

## PICTURE BOOK COLLECTION PLAN

### DESCRIPTION

The circulating picture book collection is divided into five categories which are shelved separately according to age, special interest, and readability. These include picture books, readers, board books, Caldecott Award (with Dr. Seuss), and holiday. A non-circulating collection used for storytimes is located in the staff office, and includes items with copyright permission for Channel 10 broadcasts. Overall, the ICPL collection serves a range of needs with enough breadth and depth to meet the demands of a literate, educated community. Primary use is by children from infancy through second grade and the adults who live or work with them. Picture books are defined here as shorter-length works published for children that rely equally on illustration and story line or simple fact to engage readers.

### SCOPE AND EXCEPTIONS

The Library's mission statement places priority on life-long learning. Picture books are one of the first library collections that children use before reaching school age and are essential to the promotion of literacy and learning. The scope is comprehensive, with wide representation of present and past authors, illustrators, series, subjects, and styles. It emphasizes quality but also meets popular demand and specialized topic needs.

Unique types of picture books include:

#### **Board Books:**

Durable books with cardboard pages that help infants and toddlers learn language and recognition skills. Most include simple stories, word identification or concepts.

#### **Picture Books:**

Hardback books in which text and illustration are equally important. Most are 32 pages in length. Types include: original story, concept, word identification, Mother Goose, simple fairy tale, picture puzzle, wordless, basic facts, life skill, bibliotherapy, and single song. Many appeal to younger kids, but some have mature topics for use with older students. Most are kept in low shelving and block-sorted alphabetically by the first three letters of an author's last name. Separate areas include Caldecott Award, Dr. Seuss titles, and Holiday picture books (intershelved with fiction and nonfiction items).

#### **Readers:**

Readers are picture books designed for children who are beginning or practicing readers. These books are formatted like chapter books, with 32-64 pages, large print, illustration on most pages, and white space between words and sentences. Many feature controlled vocabulary or other reading methodologies. Appeal and readability levels are important for users of these titles. Readers serve as a transition between picture books and long chapter books.

Scope and organization of the collection have changed over time. Once, readers and preschool nonfiction were interspersed with traditional picture books. Even earlier, picture books were shelved in subject areas rather than alphabetically by author. There is some overlap between jEs and nonfiction in fairy tales, social issues, poetry, and songs. These books are often remade as films and purchased for the DVD collection. Some are now offered online via the Library's website and *Tumblebooks*. While downloadable

picture books may eventually be user-friendly and attractive to read, they aren't as of yet (though a new *LookyBooks* website seems promising.) Picture books are generally cataloged by format rather than strict interpretation of subject or age "appropriateness."

Publishers continue to expand the definition of today's picture book. The influence of manga and the graphic novel is increasing, as seen by the 2008 Caldecott Award choice, *The Invention of Hugo Cabaret*. Some formats work well for libraries while others do not. Pop-up books (with exception of program collection), mass market Golden Books, paperbacks, sticker or workbook stories, and movable part or toy books are not purchased. Some lift-the-flap books are added if durable. Picture books accompanied by compact discs are added to the jAudio/Book collection. Those that come with a puppet or stuffed animal are added as circulating toys.

#### **AUDIENCE**

Primary users are parents and children from infancy through second grade plus adults who work as early childhood educators and daycare providers. The collection is a supplemental resource for elementary school teachers, older pupils, and home-school families. Occasional use is made by college students, grandparents, youth groups, tutors, authors, artists, and babysitters. In addition, library staff and volunteers use picture books for children's programs and displays.

#### **SIZE AND DUPLICATION**

As of 12/07, the number of items in subcategories of the Picture Book were: 1,254 board books (scat 12), 18,463 picture books (scat 102), 4,421 readers (scat 103), and 435 Caldecott books (scat 104). The holiday collection includes 2,024 items which are mostly picture books (scat 106). There are approximately 800 picture books in the program collection (scat 702).

Duplicate copies are important for bestsellers, acclaimed authors or illustrators, and classic titles in regular use. Up to 60% of the budget is used in any year for extra copies or replacements. Best sellers and holds do not drive selection as much as adult collections, but demand is considered for initial and follow-up ordering. There are few purchase alerts for picture books. Added copies are routinely ordered for titles and authors that are classic, time-tested, and in continual demand.

#### **MAINTENANCE**

Maintaining physical condition for picture books requires vigilance plus assistance from all who discover items in poor repair. Users often read these books repeatedly, in the library as well as at home. Young children may not know how to care for books, resulting in torn pages, drawing, chewed covers, water damage, and grosser evidence best left unsaid. The stacks must also be searched for damaged items that get checked in and shelved. Board books are weeded often for condition while others are checked once or twice a year.

Systematic monitoring of condition is also important. Since 2005, items circulating more than 100 times have been examined once a year and replaced if necessary or withdrawn. Holdings for picture books that circulate 12 times or more per year are also checked for

added copy orders. An annual item purge is done for books not circulating at least once a year. Some purged items may be used for outreach collections in the community.

Shelving can become an issue at slow times of the year. But most children's collections got more shelf space when the new building opened in June, 2004. Those that didn't are considered no-growth collections (i.e. board books). With an annual turnover rate of 6, picture books are often in use which helps maintain shelving capacity.

#### SELECTION

Prepublication reviews and promotional "buzz" are important and many titles are ordered early so patrons can see what's coming and place holds. Yet picture books are a unique art form, so equal attention is paid to critical qualities too. Selection in this area requires an understanding of the aesthetics, history, and trends of the format. As well as the ability to balance popular demand, media hype, and subject coverage needs with quality vs. quantity concerns. Familiarity with a broad range of children's literature helps, plus an awareness of publishing trends, literary awards, community interests, school assignments, visiting authors, and current stories in the popular media.

The most important review sources are *Booklist*, *Kirkus*, and *Publisher's Weekly*, followed by *School Library Journal*, *BCCB*, and *Horn Book*. *The New York Times Book Review*, *Booklinks*, *Home Education*, and *Parents* are also used. Some online journals, blogs, and wikis are consulted, such as *The Edge of the Forest*, *PlanetEsme*, and *childrensbookreviews*. All award and honor picture books are ordered plus ALA Notables. Other national book awards are considered. Board books and readers are not as frequently reviewed, so *TitleSource* lists and prebound catalogs are used for new and retrospective development. Publisher catalogs and subject bibliographies help with collection gaps. Most ordering is done online. Standing orders are not used nor are preview plans or visits from publisher sales representatives.

Split bindings and loose pages are a problem. Trade bindings are the least durable and last 30 circulations. Reinforced editions are better. Pre-bound books often circulate more than 100 times. Generally, jEs are ordered in the most durable edition available, regardless of discount.

Donated items in good condition are added if there is sufficient demand. The collection is also supported by the Jessica Lottman endowed fund plus small designated gifts on occasion. Finally, patron suggestions are welcomed and most are ordered if possible.

Updated January 28, 2008