

Laying the Groundwork to Hook Transitional Readers

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Denver Public Library
CATS Winter Workshop 2019



DENVER PUBLIC LIBRARY

Agenda

- Creating the Grade Level Reading (GLR) project
- Early & Transitional Book subject headings
- Diversity audit
- Staff training
- Five Grade Level Reading Skills
- Next Steps

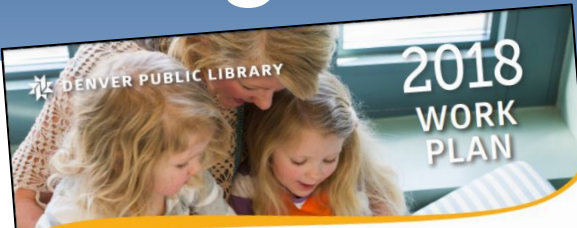


Turn & Talk

- Why did you choose this session today?
- How do you support K-3rd readers at your library?



Background information



DENVER PUBLIC LIBRARY **2018 WORK PLAN**

2018 Internal Theme
Building Relationships

Mission
The Denver Public Library connects people with information, ideas and experiences to provide enjoyment, enrich lives and strengthen our community.

Vision
An inspired and engaged Denver.

Focus Areas

- ✓ Early Learning
- ✓ Out-of-School Learning
- ✓ Services to Immigrants and Refugees
- ✓ Digital Inclusion

Strategic Initiatives

- Activate Denver
- Charting the Course
- Community Engagement
- Customer Experience
- Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion
- Staffing Analysis

Projects

- Data Roadmap
- Hours Analysis
- Internal Communications
- Language Access Plan

Community Impacts

IMPACT: CHILDREN ENJOY READING AND LEARNING AND FLOURISH IN SCHOOL AND LIFE.

EARLY LEARNING ✓
Executive Sponsor: Susan Kotarba
Lead: Alison Barney
Build on existing initiatives, including Summer of Adventure, that focus on school readiness. Continue extending services, materials and opportunities to children from birth to five years old and their adult influencers in literacy-challenged neighborhoods. Develop new strategies to reach birth to three year olds, utilize the new Early Learning Outreach Team and refine participation in the City's Road to Reading initiative.

OUT-OF-SCHOOL LEARNING ✓
Executive Sponsor: Susan Kotarba
Lead: Alison Barney
Provide targeted and engaging out-of-school learning opportunities focused on science, technology, engineering, art and math (STEAM) for school-age children and teens, including the evolving Summer of Adventure program. Determine ways to support grade level reading, incorporate social-emotional learning and define the Youth Services vehicle's staffing, programs and collection.

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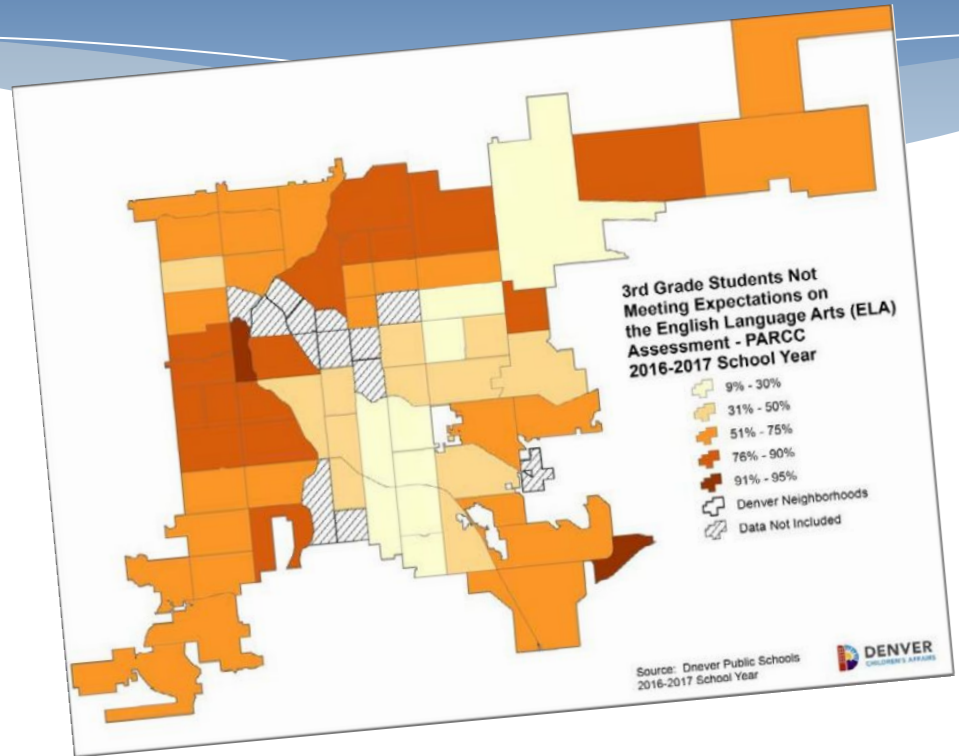
OUT-OF-SCHOOL LEARNING ✓
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The Big Idea...

Mayor's 5 goals for children:

Goal #2

Increase the number of third-grade students who can read at grade level.



First Steps

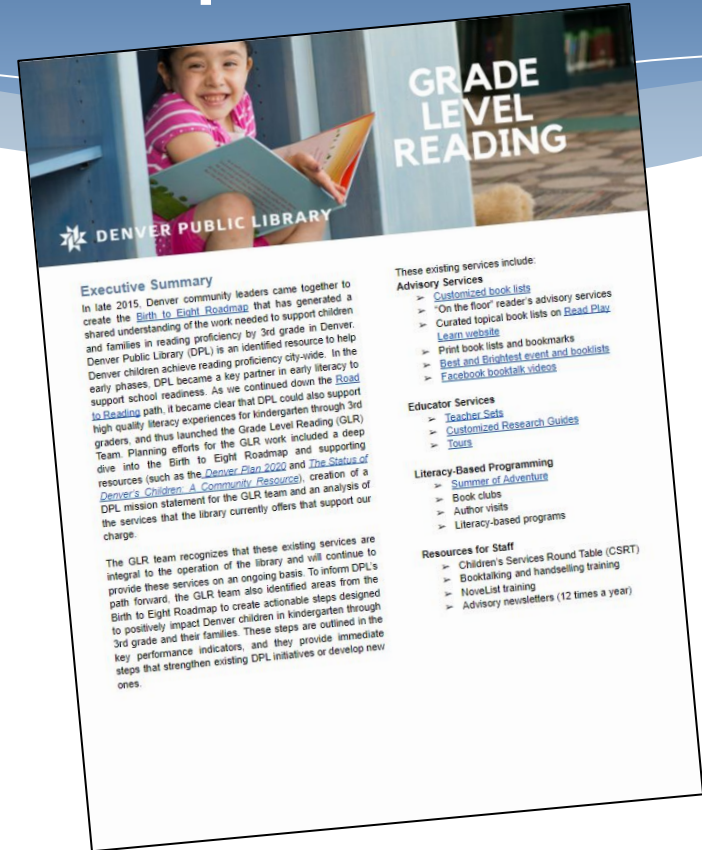
1. Hire limited term (2 years) librarian
2. Create work team (4 librarians)
3. Research, research, research
4. Re-connect with DPS



Mission and Workplan

Grade Level Reading (GLR) mission:

Support and empower library staff, families and educators to connect children (K-3rd grade) with diverse books they enjoy and that inspire curiosity to foster lifelong readers.



Literacy results for Colorado students after READ Act

Despite more than \$40 million spent per year from the READ Act, the rate of Colorado third-graders meeting reading expectations rose by fewer than 2 percentage points while the percentage of elementary students with "significant deficiencies" in reading continued to rise.

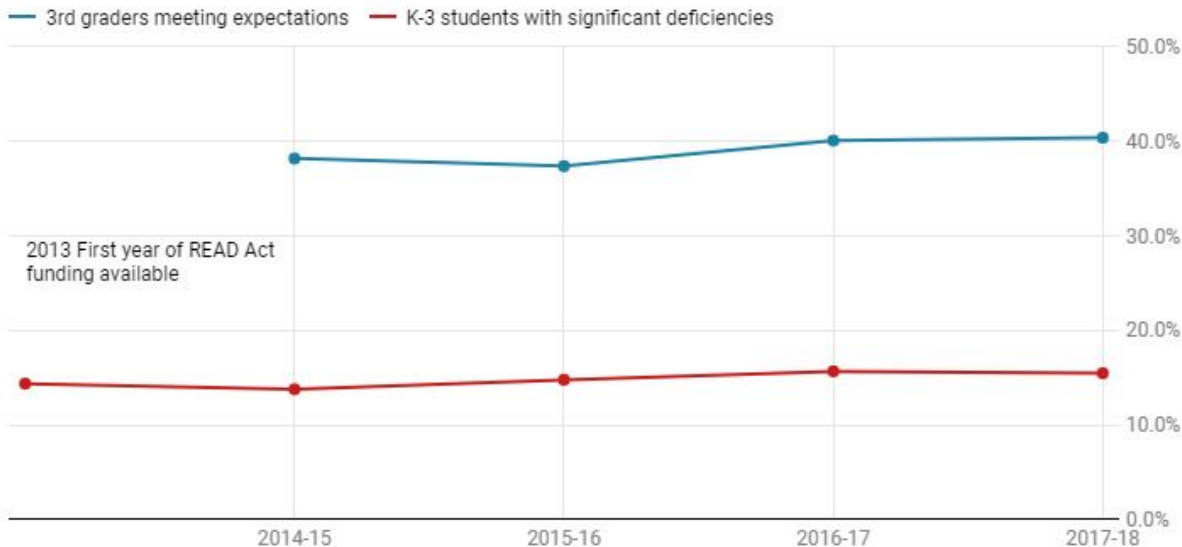


Chart: The Colorado Sun • Source: Colorado Department of Education • Created with Datawrapper

- A statewide concern
- During the 2017-2018 school year only 40% of 3rd graders in Colorado were reading at grade level

Image: Colorado Sun, JAN 29, 2019, Christopher Osher, *Colorado spent \$231 million to help young children catch up on reading. But rates of kids with significant deficiencies only worsened.*



Early and Transitional Books



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Early & Transitional Books Project Goal

To make it easier for staff, caregivers, and educators to find books for kindergarten through 3rd graders.



Nuts and Bolts

- Collaboratively created access points
 - Cataloging
 - Collection Development
 - Children's Library Staff
- Implementation across DPL
- Increased access, not increased stigma
- No standardized leveling system for Denver Public Schools



Chosen Direction

- Technically, “local-subject-heading-points”
- Informally, “subject headings”
- More access points for customers and staff
- Access via OPAC or staff catalog client
- No change in shelving
- No stickers
- No stigma!

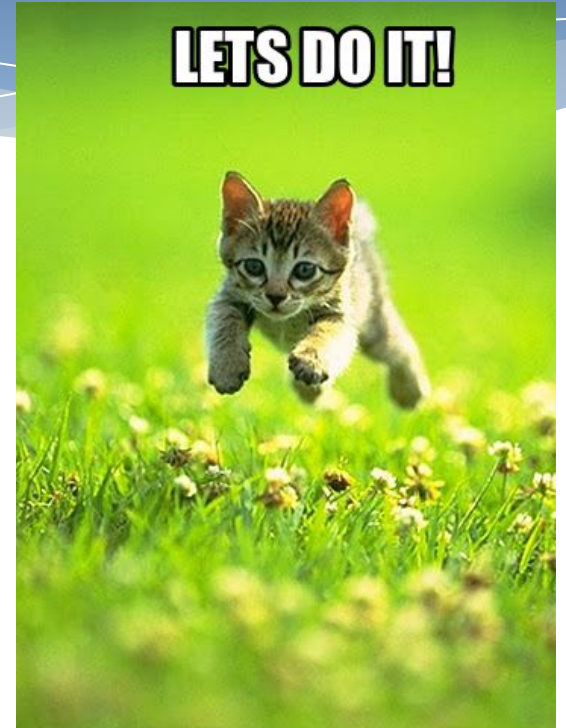


Image: <https://memecrunch.com/meme/6CEN1/lets-do-it>



Creating and Maintaining

- Jan 2017 - Meetings between Cataloging, Collection Development, Children's to discuss goals, challenges, and opportunities
- May-Aug 2017 - Children's Library staff created title list (pub. 2016 and before)
- Aug 2017 - Launched and promoted access points
- Dec 2017 - Added 2017 titles
- Ongoing - Subject headings updated twice a year (May & Dec)



Final Subject Headings

Early Books

Support kids beginning to read.

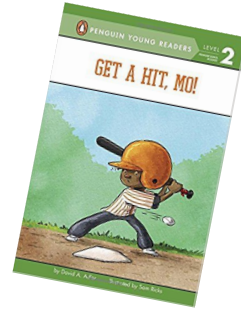
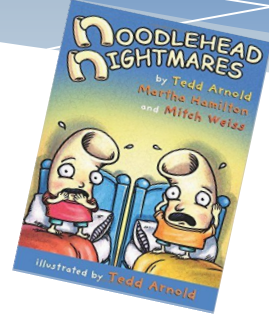
Transitional Books

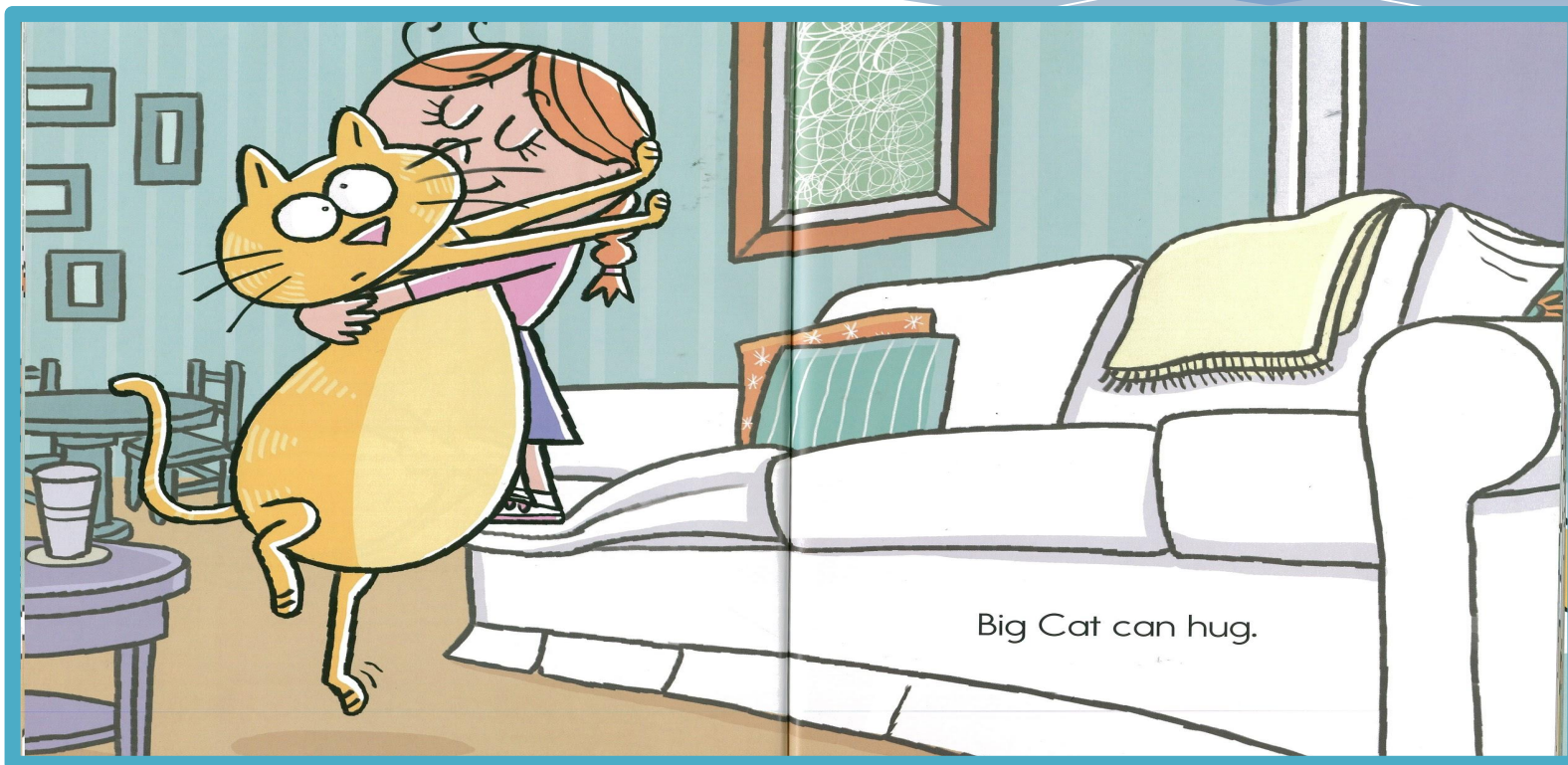
Support kids bridging from early books to chapter books.



Early Books have...

- Strong word repetition
- Mostly short words and sentences
- Simple punctuation and font
- Illustrations on every two page spread
- Lots of white space
- Font of 14 points or larger
- Lexile range of 0-350
- Informed judgment





Big Cat can hug.

It is time for the next play.
"Mo will go deep," Coach Steve
tells the team again.
"But don't throw to Mo."
The play starts.

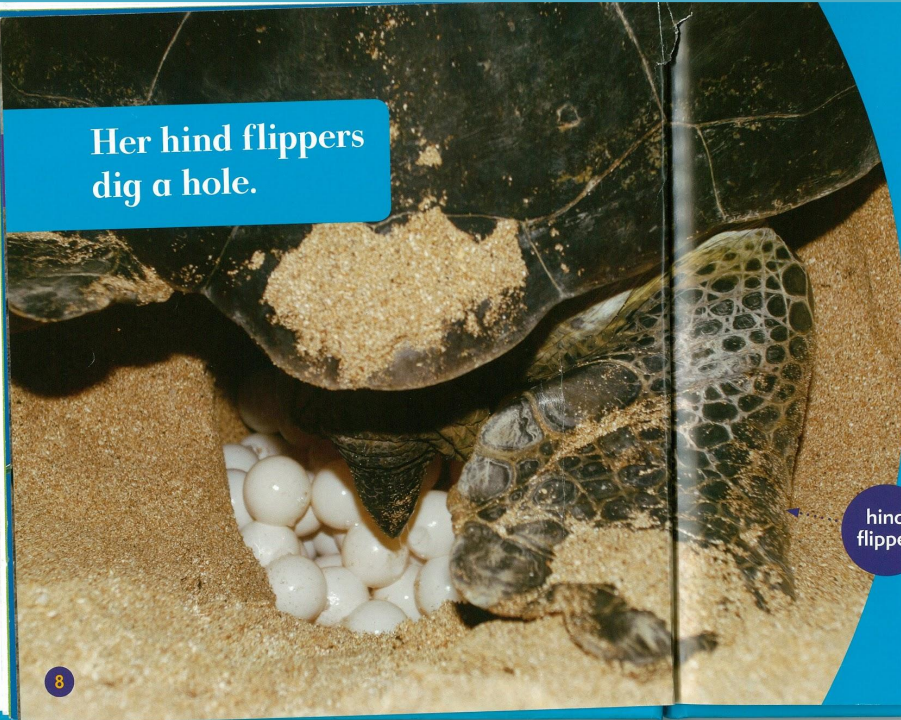


The same Jay runs with Mo.
Then he stops.
"I'll wait here," he tells Mo.
"No one would throw to a small
butterfingers."



He's right again.
No one throws to Mo.

Her hind flippers
dig a hole.



8

She lays her eggs.
She covers them
with sand.

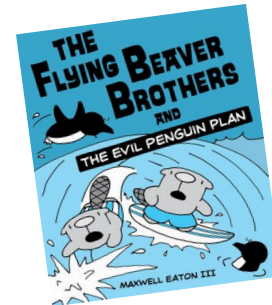
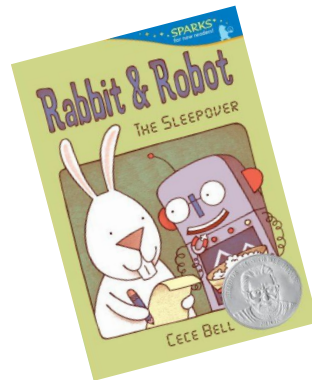
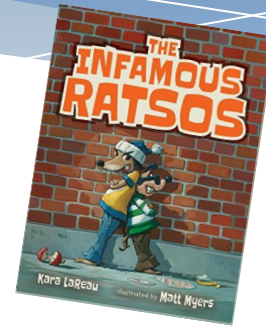


hind
flipper

9

Transitional Books have...

- Around 100 pages
- Harder words and sentences
- A few or more illustrations per chapter
- Wide margins and white space
- Chapters < 15 pages
- Font of 13 points or larger
- Lexile range of 350-750
- Informed judgment



"Would you like some more?" said Stella.

Some more of what? Mercy wondered. She snorted.

"Isn't this lovely?" said Stella.

"I don't think Mercy is happy," said Frank.



"Everybody is always happy at a tea party," said Stella.

"I'm not happy," said Frank. "I'm hungry. Plus, I look stupid in this hat."

"Oh, please," said Stella. "Here, have some more cake."



“Charlie and Mouse!” cried Grumpy.
“You are getting so big!”
“Yes,” said Charlie, “I am getting *so* big!
I can read. And swim. And eat *three* hot dogs!”
“That is a lot of hot dogs,” said Grumpy.
Charlie nodded. “*With* mustard.”
Mouse shook his head. “I am not getting big.”
“Well,” said Grumpy. “You are bigger than you
were. You are not getting small.”
“No,” said Mouse. “I am not getting small.”
“Then what are you getting?” asked Grumpy.

2



"Maybe not as perfect as *me*," said Dyamonde, "but you're at least halfway, and that's pretty close!"

Damaris was surprised to see her lips curling into a little smile.

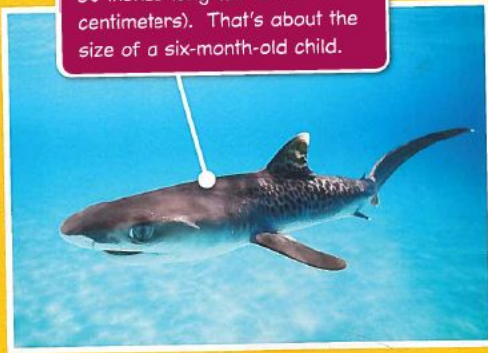
Dyamonde bumped hips with her. "Let's get out of here," she said.

Damaris followed Dyamonde out into the hall. Dyamonde didn't know it, but by the time the girls reached homeroom, Damaris's smile had slipped away.



A tiger shark pup's dark stripes help it hide. The stripes blend in with shadows in the water. But predators still eat most of the young pups.

A newborn pup is 20 to 30 inches long (50 to 75 centimeters). That's about the size of a six-month-old child.



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Tiger sharks grow until they are seven to ten years old. Then they can have their own pups. Most adults live for about twenty-seven years. Some live until they are fifty.

Adult tiger sharks are huge. The largest ones grow as long as a car!



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Evaluating Our Collection with a Diversity Audit



Community-Based Evaluation

- Individual titles
- Big picture perspective
- How does it reflect our community?



Why Do We Need Diverse Books?

- Validates multiple experiences and perspectives
- Having (or not having) access to high quality diverse literature affects motivation, academics, and critical thinking
- Diverse stories and voices are important for everyone, not just people who share those identities
- Stories create opportunities to develop empathy and understanding of yourself and others
- Different types of diverse books (see notes for more)



“For a diversity audit, we are attempting to determine what percentage of our collection is something other than the established norm.”

- [Karen Jensen](#)



Definition of a Diversity Audit

- Based on method developed by Karen Jensen
- What does a diverse collection look like?
- Target goals based on demographics



Our Audit

- Early & Transitional Books
- Fiction only
- Used stats from city, state, and nationwide research, including:
 - Denver Office of Children's Affairs
 - Child Trends Data Bank
 - Pew Research Center
 - U.S. Census Bureau



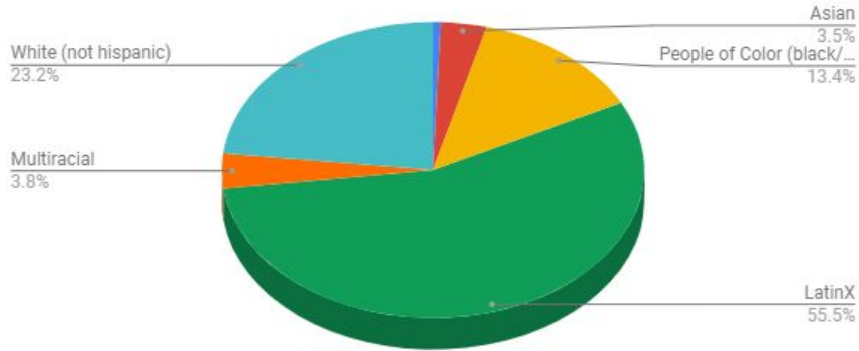
Types of Diversity Covered in this Audit

- Race/Ethnic background
 - #OwnVoices
- Ability
- Socio-economic
- Family structure
- Human, animal, inanimate object, other...
- Looked at representation, but did not assess for quality/stereotypes

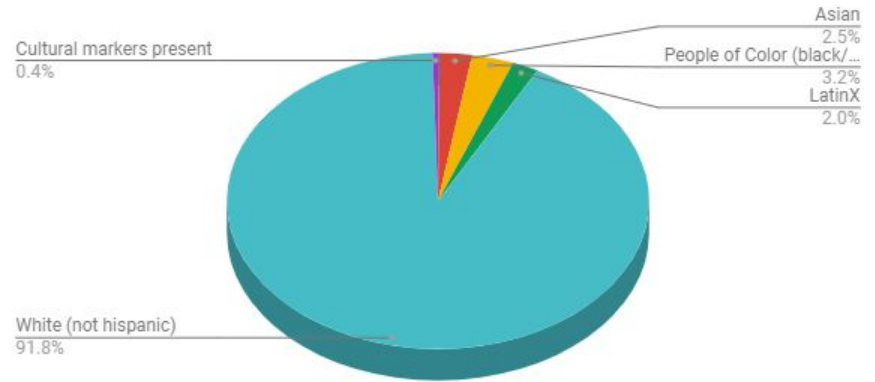


Results - Cultural Representation

Denver Child Population vs. Category



Actual - Early Books vs. Category



Results

Early Books

- 55.5% non-human protagonists
- 11% diversity of any kind
- 1% OwnVoices authors or illustrators

Transitional Books

- 44% non-human protagonists
- 11% diversity of any kind
- 4.4% OwnVoices authors or illustrators



What Did We Do with Our Findings?

- Used to purchase additional titles using state grant funding
- Increased awareness around the need for future purchases
- Utilized by the Beginning Reader Core Collection Steering Committee
- Other departments/committees embarking on diversity audits



Staff Training



Children's Library Staff

- GLR work team share learning with rest of department (librarians, shelvers, clerk)
- All librarians prepare to present at system-wide venues



System-wide

- Children's Services Round Table
- Monthly "Supporting GLR" trainings
- Group meetings (lead clerks, senior librarians)
- StaffWeb



Five GLR Skills



What's After ECRR?

- Every Child Ready to Read has been around for 10+ years
- Many libraries have significantly improved/increased services to 0-5 year olds and their grown-ups
- But what happens next?
- How can we support kids transitioning to kindergarten and beyond?



The Five Skills

1. Fluency
2. Decoding
3. Comprehension
4. Reading Motivation
5. Background Knowledge



Fluency



Fluency is the ability to read a text correctly, quickly, and with expression.

Image: <https://me.me/i/engaging-warp-speed-74eae4130684748a967509c747d580a>



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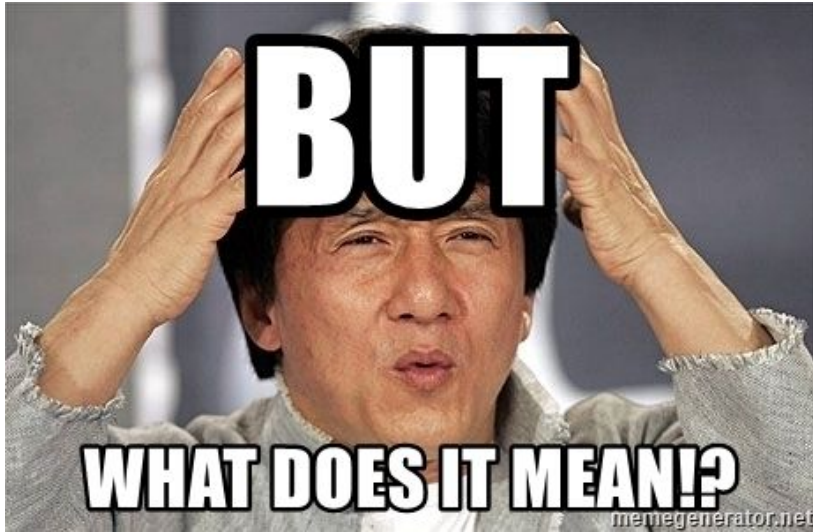
Decoding



Decoding is the ability to use knowledge of letter-sound relationships to accurately read a word. At its basic level, this means “sounding out” words.

Image: thecatwhowrites.com

Comprehension



Reading comprehension is the ability to understand and/or explain what you are reading.

Image: <https://memegenerator.net/instance/81186708/jackie-chan-but-what-does-it-mean>



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Reading Motivation

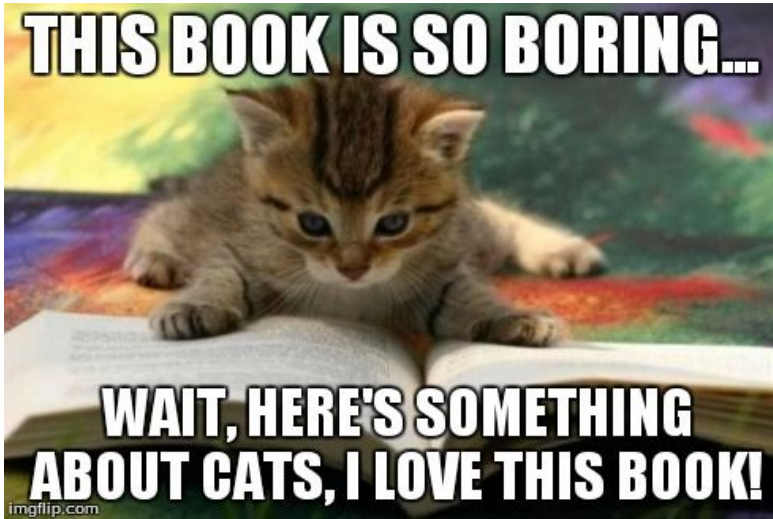


Image: <https://imgflip.com/i/e9ghq>

Motivation is critical to ensure kids enjoy reading. Kids who can self-select books that reflect their interests and life experiences demonstrate more reading motivation.



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Background Knowledge



Background knowledge refers to activating and building on children's prior knowledge to prepare them for the concepts and words they will encounter in the text.

Image: <https://www.indigostruments.com/blog/chemistry-cat-memes-that-are-absolutely-meowgnificent/>

Questions?

Breakout Session Two:

Implementing System-Wide Supports for Transitional Readers

11:15 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.



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Contact Us

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Links

- [Doing a YA Collection Diversity Audit](#) by Karen Jensen
- [Colorado spent \\$231 million to help young children catch up on reading](#) by Christopher Osher
- [The Five Grade Level Reading Skills](#)
- [Grade Level Reading Workplan 2018](#)
- [Guessing Geisel: A Mock Blog](#)
- [Read Play Learn's K-2nd grade section](#)
- [Reading Level Resources](#) (includes Perma Bound's Text Correlation Guide and more)
- [Scholastic Kids & Family Reading Report](#)
- [Implementing System-Wide Supports for Transitional Readers - Part Two](#)
- [Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack](#)