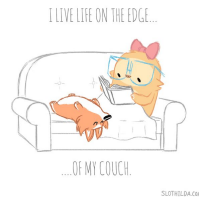


Hooking Struggling Readers with Books They **CAN** and **WANT TO** Read

Workshop 1
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Mar 13, 2018



Workshop 1 Appreciating e-books which are appropriate for and appealing to struggling readers



Outline

- Development of digital picture books
- Why use digital picture books?
- What makes a good digital picture book for beginning readers?

Development of children's e-books so far

- Scanning entire print picture books
- Transforming picture books into **film-like creations**
- Transforming picture books with **features unique to the digital world** and adding **interactive features**, including games, that extend beyond story

(Yokota, 2014)

The Library Mouse (A Kindle e-book)

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=1iNJ80xL8BNwevp6uiXmx4QxSv3Lrgl2p4Tt4vcnW3-Q>

Japanese Fairy Tales Animation

<https://itunes.apple.com/hk/app/id1335453747>



Comments on 'Japanese Fairy Tales Animations'

- Pros: comprehension is supported by visual and auditory cues, making meaning more accessible to the readers
- Cons: the reader loses control of what they want to focus on the text and for how long. This control is put in the hands of the director of the film.

Pete's Robot

<https://itunes.apple.com/hk/app/petes-robot/id507888109?mt=8>

What features in the book do you think are unique to the digital books?



Comments on 'Pete's Robot'

- Pros: the narration is expressive and fluent, can enhance comprehension; a choice of different narrators is given to accommodate readers' different preferences; the "hot spots" (take adv of what digital platform can offer)--enhances the mood and makes the storytelling experiences more interactive

Oobie's Space Adventure

<https://itunes.apple.com/hk/app/oobies-space-adventure/id435643345?mt=8>

Go to 'playground' and play with Oobie. How do games like this extend a child's reading experience beyond the story?



Comments on 'Oobie's Space Adventure'

- Pros: take adv of handheld devices can do which desktop can't--even young children can have easy control of on-screen movements through swiping/ touching/ dragging. Here Oobie can float and be spun, which mimics the weightlessness of outer space and extends a child's reading experience beyond the story.

Why use digital picture books? (Cahill & Franzen, 2013)

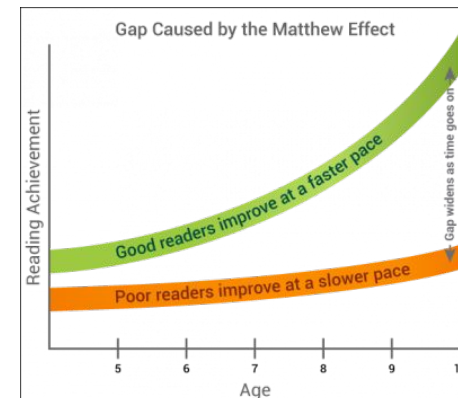
- Benefit literacy and language development
- Support traditional literacy processes (i.e. concepts about print, phonemic awareness, phonics, oral fluency, vocabulary & comprehension)
- Allow for a personalised reading experience (e.g readers can select level of support according to own needs)
- Useful tools for struggling readers (the multimedia elements are a great help to decoding and can make a tough literacy task easier)

Benefit literacy and language development

- The supportive features **reduce cognitive load** needed for decoding and allows a child to focus on extracting meaning from the text → this **improves comprehension**, helps a child to **stay on task** & most importantly **sustains their reading interest**.
- Reading is the most **important source of vocabulary growth**. The more a child reads, the larger his/ her vocabulary & the easier for him/ her to read more challenging texts to further expand his/ her vocabulary and *vice versa*.

The Matthew Effect in reading (Stanovich, 1986)

"the rich get richer and the poor get poorer"



What makes a good digital picture book for beginning readers?

Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engaging story • Well-developed characters • Comprehensible (made accessible through supportive features) • Springboard for reflection on real world connections
Images	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Text and illustrations are well-coordinated • Can complement, enhance/ even extend the text
Narration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expressive and fluent (X distracting elements) • Word-by-word highlighting in sync with the reading voice • Control over narration options: e.g. level of support needed ('Read to me'/ 'Read by myself') and options to select a voice or even record own voice
Interactive functions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personalisable elements (e.g. selection of different endings) • Glossary list with child-friendly definitions • Sound effects/ music to complement mood • Interactive "hot spots" (without distracting readers from the story)/ activities to extend the story • Visual/ verbal/ written/ iconic cues to direct readers to "hot spots" <p style="text-align: right;">(Cahill & Franzen, 2013)</p>

Zipke (2014)

- Suitability in terms of developmental stage
- Entails elements of good writing : strong voice (e.g. *The True Story of Three Little Pigs, Don't let the pigeon drive the Bus*), strong sentence fluency (e.g. *There was an old lady who swallowed a fly, Room on the Broom*)
- Subject matter → interesting?
- 'Not just print transferred to screen'
- Encourage a reader to read rather than 'watch a movie'

Support for 'learning to read'

Important considerations for children who are learning to read (Yokota & Teale, 2014):

- Text appearance (x decorative font)
- Highlighting of text
- Opportunities for word exploration (e.g. click on individual words to hear how a word is pronounced/ teach phonemes/ phonics patterns)
- Illustration- text match
- Layout not too busy, esp. for dyslexic learners (for more, see Ch6 of Kormos and Smith, 2012)

Some guiding questions

- Analyse each feature's role in helping a young reader's independent reading → does it **help/ hinder** a child's reading?
- Does a feature **distracts/ aids** comprehension?
- Is the interactive feature **purposeful** or just some generic activities which have little to do with the story?
- Is the any **mismatch/ inconsistency** between the text & the illustrations/ between the reading voice and the highlighting of text?
- Is the book able to take advantage of what technology can do? Does it have what we called "**added digital affordances**"? (e.g. possibility of nonlinear storytelling in *The Land of Me*)

Springer et al. (2017)

One of the research-based principles to build students' reading interest → **select texts with interest-enhancing elements**

- Texts that are inherently interesting has three writing main traits: **coherence, relevance, vividness**

Coherence

- The ease with which the readers can connect ideas in the text and make inferences.
- Does it have good organisation/ is difficult to digest?
- Any helpful visual aids like illustrations and charts?

Relevance

Do the texts contain stories and contexts which young readers are familiar with/ can relate to ?

e.g. the relevance of anxiety about the 1st day of school in the book *Butterflies in my stomach and other school hazards?*

Vividness

- Are there details to increase students' interest in reading and help the story longer?
- Are there vivid descriptions which captivate readers' imagination? (e.g *Jesus's Christmas Party & Cat vs. Dog*)

Text complexity & learning to read (Allington et al., 2015)

- Texts which *match with students' reading level* → greater reading gains (i.e. books a learner can read with **95-98% word recognition** & **75-89% comprehension**) → esp. true for beginning readers
- Difficult texts must be accompanied by **high level of support** (if learners are to benefit from them)

The three little pigs

<https://itunes.apple.com/hk/app/the-three-little-pigs-by-nosy-crow/id418543664?mt=8>

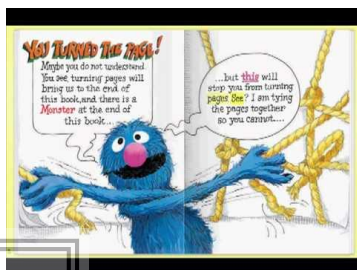


The three little pigs (Comments)

- Pros: The 3D version looks fantastic, with bright colours and every part of the screen with detail.
- Cons: the interaction (not shown in this video) was more distracting than educational. The majority of the interaction (tap on characters to make them say silly words/ do backflips) is not related to the storyline.

The Monster at the end of this book

<https://itunes.apple.com/hk/app/the-monster-at-the-end/id409467802?mt=8>



The Monster at the end of the book (Comments)

- Pros: An excellent example of what to expect in a high quality e-book. The narration is expressive, making meaning very clear to the reader. The interactive features tie directly into Grover's attempts to keep the reader from turning the page because of the monster at the end of the book; the reader can break through the obstacles by touching the hot spots and thus moving the story forward.

Book ideas

- Alphabet Books
- Create a sing along book (e.g. Love me tender, You're the Sunshine of my life)
- Create a book with silly rhymes and poems (e.g. *The Big Fat Cow That Goes Kapow*)
- Procedure books to give students a chance to make something after reading a book (e.g. [How to make ice-cream in a bag](#))
- A book that teaches idioms (can you create a story with food/ drink idioms "a piece of cake", "my cup of tea", "top banana", "big cheese")
- A book which teaches phonics (e.g. [Rhyming Dust Bunnies](#))

To sum up

- The best of e-books are those which can **take advantage of the digital platform** to engage and support readers.
- In designing e-books for beginning/ struggling readers, there are a few important considerations (e.g. how to integrate appropriate supportive features, whether the text has **the three traits** of inherently interesting texts and **text complexity**). Do let these important considerations guide you in your design!

“Each flower becomes a gift, and whether the gift is noticed or ignored, both giver and recipient are transformed by their encounter.”



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