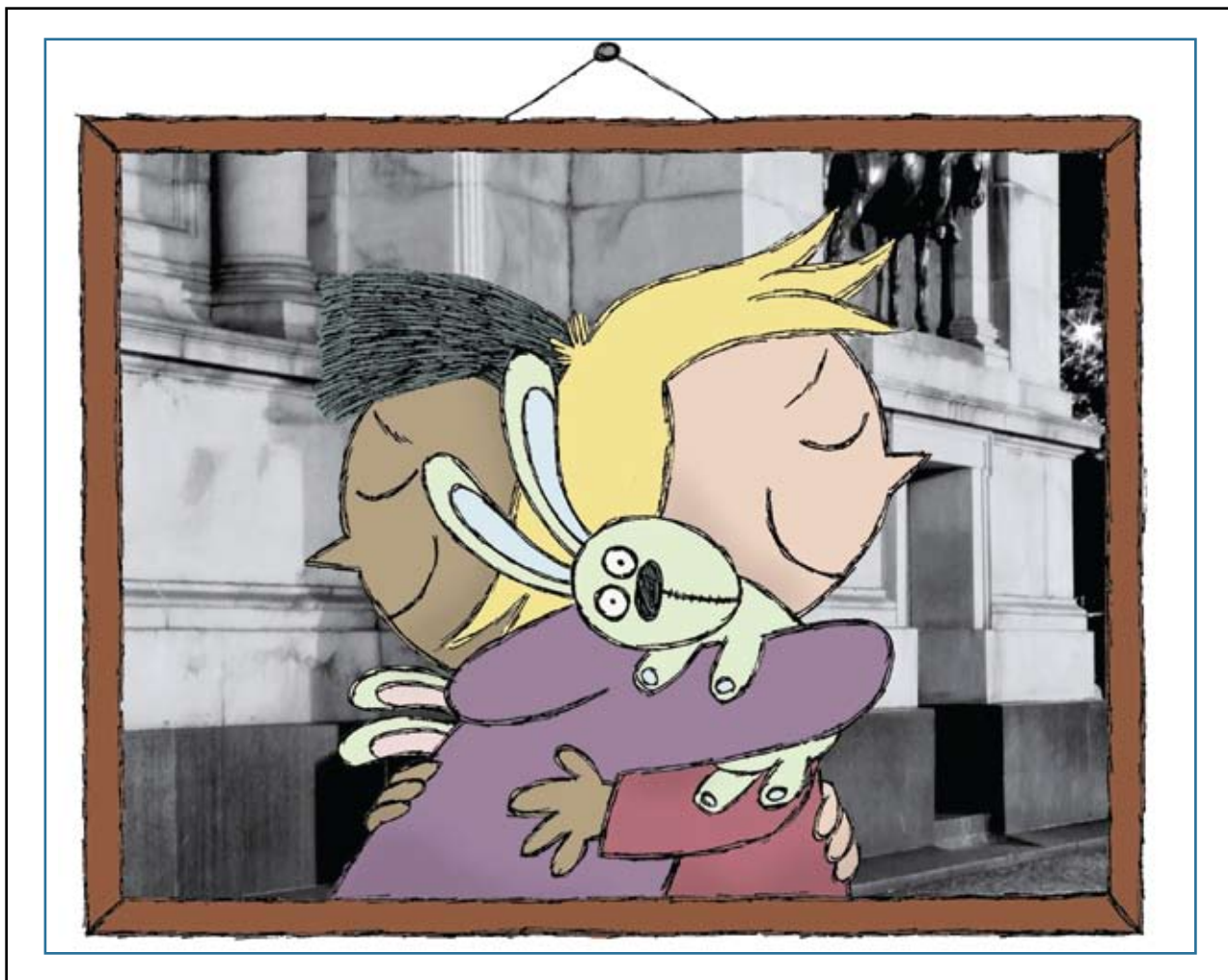


Children & Libraries

the journal of the Association for
Library Service to Children

Volume 5 Number 3 Winter 2007 ISSN 1542-9806



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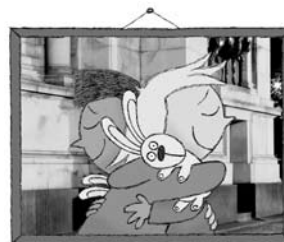
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Cover image from *Knuffle Bunny Too*, Mo Willems (Hyperion, 2007)
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Editor's Note Serving the Underserved

Sharon Verbeten

As we all know, library service to children is as nourishing as a healthy breakfast and as essential as a good night's sleep. It may, perhaps, be even more vital to children with special needs and their parents.

That's why it was so encouraging to have such outstanding speakers and enthusiastic attendees to ALSC's preconference on that topic in Washington, D.C., earlier this year. I'm pleased this issue of CAL is able to focus on some of the topics addressed—from the points of view of librarians, educators, and parents.

Whether you are the parent of a child with special needs (as I am), or a librarian looking for more ideas on how to serve special needs families, this issue is inspiring.

My daughter, Holland, just turned one, and I've worked hard to network with bookstores, libraries, therapy groups, and others to bring books and other resources into her life. I feel lucky that she has been born at such a promising time . . . when—we can hope—the term “underserved” may soon be incorrect. ☺



Executive Director's Note Be Bop, Blues, Books, and Language

Diane Foote

Fisk, fisk.” “Ma-Da.” These were the two things my toddler son could say last summer; we'd enrolled him in our state's early intervention program earlier in the year, and speech was a primary concern. He referred to his father and me interchangeably as “Ma-Da,” but that was about the only thing he could say that related to his daily experiences. Naturally, with me as a mother, he had an enormous collection of books, but truthfully, his father was the one who spent the most time reading with him.

Chris Raschka's *Charlie Parker Played Be Bop* was an adults' favorite, along with other music-themed picture books, such as *Blues Journey* by Walter and Chris Myers and *Ellington Was Not a Street* by Ntozake Shange and Kadir Nelson, but the Raschka book did what no other book, and almost no efforts by the speech therapist or mom or dad, had been able to do: inspire him to verbalize something that was of interest to him.

We hope the articles in this issue will guide and inspire youth librarians to leverage the library's incredible resources, human, audiovisual, and electronic in addition to print, to benefit all children, with all kinds of interests and needs.

At age four, Steven is still getting speech therapy, and he's made enormous strides. He still loves books, especially *Knuffle Bunny* and the Pigeon books by Mo Willems and Ezra Jack Keats' *The Snowy Day*. Every now and then we pull out his old favorites, and now he can say “saxophone,” “bus stop,” and “leg bone.” Boomba boomba! ☺

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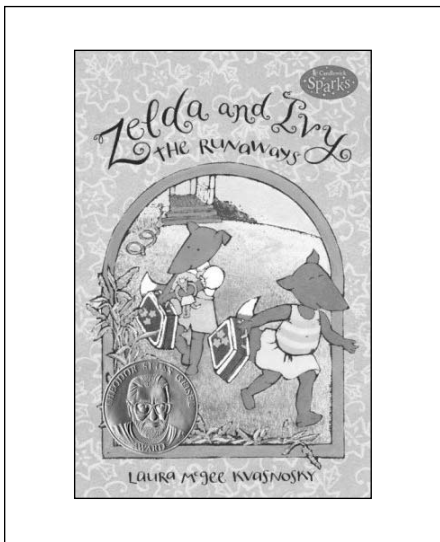
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Geisel Medal Acceptance Speech

The Power of Fairy Godmothers

By Laura McGee Kvasnosky



*Laura McGee Kvasnosky is the winner of the 2007 Theodor Seuss Geisel Medal for *Zelda and Ivy: The Runaways*, published by Candlewick. Her acceptance speech was delivered at the Annual Conference of the American Library Association in Washington, D.C., on June 25, 2007.*

I've been lucky in life to cross paths with librarians who I've come to think of as fairy godmothers. These fairy godmother librarians show up when I most need it and offer unexpected generosity.

The first was Mrs. Hoe at the Tuolumne County Library in Sonora, California. Mrs. Hoe even looked like a fairy godmother—tiny, with twinkling eyes—and I am pretty sure she had wings neatly folded under her crisply starched white blouse. I was the new girl, a lonely eight-year-old, when Mrs. Hoe handed me a book about another Laura who had moved (to a *Little House in the Big Woods*). I expect you all know the power of the right book at the right time.

Other fairy godmother librarians have graced my path. Gayle Richardson at Seattle Public Library gave me courage to submit my first book dummy, thus launching my career. Marian Creamer of Portland, Oregon, revealed the magic of a fabulous school visit and became a dear friend.

Then last January, a whole flock of fairy godmother librarians—and one fairy godfather librarian—gave my book the Theodor Seuss Geisel Medal. Thanks to each of you for this unexpected generosity.

As often happens when you write a story, *Zelda and Ivy: The Runaways* is not exactly what I intended. I was writing three adventures for the fox sisters, but it turns out I was also writing about the writing process itself.

In the title story, *Zelda and Ivy* run away to the backyard, something my sister Nan and I did when we didn't want to clean our room. But in a sense, it's the same journey you take when you write a story. You leave home for points unknown, and return, somewhat changed, to a room that still needs cleaning.

Which is what I was doing when I got the idea for the second story; I was vacuuming my son Tim's room. Under the carpet, I found an envelope addressed in

his second-grader printing—*A Gift to the World of the Future from the World of the Past*. Inside was a quarter. I began the Time Capsule story with Tim's line.

But what is a book if not a time capsule? Stretching backward as well as forward, encapsulating the past into a package for the future.

*In the title story, *Zelda and Ivy* run away to the backyard, something my sister Nan and I did when we didn't want to clean our room. But in a sense, it's the same journey you take when you write a story. You leave home for points unknown, and return, somewhat changed, to a room that still needs cleaning.*

In the third story, *The Secret Concoction*, *Zelda* is given Creative Juice—which gave me a chance to demonstrate my belief that every creative work has a life of its own. So it is with the life of the *Zelda and Ivy* series. This award suggests they were meant to become beginning readers.

Which brings me to my thanks. Thanks to my husband, John. Thanks to my critique group. Thanks to the wonderful people at Candlewick Press, especially editor Liz Bicknell, art director Kristen Nobles, and Kate DeRosier in sales. And thanks to the fairy godparent librarians on the Geisel Committee.

Because of all of you, this Cinderella is having a ball. ☺

Library Services

to Children with Special Needs

Is Your Early Childhood Literature Collection Disability-Inclusive and Current?

Crystal E. Kaiser

As early education becomes progressively more inclusive, young children with disabilities and a wider range of special needs are increasingly more likely to be a part of community group care and educational programs and thereby included in library field trips.

It is imperative for them and important to their teachers that they are able to find literature at their interest level that reflects an acceptance of their particular disability or special need. Similarly, with the earlier identification of disabilities and special needs, more parents may be educated as to the precise nature of the specific challenges facing their young child and may wish to locate appropriate literature that might validate their child and help him to identify with another child experiencing similar challenges. A comprehensive listing of more than three hundred such titles currently in print is presented, each of which has been categorized and subcategorized to facilitate research for specialized content. In addition, approximately one hundred additional titles on closely related topics also are presented.

Research Challenges

Children's librarians are important sources of information for parents of young children with special needs and disabilities who seek picture books and beginning chapter books with which their preschool or early primary-age child can readily identify. In addition, greater numbers of early childhood teachers are now teaching in inclusive programs in which children with a wide variety of disabilities and special needs may be integrated, posing new curricular challenges for which children's literature resources may be sought. Despite these

imperatives, locating such titles among current books in print may be surprisingly challenging and time-consuming, even for veteran librarians, particularly in this age range.

Additionally, there are too many out-of-print titles still occupying library shelves that may reflect a very different time in this rapidly changing field, along with now-objectionable attitudes and dispositions toward these populations. They also may present now-incorrect or seriously outdated medical or developmental information, as well as now-objectionable terminology, making them a somewhat risky alternative to all but the experts in this field for most purposes.

There are numerous reasons why appropriate titles are particularly hard to find in this specialty area using traditional search engines and library resources. First, perhaps due to business decisions based upon relatively limited audiences, many of these books go out of print unusually rapidly, often before several reliable children's books in print compilations are even published. Second, many titles are more likely to come from small, specialty publishing houses that may have limited visibility within mainstream library sources.



Crystal E. Kaiser is Associate Professor in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction and Director of Early Childhood Special Education Programs at the Ruth S. Ammon School of Education at Adelphi University in Garden City, New York. She can be reached at kaiser@adelphi.edu

Third, even otherwise reliable Internet search engines often fail to successfully isolate literature specifically for the young child on these highly specialized topics. Even texts indicated to be in the target age range often were found to be at a higher level than would be appropriate for a seven-year-old or second-grader. The time necessary to amass current information on these topics makes it unrealistic for most children's librarians to conduct this research in response to individual requests, and there is currently no central resource for them to consult that would measurably speed such a search.

A New Resource

Presented here is a comprehensive literature review of more than three hundred current books in print for and about young children with special needs from ages two to seven, presented by category and subcategory for ease of reference. Many of the topical titles identified here may have relevance for caregivers of all young children, extending to such topics as wearing glasses or an eye patch, getting ear tubes, or having asthma or a peanut allergy.

Recommendations

There is a smaller subset of the presented book titles that represents particularly salient exemplars of current recommended best practice or especially positive portrayals of young children with special needs as they interact with their families and friends, and that also provides both realistic and factually correct information on specific conditions. Highlighting these titles should provide welcome guidance to those children's librarians most interested in conducting a more selective and topically representative review with a focus on quality that may best reflect the state of the practice in early childhood special education today.

* Denotes a particularly recommended text reflecting current facts or dispositions.

° Denotes text with religious or spiritual overtones.

I. Differences, Disability, Illness, and Related Conditions

Alopecia

Lonczak, Heather. *Mookey the Monkey Gets Over Being Teased*. Magination Pr., 2006.

*Murphy-Melas, Elizabeth. *The Girl with No Hair: A Story about Alopecia Areata*. Health Pr., 2002.

*Peterseil, Yaacov. *Princess Alopecia*. Pitspopany Pr., 1999.



Attentional Disorders

Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD)

Carpenter, Phyllis.

Sparky's Excellent

Misadventures: My A.D.D. Journal by Me (Sparky). Magination Pr., 1999.

*East, J. *ADD in Poetry*. Trafford, 2004.

Nemiroff, Marc, and Jane Annunziata. *Help Is on the Way*. Magination Pr., 1998.

Weiner, Ellen. *Taking A.D.D. to School*. JayJo Books, 1999.

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

Bishop, Brett, and Laura Olson. *Clayton's Path*. Apogee Publ., 2001.

Corman, Clifford, and Esther Trevino. *Eukee, the Jumpy Jumpy Elephant*. Specialty Pr., 1995.

*Galvin, Matthew. *Otto Learns about His Medicine*. Magination Pr., 2001.

Gehret, Jeanne. *Eagle Eyes: A Child's Guide to Paying Attention*. Verbal Images Pr., 1990.

Gordon, Michael. *My Brother's a World Class Pain*. GSI Publ., 1992.

*———. *Jumpin' Johnny, Get Back to Work*. GSI Publ., 1998.

Kraus, Jeanne. *Cory Stories*. Magination Pr., 2004.

Lee, Betsy. *Whoa, Wiggle-Worm*. Learning Abilities Books, 2003.

*Moss, Deborah. *Shelley, the Hyperactive Turtle*. Woodbine, 2006.

Penn, Audrey. *A.D.D. Not B.A.D.* Child and Family Pr., 2003.

Rotner, Shelley, and Sheila Kelly. *The A.D.D. Book for Kids*. The Millbrook Pr., 2000.

*Shapiro, Lawrence. *Sometimes I Drive My Mom Crazy, but I Know She's Crazy about Me*. Child's Work, 1995.

Tunis, Sandra. *Why Can't Jimmy Sit Still?* New Horizon Pr., 2004.

Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD)

Autism/Pervasive Developmental Disorder Not Otherwise Specified (PDD-NOS)

*Amenta, Charles. *Russell Is Extra Special*. Magination Pr., 1992.

Bishop, Beverly. *My Friend with Autism*. Future Horizons, 2002.

Day, Alexandra. *The Flight of a Dove*. Farrar, 2004.

Edwards, Andreanna. *Taking Autism to School*. JayJo Books, 2001.

Edwards, Becky. *My Brother Sammy*. Bloomsbury Children's Books, 1999.

Ellis, Marvie. *Keisha's Doors*. Speech Kids Texas Pr., 2005.

*———. *Tacos Anyone?* Speech Kids Texas Pr., 2005.

Ely, Lesley, and Polly Dunbar. *Looking After Louis*. Albert Whitman, 2004.

Healy, Angie. *Sometimes My Brother*. Future Horizons, 2005.

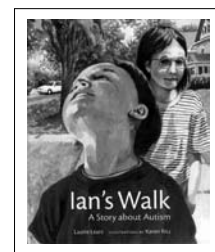
*Lears, Laurie. *Ian's Walk*. Albert Whitman, 1998.

Messner, Abby W. *Captain Tommy*. Future Horizons, 1996.

Peralta, Sarah. *All about My Brother*. Autism Asperger Publ., 2002.

Thompson, Mary. *Andy and His Yellow Frisbee*. Woodbine, 1996.

*T w a c h t m a n - Cullen, Diane. *Trevor Trevor*. Starfish Pr., 1998.



Yamanaka, Lois-Ann. *The Heart's Language*. Hyperion, 2005.

Asperger's Syndrome

Gagnon, Elisa, and Brenda Smith Myles. *This Is Asperger Syndrome*. Autism Asperger Publ., 1999.

*Hoopmann, Kathy. *All Cats Have Asperger Syndrome*. Jessica Kingsley, 2006.

*Larson, Elaine Marie. *I Am Utterly Unique*. Autism Asperger Publ., 2006.

*Murrell, Diane. *Friends Learn about Tobin*. Future Horizons, 2007.

Schnurr, Rosina. *Asperger's Huh? A Child's Perspective*. Anisor Publ., 1999.

Emotional Challenges

Fear, Anxiety, or Shyness

*Best, Cari. *Shrinking Violet*. Farrar, 2001.

Cain, Barbara. *I Don't Know Why—I Guess I'm Shy*. Magination Pr., 1999.

Crary, Elizabeth. *I'm Scared*. Parenting Pr., 1994.

*Henkes, Kevin. *Wemberly Worried*. Greenwillow, 2000.

Meiners, Cheri. *When I Feel Afraid*. Free Spirit Publ., 2003.

*Spelman, Cornelia. *When I Feel Scared*. Albert Whitman, 2002.

*Stewart, Shannon. *Sea Crow*. Orca, 2004.

Wells, Rosemary. *Shy Charles*. Puffin Books, 1988.

Sadness and Depression

Goldblatt, Rob. *The Boy Who Didn't Want to Be Sad*. Magination Pr., 2004.

*Greive, Bradley. *The Blue Day Book for Kids*. Andrews McMeel Publ., 2005.

Mundy, Michaelene. *Sad Isn't Bad*. Abbey Pr., 1998.

*Spelman, Cornelia. *When I Feel Sad*. Albert Whitman, 2002.

Sprecher, John. *Jeffrey and the Despondent Dragon*. Special Kids, 1997.

Chronic Illness

Allergies

*Black, Christina. *Mommy, Is This Safe to Eat?* R3C Creations, 2006.

*Gosselin, Kim. *ZooAllergy*. JayJo Books, 1996.

Harrison, Troon. *Aaron's Awful Allergies*. Kids Can Pr., 1996.

*Koster, Gloria. *The Peanut-Free Café*. Albert Whitman, 2006.

*Nassau, Elizabeth. *The Peanut Butter Jam*. Health Pr., 2001.

O'Reilly, Nadine. *Peter Can't Eat Peanuts*. O'Reilly Publ., 2005.

Powell, Jillian. *Aneil Has a Food Allergy*. Chelsea Clubhouse, 2004.

*Smith, Nicole. *Allie the Allergic Elephant*. Jungle Communications, 2004.

*———. *Cody the Allergic Cow*. Jungle Communications, 2004.

———. *Chad the Allergic Chipmunk*. Allergic Child Publ. Group, 2006.



Ureel, Jessica. *The Peanut Pickle*. First Page Publ., 2004.

Weiner, Ellen. *Taking Food Allergies to School*. JayJo Books, 1999.

Asthma

Glaser, Jason. *Asthma*. Capstone, 2006.

Gordon, Sharon. *Asthma*. Children's Press, Scholastic, 2003.

*Gosselin, Kim. *Taking Asthma to School*. JayJo Books, 1998.

*———. *The ABC's of Asthma*. JayJo Books, 1998.

*———. *Sportercise!* JayJo Books, 2004.

Kroll, Virginia. *Brianna Breathes Easy: A Story about Asthma*. Albert Whitman, 2005.

*London, Jonathan. *The Lion Who Had Asthma*. Albert Whitman, 1992.

Moore-Mallinos, Jennifer. *I Have Asthma*. Barron's Educational Series, 2007.

Muirhead, Maria. *My Asthma Book: Story and Activity Book*. iUniverse, 2007.

Powell, Jillian. *Zack Has Asthma*. Chelsea Clubhouse, 2005.

Robert, G. *Sillwee Wobbert and Wheezing Will in the Big Game*. Dream Publ., 2003.

Cardiac (Heart) Problems

Robert, G. *Sillwee Wobbert the Happy Heart Kid*. Dream Publ., 2001.

Celiac Disease

Falini, Nancy. *Gluten-Free Friends: An Activity Book for Kids*. Savory Palate, 2003.

*Kruszka, Bonnie. *Eating Gluten-Free with Emily: A Story for Children with Celiac Disease*. Woodbine, 2004.

Lowell, Jax. *No More Cupcakes and Tummy Aches*. Xlibris, 2004.

Crohn's Disease

*Sileo, Frank. *Toilet Paper Flowers: A Story for Children about Crohn's Disease*. Health Pr., 2005.

Juvenile Diabetes

*Block, Jed. *The Best Year of My Life: Book 1: Getting Diabetes*. N.E.W. Printing, 1999.

Glaser, Jason. *Juvenile Diabetes*. Capstone, 2007.

Mulder, Linnea. *Sarah and Puffle: A Story for Children about Diabetes*. Magination Pr., 1992.

Olson, Michael. *How I Feel: A Book about Diabetes*. Lantern Books, 2003.

*Pirner, Connie. *Even Little Kids Get Diabetes*. Albert Whitman, 1991.

*Powell, Jillian. *Becky Has Diabetes*. Chelsea Clubhouse, 2004.

Robert, G. *Sillwee Wobbert, Diabetes, and Jose at School and Play*. Dream Publ., 2003.

Juvenile Rheumatoid Arthritis

Aldape, Virginia. *Nicole's Story: A Book about a Girl with Juvenile Rheumatoid Arthritis*. Lerner, 1996.

Miller, Dee Dee. *Taking Arthritis to School*. JayJo Books, 2002.

*Murphy-Melas, Elizabeth. *Keeping a Secret: A Story about Juvenile Rheumatoid Arthritis*. Health Pr., 2001.

Sickle Cell Disease

*Baldwin, Carol. *Sickle Cell Disease*. Heinemann, 2003.

Communication and Speech

*Holcomb, Nan. *Sarah's Surprise*. Jason and Nordic Publ., 1990.

*Lears, Laurie. *Ben Has Something to Say: A Story about Stuttering*. Albert Whitman, 2000.

Lester, Helen. *Hooway for Wodney Wat*. Houghton/Walter Lorraine, 1999.

Stuve-Bodeen, Stephanie. *Babu's Song*. Lee and Low, 2003.

Craniofacial Disorders

Brink, Benjamin. *David's Story: A Book about Surgery*. Lerner, 1996.

Disabilities in General

General Disabilities

Anderson, Peggy. *We Go in a Circle*. Houghton/Walter Lorraine, 2004.

Bertrand, Diane. *My Pal, Victor/Mi Amigo, Victor*. Ideals Children's Books, 2004.

Brown, Tricia. *Someone Special, Just Like You*. Holt, 1995.

DeLoach, Kathleen. *Daniel's World: A Book about Children with Disabilities*. Three Moons Media, 2004.

*Dwight, Laura. *We Can Do It!* Star Bright, 1997.

———. *Brothers and Sisters*. Star Bright, 2005.

Green, Jen. *I'm Special*. Wayland Publ., 2007.

*Maguire, Arlene. *Special People, Special Ways*. Future Horizons, 2000.

Morse, Linda. *Sam's Just Sam*. Bear Hug Pr., 2001.

Smith, Sally. *Different Is Not Bad, Different Is the World: A Book about Disabilities*. Sopris West, 1994.

*Thomas, Pat. *Don't Call Me Special: A First Look at Disability*. Barron's, 2002.



*Weninger, Brigitte. *One for All, All for One*. Penguin, 2005.

Willis, Jeanne. *Susan Laughs*. Holt, 2000.



Service/Helping Animals

*Brussee, Warren. *Laoch (Lay-Ock): The Guide Dog Puppy*. Booklocker.com, 2006.

Calmenson, Stephanie.

Rosie: A Visiting Dog's Story. Houghton, 1994.

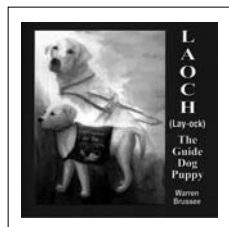
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Moore, Eva. *Buddy: The First Seeing Eye Dog*. Scholastic, 1996.

Oliver, Clare. *Animals Helping with Special Needs*. Grolier, 1999.

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Down Syndrome (see also Mental Retardation and Developmental Delay)



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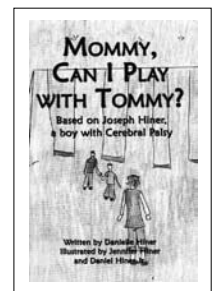
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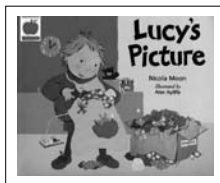
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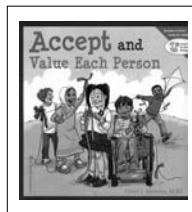
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Editor's note: Selected portions of this work were presented at the 22nd Annual International Conference of the Division for Early Childhood (DEC) of the Council for Exceptional Children, October, 2006, in Little Rock, Arkansas. The author is an International Past President of DEC.

This work also was the impetus for devoting the Winter issue of CAL to library services for children with special needs. We're pleased to incorporate other perspectives on this topic in this issue as well.

Library Services

to Children with Special Needs

Where Is It? *¿Dónde Está?*

Spanish Language Resources about Children with Special Needs

Carrie Banks

When parents discover their child has a disability, they are often overwhelmed by a variety of emotions and choices. Many experts describe a process similar to the five stages of grieving that many parents go through.

Decisions about medical treatment and education must be made, sometimes when the parents are dealing with a condition they may never have heard of. And then there is the task of explaining things to family and friends. Some will understand; some will not. Some will be helpful, and some will be hurtful. Now, imagine dealing with all of that if you do not speak the same language as your child's doctors, therapists, and teachers.

Spanish-speaking families of children with disabilities face many obstacles to getting the care and services their children need, and language itself often creates a barrier. Lack of cultural competency on the part of service providers also can hinder access. In addition, families might be unwilling to become involved with governmental agencies. Finding accurate, current, and understandable information also can be challenging. Without access to such information, informed decisions about medical, educational, and therapeutic options cannot be made.

Exceptional parenting books in Spanish are rare. A major New York-based distributor recently found only twenty-one books on disabilities issues, and only seven covered children with disabilities. The topics covered included Attention Deficit Disorder

with and without hyperactivity, autism spectrum disorders, alcoholism, Alzheimer's, anorexia and bulimia, AIDS, bipolar disorder, Down Syndrome, cancer, diabetes, fibromyalgia, heart disease, mental retardation, and schizophrenia. Many issues are not addressed at all. Learning disabilities, blindness, deafness, and cerebral palsy are a few of the overlooked topics.

A search of Brooklyn Public Library's catalog turned up fifty titles on related topics, with only fourteen dealing with children. It is not for lack of trying. Brooklyn Public Library has had a concerted buying effort for the past three years, including at American Library Association (ALA) conferences and the Guadalajara book fair. A survey of all of the Spanish-language publishers at the ALA Annual Conference in Washington, D.C., turned up one new book.

There are often problems with the books available. Those that are translated from English have a short shelf life because they are often published a year later in Spanish. Books published originally in Spanish often describe the medical and educational protocols of the countries where they are published, which can be different than those in the United States. Because of their grassroots nature and desktop publishing capacity, they are able to identify needs and meet them more quickly than traditional publishing.

So, where do we go to meet the needs of these families? Advocacy agencies and parent groups are good sources of current Spanish language material on children's disability issues. The Internet, of course. Web sites run by the government, parent advocacy groups, medical centers, professional organizations, and others can be very helpful. There are even sites for children. The following sites were evaluated with respect to

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currency, accuracy of the information to United States protocols, publisher authority, and ease of access. They were all either written in Spanish or translated by a person, not a computer program.

Spanish Language Disability Web Resources for Parents of Children with Special Needs

Allergies and Asthma

American Academy of Allergy Asthma and Immunology, www.aaaai.org/patients/resources/spanish.stm. Information on asthma and allergies for patients and parents of patients.

Arthritis

National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases, www.niams.nih.gov, click on “Portal En Español” at the bottom of the page. A division of the National Institutes of Health, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has several brochures in English and Spanish on lupus, arthritis, and so on.

Attention Deficit Disorder

Children and Adults with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (CHADD), www.chadd.org, click on “En Español,” upper right. Basic information about ADD with or without hyperactivity.

Autism

Autism Society of America, www.autism-society.org, click “En Español” at the bottom of the page. Basic information on autism spectrum disorders.

Blind and Deaf

Planeta Visual, www.planetavisual.net/sc. Covers many aspects of the experience of people who are deaf and blind.

Diabetes

Los Diabetes y los Latinos, www.diabetes.org/espanol. This official site of the American Diabetes Association has an abundance of good information, from medication to diet and exercise.

La Zona Juvenil, www.diabetes.org/espanol/zona-juvenil.jsp. Older children and teens can get basic information on diabetes, nutrition, medications, and connect with others with diabetes here.

Down Syndrome

National Down Syndrome Society, www.ndss.org, click “En Español” on left sidebar. Basic information on the many aspects of Down Syndrome.

Epilepsy

Epilepsy Foundation, www.epilepsyfoundation.org/contestacion. Frequently asked questions.

Epilepsy Foundation of Arizona, www.epilepsyfoundation.org/local/arizona/spanishlinks.cfm. Covers an extensive list of topics ranging from surgery and children to medications and the ketogenic diet.

Learning Disabilities

Colorin Colorado, www.colorincolorado.org, click on “En español” in the left sidebar. This bilingual site for families and educators of English language learners includes a section on learning disabilities. Many other topics relating to literacy also are addressed.

Mental Illness

Mental Health America, www.nmha.org/go/en-espanol. Formerly the National Mental Health Association, this site covers a variety of topics for which information in Spanish is difficult to find, including schizophrenia and information for military families, among others.

National Alliance on Mental Illness, www.nami.org, click “En Español” on the top bar. Includes resources, advocacy, and discussion groups.

Physical Disabilities

Spina Bifida Association, www.sbaa.org, click “En Español” on the top bar. Comprehensive information from the leading support group.

United Cerebral Palsy, www.ucp.org, click on “En español” in the left sidebar. Focuses on all aspects of cerebral palsy and some other types of physical disabilities.

Special Education

Early Childhood Research Institute: Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services, www.clas.uiuc.edu. This English/Spanish site finds, evaluates, and disseminates research on effective early childhood special education practices. Though it targets professionals, much of the information could be useful to parents.

Speech Disabilities

Fundación Americana de la Tartamudez, www.tartamudez.org. Resources, information, services, and support for people who stutter.

Miscellaneous Various Disabilities and Medical Conditions

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, www.cdc.gov, click on “CDC en español,” in the upper right. Covers many different conditions, including sickle cell, diabetes, and developmental disabilities.

Centro Nacional de Diseminación de Información para Niños con Discapacidades, www.nichcy.org/spanish.htm. “Resources You Can Use” bibliography.

Los Niños en Su Casa, www.losninosencasa.org. This general parenting site has a section on children with special needs.

MedlinePlus, <http://medlineplus.gov/spanish>. Information on all types of disabilities from the National Library of Medicine.

Ser Padres, www.cyberpadres.com. Information from both Spain and the United States on specific conditions.

¡Yojule!, www.nichcy.org/pubs/spanish/paraninos.asp. NICHCY’s Spanish-language site for teens with disabilities.



Library Services

to Children with Special Needs

The Building Bridges Project

Library Services to Youth with Disabilities

Lisa C. Wemett

The Building Bridges Project was supported for three years by two Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) grants totaling \$99,150 to the Monroe County Library System, which serves the metropolitan area of Rochester, New York. The first grant covered 2003 through 2004 (\$24,150) and the second grant began in 2005, ending in May 2007 (\$39,700 in funding for the first year and \$35,300 for the second year). Our goal was to increase services and programs to meet the needs of youth with disabilities and their families. Our project promotional tag line was “Working Together to Help Youth Become Lifelong Library Users.” Children and teens with disabilities were encouraged to participate in regularly scheduled library programs, and parents were provided with opportunities to increase their ability to support their children’s growth.

Service improvements included developing a children’s computer instruction guide for the system’s online catalog, posting picture icons corresponding to the Dewey Decimal System in nonfiction collections, expanding collections in the areas of disabilities and parenting, and developing an online resource guide for parents and professionals listing nearly three hundred agencies and organizations that provide services to people with disabilities. Regularly scheduled training for library staff raised awareness and promoted acceptance of youth with disabilities across the library system. Collaboration was strengthened between the libraries of the Monroe County Library System, advocacy agencies, parent groups, and community groups.



Lisa C. Wemett is Assistant Library Director for Reference and Teen Services at Webster (N.Y.) Public Library.

Objectives

We wanted to encourage families of youth with disabilities to not only visit their local libraries, but to ensure that their experiences were ones that would guide both the entire family and the children to use the library regularly and become active members of their communities’ libraries.

We wanted to develop programs and accommodations to help youth with disabilities develop their library skills, but we also hoped to encourage their participation in regularly scheduled library programs. We felt we could provide parents with opportunities to have another place in the community where they could take their child to enjoy stories, try new experiences, and interact with typical peers outside of a school setting. In doing so, we hoped to improve community awareness and acceptance of youth with disabilities. Ambitiously, we wanted to educate everyone from the youngest readers to the librarians who put the books into their hands.

We also needed to vastly improve our collections to have stories and up-to-date nonfiction materials about youth with disabilities so children and teens would find books about people “just like me” in the collections. Monroe County has many quality services and community resources available to people with disabilities, so the library was the perfect agency in its information and referral role to connect families with these resources.

Target Population

The grant was geared toward youth ages three to twenty-one years of age, but the broad scope of our initiatives ended up

enhancing library programs and services for patrons of all ages. The first grant was called Library Services to Youth with Developmental Disabilities, but the focus shifted in the second grant to Youth with Disabilities in an effort to reach more children and teens. Families told us in the first year that they did not participate in the programming because their child was not diagnosed with a developmental disability. However, we knew many children and families who have learning, neurological, or physical disabilities face similar issues of exclusion and learning difficulties as youth with developmental disabilities. Changing our grant title and utilizing a unique logo helped unify our message.

Thirteen libraries participated in the grant. The libraries served both large suburban towns surrounding the city of Rochester and several smaller rural towns in the region. The Monroe Branch of the Rochester Public Library also participated.

Project consultant and advocate Rhonda Miga was hired for the duration of the project. She has a son who has autism and is well-versed in the various supports available in the Rochester community for families with children with disabilities.

Accomplishments

Library staff at all levels increased their knowledge and understanding of working with people with disabilities and attended training sessions to acquire the skills necessary to serve the target population. Sessions focused on awareness, understanding, communication skills, and acceptance of other's differences. Stressing that a person with a disability is a person *first*, who also happens to have a disability, the training introduced the concept of People First Language.

The training sessions were offered to help the staff decrease their unknown anxieties. The participating librarians expanded the accessibility to their collections and services, learning how to modify their existing programs and to develop new programs to accommodate youth with disabilities, allowing children

and teens to participate to their fullest potential. About a dozen training sessions were held, reaching more than 220 staff members across the system.

Library staff became more accepting of youth with disabilities as they created enriched learning environments. They developed displays to feature the new materials on disabilities and were gratified to see so many circulate. (There's nothing like continuously needing to restock a display to help the staff realize people need these materials but may be hesitant to ask for assistance to locate them!) Staff members in some of the libraries also encouraged teen volunteers with disabilities to share their talents.

The grant helped increase collaboration in the community, building alliances between public libraries themselves, along with many parent groups (such as the Flower City Down Syndrome Network), service agencies, and ven-

dors (including Mayer-Johnson, Mass Mutual, and Woods Oviatt Gilman). Area academic libraries (such as Rochester Institute of Technology and the National Technical Institute for the Deaf) also collaborated with us. School and public library cooperation was enhanced with the Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) Career Network and the Monroe #1 BOCES Parent Educator Resource Library (which received materials from the grant). Several school districts had Together Including Every Student (TIES) chapters, and group representatives took turns attending the meetings of the library staff from around the county who were involved in the grant.

Parents who participated in the grant activities gained knowledge, enabling them to support their child's growth. As they became familiar with library services, they were able to help their child become more independent in using the

People First Language

For more information about People First Language, visit www.disabilityisnatural.com/peoplefirstlanguage.htm.

Instead of . . .

Say

blind child

a child who is blind

the mentally retarded

children with developmental disabilities

a child afflicted with cerebral palsy

a child who has cerebral palsy

deaf students

students with hearing impairments

a child confined to a wheelchair

a child who uses a wheelchair

disabled children

children with disabilities

children with special needs

children who receive special education services

toddlers with birth defects

toddlers who have congenital disabilities

a spastic child

a child who uses a wheeled walker

an autistic child

a child with autism

a brain damaged child

a child with a brain injury

library. They realized that libraries' recreational and educational programs were welcoming to *all* children and teens. Through the library's referrals, these parents became aware and linked to community agencies, service providers, support groups, and organizations that provide services for youth with disabilities and their families.

Programs

The librarians involved in the grant included children's and teen services staff from each library. One overarching goal was to conduct age-appropriate programming, including children and teens with disabilities in regular library programming. The libraries wanted to show parents how storytimes and other youth activities could reinforce literacy and language skills as well as provide a social component for children with disabilities to make new friends outside of their school settings.

Programs included:

- Library card sign-up days, which stressed that all children were eligible to receive a library card. This basic first step to becoming a lifelong library user was highlighted through a variety of fun activities for all families, but publicity was geared to getting the word out to parents that children with disabilities were welcome in the library. The children themselves feel a sense of independence and pride when checking out their own books on their own card.
- Book discussions and storytimes, where all children increased their awareness and understanding of each other's differences by using fiction titles featuring characters with disabilities. One library encouraged the

use of audiobooks for participants that had reading difficulties, which allowed the students to fully participate in the book discussions.

- A collaborative effort between two public libraries serving a school district that crossed their service areas had the public librarians working with school faculty in social studies, English language arts, and the school media specialists to develop a list of modified social studies reading materials to be purchased for the public libraries. (Modified meaning high-interest and low-vocabulary materials for reluctant readers or children with learning disabilities.)
- A planning session for parents on wills and trusts for children with special needs.
- During Deaf Awareness Week, members of the Rochester Recreation Club for the Deaf demonstrated telecommunications tools and services. Another library offered basic American Sign Language (ASL) classes for children and adults. One public library located closest to the National Technical Institute for the Deaf offers storytimes for children and their families presented in both voice and sign.

We had budgeted for an author visit in the grant, but ultimately facilitated an author chat via telephone with Cynthia Lord, whose first novel, *Rules*, was a 2007 Newbery Honor Book.

Rules tells the story of a preteen girl, Catherine, whose younger brother, David, has autism. Catherine writes rules for David to help him learn about life, like "No toys in the fish tank." When David goes to occupational therapy, Catherine meets Jason, who uses a wheelchair. Jason communicates using a picture exchange

system and Catherine, a budding artist, draws additional cards for Jason with words she thinks he will like. It is a story of family relationships, friendship, and growing up. Torn between love for her brother and impatience with the responsibilities and embarrassment he brings, Catherine strives to be on her parents' radar and to establish an identity of her own.

Lord talked with students by telephone on four different dates at four different libraries, allowing for lively interchanges of questions about her writing and her life as a parent of a child with autism. She told us the idea of a sibling writing rules for a brother who had autism came from her daughter, who had asked, "Why don't I see stories about families like ours?"

It is sometimes difficult to say how many participants in the programs had disabilities, as many developmental disabilities are "invisible"—without any physical attributes. Our estimates were that 20 to 30 percent of the children and teens in attendance at our programs had disabilities. In year one, twenty-four programs were held, reaching more than 1,600 youth and adults. In just the final three months of the grant, ten book discussions and storytimes reached 132 patrons.

We found that encouraging youth with learning and physical disabilities to take part in meaningful library programs helped these children and teens in several ways. The programs:

- encouraged their language skills to evolve;
- promoted socialization between typical peers and the youth with disabilities;
- improved independent library skills, with a goal of becoming lifelong library users; and
- fostered the desire to seek out the library on a regular basis as both an educational and social resource.

Promotional Efforts

The libraries individually and collectively used many avenues to promote the proj-

Sample Statement of Welcome and Accommodation

Library programs are open and beneficial to all teens, regardless of their levels of education, experience, and physical or cognitive abilities. We invite everyone to participate. In order to make your experience positive and enjoyable, please inform us in advance of any special accommodations you may require to meet your needs. For further assistance, please contact the staff.

ect. Statements of welcome, inclusion, and accommodation were developed and used on library program fliers.

A link was set up on the main page of the Monroe County Library System's Web site, which received an average of 460 hits

per month over the seven months of the first grant. A feature story about the grant and the disability resource guide was

Making Library Programs More Accessible

How do families know you'll work with them?

- Include a statement of inclusion on all event fliers, in media releases, and on the library's program Web site.
- Encourage families to ask and be receptive to their suggestions for improvements.
- Offer program fliers in large-type format on demand (for example, enlarge on your copier).

Does the program include reading instructions or rules of a game?

- Provide instructions in large size typeface or fonts using upper and lower case letters (not all capitals).
- Print a set of discussion questions ahead of time and provide it to the participant to read at a comfortable distance and to encourage him/her to formulate responses ahead.

Does the program include snacks?

- Ask the participant if smaller pieces are needed for ease of chewing and swallowing.
- Find out if there are food allergies, and offer an alternative snack or choices for everyone.

Does the activity require individual participation or decision-making?

- Provide a personal assistant for one-on-one help so the student can participate fully.
- Have the adult-in-charge spot-check everyone's progress, offering encouragement and reinforcement.
- Use a team approach for trivia games and so on, so children help one another and increase their social skills.
- Provide youth with disabilities proximity to typical children and teens to ensure that everyone is included in the action.

Does the program require individual writing?

- Arrange students in small work groups and have one child or a teen volunteer write notes to share on behalf of everyone in the group.

Are your crafts cookie-cutter style, or as unique as every individual who attends?

- Be flexible and encourage creativity by selecting activities that allow for individual decision-making, rather than "when you are done, it should look like this."
- Provide peer partners or assistants to encourage children to do as many steps themselves as they can.
- Put supplies at every table within easy reach or make place settings for every person (an accommodation for students with mobility impairments).
- Offer crafts other than those dependent on fine-motor skills (for example, painting versus pencil drawing, tie-dye T-shirts versus macramé bracelets, clay sculptures versus stringing beads).
- Along with verbal directions, provide a written instruction sheet and a demonstration of the steps *before* everyone starts to meet several different learning styles.
- Use icons on directions (such as an image of scissors ✂) as well as saying, "cut out . . ."

Basic Strategies and Techniques of Inclusion

- Ensure there is good lighting in the activity room; dim lighting is difficult for youth with visual impairments.
- Use a sound system with a microphone to give instructions clearly to everyone.
- Introduce participants and provide name tags so children and teens become friends with someone they didn't know before.
- Circles of chairs for discussions and tables set in a square or U let everyone see and hear better.
- When developing reader's advisory lists and displays, include some books that have persons with disabilities as featured characters.
- With summer reading programs, allow a choice for reading for a set number of minutes (as well as a number of pages or books).
- Encourage the use of audio books or e-books.

published on the county library system's newly redesigned Web page in 2006.

To help students become lifelong library users, we wrote the *MCLS Kids Catalog Instruction Guide*, designed to assist teachers and librarians instructing children how to use the library's online catalog. This product has benefits to *all* patrons; copies are now available on our children's OPAC work stations to help all parents as they work with their children to access the online catalog, Kid's Catalog Web, The Library Corporation's OPAC for younger library users. (The Monroe County Library System uses CARL Solution for their automation system.)

A major effort was developing picture symbols (icons, see page 20) that corresponded to the Dewey Decimal Classification System. Posting them on the nonfiction shelves helped nonreaders locate common materials more easily in the collection.

Articles were included in school district newsletters, and those newsletters published by our grant partners (for example, *The Bridge* newsletter from The Advocacy

Center). A full-page ad in the fall 2005 issue of the *Genesee Valley Parent Magazine* and a later half-page ad in the magazine's Family Resource Directory helped to get our message to thousands of families who might not be library users (both 2006 and 2007 editions).

The development of the *MCLS Guide to DisABILITY Resources in Monroe County* is one legacy of the grant. Each entry has the agency name, its mailing address, telephone number (voice/TDD), Web address (a link), and a description of the agency's services. Many of these sites have additional resource listings, making the guide a powerful tool to access help and services for families of youth with disabilities. It also is a valuable information and referral tool for library staff. Categories include support groups for parents, siblings, and people with disabilities; family fun activities; after-school activities; accessible transportation; camps; service coordination; and reimbursement for goods and services for families.

Families were looking for materials on diverse topics, including the latest research on a specific disability, educa-

tional support, and community inclusion. More than one thousand new items were added in the project libraries, and were available for loan throughout the system. Many of these items were in a variety of formats to meet various learning styles, including audiobooks, Braille materials, and videos.

For the families of youth with disabilities, library resources can empower parents and caregivers with the knowledge they need to support their children's growth and independence, both within the library and beyond. For example, we added materials on bullying, also known as relational aggression, to help children and teens with the pain of social exclusion that many youth with disabilities suffer for "being different." Most of the participating libraries received \$1,500 to spend on materials for children, teens, and parents.

Conclusions

Here are three things other librarians can learn from our project:

- It was *not* difficult. Librarians anywhere can fashion a similar program, and it should be done everywhere.
- Librarians must dedicate time and effort. We were blessed with a parent who headed up the project from her personal perspective as an avid library user and an advocate for children with disabilities and their families. She was our cheerleader and coach, kept us on task, and helped us see the big picture.
- There is strength in numbers. With a unifying message and an identifiable logo used everywhere from fliers to ads to Web pages, the Building Bridges Project became recognizable in the community. More libraries, plus more press, plus more community collaborations, equaled more results.

Best Practices

These are five service enhancements every library can take away from our project:

How Librarians Can Help Parents of Children with Disabilities

Introduce yourself. If you see a child with a disability, go over to the parent and child to break the ice. Keep in mind that some children have hidden disabilities.

Ask questions. "Does your child have any needs we should know about or does she need any assistance?"

Talk directly to the child or teen with a disability, not over or around them.

At every registration ask, "Does your child have any special needs?" or "Does your child need any accommodations?"

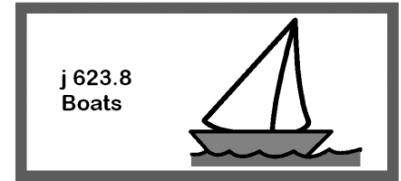
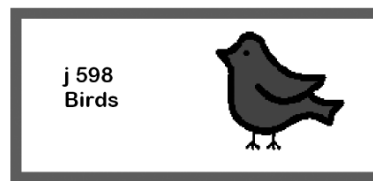
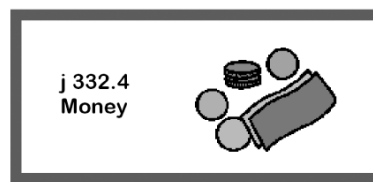
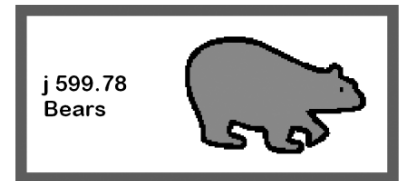
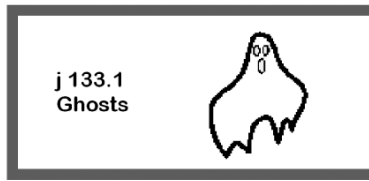
Don't be afraid to ask for help. Does the parent have someone in mind that can provide additional support during a program?

Don't assume you know everything about the child because you know the disability. Child first, disability second.

Set up volunteer opportunities that focus on a student's strengths.

Make suggestions such as, "Maybe we can do this instead of this."

It's often hard for parents to bring their child with a disability into the library for the first time. Make it as enjoyable and friendly as you can.



These icons correlate to Dewey Decimal Classifications.

- Include a welcoming statement of accommodation in your library publicity regularly, but most especially, reiterate it in your program fliers and on your Web page. Putting this in writing keeps the philosophy of service to everyone in front of the staff, reminding them to be flexible as needs arise.
- Expand your collection in the areas of disabilities, parenting, and recreational reading (and listening and viewing) with titles featuring characters with many abilities. Students want to read about their families, their siblings, their friends, and, most of all, “kids like me.”
- Search out and nurture community collaborations. The project coordinator had an active e-mail network with agency personnel and families with children with disabilities that kept them up-to-date on programs and other grant offerings.
- Use displays with easily recognizable icons and logos to alert patrons to

community resources, programs, and training sessions as well as for materials they need but may hesitate to ask for.

- Train your staff. It is a necessity to offer consciousness-raising training to help all levels of staff understand and have a heightened awareness of disabilities, whatever they are. We should all be striving to offer outstanding customer service in an atmosphere that welcomes all patrons.

More information about the programs mentioned in this article can be found at “The Building Bridges Project” resources for the public on the Monroe County Library System Web page, www2.libraryweb.org. In the “Quick Links” drop-down menu, select “Youth with Dis-ABILITIES.” It describes the grant and its goals, and it emphasizes the library resources available to parents and library professionals. Two products that are models for other libraries to replicate include the *MCLS Guide to DisABILITY Resources in Monroe*

County and the MCLS Kid’s Catalog Instruction Guide.

Content for library staff also is available on the Building Bridges Project at www.websterlibrary.org/Webster_content/teenhome.htm. On the library’s “Just for Teens” page, we are temporarily hosting documents that you may review, print, and use. Scroll to the very bottom of the “Just for Teens” page to see a link, “Building Bridges Project.” Documents include LSTA reports, outcomes, and summary of achievements; collection development tools (ways to evaluate books that address disabilities and lists of materials purchased from 2004 through 2007); programming for children, tweens, teens, and families (full reports plus a planning template). ☺

Editor’s note: This article is based on a speech delivered during a panel discussion on Best Practices in Service to People with Disabilities at the ALSC and ASCLA preconference June 22, 2007, titled “The Underserved 20 Percent: Children, Teens, and Adults with Disabilities.”

Library Services

to Children with Special Needs

Small Steps, Big Results

Preparing a Story Time for Children with Special Needs

Antonette K. D’Orazio

Last year, in anticipation of Autism Awareness Month in April, a parent approached me about doing a pajama story time specifically designed for children with autism. Even though I wanted to accommodate her request, I was nervous. While I had done story times for a visiting class of children with autism, I had no training or experience working directly with children with special needs, and I had never done a story time for the public.

But this parent was very supportive, offering to handle publicity and sign-ups. She even made arrangements with area high school students to offer babysitting services for siblings who might be left home during the program, and offered suggestions for the programs themselves. The only thing I had to do was plan and present the programs.

After consulting with district teachers of students with special needs and other professionals in the field, I had a better idea of how to structure the programs. I offered two forty-five-minute evening programs on different nights to include stories, songs, rhymes, fingerplays, and a simple craft. The age breakdown was three to five years old and six to eight years old, both with parents in attendance. Two teen volunteers helped with the craft. To encourage feedback from parents, I created a short evaluation form asking if the time was convenient, if they’d like

to be notified of future programs, and if they would like to see additional programs offered in the future.

Based on positive comments, I decided to offer similar programs four times a year. These programs would not be limited to children with autism, but be especially adapted for children with special needs.

For my second program, local musician Ann Wild offered to do the program at no charge. She was beginning to offer music programs for children with autism and wanted to get some experience. Together we planned a story time that included Wild’s singing and guitar playing. She brought kid-friendly musical instruments and props such as shaky eggs and scarves for the children to use. As I planned to do this program without a craft, I scheduled it for thirty minutes, although with Wild accompanying it could easily have been forty-five minutes long.

Since then, working solo, I have planned thirty-minute programs with seasonal themes and a simple take-home craft packaged to include all necessary supplies except such basics as glue and scissors. I have incorporated ideas I learned from Wild in addition to feedback received directly from parents attending the sessions. The following are suggestions for planning similar programs.

- Keep the groups small—about ten children with at least one adult each.
- If you are splitting programs into age groups, consider cognitive age as opposed to chronological age; allow parents to decide which program their children will thrive in.

Antonette K. D’Orazio has been a children’s librarian for fifteen years. Currently, she is the supervisor of a busy children’s department in the Bernards Township Library in northern New Jersey.

- Regular lines of publicity may not reach the people you are trying to target; try to find a gatekeeper, perhaps a parent or a teacher, who can spread the word.
- For legal reasons, be sure your publicity for the general public does not exclude anyone. For example, the title of our program is the generic “Spring Fun Story Time.”
- Try not to turn anyone away, whether or not he or she is a child with special needs. Don’t be concerned about closing out the children you are trying to reach; you’ll find that most parents of children who do not have special needs will either not sign up or wait to see if there are still openings as the program approaches.
- If your building is accessible, be sure to advertise that.
- Consider taking registrations in case you need to make any accommodations.
- Thirty-minute programs work fine; if you decide to include a craft, tack on an extra fifteen minutes.
- Use rug squares on the floor to signal to children and parents where you want them to sit; a wheelchair also can glide over them easily.
- Big books keep the attention of the children and are easier to see than regular-sized books; when using smaller books, be sure the pictures are large and clear.
- Involve the children as much as possible. Ask questions, even if you think you will not get answers. Props, such as finger puppets or stuffed animals that children can hold during the story, are effective in keeping them engaged.
- Adapt songs and rhymes so that they include big hand or arm gestures, as opposed to small finger manipulations; many children with special needs have a difficult time with fine motor skills.
- Sharing a handout of rhymes, songs, and fingerplays allows parents to join in. Include contact information so caregivers can offer feedback on the program.
- Invest in props such as scarves or shaky eggs; these easily handled items will pull children into the program.
- If you are doing programs for different age groups, there is no need to make drastic changes. Just use a longer book with the same songs and rhymes for older children.

The following is a sample program outline for a spring-themed story time:

Song: “The More We Get Together.” Talk about the theme. Show a puppet of a nest with baby birds and allow each child to handle it.

Flannel: “Five Umbrellas.” Count and guess colors; have each child come up and pick the correct color umbrella.

Big Book: *Flower Garden* by Eve Bunting.

Finger play: “Green Leaf.”

Action verse:

Stretch up high! Touch the sky!
Stretch down low—touch your toes!
Your knees,
your shoulders,
your head. [repete]
Have each child choose one scarf
(I keep the scarves and eggs in a basket).

Action verse with scarf: “I See the Wind” (2X)

Action verse with scarf: I’m a Puff of Wind” (2X). Place scarves on the floor and have each child pick two shaky eggs.

Action verse with eggs: “Wind Song” (2X). Place one egg on the floor and pick up a scarf so each child is holding a scarf in one hand and an egg in the other.

Action verse: “Noble Duke of York” (2X). Ask the children to return the scarves and the eggs.

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Big book with puppets: Time for Bed by Mem Fox. Hand a puppet to each child as the animal is introduced. After the story, the children return the puppets to a box.

Song: "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star."

Take-home activity: Ten marigold seeds and a biodegradable pot in which to plant them.

At the end of the program, allow time for children to handle the puppets.

The above is a basic outline of how I structure my programs; they are not very different from preschool story times. Having a theme helps me choose rhymes and stories, but it's not necessary. Don't be distracted by what you might consider unusual behaviors; just keep going and trust the caregiver to deal with anything unexpected. Before the program, you may want to announce to the adults to feel free to leave the room if necessary.

Feedback

I have found that parents really like these programs for several reasons. First, it

demonstrates to their children that they are welcome to a community center such as the library. It also frees parents from worry over how their child's behavior will be perceived by others; it is a safe environment where their children will not be judged.

It is vitally important that you are calm, welcoming, and enthusiastic before, during, and after the program. Remind parents that their children may attend any age-appropriate programs that your library offers. If they feel uncomfortable, allow them to speak with the person who is running the program to discuss expectations.

One mother commented:

I thought that you did a phenomenal job of planning and sequencing both quiet activities as well as more interactive ones and that the children really responded very well to your instruction. Everyone was

engaged and eager to participate, and you made each child feel that they were contributing to the lesson.

I also thought that the size of the group was optimal because each child had a chance to interact with you as well as with the other children and adults present. Had there been a larger group, I'm not sure that my daughter would have been able to attend and participate as well as she was able to that evening.

Parents have encouraged me to continue offering such programs, even in the face of what appeared to be a lack of interest. For example, this past summer, although children had signed up, on the night of the programs, no one came. A few weeks later, a parent who had come to a previous program was so disappointed when she heard this that she contacted several other parents, asking them if they were still interested in these story times. She got a resounding yes!

If you attempt such programs, remember, sometimes small steps are actually big ones, and you are offering an invaluable service to an often underserved population. ☺



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A Parent's View

How Libraries Can Open the Door to the 20 Percent

Paula Holmes

As a librarian and an advocate for children with learning differences, preparing a presentation for librarians gave me an opportunity to review the journey I began eight years ago. I am the parent of two children who are part of an underserved population. When I look at my children, I don't see their disabilities, but instead two growing boys with gifts and talents. It is only when we are in situations where people see their disabilities first or don't understand their learning differences that I become a parent of the twenty percent.

I felt all alone when my kindergartner was diagnosed with myriad learning differences, motor delays, and behavioral issues. I found myself in a room with the school officials, who sat on one side of an extremely long table while I sat all alone on the other side.

I can only speak for myself, but the moment when I found out all the things my child *couldn't* do was overwhelming. I forgot all the wonderful things my child could do. When you confide to friends and family whose children are part of the eighty percent, they often don't know how to react or they feel uncomfortable. As a parent, sharing was not always rewarding.

I'm lucky to have a background in library science. I researched every term and buzzword the school district used in my first of many Individualized Education Plan meetings.

The library is a place to which many parents and caregivers of children with disabilities turn. Libraries are trusted to know reliable sources on the Internet, community resources, and the

latest published research. I would ask any librarian who has not already done so to consider creating a pathfinder for parents that provides reliable information on disability issues. Making partnerships with parents will, in turn, create advocates for your library.

As deep a love as I have for libraries, I have often felt let down by the library when it comes to my children and my friends' children. At first, my children's disabilities are invisible. To serve them best, allow flexibility and adaptability. Most importantly, as my children adroitly pointed out to me, summer reading prizes shouldn't make you feel bad. For example, a struggling reader does not need to be reminded of his struggles by receiving a prize appropriate for a much younger child. Assistive technology levels the playing field for many kids with disabilities. Consider alternatives to print material. Don't underestimate a child with disabilities. Many of our favorite authors and illustrators are in the same category.

When librarians interact with a child who has a disability, they are modeling behavior for every patron in the library as well as building trust with that child and his family. Librarians represent the view that that child will have of libraries for the rest of his life.

In building trust with a child, librarians help the child become an advocate for himself. They reassure the parents that they are not alone in this journey. My suggestion to all librarians? If you open the door, we will come in. Knowing that a situation is welcoming and safe is a gift.

I have found that my journey is one shared by many, and that in sharing my experience, I learn of others with a story.

Librarians must continue to partner with patrons so they know the library door is open for them. Improving the view from any side of the desk can be extremely satisfying. ☺

Paula Holmes is a special education advocate and has a master's of library science degree from the University of Pittsburgh with a specialty in children's services. She lives in Pittsburgh with her husband and their two children.

Washington, D.C., Bound!

ALA Annual Conference, June 2007

All photos by Sharon Verbeten



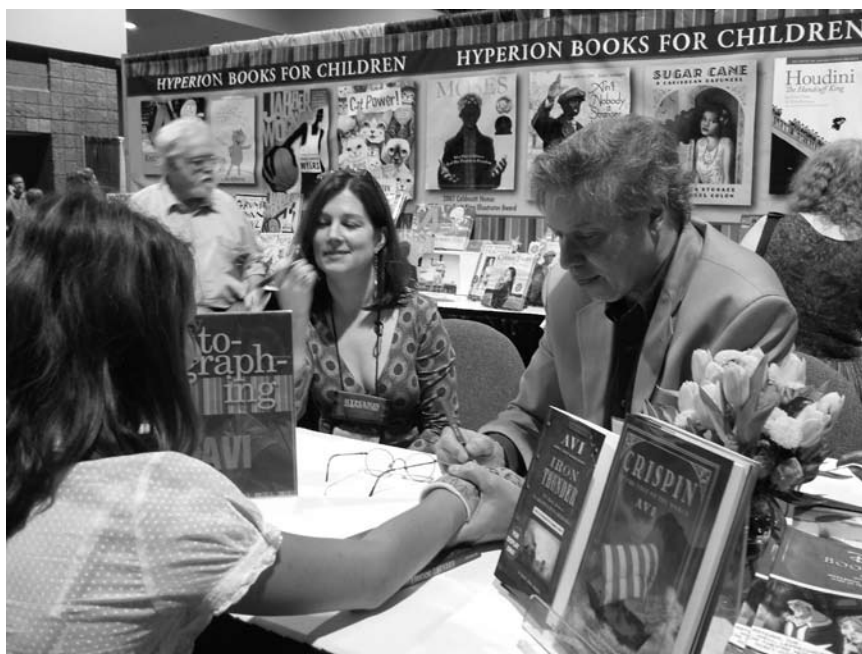
The Washington Monument



Joanna Ward, County of Los Angeles Public Library, left, talks about ALSC services at the division's booth in the exhibit hall. At right is Diane Williamson of Abbots Hill Elementary in Duluth, Ga.



Celebrating *Star Wars'* 30th anniversary, this R2D2 mail box piqued interest of passersby in Washington, D.C.



Author Avi signs a young fan's cast at the Hyperion booth.

Daydreaming and Doodling

An Interview with Mo Willems

Carrie Cooper and Melissa Schutt



Most adults who care about children's books know that author/illustrator Mo Willems earned consecutive Caldecott Honor awards in 2004 and 2005 for *Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus* and *Knuffle Bunny: A Cautionary Tale*.

They may not be aware, however, that these two books also earned Willems a more obscure honor—consecutive Kentucky Bluegrass Awards (KBA) in the kindergarten through second grade category. The KBA is one of many state children's choice awards, which asks kids to vote for *their* favorite books (from titles nominated by teachers, librarians, and kids) each year.

In September 2006, Willems traveled to Louisville, Kentucky, to accept his awards at the Kentucky Reading Association's annual conference. Before attending the awards banquet, he spoke to fifty second graders from a local elementary school, and we were impressed by his immediate connection with the children. His interest in and respect for their ideas and insights was apparent, and they responded with enthusiasm and thoughtfulness.

They were excited to learn how to draw the famous pigeon and to be the world premiere audience for the Carnegie Medal-winning *Knuffle Bunny* DVD (and were quick to point out the pigeon's cameo appearance). Most of all, Willems made every-

one in his presence laugh, all while talking about his passion for art and words.

During his visit, Willems sat down with us to talk about children's books, children's choice awards, and his creative process.

What is the significance of the state children's choice awards?

I really enjoy the state awards because they do two things—one, they validate your work, because kids are voting on them. But more importantly, state awards get kids involved with reading and expose them to books that they wouldn't read otherwise. They learn that their esthetic judgment matters. Kids are told when they are young that these are good books and these are bad books, and they aren't allowed to make their choice about what is a classic. In that sense, it's very liberating.

What is the process of creating a book like for you? What comes first—the pictures or the text?

It's all simultaneous. Every book is different. Some things come very quickly, and other ideas take a long time. On average, I probably think about a book for about a year before I start—daydreaming and doodling. I always put my characters in different situations before I start writing the story. An idea, a line, or a phrase sometimes sets you in a direction, and then you have to discover the character. I do the manuscript in comic book form. That takes a couple months, and then the revisions. The final production process takes from three to six months. It depends on the technical process. [In] *Knuffle Bunny Two* there is a lot of nighttime photography, and one shot that is twenty-four-by-nine-inches of all of Manhattan. As you can imagine, the production on that was more complicated; I had to set up

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a film shoot and scheduling. If there is one set method, then you're doing it wrong because then you're in a rut. Every book, even sequels, has to have a different process to keep it fresh.

Is there a theme in your books?

Readers decide what those messages are. I have for each book what I consider to be a controlling idea that I keep close to my chest. Themes have sort of developed. My first set of books (and my first television work as well) was about failure.

I feel very strongly that failure is underrepresented in our culture. Only number one is good enough, and everybody has to strive for that. For instance, I don't believe a child can do anything; I think that's lying to a child because the child says, "Wait a second, I can't fly." You can say to a child, "You can do something," which is much more specific and true. The *Elephant and Piggy* books are about friendship and the delicate nature of friendship and the acceptance that is required for it.

Tell us about the Elephant and Piggy early reader series. What inspired you to try a new format?

I had read so many articles and interviews that claim the hardest writing for children is the early reader because the vocabulary is so limited. I thought if that's the hardest kind of book, I really want to do that! There are many excellent early readers. But I've noticed with my own child that there is a bump when kids hit a certain age. Her picture book stories are complex and engaging, and then when she starts reading her first books they aren't nearly as funny and engaging. *Go, Dog. Go!* is brilliant! It's legible and funny and I wanted to do something like that. The quality of the average picture book is pretty high; it would be great if the early reader selections would be equally strong.

You've been quoted as saying, "Children are shorter, not dumber." How does that belief inform your work?

I respect children. I never will write a book that isn't on their side. Those are lecture series, not really books.

Being a child is exhausting. You have no power. I can buy a candy bar and eat it. This is a power that's unimaginable to a child. Deciding when you are entertained, what to watch on TV, and when to watch TV—all of those are decisions that children are conscious of *not* being able to make. So, I try to be as much as possible on their side. *Time to Pee!* and *Time to Say "Please!"* aren't manners books. I originally wanted to call *Time to Say "Please!"* *How to Get the Cookie*. They are guide books.

What were you like as a child? Do you have any memories of books or libraries you could share?

I was born in the late sixties. I had no American books. I only had Dutch books. I loved this artist named Fiep Westendorp, a Dutch national treasure. My first real American literature that I read was *Charlie Brown*. I read it voraciously. I read comic strips, too. Now that's considered reading, but at the time teach-



Artwork copyright 2007, Mo Willems.

ers would tell me to put down the books and start reading. In terms of American books, I read a lot of Dr. Seuss.

How do other illustrators respond to your work?

The children's book world, by and large, is very nice and welcoming. I live in a neighborhood with a lot of other writers and artists. Jon Scieszka, Lane Smith, and Brian Selznick are pals and neighbors. All these guys are very welcoming, partially, I think, because picture books are one of the few industries left where you can really have an individual form of expression. So, there isn't really much competition. I'm not going to draw like Brian Selznick, so he doesn't have to worry about me putting out a book like his. Applied to artists who are speaking in their own voice, in their own idiom, I have never found any sort of competitive behavior.

We've heard one of your goals is to simplify your drawings so that kids can replicate them. Why is this important to you?

Well, because I think that books should be played more than read. Books should be a gateway to creativity. Passively reading a book is missing a lot of the experience. What made *Charlie Brown* great were two things—the lead character was unhappy, which was the only truth I'd ever seen in children's entertainment. And, his head was a circle, so anyone could draw him.

I started out drawing *Charlie Brown*. I encourage kids to draw the pigeon. The most exciting thing is when I get books from children that have pigeons and some of their own characters. They transition out of this initial exploration of my book to creating their own works.

Do you have any words for librarians and teachers?

No messages. Keep up the good work. Librarians and teachers are on the front lines. They don't get the credit or the glory. There's a complete inequity in terms of the amount of work they do versus the amount of work I do and the rewards and admiration that come to me. I'm very appreciative of librarians. I wasn't aware before I got into this business how influential they are in terms of guiding books and getting them where they need to be, and making esthetic judgments and steering the big boat that is picture books. That was a revelation. ☺

The ABCs of Hospital Storytelling at the Brooklyn Public Library

Andre Powe

I read a board book to a fifteen-month-old baby in a crib. He was so happy and very focused on the brightly colored pictures. His little hands came through the bars and he made grunting sounds as he attempted to take the book. I slipped it through the bars to him. He smiled broadly, picked it up, and tasted it, of course! Yum, yum!—Hospital storyteller at a pediatric inpatient unit of a teaching hospital.

Hospital Storytelling is a family literacy program featuring Reading Troubadours (volunteers) and hospital storytellers (paid). These literary advocates read aloud to children in hospitals and clinics while assisting them in selecting free Reading Is Fundamental (RIF) books. The program encourages families to read together and start a home library that connects them to the public library. It also provides a distraction for children in uncomfortable situations.

The Hospital Storytelling program started in 1999 with two sites, and by 2001 there were six locations. Today there are thirty-nine sites.

The program was incubated in spring 1996 when Carrie Banks, current director of the Child's Place for Children with Special Needs at the Brooklyn Public Library (BPL), met with Bob Wilkins, then-director of Coney Island Hospital's Developmental Center. They discussed how to build a library hospital program based on Reach Out and Read (ROR).

Andre Powe, a transplanted Jamaican, is Coordinator of Hospital Storytelling at The Child's Place for Children with Special Needs at the Brooklyn Public Library.



Troubadour Carol Beemer

The American Medical Association funds the ROR initiative so children can receive books from their pediatrician during well-child visits. There was a strong interest in partnering to read to kids and provide help in building home libraries.

Banks also attended the inaugural meeting of the Horticultural Therapy Round Table at Brooklyn Botanic Garden (BBG) and met an outreach coordinator for the Brooklyn Pediatric Aids Network (BPAN), who was excited about the possibility of the kids being read to while they were waiting to be seen by the doctor.

Initially, all storytellers were hired as per diem workers, but diminished funding demanded a volunteer arm of the program. From then on, hospital storytellers were paid with a flat fee as independent contractors to make monthly visits to critical care sites, such as hospital inpatient wards, group homes for

children with disabilities, and specialty clinics. Reading troubadours are volunteers who visit well-baby pediatric and family clinics in hospitals and community settings twice monthly for a six-month commitment.

Today, we have seven hospital storytellers and seven Reading Troubadours visiting thirty-three medical locations throughout Brooklyn, the nation's fourth largest city, with a population of around 2.7 million widely diverse residents.

BPL's Hospital Storytelling RIF program now serves approximately thirty-five hundred children per year, and we distribute books in twelve languages. Included among the facilities served are hematology oncology units, kidney dialysis units, neurobehavioral clinics, sickle cell clinics, and clinics for HIV-positive children. There also are clinics where children with special needs receive comprehensive medical services, and group homes where residents are children with special needs.

Readers encounter many languages and religions as well as a variety of medical, social, and educational challenges. They meet new arrivals to the community in the form of immigrants from all over the world. For example, at Maimonides Hospital clinics, we see large Asian and Orthodox Jewish populations as well as Spanish-speaking residents.

Because each site offers a unique cultural setting, individualized approaches work best. We consider the economic and social issues of the community and the services provided by the clinic. Even the physical layout of the waiting room is studied to determine the best place to form a story circle and minimize environmental distractions.

Staff, Recruitment, and Training

Many committed paid staff and volunteers have contributed to the program. Reading Troubadours, who are recruited by the BPL Office of Friends and Volunteers, attend group training workshops in conjunction with The Child's Place, where the significance of reading aloud to children is emphasized. The Child's Place recruits hospital storytellers through referrals, recommendations, and résumés submitted for consideration. Per standard procedure at the library, background checks are conducted on candidates with their permission.

All readers must attend a workshop where they are briefed on issues of dealing with children in hospitals, including confidentiality, safety considerations, and infection-control issues. They also shadow a volunteer or storyteller on-site. This initial visit includes representatives from The Child's Place, the Office of Friends and Volunteers, and the clinic's liaison, allowing all of the volunteers' concerns to be addressed at the start of their commitment.

With the assistance of funding from RIF, we now offer a second level of training for volunteers. Within the last year, we have held two Reading Troubadour forums, where existing and incoming volunteers share information. This presents an opportunity to network with colleagues.

Fast Facts

- Our youngest troubadour was fifteen when she started.
- The most library cards issued in one session is twenty. Applications were submitted in English, Spanish, Arabic, and Urdu.
- Books are shipped as far away as Massachusetts.
- One storyteller instructs the kids in the inpatient ward how to do yoga and meditate.

Why We Do It

Sick children tug on people's emotions. Perhaps on an emotional level, a calm, soothing voice in some sort of regulated melody or pattern can enhance healing. Or perhaps the healing process is enhanced by minimizing a child's dread, fear, anxiety, isolation, or pain and suffering.

Medical settings offer the opportunity to provide books to families with low literacy who often do not read aloud to their children at home. Research reported in *Young Children* stated "the single most important activity for building (the) understandings and skills essential for reading success appears to be reading aloud to children."¹

Reading aloud benefits all children, and Hospital Storytelling firmly embraces the notion that all children can benefit from reading, even those with multiple or profound disabilities whose receptive language usually exceeds their expressive language. All children can be engaged and become responsive to the material that is read to them.

Partnerships

We work with entities within the library and with other institutions to build and enhance the programs. With rare exceptions, all books are provided through RIF, a federally funded program that provides books for children in communities with low reading scores.

Books are selected from approved vendors and purchased with matching funds. For 2005–2006, Reading Troubadours received a RIF Ingenuity Award grant to increase the number of sites and volunteers as well as fund some program expenses. In June 2006, hospital storytellers and reading troubadours were invited to an honors program in Washington, D.C., that gathered the best RIF programs from across the country to share stories and resources.

Within the library, we work closely with the Office of Friends and Volunteer Services to recruit and train volunteers. At BPL, we also work with the Office of Neighborhood Services in pro-

moting the First Five Years Initiative, which promotes reading to children in their earliest years. We also work closely with the BPL foundation office to raise money.

With the ROR program we schedule site visits. At Lutheran Hospital we work with the ROR coordinator to place volunteers at the various sites, and the coordinator arranges to store books and publicize visits. At Maimonides Hospital, we work with the Asian-American community outreach director by participating in holiday events and family health fairs targeting Brooklyn's large Asian community. We also partner with the P403 schools in hospital program.

In distributing free RIF books, the library becomes a philanthropic organization as opposed to being viewed simply as a lending institution. It becomes a social organization and an important community resource provider. The library is seen as a kinder, gentler place because it offers this personalized individual service.

Ongoing Considerations

Throughout the training, learning is integrated with considerations of cross-cultural concerns. Everything affects our materials selection—what children read based on their culture, comparisons between materials chosen by community, and choices made by immigrant and non-immigrant, English and non-English-speaking families.

Differences in social interaction as well cultural taboos also are discussed. We want people to be aware of and comfortable with a multicultural landscape. For example, we alert readers that in Orthodox Jewish communities, men would not directly accept anything handed to them by a woman.

Because Hospital Storytelling is a grant-funded program, we solicit funds at the beginning of each fiscal year. Paid storytellers do longer stints than volunteers; many volunteers go away for the summer, so there are seasonal inconsistencies in the program.

Storytellers go to the more challenging places—hospitals, specialty clinics, and group homes—where consistency is more important. Generally, there are between five and twenty children in the clinics.

The Future

To make our communication systems more efficient, we are considering establishing a Web site or blog for the storytell-



Carol Beemer reads to a group.

ers. Questions will be answered by me or another experienced reader, and the information will remain online as a reference.

Down the road, reports will be posted online so individual departments can collect data they need. For example, the RIF coordinator at BPL can pull the attendance and book distribution figures. The Office of Friends and Volunteer Services can access figures pertaining to the participation of volunteers.

Even though the program is steeped in the most basic notions of children's literacy, communications, and palliative care, Hospital Storytelling operates from the toolkit approach to mass communication. It establishes and encourages community, health, and literacy organizations to work together and increase capacity building for the program's endeavors. It is both self-supporting and diffusive as a program.

Since its foundation, RIF has addressed a poverty of literacy. Together with such institutions as BPL, it continues to do just that while addressing a poverty of connection.

As one child put it, "You mean I can keep these books and then go to the library for more books? So is this all about getting us to use the library?"

Yes, it is. ↪

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The Music of Appalachian Children's Literature

Jennifer Smith

Because bluegrass and country music are so closely associated with Appalachia, it's surprising to find in Appalachian children's literature that traditional music resounds loudest. Vocal and instrumental renditions of familiar folk songs, ballads, and hymns—as well as some that are not-so-familiar—are plentiful in the pages of Appalachian children's literature. Much can be learned of Appalachian history and heritage by investigating the music found in these stories.

Due to the difficulty in crossing the mountains, very few European immigrants attempted to settle in the Appalachian region prior to the discovery of the Cumberland Gap in 1750. The land was inhabited largely by the Cherokee and other Native American tribes, along with a small population of hunters, trappers, freed or escaped slaves, and others who found their way to the mountains.

The discovery of the Cumberland Gap provided easier access to the land beyond the mountains, and by the time of the American Revolution, approximately two decades later, the mountains were being traversed on a regular basis by immigrants.¹ Europeans of Scotch-Irish, English, and German heritages were among the initial people settling in the mountains.² For the most part, these settlers were illiterate, and they relied on the oral tradition to relay their stories and music to new generations. The stories and music shared with others served as a connection to their past and a link to their homelands. In addition to the stories, folk songs, and ballads, a few greatly cherished musical instruments also were passed down through the generations. Rebecca Caudill provides a glimpse of the early settlers' lives to us through her Newbery Honor book *Tree of Freedom*.

The story, set in 1780, follows the Venable family as they move from their home in Carolina to the newly opened Kentucky territory. The hardships of pioneer life are deftly captured in this story, with much description given of the family clearing land, raising crops, and building their cabin. Woven between each new complication that threatened the Venables' survival as Kentucky pioneers is an enlightening glimpse of the elements included in their daily routine, such as food preparation, songs sung, games played, and superstitions believed. A wide variety of music is incorporated into the story. One example from the novel is the ballad "Golden Willow Tree," which Noel, the oldest son in the story, sings while he accompanies himself on the dulcimer.

The "Golden Willow Tree" is only one of many surviving versions of the ballad. Others include "The Weeping Willow Tree," "The Golden Vanity," and, what some believe to be the original version, "The Sweet Trinity." This ballad tells the story of Sir Walter Raleigh's ship, *The Sweet Trinity*. Raleigh had the ship built in the Netherlands, and during its maiden voyage it was threatened by a pirate ship. The captain called on the crew to save *The Sweet Trinity* and offered a reward of gold along with the hand of his oldest daughter in marriage. The only volunteer was a young captain's boy. The boy used a nine-point auger to drill holes in the pirate ship, successfully sinking it. *The*

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Sweet Trinity was saved, but the captain reneged on his deal. In response, the captain's boy drowned himself to avoid living with the humiliation of his unheralded deed.³

With her inclusion of this and other ballads, hymns, and play songs in *Tree of Freedom*, Caudill captures the core of music that is called traditional Appalachian music. It is largely based on Anglo-Celtic folk ballads and instrumental dance tunes. Women often sang love songs, lullabies, play songs and chants, and hymns unaccompanied as they went about their daily chores. Many of the tunes were modal and sung as personal narratives, a style reflective of the British tradition. Through their music, women became the keepers of the families' cultural heritage, teaching the songs to their children and changing a word or verse here and there to more accurately reflect their particular family's story.⁴

Over time, characteristics of the region's Native American and African American music were incorporated into Appalachian traditional music. For example, the African Americans who either escaped slavery or freely chose to settle in the mountains influenced Appalachian traditional music in several ways. In particular, they introduced the call-and-response singing style to the mountains. This was influential on the hymns and spiritual songs sung in the mountains; it developed into a hymn form that incorporated a repetitious refrain after each verse.⁵

"Jesus, Jesus, Rest Your Head" is a traditional Appalachian carol that reflects the influence of the call and response style of music. Each verse of the carol is followed by the singing of the same refrain:

Jesus, Jesus, rest Your head,
You has got a manger bed.
All the evil folk on earth
Sleep in feathers at their birth.
Jesus, Jesus, rest Your head,
You has got a manger bed.⁶

The writer of this hymn remains unknown, but John Jacob Niles, one of the more well-known song catchers of the Appalachians, probably collected the hymn in the early 1930s in Hardin County, Kentucky.⁷ Gloria Houston includes the carol in her book *The Year of the Perfect Christmas Tree*, which tells the story of a small mountain community's preparations for a Christmas Eve service near the end of World War I.

Traditional Appalachian music remained true folk music throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Around the turn of the twentieth century, industrialization introduced mass production and mail order, which made access to musical instruments, especially the guitar, much easier. It also became possible to record sound, and the radio closed the communication gap between mainstream America and the people of the mountains. Popular music from the outside could now be heard in the mountains via the radio. Radio stations began sponsoring contests and broadcasting live performances of local mountain talent to the outside. As might be expected, musical styles began to cross and merge, with the end result being the type of music known as old-time or old-timey.⁸

The old-time ensemble usually consisted of a string band that included one or two fiddles, a banjo, a bass, and a guitar, with the singing done by a single male voice. A picture book that depicts this ensemble is Cynthia Rylant's *The Relatives Came*. There is no mention of making music in the text, but the humorous illustrations by Stephen Gammell show the visiting relatives making music.

The commercial viability of old-time music ended with the Great Depression. The 1930s and 1940s ushered in an individual star system, with musicians such as Hank Williams gaining popularity. There also was the introduction of horns, electric instruments, and bluegrass into the old-time music. The old-time music served as a transitional phase in which traditional Appalachian music stepped back and made room for the beginnings of modern country western.⁹

With her mention of a 1982 Pontiac sedan, Katherine Paterson places her book *Come Sing, Jimmy Jo* during a decade in the 1900s well past the heyday of old-time music. Yet, in this story about a family from West Virginia that gains a modest amount of success as a performing group, Paterson displays as a secondary theme the struggles and differences of opinion between the group's members regarding the modernization and popularization of their repertoire. Paterson describes the difficulty many groups may have encountered in transitioning from the old-time music to that of the country western repertoire.

During this transitional time, traditional Appalachian music remained viable. It continued as a participatory folk music that was sung and played and passed on to younger generations. The traditional Appalachian music—folk songs, ballads, lullabies, play songs and chants, and hymns—is most often included in Appalachian children's literature.

Belle Prater's Boy, a Newbery Honor book by Ruth White, is the story of two twelve-year-old cousins, Gypsy and Woodrow, each trying to come to terms with the loss of a parent. Blind Benny is a fixture of Coal Station, Virginia, where Gypsy and Woodrow live, and appears throughout the story. It is not until near the end of the book that the reader discovers that one of Blind Benny's purposes in the story is to help Gypsy and Woodrow find closure and comfort regarding their losses.

Benny has been blind since birth and an orphan since a very early age. He lives in the hardware store Gypsy's father once owned and operated. Every night, Benny walks the streets of Coal Station picking up the handouts that have been left for him on the back porches. As he walks his rounds, the neighborhood dogs join him one by one, and Benny sings. One night, Gypsy and Woodrow sneak out of their respective houses and accompany Benny on his rounds. During their walk, Benny shares his own story of loss and heartbreak with the two cousins. All are comforted by Benny's singing of several songs, including "Red River Valley."

Many consider "Red River Valley" to be a cowboy song and associate it with the settling of the West because the Red River flows through Texas until it meets up with the Mississippi River

in Louisiana. Surprisingly, the origins of "Red River Valley" lie in the Appalachian region of New York. The ballad was originally called "In the Bright Mohawk Valley."¹⁰ The Mohawk Valley is located in the foothills of the Adirondack Mountains, which are considered part of the Appalachian mountain range. Whether you attribute the song to Appalachia or not, it serves as an example of how folk music is based in the oral tradition and often evolves and changes to reflect the characteristics of a specific culture or region.

Two other well-known songs, included in Jerrie Oughton's *Music from a Place Called Half Moon*, also find their origins in Appalachia. Cherokee Fish lives on the fringes of Half Moon, North Carolina, with the other Native American residents of the town. The issue of integration has become the town's focus for the summer, and tensions are high. Cherokee goes to the woods by the mill to escape his daily life and play his harmonica. In one scene from the book, the main character, Edie Jo, who also uses the woods by the mill as her place of escape, arrives without Cherokee knowing it and eavesdrops on his playing:

And that boy wasn't a beginner, either. He didn't play random notes. He began by playing the mountain hymn, "On Top of Old Smoky." I reckon every mountain person learns that before they learn their ABCs. Then he branched off and spun out "Down in the Valley."¹¹

The tunes Cherokee is given to play in this scene are noteworthy, as they foreshadow the sadness that will surround him by book's end.

Lost love and loneliness are the themes of "On Top of Old Smoky." No one knows when the song was written, but it has been popular since pioneer days. Over the years, it has lent itself to many parodies, including "On Top of Spaghetti" and "I Shot My Poor Teacher." The original title refers to the fog that gets so thick in the Blue Ridge Mountains that it looks like smoke.¹²

"Down in the Valley" also is a ballad about lost love and loneliness. The song, which comes from an old British air, was popular in the Appalachian Mountains during the pioneer days. One story about the song claims it "was written by a prisoner in the Raleigh State Prison in the form of a letter to a girl in Birmingham."¹³ The song became a hit after the verses were published in a local newspaper.

The traditional music found in Appalachian children's literature shows the reader how important music is in the everyday lives of the mountain people. It is part of Appalachian heritage. As previously seen in *Tree of Freedom* by Caudill, music had a place in the lives of the early settlers of Appalachia. Music was a natural accompaniment to chores, served as evening entertainment, and was the foundation of worship services. Separating Caudill's books from those of other Appalachian children's authors is the prevalent inclusion of children's play rhymes and chants. One play rhyme she mentions in *Tree of Freedom* is "William Matrimmatoe":

William Matrimmatoe
He's a good fisherman.
He catches hens,
Puts them in pens.
Some lay eggs.
Some lay none.
William Matrimmatoe
He's a good fisherman.
Wire, briar, limber, lock.
Three geese in a flock.
One flew east.
One flew west.
One flew over the cuckoo's nest.
Wire, briar, limber, lock.¹⁴

"William Matrimmatoe" also is included in Gloria Houston's book, *My Great Aunt Arizona*, which is based on the life of Houston's aunt, who taught in a one-room school for many years. Houston explains on her Web site that "William Matrimmatoe" is played similarly to "One Potato, Two Potato." Each participant stands in a circle with his fists held out in front of him. The child who is "It" goes around the circle touching each fist and singing the rhyme. The last fist touched at the end of the rhyme is out. This repeats until one fist is left. The owner of that fist becomes the new "It."¹⁵

Like Caudill and Houston, author Ruth White includes the music of everyday mountain life in her books. White's book *Sweet Creek Holler* is filled with a tremendous variety of music and performers. It is set in the coal mining area of western Virginia in 1948. Ginny, our narrator, and her sister, Junie, come to the small community with their mother after their Daddy is killed.

Times are difficult, and music is one of the few things that lighten the family's load. Our first introduction to the music of Sweet Creek Holler comes from Nit Purvis, the resident drunk and father of Ginny's best friend, Lou Jean. Nit is on his way to work at 10 A.M. He is inebriated and singing "The Cabbage Head" song at the top of his lungs:

I come home this morning
Drunk as I could be,
And I saw a head laying on the bed
Where my head orta be.
"Wifey, little wifey,
Come 'splain this thang to me:
How come there's a head laying on the bed
Where my head orta be?"¹⁶

Another version of the song is titled "The Drunken Fool." Whichever version is sung, the song is a numbskull tale set to music. For, as it is in numbskull tales, one character, in this case the wife, dutifully points out to another character of the story, in this case the husband, the folly of his ways, and the husband is not able to put two and two together. Nit eventually ambles off to work singing as he goes and the story continues.

Later in the book, Ginny shares how she, Junie, and Lou Jean are greatly influenced by the Grand Old Opry:

Then there were the Saturday nights. Just about everybody in the holler listened to the Grand Ole Opry live from Nashville, Tennessee, on the radio. Me and Junie usually went to bed before it was over, but the radios played on through the night up and down the valley. The sounds of twanging guitars, banjos, and fiddles playing all the hillbilly favorites echoed through the dark hills.

Junie didn't like to sing as much as Lou Jean and I did. The two of us knew all the Opry regulars and most all the words to their songs. Lou Jean would sneak off with me into the hills, where we would pick a cliff for our stage and sing our hearts out to the trees, our audience.¹⁷

Through these very descriptive passages, White captures the importance of music in the everyday life of the old and young living in Appalachia.

George Ella Lyon shows the importance of music in everyday life and carries on the folk music tradition in her book *Basket* by incorporating an original song. The book is a story about a grandmother and her little white oak basket, which is used for gathering eggs, holding fruit, and many other things. As grandmother ages, she moves from the farm to a house in town, to an apartment. In one of those moves, the little basket gets lost.

From that day forward, anything that grandmother cannot find is in the basket. The "Spool of Thread" song, written by Lyon, is reminiscent of traditional folk music and appears throughout the story. Two lines of the song appear as a refrain after certain segments of the story:

Spool of thread, spool of thread,
thimbleful of flour will make my bread.
Spool of thread, spool of thread,
we'll all dine on a darning egg.
Spool of thread, spool of thread,
stitch us together and we won't go beg.¹⁸

Lyon's husband wrote the music for the song. Music and lyrics are provided at the end of the book.

Houston goes a step beyond showing the importance of music in everyday Appalachian life by basing the entire story of *Mountain Valor* around a single folk song. Valor's father is fighting in the Civil War. He has been gone for several years, and his daughter misses him terribly. Throughout the story, either Valor or another character in the story sings the favorite song of Valor's father, "Gypsy Rover":

A Few New Voices of Appalachian Children's Literature

Appalachia is both a place and a people. The place incorporates portions of thirteen states stretching from Mississippi to New York. The people form a distinct culture that has been shaped by history and heritage. Both the region and culture of Appalachia have been portrayed in a variety of ways throughout the years in children's literature. The portrayals available are largely due to two distinct groups of children's authors and illustrators that have become synonymous with Appalachian children's literature.

When the first significant published Appalachian children's literature appeared around 1940, the most recognized Appalachian children's writers were Rebecca Caudill, May Justus, William Steele, Jesse Stuart, James Still, and Lillie Chapin. These prolific authors wrote in a variety of styles and genres that reflected their individual heritages. Their contributions to Appalachian children's literature, which spanned from 1940 to 1970, were significant because they set the standard for how the Appalachian culture and region would be portrayed in children's literature.

The 1960s and 1970s were transitional years that saw the popularity of Appalachian children's literature decline somewhat. During this time, new perspectives, attitudes, and realities concerning Appalachia were revealed. Also, because of an emphasis on multicultural education and

literature, an expansion of the genres and characters seen in Appalachian literature occurred. These influences among others raised the publishing standards for future Appalachian children's literature.

During the 1980s and 1990s, there was a renewed interest in and increased expectations of published Appalachian children's literature. Cynthia Rylant, George Ella Lyon, Ruth White, Gloria Houston, Jerrie Oughton, and Paul Brett Johnson met these expectations and became widely recognized authors of the genre. As with the first cluster of Appalachian children's authors, these writers have been a prolific group and the recipients of numerous honors. Today, their portrayals of the culture and region have shaped the attitudes of many children and educators toward Appalachia.

While the authors mentioned in this last group are still active and continue to contribute to the wealth of published Appalachian children's literature, there are other authors and illustrators deserving recognition. As we enter the twenty-first century, new voices are sounding. These authors and illustrators are continuing the tradition of well-rooted portrayals of the Appalachian culture and region and may be on the verge of becoming a distinguishable grouping of Appalachian authors and illustrators all their own. See the bibliography for selected titles with publication dates from 2000 to the present.

The gypsy rover comes over the hill,
 And down through the green wood so shady.
 He whistled and sang 'til the green wood rang,
 And he won the heart of a lady.
 Ah dee do. Ah dee do da day.
 Ah dee do, ah dee daisy.
 He whistled and sang 'til the green wood rang,
 And he won the heart of a lady.¹⁹

This song is traced to Scotland and was first published there in 1740. The words to the Scottish version are very different than what Houston uses in her story. The Scottish version of the song supposedly recounts the tale of Johnny Faa, an Egyptian who came to Scotland and was given the title of lord and earl of Little Egypt by James V of Scotland. By the next year, the Egyptians were told to leave the realm. Johnny Faa refused, and he, along with several other gypsies (the term is derived from "Egyptian"), were hanged.²⁰ "The Gypsy and the Lady," as the song is called in Scotland, immortalizes the wife-stealing escapades of Johnny Faa, with some versions being rather racy. The American versions are much tamer and quite romantic. The lady of the song runs away with her lover, the gypsy rover, but is pursued by her father. Her father finds the two lovers, but she refuses to leave the side of her gypsy and declares, "I will stay till my dying day, with my whistling gypsy rover."²¹ It is this tamer version of the song that means so much to Valor.

The reappearance of the words to this folk song throughout the story accomplishes several things. This is the song Valor remembers her father singing to her when she was little. Its regular occurrence in the story keeps the connection between father and daughter alive and intact. It is referenced as a song from the old country, which alludes to Valor's heritage—her parents' families came to Appalachia from Scotland. The song also is used to foreshadow the romance that blooms between Valor and Laird Randall McKenzie, a soldier from Scotland.

May Justus does a similar thing in her book *Barney, Bring Your Banjo*. Barney is invited to perform at a Saturday night play party given by his uncle. He picks out the tune that his grandmother is singing while doing the laundry. When he asks her to sing other verses to the song, she cannot remember the words and suggests that Barney ask the neighbor. For the rest of the week, up to the day of the party, each neighbor sends Barney to another neighbor, who teaches an additional verse of the song, "Tale of a Pig." The melody and all the verses are included in the book. Of course, Barney's performance at the play party is a huge success.

Instead of creating a story to fit around a song, some authors have used Appalachian folk songs to create song picture books. One example is *Evening: An Appalachian Lullaby* by Paulette Livers Lambert. Rich, colorful illustrations reflect the words of the lullaby while depicting a secondary story of a father and his young sons playing a game of hide and seek as the boys attempt to avoid bedtime. Eventually, the boys are lulled to sleep by the sounds of nature.

The Little Mohee: An Appalachian Ballad by Joanna Troughton is another example of a song picture book. It uses the verses of

the song as the text of the story. Troughton captures the meaning of the song's words in her art. And, as they should, text and illustrations work one with the other for a nicely balanced presentation. Another general characteristic of the song picture book is that the music for each song, at least the melody line, is almost always included in the book, usually at the back.

"The Little Mohee" may be a version of "On Top of Old Smoky," as the same melody is used for both songs. The theme of lost love is also common to the two songs. The story of "The Little Mohee" concerns a man from the Old World who meets a young Indian girl in the New World. He refuses her advances until he returns to his home and discovers that his betrothed has been untrue. He then returns to the New World and his Little Mohee.

The song picture book is a unique and useful format. It is an important means of preserving folk songs and the heritage they represent. Song picture books are warm, inviting theaters from which this history can be performed and passed to younger generations.

All of the songs mentioned here, from "The Golden Willow Tree" to "The Little Mohee," are part of the framework upon which the history of Appalachia is built. Traditional Appalachian music is bound up with the everyday life of the mountains. Investigating the music of Appalachian children's literature provides a means for more fully understanding and appreciating Appalachian heritage.

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- Crum, Shutta. *My Mountain Song*. Illus. by Ted Rand. Clarion, 2004. 32p. Gr. K–3. While visiting her great-grandparents one summer on their Kentucky farm, Brenda Gail learns how she can write her very own mountain song made of special memories. The watercolor illustrations expertly blend the old with the new, providing an updated look at life in the mountains.
- Cullen, Lynn. *Little Scraggly Hair: A Dog on Noah's Ark*. Illus. by Jacqueline Rogers. Holiday House, 2003. 32p. Gr. K–3. Watercolor illustrations accompany this legend that explains how dogs came to have wet noses. First appearing in a Scottish collection of stories, the author Americanized the story by setting it in Appalachia. The incorporation of the mountain dialect in the story is very well-done.
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telling of Emma's story. Everyone is coming for the family reunion, where old and young share their talents. Rip the hound dog is banned from the reunion because every time Emma sings, he howls. Finally, it is Emma's time to sing at the reunion, but she can't do it until Rip happily joins in.

Henson, Heather. *Angel Coming*. Illus. by Susan Gaber. Atheneum, 2005. 32p. Gr. K-2. The beautiful acrylic paintings join the softly cadenced text telling of a little girl's anticipation waiting for the birth of her baby brother. An author's note explains that the story was inspired by the Eastern Kentucky Frontier Nursing Service created by Mary Breckinridge. The nurses were known as angels on horseback.

Howard, Elizabeth Fitzgerald. *Virgie Goes to School with Us Boys*. Illus. by E. B. Lewis. Simon & Schuster, 2000. 32p. Gr. K-3. Based on family history, this story is set in post-Civil War Tennessee, where Virgie, a young African-American girl, proves she can attend school as her five older brothers do. The watercolor illustrations poignantly reflect the sibling bonds and the determination to gain an education.

Johnson, Paul Brett. *The Goose Who Went Off in a Huff*. Illus. Orchard Books, 2001. 32p. Gr. PreS-1. A companion book to *The Cow Who Wouldn't Come Down* and *The Pig Who Ran a Red Light*, this is another tale about the extraordinary animals that live on Miss Rosemary's farm. Magnolia, the goose, wants to be a mother. She achieves her goal in an unexpected way. The expressive acrylic illustrations capture the fun and humor of this unusual situation.

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Swain, Gwenyth. *I Wonder as I Wander*. Illus. by Ronald Himler. Eerdmans, 2003. 32p. Gr. 2-5. A fictionalized telling of how John Jacob Niles collected the song "I Wonder as I Wander" from the young daughter of an itinerant preacher. The realistic watercolor and pen illustrations capture the hardships of Appalachia during the Great Depression.

Thornhill, Jan. *Over in the Meadow*. Illus. Maple Tree Pr., 2004. 32p. Gr. PreS-2. A traditional Appalachian counting rhyme made popular by Olive A. Wadsworth. A new dimension has been added as each illustration is created from everyday objects. A very enjoyable jaunt from one to ten.

Folk Literature

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Hicks, Ray, as told to Lynn Salsi. *The Jack Tales*. Illus. by Owen Smith. Callaway, 2000. 40p. Gr. 4-7. A collection of three Jack tales as told by celebrated storyteller Ray Hicks.

Johnson, Paul Brett. *Bearhide and Crow*. Illus. Holiday House, 2000. 32p. Gr. K-3. After Sam tricks Amos into swapping a prize-winning gourd for a smelly old bearhide, Amos decides to give Sam a taste of his own medicine by negotiating an even more worthless trade. The story is based on a bit of Appalachian lore that says if you split a crow's tongue, you can teach it human speech.

Johnson, Paul Brett. *Fearless Jack*. Illus. Margaret McElderry Books, 2001. 32p. Gr. K-3. In this Appalachian tall tale, Jack leaves home to seek his fortune. After killing ten yellow jackets with one whack of his hat, he advertises his heroism on the front of his hat, "Fearless Jack Killed Ten at a Whack." After reading the advertisement, the sheriff hires Jack to vanquish the ornery critters that are terrorizing the town. Jack is paid handsomely for his efforts, acquiring the fortune he sought.

Johnson, Paul Brett. *Jack Outwits the Giants*. Illus. Margaret McElderry Books, 2002. 32p. Gr. K-3. Once again Jack is up to his old tricks. This time he outwits two giants who want to eat him for breakfast. Johnson's light-hearted, acrylic paintings perfectly capture the tone of this rollicking tale.

Fantasy

Youmans, Marly. *The Curse of the Raven Mocker*. Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2003. 288p. Gr. 4-8. Adanta's parents are spirited away from their isolated cottage in the Smoky Mountains. She goes in search of them and discovers the truth about the Cherokee stories that her father told her.

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Historical Fiction

Crum, Shutta. *Spitting Image*. Clarion, 2003. 224p. Gr. 4-8. In the small town of Baylor, Kentucky, twelve-year-old Jessie K. Bovey confronts her problems while serving as guide to VISTA volunteer, Miss Woodruff, who has come to fight the War on Poverty during the late 1960s.

Davis, C. L. *The Christmas Barn*. Pleasant Company, 2001. 200p. Gr. 4-8. Based on stories from the author's family, twelve-year-old Roxie describes the winter of 1930, when their cabin in the Appalachian Mountains is destroyed by snow and her family must move into the barn a few days before Christmas.

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White, Ruth. *Tadpole*. Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2003. 208p. Gr. 4–8. In 1955 rural Kentucky, Serilda Collins, a single mother of four lively girls, discovers that her nephew, Tadpole, is being abused. She takes him in, and the house becomes even livelier.

Realistic Fiction

Bradley, Kimberly Brubaker. *Halfway to the Sky*. Delacorte Pr., 2002. 176p. Gr. 4–8. A moving story of twelve-year-old Dani, who runs away to the Appalachian Trail in response to the horrendous year she has experienced. Her older brother died from muscular dystrophy, her parents divorced, her Dad remarried, and a new baby is on the way. Dani takes to the trail, where she finally allows herself to grieve and think.

Nolan, Han. *When We Were Saints*. Harcourt, 2003. 304p. Gr. 6–12. Influenced by his grandfather's dying words and a girl suffering from mental illness who believes they are saints, fourteen-year-old Archie sets out on a spiritual quest that takes him from southern Appalachia to the Cloisters Museum in New York City.

White, Ruth. *Buttermilk Hill*. Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2004. 176p. Gr. 4–8. Things are difficult for Piper after her parent's divorce. Gradually, all members of her family begin to build new lives for themselves, and she finds her way too.

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We Said Feminist Fairy Tales, Not Fractured Fairy Tales!

The Construction of the Feminist Fairy Tale: Female Agency over Role Reversal

Leslee Farish Kuykendal and Brian W. Sturm

A child's first exposure to literature is often a fairy tale, frequently a derivative of one of the classics by the Brothers Grimm or Charles Perrault. While lack of mythology instruction in the early elementary curriculum and lack of mythology recall knowledge in adolescents is cause for concern, high school students do know basic Aesop fables and such well-known fairy tales as Cinderella.¹



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Many states mandate the study of folktales, fairy tales, and fables in their curricula (for example, the statewide curricula of North Carolina, California, and Rhode Island emphasize this for third grade), preschools often include fairytales in their curricula, and public libraries use fairytales and folktales in preschool programs aimed at developing early literacy habits. These tales, many hundreds of years old and found in countless incarnations all over the world, are a basic part of the intricate layering of stories and influences that perpetuate and inform the cultural norms surrounding the world the child lives in.²

The cultural norms represented in fairy tales play a large part in the socialization processes of the child who reads them. Contained within these cultural norms are the shared beliefs about gender roles held by the child's society. The development of a gender identity is integral to a child's self-perception. According to Judith L. Meece, gender conceptions are important for understanding not only the self but also the behavior of others.³

Additionally, they affect the way children are treated by peers and adults and influence future behavior expectations.⁴ As children grow, they use information from their parents, peers, school, literature, and the media to form theories on how men and women are supposed to behave. Literature in general, and fairy tales in particular, gender children. The characters depicted in stories help children to determine what it means to be male or female as it applies to behavior, traits, or occupation within a child's culture.⁵ In this capacity, fairy tales can be powerful cultural agents, telling the child who reads them how they should behave with regard to gender.

Fairy tales contain shared beliefs about gender roles held by a child's society; however, shared beliefs can and frequently do

take another form: the oversimplified gender role stereotype.⁶ Beginning in the 1960s, United States researchers began to notice the frequency with which gender stereotypes occurred in children's books. They questioned how this repeated exposure to gender stereotypes might affect a child's development.

In response, a number of studies were conducted, many revealing similar patterns of male dominance and female subservience.⁷ Researchers concluded that repeated exposure to the stereotyped images of gender was likely to have a detrimental effect on the development of a child's self-esteem as well as his perceptions of his own and others' abilities and potential.⁸

Fairy tales can be immensely influential in children's developing gender identity, so it is important to examine the messages that are being transmitted. It has long been recognized that the traditional European canon of fairy tales, those that have survived to the present day, are tales that reflect and reproduce the patriarchal values of the society that crafted them, and, as Marcia Lieberman explained, "Millions of women must surely have formed their psycho-sexual self-concepts and their ideas of what they could or could not accomplish, what sort of behavior would be rewarded, and of the nature of reward itself, in part from their favorite fairy tales."⁹

These stories portray women as "weak, submissive, dependent, and self-sacrificing while men are powerful, active, and dominant."¹⁰ Fairy tales define women as beautiful objects, powerless to alter the events in their lives, while fairy tale men are powerful agents of their own destiny. There are characters within these tales who defy these descriptions; however, their defiance comes with a price. Powerful women in fairy tales are generally ugly if not also evil.¹¹ The exception to this rule is the wise woman or fairy godmother; however, these powerful women are still separated from traditional fairy tale women in that they are not truly human.¹²

Traditional feminist criticism of the "classic" fairy tale texts rests on the fact that stories that reflect traditional patriarchal values survive, while those tales whose characters shed their archetypes and step outside the bounds of accepted behavior disappear into oblivion.¹³ Thus, the fairy tales told and retold today are not necessarily representative of the genre. Rather, they are a direct result of the "skewed selection and silent revision of subversive texts."¹⁴

Within this socio-political and -historical perspective, early feminists (1950s and 1960s) examined the roles of women embedded in the folktales and fairy tales that have survived and found them to be "an unfortunate source of negative female stereotypes . . . [and] . . . one of the many socializing forces that discouraged females from realizing their full human potential."¹⁵ Andrea Dworkin (1974) summarized this position:

There are two definitions of woman [in fairy tales]. There is the good woman. She is a victim. There is the bad woman. She must be destroyed. The good woman must be possessed. The bad woman must be killed, or punished. Both must be nullified. . . . [the ending of these tales] tells us that happiness

for a woman is to be passive, victimized, destroyed, or asleep. . . . It tells us that the happy ending is when we are ended, when we live without our lives, or not at all.¹⁶

These feminists "saw women as artificially separated from and wrongly considered unequal to men."¹⁷

During the late 1970s and 1980s, feminism evolved into the feeling that "women were naturally separate from men and rightly superior," and rewritten folktales and fairy tales claiming to be "feminist" often simply reversed the normal gender stereotypes (for example, Robert Munsch's *The Paper Bag Princess*, 1980).¹⁸ Feminist writers also published collections of folktales with strong heroines, such as Alison Lurie's *Clever Gretchen and Other Forgotten Folktales* (1980) and Ethel Johnston Phelps' *The Maid of the North: Feminist Folk Tales from Around the World* (1981).¹⁹ While these collections often paired the strong, clever woman with a stupid or inept man (touting women's superiority over men), they also began to transition feminist criticism toward the exploration of the cultural diversity and breadth of women in folktales and the recovery of the "collective female voice" in these tales.²⁰

Kay Stone characterizes this third wave of feminism as the view of "both women and men as naturally separate but potentially equal—if men shape up."²¹ Feminist children's fairy tales seem to lag several years behind the changing conceptions of feminism.

Jane Yolen lamented in her 1977 article, *America's Cinderella*, "The magic of the old tales has been falsified, the true meaning lost, perhaps forever."²² And given what is known about canonical fairy tale literature, it is very tempting to agree with her and mourn the loss of the true fairy tale.

However, "contamination," a term folklorists use to explain foreign influence on pure narrative tradition, can have an enriching process on the fairy tale. Author Jack Zipes, of *Sticks and Stones: The Troublesome Success of Children's Literature from Slovenly Peter to Harry Potter*, discusses the possibility that the contamination of fairy tales "can lead to the birth of something unique and genuine in its own right."²³

Though the European canon (Grimm or Perrault) are thought of as "original" fairy tales, "There is no genuine or authentic version of a fairy tale."²⁴ In fact, tales are constantly being reworked and adapted to reveal new facets of a culture or the creativity of an author or storyteller.²⁵ Re-vision, a term whose groundwork is laid in feminist postculturalist thought, indicates an author's decision about which original elements to retain and which to refute when creating his new vision of the text.²⁶ "Feminist rewriters of fairy tales have reworked the conventions of the genre so as to encode discourses that contradict or challenge patriarchal ideologies that are increasingly viewed as anachronistic in today's society."²⁷ Re-visions are one form of contamination.²⁸

Many feminists consider it fitting that women are now reclaiming fairy tales, given fairy tales' oral tradition and the historical connection between women and child rearing. However, it

would be unfortunate for women to revise these fairy tales with the sole intention of disrupting the binary gender construction.²⁹ The simple reversal of gender roles does not result in a feminist fairy tale, but rather a fractured fairy tale.

Fractured fairy tales challenge gender stereotypes and patriarchal ideologies only at the story level of the text. These changes rely on a straightforward reversal of gender roles and the substitution of strong female characters for more passive female characters.³⁰

Children are not fooled by these false heroines. A 1989 study focusing on children's responses to Elizabeth, the protagonist in Robert Munsch's *The Paper Bag Princess*, found that many of the children in the study were unable to view Elizabeth as a genuine hero.³¹ *The Paper Bag Princess* is an example of a feminist tale that complies with the traditional form of a fairy tale but possesses obvious reversals of traditional gender roles. In this case, Princess Elizabeth rescues Prince Ronald from a dragon and then decides not to marry him. Children in the study felt that Elizabeth ought to have "cleaned herself up and married the prince."³² Similar studies found similar results, with the sentiment being that while children admired strong female protagonists, these were not the characters they wished to emulate.

It would seem, then, that in order to truly re-vision a fairy tale, thereby creating a work that is artistically new and rings true to a child, feminist authors must cease attempting to simply reverse gender roles. Rather, they must re-vision the entire work and create something from the ground up. Donna Jo Napoli is one feminist author who has found success re-visioning fairy tales, creating feminist rather than fractured fairy tales.³³ She has altered generic conventions in three main areas in her books that allow her to rework the discursive foundations of the traditional material: narrative strategy, representation of male and female characters, and renegotiation of patriarchal ideologies and values.³⁴

Napoli chooses narrative strategies that subvert the traditional omniscient anonymous narrator in order to present other sides of the story. She frequently chooses a first-person narrative, allowing the protagonist to be the agent of his own narration. Feminists frequently write of the importance of giving voice, agency, and subjectivity to those who have previously been silenced and objectified. A female protagonist is enabled if she narrates her own story.

In children's literature, the character's voice serves as a metaphor of female agency, providing her with the potential for self-determination. In *The Magic Circle*, a feminist re-vision of *Hansel and Gretel*, Napoli makes a deliberate decision to give her sorceress protagonist (the traditional witch) voice and agency. Napoli's decisions regarding the sorceress invite the readers to empathize with a character who has not only been objectified and vilified in the traditional tales, but whose representation has, more generally, "been symbolic of misogynist attitudes toward women."³⁵

A truly feminist children's story has recently been defined as one in which the main character is empowered, regardless of

gender.³⁶ In keeping with this definition, Napoli alters the representation of male and female characters with regard to issues of gender and gendered relationships.

In her fairy tales, Napoli pays as much attention to subverting stereotypes of heroes and princes as she does to redefining female protagonists.³⁷ Napoli re-visions the classic tale *Beauty and the Beast* in her novel, *Beast*. In *Beast*, Napoli alters the tale by presenting the story through the first-person narrative of Prince Orasmyn, the Beast. Napoli introduces her readers to a Beast who possesses the "traditionally feminine attributes of delicate respect for Beauty's [Belle's] feelings, nurturance, comfort, gentleness, and patience."³⁸

Additionally, Napoli skews the traditional power dynamic between Belle and Beast. In his lion form, Beast reads with difficulty and can only communicate by scratching words with his paws or using nonverbal signs. Conversely, Belle has full access to language in its spoken and written forms. She keeps a journal of sorts and writes her own story, chronicling her thoughts and feelings about the Beast and her situation. "Napoli, thus, positions Belle in a positive relation to language and culture by subverting androcentric theories that devalue women's status in a patriarchal sex-gender system on the grounds that women do not have full access to the symbolic (language as power and culture)."³⁹ In this way, Napoli alters the traditional representation of male and female characters in order to create a feminist, rather than fractured, fairy tale.

The third way in which Napoli alters generic conventions in her books is the renegotiation of patriarchal ideologies and values. In the Brothers' Grimm telling of the story of *Rumpelstiltskin*, the tale "rests on the premise that a daughter who produces wealth, whether through her own labor or through magical means, is a girl who can make a good marriage."⁴⁰ Napoli's retelling of the tale, *Spinners*, attempts to challenge the patriarchal capitalist value placed on marriage by the Grimms' version of the story by emphasizing the artistry, rather than the economics, of spinning. In *Spinners*, spinning and weaving, though it earns Saskia a living, also earns her respect as an artist with the ability to create beauty where none existed before.⁴¹ Napoli empowers Saskia with the same talent that the Grimm Brothers used to sell her into marriage.

Children use fairy tales to identify cultural norms about the world in which they live. Contained within these cultural norms are the shared beliefs about gender roles held by the child's society. As fairy tales are often a child's early exposure to gender identity and how it defines a character, these gender roles should be as realistic as possible.

Real men and women are not the stuff of fairy tales, completely good or completely evil archetypes. They are complicated. Real men and women play roles beyond the traditional gender-defined positions depicted in canonical fairy tales.

For feminist fairy tales to meet the needs of a society of children in want of fully realized, complicated characters (regardless of gender), feminist writers need to move beyond straight

role reversal. Children see through these fractured fairy tales and do not identify with their one-dimensional protagonists.

Feminist fairy tales must be stories in which the main character is empowered regardless of gender. In order to do this, more authors should follow Donna Jo Napoli's lead and re-vision traditional stories by changing narrative conventions, empowering female and male protagonists, and developing narratives that encode truly feminist themes and values. ♀

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Tuning in to Audiobooks

Why Should Kids Listen?

Arnie Cardillo, Bruce Coville, Tim Ditlow, Ellen Myrick, and Teri Lesesne

The Educational Paperback Association (EPA) annual membership meeting might not seem like the most likely place to turn up the volume on audiobooks. Among the sixty-odd publisher members, however, are three audiobook publishers without equal in the world of recorded books for young people. Tim Ditlow of Listening Library and Arnie Cardillo of Live Oak Media had both served terms on the board of the trade association, and newcomer Bruce Coville of Full Cast Audio had been one of the most popular speakers in recent years in his guise as author. With such talent available, it was only natural that 2005 meeting co-chair (and audiobook enthusiast) Ellen Myrick would lobby to include an audio element in the program.

It became clear that the audiobook panel needed an additional voice—one that had recognized credibility and authority about the impact of audiobooks on kids. Bruce Coville had once

shared a long ride with Teri Lesesne and discovered a kindred soul. Tim Ditlow mentioned that a Teri Lesesne had conducted some research with audiobooks and written about it in one of their catalogues. Arnie Cardillo didn't know Teri Lesesne yet, but he certainly would soon. Teri, when contacted, enthusiastically agreed to join the audio panel. Lastly, Ellen Myrick, who had founded the publication *The Heard Word* at Ingram several years earlier, spoke to the assembled distributors and publishers about how to market audiobooks effectively in their own promotional materials. Her goal was to get them to recognize audiobooks as an opportunity to be explored and shared at every level of their business. When the ninety minutes were over, Ellen Myrick wanted a room full of audiobook converts, and she found them. Because the EPA panel proved to be a resounding success, the panel decided to submit a presentation for the ALA Annual Conference in New Orleans. Sponsored by ALSC, the panel found that once again, attendees were intrigued to learn about the process of making audiobooks and how audiobooks might meet the needs of children and teens. What follows is a summary of the presentation for ALA. The three distinct types of audiobook recordings, along with some rationale for using audio with children and teens, should assist those librarians wishing to get kids reading with their ears.

Tim Ditlow is Vice President and Publisher at Large for Random House Audio.

Arnie Cardillo is an audio producer for Live Oak Media.

Bruce Coville is President of Full Cast Audio and a noted author of children's and young adult books.

Ellen Myrick is an Editor for North-South Books and performed on the Full Cast Audio production of Stop the Train.

Teri Lesesne is Professor of Library Science at Sam Houston State University, Huntsville, Texas, and a member of the Odyssey Committee.

Production Style #1: Readalong (Arnie Cardillo of Live Oak Media)

All Audiobooks Are Not Equal!

Just as there are different types of children's books (picture books, beginning readers, early chapter books, and middle-grade and young adult fiction), there are different types of

children's audiobook productions. And a book's format can sometimes lend itself to different production styles, treatments, and techniques. Simply stated, a picture book readalong is a word-for-word audio recording that is meant to be listened to while the child is reading and following along in the book. Producing a picture book readalong, however, is not a simple process (at least not the way we do it), and we approach our readalong production with two purposes in mind: to help children learn to read, and to make the reading experience fun!

Multisensory and Associative Learning

Learning is most effective when it is a multisensory experience. Infants and toddlers see, hear, and touch things in the world, their parents name these things, and so they are taught and learn to associate words with the things they sense. The same holds true in the world of the picture book readalong. In teaching reading to young children, educators have found that, if a child sees a word and hears it at the same time, the dual experience of seeing and hearing creates a double impression and deeper imprint of the word in the child's memory than the act of just seeing the word. This double imprint and impression allow the child to more effectively retain words in his or her memory and make associations between the visual and auditory nature of words.

When we produce a readalong of a children's picture book, we utilize this concept of multisensory and associative learning. We try to draw the child into the world of the book, into the illustrations and words, by using sound effects, music, and production techniques that support the reading and imprinting process. Illustrations in picture books are there to help the beginning reader understand and decipher the words and story. For the young child, the illustrations are integral to the telling of the story; or, to put it another way, the text and story are picture-dependent. So, when we produce a readalong, we make sure that the pictures become "part" of the production. One way we do this is in the pacing of the narration. Without interfering with the natural flow of the text, we allow time for the child to look at the pictures and make associations between the story and the illustrations that support it. We even take into account the time that the child needs to physically turn the page of the book and locate the words on the next page. Most importantly, we are very careful to pace the narrator's reading so that it is not too fast to frustrate beginning readers, nor too slow to cause them to lose interest.

Casting Narrators

We try to cast narrators who are skilled in creating different voices (who can sound like a happy cow, a nervous mouse, a nauseous chicken, a young boy or girl, and so on), and we ask the narrator to make each character different and distinctive from the others to help the child remember and recognize the various characters as the story unfolds. In other words, we want to make each character believable and interesting to the young listener.

Sound Effects and Music

In the same way, we believe that sound effects, if used effectively, can represent words and events in the story and reinforce the

text. Sound effects of a door slamming, a piece of paper being crumbled, a thud, and footsteps are all ways of making a greater impression or imprint of the word and action in the child's memory. We also pay particular attention to where we place the sound effect in relation to the narration; that is, either right before, during, or after the reference in the text, depending on where it best combines with the words and illustration to have the most impact. Music speaks to the emotions, and so we use original music to reinforce the emotionality of the words and text. The use of specific instruments can evoke certain emotions or moods, such as violins and violas for sadness or suspense; flutes and woodwind instruments for warmth and happiness; and brass instruments for heroic acts. The use of specific instrumentation and music styles also helps capture the essence of a book's characters (a bassoon for a basset hound, a flute for a bird, a tuba for a cow, and so on), or introduce children to different musical genres (for example, salsa music for Gary Soto's *Chato's Kitchen*; blues guitar and harmonica for Walter Dean Myers' *The Blues of Flats Brown*; a jazz quartet for Chris Raschka's *John Coltrane's Giant Steps*). Increasingly, children's books are being published about singers, musicians, composers, songs, and musical genres. It is in these types of books in particular that the text and message of the book become "music dependent," and the music component in the audio production conveys the author's and illustrator's intent more vibrantly than the book alone does.

A Final Word about the Sound Mix and Human Voice

Finally, it should be stated that, no matter how many sound elements, tracks, and techniques we use to support the reading process, we ensure that the narrator's voice takes center stage, and that all other sound elements make up the supporting cast and are placed in the background of the sound mix. It is also important to use these sound elements judiciously; that is, when and where they have the greatest impact on the imprinting process. Ultimately, we know that there are times when nothing takes the place of or makes more of a lasting impression than the human voice.

Production Style #2: Single Voice Narration (Tim Ditlow of Listening Library)

For an audiobook producer, selecting a narrator for an audiobook is what selecting grapes is to a vintner. It can take years to develop the skill set to create a vintage list of recordings, and one must be willing to take the time to nurture the craft. There are as many ways to cast an audiobook as there are audiobook companies, and over the past fifty years one of the hallmarks of Listening Library is that we do not rely on one single approach to casting. In other words, rather than rely on the same actors year in and year out to read our children's titles, we believe that each unique book deserves a unique voice. We know children listen to our titles over and over again, therefore why not give them (and their parents) the widest possible range of new voices to enjoy?

This may sound like a simple approach, as there are so many actors out there, but with close to one hundred new releases

Memorable Moment at EPA

For many at the meeting, the most perfect moment came during a lunchtime presentation. Seated in a room with floor-to-ceiling windows looking out upon the stunning cathedral in the center of Santa Fe, Jim Dale, the voice of a pantheon of Harry Potter characters, began to read aloud. As we became enveloped in the world of Harry Potter, the cathedral bells began to chime. The low-slung clouds began to release downy snowflakes all around us as we basked in the warmth of the room and Jim Dale's voice. An audiobook lover's heaven. A bibliophile's bliss.

a year, the commitment to find the right voice creates a tremendous challenge for our executive producers and directors in New York, Los Angeles, and London. For example, you can imagine how tempting it might be to keep using some of our top narrators over and over again, but an overreliance on the same voices can easily lead to miscasting in the world of children's recordings.

However, there is always a risk in hiring new talent. This is similar to the creative tightrope walk book editors take with new authors, record labels with new musicians, and film directors with new actors. But the rewards can be worth it when the actor gives one of those magical performances where a single voice can sound like a multivoice recording. Who knew Jim Dale, who had never read an audiobook before, was going to make recording history with his creation of more than two hundred and fifty voices for the Harry Potter series?

So how do we actually do the casting? Casting begins the moment we start reading a manuscript. This is where experience comes in because, while technically any book can be recorded, not every book should be recorded. There are some books that do not have the internal rhythm and flow to make a good recording. Sometimes a great narrator can make an okay book sound better, but it is difficult to transcend difficult text and stilted dialogue.

Casting is a collaborative process at Listening Library. Our executive producers lead the way, as many of them have produced more than a thousand audiobooks, and along with the freelance directors we use, they have developed an innate sense of the acting demands presented by a new novel.

Here are just some of the questions we discuss when we begin casting a new title:

- Is the author interested in reading? We've always invited authors to audition, and over the years some of our most outstanding recordings are performed by the author (such as Philip Pullman in *The Golden Compass*). The key word is "audition," because not every author has the right voice—just because they want to read doesn't mean that this is what is best for a young listener.

- Would a celebrity be appropriate? A big name for big name's sake is a common casting mistake in our industry, and for most children's books the big name is the author. However, sometimes a Hollywood name is the perfect match of voice to book (Anne Hathaway for *The Princess Diaries*).
- What about a current actor on Broadway? It sure helps to have our studios just blocks away from Times Square. A few years ago Laura Linney was on stage and we had her read the Nancy Drew series each afternoon for a few hours before she walked over to the theatre for her evening performance.
- Is the novel written in the first-person and, if so, are there any regional accents? How many other characters are there? Is it a youthful or older voice? What if the book is set in Korea or in the Aleutian Islands? This is why we work closely with many voice-over agents, who help us cast a wide net for actors.

We hope this gives you some idea of the decisions involved in casting a children's or young adult novel. It is a complex process, and yet, after selecting the right books to record, it is also the single most important decision in our business. For a young child this may be his first audiobook experience, and we want him to become a lifetime listener!

Production Style #3: Full Cast Audio (Bruce Coville of Full Cast Audio)

Bruce Coville says that he started Full Cast Audio just so he could have a few dozen talented people come and read to him at night—which is what happens every time Full Cast Audio starts work on a new book.

Actually, the real start of the process is title selection, of course. Here the mode of recording puts on an extra layer of filters: not only must we love the book we choose, it must be dialogue-driven. The next stage, casting, can be lengthy, as we must find actors who are not only skilled performers, but whose voices will work together in a way we think of as "symphonic." One challenge, especially in a book involving numerous young performers, is making sure the actors' voices are distinct so it will always be clear which character is speaking. We spread our net wide, and may bring in people from outside the acting community to achieve a specific sound or accent. (To record Kenneth Oppel's *Skybreaker*, which features a pair of Sherpa guides, our director found two Nepalese doctors, who took on the roles with great authenticity!)

Once we have our cast, we gather around a large oak table in our main office for what we call (surprise!) "the table read." Depending on the length of a book, this may take as many as four evenings. It's a delicious experience, our first chance to hear the book come to life with the voices we've been so carefully assembling. The main purpose, of course, is to familiarize the cast with the flow of the text and with working with each other. Another purpose, less obvious, is to get the laughter out of the way! What is funny on the page can become side-split-

ting when read by a group of skilled actors bouncing words off each other. In the relaxed atmosphere of the table read we can take the time to enjoy that. We usually serve a dinner the first evening, giving the actors a chance to socialize and build relationships.

In the studio the work becomes much more focused. We use a four-microphone setup, with the narrator stationed permanently at one mic, and the remaining mics serving multiple duty. We use as many as fifty actors in a book, so those mics can come in for a lot of adjusting for varying heights! In a crowded scene, the actors may be called upon to do “the Microphone Gavotte.” Basically, if two (or more!) actors are sharing a microphone, they must step up to and then away from the microphone quickly and quietly. We can’t actually record a line until all is still and silent. This is time consuming, of course, but we’re seeking an intimate sound that requires the actors to be close on mic when we record them.

Unlike most single-voice recordings, the director is actually in the booth with the actors. He or she will be wearing headphones (“cans”), for two reasons. First, to hear what’s going into the mic in the same way a listener on headphones eventually will. This is vital, because small mouth noises—clicks and pops—that you wouldn’t hear standing five feet away become very prominent when the actor is close to the microphone. The second reason for the headphones is so the engineer and production assistant—both sitting in a room above the record-

ing booth—can provide feedback. This ranges from noting that an actor needs to take a drink (we go through huge amounts of bottled water on a project) to lengthy consultations on pronunciation issues.

Between rehearsal and studio, our casts put in six to seven hours for every hour that actually ends up on the final recording. It’s intense work. It’s also quite joyful. We hope that pleasure is clear in the final product!

And, when you consider that most of our recordings never go out of print in this age of digital downloads, then we want to make sure that our recordings will stand the test of time.

So, Why All This Fuss about Audiobooks in the First Place?

Look into the bedroom of the average child or teen. Gone are the record players, replaced by mp3 players. Kids seem more than ever to be wired. This change has impacted how we define literacy and will refine our definitions in the twenty-first century.

Because of legislation, most notably No Child Left Behind, we are facing a crisis in reading. P. David Pearson observed several years ago that we could end up some day with a nation full of kids who can pass tests.¹ However, he wondered whether or not we were creating readers. The latest scores on the National Assessment for Educational Progress (NAEP) confirms in part



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Pearson's concern. We have students who can read at the basic levels of comprehension. However, readers who are proficient and advanced are scarce. Also scarce are children who still love to read beyond elementary school. *Newsweek* recently observed that educators are noting slumps in reading as early as fourth grade.²

How can we deal with this ever-evolving notion of what it means to be literate if we are losing readers as young as ten years of age? One of the answers might be a tool that has been available for our use for quite a while: audiobooks. Audiobooks were considered more ancillary-type material, provided for students with visual problems, for instance. Now, they are being viewed as tools for every reader. How can we best use this tool to benefit readers? We suggest three key areas where audio can assist educators:

1. Audiobooks can offer more *time* for adolescents to read. Today's teens are often overscheduled and overwhelmed by the extra activities they participate in outside of school. More than likely, they spend a great deal of time in transit between school and their after-school job, between school and music lessons, between school and athletics. Listening to books in transit can provide the time some kids need.
2. Audiobooks can serve as models of verbal fluency. Fluency is a key term in literacy these days. Listening to audiobooks can help students hear how a fluent reader sounds. They serve, then, as models. Students who are English language learners or in English as a Second Language classes are just one group to benefit from audiobooks. Listening to books for these students teaches them about the pacing of oral language, pronunciation, and even about idiomatic expressions.
3. Audiobooks can motivate reluctant readers and provide assistance for struggling readers. Some kids do not read on level. Occasionally, these are our reluctant readers. They may also be those readers who struggle with text for a variety of reasons, including dyslexia, learning disabilities, and lack of vocabulary development. Students who are reading below level can often listen to a book written several years beyond their reading comprehension. So, instead of providing baby-

ish books for kids who struggle, we can allow them to read the same books as their peers by adding audiobooks as an alternative form of reading.

The use of audiobooks in educational settings is becoming more and more common. Recently, Lesesne conducted a survey about the use of audio and found that many schools now have collections of audiobooks. Some are housed in the library and circulate as would any other type of material. Other audiobooks are placed in the classrooms and are used in small- and large-group instruction. While there is little hard data right now about the effect of audiobooks on reading, the few studies reported indicate that audiobooks could prove to be a powerful weapon in the battle against not only falling test scores but the decline in recreational reading as well.

Nascent research has suggested that audiobooks improve the vocabulary development of students struggling to learn English and become fluent. They also provide more time for those students whose schedules are over-full. Reluctant readers seem to be more likely to check out and read an audiobook than a traditional book. And we have noted one additional benefit: parents and other family members are listening in as well. Never before have educators had the bounty of books in audio format available. More and more titles are being published simultaneously in hardcover and in audio. Classics, contemporary literature, drama, poetry: all are being produced in ever-increasing numbers. And thanks to the efforts of YALSA and ALSC, the first award for excellence in audiobooks for children and young adults, the Odyssey Award, will be presented in 2008. So, fire up the CD player, download a book onto your mp3 player, or insert an audio into the computer and enjoy this new way of reading. ☺

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What Do You Say, Dear; What Do You Do?

Creating a Welcoming Library Environment

Maureen Farley and Betsy Diamant-Cohen

How do you feel when you walk into a new place and someone welcomes you with a smile and a big “hello?” How do you feel when you enter a new place and no one speaks to you?

For most, an enthusiastic welcome puts them at ease in an unfamiliar situation and creates the expectation of a pleasant experience. One of the most important aspects of the librarian’s job is to be welcoming, sincere, and friendly to all who come to children’s programs. Here are some tips offered by seasoned professionals who have spent years working with parents and babies regarding best practices for interacting with parents, caregivers, and children.

When people arrive, stand near the door and greet each one warmly. Select phrases are:

- Hi or hello.
- I’m so glad you’re here!
- Thanks for coming today!
- Hello, my name is ____; what’s yours?
- Welcome! Come right in!
- Hi, I’m ____; I’m so glad you’re here today. Your name? Your baby’s?

These are only suggestions. Most importantly, be yourself; use words you are comfortable using. Remember how it feels to come into a new situation, and consider how you would like to be greeted.

When you meet a toddler or preschooler for the first time, he is less inclined to tell you what his name is and more inclined to answer yes-or-no questions. Commenting positively on an item of clothing or something he has in his hands can forge an initial bond. You could also ask about what he’s done so far today or what it was like getting to the library.

- What a lovely pink shirt you are wearing today.

- Oh, you have Teddy close to you today.
- Those are great light-up sneakers!
- You’re all bundled up for the snow outside.
- I love your sweatshirt; I wish there was one just like it in my size!

Refrain from commenting on the child; when you make comments about hairstyles or physical characteristics, even to say something like “What a pretty young lady!” you are passing judgment. Even if you think you are saying something positive, parents may not appreciate your comments.

Also, other parents might get offended if you do not say something similar to their child. If you repeat the same thing, though, parents will sense you are insincere. So, find some article of clothing or a favorite toy that invites positive comment, and initiate conversation with the child.

One of the best times for socializing with parents is immediately following a children’s program. For the parents of very young children, this time can be extremely important. Bringing out age-appropriate toys and giving the children a chance to

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***Betsy Diamant-Cohen** is the Children’s Programming Specialist at the Enoch Pratt Free Library (Maryland) and author of Mother Goose on the Loose (Neal-Schumann Publishers). Winner of the 2002 Godfrey Award for Excellence in Public Library Programming for Children and Families, Mother Goose on the Loose programs are presented at public libraries and daycare centers around the world.*

What Do You Say, Dear; What Do You Do?

play while the parents interact can be just as important as the formal program itself.

During this time, the librarian can play with the children and model play behavior or converse with parents. Parents can also get to know each other. These informal conversations create personal bonds and give the adults an opportunity to ask questions. Librarians can then offer support and information to the families.

Making conversation with strangers is not easy. For some librarians, this part of a programming session can be very difficult. Below are some tips for utilizing the time after a program most effectively:

Ask a parent simple questions or make observations regarding his or her child. Parents welcome the opportunity to speak about them. Your comments will encourage them to make observations of their own. Possible questions and observations for programs geared for children under the age of two are:

- *Please remind me of your child's name.* Don't ask, "What is your child's name?" because then it sounds like you never knew it. By saying "Please remind me" you are letting the parent know that it is important to you, that you know you have heard it at least once already but you would like to be reminded.
- *How old is your child?*
- *Does your child sleep through the night?* Most young children do not sleep through the night. Because of this, the parents end up getting very little sleep. Bleary-eyed parents will appreciate hearing that someone can relate; being able to talk about it relieves some of the burden. Just listen to them. You do not need to offer any cures. If the parent seems to want advice, you can mention that there is a book on getting your child to sleep through the night in the library's parenting section (but make sure there really is one there before you recommend it).
- *Susie looks like she's ready to walk all over the room!*
- *What new things has your child done this week?*
- *Tell me about your baby. What is he or she like?* This is a great conversation starter. When a librarian is a good, active listener, he or she can learn a lot about the parent and baby and how they are doing together. And with that information, he or she can let parents know the library can provide parenting information and direct them to any community resources they may need.

Questions are easier because you can just listen to what the parents have to say. Observations require more attention on your part.

Additional useful prompts include:

- What makes him smile?

- What soothes him when he's crying?
- Does she have a favorite thing to hold or play with?
- How is she alike and different from her brothers or sisters?

This is a good time to observe the nature of a new baby. From the start, we can often see a unique personality emerging, and that's fun to point out and celebrate:

- Your daughter seems very curious about the world around her.
- Your son seems to gravitate toward other children.
- I noticed Joey really responded to the bell portion of the program today.
- I loved watching Ellie bounce with the shaker eggs.
- Your son really watches what's going on and takes a lot in.

It's important to follow parents' cues. Respond based on what they have said to you. And it's okay if a parent doesn't want to talk or is just reserved or shy. You can always say:

- You're doing a wonderful thing by bringing your baby to the library.
- You're giving your baby a great start. Fantastic!
- I really admire your effort in taking two buses to get here each week.

When they are more comfortable, and see your genuine interest, quieter parents will ask for information. Don't be pushy about questioning; just be available! And then, just like the warm welcome you offered at the beginning, give parents a hearty goodbye and thanks for coming:

- It was great seeing you today!
- Looking forward to seeing you next week!
- I loved having you and (baby's name) in our program today!

When young families bring their babies to the library and receive a warm and friendly welcome, they learn about community support and resources and they will soon realize they are never alone.

Words have power, and our easy and frequent conversations with parents can go a long way in acting as a gateway to the larger world of books. Children's librarians have the privilege of helping parents raise children who are readers and lifelong library users, and it only takes a few words and a few thoughtful moments. ☺

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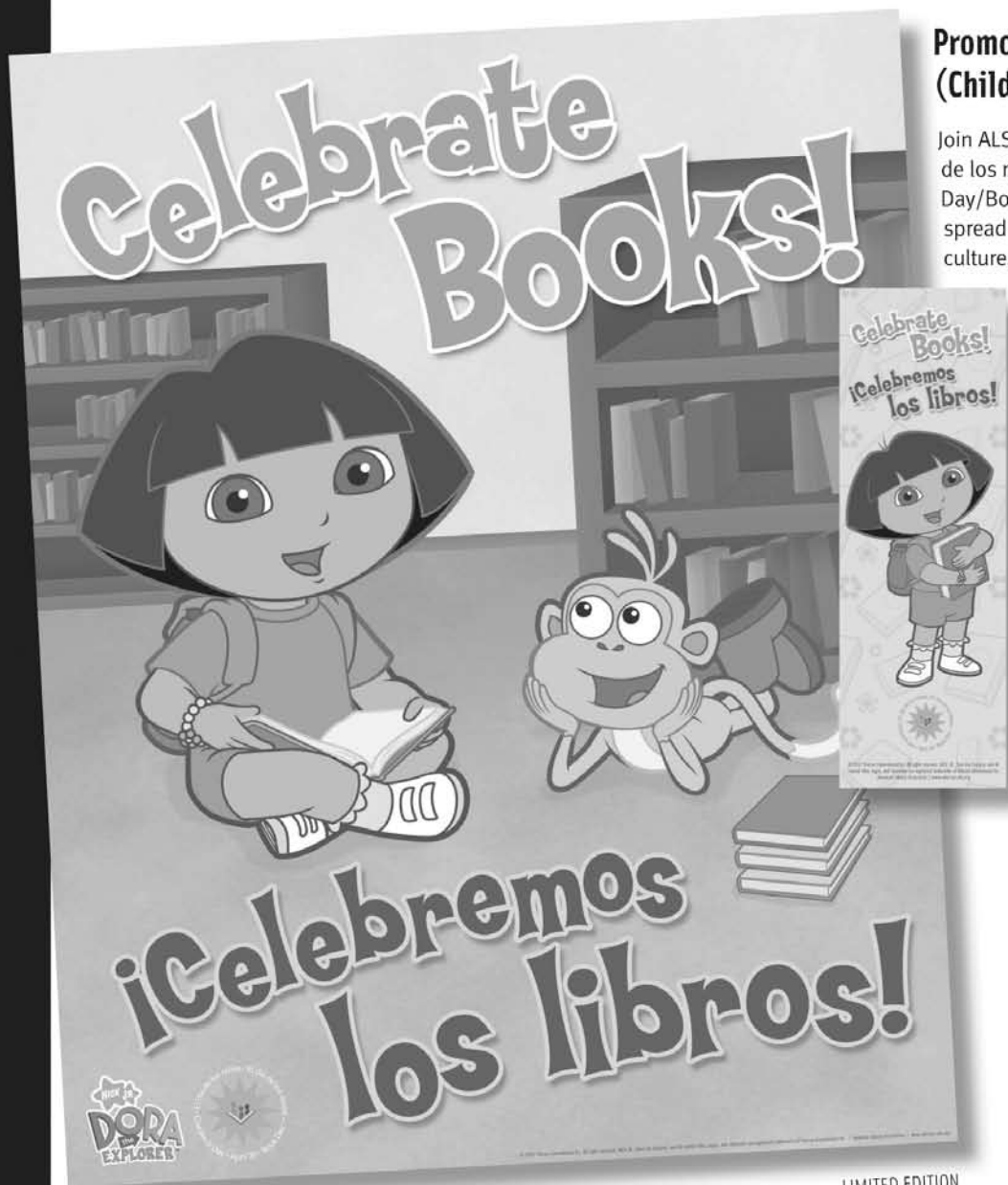
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REsearch And Development

Game On!

Research into Children and Gaming

Crystal Faris, ALSC Research and Development Committee

Recently, I asked a roomful of adults attending a book discussion what first came to mind when asked to describe a video or computer gamer. Laughter ensued as the first respondent mentioned a recent commercial featuring geeky guys in their “man cave.” Not many positive comments followed. Clearly gaming was viewed as less valuable and less important than reading books by this group.

The Gaming Generation

Unlike the stereotypical view of an overweight teen boy playing mature-rated or violent games in a darkened room, the reported average age of gamers is thirty-three, and the average age of parents who play computer or video games is forty.¹ Today’s parents of young children were children themselves when Nintendo’s mascot Mario became more recognizable (by children) than Mickey Mouse.²

To shatter that stereotype of the typical gamer even further, women represent more of the gaming population than do boys. Thirty-one percent of gamers are women age eighteen or older, and 20 percent are boys age seventeen or younger.³ Also, the parents of that stereotypical teen boy gamer probably know what game he is playing, as parents report monitoring

the games their children play 90 percent of the time. Finally, that stereotypical teen boy gamer is likely to be playing a video game rated “E” for everyone or “T” for teen, as nearly 85 percent of all video and computer games sold in 2006 were rated “T” or below. Only 15 percent sold were rated “M” for mature.⁴

The understanding many people have that playing video and computer games contributes to the documented rise in obesity among young people also is being proven incorrect by two recent studies. One found no relationship between video game play and obesity or physical inactivity, and the other found no relationship between physical fitness and Internet-use time.⁵

Gaming and Learning

James Gee was one of the first academics to begin writing about the value of video and computer gaming and the possible implications for children and their learning. He notes that gamers who are gaining proficiency in a new game practice for hours, but the practice is not boring because of the virtual worlds in which they are playing and because each success brings more from that virtual world as well as more prestige from other gamers.⁶

While gaining proficiency in the game, the learner can take huge risks because the consequences are low. Even if a character dies, the gamer can bring it back with another opportunity to gain the next level, defeat the foe, and achieve multiple layers of success.⁷ New learners, especially children, have few places where they can gain proficiency with each step of practice bringing rewards and in environments with low risk.

*This column was prepared by the **ALSC Research and Development Committee**, which includes Crystal Faris, Gaye Hinchliff, Mona Kerby, Bowie Kotrla, Ya-Ling Lu, Alice Neve, and Suzanne Stauffer.*

Several researchers at the University of Wisconsin–Madison have studied in more detail the learning that takes place in gaming, primarily in massive multiplayer online games, or MMPOGs, as they are commonly called. Players of these games gain numerous skills once only associated with the realm of education: “[MMPOG] play is a thoroughly literate activity involving manipulation of texts, images, and symbols for making meaning and achieving particular ends.”⁸ Some of the literate activities taking place in MMPOGs are “researching equipment, making maps, managing resources, investing currencies, building models, designing strategies, debating facts and theories, and writing.”⁹

Children from the ages of three to five have been shown to gain prereading skills and school readiness from computer and video gaming. The games cultivate their eagerness to master early literacy skills. Older children gain logic skills from gaming because they have to form a hypothesis and test it. They also experience teamwork and community as they work together to solve problems their virtual selves encounter in games.¹⁰

Differing Opinions

Of course, not everyone agrees that video and computer gaming is a learning activity for children. There are those who believe that the “benefits are over-hyped and could actually harm students’ creativity and emotional development.”¹¹ There also are concerns regarding the portrayal of ethnic groups and women in video games.

In summer 2007, the American Medical Association (AMA) issued a warning to parents about the potential dangers of excessive video game playing. Physicians were reporting what they believe may be a growing problem among children—an addiction to video or computer gaming. The AMA asked the American Psychiatric Association to further study long-term effects of video game use related to aggressive behavior in children.¹²

What’s Missing?

The MacArthur Foundation believes that more hard data is needed to understand how digital technologies are changing the ways children learn as well as play, socialize, and exercise judgment. The foundation announced in early 2007 that they are distributing \$50 million to researchers for study in this area. Some of the research currently being funded is into the educational benefits of commercially available games that were not designed for school use and what students learn when they join other players in role-playing games.¹³

More study may be needed in the gaming experiences of young girls. While women are reporting themselves as gamers, they tend to be casual gamers playing online puzzle games or drawn to Nintendo DS games such as Brain Age. Yet, the representation of women in computer science and technology careers has decreased, “and their lack of gaming experience seems to be a part of what’s held them back. Men who major in computer science tend to cite video games as what got them into the field, while women who drop out of the major often say they lack credentials, such as hours spent video gaming.”¹⁴

Library Implications

Libraries and librarians have had numerous debates about the literary merit of book genres, and we have debated the value of various media. All this debating often results in our expressed hope that each reader is valued as are all library users of other formats. “We need to recognize that video and computer games have emerged as a legitimate format for many library users. We need to view video games as content and service.”¹⁵

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New Books

Dailey, Susan M. *Sing a Song of Storytime*
de Las Casas, Dianne. *Kamishibai Story Theater: The Art of Picture Telling*.
Diamant-Cohen, Betsy. *Mother Goose on the Loose: A Handbook and CD-ROM Kit with Scripts, Rhymes, Songs, Flannel Board Patterns, and Activities for Promoting Early Childhood Development*.
Dixon, Tiara, and Paula Blough. *The Sound of Storytime*.
Faurot, Kimberly. *Mother Goose Rhyme Time*.
Haven, Kendall and MaryGay Ducey. *Crash Course in Storytelling*.
Irving, Jan. *Stories, Time and Again: A Program Guide for Schools and Libraries*.
Lincycomb, Kay. *Storytimes . . . Plus!*
Reid, Rob. *Storytime Slam!: 15 Lesson Plans for Preschool and Primary Story Programs*.
Totten, Kathryn. *Let's Read! Storytime Crafts: Literacy Activities for Little Learners*.

Professional Resources on Storytelling

Kathryn Miller, Junko Yokota, and Gail Bush

Dailey, Susan M. *Sing a Song of Storytime*.
New York: Neal-Schuman, 2007.
Paper w/CD-ROM ed. 178 pp. \$65
(ISBN-10: 1-55570-576-6; ISBN-13:
978-1555705763)

Dailey, a public librarian in Indiana, has done her research and makes a strong case for the importance of including song in storytime programs. She makes it easy for the reader to identify appropriate songs and tunes.

Organized by theme, the book provides readers with song titles that are easily incorporated into storytimes. The song lyrics, along with a list of picture books that will work with the song and a visual aid or craft suggestion, also are included. To make a librarian's life easier, the book features a CD-ROM with audio and visual files.

The audio CD-ROM files are the tunes and sung words for most of the songs presented through the book (*note: You can incorporate songs into a storytime even if you can not sing*); the visual files are the essential pieces for the crafts and visual aids that accompany the book's theme-based songs. This is a great way to learn more about music, how music is used as a learning tool, and how to successfully incorporate song in a storytime program.—KM

de Las Casas, Dianne. *Kamishibai Story Theater: The Art of Picture Telling*.
Illus. by Philip Chow. Westport, Conn.: Teacher Ideas Pr./Libraries Unlimited, 2006. 100 pp. \$27
(ISBN-10: 1-59158-404-3; ISBN-13:
978-1-59158-404-9).

Based on their suitability for use in the traditional Japanese form of storytelling known as Kamishibai, the author retells and adapts twenty-five stories from across Asia—including the Philippines, Japan, India, China, Malaysia, Laos, Singapore, and Vietnam. Beginning with a section on the background of Kamishibai, which literally means “paper drama,” a historical explanation of the practice describes how the Kamishibai man, an itinerant storyteller, would travel from village to village on his bicycle in order to sell candy.

The next chapter describes how to tell a Kamishibai story, as well as an elaborated section on how to scaffold students in their telling and creating of such stories.

Tips on management and organization as well as practical tips on classroom activities related to the Kamishibai stories will be particularly helpful. A bibliography and list of Web sites offer additional resources. In addition, Allen Say's picture book *Kamishibai Man* (Houghton, 2005) offers a beautifully illustrated and told story of a reminiscent look back at the era of the Kamishibai tellers before television took over young children's attention.—JY

Diamant-Cohen, Betsy. *Mother Goose on the Loose: A Handbook and CD-ROM Kit with Scripts, Rhymes, Songs, Flannel Board Patterns, and Activities for Promoting Early Childhood Development*.
New York: Neal-Schuman, 2006. Looseleaf binder: 400 pp. \$85 (ISBN-10: 1-55570-536-7; ISBN-13: 978-1555705367)

For librarians, teachers, caregivers, and parents working with very young children, *Mother Goose on the Loose* is a great resource tool that incorporates nursery rhymes into storytime programs. Not only does it provide readers with the text of nursery rhymes, it also includes a recording of each nursery rhyme on CD-ROM. Ten complete nursery rhyme programs are included in the binder. Each program is carefully laid out with a general program outline, step-by-step program directions, program script, body rhymes, drum sequence, stand-up actions, animal activities, musical instruments, a lullaby, interactive rhymes, and closing rhymes.

The programs are very thorough and could be broken into several different storytimes, depending on the time you have available and the audience's attention span. Shopping lists for the resources you will need, promotional illustrations, program planning sheets, and evaluation tools are included. This is a very thorough book from which users can take pieces or use full programs. It's a very solid resource for those who work with young learners.—KM

Dixon, Tiara, and Paula Blough. *The Sound of Storytime*. New York: Neal-Schuman, 2006. 175 pp. \$65 (ISBN-10: 1-55570-552-9; ISBN-13: 978-1555705527).

Looking for creative storytime curriculum topics that incorporate unique themes, books, and sounds? Here the authors provide forty-two storytime lessons, organized into seven broad sound categories: bells, rhythm sticks, sand blocks, shakers, tambourines, vocal chords, and encore medley.

Each program offers readers a book selection, a summary of the featured book, a book-appropriate activity, optional book selections, a music activity, and a make-and-take activity. The CD-ROM includes a storytime song to play with the music activity as well as Ellison die-cut templates. This book is a complete resource, providing teachers and librarians with all of the tools they need to quickly pull together a well-thought storytime.—*KM*

Faurot, Kimberly. *Mother Goose Rhyme Time: Animals*. 68 pp. Fort Atkinson, Wis.: Upstart Books, 2006. \$16.95 (ISBN-10: 1-93214-666-0; ISBN-13: 978-1932146660).

Faurot, Kimberly. *Mother Goose Rhyme Time: Night*. 72 pp. Fort Atkinson, Wis.: Upstart Books, 2006. \$16.95 (ISBN-10: 1-93214-665-2; ISBN-13: 978-1932146653).

Faurot, Kimberly. *Mother Goose Rhyme Time: People*. 66 pp. Fort Atkinson, Wis.: Upstart Books, 2006. \$16.95 (ISBN-10: 1-93214-667-9; ISBN-13: 978-1932146677).

Faurot, a children's librarian from St. Paul, Minnesota, cheerfully weaves nursery rhymes and related activities into storytime programs. Each six-chapter book centers around a theme (animals, night, and people). Each chapter features a Mother Goose rhyme, musical notation, storytime program ideas, activities, and rhyme-time props that librarians or teachers can cut out, decorate, and laminate.

The series is a helpful early literacy tool and, as suggested by the author, strongly

supports English as a Second Language/English Language Learners.—*KM*

Haven, Kendall and MaryGay Ducey. *Crash Course in Storytelling*. Westport, Conn.: Libraries Unlimited, 2006. Paperback, 136 pp. \$30 (ISBN-10: 1-59158-399-3; ISBN-13: 978-1591583998).

This book invites the reader to get in touch with his or her inner storyteller as it focuses on the sheer pleasure of sharing stories, demystifies the preparation process, and downplays the anxiety of trying to match the talents of professional storytellers. We all tell stories in one way or another. Why? What is it about stories that appeal to the human condition?

The authors, both storytellers, explain the power of story and the variety of ways to approach the telling. Props, puppets, pacing, and practice are discussed in a nonthreatening style.

The audience for this book is decidedly children's and youth services public librarians. Ducey is a career children's librarian and considers the place for storytelling in the library. Programming hints and ideas are included, but the focus is on the novice storyteller.

Strengthening your resolve to enjoy the learning process is important to the authors. How you tell stories fits who you are, your unique personality. One caveat is the memorization of the literary tale—here all the loose, comfortable rules of be-yourself storytelling are replaced by the need to get the story right. However, the authors manage to explicate the process of learning the tales so that the reader feels that even this worthy goal is within reach. Selecting the best stories for your style, evaluating the potential of stories, and sticky copyright issues are discussed.

Problems during storytelling? Forget the words? Don't know what to do now? The authors are ready with advice and encouragement to boost a reader's confidence. They believe in the power of story and the bond that develops between the storyteller and the audience. They want readers to feel that power, and they write in a manner to embrace even the most reluctant.

And after your initial forays into storytelling, and as learning curves diminish and comfort levels soar, readers will revisit this book for affirmation and gentle reminders of why they started down this magical road in the first place.

This book is the third in the Libraries Unlimited Crash Course series following *Web Design in Libraries* and *Children's Services*. It includes a bibliography of storytelling methods books, research, collections of traditional tales, family stories, participation stories, movement stories, Web sites, and an index.—*GB*

Irving, Jan. *Stories, Time and Again: A Program Guide for Schools and Libraries*. Westport, Conn.: Libraries Unlimited, 2005. 216 pp. \$34 (ISBN-10: 1-56308-998-X ISBN-13: 978-1563089985).

The author provides teachers and librarians with comprehensive coverage of ten storytime topics that will be of particular interest for second-through sixth-grade learners. Topics in this resource book, which are suitable for boys and girls, include "A Glimpse of Tropical Rainforests," "Egyptian Mythology: A Glimpse into Eternity," and "Fantasy Worlds."

Each comprehensive topic includes a teacher introduction, bibliography, suggestion on student reports, term projects, pathfinders, art projects, and suggestions for the theme's use in a public library. The topics will be attractive to older learners as well as to elementary-level students. Packed full of ideas that can be expanded beyond the topics presented in the book, this recommended resource will be a well-used addition to teacher and librarian professional reading resource shelves.—*KM*

Lincycumb, Kay. *Storytimes . . . Plus!* New York: Neal-Schuman, 2007. 133 pp. \$45 (ISBN-10: 1-55570-583-9; ISBN-13: 978-1555705831).

All children's librarians need to have tricks up their sleeves—favorite books that can easily be turned into a storytime and knowledge of a few popular themes that can quickly be used to create a fun program. But when you seek new ideas,

putting a full program together can be time-consuming.

Lincycomb, a Texas librarian with school and public library experience, presents readers with thirty-five complete storytimes in her book. Her themes each consist of three components—original rhymes and songs that are to be sung to the tune of well-known classics, an annotated book list that fits in with the storytime theme, and directions on a simple craft.

Themes in the book are unique and include “Armadillo Antics,” “Tooth Fairy’s Coming,” and “Spaghetti Day.” Full of creative ideas for storytimes, this book also offers a section on how librarians can improve their presentations. If you are looking to bring original, new program ideas to your library community, this is a must-read.—*KM*

Reid, Rob. *Storytime Slam: 15 Lesson Plans for Preschool and Primary Story Programs.* Fort Atkinson, Wis.: Upstart Books, 2006. 88 pp. \$17.95 (ISBN-10: 1-93214-652-0; ISBN-13: 978-1932146523).

Do you want to make literature come alive for children? Reid, a lecturer on children’s literature and literature for adoles-

cents at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, has put together lesson plans that combine reading aloud, wordplay, and movement activities to help make literature real for young learners.

In his book, Reid uses fifteen unique themes, such as “B is for Bulldozer” and “I’m Telling! Tales of Naughty Kids and Animals,” to assemble collections of poems, picture book suggestions, and musical and movement activities that can be used in the library or the classroom.

Reid’s book is a fun approach to storytimes, stepping beyond traditional themes and providing ideas on how to make young learners’ imaginations soar. This is a great book for experienced teachers and librarians to gather new ideas for their curriculum.

Each storytime presented does require research on the storytellers’ part—gathering books, mastering a movement activity ahead of time, or preparing a felt board with text-based instructions. With some effort, this book will help make programs come alive.—*KM*

Totten, Kathryn. *Let’s Read! Storytime Crafts: Literacy Activities for Little Learners.* Fort Atkinson, Wis.:

Upstart Books, 2006. 120 pp. \$16.95 (ISBN-10: 1932146466; ISBN-13: 978-1932146462).

If you are working with PreK–1 learners, this book is a treasure trove of theme-based teaching ideas, annotated book lists, stories, and crafts. It contains twenty themes, each with a section on rhymes, songs, and fingerplays, as well as a list of theme-relevant books and literacy tips for the parents.

Each theme includes a simple craft with patterns that can be copied and cut out. The book ends with hand-outs for parents on such topics as “Multiple Intelligences and Your Preschool Child,” “Fitting Read Aloud Time into Your Day,” and “Recipes for Parents and Children to Make Together.” For teachers and librarians looking for complete storytime programs, this book is a wonderful addition to a resource shelf.—*KM* ☺

Kathryn Miller, Junko Yokota, and Gail Bush enjoy reading, writing, teaching, and working together at the Center for Teaching through Children’s Books at National-Louis University in Chicago.

Correction: The reviews in the Summer/Fall 2007 issue were all written by Kathryn Miller.

2008 Continuing Education Events

Preconference – Summer Reading Survivor: Overcoming the Challenges

ALA Annual Conference, Anaheim, CA

June 26, 7:00-9:30 p.m. and June 27, 8:00 a.m. -4:45 p.m.

Fight summer reading fatigue! Be re-energized, and learn something new too!

Meet poet, author and folklorist, **Judy Sierra** (author, Random House) who is *Wild About Reading* and illustrator **Harry Bliss** (illustrator, HarperCollins) who will help you “Catch the Reading Bug.” Literacy educator **Stephen Krashen** (PhD, Professor Emeritus, Univ. of Southern California) will remind you why summer matters to kids. Breakouts and panel discussions will focus on collaboration, partnerships, promotion, and online programs. Finally, award-winning author **Pam Muñoz Ryan** (author, Scholastic) will have you shouting “Hooray! Ole! We love reading!”

Registration Rates: ALSC Member \$195, ALA Member \$240 (or join ALSC for the same price),

Non-Member \$285, Student/Retired Member \$175, Limited On-site Rate: \$300

Register at www.ala.org/annual. Additional information is available at www.ala.org/alsc. Click on “Events & Conferences.”

ALSC National Institute – September 18-20 Salt Lake City, UT

Trailblaze your path to library success by attending the ALSC National Institute, to be held in historic and scenic Salt Lake City, Utah. The institute, will feature three exciting tracks on the topics of technology and children’s services, programming in the new millennium, and inspiring lifelong reading with the best of the best in children’s books and a special focus on tweens and reading. Tracks will repeat on Thursday and Friday so that attendees may take advantage of two of the three tracks. On Saturday, attendees will choose to participate in one of three available morning workshops.

Thursday dinner, Friday breakfast, lunch, and evening reception, and Saturday breakfast are included in your registration fee and will feature keynotes from well-known authors and illustrators. The William C. Morris Endowment will sponsor Friday’s “Breakfast for Bill” featuring a panel of children’s book creators. The breakfast will honor the memory of Morris, a long time ALSC member and friend, recipient of the first ALSC Distinguished Service Award, and an advocate for children’s librarians and literature. Additionally, ample time will be scheduled for networking with colleagues and meeting new contacts. A mentoring program will help connect seasoned professionals with those new to the profession.

The institute will be held at the Hilton Salt Lake City Center, nestled in the heart of downtown Salt Lake City and footsteps from historic Temple Square and the world renowned Family History Library. A room block, with special rates, has been secured at the Hilton. Information about registration and program information will be posted on the ALSC Web site and ALSC-L early in 2008 as plans develop. So prepare to head west, partners, and have a rip roaring time!

- Centrally located within the western half of the country, SLC is easily accessible by air with direct flights daily from 104 cities! The airport is just 10 minutes from the downtown and ample public transportation makes sight-seeing easy!
- Salt Lake is home to one of the world’s largest family history libraries, and the SLC Public Library was named Thompson Gale/Library Journal’s 2006 Library of the Year.
- SLC combines the amenities of urban life, the friendliness of a small, western town, AND the great outdoors.
- We hope you will plan to join us for an enriching continuing education experience in this vibrant, tourist-friendly location!
- If you plan to spend some extra time in the Salt Lake City area before or after the Institute, check out www.visitsaltlake.com for more information.

More details and registration information are available at www.ala.org/alsc. Click on “Events & Conferences.”

Board Major Actions

The following actions were voted on by the board on the ALSCBoard electronic discussion list. The month and year of the vote is in parentheses after the action.

VOTED, to co-sponsor, in name only, the REFORMA program "Bilingual Mind" at the ALA 2008 Annual Conference. (July 2007)

VOTED, to approve the revised Policy for Service on the Arbuthnot Selection Committee. (October 2007)

VOTED, to approve the revised Policy for Service on the Wilder Selection Committee. (October 2007)

VOTED, to approve the revised Policy for Service on the Carnegie Selection Committee to make it consistent with the existing book award policies. (October 2007)

VOTED, to fund the School Age Programs and Services Committee's proposed "Great Elementary School Reads" booklist project in the full amount of \$1,500 from the Children's Library Services Endowment, to be applied to the FY08 budget and expended by August 31, 2008 (November 2007).

2008 Preconference to Focus on Summer Reading

Mark your calendar and plan to attend ALSC's preconference on summer reading, Thursday and Friday, June 26 and 27,

2008, in Anaheim. Thursday evening's reception will provide time for registration check-in and networking. Children's author, poet and folklorist Judy Sierra will delight attendees with her storytelling. Friday morning sessions will feature a panel discussion on collaborative summer programs and a presentation on research by Stephen Krashen, emeritus professor of Education at the University of Southern California and author of *The Power of Reading: Insights from the Research*. Cartoonist and illustrator Harry Bliss will be the luncheon speaker. Friday afternoon breakout sessions will address promoting summer reading programs in schools, serving children with vision impairments, and more, and will be followed by table talk displays of successful programs. Afternoon speakers are Ginny Cooper, executive director of the D.C. Public Library, and Pam Muñoz Ryan, award-winning children's author.

2008 Slate of Candidates

Vice-President/President-Elect

Maralita (Micki) Freeny, Prince George's Library System, Hyattsville, Md.
Kate McClelland, Perrot Memorial Library, Old Greenwich, Conn.

Board of Directors

Marge Loch-Wouters, Menasha (Wis.) Public Library
Patricia (Pabby) Arnold, East Baton Rouge (La.) Parish Library
Georgene DeFilippo, Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh
Leslie Molnar, Cuyahoga County (Ohio) Public Library, Parma, Ohio

Bernadette Nowakowski, Harold Washington Public Library, Chicago
Bruce Farrar, Harris County Public Library, Houston, Texas

Caldecott Chair, 2010

Rita Auerbach, New York, N.Y.
Wendy Lukehart, D.C. Public Library, Washington, D.C.

Newbery Chair, 2010

Katie O'Dell, Multnomah County Library, Portland, Ore.
Junko Yokota, National-Louis University, Evanston, Ill.

Sibert Chair, 2010

Susan Veltfort, King County Library System, Issaquah, Wash.
Vicky Smith, McArthur Public Library, Biddeford, Maine

Wilder Chair, 2011

Megan Schliesman, Cooperative Children's Book Center, University of Wisconsin, Madison
William Teale, University of Illinois-Chicago

Caldecott Committee, 2010

Zahra Mirjehan Baird, Chappaqua (N.Y.) Library
Susannah Richards, Eastern Connecticut State University, Storrs
Joanna Ward, County of Los Angeles Public Library
Meagan Albright, Alvin Sherman Library, Ft. Lauderdale, Fla.
Christine (Chris) Caputo, The Free Library of Philadelphia
Becky White, Allen County Public Library, Fort Wayne, Ind.

Henrietta Smith, University of South Florida, Tampa
 Jan Watkins, Skokie (Ill.) Public Library
 Carole DeJardin, Appleton (Wis.) Public Library
 Ann Crewdson, Issaquah (Wash.) Library
 Julie Roach, Cambridge (Mass.) Public Library
 Merri Lindgren, Cooperative Children's Book Center, University of Wisconsin-Madison
 Christy Estrovitz, San Francisco Public Library
 Anna R. Healy, Rochelle Lee Fund, Chicago

Newbery Committee, 2010

Eva Mitnick, Los Angeles Public Library
 Deborah Wright, Newport News (Va.) Public Library System
 Meaghan Battle, Ann Arbor (Mich.) District Library
 Steven Engelfried, Multnomah County Library, Portland, Ore.
 Maria Mena, Leon County Public Library System, Tallahassee, Fla.
 Maureen McCoy, Brooklyn (N.Y.) Public Library
 Maria Salvadore, Washington, D.C.
 Holly Jin, Skokie (Ill.) Public Library
 Myra Katz, Prince George's County Memorial Library System, Largo, Md.
 Deborah Stevenson, Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books, Champaign, Ill.
 Linnea Hendrickson, Bandelier Elementary School, Albuquerque, N.M.
 Teresa Brantley, Salem Middle School, Apex, N.C.
 Wendy Woodfill, Hennepin County Library, Minnetonka, Minn.
 Elva Garza, Austin (Tex.) Public Library

Sibert Committee, 2010

Roxane Bartelt, Kenosha (Wisc.) Public Library
 Anne Callaghan, Racine (Wisc.) Public Library
 JoAnn Jonas, Chula Vista (Calif.) Public Library
 Ed Sullivan, Lake City Middle School, Oak Ridge, Tenn.
 Rebecca (Becki) Bishop, Campbell Court Elementary School, Bassett, Va.
 David Mowery, Brooklyn (N.Y.) Public Library
 Lisa Dennis, Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh
 Margaret Tassia, Lancaster, Pa.

Wilder Committee, 2011

Anne Heidemann, Canton (Mich.) Public Library
 Andrew Medlar, Chicago Public Library
 Angela J. Reynolds, Annapolis Valley Regional Library, Bridgetown, Nova Scotia, Canada
 Carla Morris, Provo City (Utah) Library

2008 ALSC Midwinter Schedule

(as of October 29, 2007)

AASL/ALSC/YALSA Jt. Exec. Committee
 Thursday, January 10, 4:30–6 P.M.

AASL/ALSC/YALSA Jt. Intellectual Freedom Committee
 Saturday, January 12, 1:30–2:30 P.M.

AASL/ALSC/YALSA Jt. Membership Reception
 Monday, January 14, 6–8 P.M.

AASL/ALSC/YALSA Jt. Youth Council Caucus
 Monday, January 14, 7–10 A.M.

ALA Youth Media Awards Press Conference
 Monday, January 14, 7:45–9 A.M.

All Committee Meetings I and II
 Sunday, January 13, 8–11:30 A.M.

All Discussion Group Meetings I and II
 Sunday, January 13, 4–6 P.M.

ALSC/BWI Summer Reading Program Grant Committee*
 Saturday, January 12, 1:30–3:30 P.M.
 Sunday, January 13, 8–11:30 A.M.

ALSC/REFORMA Jt. Exec. Committees
 Saturday, January 12, 6–7 P.M.

Arbuthnot Honor Lecture (2009)*
 Saturday, January 12, 1:30–3:30 P.M.

Batchelder Award Committee (2008)*
 Friday, January 11, 8–11:30 A.M.
 Saturday, January 12, 8 A.M.–12:30 P.M. and 8–10 P.M.
 Sunday, January 13, 8–10:30 A.M.

Batchelder Award Committee (2009)
 Sunday, January 13, 1:30–3:30 P.M.

Bechtel Fellowship Committee*
 Sunday, January 13, 1:30–3:30 P.M.

Belpré Award Committee (2008)*
 Friday, January 11, 8–11:30 A.M.
 Saturday, January 12, 8 A.M.–12:30 P.M. and 8–10 P.M.
 Sunday, January 13, 8 A.M.–noon

Belpré Award Committee (2009)
 Sunday, January 13, 4–6 P.M.

Board of Directors
 Saturday, January 12, 2–5:30 P.M.
 Monday, January 14, 2–5:30 P.M.
 Tuesday, January 15, 2–5:30 P.M.

Budget Committee
 Sunday, January 13, 4–6 P.M.
 Tuesday, January 15, 10:30 A.M.–12:30 P.M.

Caldecott Award Committee (2008)*
 Friday, January 11, 8 A.M.–12:30 P.M. and 8–10 P.M.
 Saturday, January 12, 8 A.M.–12:30 P.M. and 8–10 P.M..
 Sunday, January 13, 8 A.M.–noon

Caldecott Award Committee (2009)
 Saturday, January 12, 4–6 P.M.

Carnegie Award Committee (2008)*
 Saturday, January 12, 8 A.M.–12:30 P.M.
 Sunday, January 13, 8 A.M.–12 noon

Carnegie Award Committee (2009)
 Sunday, January 13, 4–6 P.M.

Día National Advisory Committee
 Monday, January 14, 10:30 A.M.–12:30 P.M.

Distinguished Service Award*
 Sunday, January 13, 1:30 A.M.–3:30 P.M.

Division Leadership
 Saturday, January 12, 9:30 A.M.–12:30 P.M.

Executive Committee
 Thursday, January 10, 2–4:30 P.M.

Geisel Award Committee (2008)*
 Friday, January 11, 8–11:30 A.M.
 Saturday, January 12, 8 A.M.–12:30 P.M. and 8–10 P.M.
 Sunday, January 13, 8 A.M.–noon

Geisel Award Committee (2009)

Saturday, January 12, 4–6 P.M.

Great Interactive Software for Kids Committee

Saturday, January 12, 1:30–5:30 P.M.

Sunday, January 13, 8 A.M.–5:30 P.M.

Monday, January 14, 10:30 A.M.–1:30 P.M.

Hayes Award Committee*

Saturday, January 12, 1:30–3:30 P.M.

Newbery Award Committee (2008)*

Friday, January 11, 8 A.M.–12:30 P.M. and 8–10 P.M.

Saturday, January 12, 8 A.M.–12:30 P.M. and 8–10 P.M.

Sunday, January 13, 8 A.M.–noon

Newbery Award Committee (2009)

Saturday, January 12, 1:30–3:30 P.M.

Notable Children's Books Committee

Friday, January 11, 1:30–5:30 P.M.

Saturday, January 12, 1:30–5:30 P.M.

Sunday, January 13, 1:30–5:30 P.M.

Monday, January 14, 1:30–5:30 P.M.

Tuesday, January 15, 8 A.M.–12:30 P.M.

Notable Children's Recordings Committee

Friday, January 11, 1:30–5:30 P.M.

Saturday, January 12, 1:30–6:30 P.M.

Sunday, January 13, 8 A.M.–noon and 1:30–6:30 P.M.

Notable Children's Videos Committee

Friday, January 11, 1:30–5:30 P.M. and 7:30–10 P.M.

Saturday, January 12, 1:30–6:30 p.m. and 8–10 p.m.

Odyssey Award Committee (2008)*

Friday, January 11, 8 A.M.–12:30 P.M. and 8–10 P.M.

Saturday, January 12, 8 A.M.–12:30 P.M. and 8–10 P.M.

Sunday, January 13, 8 A.M.–noon

Organization & Bylaws Committee

Saturday, January 12, 1:30–3:30 P.M.

Past Presidents' Breakfast

Saturday, January 12, 7:30–9 A.M.

Penguin Young Readers Group Award Committee*

Sunday, January 13, 8–10 A.M.

Pre-Midwinter Institute: "Teen Parents Raising Readers: Youth Services Staff Making It Happen (Limited onsite registration will be available at \$275.)

Friday, January 11, 9 A.M.–5 P.M.

Priority Group Consultants' Meeting

Saturday, January 12, 8–9 A.M.

Sibert Award Committee (2008)*

Friday, January 11, 8 A.M.–12:30 P.M. and 8–10 P.M.

Saturday, January 12, 8 A.M.–12:30 P.M. and 8–10 P.M.

Sunday, January 13, 8 A.M.–noon

Sibert Award Committee (2009)

Sunday, January 13, 1:30–3:30 P.M.

Storytelling Discussion Group

Monday, January 14, 8–10 P.M.

Tandem Library Books Literature Program Grant*

Saturday, January 12, 1:30–3:30 P.M.

Sunday, January 13, 1:30–3:30 P.M.

Wilder Award Committee (2009)*

Saturday, January 12, 1:30–5:30 P.M.

Sunday, January 13, 8–10 A.M.

For an up-to-date list of ALSC meetings, visit www.ala.org/alsc and click on "Events & Conferences." Always consult your Conference Program Book and Supplement onsite for any late changes.

*Denotes closed meeting

Gear Up for Día 2008

Plans are underway now for the 2008 Día celebration in libraries across the country! El día de los niños/El día de los libros (Día), also known as Children's Day/Book Day, is held annually on April 30, and is a celebration of children, families, and reading that emphasizes the importance of advocating literacy for children of all linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

ALA Graphics is now offering for sale a limited edition Día poster and bookmark featuring the delightful character Dora the Explorer. The material is not dated, so it is perfect for year-round use. Check your Graphics Holiday catalog for more information.

The Día Web site now features ideas on how to get started on celebrating Día in your library. More than four hundred libraries of various sizes in diverse communities have shared their Día celebration ideas with us. Their stories may be found at www.ala.org/dia. ☺

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THE LAST WORD

Remembering Miss Fisher

Harvey Blumenthal

As a young boy, I spent many happy and quiet summer days at the public library in my hometown of University City, Missouri.

Miss Emily Fisher, the children's librarian, was tall and thin and had short, curly, snow-white hair. I never thought about her age; she was just a white-haired adult.

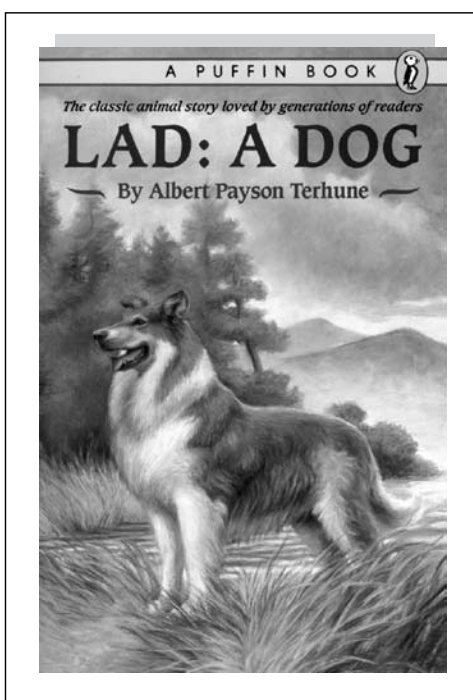
I don't remember who approached whom first, but she knew I was a regular, and she gently guided me to books that ignited my imagination—books by Mark Twain, Jack London, Zane Gray, and John R. Tunis.

Miss Fisher also, perhaps presciently, directed me to the several novels about collies written by Albert Payson Terhune.

Almost thirty years later, in 1977, my friend Irving Litvag published *The Master of Sunnybank*, widely considered the definitive biography of Terhune. He wrote that Terhune "was unquestionably the most famous, the most productive, and the best-compensated writer of dog stories that ever lived."

Terhune died in 1940, but devotees of his books and his memory still convene each year at his storied home, Sunnybank, in Pompton Lakes, New Jersey. Following his acclaimed book, Irv, now deceased, was repeatedly invited to be the keynote speaker at a gathering of Terhune's friends. I once mentioned to Irv that I was introduced to Terhune's books by Miss Fisher, and Irv smiled as he reminisced that that was exactly how his own interest was kindled.

Linda Ballard, director of the University City library since 1993, had never heard of Emily Fisher, but she recently arranged



for me to interview two former long-time University City librarians, Shirley Goldberg and Rhoda Hurwitz, now in their eighties.

Both remembered Miss Fisher, but each of them, independently, told me they never really got to know her. She was a private person who didn't talk about herself, and both remembered having little personal contact with her. They described her as dignified and "always a lady," in both dress and in bearing.

Both Goldberg and Hurwitz are graduates of University City High and also of Washington University; one majored in English, the other in history. They loved books and described themselves as readers. Both of them spoke fondly of the University City library and remarked about the warm and welcoming atmosphere.

Hurwitz spontaneously commented, "It was my favorite place to go."

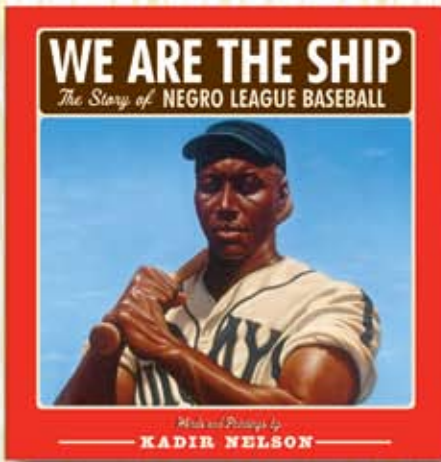
Clearly, the University City library captured the imagination of, and cast a wonderful spell on, so many of us; libraries evermore have had that mystical and beloved power.

Irv and I found pleasure in remembering Miss Fisher and the lasting influence a thorough professional and dedicated librarian, lost in history, exerted on us and, surely, untold other children.

Harvey Blumenthal is Clinical Professor of Neurology at the University of Oklahoma College of Medicine in Tulsa.

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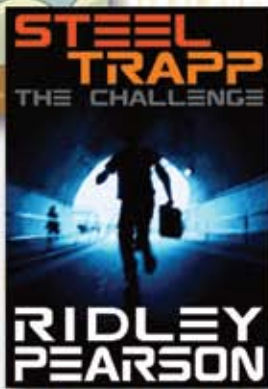


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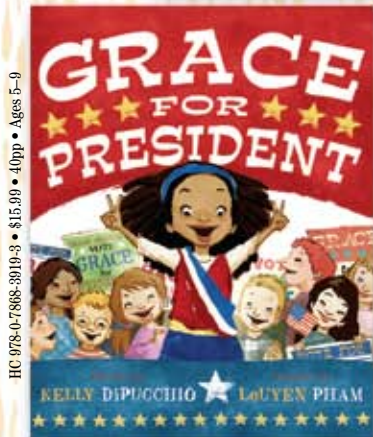
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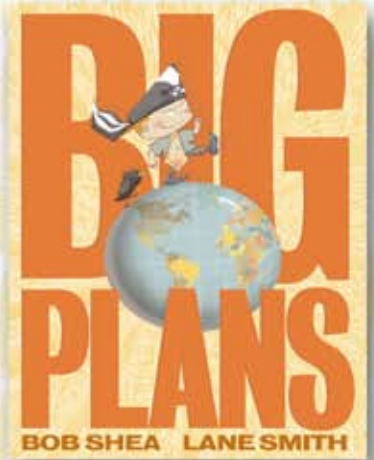
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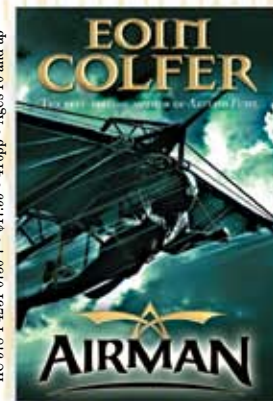
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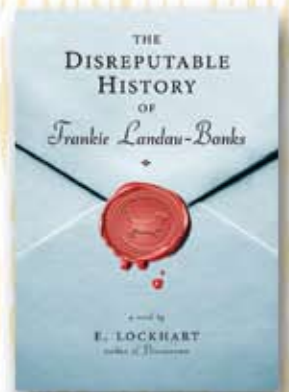


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