ALSC
Association for Library Service to Children

CLOSING THE WORD GAP
Mentoring and Partnerships
LGBTQ Characters in Fiction

COMING SOON!

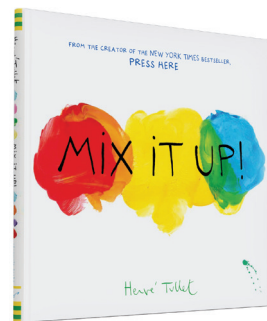A BRILLIANT COMPANION TO THE NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLERS PRESS HERE AND Mix It Up!

NEW!

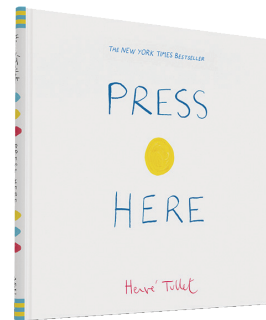FROM THE CREATOR OF THE NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLERS
PRESS HERE AND MiX iT UP!

LET'S PLAY!

Hervé Tullet

THE NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER

PRESS HERE

Hervé Tullet

FROM THE CREATOR OF THE NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER
PRESS HERE

MIX iT UP!

Hervé Tullet

Table OF Contents

Volume 14, Number 1 • Spring 2016

Children & Libraries

the journal of the Association for Library Service to Children

⬢ Peer-Reviewed Article

ON THE COVER: Three of eight unique posters designed for ALSC's Babies Need Words Every Day: Talk, Read, Sing, Play. All eight posters, a book list, and media kit are free to download at www.ala.org/alsc/babiesneedwords.

2015 APEX® AWARDS FOR PUBLICATION EXCELLENCE

Editor's Note
Little Cogs Make Big Machines Work

By Sharon Verbeten

Hasn't it been an extraordinary year to be involved in children's literature? As I write this, I'm still basking in the glow of the Youth Media Awards, which gave us some amazing and somewhat surprising winners. But overall, the squeals of delight could be heard throughout rainy Boston. It's an invigorating experience to be sure, much like every convention experience I've had.

I'm proud to learn more at each conference about the We Need Diverse Books movement and ALSC's program Babies Need Words Everyday (which you'll read more about in this issue).

I'm also thrilled to be surrounded at these events with some of the luminaries of the children's literature world—those whom I've admired for years, such as children's literature authority (and my former boss!) K. T. Horning of the Cooperative Children's Book Center (CCBC) at UW-Madison and intellectual freedom champion Pat Scales, this year's ALSC Distinguished Service Award winner.

And then, of course, there are the authors, illustrators, and publishers who leave me awestruck. But whenever I start to feel like a little cog in a big machine, I just talk with some of these people—who are so down to earth, friendly, and helpful that I realize we are all in it for the same reason. We love kids, we love books, and we love talking about them! Sure, some of us are more accomplished in various ways; some have won numerous honors; some quietly go about their work never seeking recognition or reward.

So many people I've talked to feel the same way—that ALSC is their home base for stretching their professional muscles, achieving their professional goals, and networking with kindred spirits.

Even if you can't get involved through attending conferences—we know it's not possible for all of you—remember how many advocates you do have at ALSC working to make children's services and publishing even stronger entities every day.

Stay in touch with each other, become an advocate in your own library, and you'll realize that all the little cogs in our big machine are necessary to keep children's librarianship running smoothly.

Today's Tech Literacy Tools

Parental Perceptions of Apps for Preschoolers

VIVIAN HOWARD AND MAUREEN WALLACE

R esearchers agree that early exposure to literature is beneficial to a child's cognitive development and countless studies have shown the immediate and long-term benefits of early exposure to literature and language.

Several studies have also shown that literacy software on traditional (i.e., non-touchscreen) computers has a positive effect on children's emergent literacy. However, as a new technology, interactive multimedia book apps, designed for young children and installed on touchscreen devices, have not been the focus of much previous research and our understanding of their use and impact is limited.

The objective of this research project is to gauge parents' and guardians' perceptions of these touchscreen book apps for preschool children and to investigate the extent to which parents/guardians are providing their children with access to book apps, what factors they take into consideration when choosing book apps, and what they consider to be the benefits and drawbacks of this technology in encouraging their young children to enjoy reading for pleasure.

Reading Print Books

Over the past six decades, researchers have noted that literacy emerges early and follows a continuum; children learn literacy behaviors through active engagement, and adults foster this emerging literacy by modeling behaviors and by reading together. Fifty years ago, Dolores Durkin studied the homes of early readers, those who could read proficiently before starting school, and found that in almost every case, someone at home had read to them and encouraged their literacy.[1] In his longitudinal study, Gordon Wells found that the experiences of five-year-olds with books directly related to their reading comprehension at age eleven: children who had the most exposure to books and reading were better readers and performed better at school.[2]

While many researchers have provided rich and detailed descriptions of the value of reading to children, more recent research has concluded that being read to in and of itself does not automatically encourage literacy.[3] According to these researchers, the verbal interaction between adult and child is the link to a successful literacy event: successful storybook

Vivian Howard is Associate Professor/Associate Dean Academic of the School of Information Management at Dalhousie University in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada. **Maureen Wallace** is an MLIS graduate of Dalhousie University.

reading involves participants actively constructing meaning based on text and pictures.[4]

Thus it appears that literacy needs to be nurtured in the pre-school years: books have to be available but the child must interact with them and with an adult caregiver who models reading and helps the child to make meaning from print and pictures for the impact to be most beneficial. Several recent studies advocate the use of dialogic reading, which involves asking children questions arising from the content of the story during the read-aloud and expanding on the answers that they provide.[5] Engaging children through questions encourages children's reading comprehension and their sense of involvement with the story.

The Every Child Ready to Read program (ECRR),[6] an initiative of the Public Library Association (PLA) and the Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC), focuses on teaching parents and guardians how to help their preschool children develop crucial early literacy skills.[7] Along with exposure to reading, writing, talking, and singing, play is another crucial aspect of preschool cognitive development and is recognized by the ECRR program as one of the five key early literacy practices that can help promote reading readiness.[8] Stephen Gass notes that "playing, exploring, and experimenting with open-ended materials as well as building concepts through direct experiences with people and objects are essential for healthy growth and development."[9]

Reading Digital Books

Literacy software for children has been available for traditional (non-touchscreen) home computers since the 1980s, and several studies have demonstrated that these programs, which include simple games designed to teach basic literacy skills, have a positive impact on children's emergent literacy.[10]

Similarly, digital picture books for children have been available since the 1990s in a variety of different formats, including online digital libraries such as Tumble Books, electronic books on CD, and e-books downloadable onto an e-book reader such as a Kindle or Kobo. The basic e-book in epub format is quite similar to the print reading experience and offers few interactive features,[11] and the uptake of digital picture books for children was relatively slow until the emergence of touchscreen tablets.

Aline Frederico notes, "The publication of digital picture books changed significantly in 2010 with the release of the iPad. In this light, portable, multitouch, high-resolution device, picture books seem to have found their ideal platform in their transmediation into digital media."[12]

Touchscreen technology has encouraged the development of three main types of apps for young children: gaming, creativity, and book apps that allow users to interact with the story and images through sight, sound, and touch.[13] This functionality encourages preschoolers with limited fine motor development to engage with touchscreen devices directly using their fingers.[14] According to a study by Digital Book World, sales of e-books for children increased by 475.1 percent in January 2012 and 177.8 percent in February 2012, largely driven by purchases of interactive book apps following Christmas purchases of iPads.[15]

In their study of digital books, including interactive book apps, as a resource in preschool literacy and language learning, Kathleen Roskos et al. observed, "For young children, electronic tools will be a chief source of textual information at school and in life. Whether stationary or mobile, the range of electronics from smart boards to hand-held devices already deliver an ever-increasing number of e-books, e-texts, and games. Moreover, the virtual explosion in apps has transformed the traditional story-book of early childhood into a highly interactive, multi-media literacy experience."[16] However, these researchers also note that the long-term impact of digital books, including apps, on children's early literacy skills or on their motivation to read, is unknown.

Some researchers note that the playful element utilized by many interactive apps can be particularly beneficial in helping certain groups of children to develop early literacy skills, especially for reluctant readers and those at risk for developing a learning disability.[17] The 2014 Early Years Literacy Survey conducted by the National Literacy Trust (UK) shows that touchscreen tablet technology encourages boys and children from lower income backgrounds to read for longer periods.[18]

Interactive touchscreen book apps can be beneficial for at-risk readers and strong readers alike because they encourage children to learn in a multitude of ways and appeal to a variety of senses: sight, touch, and hearing. Librarian Danny Jacobs advocates the use of iPads in preschool library storytimes as "an excellent way to help engage children in reading and develop their cognitive abilities."[19]

However, not all research confirms the value of the interactive book app, and the American Academy of Pediatrics' (AAP) 2011 policy statement, Media Use by Children Younger Than Two Years, recommended that children over the age of two should interact with screens for less than two hours a day, noting "by limiting screen time and offering educational media and non-electronic formats such as books, newspapers and board games, and watching television with their children, parents can help guide their children's media experience."[20]

However, in response to the new media environment created by the iPad and the rapid growth of apps aimed at young children (and subsequent to the data collection that forms the basis for this study), the AAP released a new set of guidelines that are less prescriptive, and that recommend a more nuanced approach. These new guidelines observe that digital media, like any environment, can have negative or positive effects, and that parents should be actively involved with their children's real and virtual environments. The revised guidelines urge parents to be selective in choosing apps and to co-engage as much as possible while their children are using digital media.[21]

While the AAP has softened its position on childhood media use, several recent studies suggest that book apps for young children may be more detrimental than beneficial to the development of literacy skills and the enjoyment of reading. This critical perspective is supported by a study by Heather Schugar, Carol Smith, and Jordan Schugar in which the researchers observed teachers using interactive book apps with children in kindergarten to grade six and found that the very richness of the multimedia experience frequently overwhelmed children's understanding or recollection of the narrative. This was particularly problematic in book apps with many irrelevant but appealing distractions, which diffused children's attention away from the story. In this study, Schugar, Smith, and Schugar found that, on average, children spent 43 percent of their time using book apps playing games rather than reading or listening to the text.[22]

Similarly, a study by Julia Parish-Morris and her colleagues showed that preschool children had lower comprehension when their parents read with them using a multimedia book app than when their parents read them a print book, largely because of the distracting interactivity that focused children's attention on the device rather than the story,[23] and a study of Australian preschoolers revealed that time preschoolers spent on tablets at home was not related to the development of any emergent literacy skills.[24]

Clearly, parents are faced with a confusing array of often contradictory evidence when it comes to deciding whether or not to allow their preschool children to access book apps. Should parents consciously ration their young children's screen time or should they encourage their preschoolers to develop literacy behaviour at least in part by interacting with book apps? And if they decide to provide access to book apps, how can parents confidently select apps that provide educational as well as entertainment value?

This exploratory study asks parents and guardians of preschool children about their perceptions of the benefits (and potential risks) of reading both print books and interactive book apps to get a sense of what parents and guardians are actually thinking (and doing) when it comes to providing their young children with access to this technology.

The Research Study

This study consisted of an online survey (see appendix) created using Opinio software, which was circulated to parents and guardians of preschool children during June 2014, using the researchers' social media accounts (Facebook and Twitter). The survey invitation was also made available through the Nova Scotia Read To Me early literacy program website, the Dalhousie University daily newsletter, several daycares in the Halifax region, and the summer reading program run by the New Brunswick Public Library.

Thus the survey respondents ($N = 133$) represent a convenience sample primarily drawn from the provinces of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, which may not be broadly representative. However, this sample does provide some interesting insights into parents' often conflicted attitudes toward book apps for their preschool children.[25]

Reading Physical Books

The survey results indicated that the majority of respondents were committed to reading print books with their children—98 percent indicated that they read physical books to their children, at least occasionally, and 88 percent read physical books with their children at least once a day. The rationale participants gave for reading to their children varied greatly. Respondents cited reasons such as helping their children's overall learning (45 percent), developing their child's vocabulary and language skills (38 percent), increasing their child's comfort with books and reading (39 percent), and developing their child's ability to recognize words and letters (15 percent) as some of the main benefits gained from shared reading of physical books with their children.

Respondents also recognized the value of shared reading in nurturing other aspects of children's development. Thirteen percent of respondents said they read to their children because it was entertaining, 24 percent said reading helped develop their children's imagination, 8 percent said it nurtured creativity, and 7 percent cited exposure to art and visual stimulation as benefits gained from shared reading of print picture books.

However, parents and guardians noted that daily quiet bonding time was as important a benefit of traditional shared reading as was the development of literacy skills; 47 percent of respondents cited this as one of the major reasons for reading to their children. One parent commented, "[Reading picture books together helps my child] develop literacy skills, develop emotional/empathy skills, learn about the world around her, [and it is also] time spent together without distractions." Another parent emphasized the importance of reading together in creating emotional closeness: "Being close, sitting together, while reading, early familiarity with words and language, recreation time together."

Use of Book Apps

Fifty-three percent of respondents indicated that they also provided their children with access to book apps, the majority on an iPad. These parents cited several benefits of book apps, as summarized in figure 1, noting that apps are entertaining (78 percent) and convenient (70 percent), and could be educational (74 percent). Fifty-six percent felt that apps increased their children's enjoyment of reading while only 34 percent cited affordability as a key advantage. (Note: Respondents were encouraged to select all the categories that applied, so the total is greater than 100 percent).

Only a minority of parents wholeheartedly and unreservedly embraced book apps as beneficial for their young children. One such parent praised apps for their "gamification of learning to
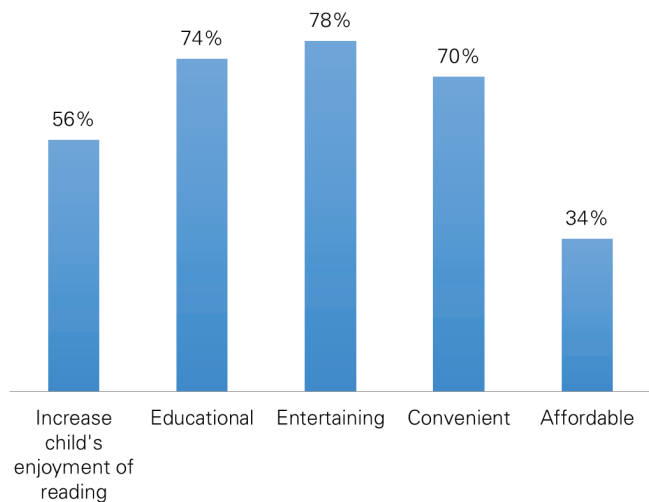
Figure 1. Parents' Perceptions of the Benefits of Book Apps ($N = 133$)

Figure 2. Parents' Perceptions of the Disadvantages of Preschool Book Apps ($N = 133$)

read [by providing] incentives. [Apps provide] child-led learning, not dependent on adult involvement." Other parents favored apps for their convenience and easy portability and some also noted that early exposure to technology, in and of itself, could be beneficial, with statements such as "My child will be using digital technology all her life. Why not start her early?" Another parent enthused, "Children love technology! My five-year-old would rather use the tablet than look at books."

However, most parents, even those who provide their children with access to book apps, expressed reservations and anxiety about giving their children too much screen time, and many indicated that they only allowed their children to use book apps in tightly controlled situations, such as when traveling outside the home, when traditional books were not available or convenient to transport.

Parents and guardians indicated that, in their view, book apps presented several key disadvantages when compared to traditional physical picture books. One of the strongest themes emerging from this question was a strong parental preference for print books and overall concern that early use of book apps could result in an "addiction" or dependency on technology and, in particular, that the stimulating interactivity of the book app could diminish children's enjoyment or appreciation of physical books.

One respondent commented, "Too much technology isn't always a good thing. [Preschool children] should appreciate actual books without the bright lights and add-ons that come with electronics. I don't want my pre-school child learning how to use a tablet by himself—I want him to flip pages and see actual pictures and words on a page." Another parent expressed a similar concern: "Too much time is spent in front of a screen, not enough time with a physical book. Learning to write goes hand in hand with learning to read—not just tapping a button or a word."

An equal number of survey respondents identified the lack of adult/child bonding time as a strong disincentive of using book
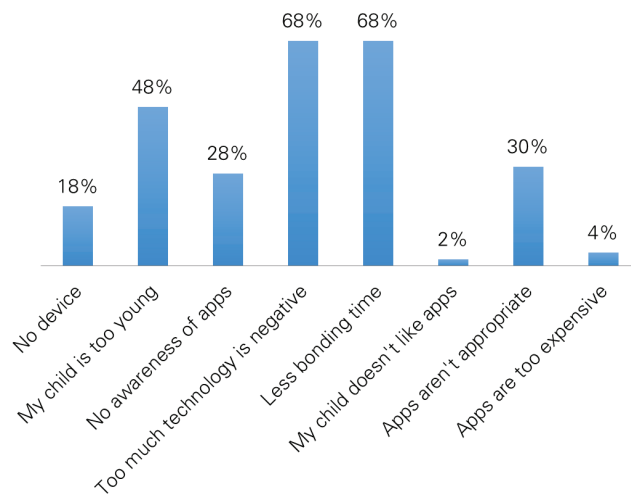
apps. Parents and guardians expressed misgivings about the replacement of human interaction by an increased reliance on technology.

One respondent commented, "I believe the interactive nature of hard copy books provide[s] more than just learning to read. The shared engagement in book reading is a positive experience for both partners and this shared engagement and the interaction that occurs builds other communicative and social skills. It can be difficult to build interactive/shared experiences around screen devices." Another stated, "Lack of interaction between parents and child [is negative]. [The child] falls into the video stupor."

Figure 2 summarizes survey respondents' perceptions of the disadvantages of book apps (Note: Respondents were encouraged to select all the categories that applied, so the total is greater than 100 percent).

Selecting Book Apps

The survey also asked parents and guardians about the criteria they used when selecting book apps for their preschool children. Interestingly, respondents indicated they intuitively sought many of the same characteristics they looked for when choosing which print books to read with their children. The most commonly sought feature for a successful book app is entertainment value, and respondents stated that apps had to be fun and interactive or children would not want to use them.

But many parents and guardians also expressed a desire for educational features, which reinforce reading readiness, such as an understanding of sequential narrative events, an interest in reading words, development of vocabulary, and an understanding of sound-letter correspondences. Parents praised book apps that reinforce these skills, making comments such as "I like the books where she can have the tablet read to her, or where she can tap on an individual word and it will read it

to her;" "[I prefer book apps which teach the] sounds of letters and breaking down words;" "I like an app that highlights words as they are read, has a dictionary that will tell my daughter the definition of a word and has no moving pictures, just still pictures. I like this because it shows her that we read left to right, helps broaden her vocabulary, and focuses on the reading aspect, rather than being similar to a television show."

These parents were clearly aware that book app activities need to support early literacy skills such as those identified by ECRR to be effective in stimulating emergent literacy. Parents and guardians also identified ease of use, price, quality of graphics, and a lack of advertising as other key selection criteria. Several respondents indicated that they researched book apps and read reviews before purchasing them for their children.

While a minority of respondents were unequivocally opposed to book apps for their preschool children and said they did not believe that preschool children should have any "screen time" whatsoever, most respondents indicated a more balanced view, accepting that exposure to technology was inevitable and could be turned to a positive advantage as long as it was not used to replace shared reading of print books.

One parent commented, "Reading with my child is one of the great pleasures of my day. We generally only use apps when a distraction is necessary, and we've forgotten to bring traditional books with us. My child loves reading, stories, and words and is completely content when reading and being read to, whether it is a traditional book or a book app." Another parent commented that her preschool children took the lead in selecting book apps: "Honestly, [the book app] is usually selected by them with my consent. My position is that literacy is literacy. If they want to develop reading skills using an Ironman/Batman book app, that's great. It's all about what piques their interest. Picking what to read is half the fun. If someone else picked my reading material, I probably wouldn't want to read."

Several parents emphasized the idea that book apps were just another form of reading and should be used in conjunction with print books: "Apps are a treat and used to complement our one-on-one reading, not replace [it]"; "It is all about balance—children should be exposed to numerous reading opportunities and can benefit from the positive aspects of [both] traditional reading and apps."

This study demonstrates that many of the parents and guardians of preschoolers who responded to this survey are experiencing some anxiety and confusion when trying to decide whether or not to allow their children to interact with book apps. Even parents who provide this access frequently report mixed feelings ranging from mild concern to guilt, and worry that this exposure may have a long-term negative effect on their children's future literacy development.

At the same time, many parents and guardians explicitly recognize that their children will live in a world dominated by technology and feel that it is unrealistic to erect artificial barriers between their preschoolers and digital information. Clearly, librarians can play a key role in sharing research findings with concerned parents and in helping them to select apps in which the interactivity supports or reinforces the story and develops emergent literacy rather than apps featuring unrelated distractions. A good book app should reflect the benefits and engagement of dialogic reading[26] and the positive benefits of creativity and imaginative play that are found in real-world recreation.

As parents themselves noted in this survey, perhaps one of the easiest ways to judge whether or not a book app is "good" is to hold it to the same standards by which traditional picture books are judged. Is it age appropriate for the target age range? Do the pictures add to the text or are they stand alone? Can the child easily navigate from page to page as they can with a real book? A "good" book app would have all these characteristics plus the extras that a traditional book simply cannot provide. Researchers and parents agree on one key point: keep the app simple; ensure that all aspects of the app add to the value as a whole, and avoid fancy "bells and whistles" that simply distract rather than reinforcing the story.[27]

Conclusion

Research consistently demonstrates that traditional adult-child shared reading of print picture books is beneficial for the cognitive development of preschool children and preliminary research also suggests that well-designed book apps may have a similar beneficial effect. Reading, speaking, and playing with children are all keys to helping children develop essential reading readiness skills. Children begin to develop these lifelong skills long before formal education begins, thus making early exposure to books and reading so critical. While there has been much research done on the benefits of traditional reading on a child's development, interactive book apps are a relatively new technology and there has not yet been time for longitudinal studies to measure the long-term effect of preschool children's exposure to this new form of reading. It would be beneficial for future research studies to compare the effect on emergent literacy of using book apps versus traditional shared reading of print picture books. At the present, parents and guardians must choose whether or not to give their children access to book apps in the absence of definite knowledge of the impact of this exposure.

The findings of this study suggest that parents are adopting a variety of strategies. Almost all parents and guardians who responded to our survey indicated that they are committed to reading physical picture books to their children, and believe that this shared reading time is extremely beneficial both for their children's education and cognitive development and for emotional bonding.

Furthermore, it was clear that very few respondents were adopting book apps without some degree of caution (and even outright anxiety) and a significant minority of parents and guardians consciously chose not to provide access to book

apps at all because they feared apps could be detrimental to their child's cognitive or emotional development and would detract from their children's appreciation for shared reading of print books. Based on the findings of this exploratory study, it is clear that book apps are not perceived as a replacement for traditional reading of physical books and, in some cases, they are perceived as an overt threat to this shared reading time.

Overall, the parents and guardians who responded to this survey feel that book apps are best used occasionally or as a supplement to traditional reading and their primary advantage is their convenience and entertainment value. Parents and guardians still consider traditional reading of physical picture books to be the preferred method for introducing young children to books and reading. ↺

References

1. Dolores Durkin, *Children Who Read Early* (New York: Teachers College Press: 1966).
2. Gordon Wells, *The Meaning Makers: Children Learning Language and Using Language to Learn* (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 1986).
3. See Marie Clay, *Reading: The Patterning of Complex Behaviour* (Auckland, New Zealand: Heinemann, 1979); Marcia Baghban, *Our Daughter Learns to Read and Write: A Case Study from Birth to Three* (Newark, DE: International Reading Association, 1984); S. J. Hoffman, *Preschool Reading Related Behaviors: A Parent Diary* (PhD diss., University of Pennsylvania, 1982).
4. See Shirley Brice Heath, *Ways with Words: Language, Life and Work in Communities and Classrooms* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983); Carol Fox, *At the Very Edge of the Forest: The Influence of Storytelling by Children* (New York: Cassell, 1993); Catherine Snow, "Declining the Art of Table Talk," *Boston Globe*, January 25, 1996, 30.
5. Meagan Albright, Kevin Delecki, and Sarah Hinkle, "The Evolution of Early Literacy: A History of Best Practices in Storytimes," *Children and Libraries* 7 no. 1 (Spring 2009): 13–18; Renea Arnold, "Charming the Next Generation: A Strategy for Turning Toddlers into Readers," *School Library Journal* 51 no. 7 (July 2005): 30–32; Rick Margolis, "Start Spreading the News: Librarians Have an Opportunity to Change the Nation—One Toddler at a Time," *School Library Journal* 51 no. 7 (July 2005): 11.
6. Public Library Association, Every Child Ready to Read, accessed Decemberer 17, 2014, www.everychildready toread.org.
7. See Viki Ash and Elaine Meyers, "Every Child Ready to Read @ your library," *Children and Libraries*, 7 no. 1 (Spring 2009): 3–7; Barbara N. Kupetz, "A Shared Responsibility: Nurturing Literacy in the Very Young," *School Library Journal* 39, no. 7 (July 1993): 28–31; Hani Morgan, "Multimodal Children's E-Books Help Young Learners in Reading," *Early Childhood Education Journal* 41 no. 6 (November 2013): 477–83.
8. Rachel G. Payne, "Read, Play, Grow!" *School Library Journal*, July 8, 2013, accessed December 16, 2014, www.slj.com/2013/07/standards/early-learning/read-play-grow-enhancing-early-literacy-at-brooklyn-public-library/#.
9. Stephen Gass, "How to Choose the Right Apps for Early Learning," *T H E Journal* (2013), n.p., accessed December 16, 2014, http://thejournal.com/articles/2013/10/01/how-to-choose-the-best-apps-for-young-learners.aspx?=THEMOB.
10. See Maria T. de Jong and Adriana G. Bus, "How Well-Suited Are Electronic Books to Supporting Literacy?" *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy* 3, no. 2 (Aug. 2003): 147–64; Rachael Levy, "'You Have to Understand Words . . . But Not Read Them': Young Children Becoming Readers in a Digital Age," *Journal of Research in Reading* 32, no. 1 (Feb. 2009): 75–91. http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9817.2088.01382.x; Cynthia R. Smith, "Click and Turn the Page: An Exploration of Multiple Storybook Literacy," *Reading Research Quarterly* 36, no. 2 (April/May/June 2001): 152–82.
11. Aline Frederico, *Playfulness in E-Picturebooks: How the Element of Play Manifests in Transmediated and Born-Digital Picturebook Apps* (master's thesis, University of British Columbia, 2014), 9.
12. Ibid., 8.
13. Michelle M. Neumann, "An Examination of Touch Screen Tablets and Emergent Literacy in Australian Pre-school Children," *Australian Journal of Education* 58, no. 2 (August 2014): 111.
14. J. L. Tahnk, "Digital Milestones: Raising a Tech-Savvy Kid," *Parenting Early Years* 25 (Nov. 2011): 78–84.
15. Jeremy Greenfield, "Ebook Growth Continues Slowdown Through August 2012, Children's Up 'Only' 50%, Adult 37%" *Digital Book World*, December 3, 2012, www.digitalbookworld.com/2012/ebook-growth-continues-slowdown-through-august-2012-childrens-up-only-50-adult-34/.
16. Kathleen Roskos et al., "Young Children's Engagement with E-Books at School: Does Device Matter?" *Sage Open* (2014): 1, http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/2158244013517244.
17. See Maria Cahill and Anne McGill-Franzen, "Selecting 'App'ealing and 'App'propriate Book Apps for Beginning Readers," *Reading Teacher* 67, no. 1 (Sept. 2013): 30–39.
18. National Literacy Trust, Children's Early Literacy Practices at Home and in Early Years Settings: Second Annual Survey of Parents and Practitioners, 2014, accessed Dec. 16, 2014, www.literacytrust.org.uk/research/nlt_research/6266_children_s_early_literacy_practices_at_home_and_in_early_years_settings_second_annual_survey_of_parents_and_practitioners.
19. Danny Jacobs, "Connected Storytimes: The iPad and Storytime," *Focus on Libraries*, New Brunswick Public Libraries Newsletter, November 2013, 13–16.
20. American Association of Pediatrics, "Media and Children." (2011), accessed December 16, 2014, www.aap.org/en-us/advocacy-and-policy/aap-health-initiatives/Pages/Media-and-Children.aspx.
21. Ari Brown, Donald Shifrin, and David Hill, "Beyond 'Turn It Off': How to Advise Families on Media Use, *AAP News*, September 28, 2015, http://aapnews.aappublications.org/content/36/10/54.full.

22. Heather Ruetschlin Schugar, Carol A. Smith, and Jordan T. Schugar, "Teaching with Interactive Picture E-books in Grades K-6," *The Reading Teacher* 66, no. 8 (May 2013): 615–24, http://dx.doi.org/10.1002.trtr.1168.

23. Julia Parish-Morris et al., "Once Upon a Time: Parent-Child Dialogue and Storybook Reading in the Electronic Era," *Mind, Brain, and Education* 7, no. 3 (September 2013): 200–11 http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/mbe.12028.

24. Neumann, "An Examination of Touch Screen Tablets and Emergent Literacy," 109–22.

25. The survey took approximately ten minutes to complete (see appendix). Only parents or guardians of preschool aged children were invited to participate and a screening question was used to eliminate those who did not meet the parameters of the study. Ultimately 133 usable surveys were completed. Microsoft Excel was used to analyze the quantitative data whereas qualitative data was coded manually to identify prevailing themes.

26. See Amy Hempstead, *Effects of Interactive Books on Phonological Awareness Skills in Pre-Kindergarten Children from Low-Income Environments* (PhD diss., Florida State University, 2008); Cynthia Chiong et al., "Print Books vs E-Books: Comparing Parent-Child Co-Reading on Print, Basic, and Enhanced E-Book Platforms," The Joan Ganz Cooney Center, 2012, www.joanganzcooneycenter.org/publication/quickreport-print-books-vs-e-books/; Maria T. de Jong and Adriana G. Bus, "How Well-Suited Are Electronic Books to Supporting Literacy?" *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy* 3 (Aug. 2003): 147–64; Ofra Korat, "Reading Electronic Books as a Support for Vocabulary, Story Comprehension, and Word Reading in Kindergarten and First Grade," *Computers and Education* 55, no. 1 (August 2010): 24–31.

27. Elizabeth Bird, "Planet App: Kids' Book Apps Are Everywhere. But Are They Any Good?" *School Library Journal* 57, no. 1 (January 1, 2011): 26–31.

Appendix. Survey

Screening question:

Do you have a preschool child or children?
[If no, the survey ends].

If yes, please indicate their age(s) and gender(s).

Section 1: These questions will focus on traditional reading practices:

1. Do you read to your child/children? Yes/No [If no, go to next section]
2. If yes, how often do you read to your child/children?
   a. Several times a day
   b. Once a day
   c. Occasionally
   d. Infrequently
   e. Never
3. Do your children participate in any formal storytimes? For example, at a local library or preschool?
4. What do you think are the main benefits of reading to your child/children?

Section 2: The next section will focus on book apps for children:

1. Does your child have access to book apps? [If no, go to question 6]
2. If yes, on what type of device? (For example, smartphone, tablet, laptop, desktop)
3. If yes, does your child use book apps with adult supervision? Yes/No
4. If yes, why do you provide your child/children access to book apps? Please select all that apply:
   a. They increase my child's enjoyment of books and reading.
   b. They are educational.
   c. They are entertaining.
   d. They are convenient.
   e. They are affordable.
   f. Other:
5. What criteria do you use to select a book app for your preschool child? In your opinion, what makes a good book app for children?
6. If your child does not have access to book apps, why not? Please select all that apply:
   a. I do not have an appropriate device.
   b. I feel my child is too young to use this technology.
   c. I am not familiar with book apps for young children.
   d. I prefer to read print books with my child.
   e. My child doesn't like book apps.
   f. I do not feel that book apps are appropriate for young children.
   g. Book apps are too expensive.
   h. Other:

Section 3: The next section will focus on traditional reading practices vs. book apps:

1. What do you think are the main benefits of book apps for young children?
2. What do you think are the main disadvantages of book apps for young children?
3. Is there anything else you would like to say about reading with your preschool child?

Of Course, We Already Knew This …

Babies Need Words Every Day

MATT MCLAIN

Shortly before the 2014 Annual Conference, the Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC) was invited to contribute to the Obama Administration's Thirty-Million Word Gap initiative. The word "gap" relates to the vast difference in the number of words that children from different backgrounds hear before they enter school.

Children from families who talk constantly hear 30 million more words by the time they enter school than children from families who don't frequently talk or who only use command and "business language."[1] The disparity is most frequently associated with household income levels, and it can have a significant effect on the child's vocabulary. Children from lower-income households can start school with a vocabulary half the size of a child from a family with a higher income.

On the ALSC Blog, Betsy Diamant-Cohen wrote, "Research has indicated that there is a link between the number of vocabulary words children know and their economic background."[2]

Published in 2003, "The Early Catastrophe: The 30 Million Word Gap by Age 3" by researchers Betty Hart and Todd Risley noted that during the first years of life, children from low-income families hear about 30 million fewer words than their peers from more affluent homes.[3]

Young children learn words by hearing them spoken by other human beings (not necessarily electronic media); when parents speak with their babies, they are building neural connections in their children's brains. In addition to building a larger vocabulary, the young brains are growing more synapses to enable easier learning later on in life.

The study by Hart and Risley determined that lower-income parents were speaking less or using fewer words while in conversation with their children. Further studies made the connection between having larger vocabularies when entering kindergarten and higher rates of graduation from high school.

Having a high school degree influences the type of job and salary a person can generally expect to get. It has also been shown to affect health outcomes, family stability, and lifetime earnings. Thus the number of words a child knows when entering kindergarten can lead to disparities, increasing the economic divide in our country.

The Every Child Ready to Read curriculum teaches that children are "learning to read" all the way up through third grade. One of the key indicators of a child's success throughout his entire school career is his readiness to read at the start of kindergarten. This includes knowing his letters and sounds, numbers up to ten, experience with drawing and writing, and the number of words in his vocabulary.[4]

The importance of kindergarten readiness is the main reason for ALSC's Babies Need Words Every Day. It's another way to help parents realize the importance of talking and playing with their children. Sometimes parents don't think their babies are learning yet. They may not understand that everything they say is being absorbed. Singing, talking, playing, and reading are all ways for parents to be proactive about helping their children get ready for kindergarten. More importantly, they are helping their children prepare for a lifetime of learning.
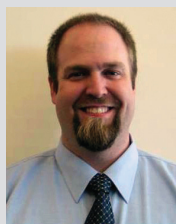
Matt McLain is the manager of the South Jordan Branch of the Salt Lake County (UT) Library. He served as the chair of the ALSC Early Childhood Programs and Services Committee from 2013 to 2015 and now co-chairs the ALSC Advocacy and Legislation Committee.

What You Can Do

This campaign is founded on the belief that libraries can help with the progress of bridging the 30 million word gap. Through storytimes, librarians can help parents understand that babies learn by hearing words spoken or sung and can teach parents to remember to use all kinds of words when their babies and young children are listening to them.

The more words their children hear and learn, the better prepared they will be to do well in school and learn throughout life.

What started as an effort to put posters above diaper changing tables, has morphed into a powerful message that can be shared anywhere. The ALSC Board's commitment to make the posters freely available signifies the importance of the Babies Need Words Every Day message. While libraries may not be able to provide direct education, libraries can organize communities and be the bridge for getting disparate groups together. This is a perfect opportunity for libraries to use their influence as trusted community partners to build a network of partnerships to promote early literacy throughout the community.

By using the Babies Need Words Every Day posters, communities can share the message far and wide, with a branded series of posters that people will recognize. The artwork, tips, and rhymes will help parents remember to talk, sing, read, and play with their children. The message can amplify work that is already being done, and strategic partnerships with businesses, government agencies, and state libraries can help cover the costs of printing the posters.

With your network of community partners, you can provide the posters to anyone who wants one and ask them to display them. You can offer them to any business that has a changing table, but as the project has grown, we believe they will be particularly effective in doctors' offices, WIC clinics, health departments, laundromats, public transportation stations, government offices, day care facilities, and, of course, libraries. And the list is only limited by your creativity! &

Visit www.ala.org/alsc/babiesneedwords to view the posters. All eight are available to download as an 11 × 17" or 22 × 28" poster in English and in Spanish. The committee thanks Nina Lindsay and the Oakland Public Library for the Spanish translation of the posters and addition of culturally authentic songs and rhymes.

References

1. Maya Shankar, "Empowering Our Children by Bridging the Word Gap," *The White House Blog*, June 25, 2014, www .whitehouse.gov/blog/2014/06/25/empowering-our -children-bridging-word-gap.
2. Betsy Diamant-Cohen, "Changing Table Initiative Come to Fruition," *ALSC Blog*, June 22, 2015, www.alsc.ala.org/ blog/2015/06/changing-table-initiative-come-to-fruition.
3. Betty Hart and Todd R. Risley, "The Early Catastrophe: The 30 Million Word Gap by Age 3," *American Educator* (Spring 2003), www.aft.org/sites/default/files/periodicals/ TheEarlyCatastrophe.pdf.
4. "Literature Review (2010)," Every Child Ready to Read @ your library, accessed January 23, 2016, www.every childreadytoread.org/project-history%09/literature -review-2010.

Birth of a Resource

The Babies Need Words Every Day program began at the 2014 ALA Midwinter Meeting in Philadelphia. ALSC then-President Starr LaTronica visited the Early Childhood Programs and Services Committee and spoke of developing early literacy posters that could be displayed above changing tables. Consider the captive audience, she noted—speaking about how the posters could connect a new audience to libraries and how it could encourage parents to talk to their children more often.

The committee started to put some literacy tips together using Every Child Ready to Read as the starting point with its concepts of talking, singing, reading, writing, and playing. The committee developed several tips for each of the five practices.

Shortly before the 2014 Annual Conference, ALSC was invited to contribute to the Obama Administration's Thirty-Million Word Gap initiative. During the conference, the ALSC Board made a commitment to create a project that would assist with closing the gap. They were clear in their message: They wanted the posters to be freely available to everyone to make as much progress as possible.

Having already come up with several literacy tips, the committee began putting together additional ideas for poster content and decided that each poster would include a literacy tip, a song or fingerplay, and fun and eye-catching artwork.

The committee considered artists who had written or illustrated children's books; after a rousing chat session on ALA Connect, we decided to request artwork created by Il Sung Na (*A Book of Babies, A Book of Sleep, Hide and Seek, The Thingamabob*).

The committee worked on refining our literacy tips and matched them up with songs and fingerplays. We also developed a booklist that could be downloaded to accompany the posters.

A few months later, Random House gave permission to use Na's artwork for the project; the first preview poster debuted at ALA Midwinter in 2015.

Out of the Box and Into the Book

Innovative Library Partnerships to Close the 30 Million Word Gap

MICHELLE BALDINI AND MARIANNE MARTENS

Recent research has shown that early literacy is directly connected to school readiness. Talking, singing, reading, writing, and playing, the basic tenets of Every Child Ready to Read 2 (ECRR2), not only increase young children's vocabulary, they also help them process new information. However, the disparity in vocabularies of children of lower and higher income families is one of the greatest battles of the twenty-first century.

Research reported by psychologists Hart and Risley found that by age four, children in lower socioeconomic status (SES) families heard 30 million words fewer than their counterparts in higher SES families.[1] More recently, a study conducted at Stanford University found that child-directed speech increased children's ability to retain, interpret, and learn new vocabularies more quickly.[2]

This is supported by Patricia Kuhl's work on early learning and the mind, especially her work on how environmental factors (such as SES) shape early learning and how early intervention and exposure to language optimizes brain development.[3] Parental involvement in early literacy programs of all kinds is crucial to the health of the developing brain. Moreover, children raised in lower SES families are at greater risk for overall academic failure. Closing this word gap is becoming a major priority of organizations such as the American Academy of Pediatrics, Hillary Clinton's Too Small to Fail Initiative, Reach Out and Read, the Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC) and Public Library Association's (PLA) ECRR2, and ALSC's Babies Need Words Every Day.

Libraries are leading advocates for early literacy and closing the word gap. Because they serve all populations, they can make a significant impact on families, especially in lower SES populations. Scholastic states that, "Six in ten parents with children ages 0–5 (60 percent) have received advice that children should be read aloud to from birth; however, just under half of parents in the lowest-income households (47 percent) received this advice vs. 74 percent in the highest income households."[4]

Michelle Baldini, MLS, received a starred review for her first young adult novel, Unraveling (Delacorte 2008). She earned an MLS, specializing in young adult literature, and has since worked extensively in the field of children's literature. At the School of Library and Information Science at Kent State University in Ohio, Michelle works as Coordinator of the Reinberger Children's Library Center alongside the top leaders in librarianship and children's literature. **Marianne Martens**, PhD, is Assistant Professor at Kent State University's School of Library and Information Science, and co-directs the Reinberger Children's Library Center. Her research and teaching covers the interconnected fields of youth services librarianship and publishing, with a special focus in the area of Digital Youth. Prior to her academic career, Martens worked in children's publishing in New York. You can read more about her at mariannemartens.org.

Overall, public libraries make it their mission to provide service to the entire community with a special focus on the underserved. They can make a difference in reaching these lower SES populations. Healthcare providers also play an important role in reaching this vulnerable population. Both can work together to educate families on early literacy.

Several organizations are partnering with libraries to reach children and their parents and caregivers in unconventional ways, for example, healthcare providers and nonprofit organizations.

In view of this, Kent State University's School of Library and Information Science (KSU/SLIS) partnered with Akron Children's Hospital to explore new ways of closing the word gap. Two events were held last spring at the Emily Cooper Welty Expressive Therapy Center at Akron Children's Hospital.

A Daily Dose of Reading: Partnering to Promote Early Literacy featured keynote speaker *New York Times* best-selling author and illustrator Rosemary Wells. Wells has long been an advocate for early literacy with her book *Read to Your Bunny*. She recommends that parents and caregivers, "Every day, make a quiet, restful place for twenty minutes. Put your child in your lap and read a book aloud. In the pages of the book you will find a tiny vacation of privacy and intense love. It costs nothing but twenty minutes and a [free] library card."[5]

At the event, Wells read to a group of thirty-five attendees (children and families, and therapy dog Maverick). Wells also spoke to professionals who work to promote early literacy, and local experts on literacy and healthcare gave five-minute lightning talks. Speakers included Community Health Supervisor for Summit County Public Health, Aimee Budnik; Karen Carbaugh, the *Reach Out and Read* Coordinator at Akron Children's Hospital; Nicole Robinson, the Outreach Manager for the Wick Poetry Center at Kent State University who promotes early literacy with patients and families at the hospital; Laura McFalls, Early Childhood Specialist for Akron-Summit County Public Library; Bibliotherapist and Bereavement Consultant for Akron Children's Hospital Mandy Seymour; and Kathy Fry, Coordinator for the Reading Rover program at Akron Children's Hospital. Speakers shared their work on educating parents and caregivers on the importance of early literacy and discussed programs that support these efforts and opportunities for collaboration.

The following day, SLIS held a symposium for librarians and educators, again keynoted by Wells. The symposium included a music and movement program where librarians Laura McFalls and Anne-Marie Savoie got the audience up and moving as they demonstrated how to give an educational and entertaining program. ECRR2 shows that children learn through singing, and music and movement programs are a fun way for children to learn language, gain social interactions, develop emotional connections, think creatively, and stay active.

Tricia Twarogowski, who was awarded the 2010 Autism Society of North Carolina's Autism Professional of the Year award, gave a presentation about the importance of serving young children with autism and other disabilities. She is branch manager at the Northwest Akron Branch of Akron-Summit County Public Library and offers sensory storytime in collaboration with the Autism Society of Greater Akron. You can see Twarogowski's "Programming for Children with Special Needs" blog series on the ALSC website.[6]

To promote the goals of ECRR2 and close the 30 million-word gap, it seems that there are important ways that librarians and healthcare professionals can collaborate. Both work daily to advocate for better and fair education and for the wellness of children. Each have access to lots of children, especially those in SES families. Cultivating partnerships with key community members who have access to children in need will help battle such things as the disparity in vocabularies and close the word gap—a million at a time. 𐦝

> *Libraries are leading advocates for early literacy and closing the word gap. Because they serve all populations, they can make a significant impact on families, especially in lower SES populations.*

References

1. Betty Hart and Todd R. Risely, "The Early Catastrophe: The 30 Million Word Gap by Age 3," *American Educator* 27, no. 1 (2003).
2. Anne Fernald, Virginia A. Marchman, and Adriana Weisleder, "SES Differences in Language Processing Skill and Vocabulary Are Evident at 18 Months," *Developmental Science* 16, no. 2 (2013), http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/desc.12019.
3. Patricia Kuhl, "Linking Infant Speech Perception to Language Acquisition: Phonetic Learning Predicts Language Growth," in *Infant Pathways to Language: Methods, Models, and Research Directions*, eds. John Colombo, Peggy McCardle, and Lisa Freund (New York: Erlbaum, 2008).
4. Scholastic, Inc. Kids and Family Reading Report, 5th ed., accessed Oct. 21, 2015, www.scholastic.com/readingreport/index.htm.
5. Rosemary Wells, *Read to Your Bunny* (New York: Scholastic, 1998), 28.
6. Tricia Twarogowski, "Programming for Children with Special Needs," *ALSC* (blog), accessed June 23, 2009, June 30, 2009, July 8, 2009, July 15, 2009, July 22, 2009, www.alsc.ala.org/blog/2009/06/programming-for-children-with-special-needs.

Taking a Closer Look

LGBTQ Characters in Books for Intermediate-Grade Children

TADAYUKI SUZUKI AND BARBARA FIEHN

Some years ago a student in our graduate course on children's literature said, "We have looked at a lot of picture books with LGBTQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgendered, and Questioning) themes and characters, but are there any books for intermediate-level elementary students? There aren't any listed in our textbook." Until hearing the question from this student, we had never thought about the availability of LGBTQ books for intermediate-grade children. However, this question began a search lasting several years and resulted in the book list at the end of this article. In 2012, Jamie Campbell Naidoo's book *Rainbow Family Collections* affirmed the experiences we had locating LGBTQ books for intermediate-level elementary students.[1] This book covers LGBTQ media for preschool through grade six published through 2011, as a result, we have limited this article to books published since 2011. This article also discusses why locating these titles is often difficult and why the books need to be available to students.

Locating LGBTQ Books

Why is it difficult to locate LGBTQ books for intermediate-grade children? "There's virtually nothing in the middle," says j wallace skelton, referring to the numerous LGBTQ books for primary and middle/high school grades.[2] Complicating finding the few books published for this age group are three things: the predominance of less widely distributed independent presses, the limited coverage by review sources, and retrieval problems with current subject cataloging.

Independent Publishers and Publicity

Malinda Lo's research indicates 30 percent of the publishers for young adult LGBTQ literature are independent presses.[3] If this is also true for elementary titles, then at least 30 percent of the LGBTQ children's titles also come from independent presses. Titles from independent presses often lack the same level of publicity as books from large publishing houses; thus they get less notice.

Jewell Gomez says, "I'd love to see better marketing of LGBTQ books so they don't just disappear."[4] Lacking publicity campaigns, LGBTQ titles are less likely to be noticed by reviewers; therefore, the books do not make it into many selection tools. With the advent of Internet social media sites such as the blog Gay-Themed Picture Books for Children and independent

Tadayuki Suzuki *is an associate professor in the Literacy Department, State University of New York College at Cortland, in Cortland, New York. He teaches both undergraduate and graduate literacy courses. His academic interests are literacy methods, teaching ESL, and multicultural education, especially the use of multicultural literature.* **Barbara Fiehn***, MS, EdD, is an Associate Professor of Library Media Education at Western Kentucky University. Following thirty years as a school librarian, consultant, and media services coordinator, she taught in library media education at Minnesota State University at Mankato and Northern Illinois University. She has also served on the ALA Intellectual Freedom committee.*

press websites, children's LGBTQ titles are getting easier to find than previously.[5]

Booklist and *School Library Journal* frequently comment on the LGBTQ content; however, secondary LGBTQ characters are less often mentioned. Those writing reviews are either unaware of the importance of this information or uncomfortable with mentioning LGBTQ content. A good example is the recently published *The Marvels* by Brian Selznick.[6] While reading reviews from three different sources, the *Booklist* review specifically used the word "gay" in referring to Joseph's uncle but did not refer to his beloved dying of AIDS.[7] The *Kirkus* review remarked only that the uncle's beloved died of AIDS,[8] and the *School Library Journal* review made no mention or allusion to the uncle's sexual orientation, his beloved, or AIDS.[9] If a person read only the third review, they would not know the book included a gay character.

Book Awards

A second reason for lack of awareness is librarians and teachers look to book awards as a guide when selecting books. Awards for children's LGBTQ titles are relatively new and have yet to gain much recognition outside the LGBTQ community. The first Lambda Literary Award to a children's or young adult title was given in 1990. The Amelia Bloomer List, established in 2002, is for high-quality fiction and nonfiction books with strong feminist content (https://ameliabloomer.wordpress.com). While not specific LGBTQ, the books on the list frequently include gender nonconforming or gender fluid characters, which are part of the critical LGBTQ identity.

The Rainbow Book List, established in 2007, is a "best of the year list" highlighting books that portray LGBTQ content for children through age eighteen (http://glbtrt.ala.org/rainbow books/rainbow-books-lists). The newest award, established in 2010, is the Children's and Young Adult Literature Award within the larger Stonewall Book Awards (www.ala.org/glbtrt/award/honored).

Subject Cataloging

A third, and perhaps the most difficult, barrier to locating LGBTQ titles is subject indexing. Searching in any standard index, such as *World Catalog, Books in Print, Book Review Index*, or library catalogs in general, generate few, if any, usable LGBTQ results. According to Naidoo,[10] and supported by Schrader and Johnson,[11] subject access to LGBTQ children's titles is fruitless. A major rule in library subject cataloging is to assign subject headings based on the content subject of the material.

Children's fiction books with LGBTQ characters are frequently not about homosexuality. For example, the book *The Manny Files* by Christian Burch is about a male nanny.[12] The story is about how the Manny (male nanny) becomes part of the family. While there are subtle hints throughout the book that the Manny and

the family's Uncle Max are forming a close relationship, it is not until the end of the book that the relationship is identified as love. *World Catalog* assigned the following subjects:

- Nannies -- Fiction.

- Sex role -- Fiction.

- Self-confidence -- Fiction.

- Family life -- Fiction.

- Brothers and sisters -- Fiction.

These subjects do not lead the searcher to LGBTQ materials. The most fruitful subject from the above list would be Sex role -- Fiction. Such a search returns an overwhelming number of items, but few will be relevant to the LGBTQ community. Johnson and Naidoo maintain that searching major indexes and library catalogs for LGBTQ books will remain problematic until indexing processes are changed.[13] Library records must begin making use of key words and tagging to identify LGBTQ materials. Naidoo suggests using phrases that are more descriptive and consistently applied would help identify desired books such as the following:

- children of gay parents

- same-sex parents

- lesbian mothers

- gay fathers

- lesbian characters

- gay characters[14]

Perseverance, some luck, and good searching skills bring results when searching for LGBTQ books for intermediate-grade children. Some may question why looking for LGBTQ books is important when there are thousands of other easily accessible books for this age group published each year. Many misconceptions regarding LGBTQ issues exist, such as sexual orientation is a choice, elementary age children do not identify as LGBTQ, books with LGBTQ characters have sex in them, or there are no LGBTQ families or children in our school. Not only children but also adults need more information; teachers and librarians should take the initiative.

Easily identifying LGBTQ books is important to help schools and public libraries support and celebrate the diverse communities. Schools have a responsibility to provide students with opportunities to explore literature from multiple points of view. Diverse family constructs are no longer an exception; *Education Week* reports LGBT parents are raising nearly 210 million children.[15] Additionally, many educators, including Short and Temple, who support multiculturalism, advocate that all children should see themselves and their families in books

they read.[16] If teachers are to meet the needs of children in their classrooms and provide their students with learning opportunities about the larger world, then all minority groups should be included in the literature available in school classrooms and libraries. Excluding any group is a disservice to all learners.

Derman-Sparks and Edwards indicate children come to school with a perception of their family as an extension of themselves;[17] however, they are also curious about other family makeups. Children initially may view any family that is different from their own with curiosity. If only some families are validated, children may question if other family structures are acceptable.

Exclusionary experiences contribute to the name-calling and bullying of any child who is outside or perceived as outside the normative expectation. When classroom materials and curricula exclude a group of people, the group becomes marginalized. Those who are marginalized are at risk for bullying. Additionally, research by Manning indicates childhood and adolescence are the times when the introduction of diverse topics is appropriate.[18] Therefore, to provide an inclusive environment for children from families with LGBTQ members, it is important that schools include LGBTQ books in their classrooms and libraries.

LGBTQ Books 2011 to Present

Identifying criteria for evaluating books for children is not difficult. Authors of children's literature textbooks such as Short and Temple have discussed evaluative criteria at length.[19] Criteria specific to LGBTQ titles is added to basic children's literature evaluative criteria as a foundation for selecting and evaluating books. Such criteria are found in the work of Naidoo,[20] the American Library Association's Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Round Table document,[21] and *Lesbian and Gay Voices: An Annotated Bibliography and Guide to Literature for Children and Young Adults* by Frances Ann Day.[22]

In reviewing the books listed below, the following simplified criteria were developed using the above resources.

- Age appropriate, meaning the writing style and content maturity, as well as the measures of reading and interest levels, such as Lexile number, indicates the book was intended for intermediate grade students.

- Good story is the key to keeping a reader interested. The characters, plot, setting, and dialogue engage the reader.

- LGBTQ character trait is a normal part of the character. The story is not about being LGBTQ but is a descriptor similar to the character being left handed or green eyed. If the plot includes LGBTQ issues, they are treated in a realistic manner.

The books on the following list were evaluated as meeting the standard children's literature and the LGBTQ literature criteria. For discussion purposes, the following groupings are used:

- books with LGBTQ main characters;

- books with LGBTQ secondary characters;

- books about transgender people; and

- nonfiction/informational books including LGBTQ identity.

Books with LGBTQ Main Characters

Two fiction books with LGBTQ main characters, both written by Tim Federle, were identified. Authors and publishers need to consider and support the writing of more books for the LGBTQ genre for this age group since as stated by Mallon and DeCrescenzo "gender identity develops in children by the age of 3."[23]

Federle, Tim. *Better Nate than Ever.* **New York: Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers. 2013. 304p.**
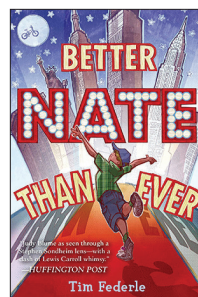
Four-foot-eight-inches, almost fourteen, not athletic, bullied at school, overshadowed by his sports star brother, that's Nate Foster. He and his best friend Libby are Broadway musical fans. They act out Broadway musicals in Libby's basement. Nate's big dream is to be on Broadway. Together, Libby and Nate make Nate's dream come true through a trip to New York to audition for *E.T. the Musical.* A 2014 Stonewall Book Award Honor title, *Better Nate than Ever* is a delightful story of a young teen looking to validate himself in a community and family that does not appreciate his uniqueness. Positively reviewed in *Booklist.* Lexile 930, age range 9–13, grade level 4–8.

Federle, Tim. *Five, Six, Seven, Nate!* **New York: Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers. 2014. 320p.**

Five, Six, Seven, Nate! begins shortly after Nate's auditions for *E.T. the Musical.* As the book opens, Libby and Nate are in his bedroom, not really packing Nate's bags for New York. Yes, he is going back to live with his Aunt Heidi. Will New York theater world be all he hopes? The story is engaging and easy to read and is a totally fun read. Nate solidifies his self-identification of being gay. However, this is not a story about being gay; it is about living a dream of being on Broadway in musical theater, growing up, and interpersonal relationships. Positively reviewed in *Booklist*, Lexile 710, age range 10–14, grade level 5–9.
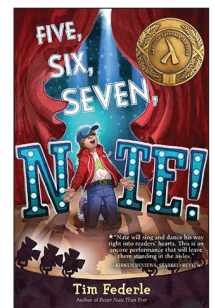
Books with LGBTQ Secondary Characters

Secondary LGBTQ characters tend to be parents, uncles, neighbors, or good friends. Finding a children's book with an LGBTQ

aunt is rare. There are six titles containing secondary LGBTQ characters.

Gennari, Jennifer. *My Mixed-Up Berry Blue Summer*. **Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin. 2012. 128p.**
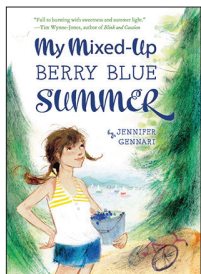
There is just nothing quite like New England blueberries, especially when they are made into a pie. Twelve-year-old June Farrel has a talent for making pies. She hopes to win the pie-making contest at the fair. The blueberries she found high above Lake Champlain are sure to be perfect for her pie; however, there are complications. The upcoming wedding of her mother and her partner brings prejudice and harassment from anti-gay marriage folks as well as from June's friends and classmates. Positively reviewed in *School Library Journal* and *Booklist*, Lexile 750, age range 10–12, grade level 5–7.

Levy, Dana A. *The Misadventures of the Family Fletcher*. **New York: Delacorte Press. 2014. 272p.**

The Fletcher family is as normal as any family can be when it contains four boys, a cat, a dog, and an imaginary cheetah. Written in third-person narrative, the chapters rotate between stories of each boy's school year. Tying the chapters together are the boys' common experiences of celebrations, family vacations, and the supportive guidance of their fathers. Starred reviews in *School Library Journal* and *Kirkus,* positive review in *Horn Book*, Junior Library Guild selection, Lexile 570, age range 9–12, grade level 4–7.
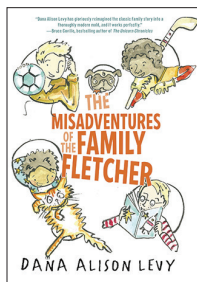
Mackler, Carolyn. *Best Friend Next Door*. **New York: Scholastic. 2015. 229p.**
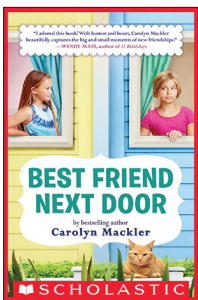
Hannah's best friend has moved away and she is heartbroken, but when Hannah gets to know the new girl, Emme, who moves in next door, life takes on a whole new look. Adjusting to life changes, the two girls tell their stories in alternating chapters, while Hannah's mother and father and Emme's two mothers are supportive and caring. Positively reviewed in *School Library Journal* and *Kirkus,* Lexile 670, age range 8–11, grade level: 3–6.

Selznick, Brian. Illus. by the author. *The Marvels*. **New York: Scholastic. 2015. 672p.**

The Marvels is two interlinked stories, one told through magnificent line drawings, and one in text, which draw the reader into the world of the theater and into the museum-like home of Uncle Albert. The text story tells of Joseph, who runs away from boarding school to find his Uncle Albert. As the story develops, the reader discovers, along with Joseph, how the two stories are connected. Uncle Albert is the gay character. Starred reviews: *Kirkus, SLJ,* and *Booklist*, Lexile 770, age range 8–12 years, grade level 3–7.

Urban, Linda. *The Center of Everything*. **Boston, MA: Harcourt. 2013. 208p.**
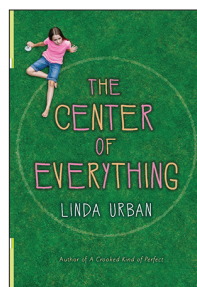
A story filled with circular references shows the reader how events cause ripples. This is a short book, plot driven, with a strong voice centering on twelve-year-old Ruby. The story emerges through flashbacks, with all the action occurring in one day. The resolution is satisfying, and Ruby and her two best friends, Lucy and Nero, act and sound like tweens. The LGBTQ characters are Lucy's fathers. Positively reviewed by all major review sources, it was a starred review by *Booklist*, Lexile 830, age range 9–12, grade level 4–7.

Yeh, Kat. *The Truth about Twinkie Pie*. **New York: Little, Brown, and Company. 2015. 208p.**

After winning a million dollar recipe contest, DiDi and GiGi transplant themselves from a South Carolina trailer park to an upscale Long Island, New York, community. DiDi deals with being sister and mother to tween GiGi, who is trying to reinvent herself as she enters a new school while learning lessons about the meaning of family and friendship. Recipes, tied to the story line, are inserted between many of the chapters. The recipes mark moments of growth. The LGBTQ character is a boy, who as the book ends, begins the process of self-acknowledgment. Positively reviewed in *Booklist, Kirkus, School Library Journal*, and *VOYA*, Lexile 730, age range 8–12, grade level 3–7.
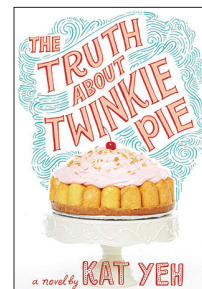
Books about Transgender People

Transgender people are those who behave in a manner that is outside the expectations of a society for a specific observable sex gender. Transgender book characters provide readers with alternatives to such stereotypical gender roles and provide a window to understanding for readers.

Gino, Alex. *George*. **New York: Scholastic. 2015. 240p.**

Ten-year-old George knows she is and always has been her female self, Melissa, but she has never told anyone. Told in the first person, the story is about normal school and life experiences colored by the knowledge that George is

concealing her very important secret. As the story progresses, George tells her best friend Kelly and later her family. Starred reviews in *School Library Journal*, *Kirkus*, and *Booklist*, Lexile 790, age range 8–12, grade level 3–7. This book won the 2015 Stonewall Book Award.

Polonsky, Ami. *Gracefully Grayson.* **New York: Hyperion. 2014. 256p.**

Grayson is struggling to fit in and deals alone with his feelings that arise from being born a boy, but always feeling he was a girl. Grayson is an orphan who has lived with his aunt and uncle since he was a young child. This book has the voice of a preteen. The reader walks in Grayson's shadow cheering him on, wishing he would confide in someone. This is the first book with a transgendered main character for tweens. Positively reviewed in *Kirkus*, *Booklist*, and *School Library Journal*, Lexile 720, age range 10–14, grade level 5–9.

Nonfiction Books Including LGBTQ Identity

Dana Rudolph says, "The fact is, children's books about real LGBT people and LGBT civil rights events are even scarcer than children's LGBT-inclusive fiction."[24] The books reviewed in this section openly address people who are LGBTQ or issues of LGBTQ people and communities. Within this category are books with social science perspectives, issues of puberty, and biographies.

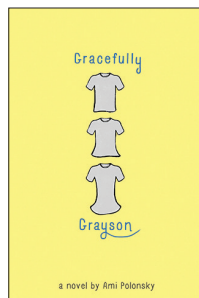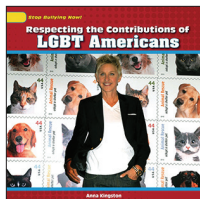**Kingston, Anna.** *Respecting the Contributions of LGBT Americans.* **New York: PowerKids Press. 2013. 24p.**

Each chapter is a two-page spread covering the history and contributions of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender Americans, including Maurice Sendak, Harvey Milk, Chaz Bono, and Ellen DeGeneres. The book also contains a glossary, index, and websites. Each topic is handled appropriately for the age level, discussed briefly but with an adequate amount of information for a good introduction to the issues. It is now outdated, but still historically accurate. The writing is clear and easy to understand. Positively reviewed in *Booklist*, Lexile not available, age range 7–11, grade level 3–6.

Plaisted, Caroline. *Boy Talk: A Survival Guide to Growing Up.* **Mankato, MN: QEB Pub. 2011. 48p.**

Intended for the pre-adolescent, this title uses a frank but short question-and-answer format, which covers almost everything upper elementary or early middle-school boys or perhaps curious girls could want to know about male puberty. A page dealing with crushes discusses feelings toward both girls and boys. Illustrations are cartoonish with text backed in colorful blocks. The narrative voice is supportive, reinforcing that everything is normal. A table of contents, glossary, and an index are helpful additions. Enthusiastically reviewed by *Booklist*, Lexile not available, age range 9–13, grade level 4–8.
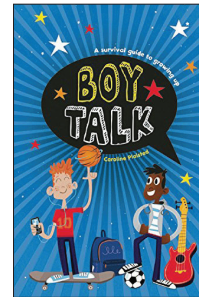
Silverberg, Cory and Fiona Smyth. *Sex Is a Funny Word.* **New York: Seven Stories Press. 2015. 160p.**
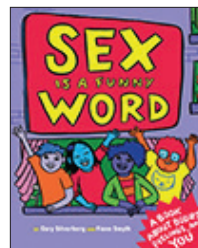
This book provides an affirming introduction for children to an exploration of relationships, gender identity, and growing sexual awareness. Included are proper words for body parts, and a section on masturbation. The book includes LGBTQ identities as a normal part of the discussion. Positively reviewed in *Kirkus*, Lexile 710, age range 7–10, grade level 2–5. This book was named a 2015 Stonewall Honor Book.

Stuckey, Rachel. *Straight Talk about Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity.* **New York: Crabtree. 2015. 48p.**

This book approaches the topic of sexual orientation and gender identity in reassuring and nonjudgmental ways. True to the series objectives, this brief book introduces the issues in a factual manner. A table of contents, other resources, and glossary help the child seeking specific information. Positively reviewed in *Booklist*, Lexile 930, age range 10–14, grade level 5–7.
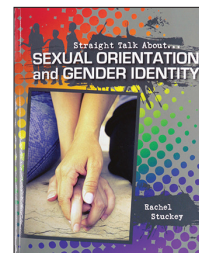
Conclusions and Implications

Books for intermediate grades with LGBTQ characters do exist and have existed for many years. However, it still takes a bit of searching to find them. *Rainbow Family Collections* is a primary source for locating the books published through 2011. This article identifies and discusses titles published since 2011, which are strong examples of quality LGBTQ literature. These books are similar in story content to many non-LGBTQ content books written for the upper elementary age level. The inclusion of LGBTQ books in school library collections is important. Pat Griffin suggests it is a step toward welcoming all students, staff, and families as valued members of the school community.[25] Moving these books out of the library and into the classroom is a next big step.

Therefore school administrators, librarians, and teachers need to work collaboratively to discuss and plan for the inclusion of LGBTQ books in the school libraries and even in the

instructional curricula. Kay Emfinger maintains, "We must make an honest assessment of our own practices, beliefs, and attitudes. For we as teachers, can change only ourselves. Transformation stems from self-reflection and knowledge gained from interfacing with resources for teachers."[26] From this collaborative effort, teachers can create a more interactive literacy-learning environment such as a literature circle, a theme analysis, and/or a grand conversation, which further supports the unique characteristics of all students and their families within the school. &

References

1. Jamie C. Naidoo, *Rainbow Family Collections* (Santa Barbara, CA: Libraries Unlimited. 2012).

2. j wallace skelton as quoted in Neda Ulaby, "'George' wants you to know she is really Melissa," *Morning Edition*, last modified Aug. 27, 2015, www.npr.org/2015/08/27/434277989/-george-wants-you-to-know-she-s-really-melissa.

3. Malinda Lo, "I Have Numbers! Stats on LGBT Young Adult Books Published in the U.S.," last modified Sept. 15, 2011, www.malindalo.com/2011/09/i-have-numbers-stats-on-lgbt-young-adult-books-published-in-the-u-s.

4. Jewell Gomez as quoted in Seth Dellon, "LGBTQ Publishing: An LGBTQ Publishing Wish List," last modified May 23, 2015, www.publishersweekly.com/pw/by-topic/new-titles/adult-announcements/article/66737-lgbtq-2015-an-lgbtq-publishing-wish-list.html.

5. Patricia Sarles, "Gay-Themed Picture Books for Children," accessed Oct. 21, 2015, http://booksforkidsingayfamilies.blogspot.com.

6. Brian Selznick, *The Marvels* (New York: Scholastic, 2015).

7. Sarah Hunter, "The Marvels," *Booklist*, published July, 2015, www.booklistonline.com/The-Marvels-Brian-Selznick/pid=7578533.

8. "The Marvels," *Kirkus*, June 16, 2015, www.kirkusreviews.com/book-reviews/brian-selznick/the-marvels.

9. Carol A. Edwards, "The Marvels," *School Library Journal*, August 4, 2015, accessed Oct. 15, 2015, www.slj.com/2015/08/reviews/books/the-marvels-by-brian-selznick-slj-review/#.

10. Naidoo, *Rainbow Family Collections*.

11. Alvin M Schrader, "I Thought I'd Find Myself at the Library: LGBTQ Services & Collections in Public and School Libraries," *PNLA Quarterly* 72, no. 1 (Fall 2007); Matt Johnson, "Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Subject Access: History and Current Practice," (MLS thesis, Queens College, 2007), www.lib.washington.edu/msd/norestriction/b58062361.pdf.

12. Christian Burch, *The Manny Files* (New York: Atheneum, 2006).

13. Johnson, "Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Subject Access"; Naidoo, *Rainbow Family Collections*.

14. Ibid.

15. "Same-Sex Parents: A Statistical Snapshot" *Education Week* (Bethesda, MD) 34, no. 29 (October 21, 2015), www.edweek.org/ew/section/multimedia/same-sex-parents-a-statistical-snapshot.html.

16. Kathy Short, Carol Lynch-Brown, and Carl M. Tomlinson, *Essentials of Children's Literature*, 8th ed. (Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon, 2013); Charles A. Temple, Miriam A. Martinez, and Junko Yokota, *Children's Books in Children's Hands: An Introduction to Their Literature* (Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon. 2010).

17. Louise Derman-Sparks and Julie O. Edwards, *Anti-bias Education for Young Children and Ourselves* (Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 2010).

18. M. Lee Manning, "Developing Responsive Multicultural Education for Young Adolescents," *Childhood Education*, 76, no. 2 (1999).

19. Short, *Essentials of Children's Literature*; Temple, *Children's Books in Children's Hand.*

20. Naidoo, *Rainbow Family Collections.*

21. American Library Association's Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Round Table, "What to Do until Utopia Arrives," 2013, www.ala.org/glbtrt/popularresources/utopia.

22. Frances Ann Day, *Lesbian and Gay Voices: An Annotated Bibliography and Guide to Literature for Children and Young Adults* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2000).

23. Gerald. P. Mallon and Teresa DeCrescenzo, "Transgender Children and Youth: A Child Welfare Practice Perspective," *Child Welfare*, 85, no. 2 (2006): 218.

24. Rudolph, Dana. "Where Are the LGBT Biographies for Kids?" *Mombian*, December 29, 2011, www.mombian.com/2011/12/29/where-are-the-lgbt-biographies-for-kids.

25. Pat Griffin and Mathew Ouellett, "From Silence to Safety and Beyond: Historical Trends in Addressing Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Issues in K–12 Schools," *Equity & Excellence in Education* 36, no. 2 (2003): 106–14.

26. Kay Emfinger, "Rethinking Welcoming Literacy Environments for LGBT Families," *Childhood Education* 84, no. 1, (2007): 25.

These Books Are Not Quiet

Bebop, Blues, Swing, and Soul: Jazz in Children's Books

DARWIN L. HENDERSON, BRENDA DALES, AND TERESA YOUNG

Ladies and gentlemen . . .

Colors and words breeze across pages, drifting or gusting in rhythmic phrases.

As you know we have something special down here . . .

And can you hear? If jazz could be seen, this is where it is found.

Different passages . . .

Duke, Charlie, Coltrane, and Ella—they're all here.

Let's get together, and see these books . . .*

*(With apologies to Pee Wee Marquette)

P ages seem to pulse as they fill the senses with rhythm, setting, and pattern. Reflecting attitude and time, young readers and listeners are inducted into the world of . . . *jazz.* Music and musicians are represented in visual and textual styles that mix and balance, amplify, and absorb, like the sounds that jazz makes.

Jazz is a genre of music like no other. It is a combination of cultures, elements, and vibrations that embrace the soul. It is a range of sounds and emotions in styles that can be characterized as ebullient, cool, enthusiastic, doleful, or any of a thousand other sensations, pulsations, and lo-o-o-ng bluesy notes. Similar to the legendary Pee Wee Marquette—who often introduced jazz artists at Birdland with his distinctively piercing soprano-like voice, proclaiming another night of jazz at the club[1]—we herald jazz as a unique art form for the reader's pleasure, and spotlight books that emanate and radiate *jazz.*

Like jazz artists improvising to differentiate and discern, books about jazz for young readers stand out and away from other genres. Perhaps because of the broad yet exceptional and exclusive canvas of sounds and emotions in jazz, certain illustrators and authors for young people have capitalized on the unique relationship between text and image.

Picture books often weld images and sounds (words), yet jazz often creates dissonance. While words and art each contribute a portion to the ideas readers use to interpret or make sense of picture books, the words and art may not always reflect reciprocity. Carol Driggs Wolfenbarger and Lawrence Sipe suggest there is a "dissonance" between text and illustration: "In

Darwin L. Henderson is Professor Emeritus of Education at the University of Cincinnati, where he taught children's literature, multicultural literature, and literacy. He is chair of the Coretta Scott King—Virginia Hamilton Award for Lifetime Achievement jury. **Brenda Dales** teaches children's and young adult literature at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio, and is currently serving on the ALSC Notable Children's Books Committee. **Teresa Young**, EdD, is Associate Professor in the Department of Childhood Education and Literacy at Xavier University in Cincinnati, Ohio. She has many years of experience working with preservice and graduate students in the areas of teacher preparation and early childhood education.

a picture book, words and pictures never tell exactly the same story. It is this dissonance that catches the reader's attention. Readers work to resolve the conflict between what they see and what they read or hear."[2]

Moreover, Sipe suggests a metaphor for text and illustration in picture books, referring to use of the terms "rhythmic syncopation," "harmony," "duet," "disharmony," and "dissonance," and these may be the relationships employed by author and artist.[3] In other words, like music, the instruments of picture books—words and art—may work in tandem for the reader, or these two instruments may be playing different melodies, so to speak, creating opposing ideas for the reader to consider when creating meaning.

We posit that picture books about jazz amalgamate numerous devices, described by Wolfenbarger and Sipe, in ways that convey the soul of jazz through the depictions of sounds of jazz. Readers are provided words and images in ways that transcend print and trip the emotions of sound and sense to create the essence of jazz. The elements of picture-book art, such as line, shape, and color, mingle and fuse to assist the reader to go beyond seeing and reading, but to go to another dimension. The melding of these artistic elements triggers the mind's eye to experience a mental picture of jazz. In other words, picture-book artists create images of what they imagine jazz "looks like" and offer this to readers of all ages.

"Charlie Parker on alto sax— / don't need a word. . . . / Notes fly through the sky / on the wings of a bird." Leo and Diane Dillon, *Jazz on a Saturday Night* (New York: Blue Sky, 2007), n.p. Photo used with permission of Blue Sky/Scholastic.

Of course, artistic techniques vary from book to book. While some portray diverse styles of art, others play upon shadows, various skin tones, and exaggerated stances, to stimulate the reader's interest. Terms that capture the exuberance of jazz can be found in Walter Dean Myers' definition of jazz, "A style of playing dependent on syncopated rhythms, improvisation, and freedom of expression."[4] This serves to chaperon our eyes and ears, our sensibilities to this genre. The literary and visual elements of jazz picture books depict extraordinary movement, boldness, and fluidity that mirror lines like the music itself. Therefore, many children's books about jazz exemplify elements of jazz, including the following:

- Improvisation: "A practice of creating music, either by harmonic, melodic, or rhythmic means at the moment it is being performed. Improvisation is a signature attribute of jazz and is at the heart of many of its compositions."[5]

- Rhythm: "The movement of musical tones with respect to time, that is, how fast they move (tempo) and the patterns of long and short notes as well as of accents."[6]

- Syncopation: "An important stylistic element in jazz music, syncopation occurs when rhythmic accents are placed on weak beats or weak parts of the beat."[7]

We found these three elements illuminated in standout books about jazz representing various genres—history, biography, picture books, and poetry. Literary elements including onomatopoeia, staccato, and riff-like phrases intermingle with illustration to depict what jazz is, establishing a kinship in all aspects of visual and textual format.

While not a picture book, Nat Hentoff's 1965 young adult novel *Jazz Country* may be considered the first book of jazz for non-adult readers. Hot colors and wavy lines radiate from a jazz horn on the front cover. Since then, authors and illustrators have emulated the improvisation of jazz by producing a steadily increasing crescendo of jazz books for young people. The *look* of jazz seems to stand apart from art seen in many other books.

From among the many jazz books available for children, we selected the following books because they bring music to life in their intense and prominent visual styles. These books are recommended because of their playful language, rhythmic flow, and unique combination of language and art that work so beautifully together to help us "see" the sound of jazz.

Books Conveying Historical Perspectives

Jelly Roll Morton claims to have invented jazz, and Jonah Winter explains, "Here's what could've happened/if you were born a way down south/in New Orleans, in the Land of Dreams/a long, long time ago,"[8] in *How Jelly Roll Morton Invented Jazz* (2015), illustrated by Keith Mallett. Streams of musical notes fly from the time Jelly Roll Morton was a baby. They circle, they gust, and strands of jazz surround the streets. The music flourishes against skies of light blue and cobalt, silhouettes and shadowy images of people, and backgrounds washed in golds and oranges. There are no hard lines in the illustrations, as if the vibrations of jazz affect even the buildings. An author note, "How Jell Roll Morton (Might Have) Invented Jazz," appears in the final spread, with the information also surrounded by a curving stream of notes.

In *Jazz on a Saturday Night* (2007), Leo and Diane Dillon explain the history of jazz as an art form, stating jazz "reached its height of popularity in the 1940s and 1950s, but it is still very much alive and respected around the world."[9]
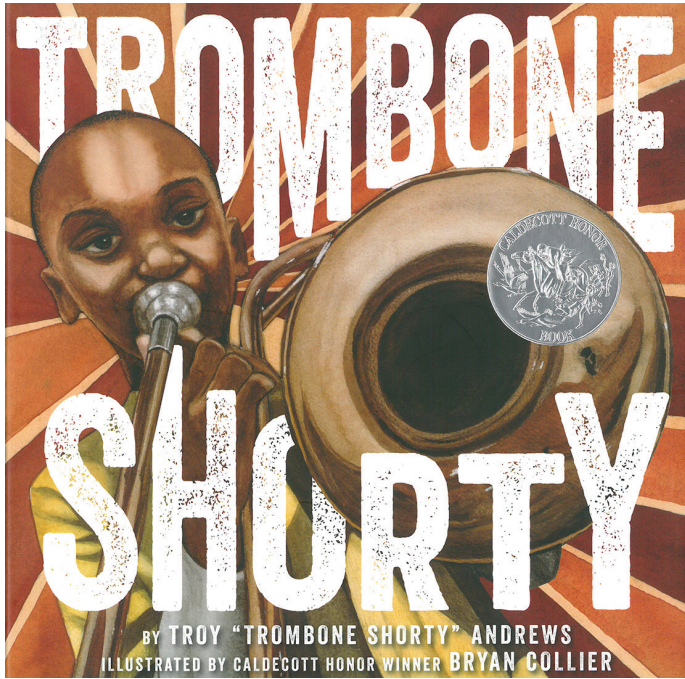
Images of Jazz Receive Recent Recognition!
Troy Andrews explains how he merged a vibrant concoction of jazz sounds from his native New Orleans to become the musical phenomenon "Trombone Shorty." The book by the same name, *Trombone Shorty* (Abrams 2015), co-authored by Andrews and Bill Taylor, and with illustrations by Bryan Collier including wafts, spirals, and blasts of sound received the Coretta Scott King (Illustrator) Book Award, and was distinguished as a 2016 Randolph Caldecott Honor Book.

In *The Sound That Jazz Makes* (2000), Carole Boston Weatherford introduces us to the genesis of jazz, and creates a lens for viewing the history of African Americans who invented this distinct and uniquely American style of music. Using repetition, or a repeated sequence, just as musicians use repetition and variance to effect balance, Weatherford begins each textual four-line stanza, or verse, with "This is . . . ." For example, "This is Africa where rhythm abounds/and music springs from nature sounds/played on a drum carved from a tree/that grows in a forest of ebony."[10] From Africa, she takes us to the slave ships, to auction blocks and fields, escape routes, to the Delta and to churches, steamboats, the legendary venue Birdland, to the street where hip hop beats, and then adds the variance, "JAZZ is the downbeat born in our nation/chords of struggle and jubilation/bursting forth from hearts set free/in notes that echo history."[11] And finally, "This is/the sound/that jazz/makes!"[12] Illustrator Eric Velasquez creates a harmony with images that illuminate and elaborate with instruments, singing, and bodies and faces held high, all in the portrayal of *The Sound That Jazz Makes*.

The words of H. L. Panahi, and paintings of Steve Johnson and Lou Fancher in *Bebop Express* (2005) take us to another historical era. "Chug-a chug-a chug-a chug-a Choo! Choo!"[13] The Bebop Express is leaving the station, so ride along for a trip to cities in the United States that are major jazz venues, with entertainment at every stop. Departing from New York City, the Sax Man plays a lively horn on the platform.

Next stop, Philly, where Drum Man animates a beat, using garbage cans and building walls for instruments. We hear bass from a Happenin' Cat in Chicago, and Song Lady boards the train in St. Louis to entertain us with scat, as vocals are her instrument. We head to our final destination in New Orleans where all four of these jazz musicians play in the street, and Song Lady begins her improvisation with "Blee bah, blee bah. / Doot doot ba!"[14] The collage illustrations by Johnson and Fancher provide the energetic appearance of having been pasted together rapidly, as textured colors, discordant lines, and altered segments mirror the vocal patterns of bebop and scat in Panahi's smooth yet vigorous text.

Jazz ABZ: An A to Z Collection of Jazz Portraits (2007) by Wynton Marsalis, immediately takes the reader to the time of LP (Long Play) record albums. This almost square, slightly oversized folio—similar in the image of a 33⅓ rpm record and complete with facsimile paper sleeve—invites the reader to give this offering a spin. Each "cut" on this "album" is an experimental poem, written by someone who knows jazz and that captures the essence of extraordinary and widely known jazz musicians. Each poem reflects the style of the musician featured, breaking rules but strong in format. The lines of text might be wavy or may be composed of seemingly random words or letter combinations. There are short staccato poems, smooth and melodic poems, as well as soulful poems. Alliteration, syncopation, and rhythm develop the verbal portraits, and Paul Rogers' accompanying visual portraits seemingly like playbills or album covers themselves, present funky, jazzy, and evocative biographical and musical sketches. Just as albums often included liner notes, there are additional biographical notes appended, and even a discography. This "album" calls to the reader and invites response.

Poetry Books

Several jazz books, which illuminate musical qualities, build on the natural, melodic nature of poetry. Certainly poetry lends itself to the pattern of movement and may involve a variety of rhythms, both expected and unexpected. For the reader, these qualities, once thought unique to music or poetry separately, are seen in both art forms. Poetry is the improvisation of the language, and these books exemplify this discovery.

Jazz (2006) by Walter Dean Myers and illustrated by Christopher Myers, prepares the venue. With poems that create the beat, the Myerses display the roots, from African and European beginnings, to black men blowing blues, ragtime, bebop, gospel from church to cemetery—achieving the uniquely American style that gained worldwide respect. Instruments include drums, bass, sax, trumpet, and piano played by women and men, with women singing sultry vocals. Here jazz is portrayed through body language, with posture that reflects emotion and physical response elicited by the music. A glossary of jazz terms and a jazz timeline complete the jazzy poems that outline the evolution.

We revisit *Jazz on a Saturday Night* (2007) by Leo and Diane Dillon to continue the poetry scene. The book includes the

well-established giants of jazz such as Miles Davis, Max Roach, Charlie Parker, John Coltrane, Thelonious Monk, Stanley Clarke, and Ella Fitzgerald as they arrive for a Saturday night set. As the music flows from page to page, so do the colors as they intermingle with sparse text simulating the sounds of bass, drums, and saxophone. When Miles Davis takes the stage, the music bursts from his horn into waves of patterns influenced by the African musical motifs. This movement of music flows through the remainder of the book. Brief biographies and a short list of jazz recordings strike the ending chords.

"Song Lady's voice is as smooth as fine silk—" H. L. Panahi, *Bebop Express* (New York: HarperCollins, 2005), n.p. Used with permission of HarperCollins Publishers.

Sweethearts of Rhythm: The Story of the Greatest All-Girl Swing Band in the World (2009) by Marilyn Nelson and illustrated by Jerry Pinkney is a brassy book of poetry, with flashy colors of golden yellow and orange, interspersed with the somber browns and olive drabs of World War II. It celebrates the rhythm of strong women united in sound and beat. It's an intersection of trombones and tubas, other band instruments and bugles, saxophones and strings played by an all-female band. These poems celebrate the determination, hardship, and joy of the International Sweethearts of Rhythm. The standout combination of jazz, swing, and bebop is as much about the era as it is the music. On each page, the reader finds small bits of musical measures in hot colors of jazz, like papier-mâché, unbound by the rest of the score. The collages are symbolic of the times, as the music straddles the beginnings of the civil rights era and the continued struggles of women's rights, and it beckons the end of war with loud vibrations. Read it in double time, and then read it again.

i live in music (1994) is a poem by Ntozake Shange, with paintings by Romare Bearden. Painting and poetry infuse in an unusual blend to stimulate and alert the senses. Wrap the sight of music around yourself as you enter the inventive shapes and colors that reflect the pattern of musical movement. Here you imagine playing jazz yourself, as you groove with syllables and colors. Shange offers a spare, lyrical text, which illuminates the magic of its sensory appeal and pleasures. Paired with the poem are twenty-one extraordinary paintings by Bearden. Bearden often spoke of his work as containing elements of the blues, and that aspect is quite evident when combined with Shange's syncopated, melodic poem.

In *Bird & Diz* (2015), author Gary Golio and illustrator Ed Young present a jazz set featuring Charlie "Bird" Parker and John "Dizzy" Gillespie. Ed Young uses bright pastels on a night-black background to create a neon-esque image on the cover to invite the reader in. Bursts of color throughout mimic the jazzy notes that interplay seamlessly between the two musicians, reinforced in a continuous horizontal panel that is printed and folded accordion style. Poetic descriptions enhance the visual display, with Diz tagging Bird when it's time to turn the one long page front-to-back. An afterword not only provides additional brief information about Bird and Dizzy, but also recommends two recordings and directs the reader to "pick up your crayons and draw!"[15]

Biographies

Biographies tell the stories of life's triumphs, sorrows, and inspirations, through an engaging canvas. The jazz greats portrayed—Ella Fitzgerald, Duke Ellington, John Birks "Dizzy" Gillespie, John Coltrane, Benny Goodman, Teddy Wilson, and Sun Ra (Herman Blount) are depicted in these picture-book biographies that carefully weave the words and illustrations together to feel the music of "jazz" with its boldness, fluidity, and extraordinary movement. The presentation of the music and the lives of the performers that created this music are shared in these outstanding biographies.

Skit-Scat Raggedy Cat: Ella Fitzgerald (2010) was written by Roxane Orgill, with illustrations by Sean Qualls. On the first page, readers feel the rhythm of jazz as "Ella cranked the handle on the phonograph, and the three Boswell Sisters crooned"[16] and the movement of color and line begins the story with a ribbon of sound. Readers feel the cadence of the music and are whisked across the page, watching Ella head to Harlem. Qualls' use of red and blue hues is captivating and shows excitement, drawing attention to the movement of the music through fine pencil lines. Ella is depicted as the "rough-tough raggedy cat,"[17] just trying to dance and sing. She steps to the mic, and the sound of jazz seems to emanate from the book. Spread across the pages are rhythmic tones, upbeat spirits of excitement, and downward feelings of despair, until the ribbon of sound appears from her own musical recordings.

Dizzy (2006), by Jonah Winter and illustrator Sean Qualls, again uses the ribbon of color, but this time with line and texture to represent the revolutionary, sometimes complicated, and

melodic music of John Birks "Dizzy" Gillespie. *Dizzy* tells the story about a "real cool cat"[18] with a trumpet in his hand. And so the story goes, through its rhythmic style and free verse, the reader learns how an angry boy found solace in his trumpet. Various shades of red with black etched borders show how Dizzy blew his anger right out through his horn. The audience, in an unexpected way, through text and illustration, feels the changes taking place in Dizzy's life. "Playing notes on a page/ what he'd learn to do/but what he wanted to play /was a thing called 'jazz.'"[19] Winter tells us jazz was like "breaking the rules, and getting in trouble"[20]—all things Dizzy knew about. So when he played his trumpet, it was fun, intoxicating, making us feel almost giddy and lightheaded. He taught others how to play "dizzy" creating a new crazy kind of jazz called bebop. And perhaps in experiencing *Dizzy*, the opportunity to feel the true depiction of jazz—spontaneity, boldness, and unexpected adventure—is revealed.

Before John Was a Jazz Giant: A Song of John Coltrane (2008), written by Carole Boston Weatherford and illustrated by Sean Qualls, is a melancholy and poignant text complemented with moody, textured illustrations in which we learn about the life of Coltrane. In a jazzy, poetic tone, the words spill throughout the text in a rhythmic cadence, even depicted by their placement on the page. The illustrations encapsulate the words, dancing around them, framing the sycophantic sound. This simplistic text is a splendid read for a younger audience as they learn that before he played a single tune or pressed his fingers on the keys, Coltrane listened with his ears.

Throughout all three of these books, Qualls depicts jazz through warm shades of blue, pink, and grey, yet with boldness and movement illuminated on the pages. The fluidity depicted in line and texture sounds the horn and as if one book flows into the other, each portraying a significant contribution to jazz history. Qualls' books paint a rhythmic picture full of cadence and unexpected nuances known as jazz.

Mysterious Thelonious (1997), written and illustrated by Chris Raschka, was based on the composition "Misterioso" by Thelonious Monk. Imagine playing jazz yourself, as you groove with syllables and colors to improvise the meaning of the book. Syllables appear on musical staff-like pages that invite one to literally read the music. A text for older readers, however, this book should be enjoyed as a read aloud and/or accompanied by music, emphasizing its movement and fluidity. Its use with other compositions promises to expand the listener's understanding of jazz.

Continuing the discussion of jazz biographies is Andrea Davis Pinkney's *Duke Ellington: The Piano Prince and His Orchestra* (2006) with illustrations by Brian Pinkney. Thumbing through the pages of this strikingly illustrated picture-book biography, we feel the essence of improvisation as Duke's fingers played "umpy-dump"[21] creating brand new melodies; melodies that set

his "fingers to wiggling."[22] The ebb and flow of the text swirling around Duke's head create a rhythmic pattern of musical movement, the rhythm of jazz.

As Duke's band the Washingtonians played at the Cotton Club, one can almost hear the offbeat tunes and "musical stream swell over the airwaves."[23] Swaths of color and line in the illustrations are fluid, like jazz music itself. And the scratchboard illustrations reinforce and represent the scintillating essence of the music. "Duke told his band to play whatever came to mind—to improvise their solos. To make the music fly! And they did."[24] And so the band plays on that musical beat with a sassy twist. The dancers in the story come to life, swinging and dancing to the "Hot-buttered bop."[25]

The Cosmobiography of Sun Ra (2014), written and illustrated by Chris Raschka, and *Benny Goodman & Teddy Wilson: Taking the Stage as the First Black-and-White Jazz Band in History* (2014) by Lesa Cline-Ransome and illustrated by James E. Ransome continue the conversation of biographies.

Multiple Caldecott Award–winner Raschka presents a biography of avant-garde jazz musician Sun Ra, who faced the harshness of segregation, but believed that music had a universal appeal and went about sharing his talents with racially integrated audiences. Similarly, in *Benny Goodman & Teddy Wilson*, Goodman and Wilson's relationship was iconic at the time, breaking the rules. But "the audiences were ready, and they stayed, and they grew, and they cheered . . . for a black-and-white band."[26] And they danced, as the musicians confidently played clarinet, vibraphone, piano, and bass drum depicted so stylistically in the illustrations.

Raschka brings a new dimension to the art form and captures the fluidity and excitement of jazz music. Bold hues, dramatic lines, staccato repetition, and the use of musical staff as backdrop to the illustrations all invite the reader to ponder the life of Sun Ra. "Sun Ra always said that he came from Saturn"[27] and Raschka symbolizes his journey to Earth with a hovering presence of the cosmos throughout this picture-book biography.

These biographies provide the audience with a chance to feel, hear, and touch the essence of jazz. Improvisation, rhythm, and syncopation are boldly stated throughout these books. The authors' and illustrators' artistic crafts create duets between the illustrations and the texts that radiate the sounds and rhythmic spirits of jazz musicians. Read them and experience the artwork, which can be elusive, playful, and bursting with energy all at the same time.

Jazz books should be read numerous times, with each encounter one should explore their cadence, their musical patterns, and rhythmic beat. These books are not quiet, but when shared with readers they evoke a sense of movement, excitement, as if hearing the jazz music through the pages. ↶

References

1. Tim Tamashiro, "Pee Wee Marquette, Jazz's Mean Little MC," *Jazz for Dabblers* (blog), September 21, 2012, http://music.cbc.ca/#!/blogs/2012/9/Jazz-for-Dabblers-Pee-Wee-Marquette-jazzs-mean-little-MC.
2. Carol Driggs Wolfenbarger and Lawrence R. Sipe, "A Unique Visual and Literary Art Form: Recent Research on Picturebooks," *Language Arts* 83, no. 3 (2007): 274.
3. Lawrence R. Sipe, "Revisiting the Relationships Between Text and Pictures," *Children's Literature in Education* 43, no. 1 (2012): 4–21.
4. Walter Dean Myers, "Glossary of Jazz Terms," in *Jazz* (New York: Holiday House, 2006), n.p.
5. John S. Davis, *Historical Dictionary of Jazz* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow, 2012), 175.
6. Christine Ammer, *The Facts on File Dictionary of Music*, 4th ed. (New York: Facts On File), 348.
7. Davis, *Historical Dictionary of Jazz*, 341.
8. Jonah Winter, *How Jelly Roll Morton Invented Jazz* (New York: Roaring Brook, 2015),
9. Leo and Diane Dillon, *Jazz on a Saturday Night* (New York: Blue Sky, 2007), n.p.
10. Carole Boston Weatherford, *The Sound That Jazz Makes* (New York: Walker, 2000).
11. Ibid.
12. Ibid.
13. H. L. Panahi, *Bebop Express* (New York: HarperCollins, 2005).
14. Ibid.
15. Gary Golio, *Bird & Diz* (Somerville, MA: Candlewick, 2015).
16. Roxane Orgill, *Skit-Scat Raggedy Cat: Ella Fitzgerald* (Somerville, MA: Candlewick, 2010).
17. Ibid.
18. Jonah Winter, *Dizzy* (New York: Arthur A. Levine Books, 2006).
19. Ibid.
20. Ibid.
21. Andrea Davis Pinkney, *Duke Ellington: The Piano Prince and His Orchestra* (New York: Hyperion, 2006).
22. Ibid.
23. Ibid.
24. Ibid.
25. Ibid.
26. Lesa Cline-Ransome, *Benny Goodman & Teddy Wilson: Taking the Stage as the First Black-and-White Jazz Band in History* (New York: Holiday House, 2014), n.p.
27. Chris Raschka, *The Cosmobiography of Sun Ra: The Sound of Joy is Enlightening* (Somerville, MA: Candlewick, 2014), n.p.

Teaming Up for Success

The ALSC Mentoring Program

MARYBETH KOZIKOWSKI WITH RACHEL SHARPE

L ibrarians are the most generous people I've ever worked with. Perhaps I noticed it because this is my second career; I was forty-three when I landed my first part-time librarian position. Painfully aware of all I had yet to learn, I was grateful for the guidance and encouragement I received from more experienced librarians. Fast forward to 2014: when I heard about ALSC's Mentoring Program, I saw my chance to "pay it forward" and learn a few things for myself, too.

Rachel Sharpe had her MLS for two years and was working part-time as a paraprofessional in the Henrico County Public Library System in Virginia when she applied to be a mentee. She said, "I was looking for a way to become more involved with library organizations, and I figured that joining the Mentoring Program would be a simple way to become a more active ALSC member as well as a chance for me to learn from a more experienced librarian."

Go for the Goals

We chose email as our main method of communication and our first task was to develop Rachel's goals for our partnership. They're the foundation of the ALSC mentoring relationship, keeping teams focused and working toward a specific outcome. We talked a lot about Rachel's goal to learn about and prepare for becoming more involved with professional organizations.

I have been actively involved in my own county library association—Children's Librarians Association of Suffolk County—and know that learning from librarians more experienced than I through meetings and volunteering helped build my self-confidence. Rachel has since joined her state library association and

signed up for her state's New Members Round Table and Youth Services Committee.

Another of Rachel's goals was to identify and develop skills that will assist her in landing a professional librarian job. My advice was to ask, "What do *you* like? "What are *you* good at that perhaps not a lot of librarians are? Follow your strength."

Rachel, a self-described techie, answered, "I'm in charge of our iPad and creating and maintaining our app collection. . . . I created a brochure/starter kit about using tablets with kids, started a new video series for kids, and made an orientation video for my library's Digital Media Lab."

Rachel's special skills paid off. In October 2015 she was hired as a full-time librarian at the brand new Libbie Mill Library opening in her county, working with teens and the Digital Media Lab.

Marybeth Kozikowski is a children's librarian at Sachem Public Library in Holbrook, New York. She is a member of the Quicklists Consulting Committee and a mentor in the ALSC Mentoring Program. *Rachel Sharpe* is a Teen Librarian in the Henrico County (VA) Public Library System. She participated in the fall 2014 ALSC Mentoring Program as a mentee.

Exchanging Ideas

Rachel asked about early literacy tips to include in storytimes. We talked about our summer reading clubs and what constitutes good patron service. We both thought Kwame Alexander's *The Crossover* was a fine choice for the 2015 Newbery Medal.

Although it wasn't one of our initial goals, Rachel added an exciting accomplishment to her résumé, "With Marybeth's encouragement, I presented a session at my state library conference for the first time. While I was nervous, I've learned a lot about presentation skills, especially thanks to all of the resources she's passed along."

Why Become a Mentor/Mentee

I'm learning how public library systems across the country are structured and managed and how they meet similar challengesPresenters show off some of the 2016 Youth Media Award winners at the ALA Midwinter Meeting in Boston. (L to R): Candice Mack, YALSA President; Andrew Medlar, ALSC

President; Sari Feldman, ALA President; Dr. Pauletta Brown Bracy, chair, Coretta Scott King Book Awards Committee; and Beatriz Guevara, REFORMA Presidentin different ways. I love new librarians' enthusiasm and the innovative ideas they bring to the profession. I can't wait to try Rachel's program in which kids use LEGOs and tablets to make stop animation films.

Rachel added, "I'd definitely encourage anyone interested in becoming a mentee to sign up. It's a wonderful opportunity to meet someone outside of your library and bring a different perspective."

The simple act of thinking about one's goals is the first step toward reaching them and they're even more attainable with help from an experienced friend. That's what the ALSC Mentoring Program is all about: both partners sharing ideas and learning from each other in the generous spirit of our profession.

If you're interested in being a mentor or mentee, visit www.ala .org/alsc/mentoring. &

Presenters show off some of the 2016 Youth Media Award winners at the ALA Midwinter Meeting in Boston. (L to R): Candice Mack, YALSA President; Andrew Medlar, ALSC President; Sari Feldman, ALA President; Dr. Pauletta Brown Bracy, chair, Coretta Scott King Book Awards Committee; and Beatriz Guevara, REFORMA President

What Exactly Is a Media Mentor?

RACHEL KEELER

After reading "Media Mentorship in Libraries Serving Youth," a white paper adopted by the Association for Library Service to Children board of directors, I had a lot to think about. The authors effectively outline why media mentorship is an ideal role for librarians, and I immediately started brainstorming, "What can I do today to be a media mentor to my community?"

I could start by having conversations with caregivers. At my library, we have an AWE Early Literacy Station computer, and I could encourage caregivers of younger children to try that, instead of our public computers. I could explain how it works and why it might be better suited for their child. This conversation would be a great transition into talking about digital media and joint engagement.

While I rarely see caregivers using the computer with their child, I have never made the suggestion that they do. However, I regularly remind caregivers that their children get more out storytimes when they participate.

Having these conversations with caregivers to help them make decisions regarding digital engagement will hopefully lead them to see me as a resource in this evolving library service.

Hoping to reach caregivers, I often place fliers for upcoming library programs in picturebooks. What if I worked with the other children's librarians in my system to create a handout with information about digital media? It's most important to convey that all media use should be interactive, with caregivers participating alongside their children.

While my branch library does not have tablets or a computer lab, I believe there is still much I can do to be a media mentor. To that end, I need to meet caregivers where they are—learning what kinds of digital media they are using with their kids. For example, if I offered a program focusing on how to best use phone apps with preschoolers, would caregivers be able to come with their own phones? I could easily help them connect to library WiFi and assist them in locating recommended apps. I could then demonstrate how to use these apps interactively with children, to encourage digital literacy and traditional literacy skills.

In the future, I plan to seek out ways to engage children, particularly those who might not have access to digital tools elsewhere, in enriching media experiences. Perhaps I could advocate for devices, or collaborate with another organization in my city. For now, I will begin by having conversations, sharing tips with caregivers, and educating myself further. &

Rachel Keeler *is a Children's Librarian at the Parker Hill Branch of the Boston Public Library.*

Envisioning a Twenty-First Century Children's Library

ANDREW MEDLAR

Most children born today will still be alive when the twenty-second century dawns—along with about eleven billion other people[1]—and it's vital that the twenty-first century is dedicated to making sure that they're ready. Libraries play a critical role in that preparation and that nurturing already happens every day in children's libraries around the globe. Indeed, it is the core purpose of the Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC) to "create a better future for children through libraries" and that very future is what the thousands of members of ALSC, and every single person serving children in libraries worldwide, are moving toward together.[2]

In said spirit of moving ahead together, this paper and presentation were crowdsourced with ALSC membership via blogs, online polls, Facebook, and Twitter, and I'm grateful for the feedback my colleagues shared. I'm also grateful to the Filipino community in Chicago for their insight and amazing *adobo* that helped me to prepare for the experience of sharing this vision with you here in the Philippines.

As a professional membership organization, ALSC is working for a vision of the future in which libraries are recognized as vital to all children and the communities that support them. We also call this our Big Hairy Audacious Goal, and it was developed by the ALSC board of directors, who are professionals of all types, as part of our 2012–2017 Strategic Plan. Why is it audacious, or *matapang*? Funding and political issues are always a concern and are always unpredictable, so meeting this goal in the context of an ever-changing world takes lots of bravery, to be sure. But we are guided and reinforced in doing so by our core values of collaboration, excellence, inclusiveness, innovation, integrity and respect, leadership, and responsiveness, and we know that, with these, we will get to that future successfully.

But what, then, does that envisioned future look like? ALSC's Strategic Plan has a very specific Vivid Description of the Desired Future, which is:

> Through free, public, and equal access to library services, children develop a love of reading, and become responsible citizens contributing to a global society. As a result of positive library experiences, children remain library users throughout their lives and pass this engagement on to future generations. Libraries continue to be dynamic, responsive, and inclusive physical and virtual environments that are fully equipped to serve all children and the communities that support them. Libraries are viewed as central and integral partners in maintaining vibrant communities. ALSC is viewed by its members as essential for their success and the growth of their profession. The association is recognized as the definitive source for new and relevant information and resources by

Andrew Medlar is President of the Association for Library Service to Children. He presented this speech at the National Library of the Philippines International Conference of Children's Librarianship in Tagaytay City on October 13, 2014.

library workers serving children. The association is politically effective through the active participation of its members, and is acknowledged as a leader in effectively directing the future of library services to children and the communities that support them.[3]

That's a lot to do! So how are we going to get there, and what will we need to have on our journey? I believe that the future is building on our past, rather than neglecting it, and conscientiously evolving it, rather than inflicting drastic immediate change. As John Green said in his 2014 Zena Sutherland Lecture, "We didn't actually get [to where we are now] through radical change. We got there through incremental change . . . all working together."[4] And as part of that change there are questions and answers for all of us dedicated to young people and to the role libraries play in their lives to ask and discuss. What do the next eighty or so years have in store? It's sure to be an adventurous blend of tradition and innovation.

Libraries: What Are They and What Will They Be?

R. David Lankes, professor and Dean's Scholar for the New Librarianship at Syracuse University's School of Information Studies in New York, says in his book, *Expect More: Demanding Better Libraries for Today's Complex World*, that libraries are collective purchasing agents for content that the community values.[5] I agree that this is a wise, responsible, and traditional, yet also forward thinking, perspective. Traditionally, this has meant objects like books and DVDs; today, this includes licenses to digital content and Wi-Fi hotspots. Looking forward, this could come to mean all of this plus whatever human beings come up with to create in the decades to come.

Because communities are exceedingly unlikely to cease valuing content, I am certain that libraries will not become extinct, and very least of all children's libraries. There have been examples bandied about to compare technologies that exist, despite and/or perhaps even *because of* advances in accomplishing the same work. These include the fact that we still have stairs even though we also have elevators, and there are still billions of candles in the world even though lightbulbs have been around for more than one hundred years. Thus computers will not replace librarians, apps will not replace storytimes, and e-books will not replace print books, at least until long after 2100 has come and gone.

How can I be so sure about that last one? Well, monographs made from paper have endured for millennia because they have proven to be resilient and convenient and, again, children's print books, will last the longest. Why? For the grown-ups who buy them a big element is simple nostalgia. The sentimentalizing of childhood will continue forever as adults remember good times and yearn for the simpler times, smells, and feels of their childhood. And while nostalgia can be hazardous to innovation, more importantly it is the tactile experience that children have with these objects.

A trend right now in the United States is Little Free Libraries. The concept of these is to create a small box or display case, fill it with books, and put it in a public place where people can take or leave a book. While these certainly aren't *libraries*, in that they aren't curated collections of materials that the community specifically values, and they aren't necessarily going to be returned for the next person, I'm very encouraged by the concept. Clearly, there is a desire to create something thematic, share content, and have it gathered together in a space. That hasn't—and I argue, won't—change.

Bill Ptacek, a past director of the King County Library System outside of Seattle, encapsulates the vision that before this first quarter of the twenty-first century is up "the library will be more about what it does for people rather than what it has for people. [And that] as society evolves and more content becomes digital . . . library buildings and spaces will be used in different ways . . . the library as a catalyst for civic engagement will facilitate learning and growth for people of all ages."[6]

Children: What's to Become of Them?

Every year, Beloit College in Wisconsin publishes a list of "the cultural touchstones" and experiences that have shaped the worldview of [incoming freshmen] to put the mostly eighteen-year-olds in perspective for their professors, who are mostly much more than eighteen.[7] They call it the Mindset List, and in 2014 it included notes on things like, "When they see wire-rimmed glasses, they think Harry Potter, not John Lennon" and "Bosnia and Herzegovina have always been one nation."[8] Well, let's think about the future of kids and what their worldview and experiences will be and how libraries can take that into perspective:

- Kids in the future will always still go through developmental stages.

- They will always have the challenge of learning to decode shapes and turn them into words.

- Kids in the future will never not have the Internet.

- They will never not have *Diary of a Wimpy Kid*.

These are things that we can count on having to work with.

Bringing Together the Institution and the Audience

I believe that much of what the focused institutions of children's libraries will become will have to do with ALSC's and the Public Library Association's (PLA) Every Child Ready to Read @ your library, which encourages children and adults to talk, sing, read, write, and play. (It also encourages families to *conversar*, *cantar*, *leer*, *escribir*, *jugar* with *Todos los niños listos para leer en tu biblioteca*.) While this important initiative has been developed to

be geared specifically toward early literacy issues, I find in it keys needed across the scope of work with children in their applicability to what twenty-first-century communities value and thus what twenty-first-century libraries must provide: programming, content, and space.

Programming

Play, especially constructive play, is particularly important for the future of programming. The esteemed Mr. Rogers said that play is the work of childhood[9] and just as libraries help adults with workforce development, this is the way we help children with their work. Sue McCleaf Nespeca explains this in the ALSC white paper, "The Importance of Play, Particularly Constructive Play, in Public Library Programming," by saying that "while playing, children learn about their world, acquire skills necessary for critical thinking, discover how to solve problems, and develop self-confidence. Play encourages healthy brain development while fostering exploration skills, language skills, social skills, physical skills, and creativity."[10]

Jenna Nemec-Loise, ALSC's Everyday Advocacy website member content editor (who signs her e-mails as "relationship builder") has this to say, "I think a twenty-first-century children's library must embrace a multigenerational approach to programming. Family engagement is critical to children's success both in school and in life, so let's foster that dynamic through ample opportunities for family members of all ages to read, discover, and create together at the library."[11]

At my hometown library, Chicago Public Library (CPL), our Summer Reading Program has been a hallmark of our programming service to children, as it has been for many others, for decades. It was a very traditional program where school-aged kids would write down what they read over the summer, earn book and toy prizes for the reading, and attend thematically related programming at the library.

In 2013, we started from scratch and reimagined a science, technology, engineering, art, and mathematics extravaganza where entire families would come together to thoughtfully read, learn, discover, and create for the cause of having fun and preventing an academic slide backward over the summer months. It still had the traditional elements of being a program during the summer that involved reading, yet it also had the innovative objective of challenging families with members of all ages to spend their summertime learning and writing their reflections of their experiences and earning digital badges. And this Summer Learning Challenge involved tens of thousands of kids who read more than two million books during their summer vacation.

As amazing as CPL's children's librarians are, they couldn't do it alone. This massive futuristic effort was the result of productive relationships with Chicago Public Schools and Park Districts and the Museum of Science and Industry, groups who had access to the children and scientific subject matter expertise, respectively. As this proves, partnerships are key.

An example of partnership, playing, *and* programming is the connection between libraries and major league sports teams. The Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners and the Massachusetts Library System have partnered with the Boston Bruins of the National Hockey League to encourage reading and learning. And the Enoch Pratt (Baltimore) Free Library teams up with their hometown baseball team, the Baltimore Orioles, during the summer baseball season. These are two robust examples of traditional organizations coming together to engage kids and their families around a love of sports and of reading.

Content

As I mentioned earlier, kids' print books will still be on the shelf when the last light is turned off in the last library at the end of time. Yet, as with many areas in life, this is a gray area rather than a black or white one, and by this I mean they will be used *with* electronic books, rather than *instead of*. The adaptability of children is key to the progress of generations over time and their ability to move back and forth between formats is, as far as they're concerned, no big deal.

Audiovisual material will go completely digital first. Already many libraries, such as the District of Columbia Public Library, have stopped buying physical music CDs. The challenge here will be to adapt to this, since such materials are very important to children's development and enjoyment. Digital music and video are an unavoidable aspect of what communities tell us they value, but we can't forget the devices needed to access the content before one can sing along to it.

An important and developing area is the circulation of apps. As these have become significant forms of interacting with content they can't be ignored as a key bit of creating children's futures, and, frankly, their presents. ALSC's Children and Technology committee has done amazing work in this area and plans to continue this focus moving forward. The Skokie Public Library outside of Chicago, for example, addresses this by mounting tablets to tables and walls and loading them with curated collections of apps that kids can interact with right there in their library. More and more libraries are even allowing users to check out the devices themselves.

Circulation of nontraditional materials is a hot topic at many libraries these days, and it is also a perfect example of the blending of old and new. In this case, "nontraditional" meaning pretty much anything that isn't a book, CD, or DVD.

At CPL, we have circulated fishing poles for many years, which began as part of a nature-based program, and which were located in branches that were adjacent to rivers and the lake. And that concept has evolved, thanks to a donation from Google, to providing check-out access to Finch Robots, which

are computer science educational tools (or, shall we say "toys") to support the learning of programming languages.

Basically, at the end of the day, content trumps format. What's on the inside counts more than the package, and that as long as the content is something that the community values, why not make it available?

But don't forget that whatever content we share in whatever formats must represent the full population, and as we move into the future must bring everyone along together. The need for the work of We Need Diverse Books is proof that we still have a long way to go to ensure that the commercial entities producing content understand and help libraries meet this need.

Space

This is an area of especially exciting development. In the cover story of the August 2013 *School Library Journal* titled "Design to Learn By," author Sarah Bayliss talks about a significant move toward the future that she considers a reference to children's museums. She quotes designer and Architecture is Fun President Sharon Exley as saying that "the best way to engage early learners . . . is through 'literacy-rich and play-based pavilions that allow children to explore.'"[12]

Nemec-Loise describes this as "family play areas that invite kids, parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, siblings, and cousins to have active, creative, and messy fun together!"[13] Here are some examples, which run the gamut from the most basic and least expensive to the commitment of an entire additional building:

It can be as simple as using recycled cardboard boxes as blocks and having them available for kids to interact with. We know that this can have a tremendous impact, as described in McCleaf Nespeca's paper for ALSC mentioned earlier and as presented in Read! Build! Play!, an ALSC toolkit that brings reading-focused activities and resources to libraries nationwide. Designed for children five and younger, this LEGO DUPLO Read! Build! Play! project blends early reading with construction play, encouraging youngsters to build along as their parents and/or librarians read age-appropriate books. ALSC and LEGO DUPLO are dedicated to promoting the importance of play in early learning, and of course any other children's toys (or, let's call them "tools") can be added, from the most traditional, like play kitchens, to more technologically advanced, such as app-filled tablets in Skokie and many other places.

The San Francisco Public Library has done fantastic work renovating their Fisher Children's Center inside its Central Library to work these elements into their space with such elements as windows encouraging "Play to Learn"; a manipulative board referencing Lombard Street, the San Francisco street considered the curviest in the world; and the storytime room ("*Sala de Cuentos*") beckoning everyone who enters to "IMAGINE." This has been done with the leadership of children's librarian Christy

But don't forget that whatever content we share in whatever formats must represent the full population, and as we move into the future must bring everyone along together.

Estrovitz and City Librarian Luis Herrera, who won ALA's Sullivan Award for Public Library Administrators Supporting Services to Children due in large part to this important work.

CPL, which has built or rebuilt dozens of new buildings in the last couple of decades, recently opened a new building in the Albany Park neighborhood with a children's space entirely designed around the concepts in the most recent edition of Every Child Ready to Read. There are areas to the following:

- Talk: An acoustical speaking tube connects two sides of the space so that kids can talk and listen to each other

- Sing: The music CDs available to the community number in the thousands, as does access to hoopla, a streaming and downloadable music service

- Read: There are thousands of books that, in the finest example of melding tradition and innovation, combine a significant brand new opening day collection with the best and most loved titles from the previous well-used building which had stood on the same site for forty years.

- Write: White board paint on the walls allows—and, indeed, encourages—writing, from the earliest stages of scribbling to elaborate calligraphy

- Play: Blocks? Yes. Manipulatives? Yes. Puppets? You bet. Much more? Absolutely!

And talk about space! The Ames Free Library, about forty-two kilometers south of Boston, has even purchased an entire house right next door to their library that is used for myriad purposes, including hosting an author-in-residence, most recently children's author Kate Klise. In this way, the Ames Free Library is helping ensure a future filled with even more wonderful books and stories.

The Journey: How Will We Get There?

Creating a better twenty-first- (and twenty-second-) century future for children through libraries is going to take the right vehicles for the job. Vehicles such as the following:

- **Technology.** Technology is perhaps the most obvious area of change in libraries (and in society) in recent times, as well as the most written about. If Beloit College were study-

ing me, they could say that I very well remember our vinyl record discs in my children's room at the Trotwood Branch of the Dayton Metro Library in Ohio, filing card catalog files in my first job at the central branch of that same library system, sending my first e-mail in college, helping patrons use the Internet for the first time at a branch of the Brooklyn Public Library, and that I now oversee dozens of electronic resources used by millions of people. The point is that being alive today means adapting and, while the rate of that growth over the next eighty-five years is the area least able to be predicted, we can do it.

- **Advocacy.** We can't get there without money and support, and ALSC's Everyday Advocacy project is a vital one to support each of us in our advocacy roles with next door neighbors and national politicians alike.

- **Education.** This involves making sure that library staff serving children are well versed in the traditions of the profession, up-to-date on the latest developments in it, and in many cases creating those developments themselves.

- **Access.** We must make sure users can get to all of this: what they value. This may involve accounting for convenient opening hours, an easy-to-use website, generous loan periods and fine forgiveness, iPads mounted at the correct heights, clear and multilingual signage, natural language cataloging, and attention to many other large and small elements that enable users to connect with what they want.

Ever Onward!

A perfect example of how children's libraries are meeting the future by blending tradition with innovation is the maker space trend that is sweeping the United States as libraries add programs, collections, space, and equipment to enable creation.

The state of Idaho has been doing a lot of work to build what they call a "Maker Culture" and have been doing it with support from the U.S. Government's Institute of Museum and Library Services.[14] Craft projects are a tradition in libraries and making those crafts with maker tools, such as a 3-D print of a double helix, as done in Idaho, can be seen as an extension of that. And what they're seeing there, is just what I think we all want to see, "Patrons are coming in more frequently, meeting with others, staying longer, jumping into more hands-on activities, delving into exploration, teaching others what they've learned, collaborating on projects, using problem-solving skills, working together as families, and showing increased interest in technology."[15]

In other words, they are having free, public, and equal access to positive library experiences that blend the traditional (libraries have long since had craft programs to make things) and innovating (now it can be done with a software program and melted plastic) to create a better future for the twenty-first, twenty-second, and twenty-third centuries and beyond. ↷

References

1. Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, "World Population Prospects: The 2015 Revision, Key Findings and Advance Tables," Working Paper ESA/P/WP.241 (United Nations, 2015), http://esa.un.org/unpd/wpp/Publications/Files/Key_Findings_WPP_2015.pdf.
2. "ALSC Strategic Plan, 2012–2017," Association for Library Service to Children, accessed Nov. 20, 2015, www.ala.org/alsc/aboutalsc/stratplan.
3. Ibid.
4. John Green, "Does YA Mean Anything Anymore? Genre in a Digitized World," *Horn Book* 90, no. 6 (November/December 2014): 20.
5. R. David Lankes, *Expect More: Demanding Better Libraries for Today's Complex World* (Lexington, KY: Riland.org, 2012), 11.
6. Joseph Janes, ed. *Library 2020: Today's Leading Visionaries Describe Tomorrow's Library* (Lanham, MD: The Scarecrow Press, 2013), 117.
7. "The Mindset List: 2019," Beloit College, accessed Nov. 20, 2015, www.beloit.edu/mindset.
8. "The Mindset List: 2018," Beloit College, accessed Nov. 20, 2015, www.beloit.edu/mindset/previouslists/2018.
9. Heidi Moore "Why Play Is the Work of Childhood," *Fred Rogers Center Blog*, accessed September 23, 2014, www.fredrogerscenter.org/resources/toolkit/activities/child-development-play.
10. Sue McCleaf Nespeca, Association for Library Service to Children, *The Importance of Play, Particularly Constructive Play, in Public Library Programming* (Chicago: Association for Library Service to Children, 2012), 3.
11. Jenna Nemec-Loise, response to survey by Andrew Medlar, September 16, 2014.
12. Sarah Bayliss, "Design to Learn By," *School Library Journal* 59, no. 8 (Aug. 2013): 27.
13. Nemec-Loise, response to survey by Andrew Medlar.
14. Erica Compton and Sue Walker, "Idaho Libraries Creating a Maker Culture," *Children & Libraries* 12, no. 3 (Fall 2014): 3.
15. Ibid.

Top Ten Advocacy Myths—Busted!

Jenna Nemec-Loise

***Jenna Nemec-Loise** is Member Content Editor, ALSC Everyday Advocacy Website & Electronic Newsletter. Everyday Advocacy empowers ALSC members to embrace their roles as library advocates by focusing on their daily efforts to serve youth and families. Each lighthearted column features easy-to-implement strategies and techniques for asserting the transformative power of libraries both within communities and beyond them. Please contact Jenna Nemec-Loise at everyday-advocacy@hotmail.com with comments and ideas for future topics.*

This past November, I packed my bags and a big box of ALSC loot so I could take the Everyday Advocacy show on the road. Sure, I'd already presented oodles of times at ALA conferences and the 2014 ALSC Institute, but bringing workshops to front-line youth services librarians in their home states was a new thing for me.

My biggest worry? Not having enough to talk about. (I know, right? I can hear you laughing from here.)

As I planned my workshops for both the Library System of Lancaster County (PA) and the 2015 Wisconsin Library Association Conference, I thought about how I'd frame the Everyday Advocacy content I wanted to present. I'm not one to lecture, and I'm certainly not Libraryland's foremost expert on advocacy. But I know a thing or two, and I can lead a great conversation.

That's when it hit me: A top ten list of advocacy myths would be an awesome way to get everyone talking. We've all heard them, and many of us have even believed a few of them at some point in our careers. What could be a better place to start?

Just like David Letterman, I'd present each myth.

But then just like an Everyday Advocate, I'd bust it.

It worked like a charm. And just in time for National Library Legislative Day and Virtual Library Legislative Day, I've got my list for you, too.

Top Ten Advocacy Myths

Ladies and gentlemen, live and direct from *Children and Libraries* magazine, here are the top ten advocacy myths—busted!

10. "It's all politics." True, sometimes things get political. But at its most basic level, advocacy is all relationships—with youth and families, with community members, with coworkers and supervisors, with library boards and administrators, and yes, with legislators and policymakers.

9. "It's about asking for money." Actually, it's about being informed, engaging with your community, speaking out, getting inspired, and sharing your advocacy story. Sometimes these five Everyday Advocacy tenets include asking for money, but there's a lot more at stake than dollar signs.

8. "It's hard." Let's say it's challenging but that you can—and should—rise to the challenge. Everyday Advocacy often means stepping outside your comfort zone and tolerating ambiguity to learn, share, and make a difference for the youth and families you serve.

7. "No one's going to listen to me." Keep the faith because someone will. Identify your key stakeholders and tailor your advocacy messages to them. Remember, it's not always what you say. How you say it matters, and a thoughtfully crafted elevator speech using value-based language can be just the ticket you need.

6. "It only happens outside the library." Advocacy has to happen inside the library, too. Cultivating relationships with internal stakeholders, including coworkers and supervisors, is equally important to those you build with schools, local businesses, and community organizations beyond your library's walls.

5. "My library is fine (i.e., I don't need to advocate)." Crisis advocacy has its place, but Everyday Advocacy shapes long-term relationships and impacts for libraries. The small steps you take on a daily basis help you grow a community of advocates who'll be ready to help when times get tough.

4. "I'm not qualified." You're perfectly qualified! Who knows more than you do about the youth and families you serve through your library? You've talked with and listened to kids, parents, and caregivers, so that makes you the expert.

3. "Someone else is already doing it." Maybe it's true that other library staff members are already engaged in advocacy efforts. But no one can be an Everyday Advocate the way you can. Your work with youth and families puts you in the best position to speak on their behalf as well as your own. And if you don't do it, maybe no one will.

2. "I don't have time." I'll let you in on a little secret: You're already doing it. Everyday Advocacy starts with the smaller-scale, but significant, ways you touch the lives of children through programming, reference, readers' advisory, and instruction. It's not something extra you need to do.

And the number one advocacy myth (drumroll, please):

1. "It's not my job." Yes. Yes, it is. Everyday Advocacy is the heart of youth services and all library work by any staff member at any level. Daily we demonstrate the purpose and value of the profession through meaningful interactions with kids and adults. What job could be more important than that?

Be a Mythbuster!

As National Library Legislative Day approaches on May 3, why not be a mythbuster in your own library? You can talk up this top ten list with colleagues, mention it at your next staff meeting, or post it on the break room bulletin board to get the conversation going. Maybe you've even got your own advocacy myths to add to the list. Invite your coworkers to do the same!

When you're ready for the next step, take your own Everyday Advocacy show on the road. Use the tips, tools, and techniques on the Everyday Advocacy website (www.ala.org/everyday-advocacy) to do some mythbusting in your library community. Engage with stakeholders to promote the purpose and value of the youth services profession. Dazzle 'em with all the ways you improve outcomes for kids and families through the library.

And who knows? You may even bust some myths of your own along the way. &

Supercharge Your Storytimes

Using Intentionality, Interactivity, and Community

Kathleen Campana, J. Elizabeth Mills, Saroj Ghoting, and Judy Nelson

Kathleen Campana *is a PhD Candidate at the University of Washington Information School and a researcher with Project VIEWS2.* **J. Elizabeth Mills** *is a PhD student at the University of Washington Information School and a researcher with Project VIEWS2.* **Saroj Ghoting**, *a children's librarian for forty years, is an early childhood literacy consultant who presents in-person and online trainings on Every Child Ready to Read, and early literacy enhanced storytimes for library staff and their partners.* **Judy Nelson** *is a Customer Experience Manager Youth at Pierce County (WA) Library System. Kathleen Campana, J. Elizabeth Mills, and Saroj Ghoting are the authors of* Supercharged Storytimes: An Early Literacy Planning and Assessment Guide *(ALA Editions, 2016), which is highlighted in the column.*

Talking, reading, singing, playing, and writing—the five Every Child Ready to Read, 2nd Edition (ECRR2) practices—are important parts of a child's early literacy development. All of you who provide storytimes are using at least a few of these practices in your storytimes, but do you ever think about HOW you use them?

Project VIEWS2 (Valuable Initiatives in Early Learning that Work Successfully) was a four-year study from the University of Washington Information School made possible in part by a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services. Project VIEWS2 initially demonstrated that storytimes make a difference in children's early literacy skills. It went on to establish that an intentional focus on early literacy skills in storytime planning and delivery increases the early literacy content of storytimes and the observable early literacy behaviors in the children who attend. Therefore when you intentionally insert early literacy skills in an interactive manner into the five practices of ECRR2, you can increase the early literacy impact of your storytime.

If you are wondering how to do this, Supercharged Storytimes can help. Supercharged Storytimes is a movement that emerged out of the VIEWS2 research. It uses the VIEWS2 Planning Tool (VPT) and emphasizes three primary methods for planning, delivering, and reflecting on your storytimes to help you be successful in your practice. These methods are intentionality, interactivity, and community.

To support the movement, the book *Supercharged Storytimes: An Early Literacy Planning and Assessment Guide* (ALA Editions, 2016) is an in-depth exploration of how to use the VPT, how to incorporate the early literacy behaviors from the VPT into the five practices of ECRR2, and how to incorporate self-reflection and peer mentoring into your process. The next sections are drawn from the book, to give you an idea of the book's content and approach, and describe how you can supercharge your own storytimes.

What Is a Supercharged Storytime?

The Supercharged Storytimes movement utilizes the VPT for planning and reflecting on early literacy storytimes. This tool is made up of two parts:

1. a collection of early literacy behaviors that a storytime provider or educator can use to incorporate early literacy into her program; and
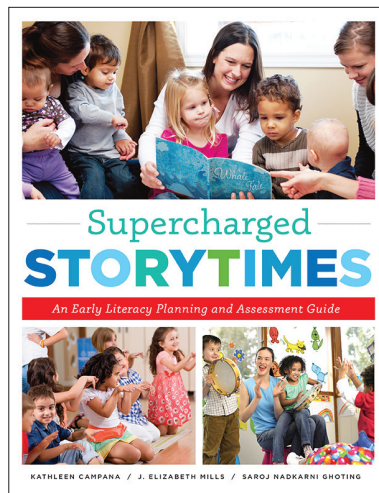
2. a related collection of early literacy behaviors that the provider or educator can observe in the children who attend the storytime.

The VPT focuses on early literacy domains (alphabetic knowledge, phonological awareness, vocabulary, comprehension, communication, language use, print concepts, and writing concepts) that are similar to skills noted in ECRR1 and early learning guidelines of other states. You use the VPT by selecting behaviors from it to apply in storytime and then designing activities to incorporate your chosen behaviors.

Below are suggestions for supercharging your storytimes organized around the three primary methods.

Intentionality

Intentionality involves identifying the specific early literacy skills you want to encourage and being thoughtful about how you encourage them in storytime. An intentional focus does not stop with planning your storytime. Intentionality is a part of your storytime delivery, making sure you are deliberate in your interactions with the children and their parents/caregivers during storytime in order to best support their learning. Finally, intentionality includes regularly reflecting on your storytime to understand its impact as well as the successes and any challenges you have noticed.

When planning your storytime using the VPT, you can be intentional by

- setting aside time to plan your storytimes using the Supercharged Storytime methods;

- selecting the early literacy skills you would like to encourage;

- deciding which early literacy behaviors you would like to use; and

- designing ways to incorporate the chosen behaviors.

When delivering your storytime using the VPT, you can be intentional by

- focusing on how you are delivering the activities;

- being deliberate in your interactions with the children; and

- giving the children opportunities to participate in storytime by pausing to allow them to contribute.

When reflecting on your storytime using the VPT, you can be intentional by

- setting aside time to reflect on your storytimes;

- thinking about how your storytime went;

- considering the impact your storytimes are having on your community; and

- identifying areas you want to revise and strengthen for next time.

Interactivity

Interactivity involves incorporating storytime elements during which the child can interact with the content of the storytime. It is about having a dialogue with the children, a back-and-forth exchange around a book, a play pattern, or a flannel board story. You can incorporate interactive elements throughout all of your storytime practices. Most importantly, you want to give the children time and opportunities to respond. Interactivity fits with intentionality because it is important to be intentional about providing ways for children to interact with you as well as with the activities you deliver.

Some methods for encouraging interactivity are

- having the children act out something that is happening in the book, song, or rhyme;

- asking the children questions about the book and pausing so that they have a chance to respond; and

- asking children to repeat or fill in words in a rhyming book, song, or fingerplay.

Community

A community is made up of fellow storytime providers. Your peers can be a crucial asset to you when developing supercharged storytimes. Find a group of fellow storytime providers (or even one other storytime provider) who are just as excited as you are about taking storytimes to the next level. Meet with them regularly, face-to-face or virtually, to discuss storytime ideas and provide feedback. Working together on developing early literacy storytimes means you can share and receive activity ideas; get support, advice, or feedback; and ask questions. You can also ask a peer storytime provider to observe and assess your storytime. Then have a discussion on what was observed, providing each other with feedback and ideas.

Public library storytimes offer our youngest customers incredible opportunities to learn through play—which research tells us is the best way for children to learn. When you, as the storytime provider, are equipped with the knowledge you need to provide these deliberate learning opportunities for children, and when you intentionally apply them to your storytimes and articulate early literacy connections to the parents/caregivers, you can rest assured that your storytimes are having a positive impact on these children and making the most of your time with them. ᕱ

Taking Great Photos . . . And Getting Them in Print

Everyone can benefit from free publicity, right? And *Children and Libraries* (*CAL*) is pleased to serve as a venue to promote your libraries' programs and practices. In fact, we'd like to run more photos of library events in CAL, but we need the help of our readers to provide us with good, usable photos. To that end, we've prepared this guide for taking photos at your library—photos that will not only serve your library and local media but can readily be used in CAL as well.


The Camera Counts. Almost everyone now uses a digital camera or has access to one. But all digital cameras (and Smartphones) are not created equal. Generally, those with a higher megapixel count will provide the clearest images with best resolution. A digital camera of 7 megapixels or more should be able to take a photo with high enough resolution for print reproduction.

What's DPI? For photos to be reproduced in journals such as *CAL*, we require digital images of 300 DPI (dots per inch) or higher. It may be hard to tell on your camera what the end resolution will be, but here's a handy rule of thumb. Just set your camera to take photos on its highest resolution setting. That's usually the setting that will take the FEWEST photos. That's one common mistake most libraries make; they set the camera to take the MOST photos, but those are generally too small to use in print.
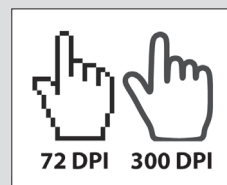
72 DPI   300 DPI

Print vs. Internet. There are different requirements for photos used in print publications and on the web. As mentioned above, a 300 dpi or higher resolution is optimal for photos used in print publications, while 72 dpi is the standard for photos used on the web. We cannot download photos from a library website unless they are high resolution (300 dpi or greater), which most likely they are not.

Composition Matters. When you're taking pictures at an event (such as storytime, book signings, etc.), keep an eye out for what would make a nice photo. Don't just snap away. Consider that a photo with two or three smiling children will make a much better photo than a group of forty kids. While it's important to take photos of the entire group to document the success of the program, snap a few close-ups of kids' faces; these will often make the biggest impact, especially in a publication, such as a newsletter, journal, or annual report. Candid shots are especially good, such as catching a child paging through a board book or building a block house.
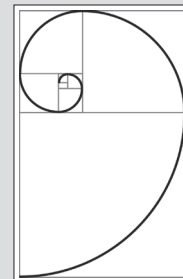
Seek out Photographers. If you're too busy the day of a library event to act as photographer, seek out someone who can and will document the event. This might be a willing parent, a library volunteer, or even a local high school or college student looking to get photography clips for her portfolio. They will likely capture things you might miss or overlook during the event.

Get Permissions. Getting permissions to take and use photographs of children is essential—both for libraries and for publications. *CAL* cannot run photos of children without having a signed permission/release form from the child's parent or legal guardian. Most libraries regularly have such release forms available during their events; if your library doesn't, you may want to consider this. It's easier to get the permissions during the event than tracking the parents down later. The release form need not be full of legalese, just a short form noting that the parent/guardian gives permission for the child's photo to be used in any publication/publicity connected to the library and its programs.
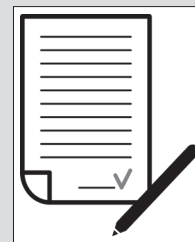
So snap away! Document those special moments at your library, and send them to us; we'd love to use them in an upcoming issue of *CAL*!

Meet the 2015—16 ALSC Board of Directors

Seated (l to r): Gretchen Caserotti; Doris Gebel; Betsy Orsburn, Vice-President; Andrew Medlar, President; Ellen Riordan, Immediate Past President; Mary Voors; and Vicky Smith
Standing (l to r): Christine Caputo; Aimee Strittmatter, Executive Director; Jenna Nemec-Loise, Division Councilor; Diane Foote, Fiscal Officer; Kay Weisman; Julie Roach; and Megan Schliesman

Index to Advertisers

THE LAST WORD

Learn to Tie Your Shoelaces . . . Please!

Melanie A. Lyttle

I had to know how to tie my shoelaces before I left kindergarten. It was on my report card.

But apparently you don't have to know how to do that anymore, or at least not in our local school district. I find that to be a real problem for me professionally!

I'm not saying that learning sight words or counting to one hundred isn't important. There is a lot that kindergarten teachers have to accomplish, and I don't know how they do it. I'm not against Velcro on shoes, but I'm not a huge fan of flip-flops or Crocs that seem to magically fly through the air during freeze tag.

However, when I do a summer library program, one of our activities is playing worm tag outside between stories; and it still seems a bit strange that most every child about to enter first or second grade has untied shoes. Cue the whiny voice and puppy dog eyes: "I can't tie my shoes. Can you do it for me?" I get a bit frustrated!

This has been happening to me for a few years, so I do plan accordingly and include time to tie shoes. I have games to play between stories that aren't as active in case one group has a higher percentage of potential projectile shoes or shoelaces that won't stay tied. As I read stories, I am usually also checking to see the footwear of the day to help determine what activity to do next.

My biggest gripe is when a child in third or fourth grade doesn't tie his shoes and then seems surprised when he falls down. I draw the line at tying *their* shoes.

Over the years, I have talked kids through the "bunny ears" method of tying shoes, but that's it. I have also decided that they really should—and probably do—make Velcro shoes for older kids.

Maybe I shouldn't play running games between stories, but the kids and I both enjoy them. I'd hate to see that stop just for a few kids who don't know how to tie their shoes.

Sometimes I just long for the good ol' days when Shoe Tying 101 was on every kindergarten agenda. &

Melanie A. Lyttle is Head of Public Services at Madison (OH) Public Library.

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

Three great options for online learning

ALSC Online Learning

Online Courses

ALSC offers quarterly online courses which are perfect for busy librarians. Courses are four to six weeks in length and many are now CEU-certified. All courses are offered asynchronously so there's no need to login at a certain time.

Webinars

ALSC's webinars are the perfect solution for someone who wants and needs educational information but doesn't have a lot of time or resources. These short (one to two hour) interactive sessions taking place in Adobe Connect give librarians and library support staff the opportunity to learn right at their desks. Webinars are offered free for all users.

Archived Webinars

Archived webinars are sessions that have already taken place, but are still available for continued learning. Unlike live webinars, archived webinars are on-demand video that can be watched anytime. These are perfect for trainings and viewing multiple times!

www.ala.org/alsced

#alsced

"A well-crafted tribute to a fascinating aviation pioneer."
—Kirkus Reviews

Fearless Flyer
Ruth Law and Her Flying Machine

HEATHER LANG
Illustrated by RAUL COLÓN

★ "Here Lang gives Law ample opportunity to voice her own words, enhancing most pages with Law's quotes in a cursive blue font. Colón's signature pointillist style produces a warm, autumnal palette of golds and browns and is an ideal complement to Lang's text, allowing for both detailed close-ups and vast landscapes. Together, Lang and Colón ensure Law a magnificent, long overdue flight from history straight into the present."
—*Booklist*, starred review

"Lang's portrait commemorates the centennial of Ruth Law's record-breaking flight from Chicago to New York. . . . Effectively employing short, staccato phrases, Lang creates a riveting, 'you are there' narrative. . . . Well-chosen quotes from Law further enliven the text. . . ."
—*Kirkus Reviews*

★ "Children will be awestruck . . . this title underscores the pilot's achievement and conveys her exhilaration."
—*School Library Journal*, starred review

BOYDS MILLS PRESS   Highlights   CALKINS CREEK