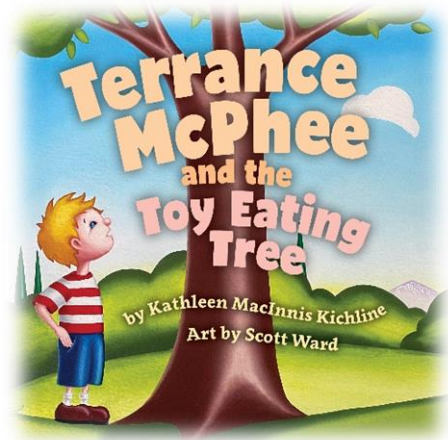


# Terrence McPhee and the Toy Eating Tree

By Kathleen MacInnis Kichline



## Educator Guide

*Summary of Story: Young Terrance McPhee launches his paper airplane from the top of a hill, only to have it soar off course and land in the limbs of a tree. Friend after friend comes to help free Terrance's plane from the clutches of the branches—first by hurling an action figure, followed by a gorilla toy, a basketball, and even a boomerang—but the tree seems to gobble each one up. Disappointed and out of options, they decide to do what kids do best and start to play! When exhausted they rest in the shade of the tree, the fun they have together prompts fond memories of their toys and the happiness they'd enjoyed. Then along comes the most unlikely of helpers, a butterfly! Toys are restored in a happy ending for all, but not until Terrance posts a sign to warn others about the Toy Eating Tree.*

### Vocabulary:

*Preview vocabulary words prior to reading, and / or discuss words post reading.*

- *Kerplunked*: the sound of something dropping
- *Namesake*: someone or something that has the same name as another person or thing
- *Blunder*: a silly or careless mistake

- *Boomerang*: a curved throwing stick originating from the native peoples of Australia
- *Tuckered*: very very tired
- *Pondered*: to think carefully and deeply about something
- *Skittered*: to glide or skip down.

#### Activity Suggestions:

- Coloring pages using art from the book
- See if you can find all the pages of the book that have a caterpillar. (Key at end of Resource Sheet) On what page does the caterpillar first appear? Can you find the page where the caterpillar is changing? Draw a picture of each of the three stages for this creature.
- Download the paper airplane from the book, print your own plane, fold it and fly it.

#### Connections to Curriculum:

##### Science / Nature

- *Butterfly Life Cycle*
- *Butterfly Effect* (interconnectedness of nature, sustainability, chaos theory)

##### English Language Arts

- *Figurative Language* - once students are familiar with the various figurative language devices, have them identify examples throughout the text (alliteration, simile, onomatopoeia). Discuss or write about the author's purpose of using each example of figurative language.
- *Rhyme Scheme* - have readers identify the rhyming pattern

Social Emotional Learning -see Discussion Questions below, and use to connect to lessons about topics such as:

- Growth mindset
- Believing in yourself
- Self-awareness

Discussion Questions: *Open-ended questions to spark conversation and critical thinking before, during and after reading.*

- Do all that you can / Take a break: How do you know which to do when?
- Who are the friends who lend you a hand when you need it? How do you help them?
- When you are feeling stuck and frustrated, what are some of the things that help you?
- Does it help you sometimes to stop what you are working on and play? How do you feel afterwards? Does it give you energy or wear you out? What are some good things about playing and how do you like to play?
- How does it change things to be grateful? Who or what are you grateful for?
- What do you trust in?
- The butterfly was a small and surprising hero in the story. Can small things sometimes make big changes happen?
- The caterpillar was there all along, even if we didn't notice. Do we always see the changes that are happening around us?
- The last page says, "The answer you are seeking is already in the making..." What do you think that means?
- You cannot make a butterfly show up when you want it to happen. But how can you help make a world where butterflies are more likely to come?

#### Author and Illustrator Information:

Kathleen Kichline has been reading to children since she was in fifth grade: her brother and sisters, then her own children, then her grandchildren. She believes children's stories are important. Not only do we learn a lot, but we can enjoy being together.

Scott Ward brings life to people, animals and landscapes with colors that are vibrant yet subtle, graceful lines, and careful attention to light and shadow. Each painting is infused with a light-hearted spirit and love of life that is self-expression for Scott.

#### Additional Resources:

Terrance McPhee Website: <https://terrancemcphree.com> - additional resources abound on the website

Butterfly organizations

[Monarch Watch](#) An education, conservation, and research program based at the University of Kansas that focuses on the monarch butterfly, its habitat, and its fall migration.

[Monarch Joint Venture](#) A national partnership that provides information and coordination for monarch conservation, education, and science.  
[education@monarchjointventure.org](mailto:education@monarchjointventure.org)

[North American Butterfly Association](#) A transnational wildlife conservation nonprofit working to create a world where butterflies thrive, for the benefit of nature and people.

[Save Our Monarchs](#) They have education programs for schools and children.

## Butterfly Effect

[https://kids.kiddle.co/Butterfly\\_effect](https://kids.kiddle.co/Butterfly_effect) - grades 5-7, downloadable pdf. Butterfly effect facts for kids

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mZv5xMIdaMo> - grades 3-4, Peekaboo kids, What is the butterfly effect? How can small changes lead to a big change?

[TEDx Talks Youth Butterfly Effect Emma Eades](#) - grades 5-6, Teen, Emma Eades, talks about how simple connections can change people's lives. One small change can make a very big difference, not just on others, but on our world.

- Caterpillar Key by opening lines on page:
  - With a gentle release.... (caterpillar in forefront)
  - "Cyrila to the rescue!" (small, at the base of the tree trunk)
  - They were staring and thinking... (left side of tree trunk, entering branches)
  - It skimmed past the plane... (small, below basketball, peeking into view from leaves)
  - "That's NOT the right spot!" (right of basketball, crawling on branch)
  - "Let's take a break," (far right of basketball)
  - They ran 'til their legs couldn't run anymore... CHRYSALLIS / PUPA (above and to left of basketball)
  
- Acknowledgement and thanks to Jenna White, educator, reading specialist