The Maine Family Literacy Initiative and Raising Readers are pleased to present the 2011 “Literacy Explorer Kits”

Each Literacy Explorer Kit provides theme activities for the 2011 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 2011

Celebrating 11 years and over 1.5 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><strong>Baby Bear’s Books</strong>&lt;br&gt;Melissa Sweet</td>
<td><strong>Peek-a-Boo What?</strong>&lt;br&gt;Begin Smart</td>
<td><strong>Pouch!</strong>&lt;br&gt;David Ezra Stein</td>
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<td><strong>What Does Baby See?</strong>&lt;br&gt;Begin Smart</td>
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<td><strong>Vroom Vroom Maisy</strong>&lt;br&gt;Lucy Cousins</td>
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<td><strong>2 months</strong></td>
<td><strong>Look at That!</strong>&lt;br&gt;Guido Van Genechten</td>
<td><strong>The Seals on the Bus</strong>&lt;br&gt;Lenny Hort</td>
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<td><strong>4 months</strong></td>
<td><strong>Knees and Toes</strong>&lt;br&gt;Rookie Toddler</td>
<td><strong>Kiss the Cow!</strong>&lt;br&gt;Phyllis Root</td>
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<td><strong>6 months</strong></td>
<td><strong>Meeow and the Little Chairs</strong>&lt;br&gt;Sebastien Braun</td>
<td><strong>Raising Readers: A Treasury of Tales from Maine</strong></td>
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### Ages:
- Newborn
- 2 months
- 4 months
- 6 months
- 9 months
- 12 months
- 15 months
- 18 months
- 2 years
- 3 years
- 4 years
- 5 years
Raising Readers & Family Literacy

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.
The Seals on the Bus by Lenny Hort

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”)

A Collaboration of the Maine Family Literacy Initiative & Raising Readers
Pamela Cote 2012
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? What would you have done if you were that character?

For your Three Year Old:
✓ Ask questions while you read
✓ Look for patterns and rhymes
✓ Sing the story
✓ Trace the letters and “search” for letters while reading
✓ Make Sound Affects – Act it Out – Get SILLY!

Developmental Milestones You May Notice:
✓ Names colors and may know some numbers
✓ Recalls parts of a story
✓ Paints or draws circles and squares
✓ Uses 3-4 word sentences
✓ Asks Why?

A Collaboration of the Maine Family Literacy Initiative & Raising Readers
### Read the Book:

- *The Seals on the Bus* is a silly rewrite of the song, “The Wheels on the Bus”. In this story, different animals climb aboard the bus for a ride to a party where “everyone is invited.” The human passengers become concerned when seals, vipers, sheep, and other creatures arrive!
- Read the book at circle time making sure that you emphasize the silly sounds the animals make. You might want to have the children guess what sound each animal will make as they arrive on the bus. Read the book a second time, inviting families to join in on the noise making.

### Literacy Extensions:

- Play “Red Light, Green Light” with the families. Cut out a large circle of red and green construction paper. Attach each circle to a dowel or paint stirrer. Have the families line up. They walk towards you when you hold up the green circle and stop with the red circle. The first family to touch you wins the round. Adapt this game by incorporating the animals from the book. Can they roar like lions? Can they slither like snakes?
- Children love to make “chalk” roads in warm weather. Set up a chalk road outside and let children explore by imitating the animals from the book. You can also play “Red Light, Green Light” outside on your road.
- Share the song “The Wheels on the Bus”. Tell the families, “Let’s sing another song about a bus.” See if they notice the connection. See song sheet in PACT Idea section.
- What is the seal carrying on the bus? A beach ball. Form one large circle or a few smaller circles. Provide each group with a beach ball. Play energizing music and see which group can keep their ball “afloat” the longest. A variation of this is to have them start a pattern of who “taps” the ball first, second, third, and so on. The group keeps repeating the patter until the ball is dropped.

### Literacy Craft:

- **Stick Puppets!**
  - For this craft you will need paint stirrers, construction paper, felt, yarn, googly eyes, markers or crayons.
  - Have children pick a character from the book (or as many characters as they would like).
  - Using felt and construction paper create the character from the book at the top of the stirrer. Crayons and markers can be used to decorate the stirrer.
  - Children should bring their stick puppets to an additional reading of *The Seals on the Bus*. Have them hold up their puppets and make the motions and noises while you read the book.
- There are two literacy crafts listed on the PACT idea take home sheet.
that you may want to start at Playgroup.

**Science & Math:**

- “Machines in Motion” is a concept that can be introduced to preschoolers to help them develop their critical thinking skills for kindergarten. Help children create this simple “machine”
  - You will need two jar lids of the same size, clay, and a drinking straw. Tell the children that they need to stick the clay to the lid and the straw, so that the straw will connect the two lids. Show younger children a model and assist them. Encourage older children to explore their supplies with just a few instructions at a time to see if they can create this on their own. Once assembled this “jar roller” should roll on its own.
- What numeracy activities can parents do with their child after their first reading of this book? Count how many different animals enter the bus. How many total animals are on the bus at one time? How many humans? If the children made the character stick puppets, have them group the puppets to help with their counting.

**Parent Education:**

- Preschoolers sometimes struggle with motion and speed. When do they move fast? When do they move slow? Helping parents understand this will help them interact with their child positively during a time when they need their child to slow down or speed up. Have a conversation and encourage them to play this game:
  - Play freeze dance…first put on some fast music and ask children to break out their “fast dance moves.” Slow the music down for “slow dance moves.”
  - Practice walking and moving like the animals featured in *The Seals on the Bus*. Who moves fast? Slow? Leaps? Hops? Slithers?
- Can parents incorporate any of the ideas from the “party” scene in their children’s life? Have them study the last few pages. Could they count party hats like the monkey? Run a number wheel like the seal? Count the animals at the party? The different colors on the pages?
- Review the back page with parents titled, “More Read-Aloud Fun from Raising Readers.” Teach parents the hand movements described for this book.

**Snack:**

- Where does the bus arrive…at a party! Try to reenact the scene on the last few pages. Serve popcorn and have each family make a “mini” pizza.
  - Cover one half of an English Muffin with pizza sauce. Top with mozzarella cheese. Place in toaster oven or under broiler.
- 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!
Parent and Child Together Time Ideas  
*The Seals on the Bus* by Lenny Hort

**READ THE BOOK:**
- Read AND sing *The Seals on The Bus* to your child. The animals are out of the ordinary and make very unique sounds.
- Make the sounds LOUD and soft. See if your child can guess the noise each animal will make.
- This is a fun book to read with your child on your lap. Make your body and legs move up and down like a bus!  
- If you do the craft activity listed below, let your child move his/her passengers while you read the story.

**MAKE A BUS AND PASSENGERS**

**BUS**
- Paint a shoebox and allow it to dry.
- Decorate the box to look like a bus using markers and stickers. You may want to cut out “wheels” from construction paper and glue them to the bus.
- Poke a hole in the front of the bus and attach a string, so that your child can pull their bus along with them.

**PASSENGERS**
- Paint toilet paper tubes and allow to dry.
- Using markers, felt, and yarn create “passengers” for the bus.
- Let your child use their imagination. Do they want people on the bus or animals? Sea Creatures? Characters from other books? Family members?
- Your child will enjoy putting the passengers in and out of the bus and taking them for a drive.
THE WHEELS ON THE BUS

The wheels on the bus go round and round
Round and round, round and round
The wheels on the bus go round and round
All through the town.
(Roll hands over each other)

The wipers on the bus go "Swish, swish, swish,
Swish, swish, swish, swish, swish, swish"
The wipers on the bus go "Swish, swish, swish"
All through the town.
(Put arms together in front of you and swish like windshield wipers)

The door on the bus goes open and shut
Open and shut, open and shut
The door on the bus goes open and shut
All through the town.
(Cover eyes with hands on 'shut' and uncover them on 'open')

The horn on the bus goes "Beep, beep, beep
Beep, beep, beep, beep, beep, beep"
The horn on the bus goes "Beep, beep, beep"
All through the town.
(Pretend to honk horn)

The baby on the bus says, "Wah, wah, wah!
Wah, wah, wah, wah, wah, wah!"
The baby on the bus says, "Wah, wah, wah!"
All through the town.
(Fisted hands in front of eyes and rub them like baby crying)

The people on the bus say, "Shh, shh, shh,
Shh, shh, shh, shh, shh"
The people on the bus say, "Shh, shh, shh"
All through the town.
(Put pointer finger to mouth to 'shhh')
This Explorer Bag Contains the Following:

- Reading Tips & Developmental Information For Your Baby & Toddler
- Parent and Child Together Time (PACT) Idea Sheet
- Supplies You Will Need For PACT Ideas:
  - Shoebox
  - Toilet Paper Tubes
  - Paint and paint brushes
  - Construction paper
  - Markers, yarn, felt, string
- Journal Activity Sheet
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<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>JOURNAL - <em>The Seals on the Bus</em> by Lenny Hort</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What did you like about the book <em>The Seals on the Bus</em>? Have you read the book or sung the song <em>The Wheels on the Bus</em>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ask your child which animal on the bus made the funniest noise. What was the noise? Were you surprised with their choice?</td>
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<tr>
<td>What PACT activity did you do with your child? What went well? What didn’t go so well?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I'll write back to you here...
LITERACY EXPLORER KITS 2011

References

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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 babycenter.com retrieved August 4, 2011 from http://www.babycenter.com/0_reading-to-your-baby_368.bc

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Your 4-Month-Old’s Development: Week 1 (n.d.), from babycenter.com retrieved August 4, 2011 from http://www.babycenter.com/0_your-4-month-olds-development-week-1_1477216.bc#articlesection3

Resources

American Academy of Pediatrics
www.healthychildren.org

Baby Center
www.babycenter.com

Candlewick Press, Raising Readers
Publisher Activity Sheets for *A Visitor for Bear* by Bonny Becker and *Bob* by Tracey Campbell Pearson

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

Medline Plus
www.nlm.nih.gov

Scholastic
www.scholastic.com

Songs for Teaching
www.songsforteaching.com

The Perpetual Preschool
www.perpetualpreschool.com

What To Expect
www.whattoexpect.com