

Tips for Selecting Books for Young Children

Early literacy for lifelong achievement

The following material is an excerpt from the Raising A Reader MA website, www.raisingareaderma.org. Please visit our website to read the complete set of recommendations for buying books for young children and to browse a list of recommended titles....

When shared with an adult trained in Dialogic Reading, books provide children with opportunities to explore new ideas, practice both saying and hearing words, and develop important pre-literacy and other school readiness skills – like sitting still for a story, identifying shapes and colors, and turning pages.

Given our experience inspiring families to read together at home, staff at Raising A Reader MA are often asked “What books should I share with my children, nieces/nephews, and grandchildren?”

Sara Pollock DeMedeiros, our Program Director, offers the following advice: “I recommend that people choose 1) books about topics that excite their children, 2) have great pictures and rhyming text- this allows children to fill in the blanks much more easily, and 3) books that parents won’t mind reading over and over again. Repetition is great for children, so parents should prepare themselves!”

Cesarina Gonzalez, Regional Program Manager for Lowell and herself a mother of three, says: “For babies I recommend board books with shiny and textured materials. For toddlers I suggest books with bold pictures. Books with story lines that can be easily understood but still appeal and reveal more meaning as the child gets older.”

When selecting books for young children remember:

- Search for topics that excite the child who will receive it.
- Look for great pictures that are both appealing to look at and may be used to extend the story experience beyond the words on the page.
- Rhyming text allows children to fill in the blanks more easily while hearing the story; this helps develop phonological awareness (the ability to hear and repeat smaller sounds in words).
- Consider story lines that are appropriate for the child’s age, while also thinking about stories that may have different meaning as the child gets older.
- Share books you will not mind reading over and over and over again!

Raising A Reader MA joyfully accepts donations of new or gently used books to share with families who may not have a complete library at home.

If you are unable to make a cash donation, please consider purchasing any of the following titles to donate:

- *The Snowman*, Raymond Briggs
- *Good Night Moon* (English or Spanish), Margaret Wise Brown
- *The Runaway Bunny* (English or Spanish), Margaret Wise Brown
- *Grandmother and I*, Helen Buckley and Jan Ormerod
- *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* (English or Spanish), Eric Carle
- *Brown Bear, Brown Bear what do you see?* Eric Carle
- *Good Dog Carl*, Alexandra Day
- *Pancakes for Breakfast*, Tommie dePaola
- *Eating the Alphabet*, Lois Ehlert
- *Planting A Rainbow*, Lois Ehlert
- *Whoever You Are*, Mem Fox and Leslie Staub
- *Is Your Mama A Llama?* (English or Spanish), Deborah Guarino and Steven Kellogg
- *Chameleon Races* (English/Portuguese), Laura Hambleton and Manolo Santos
- *Jamaica Tag-Along*, Juanita Havill and Anne Sibley O'Brien
- *Calling All Doves* (English or Spanish), Juan Felipe Herrera and Elly Simmons
- *Guess How Much I Love You* (English or Spanish), Sam McBratney and Anita Jeram
- *All Fall Down*, Helen Oxenbury
- *Clap Hands*, Helen Oxenbury
- *Where the Wild Things Are* (English or Spanish), Maurice Sendak
- *Fifty on the Zebra: Counting with the animals* (English or Spanish), Nancy Grande Tabor
- *The Little Mouse, The Red Ripe Strawberry and the Very Hungry Bear*, Don Wood
- *The Napping House* (English or Spanish), Audrey Wood with Don Wood
- *Piggies*, Audrey Wood with Don Wood
- *Silly Sally*, Audrey Wood

Learn more online:

- www.facebook.com/raisingareadermassachusetts
- www.twitter.com/raisingareaderma
- www.youtube.com/raisingareaderma

Raising A Reader MA is a 501-c-3 nonprofit organization. All donations are tax deductible. Our EIN number is 80-0297898.

