



Family Fun & Adventures

Chatterbooks activity pack



Reading and activity ideas for your Chatterbooks group



Supported using public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**



Family Fun and Adventures!

About this pack

Here is our June 2013 Chatterbooks activity pack from The Reading Agency and Children's Reading Partners, with ideas for Chatterbooks reading group activities, discussion, and further reading, inspired by new titles and favourite stories - all about the many kinds of families there are and the adventures they get up to.

Chatterbooks [www.readinggroups.org/chatterbooks] is a reading group programme for children aged 4 to 14 years. It is coordinated by The Reading Agency and its patron is author Dame Jacqueline Wilson. Chatterbooks groups run in libraries and schools, supporting and inspiring children's literacy development by encouraging them to have a really good time reading and talking about books.

The Reading Agency is an independent charity working to inspire more people to read more through programmes for adults, young people and Children – including the Summer Reading Challenge, and Chatterbooks. See www.readingagency.org.uk

Children's Reading Partners is a national partnership of children's publishers and libraries working together to bring reading promotions and author events to as many children and young people as possible.

Contents

- About this pack
- Some new books about families – plus a 'taster' from each book
- Top Tips for a Successful Session
- Book List – more reading ideas
- Warm Up and Introductory activities
- Longer activities: *An Outdoor Session; Drawing a Family Portrait; Family Fact Files; Your Family Tree; A Family Time Capsule; A Jeremy Kyle Show!; Inviting Guests*

About this pack

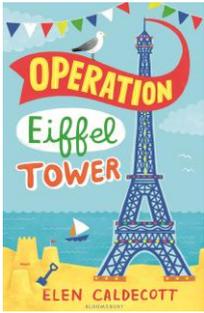
This pack introduces you to new titles from our Children's Reading Partners publisher partners, with tasters from each book.

There is also a booklist of more books to enjoy – some more by these authors, plus further titles with similar themes.

The activities will engage members into lively discussion. Start your session with some fun warm up icebreakers which aim to get children thinking and talking.

Then move on to longer activities – there's a selection here for you which will link with most of the titles recommended in this pack

Family Fun and Adventures – some ‘Taster’ titles



Elen Caldecott *Operation Eiffel Tower* Bloomsbury
9781408805732

About the book: Lauren, Jack, Ruby and Billy live by the seaside with their mum and dad. But their parents are always arguing, and then their dad moves out. Lauren and Jack decide they have to get them together again. And so begins Operation Eiffel Tower . . . in which the four children try to raise money to give their mum and dad a treat in an attempt to make them happier. First they want to send their parents to Paris, but quickly realise they can never afford that, so

instead they set up a dinner for two under the Eiffel Tower in the local crazy golf attraction. But will it get their parents talking again?

A funny and very moving story that tackles important issues with a light touch.

About the author: Elen Caldecott lives in Bristol with her husband and dog, Biff. She has always liked to read books and as a child I would write sequels to her favourite books because she couldn't bear to say goodbye to the characters. Eventually, she started inventing characters of her own. Before becoming a writer, she was an archaeologist, a nurse, a theatre usher and a museum security guard. It was while working at the museum that she realised there's a way to steal anything if you think about it hard enough and therefore either had to become a master thief, or create some characters to do it for her - so she began her debut novel, How Kirsty Jenkins Stole The Elephant. See www.elencaldecott.com

A Taste: *'The ball flew clean over the Atlantic Ocean and dropped – plop – into the hole by the Statue of Liberty's size-twelve feet.*

'A hole-in-one!' Jack cried. 'Hole-in-one, hole-in-one, hole-in-one!' He lifted the club and twirled it as though he were leading a brass band down the High Street. 'Did you see that?' he asked.

Lauren looked up from her magazine. 'Nope,' she grinned. 'I wasn't watching. You'll have to do it agin.'

'I want a go of the stick,' Ruby said.

'It's called a club,' Jack said.

'I want a go of the club,' Ruby said. There was a determined crease between her eyebrows.

Sometimes Ruby looked just like Mum..

...'We need to get back,' Lauren said. 'Mum will be wondering where we've got to.'

Jack sighed.

'One more go?' Ruby asked hopefully.

Lauren paused, then shook her head. 'No.'

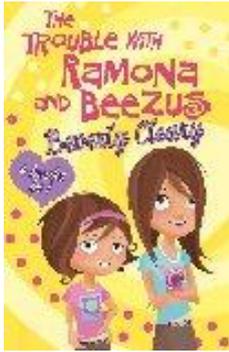
Jack retrieved the ball. He squeezed it in his palm. He liked the feel of its hard dimpled shell. He threw it up and caught it.

'Jack,' Lauren said, 'come on.' She got up off the bench and closed her magazine. The girl on the cover had a wide lipstick smile, as though nothing bad could ever happen in the world.

Jack nodded slowly. Lauren was right – it was time to go back. He just wished they didn't have to.

Near the exit, William, owner of William's World of Wonders, sat in his booth. Jack handed back the club and dropped the ball into a glass dish on the counter top. 'See you tomorrow,' he said.

Have a go at [this great competition](#) around Elen's books!



**Beverly Cleary *The Trouble with Ramona and Beezus* OUP
978-0192755216**

About the book: Four stories in one about two sisters. In the first (*Beezus and Ramona*) Beezus - aged 9 - is trying to cope with her exasperating little sister Ramona, who's 4. In the second tale (*Ramona the Pest*), Ramona starts going to Kindergarten and falls in love with Miss Binney her teacher. In *Ramona the Brave* Ramona's in First Grade and sticks up for her big sister when Beezus gets bullied by some boys, and in the fourth outing (*Ramona and her Father*) Ramona

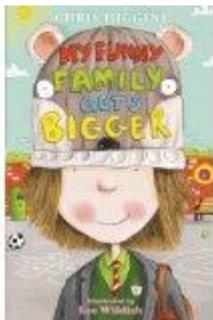
tries to get her father to stop smoking.

The *TES* says: 'These books take you straight to the heart of a believable family set-up with humour, understanding and unflagging pace.'

About the author: Beverly Cleary is one of America's most popular authors. Her books have earned her many awards, including the American Library Association's Laura Ingalls Wilder Award, presented in recognition of her lasting contribution to children's literature. She lives in California and is the mother of grown-up twins.

A Taste: *Beatrice Quimby's biggest problem was her little sister Ramona. Beatrice, or Beezus (as everyone called her, because that was what Ramona had called her when she first learned to talk), knew other nine year old girls who had little sisters who went to nursery school, but she did not know anyone with a little sister like Ramona.*

Beezus felt that the biggest trouble with four year old Ramona was that she was just plain exasperating. If Ramona drank lemonade through a straw, she blew into the straw as hard as she could to see what would happen. If she played with her finger paints in the front yard, she wiped her hands on the neighbour's cat. That was the exasperating sort of thing Ramona did. And then there was the way she behaved about her favourite book...



**Chris Higgins *My Funny Family Gets Bigger* Hodder
978-0340989869**

About the book: Mattie is nine years old and she worries about everything. Which isn't surprising. Because when you have a family as big and crazy as hers, there's always something to worry about. Fortunately, reassurance is always close to hand in this third story about the lovable Butterfield clan.

It's the new school term and, as the baby inside Mum's tummy gets bigger and bigger, the family begins to plan for Christmas. There are lists to be made and presents to be wrapped. But could an unexpected Christmas gift be just around the corner?

About the author: Before writing her first novel, Chris Higgins taught English and Drama for many years in secondary schools and worked at the Minack open-air theatre on the cliffs near Lands End. She now writes full time and is the author of ten books for children and teenagers. Chris is married with four daughters. She loves to travel and has lived and worked in Australia as well as hitchhiking to Istanbul and across the Serengeti Plain. Born and brought up in South Wales, she now lives in the far west of Cornwall with her husband. See www.chrishigginsthatsme.com

A Taste – from *My Funny Family Gets Bigger*:

Dontie-who is eleven-is going to secondary school and Stanley is going to start at my school in reception class.

It's the first time Stanika will have been separated.

Stanika is Stanley and Anika. Stanley is going on five and Anika is going on three. They are always together, that's why we call them Stanika.

I'm worried they're going to miss each other.

I do rather a lot of worrying. Every day I make a Worry List. I find it helps. If I write my worries down, they don't happen. But if I don't write them down, they do.

This summer when I was on holiday in Cornwall I stopped keeping a Worry List. Then my brother Dontie fell off a cliff.

But that's another story.

My name is Mattie and I'm nine and a half. My sister V is seven and three-quarters. V is short for Vera Lynn but she doesn't like her name so we call her V.

Anika's going to stay at home with Mum, just the two of them, while everyone else goes to school, including my dad. He teaches art at the college. But sometime soon there will be three of them at home because my mum's having another baby.

Jellico will be there too, waiting for us to come home from school. Jellico is our scruffy, scrounging, scrumptious dog.

Download these *My Funny Family* [activity sheets](#)!



Fleur Hitchcock *The Trouble with Mummies* Hot Key Books 9781471400469

About the book: Sam comes home one day to find his family turning strange - his mum is redecorating using hieroglyphics and his dad is building a pyramid in the back garden. He hopes it's just a weird new fashion ...but then the strangeness starts to spread. With the help of his friends Ursula, Henry and Lucy the Goat, Sam must save his town from rampaging Roman rugby players, hairdressers turned cavewomen, and a teacher who used to be a 'basket of kittens' but now wants to sacrifice the Year Ones to the Aztec sun god. As history invades Sam's world, will he be able to keep the Greeks away from the Egyptians and discover the cause of the Mummy madness? Warning: contains dangerous dressing-up, mild historical violence and prolonged scary humour.

About the author: Raised in Winchester on the banks of the river Itchen, F.R. Hitchcock grew up as the youngest child of three. When she was eight, she wrote a story about an alien and a jelly. It was called THE ALIEN AND THE JELLY and filled four exercise books. She grew up a little, went away to school near Farnham, studied English in Wales, and, for the next twenty years, sold Applied Art in the city of Bath. When her younger child was seven, she embarked on the Writing for Young People MA at Bath Spa and graduated with a distinction. Now living outside Bath, between parenting and writing, F.R. Hitchcock works with her husband, a toymaker, looks after other people's gardens and grows vegetables.

Visit F. R. Hitchcock at www.fleurhitchcock.wordpress.com – and have a look too at Fleur's Story Adventure (www.thestoryadventure.com), which had over 2300 young people represented on the

site contributing to the live writing project – together they amassed 116,000 page views and spent 2250 hours reading and commenting on each chapter!!

A Taste – from *The Trouble with Mummies*:

Probably the first really noticeable thing was Mum coming back from the hairdresser's on Friday afternoon, wearing a small black beard.

I sat at the kitchen table, staring.

'What?'

'Mum, you've got something...'

'Yes, Sam, dear.'

'Mum - you've got a beard.'

Mum stood at the tiny mirror stuck by the back door. 'Yes dear - don't you like it?'

It's Saturday and Mum's beard hasn't gone away. She's up in the bathroom right now, wrapping it in tinfoil.

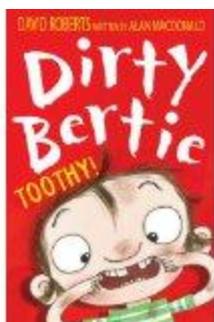
'Sam,' says Dad. He pulls on his jacket. 'Would you like to come into work with me?'

I nearly choke on my cereal. He knows I can't stand his work. Dad runs the City Museum. The really boring, really big City Museum, stuffed full of stuffed things in dusty boxes; beyond your wildest dreams of boring. It's so dull that you have to leave your brain behind at the door to stand it for more than a minute...

'...I thought that just this once you might like a wander round before we re-open to the public on Monday? It's changed in there, really. We've updated it. I'd love to see what you think.'

...We walk into the newly cleaned-up hallway of the museum. It's all very shiny and light. It seems bigger, taller. It used to be crammed with stuffed birds in cases, stuck onto broken twigs and labelled with curly brown scraps of typing. Now there's a huge TV showing floaty skeletons and cave paintings....There's a bank of glass cases, glittering with cleaned-up Egyptian relics. It used to be a single dusty case that looked more like a jumble sale than an exhibit, crammed full of sarcophagi and jars...

For a fun *The Trouble with Mummies* activities pack, visit the [Hot Key website](#).



Alan MacDonald & David Roberts *Dirty Bertie - Toothy!* Stripes Publishing 978-1847153630

About the book: Dirty Bertie - the boy with nose-pickingly disgusting habits - is back for another helping of comic chaos! More disgusting than ever, with crazier plans and increasingly madcap schemes, Bertie continues to delight his legions of fans who revel in his revolting ways. Join Bertie on his 19th adventure in Toothy! as he takes a reluctant trip to

the dentist, tries to keep his cool on the hottest day of the year, and causes a mid-air emergency whilst flying with a very nervous Dad! Dirty Bertie is a hugely popular series created by David Roberts. With each hilarious story approximately thirty pages long and split into chapters, Dirty Bertie is ideal for reluctant boy readers or readers in search of hilarity but with a short attention span.

About the authors: David Roberts is one of the UK's foremost children's illustrators. He has worked with a host of writers including Philip Ardagh, Georgia Byng and the Children's Laureate 2011 - 2013 Julia Donaldson. David won a Gold Award in the Nestle Children's Book Prize for *Mouse Noses On Toast* in 2006, and was shortlisted for the 2010 CILIP Kate Greenaway Medal for *The Dunderheads*.

Alan MacDonald was born in Watford. He dreamed of becoming a professional footballer, but when he won a pen in a writing competition his fate was sealed. Alan has written over eighty children's books, which have been translated into many languages and won several awards. Alan also writes for TV, including *Horrid Henry* on CITV.

Download this Dirty Bertie [activity pack!](#)

A Taste: *'Ah, Bertie,' breathed Mr Filling. 'I've been waiting for you.'*

Bertie was pushed back into a chair. CLUNK! Iron rings snapped down over his wrists. He was a prisoner.

'No, let's have a look, shall we?' cackled Mr Filling. The mask over his face slipped down, revealing two sharp fangs.

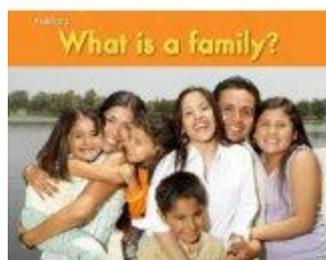
'ARGHHH!' Bertie woke up in bed clutching his pillow. He opened his eyes. Thank goodness, it was only a nightmare.

What day was it today? Just a normal school day – maths, English, then... Bertie turned cold. Then THE DENTIST. HELP!

Later that day, Bertie sat in the dentist's waiting room. Suzy yawned. Mum was reading a magazine. None of the other people in the waiting room seemed nervous at all.

Bertie stared at a poster on the opposite wall. A large smiley tooth said 'Brush your teeth!'

Bertie wished he was back in school – anything was better than this...He gripped his seat. From now on he vowed to clean his teeth ten times a day. He would even use toothpaste. He would give up sweets – apart from jelly snakes, obviously.



Rebecca Rissman *What is a Family?* Raintree 978-1406229714

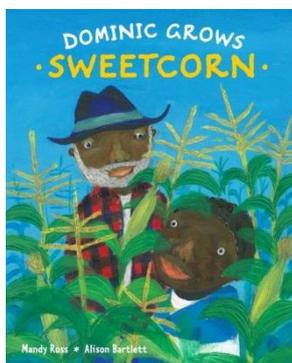
About the book: This is a non-fiction title for younger children, using simple text and vivid photographs, showing how families are groups of people who care for each other, and that all families are different. As well as direct relatives, this discussion of family also includes important people such as role models and foster parents.

About the authors: Rebecca Rissman writes non-fiction books for young people, on a range of subjects including science, maths and history.

Consultant for this title is Anne E. Pezalla PhD, who researches child development and adolescent crowd behaviour.

A Taste: *Some families include parents. Parents are adults who care for children. Male parents are called fathers. Sometimes they are called dads. Female parents are called mothers. Sometimes they are called mums.*

Some parents are divorced. Divorced parents live apart but still care for their children. Some divorced parents remarry. The person that a divorced parent marries becomes your step-parent.



**Mandy Ross *Dominic Grows Sweetcorn* Frances Lincoln
978-1847803276 (ill. Alison Bartlett)**

About the book: When Dominic visits Grandpa, they go into the garden together, and Grandpa shows Dominic how to grow sweetcorn, the way he used to grow it back in Jamaica. While they work, Grandpa tells Dominic about his life in Jamaica, and talks about how he met Dominic's grandma and what happened when they came to Britain. When the sweetcorn is ready to harvest, Grandpa and Dominic trade it for apples from the next-door neighbour, just as Grandpa used to in the Caribbean.

About the author: Mandy Ross has written over 60 children's books, including Peekaboo Baby! (shortlisted for the Sainsbury's Baby Book Award 2001), Animal Lullabies, and Children's History of Birmingham. Twice shortlisted for Birmingham Poet Laureate, Mandy works widely in schools and has also worked with CBSO, Ikon Gallery, Ledbury and Wenlock Poetry Festivals and the Birmingham Book Festival. Mandy takes inspiration from the lively streets of Birmingham where she lives with her partner and 13-year-old son – just across the road from her neighbour Grandma Brown, whose story sowed the seed for this book.

Alison Bartlett writes and illustrates children's books for major publishers in Europe, Asia, Australia and the United States. She lives in Bath with her son Joel and two Jack Russell terriers.

A Taste: *'Did you and Grandma Dora work hard?'* asked Dominic.

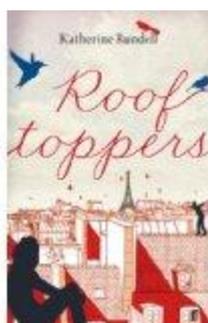
'Yes,' sighed Grandad, *'and harder still when the babies came, your dad and his sisters. Grandma Dora looked after them while I went to work. Then at night I'd see to the babies an' your Grandma Dora worked nights at the hospital. Work, work, work !'*

Sounds hard, Grandad,' said Dominic.

'It was,' said Grandad. *'But now I can stay at home an' look after my garden with you, my boy.'*

'Morning, Wilford!' called Jim from over the fence. *'Morning, young Dominic! Do you want some tomatoes? I've grown too man!. We can't eat them all.'*

Dominic looked at Grandad and smiled.



**Katherine Rundell *Roof-toppers* Faber 978-
0571280599**

About the book: *My mother is still alive, and she is going to come for me one day.* Everyone thinks that Sophie is an orphan. True, there were no other recorded female survivors from the shipwreck which left baby Sophie floating in the English Channel in a cello case, but Sophie

remembers seeing her mother wave for help. Her guardian tells her it is almost impossible that her mother is still alive, but that means still possible. So when the Welfare Agency writes to her guardian threatening to send Sophie to an orphanage, she takes matters into her own hands and flees to Paris to look for her mother, starting with the only clue she has - the address of the cello maker.

Evading the French authorities, she meets Matteo and his network of rooftoppers - urchins who live in the sky. Together they scour the city for Sophie's mother...

About the author: Katherine Rundell was born in 1987 and grew up in Africa and Europe. In 2008 she was elected a Fellow of All Souls College, Oxford. Her first book, *The Girl Savage*, was born of her love of Zimbabwe and her own childhood there. *Rooftoppers* was inspired by summers working in Paris and by night-time trespassing on the rooftops of Oxford colleges. She is currently working on her doctorate alongside an adult novel.

A Taste: *On the morning of its first birthday, a baby was found floating in a cello case in the middle of the English Channel...The baby was found wrapped for warmth in the musical score of a Beethoven symphony. It had drifted almost a mile from the ship, and was the last to be rescued. The man who lifted it into the rescue boat was a fellow passenger, and a scholar. It is a scholar's job to notice things. He noticed that it was a girl, with hair the colour of lightning, and the smile of a shy person.*

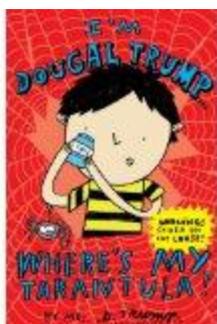
* * *

Love is unpredictable, thought Sophie. She hesitated. Then, 'Charles, can I ask you something?' 'Of course. Always.'

Sophie tried to find the right words. To give herself time she gulped the rest of the chocolate, and ran her finger around the inside of the cup.

'It's only that I've been thinking – if she is alive – and I'm sure she is – why didn't she come for me?' 'But she would have been told you were dead, Sophie...Nobody in France would have known about you.'

'I know. I do know that. But they told me that she was dead and I didn't believe them. Why did she believe it? Why didn't she keep looking?'



D. Trump *I'm Dougal Trump ... Where's My Tarantula?* Macmillan 978-1447220220

About the book: "Mum," I yelled. "Sybil the Goliath birdeater spider is no longer in my room." Somebody has stolen Dougal's tarantula, Sybil (named after his sister - they both have very hairy legs), and she is being held to ransom. Dougal must fulfil the kidnapper's demands before poor Sybil is tortured - one leg at a time.

About the author: Nobody ever listens to D. Trump, so he has to record things in writing - to clear his name, and to point out that the unfortunate things that happen to him are very rarely his fault. He has a moany sister, a mum who cooks brown goo and a dog who inhales socks.

PLEASE NOTE: D. Trump sometimes has a bit of help with his writing from a lady named Jackie Marchant, who lives in north-west London.

A Taste: *EXCITING NEWS! I've just had a phone call from Mr Wellington, President of the London Zoological Association...Sometimes Mr Wellington asks people to look after one of his creatures until he can return them or find them a new home. Today he called me to ask if I would like to look after one of his creatures!*

He emailed me a list of possibilities...I saw a name that leaped from the list and said 'Don't look after the others, look after me!'

Her name is Sybil, pronounced Sibble, just like my sister. But this Sybil is much more beautiful than my sister. This Sybil is a rare and very large spider. Sybil is a Goliath bird-eating spider, the largest type of tarantula there is. She's the size of a dinner-plate and has eight very hairy legs.

Family Fun and Adventures! Book List

Here are some more great books to enjoy!

AUTHOR	TITLE	PUBLISHER	ISBN
	FOR YOUNGER CHILDREN		
Allan Ahlberg	<i>Mrs Lather's Laundry</i> (see all the <i>Happy Families</i> beginner reader series)	Puffin	978-0140312430
Atinuke	<i>Anna Hibiscus</i> (series)	Walker Books	978-1406306552
Floella Benjamin & Margaret Chamberlain	<i>My Two Grannies</i>	Frances Lincoln	978-1847800343
Floella Benjamin & Margaret Chamberlain	<i>My Two Grandads</i>	Frances Lincoln	978-1847800602
Kes Gray	<i>Mum and Dad Glue</i>	Hodder	978-0340957110
Val McDermid	<i>My Granny is a Pirate</i> Download the activity sheet!	Orchard	978-1408309278
Francesca Simon & Tony Ross	<i>Horrid Henry's Nightmare</i> (Horrid Henry series)	Orion	978-1444000160
	FAMILY LIFE – its ups & downs		
Annie Barrows	<i>Ivy and Bean Take Care of the Babysitter</i> (see Ivy and Bean series)	Abrams & Chronicle	978-0811865845
Elen Caldecott	<i>The Great Ice Cream Heist</i>	Bloomsbury	978-1408820506
Roddy Doyle	<i>A Greyhound of a Girl</i>	Marion Lloyd	978-1407129341
Anne Fine	<i>Flour Babies</i>	Puffin	978-0140361476
Anne Fine	<i>Madame Doubtfire</i>	Puffin	978-0140373554
Chris Higgins	<i>My Funny Family</i> (My Funny Family series)	Hodder	978-0340989845
Megan McDonald	<i>Judy Moody Saves the World</i> (series)	Walker Books	978-1406335842
Hilary McKay	<i>Binny for Short</i> See also <i>The Exiles</i>	Hodder	978-

	series, and the Casson Family series		1444900545
Simon Mason	<i>Moon Pie</i>	David Fickling Books	978-0385618519
Wendy Meddour	<i>A Hen in the Wardrobe</i>	Frances Lincoln	978-1847802255
Wendy Meddour	<i>Wendy Quill is a Crocodile's Bottom</i> See this video trailer!	OUP	978-0192794635
Liz Pichon	<i>The Brilliant World of Tom Gates</i> (series)	Scholastic	978-1407120690
Gwyneth Rees	<i>My Super Sister</i> (series) Download these activity sheets!	Macmillan	978-0330461146
Trisha Speed Shaskan	<i>Seriously, Cinderella is So Annoying!</i>	Raintree	978-1406243116
Jacqueline Wilson	All titles!		
	FAMILY ADVENTURES		
Frank Cottrell Boyce	<i>Chitty Chitty Bang Bang and the Race against Time</i> (series) Download this A3 activity sheet!	Macmillan	978-0330544207
Mo O'Hara	<i>My Big Fat Zombie Goldfish!</i> (series) Download these activity sheets!	Macmillan	978-1447227984
Helen Peters	<i>The Secret Hen House Theatre</i>	Nosy Crow	978-0857630650
	CLASSIC FAVOURITES		
Louisa M Alcott	<i>Little Women</i>	Vintage	978-0099572961
Enid Blyton	<i>Five Go to Smuggler's Top</i> (see <i>Famous Five & Secret Seven</i> series)	Hodder	978-1444908688
Frances Hodgson Burnett	<i>The Secret Garden</i>	Vintage	978-0099572954
Eve Garnett	<i>The Family from One End Street</i>	Puffin Modern Classics	978-0141329673
Tove Jansson	<i>Finn Family Moomintroll</i>	Puffin	978-0140301502
L. Montgomery	<i>Anne of Green Gables</i>	Vintage	978-0099582649
E. Nesbit	<i>Five Children and It</i> (see also <i>The Railway Children</i>)	Vintage	978-0099572985
See also Jacqueline Wilson	<i>Four Children and It</i>	Puffin	978-0141341446
Arthur Ransome	<i>Swallows and Amazons</i>	Vintage	978-0099572794
Joanna Spyri	<i>Heidi</i>	Puffin Classics	978-0141322568

Top Tips for a Successful Session

- Look at the pack and use the material to suit your group
- Remember that some Chatterbooks children will whizz through all the activities while some Chatterbooks groups will only need a couple of activities to keep them busy throughout the session.
- Be flexible and have fun
- Photocopy sheets to use as handouts
- Use the Chatterbooks 'Bookbites' post-its to make simple reviews about the books
- Talk to parents and carers at the end of the session to let them know what your group has been doing
- Organise activities as individuals, in pairs or as a whole group
- Make a display of books with a 'Families' theme – use our booklist to help you do this

A Sample 'Families' themed Chatterbooks session plan (times approx)

Welcome – juice & biscuits

Getting started – ice breaker; a simple warm up activity (5 mins)

– eg. talking about what your family best likes doing together; does your family have favourite books? or Family Bingo (see below)

Talking about books (15 mins)

- eg. Books still popular now, that were popular when parents were children; NB. updated stories such as *Young Sherlock*; *Young Bond*; *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang*

Activity – drama, movement, exploring the library, game, making something (30 mins)

- eg. *Design and draw a new scary ride for a family theme park*

Choosing books (10 mins) – this could include choosing a book from anywhere in the library which children think a parent/carer might like

Goodbye, and dates for the next meeting

Warm Up Activities

Here are a few shorter activities to get your group thinking and talking.

Use big sheets of paper to write and draw on and keep these on hand for the whole session to inspire and motivate.

- **Have a discussion about families** – what people are there in a family? Are families the same? What different families can there be?
- Here's what **Jacqueline Wilson** says about families: *'From when I was very young, I made up my own big families and wrote endless stories about them. I was an only child, and I particularly longed for jolly older brothers and special, understanding sisters.'*

If you could **choose story book characters to be your brothers and sisters**, who would they be – and why?

- Talk about **favourite family holidays and outings** – or if your family could go anywhere, where would you go and what would you take?
- Play **'Packing for a Holiday'**: The first person says 'For our family holiday I'm packing swimming things.' The second person adds an item – eg. 'For our family holiday I'm packing swimming things and some books to read.' Go round the group, each person in turn adding an extra item. The last person in the group has to remember everything on the list! (You could go round the group more than once to get a really long list....)
- Pass a joke book round the group, or have a collection of joke books for children to browse through and **choose jokes for their family** – they then take turns reading a joke that they think would make family members laugh
- Look round the library and choose a **book you think your mum/dad would have liked when they were a child.**
- Play **'People Bingo.'** Prepare this by making a list of general characteristics and activities that children in your group are likely to have/do – eg. Favourite colour is green; Doesn't like eating beetroot.

Make up some cards as below, with different permutations – enough for one per child. When you're ready to play, give each participant a bingo card and a pen. Ask the children to go round and talk to each other to find people who match the things on the cards. When they get a 'Yes' they must put the person's name in the corresponding box. (Leave room for this when making the cards). The first person to fill three boxes across or down (or the whole card) yells BINGO! and the game is over.

PEOPLE BINGO CARD A		
Has a dog	Has been to France	Has seen a Wimpy Kid film
Supports Man United	Likes One Direction	Has blue eyes
Has a brother	Has a baby sister	Has a grandma
CARD B		
Has a cat	Supports Man United	Doesn't like drinking milk
Likes reading Roald Dahl	Has brown eyes	Has a grandad
Has a baby brother	Has a sister	Likes One Direction

Longer Activities

With thanks to colleagues from Worcestershire schools, School Library Service, Public Library Service, and Worcester University, for several of these ideas!

1. An outdoor Family Activity

This could be in a park, or a library's garden – with group members and their families. You could also have a picnic!

Icebreaker:

Find interesting items from nearby – eg a bird's feather; leaves

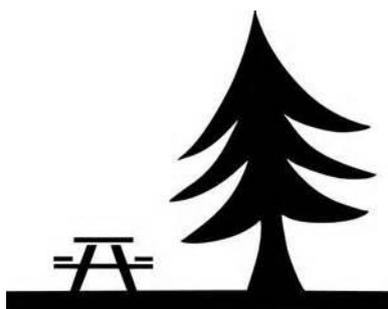
Books:

Have a collection of relevant information books to look at and talk about. Use these to identify what people have found

Activity:

Set up a **story trail**

- Choose some short/picture book stories to share which fit with different settings in your outside location – eg. *The Gruffalo* in a wood/under trees; *The Lighthouse Keeper's Picnic* (Armitage); *The Teddy Bears' Picnic* (Kennedy); *Scaredy Squirrel goes Camping* (Watt); *My Brother's Famous Bottom Goes Camping* (Strong)
- With older children you could choose to read excerpts from longer books – eg. *Swallows and Amazons* (Ransome); *Walk Two Moons* (Creech)
- Or you could take a single picture book story (eg. *The Gruffalo* again!) to read in excerpts at different locations around the whole trail



A Family Portrait

Draw a picture here of your family.

You can also include friends and people who are important to your family.

Give your picture a title, and (in order) say who all the people are in the portrait.

(Or you could label each person in the picture.)



Title:

People in this picture:

Family Fact Files

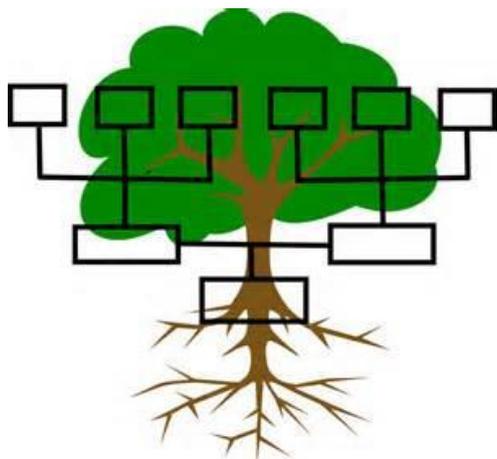
Make a Fact File Pack about your family!

Complete a Fact File sheet for each person, using the template below

You could also design and draw a cover for your pack; then put it together in a loose leaf folder, or by punching holes at the left of each sheet to put ribbon through and tie the sheets together.

FAMILY FACT FILE
NAME
PLACE IN FAMILY
LOOKS – hair, eyes, height etc
ANY SPECIAL CHARACTERISTICS!
LIKES
DISLIKES
FAVOURITE BOOK
BOOK CHARACTER LOOKALIKE
WHY?

Your Family Tree



Talk about a Family Tree – explain that this is a plan which shows how members of a family are connected to each other. Draw a simple plan on a flip chart sheet starting at the bottom with 'Me' and moving up through parents and grandparents. Add in brothers and sisters and aunts and uncles.

Ask children to make lists of who could go on their family tree – maybe they could talk about and research this at home with their families.

Then let them have a go at putting together their family tree, using a simple arrangement like the one below.

Grandmother Grandfather

Grandmother Grandfather

Mother + Uncles & Aunts

Father + Uncles & Aunts

ME + Brothers and Sisters

A Family Time Capsule

What would you put in a time capsule about your family, so that people in 50 years' time could open the capsule and get an idea of what your family was like?

Discuss this in your group and share all your ideas on a flip chart.

Think about:

- Books you enjoy reading
- A newspaper; magazine
- Objects you use
- Things you wear



Talk about how puzzling – or how easy to understand – some items might be to people in the future.

A Jeremy Kyle Show!



Choose a story where there is some conflict or disagreement between family members and then talk together about what are the different points of view and arguments.

Raintree's series 'The Other Side of the Story' would be really good for this. (See *Seriously, Cinderella is so Annoying* in the booklist in this pack)

Or you can take a well-known story and let the children think for themselves what the other side of the story might be.

Write up the points of view on a flip chart, and all decide who will take on the different roles – including a 'Jeremy Kyle' to ask questions and get people talking. Remember – for all the arguments, the aim is to bring people back together to resolve their problems!

Inviting Guests

Children could invite members of their family to come and talk to the group – eg. grandparents with memories and reminiscences; or a local animal sanctuary expert – after all, pets are part of a family!

Get the group to think in advance what they might ask to get a really good Q & A session going.

Evaluation Tip

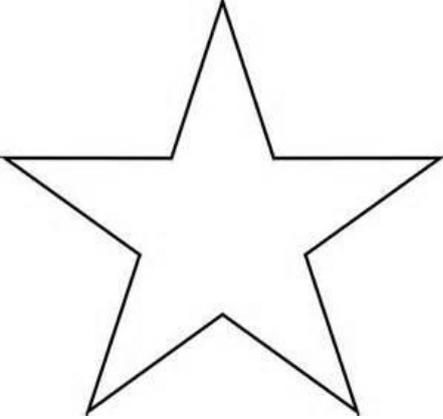
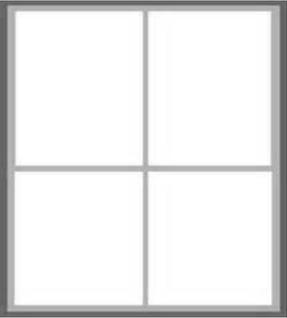
'STAR, WINDOW, WISH'

This is a nice way of finding out what children have got from an activity. You could use the sheet below.

- STAR = this is what they enjoyed, liked best
- WINDOW = this is what they learned (a window on to something new)
- WISH = this is a wish about the activity – it can be critical or appreciative: eg. wish it could have been longer/shorter; wish they could do it again; wish that x had been included...

Chatterbooks session...

My STAR, WINDOW, WISH

 <p>What I liked best</p>	
 <p>A new thing I learned</p>	
 <p>My wish</p>	