

Children's Literature by Developmental/Chronological Level: Birth-Five

Adapted from chart in Huck, Charlotte S. (2004) Children's Literature in the Elementary School, 8th ed. Boston: McGraw Hill.

Birth to around six months:

1. Explore by listening: receiving language. Read books that "sound good"—that you enjoy reading. Sing songs.
Example: Mother Goose, lullabies, songs, poetry.
2. Exploring by feeling, reaching out. Read books that provide different textures.
Example: "Touch Books"
3. Exploring by looking. Try books with large, clear, pictures, especially those with faces.

Six months to around a year:

1. Small object play. Let child hold a small object while you read; participation books.
Example: The Very Hungry Caterpillar
2. Developing memory and "objective permanence" (the concept that something does not go away even when covered). Pick an object illustrated book and let child find page on its own.
3. Developing Curiosity: Read stories that start on one page and end on the next page; book that ask questions.
Example: Ask Mr. Bear
4. Learning names for things. Point as you name things. Let baby point.
Examples: object picture books, ABC books
5. Learning language. Books with interesting sounds. Songs, lullabies, rhymes, repetitive books.

Toddlers:

1. Learning to talk: one word; new worlds. Books with key words, common word; books to point at, name things, talk about.
Examples: books about animals, cars and trucks, or familiar objects.
2. Learning to talk: simple sentences. Books with very short, simple sentences and repetition.
Examples: Eric Hill books
3. Crawling, climbing, and running. Books should be stored in many places. Stories children can act out.
Examples: The Gunniwolf, Caps for Sale
4. Pride in accomplishments. Growing independence.
Example: The Happy Egg
5. Developing a sense of humor; curiosity; guessing.
Example: Rosie's Walk; INFORMATION BOOKS
6. Social development; character development.
Example: Corduroy
7. Exploring Objects; manipulating things. Example: Feed the Animals

Preschoolers

1. Rapid development of language.
Example: Mother Goose
2. Very active, short attention span
Example: Who's There?
3. Child is the center of the world: interest, behavior, and thinking are egocentric.
Example: Bedtime for Frances
4. Curious about the world around him/her.
Example: Peter's Chair & INFORMATION BOOKS
5. Building concepts through many firsthand experiences.
Example: Count and See
6. Child has little sense of time. Time is "before now," "now," and "not yet."
Example: Seasons
7. Child learns through imaginative play. Example: May I Bring a Friend?
8. Seeks warmth and security in relationships with adults.
Example: Goodnight Moon.
9. Beginning to assert independence. Takes delight in own accomplishments.
Example: The Carrot Seed
10. Beginning to make value judgments about what is fair and what should be punished.
Example: Titch

