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!
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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.
The Bugliest Bug by Carol Diggory Shields

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 Five Year Old:

✓ Help your child build vocabulary Have your child use his/her imagination to make up and tell you stories. Ask questions to help him/her expand the stories.
✓ Pause when you are reading to talk about the book.
✓ Look for patterns in words that are familiar. Words ending in “at” are very common: cat, pat, sat.
✓ Praise and support your child’s response, “That’s right. The sun looks like a circle.”

Developmental Milestones You May Notice:

✓ Hops, somersaults, swings, may be able to skip
✓ Can count ten or more objects and correctly names four colors. Prints some letters
✓ Recalls parts of a story, tells longer stories
✓ Copies triangle and other geometric patterns
✓ Likes to sing, dance, and act
✓ Sometimes demanding, sometimes eagerly cooperative
**Read the Book:**
- Get ready to love BUGs! This book has a variety of bugs in the story. After you read this story once, children will want to study the pictures and count and identify the bugs!
- The first page in the story gives the definition of a bug – it has six legs, might wiggle and/or crawl.
- These bugs are colorful. Have children study and choose their bug for the Literacy Craft section.
- This story rhymes and reads like a silly, upbeat poem. Read the story using a dramatic voice – use sound effects and change your facial expressions.
- There are clues in the story (hidden pictures) that show that the judges are not “bugs”. Can the children find them the second time you read the story?

**Literacy Extensions:**
- Talk with the children about the differences between insects and arachnids. How many legs does each have? Do they look different in other ways? Would you rather have an insect or an arachnid as a pet? If you did have one as a pet, what would they need to live with you?

**Literacy Craft:**
- Bug Time! For this craft you will need, egg cartons, paint, googly eyes, pipe cleaners, and glitter.
  - Have each child design their “Bugliest” Bug! Ask them how long they want their bug to be and cut the egg carton for them.
  - Children will paint and decorate their egg cartons to create bugs. Help them poke holes into the egg carton and insert the pipe cleaners for legs and antennas. Make sure they count their legs and have the right amount to be an insect!
- Create Binoculars for your Bug Hunt (see Science section)
  - Give each child two toilet paper tubes. Help them cover the tubes with black construction paper. Poke a hole on each side of the tube and string yarn through the holes. Children may decorate their binoculars.

**Science:**
- Study Bugs – go to the library and check out books on different types of bugs. Study the books with the children: look at the pictures, read simple facts to them. See if they can find the bugs from *The Bugliest Bug* in their library bug books.
- Go on a Bug Hunt. Using the “binoculars” they create in the Literacy Craft section, have the families go on a bug hunt. Walk outdoors and investigate the grass, trees, and leaves. What do they notice? Talk with them about the importance of leaving bugs and animals in their natural habitat.
- Sing this song while on your bug hunt ([www.everythingpreschool.com](http://www.everythingpreschool.com))
  A-hunting we will go
  A -hunting we will go
  We'll see a (insert any insect here)
  visit it
  (loudly) and then we'll walk along!

**Parent Education:**
- Talk with parents about the conversations they have with their children when they read stories to them. Do they point out pictures? Do they make predictions? (remind them a guess does not need to be correct, there is no right or wrong answer with predictions) Do they help their child compare things in the book, such as “This little boy is wearing a red shirt in the book. You are wearing a red shirt too, but your shirt has stripes on it.”
- *The Bugliest Bug* is a great book to introduce the concept of compare and contrast to parents. Talk with parents about looking for similarities and differences between the insects. How are they different from the arachnids?
- Introduce the concept of a Venn Diagram. This is a compare/contrast diagram and is especially helpful to complete before writing a compare and contrast essay. For a children’s Venn Diagram use pictures (magazine cut outs) instead of words. A Venn Diagram is two circles that intersect. Check for samples on line.

**Snack:**
- There are many fun “bug” snacks to share at playgroup. Here are a few:
  - Ants on Log: Fill a piece of celery with peanut butter and top with raisins. Ants on a Stump: Slice apples in a circle. Drop small amounts of peanut butter on the slice and add raisins.
  - This bug snack is from the 2010 Bob Literacy Explorer Kit:
    - Create a flying insect:
      - Fill a celery stick with peanut butter
      - Use carrots (shredded work best) for legs and arms, raisins for eyes, string cheese for the antennae
  - Don’t forget the arachnids!
    - Spread cream cheese or peanut butter on an oval cracker. Stick eight pretzel sticks into the cream cheese or peanut butter for “legs” and use raisins or chocolate chips for “eyes”.
  - 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!
READ THE BOOK:

- Read *The Bugliest Bug* to your child more than once. After you read it the first time, try some of these activities:
  - Can your child find the clues that the arachnids (spiders) are in the story?
  - How many different insects are in the story?
  - Which is their favorite insect? Why?
  - Did they think Dilly was brave when she saved the other insects?
  - Did she deserve the Bugliest Bug award?

INSECT COLLAGE:

- Cut clear contact paper into the shape of an insect, such as an ant, ladybug, or butterfly.
- Have your child tear different colored pieces of tissue paper into small to medium size pieces.
- Place the tissue paper on the bug cut out. Place the top of the clear contact paper back over the insect shape.
- This can be used as a place mat... or...punch a hole at the top and string it with yarn. It's a great decoration for their room!

NATURE WALK:

- Use the binoculars you made in playgroup for a nature walk.
- Go for a walk with your child. Study the sky, trees, and grass. Look for bugs and observe them. Where are they going? What are they doing?
- Talk with your child about how he/she can take care of your yard, neighborhood, and the whole earth!

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Pamela Cote 2012
This Explorer Bag Contains the Following:

- Reading Tips & Developmental Information For Your Five Year Old
- Parent and Child Together Time (PACT) Idea Sheet
- Supplies You Will Need For PACT Ideas:
  - Clear contact paper
  - Different colored tissue paper
  - String/yarn
  - Binocular instructions if necessary
- Journal Activity Sheet
What did you like about the book *The Bugliest Bug*? What do you think your child’s favorite bug was?

Read a story to your child and compare something in the story to something in your child’s life. For example, “This little boy is wearing a red shirt. You are wearing a red shirt, too. What is a little different about your shirt? Yes, it has stripes!”

What did you compare? Describe your conversation....

What PACT activity did you do with your child? What went well? What didn’t go so well?
I'll write back to you here...
LITERACY EXPLORER KITS 2011

References

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Kuffner, Trish (1999), *The Toddler Busy Book*, Meadow Brook Press, Minnetonka, Minnesota


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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Springvale Public Library, *Baby Rhyme Time* (2011), Springvale, Maine


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