

Book Selection for Dialogic Reading

Guidelines for Selecting Books for Young Children

Guidelines	Means . . .
Appealing and Appropriate	Is the book appealing to young children? Is the content appropriate (developmentally, values, related to content, complexity, etc.)? Is the length appropriate and likely to hold children’s attention?
Alphabet Knowledge (and Early Writing)	Does the book encourage “talk” about the alphabet and its purpose? Does it allow you to reinforce letter names and sounds with multiple examples of words/pictures to represent names and sounds appropriately? Are letters represented in different forms or fonts to encourage generalization?
Comprehension (N-Narrative and E-Expository text) (Listening and Understanding)	Does the book provide opportunities to ask a variety of questions (open and closed, explicit and implicit)? If it is a story, is it a good example to highlight simple story structure, story elements,, sequencing, main idea, details, etc? For information text, does it provide a simple way to address early skills for understanding informational text? Are there examples of realistic pictures, headings, labels, charts, maps, table of contents, directions, graphs, etc?
Concepts About Print (Book Knowledge and Appreciation)	Does the book allow you to focus on word awareness, directionality, or functions of print? Is it a good example for modeling finger point reading? Is there any embedded print? Is the print size appropriate?
Dialogue or Interaction	Is this a good source of discussion topics? Does it provide opportunities for children to participate by repeating phrases, conversing, answering questions, taking turns, manipulating the book, etc?

Handout 6.2

Oral Language (Speaking and Communicating)	Is the book a good example for building background knowledge and vocabulary about a topic? Does the book allow you to emphasize concepts or categories? Does it promote practice opportunities?
Phonological Awareness	Are there opportunities to focus on phonological awareness skills such as rhyming, alliteration, syllables, sound isolation within words, or language play?
Vocabulary—at least 3	Is the book a source for at least 3 words (rich vocabulary that provides opportunities to extend vocabulary and teach words that may not be learned through exposure alone)?
Other	Other features that make this an appropriate book for young children.

Adapted from Cavanaugh, C.L. (2010)