



# BOOKS

## Owl - Saint John Paul II – Jr. Camp

### Background

The Jr. Camp group at Owl - Saint John Paul II completed a project on “Books”. This group of 26 children includes children ages 5 and 6. It spanned from July through August, with Amanda Sagastume, RECE, EunHee Jang, RECE and Kara Moshier, RECE as the facilitators.

### Phase I: Beginning the Project

Our group’s project on books began as we observed an interest in listening to stories read aloud, books being played on CDs, as well as watching and listening to stories on the iPad. We prepared a provocation involving stapled paper booklets and bound page protector booklets for the children to explore. This prompted the children to author and illustrate their own stories, as well as select and display art work in the page protector booklets. The booklets were changed each week to create ongoing art books.

We took their interest in books and expanded into discussions with the children about their knowledge and questions concerning books. We asked the children what do they know about books, what do they want to know and whom they think we can ask.

What do we know?	What do we want to know?	Who can we ask?
<b>Kayla:</b> Every book has an author. <b>Simone:</b> There are pictures to look at. <b>Astrid:</b> You can get books at a store. <b>Michael, Sebastian:</b> Books are made of paper. <b>Ella:</b> Big kid books have no pictures! <b>Cameron:</b> The outside of a book can be plastic. <b>Colton:</b> The outside of the book is a cover.	<b>Kayla:</b> How are books made? <b>Kayla:</b> Who makes books? <b>Astrid:</b> What are books made of? <b>Ella:</b> Where are books made? <b>Colton:</b> Why do some books have no pictures? <b>Ethan:</b> Why do some books have no words?	<b>Ella, Evelyn:</b> Me!  <b>Astrid:</b> Eira, my sister, knows a lot about books or a librarian.  <b>Kayla:</b> an author

## Phase 2: Developing the Project

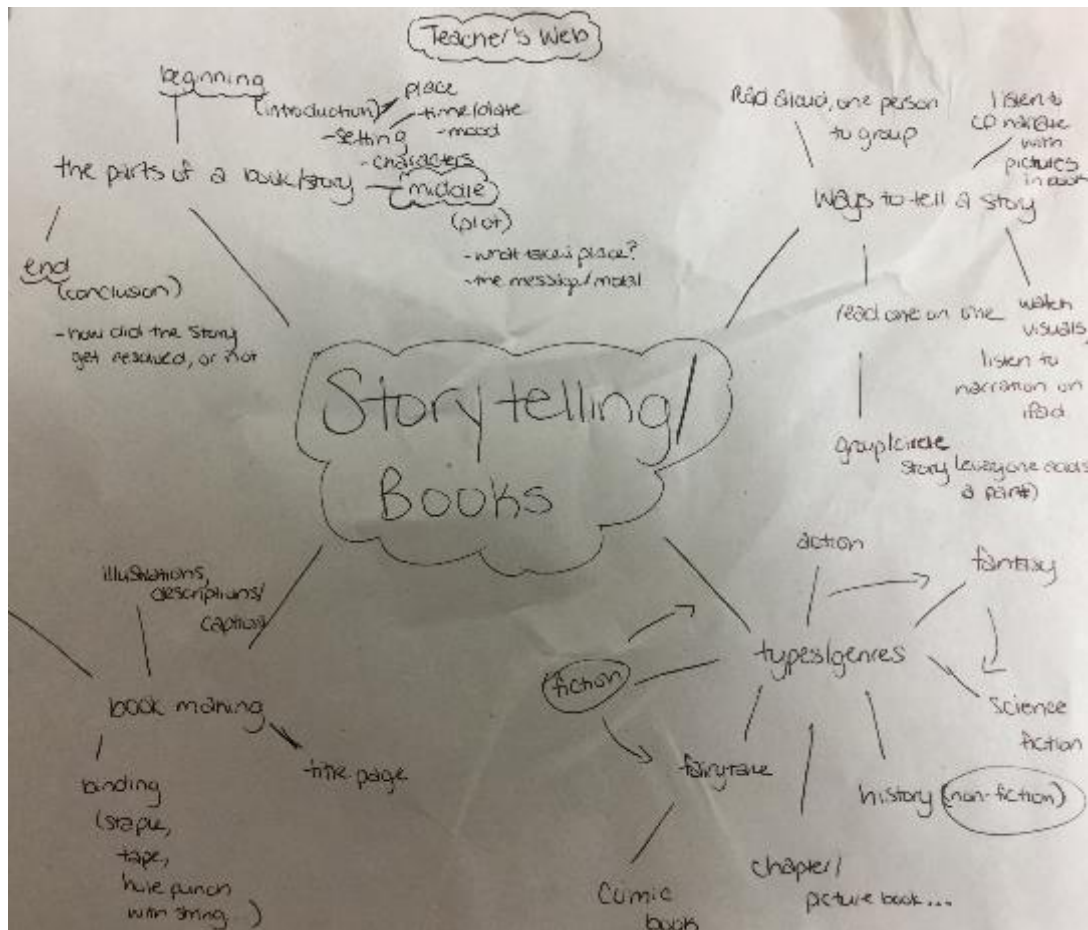


Figure 1

The staff began brainstorming what areas we could expand this topic to. These included, the parts of a story, ways to tell a story, types/genres, and book making (the title page, illustrations, writing, binding, et cetera). This was included in a web (Figure 1).

Upon investigation (based on our “What do we want to know?” questions and observations) the children seemed to be most interested in book making, types of books and how to tell a story. These areas coincided with our teacher’s web ideas.

We created a key words vocabulary list to investigate the meanings of with the children (Figure 2).

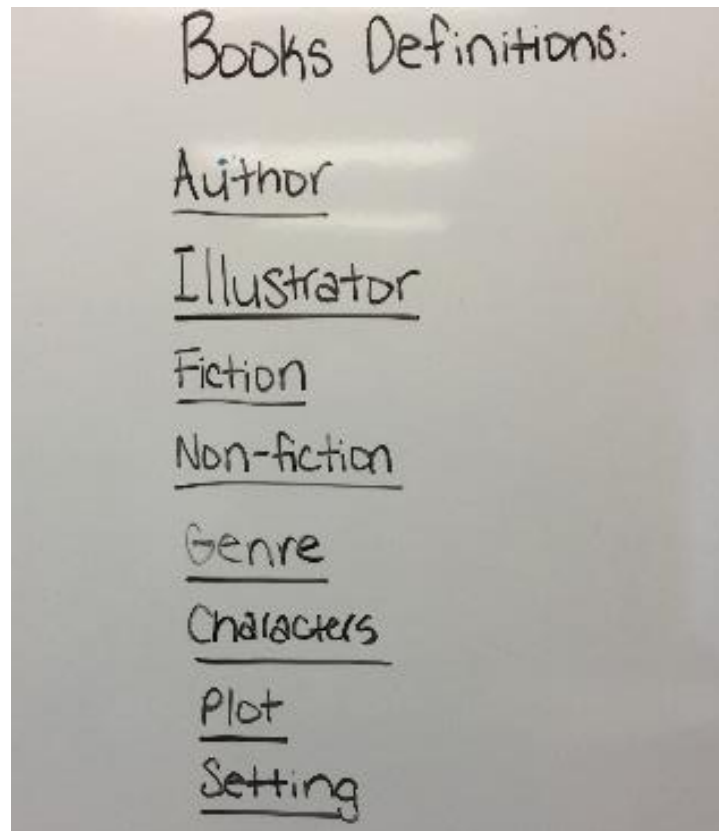


Figure 2

### Informal Definitions (children tell us what they think the words mean)

1. Author - "An author is the person who writes the book." – Connor
2. Illustrator - "An illustrator is the person who draws the pictures." - Kara K.
3. Fiction - "Fiction means the book is not real." – Connor
4. Non-Fiction - Non-fiction means it's real." – Wade
5. Genre - All the children were unsure of the meaning of this. Some ideas were "half true, half not", "It's a funny book", "only has pictures or only has words". They were on the right track! We read the Google definition, which explained it is a type of book or the kind of story. The children brainstormed examples, which included "funny", "science", "scary", "true story", etc.
6. Characters - "People in the book who say something."
7. Plot - This was another word we were unsure of. A Google search informed us that it is the main event of the story.
8. Setting - Kayla thought "the making of the book?" We searched this term and learned it is the place or time where/when the story happens.
9. Title - Connor reminded us of a definition we were missing - Title! He described this as the "name of the story". Ella described this as "what the book is called"

### Formal Definitions (Google vocabulary words)

1. Author – a write of a book, article or report
2. Illustrator – a person who draws or creates pictures for magazines, books, etc.

3. Fiction – writing that describes imaginary events and people (short stories, novels)
4. Non-Fiction – writing that is based on facts, real events and people (biography, history)
5. Genre – a category of artistic creation (music, writing) represented by different styles/subjects
6. Characters – a person in a novel, play or movie
7. Plot – the main events of a play, novel, movie created by the writer in a specific order
8. Setting – the place or surroundings where an event or story happens
9. Title – the name of a book

## 1<sup>st</sup> Representation Drawings

Throughout the project, we took many opportunities to introduce different types of books and methods of reading to the children. These included a variety of genres (comic, action, comedy, chapter, poetry). We also looked at different ways of listening to a story: audio book, one-on-one reading, reading aloud group stories, video and narration of a story. We also actively engaged in story telling by singing songs in a story and filling in the blanks of a rhyming story.

These experiences with books and stories inspired a provocation for the children to create their own art or written story to include in a book (Figure 3 & 4). Figure 5 & 6 is one child's first representation of a book. It is titled "Rapunzel" by author Simone, age 5.



Figure 3



Figure 4





Figure 5

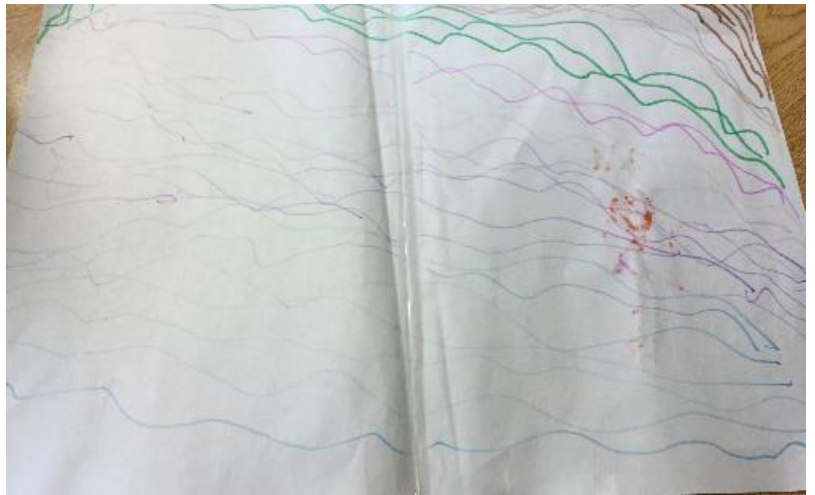


Figure 6

Below (Figure 7) the children are pictured listening to a CD narrate the story as Kara turns the pages. This helps the children to follow along with the words and illustrations. This type of book captured many children's attention as there are often sound effects and music accompanying the narration.



Figure 7

## Creating a Story-Telling Circle

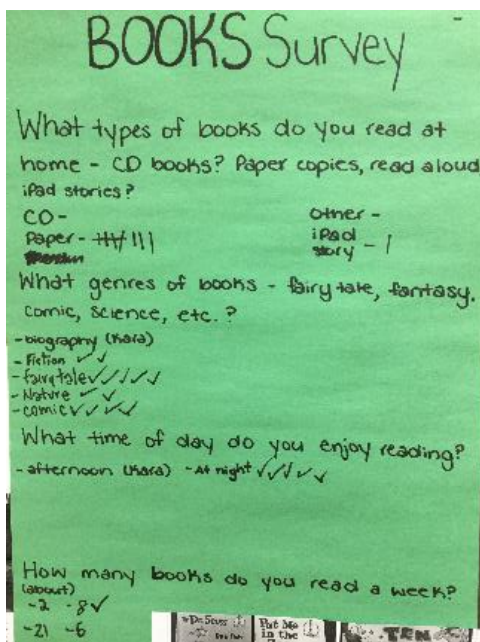


Figure 8

Amanda led a group time to invite the children to imagine their own event to add to a group story (Figure 8). Amanda explained that a story has a beginning, middle and end. After the children added their piece, Amanda recorded their descriptions then read aloud the full story!

## Survey

The children and parents were invited to do a survey to determine more about our book knowledge and interests (Figure 10). This was also a way of including input and involvement from families. Our results state that most children read paper copies of books at home, the most popular genre is fairytale, most common time to read is at night, and an average of 8 books are read per week.



**BOOKS Survey**

What types of books do you read at home - CD books? Paper copies, read aloud, iPad stories?

CD -	Other -
Paper - 11/11	iPad - 1

What genres of books - fairytale, fantasy, comic, science, etc.?

- biography (none)
- Fiction ✓
- fairytale ✓✓✓
- Nature ✓✓
- comic ✓✓✓

What time of day do you enjoy reading?

- afternoon (none) - At night ✓✓✓

How many books do you read a week? (about)

- 2 - 8 ✓

- 21 - 6

Figure 10

## Sharing Books from Home

Owl families also got involved by sharing books from home with the class. Some children initiated this with science/nature books (such as Kara, age 6 - Figure 11) or comic/superhero books (Wade, age 5 - Figure 12). The children chose to show the pictures and/or narrate the book. EunHee helped to facilitate these activities, supporting the children by reading from the books if desired.



Figure 11



Figure 12

## Creating a Menu Booklet

Another provocation that was set out included menu booklet making. The children were free to cut from a variety of fliers, paste their choices in paper booklets and draw/label with writing materials. The children expressed their knowledge in a variety of ways (Figure 13 & 14), as pictured with Sebastian, age 5 and Kacey age 6.





Figure 13



Figure 14

Some children even included numeracy in their menu booklets by writing prices for their menu items, such as Kara, age 6 (Figure 15) and Piper, age 4 (Figure 16).

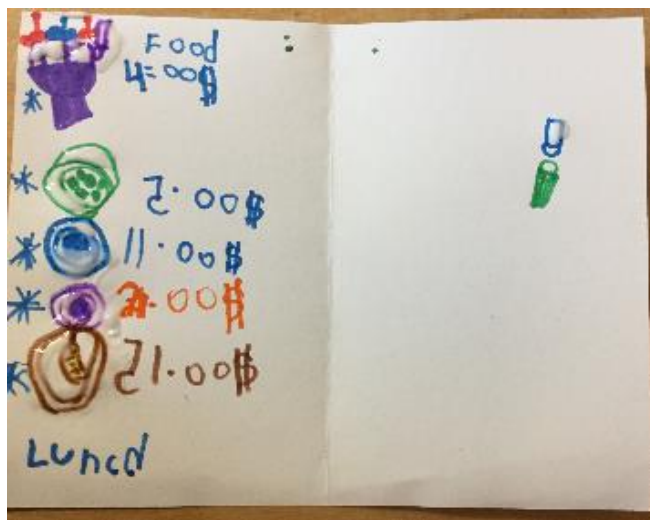


Figure 15



Figure 16



## Exploring Genres & Voting

Amanda displayed examples of genres, such as a chapter book and a comic book (Figure 17). Throughout this particular week, the children were read to and were free to explore a variety of genre books, also including comedy, picture book, action/superhero, seasonal, mystery and poetry. We discussed what characteristics define the genres, such as “comedy means a silly or funny story”.



Figure 17

At the end of this week, once we had explored several genres, the children were invited to vote on their favourite. They were able to write their name or check on the poster matching to the book of the one they enjoyed the most (Figure 18 & 19). The results showed that Peanuts comic and Dr. Seuss (One Fish, Two Fish and Put Me in The Zoo) were our top 2!



Figure 18



Figure 19

## Materials & Tools for Book-making & Binding

To help us explore some of our inquiries about how books are made, we set up a provocation with a variety of book making materials and tools. This included plain paper, lined paper, plastic sleeves, stapler, hole punch, and string. The children could use these to make an art book, write in a book, or save their work in a page protector booklet. This experience helped the children to learn different methods of binding books, such as stapling or taping the spine, as well as to hole punch/tie the spine with string. We learned books do not only have to be paper or words – they can be made of a variety of materials and feature art as well! Below (Figures 20, 21 & 22), Charlotte, age 6, Lena, age 5, and Sebastian and Wade, ages 5, are using different methods and resources for book-making.



Figure 20



Figure 21



Figure 22

## Poem Writing

As we have learned about rhyming books, a few children were interested in helping to create poetry. EunHee and Kara set out sticky notes with simple words and some books for inspiration (Figure 23). Kara, age 6, used a “Llama Llama” rhyming book as inspiration, shown in Figure 24. We picked out the rhyming words in this story, noticing they were at the ends of sentences. Then we gave it a try!



Figure 23



Figure 24

We then worked together to use the rhyming sticky notes we had come up with so far and insert them into short stories. We remembered how there is a beginning (setting, characters...), middle (plot), and end. Here is an example:

“There was a cat in a hat  
The cat chased a rat  
What’s sillier than that?  
Then, the silly cat fell asleep!  
As he was asleep, he dreamed about sheep!”

We then tried a variety of genres of poetry, including a Halloween poem:

“I went to grab my hat  
Unfortunately, inside there was a bat!  
In the corner, the bat saw a rat  
So, the bat hid in my hat!  
This was a game of hide and seek  
But it was so spooky, it made me shriek  
I realized I was in a haunted house  
With scary creatures, like a vampire mouse!  
Then I made a scream,  
But I realized it was just a dream.”



## Comprehension of Vocabulary (applying our knowledge)

Throughout our study of books, we challenged the children to apply their vocabulary knowledge to a variety of group stories. Figure 25 gives an example. We identified the book's author, illustrator, title, genre, fiction or non-fiction, characters, plot and setting.

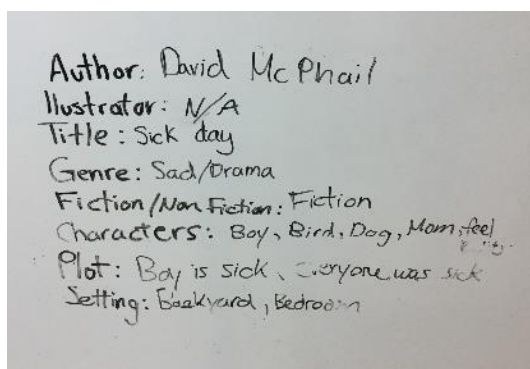


Figure 25

## Exploring Reading in Various Languages

To include cultural exploration in our book project, we introduced the reading of a group story in three languages. Amanda translated our “Giraffes Can’t Dance” story to Spanish, EunHee translated it to Korean (Figure 26), and Kara conducted the final reading of the story in English. We were interested to see how the children were most intrigued by listening to the story in their non-native languages. We could understand what might be taking place as we examined the illustrations and listened carefully to the tones of voices used to read the story.



Figure 26

## Phase 3: Concluding the Project

### Story-Telling Through Various Means (Final Experience) – 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3D Representation

As a way of expressing our knowledge and interests about books and storytelling, we provided a variety of story-telling materials for the children to work alone or with peers. This also acted as a way of representing what a book means to them, after we had learned more about them in depth. In many cases, this experience resulted in a 3D representation, including a playdough and loose parts structure, art and story books, et cetera.



Figure 27



Figure 28

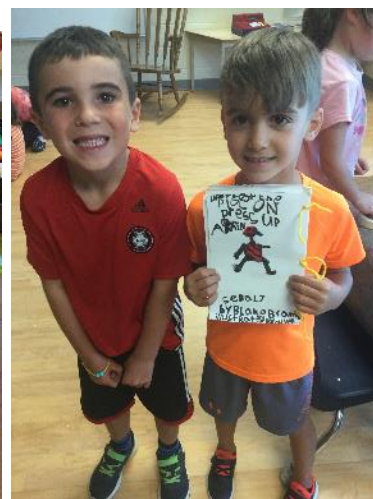


Figure 29

Figure 27 displays several of the children at work expressing their stories through colourful art, writing or hands-on mediums. In Figure 28, Evera (age 6) and Colton (age 6) work together to express a story, as Colton displays it with playdough and loose parts while Evera creates an artistic version of events on paper. Oliver (age 6) and Blake (age 6) proudly display their work about the Pigeon Who Drove the Bus, a representation of a popular children's series.

Once the children had added the finishing touches to their story projects, they were invited to share with their peers. This added an element of language and a social experience to the individual projects. We hope from this, the children learned there are many types of books or ways to express a story.

### Community Involvement – The Final Answers to Our Questions

We initially asked several questions about books, and suggested who we may ask for help with these. We decided to reach out to a local library to inquire if an employee could provide us some answers. We received a reply, which included:



**Kayla: How are books made?**

Books are made at a place called a printers. The printers take the words and pictures and print them on large sheets of paper, which they then cut down and sew or glue together to make a book.

**Kayla: Who makes books?**

Authors write the book and then the book gets sent to printers. The printers take paper, glue, and ink and make the book.

**Who is an author?**

An author is anyone who puts words on a page.

**Astrid: What are books made of?**

Today books are made of paper which is glued, tied, or sewn together. When people first started writing there was no paper so they used whatever they could find such as leaves, bark, metal, wood, and animal skin.

**Ella: Where are books made?**

Books are made at a place called the printers. Printers is a place that has big machines that print images and words on large sheets of paper that then get made into books. There are these places all around the world.

**Colton: Why do some books have no pictures?**

Some books don't have pictures because they are generally for people who have more experience reading and can imagine what the author is saying through the words. Also, it takes a long time and a lot more money to print pictures. This is not to say that these type of books are better than books with pictures. They both are important and they both tell important stories.

**Ethan: Why are some only with pictures?**

Books that have a lot of pictures are generally books for people who are just learning to read or for people who enjoy looking at pictures. The pictures in books can help a reader understand what is going on in the story by using art to tell the author's message.

## Teacher Reflections

Kara: I enjoyed how this project allowed the children to explore a shared interest in a way that was suited to their learning style, as we provided many methods of sharing or creating a book or story. The children and educators were able to collaborate to create our own verbal stories, written or picture books, 3D stories and even explore new genres and languages that may not have been familiar. I believe the children's language and social experiences developed as we explored this topic, as well as other learning domains such as numeracy and science. These we incorporated through surveying, voting, charting, nature and animal books, etc. There is so much to explore within the world of books and I hope we were able to touch on the most meaningful aspects for the children.



EunHee: Throughout the summer, by facilitating the book project, the children and I both had a great opportunity to learn more about books. By approaching the community library to have the answers from the children, I personally had a chance to converse with the librarians and know that there were various programs going on to expand children's literacy and creativity skills. The most meaningful moment I had with the children was at the end of the project when I shared the story in Korean, the children seemed to be so mesmerized. Even though they did not understand the language itself, the children seemed to grab the meaning by the tones and illustrations. Through this experience, we all were able to know that we could communicate with each other through different ways such as visual cues and tones of voice.

Amanda: It was rewarding to extend a learning experience according to the children's interests. We created the book project based on our observations that the children were interested in, making books of their own. The children received the project responsively as they continued to demonstrate their interests in books throughout the project. Using the vocabulary words such as: title, introduction, setting, plot and author, we experienced the children brainstorming for answers as a group. This was a great experience as all the children learned from one another. They were able to develop the foundation of engagement, belonging, and expression, as well as enhance their skills in fine motor and language development. Each child had the opportunity to create the book of their choice with words, art or various materials. We were able to introduce the types of books including comic books. The children were intrigued to see how each image in the book was a scene of the story. Some decided to create chapter books, a short story or a comic book. We were able to foster an understanding of the types of books children were interested in by collecting information through a survey. Exploring the different types of books was an experience that kept everyone's interest, including the educators. I hope that this will be an experience that the children can carry on and benefit from in their future.