



# The Bookbug Explorer Bag

## Get ready to explore with Bookbug!

The Explorer Bag provides an ideal opportunity to build links between your setting and the family home.

Every 3-year-old child in Scotland receives a free Bookbug Explorer Bag. It includes books and materials to encourage mums, dads and carers to talk, cuddle, sing and share stories and rhymes with their children.

To ensure every child can access the books, CALL Scotland have produced symbolised resources for each of the books in the Explorer Bags. Visit [symbolsforall.org.uk/bookbug](http://symbolsforall.org.uk/bookbug)

### A note on the bags:

- The contents vary each year, so please familiarise yourself when you receive your delivery.
- These bags are for children in their ante-preschool year and **should only be given to 3 year olds**, but you can find ideas for involving other children in your setting on our website.

## Ideas and activities:

### Build the excitement

Early years staff have said they notice a difference in children's excitement and engagement if children are familiar with the books and know they will receive their own copies. You could:

- Read the books with the children several times
- Tell the children that Bookbug has a special gift for them and they will be taking home their own Bookbug Explorer Bag with copies of the books
- Involve children in planning a special gifting event to celebrate taking the bag home
- Post photos on social media so families can share in the excitement
- You'll find further suggestions linked to the Curriculum for Excellence on our website. Turn over the page to get started!

Find everything you need at  
[scottishbooktrust.com/explorergifting](http://scottishbooktrust.com/explorergifting)

# Inspiring curiosity and creativity

Follow children's interests from the books and support them to explore concepts, themes, characters and events from them in more detail. From open-ended provocations to practitioner-led games, the books can support learning across the breadth of the curriculum. Extending the stories into play helps to deepen children's understanding and inspire a lifelong love of reading.

## All Kinds of Families

by **Sophy Henn**

This non-fiction picture book celebrates the diversity of families throughout the animal kingdom, from emu daddies who raise their chicks, to female elephants who are head of the household. Little ones will love the vibrant artwork and easy-to-read facts, and this is a fantastic starting point to talk about inclusion and family life.



### Go on a scavenger hunt

Hide drawings of the animals found in the book around your nursery or early years setting. Print the drawings on paper and give the children a sheet each. Play some music or songs from the Bookbug app and see if the children can find the animals. Get them to tick them off as they go!

### Try this action rhyme

Pretend to walk very carefully through the jungle and mime the actions and make the sounds of the animals from the book. It's easy to make up more verses for this rhyme.

I was walking through the jungle,  
What did I see?  
A big orangutan laughing  
At me, me, me!

I was walking through the jungle,  
What did I see?  
A huge grey elephant grunting  
At me, me, me!

I was walking through the jungle,  
What did I see?  
Two spotty cheetahs roaring  
At me, me, me!

### More fun activities

- Ask the children to draw a picture of someone they love. Put a paper frame round each one and make a frieze for the wall.
- Find some rocks outside to make a family. Bring them back and paint them. Encourage the children to make up stories and encourage them by asking questions.
- Talk about the different habitats in the book. Make a textured picture of the children's favourite places using materials from outside.

Encourage families to use their World Book Day £1 token at their local participating bookseller to get a £1 book for free or £1 off another of their choice.



# The Button Book

by Sally Nicholls and Bethan Woollvin

Excellent for imaginative play, *The Button Book* features a variety of buttons for children to 'press' and discover all the wonderful things that they do. From making a sound to playing a song, this is the perfect book for reading aloud and getting everyone to join in with the actions.



## Design some buttons

Create your own giant buttons out of card – they can be different shapes like in the book. Ask the children what they would like each button to do and include them in the story the next time you read it aloud.

## Create a mural

Bring the story to life in your setting by creating a mural inspired by the book. Support the children in planning and creating the display using a range of colours, materials and objects. Mount the display at child-height so they can interact with it.

## More fun activities

- Use lolly sticks to make all the shapes in the book – square, circle, triangle, hexagon and more.
- Ask the children to find something of a specific colour in your early years setting. Get the children to work in teams to find the objects together.
- Play a game of 'Simon Says' with the actions from the book – clapping, bouncing, hugging, sleeping, etc.

# The Littlest Yak

by Lu Fraser and Kate Hindley

Little Gertie is the smallest of all the yaks, but when she needs to help out one of the herd from a tight spot she realises how brave and mighty she is. With rhyming text and super-cute illustrations, this brilliant book empowers all those who are small.



## Explore different habitats

Investigate the habitat of the Tibetan Plateau and the animals that live there. Give children opportunities to talk about and explore these animals through talk, play and creative activities such as drawing, painting and making sculptures. Find some non-fiction books from the library exploring the life of yaks.

## More fun activities

- Make a little Gertie using salt dough or play dough.
- Use wool to make a picture of Gertie. Cut lots of strands of different coloured wool and stick them to an outline drawing of her.
- Make a snowy picture for the littlest yak to live in. Use cotton wool, paints and glitter.

## Promote thinking and language

Ask the children why they think Gertie was so unhappy to be the littlest yak. What did she learn by the end of the story about herself and about being big and small? How did Gertie realise that she was big on the inside even though she was little on the outside?





## Let families know that the bag is coming home

Please tell families about the Explorer Bag before it goes home. We've created a poster you can put up in your setting. You can also share our social media posts with families.

## Encourage families to share stories, songs and rhymes at home

Families are more likely to use the resources in the Bookbug Bags if they understand the benefits of reading and how it can support their child's early learning. You could:

- Show them the parent leaflet in the bag, which has lots of handy tips about how to use the Explorer bag
- Share ideas with families for using the bag at home using learning journals or social media, and encourage parents and carers to tell you what they've been doing
- Tell families about the benefits of sharing books. It's a lovely way to support children's speech and language development and helps lay the foundations for learning to read
- Encourage families to sing and rhyme at home using Bookbug's online Song and Rhyme Library or the free Bookbug app. Try the Explorer playlist to get started!

Welcome parents and carers into your setting, and invite them to join in with an explorer-themed story, song and rhyme session. Suggested session plans based on each book are available on our website.

## Encourage library visits

There are suggestions for other books to explore in the activity booklet. Encourage families to join their local library and borrow books for free. Children of all ages can have library cards of their own!

## Join us for webinars and training

We provide funded webinars to support the gifting and use of the Bookbug Explorer Bag in your setting, as well as other training courses to support literacy in the early years.

[scottishbooktrust.com/bookbugtraining](https://scottishbooktrust.com/bookbugtraining)

## Keep in touch

Contact your local Bookbug Co-ordinator for Bookbug Bags, promotional resources including posters and leaflets and local information.

[scottishbooktrust.com/bookbug/local](https://scottishbooktrust.com/bookbug/local)

Sign up for our Working with Bookbug newsletter for updates, resources and competitions.

[scottishbooktrust.com/explorergifting](https://scottishbooktrust.com/explorergifting)



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