

Characteristics of good books

Books for babies to one year

- Thick cardboard pages
- Flexible cloth or vinyl pages
- Small, chunky format
- Simple, bright pictures or photos
- Few or no words on a page
- Themes that encourage sounds (farm animals, vehicles, etc.)

Books for toddlers and twos

- Cardboard or thick paper pages
- Repetition of words or phrases
- Pictures that tell a story without words
- A story told in a few, simple words
- Nursery rhymes or rhyming words
- Stories about familiar, everyday things
- Simple concepts like colors or shapes

Books for preschoolers

- Increasingly more complicated stories
- Stories about different cultures and places
- Folktales
- Stories about issues children face (fears, separation, and starting school)
- Rhyming text or poetry
- Humorous plots or characters
- Non-fiction subjects
- Color, letter or number themes

Resource:

<http://www.parentsasteachers.org>

Seminole State College
Early Childhood Education
100 Weldon Blvd.
Sanford, FL 32773-6199

Our mission is to promote family involvement by providing information on topics of interest in early childhood education to the parent as the child's first and most important teacher.

Choosing Books for Your Young Child



Sponsored by Seminole State College, the Early Learning Coalition of Seminole, and Florida's Office of Early Learning

Seminole State College
Early Childhood Education
100 Weldon Blvd., Sanford, FL 32773-6199
407.708.2413

ChildDevelopment@seminolestate.edu

Many educational studies show that when parents read to their children from the time they are babies, children learn to read earlier and are better readers later in school. The National Assessment of Educational Progress (1998), known as the Nation's Report Card, found that students with higher reading scores were more likely to report they had encyclopedias, magazines, newspapers and at least 25 books in their home. Having books and magazines at home is important. But how do you know what books to choose for your child? Here are some tips for getting good books for young children of all ages.

Where to get books

Borrowing books from the public library is a good place to start. Many libraries now offer board books for infants and toddlers plus picture books for preschoolers. Garage sales and sales conducted by libraries are good sources of inexpensive books. Or you can organize a book exchange in your neighborhood or preschool so children can trade books. Discount stores, bookstores and Internet book sellers all have bargain sections or run specials. Your parent educator or librarian may also have suggestions for sources of inexpensive or free books in your area.

Where to keep books

Children need to have books where they can reach them, so consider having several places at home and in the car where books are readily available. A cardboard box that the child is allowed to decorate with art work or scribbling is a simple solution. A low shelf or a bottom drawer also allows easy access. Having a section of a shelf on family bookcases lets your child know his books are important, too.

What to look for in a book

Good books for young children need to be well made and durable. Little ones like to really explore their favorite books, carrying them around, tugging on the pages, and even "mouthing" them. Large, colorful pictures attract children to books and hold their interest. The youngest children will enjoy photographs or realistic pictures which help them relate the book to familiar things in their surroundings. Preschoolers are attracted to a wide variety of artwork in books. Good stories with interesting characters and a plot with lots of action also appeal to preschoolers, where babies and toddlers are interested in books with just a few words on the page or ones that label objects in the pictures. Choose books for all ages that picture people with a variety of cultures, races, physical abilities or occupations.

When to get and give books

Anytime is a great time for a new book! Give books for special occasions or everyday treats. Encourage your child to choose a book as a souvenir on a family trip. Encourage grandparents or other relatives to help build your child's personal library, and let the giver have the pleasure of reading the book to your child for the first time. Buy books as gifts for baby showers, children's birthday parties, or holiday gifts. No matter when you give your child a book, you are helping build a love of reading.

