

Selection Criteria for Books for Children.

The following criteria is the result of the activities undertaken under the Bhutan Children’s Book Initiative Project, a collaboration between the Ministry of Education and Save the Children International, Bhutan Country Office, Thimphu. School teachers and parents can use this suggestive criteria in selecting reading materials for their children.

Text Content	4-6Years age group	7-9 Years age group	Notes
<p>Appropriateness of story/text/theme for the age group</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Themes and realities familiar to 4 to 6 years old children; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ doing things by oneself ✓ going places (the market, the health centre, etc.) ✓ mastering impulses and emotions (getting angry, etc.) ✓ navigating relationships with parents, siblings, and friends ✓ acquiring basic values • Predictable stories, with repeated events centered around a child’s world (home and neighbourhood) or problem that a 4 to 6 year would conceivably encounter or need to be resolved • The story offers children a variety of things to think about, to question, and to consider; it encourages discussion, • Humor that is easy to grasp (silly characters, situations, games) • Memorable characters • Nonsensical situations and characters • GENRES relevant <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Short poems, nursery 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Themes and realities familiar to 7-9 years old children; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Building Relationships at school and at home ✓ Animals/pets (including talking animals) ✓ Moral character (sharing, being kind) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Playing (games) Family relationships ✓ Conflicts and problems (problems related to family, friends and schools) • Predictable plot, with repeated events that are easy for children to understand with the aid of the illustrations and repeated readings) • Memorable characters • Age appropriate tension, conflict or problem that needs to be resolved. • Light, humorous stories, typical of childhood experiences • Concrete, easy to understand ideas • GENRES relevant <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Traditional tales with simple descriptions (and with repeated patterns) Poems, Fantasy, Realistic fiction, 	<p>Genres relevant: The book assessed should be of one of the relevant genres.</p>

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	rhymes and songs; ABC books, counting books, wordless picture books; informational picture books	Informational/factual texts, Simple biographies on well-known subjects	
Appropriateness of length for age group	No more than 32 pages and 500 words	No more than 40 pages and 1000 words	
Presentation	4-6 Years age group	7-9 Years age group	
Quality, attractiveness and appropriateness of cover for age group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cloth books or books that use heavier and thicker stock paper (e.g. paper used in visiting card/certificates etc) and hard covers (150 gsm for inside pages and 300 gsm for cover page) • Cover visually appealing to children • Title, author and illustrator on cover page and title page • Interesting title • Large print (title) • Title is related to the story. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Books that use heavier and thicker stock paper (e.g. paper used in visiting card/certificates etc) and hard covers (150 gsm for inside pages and 300 gsm for cover page) • Cover visually appealing to children • Title, author and illustrator on cover page and title page • Large print • Interesting title 	
Appropriateness of page design & layout for age group (including placement and amount of text on page)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent placement of illustrations and text on page • Illustrations separated from print • Some special features in the illustrations and print that engage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some variety in placement of illustrations and text on page • Illustrations not always separated from print 	

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	interest and make texts interactive <i>(pop-up books, lift the flap books, see through holes, sound effects)</i>		
Quality, relevance and appropriateness of illustrations for age group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large, colorful (bold colors) and visually appealing; More detailed • Take up the majority of the space on page • Illustrations complement understanding of text 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large, clear, colorful, visually appealing illustrations in a variety of media • More detailed and complex illustrations • Illustrations complement understanding of text, and in particular the mood of the story • Labelled pictures drawings or photographs 	
Appropriateness of font & font size, for the age group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large primary font (Fonts that are appealing for age group and large enough to see) • Exaggerated (bigger) spacing between lines and words 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large primary font (Fonts that are appealing for age group and large enough to see) • Exaggerated (bigger) spacing between lines and words 	
Appropriate and accurate use of color	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bright and colourful • Full colour illustrations • Accurate colours (unless colours are inaccurate intentionally, for example a blue elephant because the story is about an elephant who is blue) • Clarity of colours - no blurring (unless intentional, for storyline) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bright and colourful • Full colour illustrations • Accurate colours (unless colours are inaccurate intentionally, for example a blue elephant because the story is about an elephant who is blue) • Clarity of colours - no blurring (unless intentional, for storyline) 	

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Language & Editorial	4-6 Years age group	7-9 Years age group	
Quality of writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patterned and predictable language (word or phrase that repeats several times in the story), however text has a good rhythm and flow; it is fun to read aloud and sounds good when read aloud • Language and word play: rhymes, alliterations, etc. • Interesting and engaging words 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sometimes (but not always) patterned and predictable language (word or phrase that repeats several times in the story), however text has a good rhythm and flow; it is fun to read aloud and sounds good when read aloud • Language and word play: rhymes, alliterations, etc. • Interesting and engaging words • Some figurative language that is easy to understand 	
Appropriateness of language patterns, vocabulary and sentence structure for age group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sentences that are more complex than children would use in everyday oral conversation but easy to follow (not tricky sentence structures that children would find hard to repeat) • Many words that are in children’s speaking vocabulary • Some words that will be memorable to children • Some figurative language that is easy to understand • Simple dialogue that is easily attributed to characters (fiction only) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Figurative language that is easy to understand • Word Play (rhymes, alliterations, mixing words) • Blend of vocabulary that children know (and likely use when speaking) and new, interesting words that will be memorable to children • Blend of long and short sentences; • Sentences that are more complex than children would use in oral conversation, but easy to follow. No tricky structures • Simple dialogue that is easily attributed to characters (fiction only) 	

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<p>Respect of conventions (absence of typos and other errors)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sentences start with capitals and end with periods or other appropriate punctuation. • Proper nouns start with capitals • No typos or grammatical errors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sentences start with capitals and end with periods or other appropriate punctuation. • Proper nouns start with capitals • No typos or grammatical errors 	
<p>Promotion of positive values</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">4-6 Years age group</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">7-9 Years age group</p>	
<p>Plot/theme/illustration addresses an important social and cultural values (equality; gender equality, environment, moral/integrity) in a way that is appropriate for the target audience</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The plot/theme/topic promotes understanding of a diverse society - that all people, regardless of their backgrounds, have feelings (love, sadness, fear, the desire for fairness and justice) and aspirations. • The illustrations are bias-free (no blatant or implicit racist, sexist or stereotypical representations/stereotypes) and culturally sensitive (i.e. people from different cultures are depicted as genuine individuals with distinctive features; characters have features that align with their culture and context) • The plot/theme/topic stresses the importance of challenging prejudice, stereotyping, unfairness, inequity and all forms of discrimination (for 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The plot/theme/topic promotes understanding of a diverse society - that all people, regardless of their backgrounds, have feelings (love, sadness, fear, the desire for fairness and justice) and aspirations. • The illustrations are bias-free (no blatant or implicit racist, sexist or stereotypical representations/stereotypes) and culturally sensitive (i.e. people from different cultures are depicted as genuine individuals with distinctive features; characters have features that align with their culture and context) • The plot/theme/topic stresses the importance of challenging prejudice, stereotyping, unfairness, inequity and all forms of discrimination (for example, young girls or females are portrayed as brave, independent, leaders and risk 	

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	<p>example, young girls or females are portrayed as brave, independent, leaders and risk takers or boys are portrayed as having emotions or wanting to engage in non traditional activities)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The plot/theme exposes children to multiple perspectives and values 	<p>takers or boys are portrayed as having emotions or wanting to engage in non traditional activities)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The plot/theme exposes children to multiple perspectives and values 	
Appropriateness of the way in which the social and or cultural message is addressed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Values or social and or cultural messages are explored instead of preached 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The conflicts or problems are solved (or resolved) in a socially, culturally and age-appropriate way, and without moralizing or preaching 	
Guiding Notes for users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear indication on how to use picture books for specific age group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear indication on how to use picture books for specific age group 	
Factual/Accuracy (Non Fiction only)	Facts are accurate and age appropriate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facts are accurate and age appropriate 	