

THE LAST WORD

Localizing ECRR

Alaska Wildlife Touts Five Practices

By Samantha Blanquart

When we think of storytime, we think of sharing a love of books with children, having a good time, and modeling early literacy behaviors for caregivers. We share early literacy tips and demonstrate activities, but we also display early literacy posters on the walls of the storytime rooms.

In fall 2019, at the Anchorage Public Library, we noticed that several of the posters in the story theater of our main library branch were looking a little tattered and dated. So we created fresh and attention-getting graphics that would reflect the individuality of Alaska.

With the help of Ready to Read Alaska, which helps families learn early literacy techniques and lends out free storytime kits, we created a locally inspired poster for each Every Child



Samantha Blanquart with her customized early literacy posters.

plans have been put on hold, but when the world is ready again, we'll be ready to spread the early literacy message throughout our community. &

Ready to Read (ECRR) practice. Each colorful poster features a different Alaska animal—a grizzly bear for “read,” a humpback whale for “sing,” a wolf for “play,” a raven for “talk,” and a moose for “write.”

Because we know that many families cannot attend storytime or library programs, we also created another version of the poster that lists all five practices together, to post in community locations where families spend time, such as local WIC clinics, pediatrician's offices, and laundromats.

As with most libraries, we haven't been able to offer in-person storytime since March 2020, and many of our outreach

Samantha Blanquart is the Early Literacy Outreach Librarian at the Anchorage Public Library. She also coordinates Ready to Read Alaska, sponsored by the Alaska State Library.

Got a great, lighthearted essay? A funny story about children and libraries? Books and babies? Pets and picture books? A not-so-serious look at the world of children's librarianship? Send your Last Word to Sharon Verbeten at CALeditor@yahoo.com.