



# Get to Know Eric Carle!

Eric Carle has written over 40 books. Many of the books include animals, and most of his books revolve around the universal theme of FRIENDSHIP. Carle recently answered a few questions for Elf.

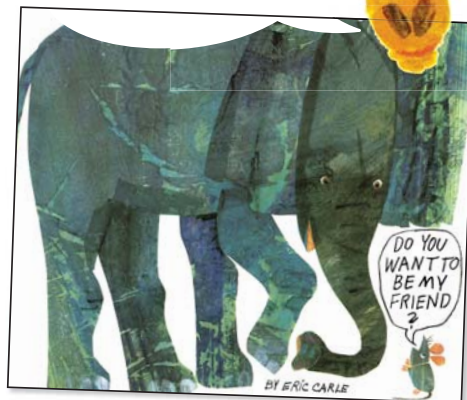
## Elf: What is your favourite book that you've written?

Eric Carle: *Do You Want to Be My Friend?* because it's about friendship.

## Elf: How did you come up with the idea to write *Do You Want to Be My Friend?*

EC: I worked on *Do You Want to Be My Friend?* for over two years. One day I worked on it joyously, but the next day I would have doubts about my story. Then the idea got put away. Two months later, I'd fiddle with it again. And so it went for almost two years.

I had abandoned it when my editor visited. She saw it and declared it wonderful. Encouraged, I finished the illustrations over the next weekend. I guess you could say, a friend helped me end it!



## Elf: There aren't many words in *Do You Want to Be My Friend?* How do you imagine the story goes?

EC: The story is meant to be improvised by the imagination of children.

When I tell the story I begin with something like this: "Little Mouse was lonely.

He wanted a friend to play with. 'Do you want to be my friend?' he asked

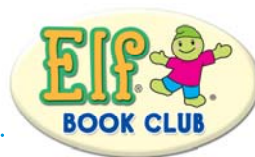
the horse. But the horse was so busy eating he did not seem

to hear Little Mouse at all. 'Never mind,' said Little Mouse to himself.

'I see a long, green tail over there. Perhaps it belongs to someone who will be my friend.' But that tail belonged to an alligator, who was not at all friendly. And the next belonged to a lion. And the next..."

## Elf: Do you like letters from children?

EC: I treasure every letter, e-mail, artwork, photograph from children, parents, teachers, librarians, and others. At times I am overwhelmed by the love that flows from so many of you to me.



Tell Eric Carle you want to be his friend by visiting his guestbook online at [www.eric-carle.com](http://www.eric-carle.com)!