



Giftng Advice for the Bookbug Explorer Bag

Thank you for helping us encourage parents and carers to talk, cuddle, sing and share stories and rhymes with their children from birth. As an early years professional, you have a very important role in discussing the benefits of songs, stories and rhymes with parents and carers when gifting the Bookbug Bags.

Bookbug is a universal programme. All babies and children are entitled to four Bookbug Bags as babies, toddlers, at nursery and in Primary 1. The Explorer Bag is gifted to **3-year-old children** in their ante-preschool year at nursery. Please have a good look at what's inside the Bookbug Explorer Bag. The contents change every year.

Tips for effective Explorer Bag gifting



Build the excitement with parents, carers and children

Get children really excited about their gift from Bookbug. Build the excitement a few days before you gift the bags. Read the books and play a few new tracks from the CD each day. Decide with the children how you'd like to celebrate gifting the books and plan an event – make sure children invite their parents or carers. When the bags have gone home, you can use your own copies to continue reading and singing together.

Involve parents and carers

Invite parents and carers to a gifting event for the Explorer Bag. For example, you could hold a special exploration themed story session. If families can't be there, make sure they know that their 3-year-old will be taking home a special gift from Bookbug. The Explorer Bag also contains activities that parents and children can do together. Encourage them to take part in the activities with their child.

Explore!

Read the books and follow the children's interests – you could explore places, foods, beasties or new objects – the list is limitless. You could have a scavenger hunt, or a good walk around your nursery play space or a local park to see what the children can find. You could go on an adventure to your local library. Parents and carers might like to come on an exploration adventure with you!

Visit your local library

Many local libraries are happy to arrange special story and song sessions to help you gift the Explorer Bag. Contact your local library to ask what support they can give. Invite parents and carers to come along to the library with their child and encourage them to sign their child up for a library card and borrow some books.



Key Bookbug gifting messages for mums, dads and carers

Families will be more likely to use the resources in the Bookbug Bags if you talk to them about the benefits of sharing books before and after gifting the bag.

Please tell them:

- It's never too early or too late to start sharing books with your child.
- Songs and rhymes lay the building blocks of learning to read by helping children develop an awareness of different sounds and how these work together.
- Have fun using the pencils and pad in your bag. Drawing will help to develop your child's writing skills.
- Talk about the pictures if you aren't confident with reading.
- Sharing books is good for your child's brain by helping their speech and language development and encourages creativity.
- Relax and enjoy, it'll help you feel good too.

Reading and health

Early book-sharing promotes attachment, speech and language development and infant mental health. Bookbug is an evidence informed programme, underpinned by research, and links firmly into GIRFEC and the Scottish Government's parenting and early years policies. Find out more at scottishbooktrust.com/research.

Help for adults who struggle with literacy or numeracy

For adults who struggle with reading, writing or numbers, The Big Plus can help. Help is free and available across Scotland with local tutors. Call **0800 917 8000** or visit thebigplus.com.

Families with additional support needs

CALL Scotland have created symbolised resources to accompany the Bookbug Explorer Bag for children with additional support needs, available at booksforall.org.uk/explorer. Bookbug can also provide tactile books in addition to the four free Bookbug Bags. Request these from your local Bookbug Co-ordinator and find more tips and information at scottishbooktrust.com/bookbug/asn.

Talk about Libraries

Please talk about libraries to encourage families to:

- Join their local library and borrow books for babies and children for free. Children of all ages can have library cards of their own.
- Go along to Bookbug Sessions – free sessions of stories, songs and rhymes for children from birth to 4 years and their families. Tell families about Bookbug Sessions in your area: scottishbooktrust.com/localbookbugsessions.

Gaelic Bookbug

Gaelic versions of the Bookbug Bags are available for families interested in Gaelic and for children in Gaelic Medium Education, and should be gifted in addition to the English versions. Request these from your local Bookbug Co-ordinator.

Need more bags?

If you need to order more Bookbug bags; would like to request tactile books for any families you work with or have any questions about your local Bookbug programme, please get in touch with your local Bookbug Co-ordinator. Find their details at:

scottishbooktrust.com/bookbug/local.

Alternatively you can contact the Scottish Book Trust Early Years team on **0131 524 0179**, email bookbug@scottishbooktrust.com or visit scottishbooktrust.com/bookbug.

*Photo by Rachel Hein,
Bookbug illustrations by Debi Gliori,
design by Tom Holmes*



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