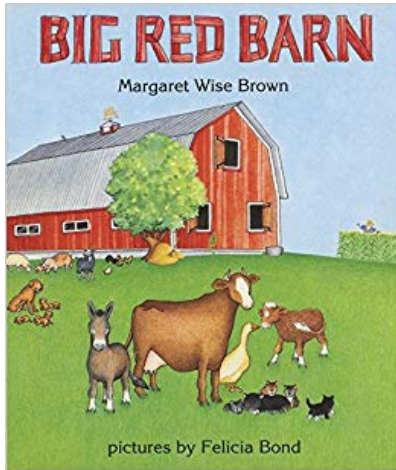


# FAMILY LITERACY GUIDE

## BIG RED BARN



### Learning

### Objectives

Students will listen, speak, read, and write for information and understanding. As listeners and readers, students will collect facts and ideas, discover relationships, and use this knowledge.

These guides are adapted from a copyrighted production of:  
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### ABOUT THE BOOK

#### *The Big Red Barn/El Gran Granero Rojo*

By Margaret Wise Brown, author

In the book *Big Red Barn*, Margaret Wise Brown writes a descriptive story about a day at the farm. The author includes many familiar farm animals and many places in and around the barn. Readers are told that "in this story the children are away. Only the animals are here today." The animals' day begins with illustrations of the sun coming up,

and ends when the sun has set and the moon is in the dark sky.

Margaret Wise Brown's story provides the reader with a grouping of common farm animals that even young children will recognize and possibly are able to name. The illustrations are colorful and enjoyable to look at. *Big Red Barn* is a book parents will enjoy reading to their children time and time again.

#### The Language/Literacy Connection - Categorizing Our Words

In all aspects of our lives, we group items together. Everything from our gender and age, to the type of vehicle we own, to our favorite grocery store is part of a category. When we fold our laundry, we put like clothing together-shirts in one pile, pants in another, socks in yet another pile. We separate those larger groups into smaller groups, for example, shirts and pants into piles that belong to each family member.

Whatever the subject, it can be put into a general category, then in more specific categories that give a more detailed description of the object. For instance, a cow is an animal (the general category) and a farm animal (more specific category). In addition, the cow can be

categorized according to its breed, its age, the amount of milk it produces, etc. When learning to read and write, we are taught to distinguish between consonants and vowels in the alphabet. We categorize words as nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, etc. We view sentences as statements, questions, exclamations, and so on. We separate our stories into fact or fiction. Children are taught to break down stories, paragraphs, sentences, and words into the many different types of categories. It is important for children to understand how things go together within a category, as well as why some items may not fit within a specific category.



## Early Childhood Education – Infant/Toddler Level

### Auditory Comprehension

1. Looks at object or people the caretaker calls attention to
2. Understands a specific word or phrase for family members, pets, objects or social routines

### Expressive Communication

1. Plays simple games
2. Imitates words

### BEFORE THE VISIT

#### 1. Gather needed materials:

- Manila folder
- Photocopies of a cow, horse, sheep, goat, chicken, rooster, pig and barn copied onto cardstock
- 2 pieces of green felt (enough to cover inside of folder), 2 additional pieces of felt for backs of animals and barn
- Scissors
- Glue sticks
- Markers or colored pencils

#### 2. Prepare lesson props:

- Follow the directions on the bottom right corner and make a felt board and felt board pieces to use as a model

#### DURING THE VISIT:

With parent holding the infant or toddler, read or look at Big Red Barn. The story contains several familiar animals that toddlers may recognize and be able to name. As you read, encourage the child, if he/she is talking, to imitate the animal sounds and label various animals. Say to the parent, "All of the animals in this book fall under a category of animals. Do you know what kind of animals they all are?" Offer the book to look through again. Give recognition for any attempt made. Acceptable answers include "farm animals," "farmyard animals," or "barnyard animals."

### FELT BOARD AND FARM ANIMALS

- Say, "When children first learn the names of animals they typically generalize an animal name for several animals. For instance, (child's name) may learn the word "dog" and call most four-legged animals dogs. We are going to make a felt board and felt animal pieces that you can use to teach (child's name) one specific category of animals, farm animals."
- Show your model felt board and felt board animal pieces to the parent. Place animal patterns, folder and other materials needed to complete the project on the workspace.
- If the parent is a reader, ask him/her to read aloud, then follow the directions to the right to make the farm felt board set.
- Once the parent has completed the felt board say: You can teach (child's name) about farm animals by playing with the felt board. Make up stories using the farm animals and the barn. Show (child's name) the animals and make the animal sounds that go with each animal. When you make the animal sounds, (child's name) may try to imitate you and try to say the names of the farm animals.

### DIRECTIONS FOR FARM FELT BOARD SET

- Glue green felt to inside of manila folder, both sides.
- Trace animal and barn patterns onto cardstock and color.
- Glue felt to the back of each animal and the barn. It may be easier to initially glue all of the photocopies onto the larger piece of felt and then cut out the pictures with the felt attached.
- Add additional details, such as a sun or pond or fence, to your felt board.

# Early Childhood Education – Preschool/School Age Levels

## Let's Look at the Animals

### DURING THE VISIT

- With the parent and child sitting together, read *Big Red Barn*. If the parent or child is a reader, ask him/her to read the book. While reading the book, encourage the child to identify the animals on each page. Engage the parent and child in a conversation about the book. Ask leading questions such as: "What was your favorite animal? Where did all the animals live? What did the animals do during the day? Which animals had babies?" Give them the opportunity to look through the book to respond to questions, if needed.
- Say to the parent: "A good tactic to use when reading to an emerging reader is to ask him/her to fill in a word. For example, when you read, 'There was a big red dog' pause to let (child's name) fill in the word 'dog'. He/she has the illustration of the dog to refer to if he/she is not a reader."

### CATEGORIES

- Say: "Did you notice that all of the animals in this book are farm animals? They are one group or category of animals. Other categories of animals are pets, jungle animals, animals that live in a zoo, sea creatures, etc. I have pictures of animals that belong to three different categories; farm animals, jungle animals, and sea creatures. Help me put each animal in the right category."
- Using a marker, divide a piece of construction paper into three sections. If the child is a writer, have him/her write a category name for each section (farm animals, jungle animals, and sea creatures). If the child is not a writer, have the parent write the names. Review each heading name when it is written on the paper.
- Mix the pictures of the animals together and take turns choosing a picture and putting it in the right category. When all the pictures have been separated into their appropriate categories, have the child tape or glue them onto the correct section on the paper. Review the animal names and categories.
- Have older children print the name of each animal under the picture once it is glued to the construction paper.

### Auditory

#### Comprehension

1. Identified categories of objects in pictures
2. Identifies an object that does not belong

### Expressive

#### Communication

1. Names categories
2. Names the items that fit into categories

### Before the Visit

1. Gather needed materials:
  - Cut out pictures prepared for the lesson
  - Large piece of construction paper
  - Double-sided tape or child-safe glue
  - Pen or markers
2. Prepare lesson props:
  - Cut out or photocopy pictures of farm animals, five different animals for each category: jungle animals (monkey, elephant, tiger, lion, hippopotamus), farm animals (cow, horse, sheep, chicken, goat), sea creatures (dolphin, octopus, shark, whale, lobster).

# Parenting Education Activity

## LIBRARY CATEGORIES

One place that has many different categories is the library. A trip to the library offers the opportunity to learn about the various sections in the library, to look at and read all different kinds of books and magazines and to borrow books for you and your children to read and enjoy. Many libraries now offer videotapes, books on tape and computer software for library cardholders to borrow. Take a trip to the library. Many libraries schedule a weekly story hour for children. If you don't have a library card, now is the time to get one! Your children may be able to sign up for their own card too!

## WHAT IS THERE TO DO AT THE LIBRARY?

Before heading off to the library, determine what activities one can do at the library and where in the library they can be done. Create a list of library tasks and ask the parent to place them in the appropriate categories. In what categories would you place the following library tasks?

- Check out books
- Take your child to story time
- Research information on New York State farm industry
- Get a library card
- Look up income tax laws related to farming
- Reserve a book
- Look up a word in the dictionary
- Find a children's book

Categories	Tasks
Children's Section	
Reference Department	
Front Desk	

## LIBRARY ONLINE

Check out the New York Center for Agricultural Medicine and Health at [www.NYCAMH.com](http://www.NYCAMH.com). This online library has English and Spanish information with a focus on safe and healthy farming for families. The center can also be contacted at 1-800-343-7527.

## CATEGORIZING BOOKS

Take several children's books, two or three books appropriate for children of various ages, on the home visit. For example, take board books, picture books, wordless books, predictable books, etc. Pile all the books together on the workspace. Ask the parent to separate them into categories based on their appropriateness for children of different ages, or some other way of grouping the books. Talk to the parent's about his/her categories. Ask why he/she grouped particular books together. This activity gives the parent an opportunity to categorize books and to learn about characteristics of different types of children's books.

### PLAY THE LIBRARY GAME

While at the library, fill in the following list of categories. If the lesson cannot be done at the library, ask the parent to visit the library on his/her own or describe these categories to the parent in a home visit.

Find three items for each category. For any items that are books, include the title of the book and the author's name.

<b>Children's Books</b> 1. 2. 3.	<b>Computer Software</b> 1. 2. 3.	<b>Newspapers</b> 1. 2. 3.
<b>Romance Novels</b> 1. 2. 3.	<b>Cookbooks</b> 1. 2. 3.	<b>Videos</b> 1. 2. 3.

# Interactive Literacy Between Parents and their Children

## Focus on Farm Animals

Farm animals are one very common category of animals that children learn about at a young age. Many songs are written about farm animals. *Old MacDonald Had a Farm*, *B-I-N-G-O*, *Five Little Ducks*, and *Baa Baa Black Sheep* are just a few examples. Games and activities have been created involving farm animal names. Duck Duck Goose and Farmer in the Dell are two common games that have been played by children for years. Many children's books feature farm animals. Look for these at the library.

- *Inside a Barn in the Country* by Alyssa Satin Capucilli
- *Just Me* by Marie Hall Ets
- *Time For Bed* by Mem Fox
- *Over in the Meadow, An Old Counting Rhyme* illustrated by David A. Carter
- *Small Pig* by Arnold Lobel
- *Barnyard Dance* by Sandra Boynton
- *The Day Jimmy's Boa Ate the Wash* by Trinka Hakes Noble

### Make a Farm Animal Mobile

Use a coat hanger, string, pictures of farm animals and tape to make your own mobile to hang up and admire. Cut pictures of farm animals from a magazine. For each picture, cut a piece of string and tape one edge of the string to the picture. You can cut the pieces of string all the same length or vary the lengths to create a multi-tiered mobile. Tie the other end of the strings to the bottom of the coat hanger. Hang the mobile up and admire your work!

### Sing a Common Farm Animal Song

Fill in your favorite farm animals!

*Old MacDonald had a Farm*

"Old MacDonald had a farm-E-I-E-I-O

And on his farm he had a (animal name)-E-I-E-I-O

With a (animal sound) here

And a (animal sound) there

Here a (animal sound),

there a (animal sound)

Everywhere a (animal sound),

Old MacDonald had a farm-

E-I-E-I-O."

### Make Your Own Farm Animals

Here are four ideas that you and your children can use to make farm animal puppets! Do your best and have fun making the puppets.

- Cut out pictures of animal faces and glue them onto tongue depressors to make animal puppets.

- With a pink marker draw a pig's face on the bottom of a lunch bag. Put your hand in the bag and you have a pig puppet!

- Use black and white crayons to draw a cow's face on the bottom of a lunch bag. Add pieces of construction paper cut into triangles for ears.

- Use a yellow marker and a lunch bag to make a duck. Glue on an orange construction paper beak. Make wings out of paper or feathers.

1. Put on a puppet show. Invite the relatives to participate as the audience. Serve popcorn. Write a script for the show. Decide who will operate which puppet. Send out invitations. Designing and addressing the invitations will give everyone plenty of opportunity to write.

2. Make a background for your puppet show. Use a cardboard box or piece of cardboard. Paint a background of green grass and blue sky. Draw a barn with a fence. Cut out a piece of blue paper and glue on a pond.