The Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy and Raising Readers are pleased to present the
2012 Literacy Explorer Kits

Each Literacy Explorer Kit provides theme activities for the 2012 Raising Readers Collection, and the kits include the following:

- General Reading Tips and Developmental Information for the different age groups.
- A Playgroup Map that contains: discussion activities, literacy extensions, craft and snack ideas, and parent education tips. Some include science and math ideas that relate to the book.
- Parent and Child Together Time Idea Sheets that assist parents in extending the learning from the playgroup. The PACT sheet provides simple ideas for families to do together around the book, such as craft ideas and songs to sing together.
- An Explorer Bag Information Sheet lists items that can be placed in a take home “Explorer Bag” for families.
- A Journal Sheet for the parent. They can reflect on the activities they did with their child. A portion of the journal sheet is for the Family Literacy Provider to “write back” to the parent.
- Reference and Resource List

Family Literacy Providers can determine which activities will work best with their families. All activities should be supervised by a parent or caregiver. Most Playgroup Maps have activities for more than one playgroup. Each Playgroup Map has activities that match the Age Milestone listed by the book on the Raising Readers’ Book List. Groups Newborn through 18 Months also have ideas for the general preschool age.

Happy Reading and Playing!
# Raising Readers Book List 2012

 Celebrating 12 years and over 1.7 million books given to children in Maine. For more information call 1-800-397-3263 or visit [www.raisingreaders.org](http://www.raisingreaders.org)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>newborn</th>
<th>9 months</th>
<th>2 years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Book!</em> Kristine O’Connell George</td>
<td><em>Animals (My Little Carry Me Books)</em> DK Publishing</td>
<td><em>I Can Help</em> David Hyde Costello</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Time For Bed</em> Mem Fox</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Chunky Books</em> – 4 pack Priddy Books</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2 months</th>
<th>12 months</th>
<th>3 years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Hip Hop</em> Catherine Hnatov</td>
<td><em>Hop a Little, Jump a Little!</em> Annie Kubler</td>
<td><em>For Just One Day</em> Laura Leuck</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4 months</th>
<th>15 months</th>
<th>4 years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Quack Quack, Maisy</em> Lucy Cousins</td>
<td><em>Who Hoo Are You?</em> Kate Endle</td>
<td><em>Homer, the Library Cat</em> Reeve Lindbergh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>6 months</th>
<th>18 months</th>
<th>5 years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Baby Faces</em> DK Publishing</td>
<td><em>Who’s in the Forest?</em> Phyllis Gershator</td>
<td><em>Maine Stories for Maine Children: A Raising Readers Collection</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Create a bridge between the literacy materials in your program and the books children have in their homes.
Purchase a copy of each of the RR books for your program. Experiencing the same book in the home and in your family literacy program multiplies its impact. Teach parents why they should read to their children daily and model how to engage their children with books. Provide parents with supplemental activities that they can do at home with each of the books. You may also find some of these books at your local library.

Use information from the Early Literacy Calendar in your parenting classes.
Many of the children in your program will have these books at home and this information will help parents understand how to enjoy the books with their kids.

Incorporate the books and related activities into your Interactive Literacy Activities.
Many RR books include activities linked to the book that you can use in the program. These are located in the back of the book. Developed with the staff at Maine Roads to Quality, the activities support Maine’s Infant Toddler and Preschool Learning Guidelines. Activities for additional books used in the program are available on the website.

Use the RR Topics Brochure for recommendations on books that deal with common childhood issues.
Available on the website, the Topics Brochure provides lists of children’s books on sibling rivalry, loss/grief, toilet training, etc. These books might be helpful as a reference for parents in your program or as an introduction on how parents can use literacy materials to address common childhood issues.

Use the RR website for read aloud tips, parent handouts, and as a resource for early literacy skills.
This kit includes the following:

- **General Reading Tips & Developmental Information**
  (Place a copy in “Explorer Bags”)

- **Playgroup Map - Theme Related Activities**

- **Parent and Child Together Time Ideas**
  (Place a copy in “Explorer Bags” with needed supplies)

- **Explorer Bag Information Sheet**
  (Place a copy in “Explorer Bags”)

*Animals (My Little Carry Me Books) DK Publishing*

A Collaboration of the Barbara Bush Foundation & Raising Readers
PC 2013
General Reading Tips & Developmental Information

General Reading Tips:
✓ It's never too early to read to your baby. It is a great time to cuddle and bond.
✓ Reading helps build vocabulary and stimulates a child’s imagination. It also helps improve his/her communication skills.
✓ Infants should be exposed to language rich environments. Language skills are related to how many words a baby hears each day.
✓ Babies love to “mouth” books, so heavy duty board books are best for babies.
✓ Babies love to hear singing, so look for books with rhythm and nursery rhymes.

For your Nine-Month-Old:
✓ Read aloud for a few minutes at a time. It’s okay to stop when your baby wants to stop reading.
✓ Board books with different, bright colors will be interesting to them. Choose books with different designs and patterns.
✓ Sing to your baby! They love to hear your voice rhyming a nursery rhyme or lullaby.
✓ Babies start to understand that pictures are objects. They will start to have favorite pictures, pages, and, as they approach 12 months, favorite books!
✓ Don’t worry about reading the story perfectly. Stop and ask questions or point out pictures.
✓ Encourage your baby to hold the book. He/she may be turning pages by the time he/she is 12 months old!

Developmental Milestones You May Notice:
✓ Enjoys imitating people, prefers certain toys and people. (Your baby may be shy and anxious with strangers).
✓ Imitates gestures and likes interactive games like peek-a-boo and patty cake.
✓ Explores objects in different ways: mouthing, banging, dropping.
✓ Starts to develop depth perception and knows objects exist even when out of sight.
**Playgroup Map**

*Animals (My Little Carry Me Books)* DK Publishing

---

### Read the Book:

- Toddlers will love *animals* from DK Publishing’s series “My Little Carry Books.” There is an easy handle on the side of the book that will allow a small hand to easily grasp the book and carry it around. It’s a perfect book for a book adventure (see Literacy Explorer Kit Newborn 2013).
- The text rhymes and each page features a different animal with rhyming text describing the animal. In addition, the pages are decorated to match the animal’s habitat. An elephant is surrounded by splashes of water, and the tortoise creeps through grass.
- The book is interactive. Children can point to the animals and mimic the noise they make or their action. One page states, “Here are three friendly pets. Let’s pat each one!”

### Literacy Extensions:

- Rhyming games are fun to play during circle time. Have the families form a circle and find a soft ball for this game. Choose a word to rhyme with, such as “hat.” Toss the ball to a parent and child. Whoever gets the ball must now say a word that rhymes like “cat.” Continue tossing the ball around. Older children can try to rhyme with their names.
- Collect different objects from the playroom that would be easy to describe, such as a shiny mirror, rough block, soft teddy bear. Pass the object around the circle and ask parents to say (or help their older child) choose one word to describe the object. Explain to them that they are using adjectives, words that describe a person, place, thing, or idea. After each person describes their item sort the items using a common theme. For example, “Let’s put all of the soft things together, let’s do a pile for hard items.” Sorting/classifying/categorizing is described in more detail in the Science and Parent Education section.

### Literacy Craft:

- Some of the animal pictures show the animal in grass or water. (See tortoise, duck, and tiger). Parents and children will have fun creating an animal scene with “grass” and “water.” They can “hide” animals under the grass and water too for an animal hunt!
  - Provide families with a large sheet of heavy paper, construction paper, crayons, glue, scissors, and animal templates (or coloring pages or magazines to cut from).
  - Families should choose animals they want in their picture and decide if the animals will be in water or grass.
  - Cut and paste the animals on the large paper (anywhere the child would like). “Cover” part of the paper with “water” or “grass.” To do this, cut a long strip of colored construction paper and put glue on the bottom of the large sheet to create a “strip” of glue. Glue the colored paper to the bottom of the large paper, so that the top part of the colored paper is loose and can be cut. Cut the paper to resemble grass or water. For grass, cut in and down into the paper to create strips and you may want to cut small...
pieces of paper out. For water, cut smoothly to create rounded edges and you may want to cut “circles” of water to place on the large sheet. The book models this idea so remind parents to look at the pictures with their child for ideas.

**Science:**

- You might want to have a conversation about the different animals in the book and what their habitat is. For example, “Oh, I see the tortoise is in the grass and the duck is in the water. Do the animals have different habitats? I wonder what is different about their body parts…hmmm, well the duck has webbed feet, so that must help the duck swim.”
- After having this discussion take families outside for a nature hunt – the focus habitats! (Explain to them that a habitat is the environment something lives in). Provide each family with a lunch size paper bag. Have them collect items that they think an animal might use/need for their habitat. For example, twigs for birds, acorns for squirrels, etc.
- After the hunt have families gather to share their items and why they chose them. Talk about categorizing items. How would they categorize them? Is the item hard, soft? Would the animal use it for food or shelter? Make a connection – what do they (the family) use for shelter and eat for food? Connections are very important to learning! See the “Reading Strategy” Section. You might want to use the “Let’s Categorize” Chart provided in this kit.
- You have just discussed items and described how they feel and their purpose. Now…Set Up a Texture Station!
  - Take a large piece of cardboard that you can place on the wall (toddler level) or lay it on the floor.
  - Create sections for different textures:
    - Packing bubbles, foil, fur, felt, sandpaper.
    - Make sure items are safe for children to touch and secured to cardboard.
    - Have families visit the station. Model questions, “Which is the softest? Do you think this feels rough or smooth?”

**Parent Education:**

- Conversations are important for parents to have with children. If you have completed some of the activities from the Literacy Extension or Science section, you will see that much of it is conversation based. Now, have a conversation with parents on why it is important. Lead a discussion on what types of conversations they have with their child. Do they talk with their child while changing their diaper, preparing food, or organizing for the next day? Families who converse a lot have strong “literacy rich” households, and focusing on being “literacy rich” is a great goal for a new parent to your program!
- **Reading Strategy:** Categorizing is a strategy that encourages the reader to group items, themes, and ideas according to commonalities. This strategy helps a reader see patterns, look for common ideas, and encourages them to organize information. Once a reader understands how to categorize information they can add new information and make new connections to the text. Parents do this with their child when they
“sort” with them. Simple activities like sorting toys by type, socks by colors, etc. help children make connections to patterns and their life. Parents can apply this to their reading by grouping common ideas while they read. For example, if they are reading an article on sleep patterns for babies, they might want to group information they read by age, pattern, or ideas that directly benefit them. They can do this by taking notes freestyle or in a chart you provide for them.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Snack:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| • Animal Snacks:  
  o Provide parents with fruits (bananas, sliced apples, grapes), vegetables (celery, shredded carrots), peanut butter, Craisons/raisins, pretzels, and other items that you think would be great to make “snack” animals.  
  o Show them how to make “Ants on a Log” by spreading peanut butter on celery and putting raisins on top of the peanut butter.  
  o What can they create using the items you provide?  
| • In addition, choose a variety of healthy snacks for all ages of the playgroup. Model healthy snack choices and talk about options for different ages.  
| • Gather round – have a spot for everyone. Parents with newborns can be a part of snack time, too!  
| • Simple snack ideas: cut up bananas, soft crackers and yogurt. |
Let's Categorize!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Feels like...</th>
<th>Smells like...</th>
<th>Sounds like...</th>
<th>Purpose?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Are there any patterns in the above items? Similarities?
Parent and Child Together Time Ideas

Animals (My Little Carry Me Books) DK Publishing

READ THE BOOK:

- Your child will love to bring animals (My Little Carry Books) along for any trip. It has a small handle, so that your child can easily carry it.
- The book features all different types of animals – including a favorite – baby animals!
- Notice that some of the words in the book are in dark, bold print. You may want to emphasize those words when reading. For example, whisper the words in regular print and say the bolded words louder.
- Babies love it when their parent changes their voice when they read them stories!

LET’S SORT!

- Place three baskets or boxes in a room. (Laundry baskets, boxes or you can use three different parts of a room, such as, floor, couch, chair, etc.)
- Ask your child what types of items they would like to gather? Toys, stuffed animals, clothes, items from the kitchen?
- Decide how you will sort the items - by color, shape, feel?
- Sort the items into the three different areas and talk about why you put each item in the chosen spot.
- To make this into a very simple activity sort just socks, blocks, books by size, etc.

A Collaboration of the Barbara Bush Foundation & Raising Readers
PC 2013
This Explorer Bag Contains the Following:

- Reading Tips & Developmental Information For Your 9-Month-Old.
- Parent and Child Together Time (PACT) Idea Sheet
- Journal Activity Sheet
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>JOURNAL – <em>Animals (My Little Carry Me Books)</em> DK Publishing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Does your child have a favorite animal? Is that animal in the book?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What did your child want to sort when you did the sorting activity from the PACT idea sheet?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did you try to read the book using different voices and making the bolded words louder? How did your child react?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I'll write back to you here...
References

Armbruster, Lehr, and Osborn (2006), *A Child Becomes a Reader*, National Institute for Literacy, RMC Research Corporation, Portsmouth, NH


Manoloson, Ward, and Dodington (2007), *You Make The Difference*, The Hanen Centre Toronto, ON Canada


National Center for Family Literacy and Snuggle (2002), *Reading Through The Years*, Gruner+Jahr Publishing, USA

National Center for Family Literacy (2009), *What Works – An Introductory Teacher Guide for Early Language and Emergent Literacy Instruction*, Based on the National Early Literacy Panel Report, Louisville, KY

Reading to Your Baby (n.d.), from babycare.com retrieved August 4, 2011 from http://www.babycare.com/0_reading-to-your-baby_368.bc

Resources

American Academy of Pediatrics
www.healthychildren.org

Baby Center
www.babycenter.com

Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy
www.barbarabushfoundation.com

Everything Preschool – Early Childhood Education Made Easy
www.everythingpreschool.com

Medline Plus
www.nlm.nih.gov

Preschool Education
www.preschooleducation.com

Scholastic
www.scholastic.com

Songs for Teaching
www.songsforteaching.com

The Perpetual Preschool
www.perpetualpreschool.com

What To Expect
www.whattotoexpect.com