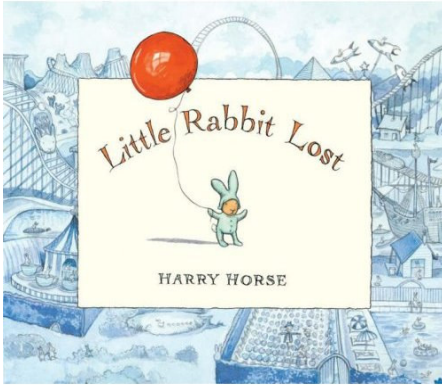




Explore-A-Story Kit

Suggested Age Level: 4-7 years old **Approximate Activity Time:** 45min.

Materials: Needed for using the book: Little Rabbit Lost by Harry Horse



balloon templates*	coloring sheets (2)*	crayons	glue
yarn	construction paper	chart paper	writing paper
rabbit ears template*	pencils	snack	scissors

***supplied in kit**

Introduction:

Hold up your hands in a fist with a red balloon hidden in your palm. Ask the children what do they think you have hidden in your hand. After some guesses, show a deflated red balloon. Ask them to think of some ways people use balloons. Show the cover of the book *Little Rabbit Lost*. Ask the group how they think the balloon will be used in this story.

or

Start off by reading some jokes from the “Funny Bunny” section of this information packet.

or

Dance by doing the Bunny Hop (If you have this song, you can play or sing it while the children dance to the directions).

The Bunny Hop: Start off alone, with partners or as a whole group. When all directions can be followed, get in a line and place hands on the shoulders, or waist of the person in front and follow the directions together.

Right, right
Left, left
Jump Forward
Jump Back
Hop, hop, hop
(repeat)

Read the book-*Little Rabbit Lost*

Possible questions to ask before, during or after the book:

1) When is your birthday?

- 2) What is your favorite amusement park/amusement park ride?
- 3) What is your favorite color balloon? Why?
- 4) Have you ever been lost? What did you do? How did you feel?
- 5) What would you do if you got lost?

Discuss rabbit facts and the differences between rabbits and hares. See information in the **Did you know?** and **Rabbits vs. Hares** sections of this packet.

Craft suggestions:

- Make some rabbit ears (see template directions)
- Make a balloon (see template directions)
- Color rabbit or balloon coloring sheet(s)

Activities:

Younger Children:

Discuss why birthdays are celebrated and give examples of how people celebrate this special day in the US and other countries. Have children act out blowing out candles, singing a birthday song and giving a present. Ask the children if they know any famous birthdays that are celebrated as holidays. (Christmas, Independence Day, President's Day...)

Have the children say the name of the month in which they were born. Next, have children line up in front of the room in the order of the month they were born. (Young children will need help with this activity.)

Older Children:

Draw a picture of something you could use so that you would not get lost from your family in a public place.

Name some ways you could find your family if you did get lost. (Have children think of "good" strangers that might be helpful.)

Game(s):

- 1) **Surprise Present-** Put an item in a box wrapped like a present. Ask the children how they can tell what's inside without using their eyes. (Answer: use other senses-touch, hearing, smell...) Have children open the box one at a time and feel the item. Ask them to use words to describe how the item feels. (hard, smooth, fluffy...) Ask children to guess the item and then show them the actual item.

Possible items to use: rubber spider or rat, marbles, rubber ball, stuffed animal, pen, pencil ...

- 2) **Pin the tail on the rabbit-** Enlarge a picture of a rabbit. Give children a chance to tape a cotton ball on the picture while blindfolded.
- 3) **Find the Carrot-** Hide a carrot and allow one or two children to find it by giving them clues as to how close or far away they are from the item. Use the words hot or cold to cue the children as to whether or not they are close to the hidden carrot.

Possible snacks:

Carrots, rabbit shaped cookies (sugar cookies cut using rabbit cookie cutter), mini carrot cake muffins

Note: Directions for both projects below.

Copy a template for each child or make two or three pre-cut templates using heavy paper such as a folder. *Note:* Heavy paper is recommended for younger children. Color all parts or use construction paper in any color.

***Note:* If construction paper is used, have children use the pre-cut templates to trace an outline of each part of the rabbit's ears or balloon onto the appropriate color of construction paper.**

Template Directions: Rabbit Ears Headband

Directions: (pieces may be colored or construction paper may be used)

1. Trace the outer ears. (any color)
2. Trace the inner ears. (any color, Inner ear should be a different color from outer ear.)
3. Cut out the inner and outer ears.
4. Paste the inner ears on top of the outer ears, making sure both bottom parts are lined up.
5. Using a brown or white piece of construction paper, cut into one-inch wide strips. Make sure the paper strips are long enough to fit around the child's head. Glue or staple the ears onto the band and adjust to child's head. *When stapling, make sure the staples edges are facing away from the head.) Staple or glue areas of the band that overlap to fit the child's head snugly.
6. Write the child's name on the back of the headband.

Cut out all parts and assemble them to resemble picture marked "completed Rabbit Ears Headband". Glue all parts together.

Template Directions: Balloon

Directions: (pieces may be colored or construction paper may be used)

1. Choose the type of balloon pattern you want. (long and curvy or small and round)
2. Trace around the balloon template and/or color the template (any color) and cut out.
3. Write the child's name on the front of balloon.
4. Cut out a small, white square to paste at the top of the balloon. *see finished balloon picture
5. Tape some yarn to the back of the balloon and hang up.

Fun Facts about Rabbits & Hares (Leporids)

- Because of their gnawing teeth, rabbits and hares were once called rodents. However, they are not rodents. They are now categorized as Lagomorphs because of their two rows of upper teeth and their ability to move by hopping.
- Leporids (a rabbit or hare) are more active from dawn to dusk and generally feed on grasses and other plants. They may also feed on buds, twigs, and bark.
- Rabbits and hares live in a variety of habitats from forests, grasslands, swamps, marshes, deserts, fields, farms and tundra. They are also able to live in tropical or dry weather and near rocky, mountainous areas.
- A few rabbits live over a year in the wild, others only live a year or less because they do not have protection from enemies.

- Rabbit enemies include snakes, fox, wolves, coyotes and humans.
- The lifespan of a rabbit is between five to ten years.
- Adult wild rabbits can weigh between two and five pounds and be as big as eight to fourteen inches long with a tail two inches long.
- Female leporids can have as many as eight litters a year. The average litter size of a rabbit contains 4-10 bunnies. Some rabbits can have as little as two bunnies while others can be as large as fifteen in one litter.

Did you know?

- There are almost fifty different species of rabbits and hares in the world.
- Rabbits and hares found in the United States include: cottontail, snowshoe, jackrabbits and many different kinds of domestic breeds.
* *The cottontail rabbit got its name because its tail resembles a cotton ball.*
* *Jackrabbits usually have black ear tips.*
- Some popular varieties include variations of the Angora, Lop, Rex, and Dwarf.
- A rabbit's fur can vary in color, texture and length. Generally, their fur is brown, gray, cream, white or a mixture of these colors. A few species are striped.
- The snowshoe hare's fur turns dark in the summer and white in the winter.
- Rabbits range in size from very small (dwarfs) to very large (giants).
- In the wild, rabbits have established a system in which they thump the ground with a hind foot several times to warn other nearby rabbits of potential danger. Domesticated rabbits have inherited this trait.
- A rabbit's eyes are capable of seeing in every direction making it possible to watch birds in the air and predators on the ground.
- Rabbits twitch their noses almost all the time. They depend on their good sense of smell to tell them if there is danger near.
- A frightened jackrabbit can jump 15 to 20 feet at a time. Cottontails jump little more than eight feet, and they tire more quickly. *Traveling at top speed, they may stop suddenly and jump in another direction. This trick has driven pursuing dogs headlong into barbed-wire fences and even over cliffs.*
- Most rabbits and hares hop. Some can walk and some can even swim!
A cottontail will swim in lakes and creeks to evade predators if found.

- The Volcano rabbit makes its home near volcanoes. This type of rabbit is only found in Mexico and lives in open pine forests where certain grasses grow, usually between 9,000-10,500 feet on the volcano.
- The island-dwelling Ryukyu rabbit and Mexico’s volcano rabbit are among the rarest of mammals in the world.
- One type of European rabbit digs complex burrows called warrens.
A colony of 407 animals was found with a den that had 2,080 entrances!
- The Bunny Hop dance was created in San Francisco in 1953.
- Some people believe that owning a rabbit’s foot is good luck.

Famous Rabbits

Easter Bunny	Bugs Bunny	Energizer Bunny	Peter Rabbit
The White Rabbit (Alice in Wonderland)	Trix Rabbit “Silly Rabbit...”	Thumper, Bambi’s friend	The Volkswagen Rabbit (car)

Rabbits as Pets

- Rabbits are very popular pets.
- They can live in-doors or outside.
- They can also be trained to use a litter box.
- To care for a rabbit you need to:
 - be patient
 - enjoy learning about and playing with your rabbit
 - take your rabbit to the vet each year
 - feed your rabbit fresh water and food each day
 - protect your rabbit from other pets
 - allow your rabbit to freely hop around in a large amount of space each day

Rabbits vs. Hares

Commonalities:

- Many people use the name rabbit to mean both rabbits and hares. However, the rabbit and hare are quite different, sharing some similarities.
- The rabbit family (leporids) consists of rabbits, hares, and pikas (guinea pigs).

Rabbits

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Most rabbits are smaller than hares.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rabbits are very sociable creatures often found living in large groups together in underground burrows called <i>warrens</i>.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Most rabbits are cottontails.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Most cottontail rabbits are weak runners and when threatened by a predator, they tend to scamper into thick brush or dive into their burrow.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rabbits try to keep hidden by hiding in burrows or depressions in the ground during daylight hours.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rabbits tend to live in the same area their entire lives. This land is called their territory. A rabbit learns and remembers every part of its territory enabling it to escape quickly if danger is near.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bunnies are born furless, with their eyes closed and helpless, in a fur-lined nest prepared especially for them.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Young rabbits are called bunnies.

Hares

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hares are generally larger than rabbits. They have longer hind legs and feet, longer ears and can jump higher than most rabbits.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hares are solitary creatures and tend to spend most of their lives alone.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Two kinds of hares are of the snowshoe and jackrabbit variety.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hares are very swift runners and tend to hide among plants and usually try to escape enemies by outrunning them. <i>* Some hares can run about fifty miles an hour, almost as fast as the fastest running animal on earth, the cheetah!</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Most hares are generally more adapted to live in open land. Hares may take shelter in caves or rock crevices.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Baby hares are born on the open ground or in simple nests. At birth, newborn hares are born with a full coat of fur, their eyes open and the ability to run around a few minutes after birth
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A baby hare is called a leveret.

Funny Bunny (rabbit jokes)

1. What do you call a rabbit that tells jokes?

A funny bunny

2. Why do rabbits have shiny noses?

Their powder puff is on the wrong end.

3. How can you tell which rabbits are the oldest in a group?

Just look for the gray hares

4. What is a rabbit's favorite dance?

The Bunny Hop

5. What kind of jewelry do rabbits wear?

14-carrot gold

6. What kind of book does a rabbit like at bedtime?

One with a hoppy ending

7. "Waitress, what's this hare doing in my soup?"

"Looks like the backstroke."

Amusement Park Safety

Parents: Safety at amusement parks and carnivals should be treated just as seriously as car safety. Teach your children how to be safe riders and pay close attention to their actions. Most kiddie rides are safe for most kids most of the time, but amusement park rides present serious risks for young children. By following the guidelines listed, you will be able to have an enjoyable and safe experience at your favorite amusement park. **Kids are quick and clever and endlessly imaginative. Watch them carefully.**

Top 10 Amusement Park Safety Tips for Parents and Kids

- 1. Talk about what to do if your child gets frightened while the ride is moving.** Strongly advise him/her **NOT** to get out of the car.
- 2. Explain to your child the concept of "inappropriate behavior".** Children should be taught to keep all body parts inside the ride.
- 3. Perform your own inspection.** Look at the outside upkeep of the ride. If it is not in good condition, the smaller details are probably being overlooked too.
- 4. Read warning signs aloud and follow the height, weight and health restrictions.**
- 5. Observe the ride operator and watch the ride with your child before boarding.** If the operator is unable to answer your questions, don't go on the ride.
- 6. Pay special attention as the ride slows to a stop and never get off a ride until the operator tells you.**
- 7. Try to join your young child on every ride & don't let your child ride with a stranger.**
- 8. Pick age-appropriate rides.**
- 9. Make sure your child is safely fastened in a seatbelt before the ride.**
- 10. Don't Let Kids Supervise Kids on Amusement Park Rides.**

To read more about *Little Rabbit Lost*, please visit our website at www.peachtree-online.com.

***The information in this kit was obtained using different websites. In most cases, facts chosen were presented on two websites independent of the other. All information is believed to be true and accurate. ***

Sources:

<http://www.geobop.com/Mammals/Lagomorpha/Leporidae/index.htm>; <http://www.rabbitworld.com/>, by Tim Paulson, <http://www.aliexplorer.com/ecology/m101.html>; <http://www.geobop.com/Mammals/Lagomorpha/Leporidae/2.htm> <http://www.blue-hare.com/animals/hare2.html#links>; "Rabbits and Hares." Microsoft® Encarta® Online Encyclopedia 2000 (28 May 2000). ©1999-2000 Microsoft Corporation; Rabbits&Hamsters Online and its respective sources; <http://rabbithamster.virtualave.net/care/rabbits/geninfo.html>; <http://www.yuckitup.com/rabbit.html>; http://www.gardenandhearth.com/Simply_Kids/amusement_park_safety.htm Your Ticket to Amusement Park Safety was originally published in Child Magazine, August, 2000; www.squiglysPlayhouse.com