



# THE VERY LONELY FIREFLY

AUTHOR: ERIC CARLE

ILLUSTRATOR: ERIC CARLE

See a video of the book read aloud here: [The Very Lonely Firefly](#)

**\*\* REMEMBER: HAVE FUN AND THE KIDS WILL TOO! \*\***

## OVERVIEW

### ABOUT THE BOOK

This book is about belonging. The firefly is looking for other fireflies so she can become part of a group just like him. He makes many attempts to fly to where he sees some kind of light but does not find another firefly. Even when he follows the family driving towards the lights, he must be patient and wait to find what he is searching for – others fireflies!

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR/ILLUSTRATOR

Eric Carle was born in Syracuse, New York to German immigrant parents. When he was 6 years old, his family moved back to Germany. Eric was very unhappy in school in Germany since the teachers were very strict. He finally moved back to America when he was a young adult. He loved going on nature walks with his father and discovered all kinds of creatures in the forest. These creatures have become the main characters in many of his books. Eric uses colored tissue paper to make his illustrations. He tears the tissue paper into different sizes and shapes and then used all types of brushes to splash, splatter and fingerpaint acrylic paints onto the thin tissue paper. His style of collages is very distinct in all his books.

## THE READ ALOUD

### BEFORE READING

Use these prompts before reading the story to help students activate background knowledge and make predictions:

- What do you know about fireflies? Another name for them is lightning bugs.
- Why do you think this firefly is lonely?
- Do you see a difference between the firefly on the cover and the one on the title page? The cover has a light on its tail, the title page does not – I wonder why.

### DURING THE STORY

Use these prompts while reading the story to help students interpret the action and content:

- (p. 2) How do we know the sun is setting?
- (p. 3) Where do you think the firefly will go to find others like himself?
- (p. 6) The dad says “Hear that noise?” What do you think he is hearing?
- (p. 10) Dad says “Be quiet out there!” Who is he talking to?

## THE VERY LONELY FIREFLY

### TOPICS & THEMES:

- Family
- Friends
- Persistence
- Loneliness

### Tips for every book!

#### POWER PHRASES:

*I WONDER...*

*I NOTICE...*

*TELL ME MORE...*

#### DIGGING DEEPER:

*“Tell me more, why do you think that?”*

*“How do you know that?”*

*“Why do you think they feel like that?”*

*“Interesting, did you notice anything else?”*

- (p. 11) What kinds of light has the firefly has flown towards? (i.e. light bulb, candle, flashlight, lantern)
- (p. 12) The little girl says “Hey! Stop fighting!” Who do you think is fighting in the night?
- (p. 17) What do you think “their eyes were reflecting the lights” means?
- (p. 20) The family sees something beautiful ahead. What do you think that might be?
- (p. 24) Tell me what the firefly has been searching for.

## AFTER READING

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*Use these prompts after reading the story to help students understand what they just read:*

- What did you like best about this book?

## BRINGING THE BOOK TO LIFE!

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- Have you ever felt lonely? Tell me about that time and why you were lonely?
- The firefly kept flying toward the light to find others. What would you do to find others like you?

## COOPERATIVE LEARNING

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- Thumbs up if you thought the firefly would find others. (Reader: count thumbs up) Thumbs down if you thought it was too hard. Reader: count thumbs down). It seems more of you thought the firefly (Reader: *would or wouldn't*) find others.
- Why did you think he would be successful? Or why did you think he would fail?

## EXTENSION ACTIVITY

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- Using the picture on the cover as a guide, have the students tell you about the parts of a firefly's body (e.g. he has 1 nose, 2 eyes, 2 antenna, 4 wings, 6 legs, a brown tummy, and a light at the tip of his tail). As they describe each part, draw the firefly on the whiteboard/chalkboard.