

# Creating Literacy Skills Kits to Target the Expanded Core Curriculum

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Most TVIs are familiar with the concept of story kits, in which real objects become “pictures” to illustrate a book for our students who are visually impaired. Drawing on our experiences using story kits, as well as our experiences using literacy kits with our own children, we have created a series of kits using children’s books, props, reading comprehension questions, and follow-up activities designed to target specific ECC skills for young children with visual impairments.

Each kit includes:

- Two copies of a carefully-selected child’s book targeting a specific ECC skill – one print and one print/braille.
- A selection of comprehension questions related to the story and appropriate for several levels of learners.
- A selection of follow-up activities related to the ECC skills targeted in the story.
- Props related to the story to explore, manipulate and use in follow-up activities.
- A notebook containing the questions and follow-up activities in both print and braille, braille and bold-lined paper for reflection on the kits/activities by students/parent/teacher and a pencil

case containing crayons, bold markers, and soft pencils for completing the reflections.

These kits are simple and so much fun to create that we hope to inspire others to create their own targeting skills appropriate for their own students. Below are the kits we have created to date.

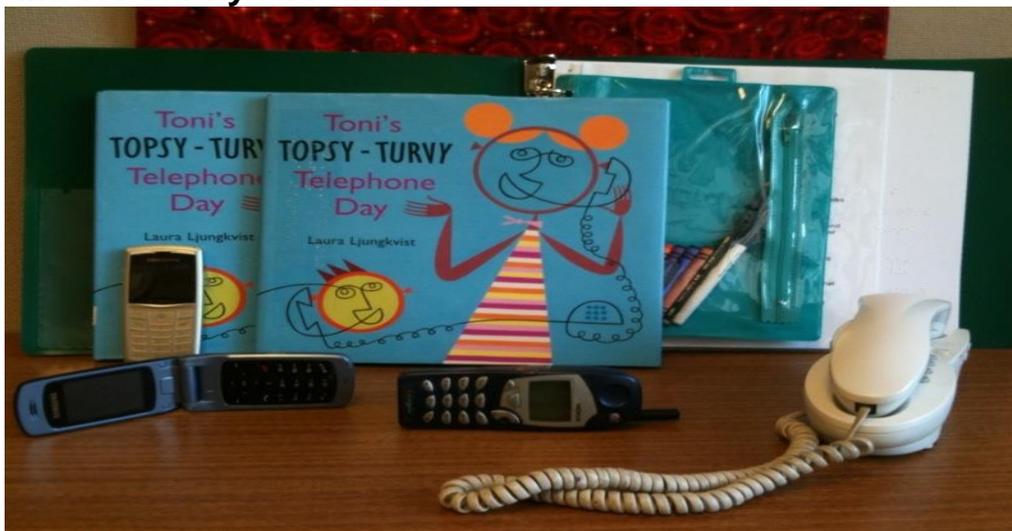
- ***Alexander, Who Used to Be Rich Last Sunday* by Judith Viorst.** Alexander (the same one who had a terrible, horrible, no good, very bad day) can't seem to save any money in this sweet, funny story. Kit includes several types of wallets/change purses, Metro Cards and old bus tokens, a talking calculator, and lots of change for counting and sorting.



- ***Froggy Gets Dressed* by Jonathan London.** The classic story of Froggy and his struggles getting dressed appropriately to go outside. Kit includes articles of clothing which use many different types of fasteners, as well as related questions and activities.



- ***Toni's Topsy-Turvy Telephone Day* by Laura Ljungkvist.** Toni tries to invite a few friends to a party, but when her phone message isn't clear, things get confusing very quickly. This kit includes a variety of telephones to explore, as well as suggestions for ways to improve phone skills, both for pleasure and for safety/911 skills.



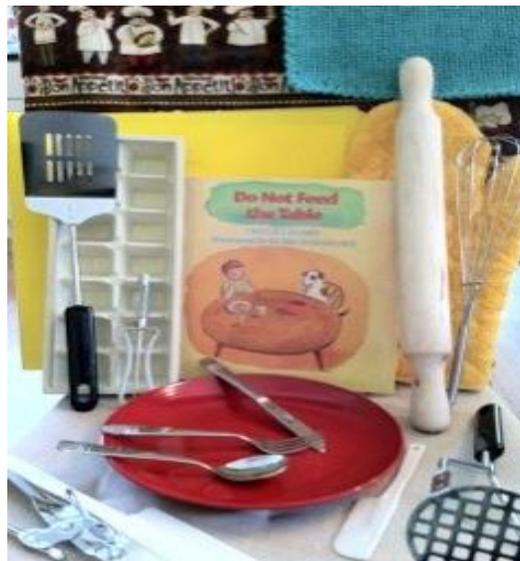
- ***Madeline Says Merci: The Always-Be-Polite Book*** by John Bemelmans Marciano. This delightful book emphasizes the importance of good manners in a pleasant, kid-friendly story. Kit includes note cards, paper, tactile stickers, etc... for writing thank-you notes.



- ***Easy As Apple Pie: A Harry and Emily Adventure*** by Karen Gray Ruelle. An easy to read chapter book about a brother and sister making apple pie with Grandpa. Suggested activities include sorting apples, going on an apple picking trip, and, of course, making apple pie. Kit includes a recipe for apple pie, measuring tools, rolling pins, Play- Doh, talking timer, and pie plates.



- ***Do Not Feed the Table*** by Dee Lillegard is a collection of poems about kitchen appliances, furniture and tools found in the kitchen. The literacy bag includes a print and braille copy of the book, questions for discussion, and ideas for extended literacy activities. A variety of kitchen related items are included in the bag: oven mitts, placemat, rolling pin, ice cube tray, potato masher, can opener, spatulas, pancake flipper, plate and silverware and more.



- ***Squeaky Clean*** by Simon Puttock is a story about three little pigs who are initially resistant to the idea of bathing, but

eventually realize that getting clean can be a lot of fun. The literacy bag includes a print and braille copy of the book, questions related to the book, and extended literacy activities, including a recipe to make your own bubble bath. Manipulatives include bath scrubbers, a variety of rubber duckies, washcloths and hand sanitizer.



- *Bebe Goes Shopping, by Susan Middleton Elya and Put it on the List, by Kristen Darbyshire are two stories that take a humorous approach to grocery shopping. This kit includes a variety of packaged food items, a magnetic grocery list, car keys, change purse and tactile watch.*



- ***Zoo in the Sky*, by Jacqueline Mitton and *Follow the Drinking Gourd*, by Jeanette Winter are two stories about the constellation system, with *Drinking Gourd* also addressing the concept of slavery in America. This kit includes an astronomy craft, a book on CD, a telescope, gourds, a ladle, and a cotton boll.**



- ***No Dragons for Tea – Fire Safety for Kids (and Dragons)* by Jean E. Pendziwol is a rhyming story about a little boy whose dragon friend accidentally sets fire to the house and the fire fighters who help them. This kit includes a functioning smoke detector, a fire extinguisher, an adorable stuffed dragon, and a real section of fire hose complete with couplings assembled just for us by Bridgeport fire fighters.**



- ***We Go in a Circle by Peggy Perry Anderson, The Perfect Pony by Corrine Demas and Hush Little Horsie by Jane Yolen are a collection of horse-themed stories for a variety of reading levels. This kit features a list of therapeutic riding programs in Connecticut, a glossary of horse terms and a collection of horse-related props including a helmet, chaps, a bit and a bridle for young equine enthusiasts to explore.***

