- quince jelly** — jelly made from the fruit quince which is hard and sour with an orange flavor
- desperation** — hopelessness, nothing else can be done, to give up
- admitted** — said it was true
- banish** — made to leave
- trudged** — walked slowly with heavy feet and heavy heart
- in vain** — without success
- pray tell us** — please tell us

## 5 Picture Review & Comprehension

- Name the members of the family. (Walter, Anna, Walter, Jr.)
- When is a child given the name Jr.? (When his name is the same as his father's) \*

- Why was Walter so well-known?(He was the best baker in the whole duchy.)
- Why would a baker have to get up early to do his job? (Because people want bread in the morning and it takes a long time to make.)
- How is Walter cooking his baked goods? (In a brick oven above the fireplace.)\*
- Who tended the store selling the baked goods? (Anna, his wife)\*
- What was Walter Jr.'s job each day? (He carried the rolls to the Duke and Duchess in the castle.)\*
- How did the Duchess like to eat her roll? (with quince jelly)
- How did the Duke like to eat his roll? (with honey)\*
- What unfortunate event happened at the bakery? (The milk was tipped over.)
- How did Walter make do? (He improvised.)\*
- Could the Duke and Duchess tell that the rolls were different? (yes)\*
- How did they punish Walter? (They wanted him to leave the duchy forever.)
- Does this seem a reasonable or harsh punishment? \*
- What are the conditions of Walter's second chance? (He must invent a roll through which the rising sun can shine three times with one piece of dough by tomorrow and it must taste good.)\*
- How did Walter eventually produce a baked good to present to the Duke and Duchess? (Worked all day and night, beat, pulled, pushed and pounded the dough.)\* (He flung the last piece on the ceiling but it dropped into a bucket of water.)\*
- Describe Walter Jr. and Anna's contributions. (Walter rescued the dough from the water bucket before he dumped it and gave it to Anna who popped it in the oven.)\*
- how did Walter feel about his new invention before the Duke and Duchess tried it?(Pleased that he saw the morning sun shining through it 3 times but was afraid it might not taste good.)
- What was their reaction? (They loved it and were glad he would not have to be sent away.)
- Describe the verbal tangle that led to the name of the new baked good. (pra...pre...pretzel?)\*
- How were pretzels received in the town? (A cheer went up from the town.)\*
- What Latin word does the word pretzel come from. Why? (bracchium, "arm," based on an ancient position used for prayer)

## 6 After You Read

- Read what Eric Carle writes on the back cover about how he came up with the idea for this book. Discuss how many of the authors we have read read-alouds from have written about something from their lives whether it is a story told to them or from something they experience with their children. Great writers are storytellers! Think of something interesting that happened in your life recently. Get a buddy and take turns telling your story to each other.

## 7 Language Lesson

- Teach the term "main character." Ask who the book was mostly about. (Walter the Baker) Ask who the other people in the story were. (Anna, Duke and Duchess, Walter, Jr., Walter's cat) Walter was the main character because most of the book was about him. (A big clue to the main character of the book is the title!) Do this with some of the other stories we have read.

**HISTORY & CULTURE**

- Discuss the season of Lent as a period of sacrifice and penance in preparation for Easter. Identify important days during Lent and discuss the importance of each.
- Ash Wednesday (beginning of Lent; represents Christ's 40 days in the desert at the beginning of his ministry)
  - Palm Sunday (Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem on a donkey)
  - Holy Thursday (Maundy Thursday - the Last Supper, Jesus' washing of the disciples' feet, Gethsemane, Jesus' arrest)
  - Good Friday (Crucifixion)
  - Easter (Resurrection)

**SCIENCE**

- Walter made two different kinds of bread by varying his ingredients only slightly. What are common bread ingredients (flour, baking powder, eggs, salt, milk, yeast). What is the difference between leavened and unleavened bread that is referred to in the Bible? (Leavened bread contains yeast to make it rise fluffy. Yeast when mixed with a liquid like water or milk causes a chemical reaction. Unleavened does not contain yeast so it does not rise and get fluffy. It is more like a cracker.) When the Israelites were in the desert, they had no yeast to make their bread.
- Find a favorite bread recipe and make it.

**ART** *Peasant Wedding Feast*, 1567, by Pieter Bruegel (Renaissance), Oil on panel, Kunsthistorisches Museum – Vienna, Austria

**Pieter Bruegel** was known as the Greatest Netherlandish painter of the 16th century. Bruegel painted proverbs, landscapes, views of peasant life, and panoramic biblical scenes. Early in his career he studied art in Italy.

*Peasant Wedding Feast* was Bruegel's most famous and beloved work, revealing the artist's sympathy and affection for country folk.

**MUSIC**

"You're a Grand Old Flag" by George M. Cohen

**George M. Cohen** (July 3, 1878 - November 5, 1942) was born in Providence, Rhode Island, into a family of traveling entertainers. From a very young age, George, his sister, Josephine, and his parents were known as "The Four Cohens." They were very popular and traveled the country performing, singing, and dancing shows. Years of experience in show business as a musician, singer, dancer, producer, actor, and composer provided Cohen with a career he loved. In his life he wrote over 300 original songs, including "You're a Grand Old Flag," "I'm a Yankee Doodle Dandy," and "Over There."

President Franklin Delano Roosevelt presented Cohen with the Congressional Gold Medal for his patriotic songs, which contributed to the morale of the troops during World War I. There is an 8-foot-tall statue of Cohen in Times Square on Broadway – it is the only statue of an actor there. He has been inducted into the Songwriter's Hall of Fame and has a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

**POETRY**"The Elephant" by Arnold Sundgard (*Animals, Animals*, p. 30)

This descriptive poem tells of the positive attributes of a well-loved mammal. After reading once for pure enjoyment, read again listening for the rhyming pairs. Put these pairs on the board. Be sure to explain meaning of each word.

It is said elephants are afraid of mice. Can you make a rhyming couplet describing the elephant's fear of mice (a mouse)?

Copy this couplet into your *Composition and Sketchbook* and then illustrate.

