The Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy and Maine’s 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!
# 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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Newborn</th>
<th>9 months</th>
<th>2 years</th>
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<tr>
<td>Book! Kristine O'Connell George</td>
<td>Animals (My Little Carry Me Books) DK Publishing</td>
<td>I Can Help David Hyde Costello</td>
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<tr>
<td>Time For Bed Mem Fox</td>
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<td>Chunky Books – 4 pack Priddy Books</td>
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<td>2 months</td>
<td>12 months</td>
<td>3 years</td>
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<td>Hip, Hop Catherine Hnatov</td>
<td>Hop a Little, Jump a Little! Annie Kubler</td>
<td>For Just One Day Laura Leuck</td>
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<td>4 months</td>
<td>15 months</td>
<td>4 years</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quack Quack, Maisy Lucy Cousins</td>
<td>Who Hoo Are You? Kate Endle</td>
<td>Homer, the Library Cat Reeve Lindbergh</td>
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<tr>
<td>6 months</td>
<td>18 months</td>
<td>5 years</td>
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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.
I Can Help by David Hyde Costello

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”)
General Reading Tips & Developmental Information

General Reading Tips:
- Find a time to read every day. Bedtime is a great time to read - it will help your child relax before bed.
- Cuddle Up! This is the time to get cozy.
- Be Silly! Be Funny! Use Sound Effects!
- Read it - Again and Again and Again...Children love to read the same book more than once.
- Follow your child’s lead; let him/her set the pace.
- Talk about what you read: What do you think will happen next?

For Your Two Year Old:
- Keep books simple. Find interactive books, like Pat the Bunny
- Ask questions while you read, like “What do you think will happen next? Or “What is this? It’s a bunny!”
- Squirming away or pushing the book away are clues that they want to move to a different activity.
- Your child will probably want to pick out the book and turn the pages. They will like to hunt for their favorite picture!

Developmental Milestones You May Notice:
- Builds tower of four blocks or more
- Begins to sort by shapes and colors
- Scribbles spontaneously
- Points to object or picture when named for him
- Uses simple phrases
- Demonstrates increasing independence
**Read the Book:**

- *I Can Help* is a book that will generate a conversation on helping, caring for others, and friendship.
- What do readers notice on the title/author page? Study the picture…and look at the facial expressions on the ducks. Do the children notice anything? Our little duck “adventurer” has a big smile on his face as he heads off to explore. A sibling watches him leave with an expression of concern while mama duck tends to another duckling.
- After you read the book, have the children find the ducks in the grass on the last page. Ask the children, “what do they think will happen next?” Encourage them to use their imaginations…it doesn’t have to just be that his mama duck hugs him. Maybe after they reunite, they all take a ride on the other animals. Imaginative conversations are important. They make guessing “what is next” fun for the reader, and we want readers to make predictions.

**Literacy Extensions:**

- After you read the book, have the families (children) share what they do to help at playgroup and/or home. Have they seen other children being helpers? You might want to model the activity by saying, “I noticed this morning that Sam helped pick up the block area before story time, and Sam’s mom helped me put out the carpet squares. That really helped me – thank you!”
- Sing this fun song to celebrate “helpers” at clean up time and throughout the day!

  **I’m a Helper, I’m a Helper**
  **Yes, I am. Yes, I am.**
  **See me help clean up, See me help clean up.**
  **We’re all friends, We’re all friends.**
  (sing to the tune of Frere Jacques)
- Play some games that incorporate everyone working together to complete a task. For example, for older children gather large towels (beach towels work great). Place children in pairs. Give each pair two towels. They will stand on one towel and hold the other towel in their hands. When you say “go,” they need to place the towel they are holding on the ground in front of them and step on it together. Then, they turn around pick up the towel on the ground behind them and place it in front of them to step on. They keep turning, picking up the towel behind them and placing it in front of them to create a “path” to the finish line. They need to communicate with each other to quickly move through this game. Many times, older children will figure out that if they place the towel lengthwise in front of them they can cover more distance.
- You might want to share a new “incentive” activity after reading this
For example, older children might enjoy a “marble jar.” Assign a number of marbles for different activities. 10 marbles = helping a friend 15 marbles = lining up quietly to go outside, 20 marbles = the class receiving a compliment on their behavior from another childcare giver. When the marble jar is full, they earn an activity or “party.” See the math section for a follow up activity to the marble jar!

- Of course, keep in mind that this book was selected for age two readers, so remember to celebrate the animals in the book! Point to the animals; try to make the “noise” or movement they make. Point to the repetitive text while reading, moving your finger left to right and emphasizing “Thank you!” Soon, even the younger children will be trying to say “thank you” with you. Also, ask the children what the animals are doing in the picture. The author/illustrator SHOWS us how they are helping, but does not tell us. For example, how does the gorilla help the giraffe? He swings on the tree to bring the branch down, so the giraffe can nibble on a leaf.

**Literacy Craft:**

- Circle of Life Activity: The “circle of life” concept is that all living things rely on each other to live and thrive. Introduce this concept to young children by using the book, *I Can Help*. The animals had help when lost, they needed food, etc. They relied on each other and helped each other.
  - Provide each family with a piece of cardboard that is at least a 14 x 14 square. (You may want to prepare the cardboard prior to playgroup.) Have the parents cut the square into a “ring” – a large circle and then cut out a circle in the center to make a wreath.
  - Provide families with all of the animals that were in the story *I Can Help*. Children can color, cut, and glue the animals onto the wreath. Older children might want to study the pictures and place the animals on the circle in a pattern that follows their appearance in the story.
  - Need some background music? Play the song “The Circle of Life” from the Disney movie, “The Lion King”.

- Community Helpers – Memory Game:
  - Complete this craft at playgroup so that parents can do this activity listed in the PACT Idea sheet. Make sure you model for parents how to play the game “memory.” Never assume that families know how to play games that you consider common.
  - Provide pictures of helpers the children might see in the community: police and fire personnel, nurse/doctor, veterinarian, teacher, and so on. Have the pictures printed on heavy cardstock. Have children color and cut the pictures into squares/rectangles. (to make matching cards)
  - Next, give them pictures of things these “helpers” might do, a book for a teacher, brushing a cat for a veterinarian, helping with a fire for a fire person, and so. They can color and cut the
pictures into squares/rectangles.

- Families can match up the activity with the helper and older children can use the cards for a game of memory.

**Math:**

- If you have decided to use the “marble jar” as a classroom incentive, you can incorporate math. When the jar is almost full, ask children to start guessing how many marbles are in the jar? Incorporate estimating with the children and discuss ways they could make their “best guesses.” You can also have a conversation about how many “good deeds” they think filled the jar…. list the different categories and use tally marks to count how many times they think they filled the marble jar with that category. Once the jar is full, collect everyone’s best guess for the number of marbles in the jar.
- Now, get ready, get set, roll….carefully roll the marbles out on the floor (have the children form a circle around the marbles). You can count the marbles in one large group or older children can break into larger groups. Have a conversation about the best methods to count the marbles: will they count by a certain number 2s or 5s, will they use the tally and/or grouping method?
- To extend this activity, ask the children what else they would like to gather to count.

**Science:**

- On the left side of the chart, list the animals in the book. On the right side of the chart, list who they helped and how they helped the animal.
- Once all of the information is listed, do the children notice a pattern? When an animal helped someone else, they received a thank you. The animal, who was helped, passed on that happy, caring feeling by helping another animal.
- Charts are great for organizing information, and simple charts are fun to use with older preschoolers. They might like to put a picture of the animal on the chart instead of writing their name.

**Parent Education:**

- How do we teach children to help one another, help within the family, and be aware that they are part of a larger community and the world? Have conversations with parents about how they model helping and how their children help at home. Do they talk to their child about how they are helpers? For example, “Abby, that really helped me when you picked up the toys with me. Now, we have more time to play outside.”
- Brainstorm with parents ways that they can encourage their child to be helpers and ways that they can model helping.

**Reading Strategy:** One reading myth is that in order to understand everything you read, a reader must read every word in the textbook, article, novel, etc. Teach readers that they need to understand their “purpose for reading” in order to determine if they need to read each section or if it is okay to skim sections. If a reader is looking for specific information, they may want to skim the text looking for
headings or bolded words that connect to what they are looking for. Once they have located their specific information, they can read in detail and apply other strategies as needed. To model this activity, gather articles on how children can be “helpers” and look for chapters in books on this topic. Encourage families to “skim” the articles and “survey” the books to look for the assigned topic. They may want to narrow their topic down by only searching for information that applies to the age of their child.

**Snack:**

- Friendship Fruit Salad:
  - Put the names of fruit salad ingredients (bananas, watermelon, blueberries) on different pieces of paper.
  - Have each family select one piece of paper and bring the fruit to playgroup.
  - Mix the fruits together and you have Friendship Fruit Salad.
  - Supply the fruit if you feel your families do not have the funds to purchase them. The family draws the piece of paper and that is the fruit they prepare for the fruit salad.
- 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.
# Animals Helping Animals...

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Animal</th>
<th>Who did they help?</th>
<th>How did they help?</th>
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Read the book:

- *I Can Help* is a book that shows safari animals helping each other. Point and name the animals on each page. What noise does the animal make? Do you know all of the animal noises? You can make up a noise for the giraffes - use your imagination!
- What are the animals doing on each page? Talk about the pictures with your child. Show them how the animals are helping each other. Emphasize the words “thank you” when you read the story to them.

Helper match up:

- During playgroup, you color and cut out cards with your child that showed helpers in your community and what they might do to help. You should have a set of “helper” cards. Now, you need to make two more sets to add to your cards.
- Make “helper” cards for you and your child. Use extra photos or make a simple drawing of each of you on the provided cardstock. Now, talk with your child about how they help you. Do they sort socks? Pick up toys? Make a matching card: draw a sock or cut out a picture of toys from a magazine.
- Have fun playing the matching and memory games you played during playgroup.
- Shuffle and mix the cards, lay them face up and see if your child can match the helper and the activity.
- If your child is older play the “memory” game with them that you learned at playgroup.
SING THIS SONG:

- You may have sung this song at playgroup. Sing it to the tune of “Frere Jacques“:

  I’m a Helper, I’m a Helper
  Yes, I am. Yes, I am.
  See me help clean up, See me help clean up.
  We’re all friends, We’re all friends.
This Explorer Bag Contains the Following:

- Reading Tips & Developmental Information For Your 2 Year Old
- Parent and Child Together Time (PACT) Idea Sheet
- Supplies You Will Need For PACT Ideas:
  - Helper cards made at playgroup
  - Two pieces of cardstock precut into squares or rectangles that match the set made at playgroup
  - Crayons, glue stick, markers
- Journal Activity Sheet
Did you and your child talk about the pictures in this book? How did he/she describe how the animals were helping?

Do you practice “manners” in your house, teaching your child to say “please” and “thank you?” How do you do that?

Do you think you model helping for your child – in your home, school, community?
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

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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.whatttoexpect.com