

# How to Use Your Literacy Explorer Kit

---

In 2025, we will mark the 100th anniversary of our founder's birth with the Barbara Bush Centennial – a yearlong celebration featuring special events across the country and the launch of exciting new family literacy programming.

**Thank you** for being a part of this initiative! Our goal is to honor Mrs. Bush's milestone birthday with 100 opportunities for families to read, learn, and play together over the course of the year.

## What is included in the Literacy Explorer Kit?

---

In the kit, there are three books to choose from along with step-by-step guides for planning and holding your own family literacy event. We've even included at-home material to share with families when they leave!

- *Little Blue Truck* by Alice Schertle (Materials designed for the youngest readers/pre-school-K)
- *The Day You Begin* by Jacqueline Woodson (Materials designed for K-grade 3 with opportunities to expand the age group)
- *First Ladies Make History* by Anita and Giovanna McBride (Materials designed for grades 2-4. This is an informational read aloud with opportunities to expand by age group.)

We have included additional materials to support the event and your families – here are a few of the items:

- Select supplies and materials for some of the activities, such as colored cellophane, blue painter's tape, bleeding tissue paper, and stamp markers
- A letter to parents/caregivers for each book to support their continued reading and learning at home
- Barbara Bush's Reading Tips bookmarks to share with families – one side has the Reading Tips, and the other side has information on how to access *free* family literacy resources
- A flyer for you to post at your site to promote the event with families

Also included is a complimentary copy of *Rosie Frost & the Falcon Queen* by Geri Halliwell-Horner to add to your reading collection. Ms. Halliwell-Horner is a Literacy Ambassador for the Barbara Bush Foundation. We created a Family Resource Guide in English and Spanish for the book to help families enjoy reading it together! We've also included a few Rosie Frost bookmarks for you to post and have available for families. The QR code on the bookmark makes the Family Resource Guide easy to access and use! Find the guides at [www.barbarabush.org/rosie/](http://www.barbarabush.org/rosie/).

We understand participating libraries and sites may have multiple copies of *Little Blue Truck* and *The Day You Begin* in your collections. The books are a donation. You may add them to your collection or have a book raffle for families.

## How do I use my Literacy Explorer Kit?

---

1. Review the books and guides. We use the term *story share* to indicate a read aloud or story time for families. All activities were designed to offer options during a story share. Which story will best fit your event? Choose one book or hold an event for each book! See the **Family Literacy Event Guide Overview** (pg. 3) for more information.
2. Promote the event to families – distribute information to them about the celebration. We've included a promotional flyer in the kit to post and share with families.
3. Prepare for your event. We have provided many options on how to welcome families, share the book, and engage with them after reading.
  - a. Select the activities that fit your shared space and families – or do them all!
  - b. Carefully review the guide to be sure you have all materials prepared, are familiar with the book you are reading, and have all materials ready for families to take home. Suggested supply lists are included in each guide.
4. Add your own flair to the event. We assume you might modify activities or add your own ideas to the read aloud.
5. Plan how you will take photos to share your celebration with us. As noted in earlier communications, some of these photos may be shared on the Barbara Bush Foundation's social media channels and at events.

6. Continue sharing the materials! All materials are available on our website at [www.barbarabush.org/literacy-explorer-kit/](http://www.barbarabush.org/literacy-explorer-kit/). We hope you'll share the Literacy Explore Kit materials with other organizations in your community, so they can hold a family literacy event too!

## How do I share my celebration with the Foundation?

Please email your photos to [bbfprograms@barbarabush.org/](mailto:bbfprograms@barbarabush.org) with the subject line “**Photos Literacy Explorer Kit.**” For the best resolution, be sure to select “Actual Size” when emailing your photos.

## Future Opportunities

We plan to hold two *free* webinars during 2025 focused on families learning together and free resources to support this. Look for an email in the next few months with additional information! To explore more free resources, visit our Literacy Resources page at <https://www.barbarabush.org/literacy-resources/>.

## Questions?

Please email us at [bbfprograms@barbarabush.org](mailto:bbfprograms@barbarabush.org) and be sure to place “**Question Literacy Explorer Kit**” in the subject line.

## Thank You

We create free resources with the support of expert reviewers. We would like to thank the Charleston County Public Library (South Carolina), Gravette Public Library (Arkansas), and Irving ISD Adult Education (Texas) for lending their expertise and reviewing the Family Literacy Event Guides for *Little Blue Truck*, *The Day You Begin*, and *First Ladies Make History*.

We would also like to thank HarperCollins Publishers, Penguin Random House, as well as Anita and Giovanna McBride and our friends at the White House Historical Association for donating these wonderful children’s books.

## Family Literacy Event Guide Overview

---

The Family Literacy Event Guides for each book are designed to offer a variety of options to engage with families, and they all follow the same format.

- **Welcome Activities:** Collaborative activities to build excitement and *background knowledge* as families arrive for the event. The suggested

activities easily promote conversations and allow families and children to make connections at different exploring stations.

- **Opening Activity:** One to two suggested activities to transition families to a story share. This might include singing a song together or a collaborative activity.
- **Sharing the Story:** We use the term *story share* to indicate a read aloud or story time for families. This section provides a suggested roadmap for reading the story. You might use all the ideas and activities, choose a few, or create your own plan to share the story.
- **Exploring More:** After you read the story, complete one or more of these activities with families to extend the fun and learning.
- **Closing Activity:** Choose how you will say goodbye and send families home with their activity bags. We understand that some families may need to leave right after the story share or after completing a few of the “Exploring More” activities. Determine if you would like to share the closing activity when you finish reading the book or after the “Exploring More” activities. Either option works depending on your shared space and overall event plan.

We encourage you to modify this suggested event format or any activity based on families’ needs and interests, space, time, and supplies. You might use all the activities, or you might use only a few. You might rearrange the suggested order of the events. We can’t wait to learn how you use these activities and what new ideas they may spark!

Thank you for being a part of the Barbara Bush Centennial celebration!