



How To Choose Good Books For Your Child

1. Choose books that you find interesting and appealing. If you are going to be reading this book to your young child, you need to choose something that is not going to bore you as you read it. Children quickly pick up on bored tones and will learn to equate reading with boredom. Chances are that if you like a book so will your child.
2. Remember the interests of the child for whom you are choosing the book. Choose books that meet their current interests and hobbies.
3. If possible, take the child with you as you go to select the books. Ask them what they would like to hear a story about, and then find them a book dealing with that topic. Let them help you choose the books.
4. Choose several books and try them out on your child. Did he or she respond to the story? Does he or she seem interested in the illustrations? Don't choose books that don't interest your child.
5. Ask for book recommendations from your local librarian, teacher or bookseller. Take advantage of the book lists and reference books available to them. (i.e A to Zoo: A Subject Access to Children's Picture Books by Carolyn Lima will help you find picture books dealing with certain topics).
6. Be prepared to spend a while choosing books. If you are choosing picture books, sit down and read them through. If you are choosing fictional books for an older age group, leaf through the book and read passages from the beginning, middle and end. If choosing non-fiction, factual books make sure that the author has documented his/her sources and that the text seems accurate, timely and interesting.
7. Visit your local library regularly. New books for children are being published all the time, and the library is a great place to sit down and review those new titles.
8. Classics and award winning books are a good place to start when choosing books for children, but don't choose them to the exclusion of other, newer, non-award winning books.

Sources:

"Choosing Books For Children: A Commonsense Guide" by Betsy Hearne with Deborah Stevenson. Published by The University Of Illinois Press, 1999.

"How To Choose Good Books For Kids" by Kate Hall McMullan. Published by Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1984.

"Tell The Lady What You Like" Shopping For Children's Books' by Terri Schmitz The Horn Book Magazine, March-April 1997 v73 n2, p171.

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