

How to find the perfect book for your child

When you and your child are looking for books, the library staff is here to help, but finding the perfect book for your child is ultimately your responsibility. You really need to know a child well to be able to find them that wonderful book, and of course no one knows your child better than you do. Here are a few guidelines to help you out:



Will this book hold my child's interest? Does the book appeal to your child? Often children are interested in books with characters that are about the same age as they are. Does your child currently have a passion about a certain subject such as rocks, insects, dinosaurs, or trains? What's going on in your child's life? If they are starting kindergarten, going on vacation, or going to the dentist, there are great books on those subjects that will be sure to interest them. Is your child facing any challenges like learning to ride a bike, dressing them selves, or sleeping alone in a new bed? There are great picture books that may make these challenges easier. Be sure to get your child involved in the selection process!

Is the reading or listening level right for my child? For the youngest readers look for board books which have few words and clear, simple illustrations. Move from board books to picture books with rhyming or repetitive texts so that children can chime in. Picture books range from simple stories to very involved tales that are appropriate for middle school age children. As your child matures, read them increasingly longer and more involved books. Keep in mind that a child's listening vocabulary is always much larger than their reading vocabulary. You can always continue to read aloud to your child, but once they begin to read it is good to choose some books that they can read by themselves. An easy way to check if a particular book contains the correct reading level for your child is to use the *Five Finger Test*. Your child puts up a finger every time they miss a word on the page. If they get to five fingers, then the book is probably too hard for them. Of course if a book is on a topic that they are very interested in, they may be willing to struggle with a challenging book. Don't forget that reading books that are easy for a child to read increases their fluency and confidence.

