

Family Literacy Event Guide

Little Blue Truck

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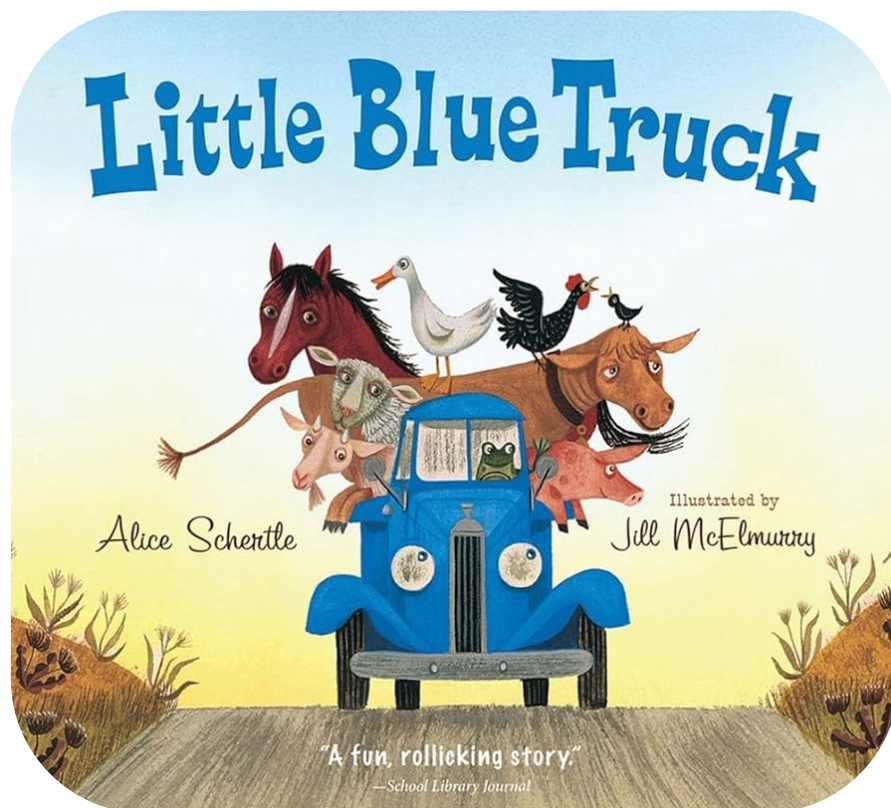


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Introduction

About the Book

From the publisher: “Meet Blue. He’s a little truck with big-rig pluck. And lucky for everyone else on the road, a bit of mud is no match for him!”

Why we chose *Little Blue Truck* to help celebrate reading

For the anniversary of former first lady Barbara Bush’s 100th birthday, we are sharing Literacy Explorer Kits with libraries and community organizations nationwide. *Little Blue Truck*, available in English and Spanish, has been selected as one of the texts to promote an engaging story share for families of younger children! We love its rhyming text, colorful story of friendship, and how it is easily found in most libraries and stores.

Information on Engagement Activities

- The activities in this guide are designed to offer options during a family literacy event, so you can decide how you’d like to share *Little Blue Truck*. We have provided ideas for activities when the families arrive (*Welcome Activities*), a transition activity to move to the story share (*Opening Activity*), a suggested roadmap for reading the story (*Sharing the Story*), and activities to extend the fun and learning (*Exploring More*).
- In this guide, the term *story share* is used to indicate a read aloud or story time for families.

- We encourage you to modify as needed for families based on their needs, 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 and for example, share an *Exploring More* activity as a *Welcome Activity*. We can't wait to learn how you use these activities and what new ideas they may spark!
- In addition to this guide, we have drafted a letter (in English and Spanish) you can give to parents/caregivers to support them in reading, learning, and playing together at home.
- You might also share the Little Blue Truck official website, so families have access to additional free resources.
- We hope families will continue to enjoy *Little Blue Truck* past story time!

Welcome Activities

- Begin your event with collaborative activities to build excitement and *background knowledge* for your reading of *Little Blue Truck*.
- The following list includes a variety of activities to have available for families as they arrive for the event. Activities can be set up as exploring stations. Choose the ones that best fit your shared space and readers.
- Variations of some of these activities are offered in the parent/caregiver letter – think about which ones you might model and share with families to welcome them.
- These activities easily promote conversations and allow families and children to get to know each other. Join in the fun and look for opportunities to talk with families and model learning engagement. You might help build the road in *Make a Road*, sort items in the *Color Scavenger Hunt*, or guess at colors during *Different Shades of Colors*.
- We have created *station sheets* for you to place at the different *Welcome Activity* stations. This will help families explore when they first arrive. Look for the station sheets in your Literacy Explorer Kit with this event guide.

➤ Make a Road!

- Supplies needed: masking tape (blue painter's tape is included in the Literacy Explorer Kit), container of vehicles or other objects that might "drive" along a road, chalk (optional)
- Create a road by laying strips of masking tape on the floor to form a road. Blue painter's tape works best.
- Have strips of tape available, so children can add their own *roads* and help build *intersections* when they arrive.
- Have a container of small to medium-sized vehicles or other objects to share, so they can explore the roadway with their object.
- If the event is outdoors in a paved area, create roads with chalk. Again, be sure to have chalk to share, so children can participate in the road building.
- *Little Blue Truck* is a book that creates a musical atmosphere with its rhyming.
 - Have music playing while the road is being built and explored. Encourage sounds and ask questions: *What noise does your truck make? What does your _____ say or what noise does it make?*
- There are two station sheets for this activity in your Literacy Explorer Kit – one for inside using tape and one for outside using chalk.

➤ Color Scavenger Hunt

- Supplies needed: 2-4 boxes/containers and a color label for each box/container (like a piece of colored construction paper or white paper that has been colored).
- Determine if you'd like to have this activity available as a welcome activity, as part of the story share, or something you encourage families to play at home.
- Pick 2-4 colors for this activity and have containers like a box or laundry basket for each color. Choose colors highlighted in *Little Blue Truck*.
- Label each container for each color. For example, for red, tape a piece of red construction paper to the front of the container.
- Encourage families to go on a scavenger hunt for these colors – finding objects and placing them in the correct basket. For example, they may find a book with a red cover or a red item in the play area to place in the basket.
- As an optional activity, children might enjoy sorting objects together. Look for opportunities to build on this activity as you join in the fun with the families!

➤ Different Shades of Colors

- Supplies needed: small ice cube trays, eye or medicine droppers, water, food coloring in red, blue, and yellow, material to protect the table, and clean up supplies.
- Set up part of the room for this science activity.
- Fill three of the tray compartments with different colors of water – one for red, one for yellow, and one for blue.
- Show families how to suction the water with the droppers and mix new colors in the empty spaces. Children will explore new colors while practicing their fine motor skills!

➤ A Tinted View

- Supplies needed: shared space with windows, easy to remove tape, scissors, and colored cellophane cut into sheets or shapes (one roll has been included in the Literacy Explorer Kit).
- Choose different colors of cellophane. Cut out shapes and tape them to windows in different parts of the room.
- Encourage children and families to look through the window and notice how the color changes the view.
- If you have extra supplies, send each child home with their own piece of colored cellophane to experiment with at home.
- If your shared space does not have windows, search online *play with colored cellophane* for additional ideas.

Opening Activity

Consider using this activity to transition families to the story share.

➤ Will You Meet a Friend of Mine?

- The children and families will be busy exploring the roadways and engaging in the other activities, now let's help them make new friends with a song!

- This song also supports one of the story’s themes – friendship! Sing to the tune of “Mary Had a Little Lamb.” If you do not know what this song sounds like, search online using the song title and listen to it.

Will you meet a friend of mine?
 Friend of mine? Friend of mine?
 Will you meet a friend of mine?
 This is my friend (child’s name).

- Consider how you might transition to reading the story while singing this song and encourage families to sing along. The children might return their vehicles or objects to the container used with *Make a Road* when their name is said. Perhaps you sing it one last time as everyone marches to the story share space.

Sharing the Story

Read aloud *Little Blue Truck* with families. You might use all these ideas and activities, choose a few, or create your own plan to share this story!

- *Little Blue Truck* is a rhyming book. Some of the words are in different colors and Little Blue Truck’s *beep* is always in **blue**.
- Show the children how the beep is always in blue and ask them to look for this word while you read the story. Invite them to help you shout out the *beeps*! Find the other words that are in different colors while reading.
- Children love to make animal sounds and even the youngest readers usually know sounds like moo, ruff, baa, and oink.
 - Ask the children to *find* the animals in the story and make the sound for those animals.
 - What other sounds can be found in the story? Help them discover other things that make noise such as leaves, wind, muck, etc. Ask them to make the sound or have them make up their own!
- Pause and have a conversation after reading the story or during a second reading to explore other themes. Modify the discussion based on the age of your readers. Here are some options:

- The Dump Truck is BIG, and the Blue Truck is little – have a conversation about different sizes and/or opposites. If you offered the color scavenger hunt activity, sort the objects in the containers by sizes as a whole group.
- *Little Blue Truck* and the animals teach the Dump Truck about friendship – revisit those parts of the story. Consider these questions and let the conversation naturally lead the way:
 - What do you like about Little Blue Truck? How was Little Blue Truck a friend to the animals in the book? How did Dump Truck act in the story?
 - What is a friend? What do friends do? What do you like about your friends?
 - What did Dump Truck learn about being a friend?

Exploring More

After you read the story, complete one or more of these activities with families. Choose the activities that work best for your shared space and available supplies.

➤ Animal Moves

- Supplies needed: stuffed animals or plastic figurines (optional).
- How do animals move? Play a game using animal movements.
- Let each child pick an animal from the story.
- Ask them to perform their animal moves and see if anyone can guess which animal it is. Encourage grown-ups to help their child or do the movement with them if anyone is feeling shy.
- What other movements can you add? Use movement words like *wiggle*, *jump*, *stomp*, or *gallop*.
- Do you have plastic animal figurines or stuffed animals in your shared space? Add them to your activity!

➤ Let's Get *Little Blue Truck* Muddy!

- Supplies needed: a blue cutout of a truck or blue paper and a truck template for families to cut out their own truck, scissors (and children's scissors if they

will be practicing their cutting skills), another piece of sturdy paper to glue the truck onto, glue, paintbrushes, white and brown paint, craft sand or a gritty material like this, clean-up supplies, and time for the trucks to dry.

- Give each family a blue cutout of a truck or give them blue paper and a template to cut out their own truck. Glue the blue truck onto a larger piece of paper.
- Children will mix a little white paint to brown paint, so it is not too dark when you paint the truck. Add a gritty ingredient like craft sand and mix everything together.
- Encourage grown-ups to let their child do the mixing.
- Children will paint the truck *muddy* and have their own *Little Blue Truck* to take home!
- If you need to simplify this activity because of space and clean-up options, children can use crayons/markers to color their truck (copied onto white paper) with blue and brown crayons/markers.

➤ Let's Create a Poster Mural

- Supplies needed: colored paper, animal templates (animals from the story), craft supplies (paint, markers, crayons, stickers, etc.), white paper to tape together to create a mural or large bulletin board paper, children's scissors, and tape.
- *Little Blue Truck* is an excellent book to create a poster mural with children.
- Give each family a piece of colored paper and have them select an animal template. They will use the template to trace the animal on the paper and then cut it out. Everyone can decorate their animal with supplies you have available – paint, crayons, markers, stickers, etc.
- Tape a long piece of bulletin board paper (or piece together construction paper or poster paper) horizontally near the bottom of a wall. If using posters, line them in a zig-zag fashion to create a curvy road.
- Use paint or tape to create a road and apply double-sided tape to the paper at different points to make “stops” along the road.
- Children can choose where to place their animal on the road and create stories with their animals.
- Read the story a second time with children placing their animals on the road as the story is read or have them act it out!

- Consider moving this activity to the story share time for an interactive read aloud.

➤ Let's Keep Talking About the Book!

- Encourage families to have conversations throughout all the activities and join the conversations.
- Point out colors and sounds in the different activities. Model how to ask questions around learning: *What did you like about the book "Little Blue Truck?" What do you think your child's favorite part was? Do you read other rhyming books?*
- Suggest new books for the families to read together.

Closing Activity

- It's time to say goodbye. Choose how you will end your time and send families home with their activity bags.
- Determine if you would like this closing activity after the *Exploring More* activities, or when you finish reading *Little Blue Truck*. Either option works depending on your shared space and overall event plan.

➤ Let's Sing a Song!

- Gather everyone back together for a closing song. This song is like the opening song, but this time everyone performs an action.
- Sing the song to the tune of "Mary Had a Little Lamb."
- Actions might include *jump around with me, turn around with me, clap around with me*. Give every child the option to choose an action.

Will you be a friend of mine,
Friend of mine, friend of mine?
Will you be a friend of mine
And (choose an action) around with me?

Family Activity Bags

- Remind families to take their activity bags, so they can keep learning and playing together!

- Consider reviewing the parent/caregiver letter with families to answer any questions and to encourage them to take home other engaging, rhyming books to share with their child!

What to Pack in the Family Bags

- **Parent/Caregiver Letter** for *Little Blue Truck*
- **Barbara Bush's Reading Tips Bookmark.** One side has Mrs. Bush's Reading Tips for family reading, and the other side has a QR code for easy access to *free* family literacy resources – including a digital text collection.
- **Which Book is Right for My Child Right Now?** (This resource is for children birth to age 3, so include it for families that have younger children!)
- **ReadLife Bookshelf Flyer**
- Optional: Any materials you have prepared for at-home activities. For example, if you used colored cellophane, add some pieces to the bags so families can continue to explore at home.