



Task Title: Choosing Library Books for Preschoolers

OALCF Cover Sheet – Learner Copy

Learner Name: _____

Date Started: _____

Date Completed: _____

Successful Completion: Yes No

Goal Path: Employment Apprenticeship

Secondary School Post Secondary Independence

Task Description: The learner will read an article and answer questions about selecting storytime books for young children.

Main Competency/Task Group/Level Indicator:

- Find and Use Information/Read continuous text/A1.2

Materials Required:

- Pen/pencil and paper and/or computer

Learner Information

Early Childhood Educators, teachers and parents all choose books for children. It is important to choose books that are age-appropriate and will capture the interest of the child.

Read "Selecting Storytime Books".

Selecting Storytime Books

When prepping for storytime, our staff have a wonderful collection of thousands of picture books right at their fingertips, but choosing a great book involves a lot more than picking one off the shelf just before the program begins. And with hundreds of new picture books added to BPL's collection each year—along with the nostalgic pull of childhood favourites and classic stories—selecting the perfect book for storytime is no easy task.

Five Essential Ingredients

When choosing a great book to read aloud at children's storytime, we consider five key elements: theme, developmental appropriateness, language, images, and inclusion.

Theme

The easiest way to narrow book selection is by theme. Themes include topics kids are familiar with and interested in, such as families, daily routines, nature, emotions, and transportation. Next time you're at a storytime, see if you can figure out the theme based on the books we read, as well as the songs, rhymes, and activities.

Developmentally Appropriate

Choosing books within a child's social/emotional and cognitive development is crucial. Of course, every child develops at different rates, so we look for books that work best for babies, toddlers, and preschoolers.

Babies (0-12 months):

- high-contrast books with bright colours
- minimal text, only 1-2 words, sometimes no words and only images
- babies love real photos of babies and faces
- board books with thick pages that can be easily grasped and moved

Toddlers (1-3 years):

- interactive books where toddlers can participate and move along

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- slightly more text, 1-2 sentences on each page
- pictures of everyday places and objects that they can identify

Preschoolers (3-5 years):

- longer books with more detail and description
- several sentences on one page with exciting vocabulary, often with humour and more complex ideas
- subject prompts discussion, which helps practice language skills, listening skills, and learning to take turns

Interactive Language

We carefully consider the language used in the storytime books and pick those that will delight the listeners and offer plenty of opportunities for the storyteller to connect with their audience. Interactive language may include alliteration, tongue twisters, rhymes, and—a big hit with our storytellers—onomatopoeia (when a word represents a sound, such as “buzz” or “vroom”).

Top of mind are questions like, is there a fun, repeating phrase that everyone can say together? Are there actions that everyone can do together? Are there any animal sounds? Or a line we can sing together? Is there a rhythm that everyone can clap together or babies to bounce to?

For all ages, interactive participation helps build confidence and motor skills and makes reading and listening fun.

Illustrations

Not all illustrations are created equal. Some illustrations are perfect for snuggle-up reading, such as very busy pictures or those with muted colours or lots of detail. Illustrations that are bright and clear with easily recognizable pictures are ideal for grabbing children’s attention. We want to pick books with colourful pictures that kids can easily see.

Inclusivity & Diversity

We are fortunate to live in a diverse community where people of all cultures are welcome— so the books we read in storytime must reflect our audience.

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Exposure to multicultural literature reflects the experiences of others in our community and helps children learn about cultures and experiences different than their own.

And One More Thing

The best books are fun to read! Storytime is about showing others that reading is a source of pleasure. When the storyteller enjoys the story, too, their enthusiasm helps instill a love of reading that little ones and caregivers will carry on at home.

Sourced from Burlington Public Library:

<https://www.bpl.on.ca/news/storytime-books>

Work Sheet

Task 1: List the three features of books intended for preschoolers.

Answer:

Task 2: List the five examples of themes that can be used to choose books for young children. Add three themes to this list.

Answer:

Task 3: List three reasons that interactive participation is important when choosing books for children.

Answer:

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Task 4: Why is it important to select books that are fun to read?

Answer:
