

# Intentional Thinking

## A Note From Your Pedagogical Leader

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### Hello Families,

#### Special points of interest:

- *High-quality children's literature supports children's social, emotional, and cognitive development.*
- *Children in our programs have constant access to high-quality children's literature. In particular, we have recently developed a Read Aloud Collection with many new books!*

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Welcome to Intentional Thinking! This is a fairly new monthly publication put out by the CCLC's Pedagogical Leader. In case you missed the first few issues and have not yet met me, I have included some introductory information to fill you in.

In the fall of 2016, the Child Care and Learning Centre began developing a pedagogical leadership position— first as a pilot project and then as a permanent position in the winter of 2018. The first question most people ask is, "What is a Pedagogical Leader?". Pedagogy is the study of how learning takes place, including the philosophy and practices that support it (Coughlin & Baird, 2013). A Pedagogical Leader supports an early learning and care organization in developing their philosophy, knowledge, and practices related to early learning.

This position is an additional investment that the Centre has chosen to make to ensure that our early learning and care programs are of the

highest quality. Pedagogical Leaders are usually employees of larger organizations, such as municipalities, and tend to work in many different Centres at once. The CCLC's choice to employ its own dedicated Pedagogical Leader is a strong statement of its focus on quality.

Over the last two years in this position, I have been behind the scenes supporting many of the Centre's developments and initiatives. Within this role, I work closely with our Educators to support reflective practice, intentional choices, and ensure that we stay on the cutting edge of early learning. I also instruct the Department of Family Relations and Applied Nutrition's third year undergraduate practicum course

that is based in the CCLC.

At the CCLC, we recognize that partnerships with families have a tremendous impact on children's learning and development. My goal with this publication is to engage you as partners by helping to explain some of the choices our Educators are making within their programs and to share some of the research within the field of early learning that has influenced us.

I am always happy to connect with families, so please feel to reach out at anytime.

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# PROGRAMMING SPOTLIGHT

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## The Importance of Supporting Children's Access to High-Quality Literature

Access to high-quality children's literature is a fundamental component of children's early learning. Children's books can help children develop socially, emotionally, intellectually, personally, culturally, and aesthetically (Renck Jalongo, 2004). Both through the topics covered in stories and the process of reading stories, children can explore interpersonal relationships, social behaviours, emotional competencies, and new information about their world.

Much of the literature that young children are exposed to is picture books. There are many different illustrated books available; however, not all illustrated books are picture books. In order for an illustrated book to be considered a picture book, there must be a balance between the words and the pictures in the work that means that neither of them would be completely effective without the other (Norton, 1999 as cited in Renck Jalongo, 2004). For example, children in the middle grades often read books that have simple drawings at the beginning of chapters. These books would not be considered picture books because the drawings are not critical to the understanding of the story. Picture books typically possess the following five features: a brief and straightforward story line, a limited number of concepts, concepts that children can comprehend, text that is written in a direct and simple manner, and illustrations that complement the text (Renck Jalongo, 2004). Picture books also usually contain an average of about 200 words. There are at least three stories told by each picture book: the story told by the words, the story implied by the pictures, and the story that results from the combination of the words and pictures (Nodelman & Reimer, 2003). Picture books can be storybooks (e.g. *The Snowy Day* by Ezra Jack Keats) or non-fiction information books (e.g. factual books about animals or science topics, concept books about shapes, colours, counting, etc.).

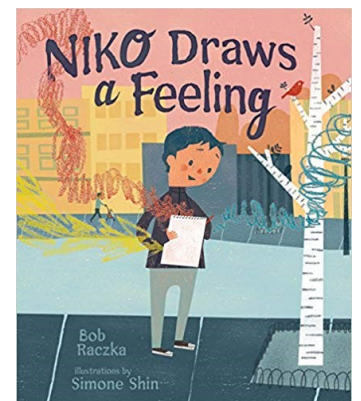
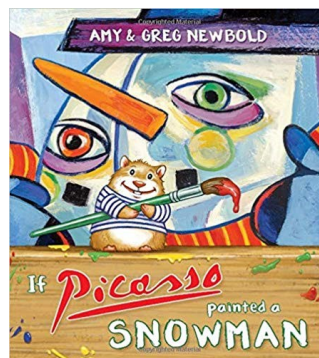
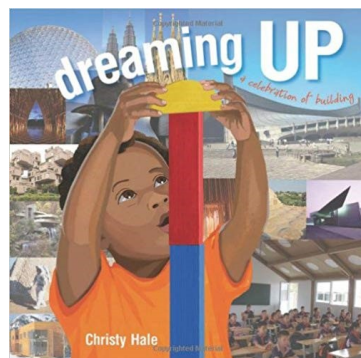
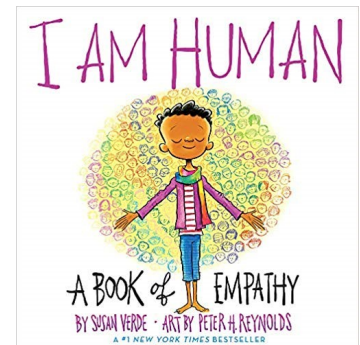
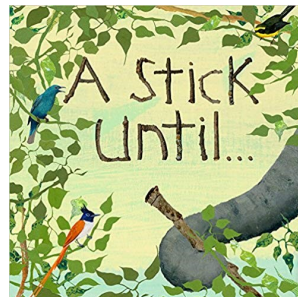
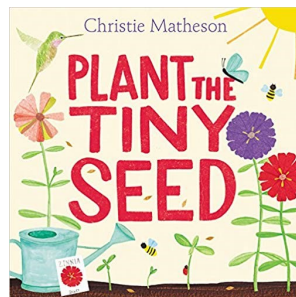
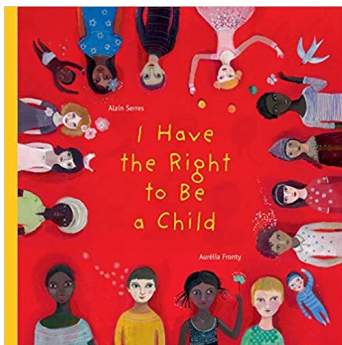
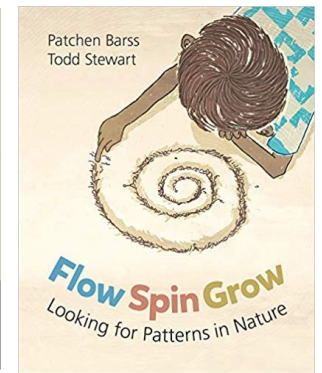
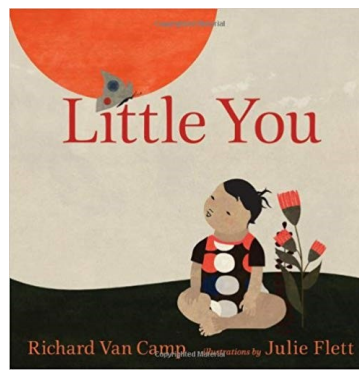
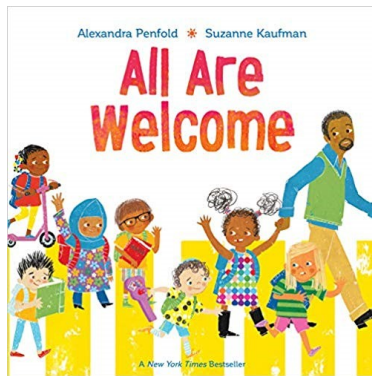
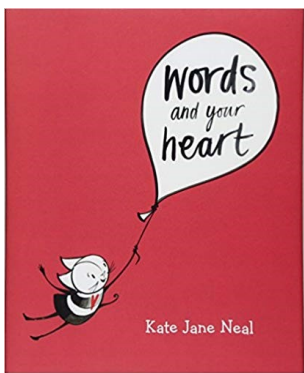
### Why Read Nonfiction and Information Books to Very Young Children?

- To provide accurate, authoritative, and interesting information
- To capitalize on children's natural curiosity and encourage them to pursue answers to questions
- To demonstrate good models of expository prose, text organization, and principles of design
- To stimulate children's desire to seek additional information about topics of interest
- To encourage children to use reference materials appropriately
- To expand children's vocabularies and knowledge of the real world
- To correct children's commonly held misconceptions
- To make children aware of the contributions of individuals and groups to society

(Renck Jalongo, 2004, p. 12)

In the last couple of years, we have developed a special collection of high-quality children's literature that we have called our "Read Aloud Collection". These books are used within our classrooms for read alouds with the children or to act as provocations for learning experiences that the children are exploring. Both our children and educators have been thoroughly enjoying this new collection of books and we are continually adding to it! If you have any favourite titles to recommend please let us know! The children also have constant access to other books from our large library through the reading areas in each of our classrooms.

Here are a few of the books that we have recently added to our Read Aloud Collection:



## How Can You Evaluate a Picture Book?

### General Evaluation Questions

- Does the book compare favorably with other picture books of its type?
- Has the picture book received the endorsements of professionals?
- Are the literacy elements of plot, theme, character, style, and setting used effectively?
- Do the pictures complement the story?
- Is the story free from ethnic, racial, or sex-role stereotypes? Are people of different races, cultures, ethnic groups, and religious groups accurately portrayed? Are all genders portrayed as active and successful? Are families portrayed in all their structural diversity?
- Is the topic (and the book's treatment of it) suitable for the young child?
- Does the picture book also appeal to the parent or teacher?

### Additional Evaluation Questions for Illustrations

- Does the mood expressed by the artwork complement that of the story?
- Are the illustrative details consistent with the text?
- Could a child get a sense of the basic concepts or story sequence by looking just at the pictures?
- Are the illustrations or photographs aesthetically pleasing?
- Can children view and re-view the illustrations, each time getting more from them?
- Are the illustrative style and complexity suited to the age level of the intended audience?

(Huck et al., 2000 as cited in Renck Jalongo, 2004)

## What Are Some of Our Classroom's Current Favourite Books?

### Maple Room

#### **Today I Feel Silly: And Other Moods that Make My Day**

By: Jamie Lee Curtis and Laura Cornell

#### **I Can Roar!**

By: Frank Asch

#### **Peck Peck Peck**

By: Lucy Cousins

### Cedar Room

#### **Goodnight Moon**

By: Margaret Wise Brown

#### **The Very Noisy Bear**

By: Nick Bland

#### **Good Night Gorilla**

By: Peggy Rathmann

#### **Owl Babies**

By: Martin Waddell and Patrick Benson

### Mulberry Room

#### **Little Blue Truck**

By: Alice Schertle

#### **The Tickle Monster**

By: Josie Bissett

#### **Hands Are Not For Hitting**

By: Martine Agassi

#### **Pete the Cat: I Love My White Shoes**

By: Eric Litwin

## Aspen Room

### **Firetruck!**

By: Ivan Utz

### **Down by the Station**

By: Jennifer Riggs Vetter

### **Pete the Cat: I Love My White Shoes**

By: Eric Litwin

### **Where the Wild Things Are**

By: Maurice Sendak

## Tamarack Room

### **Will Ladybug Hug?**

By: Hilary Leung

### **The Wheels on the Truck**

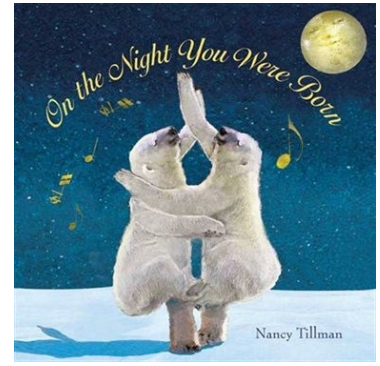
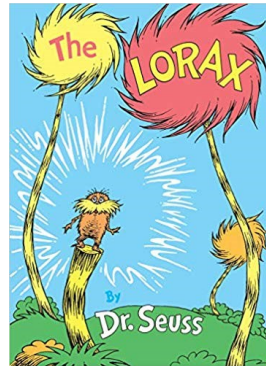
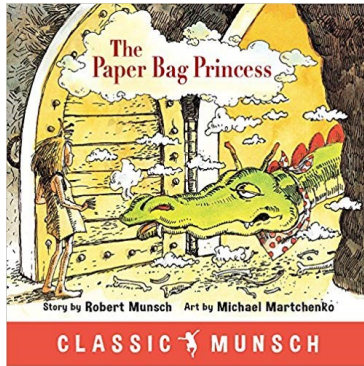
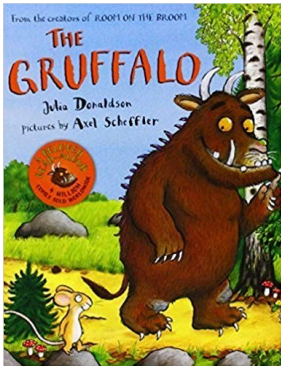
By: Steve Metzger

### **Do You Know Which Ones Will Grow?**

By: Susan A. Shea

### **Waves in the Bathtub**

By: Eugenie Fernandes



## Oak Room

### **The Paper Dolls**

By: Julia Donaldson and Rebecca Cobb

### **The Little Old Lady Who Was Not Afraid of Anything**

By: Linda D. Williams and Megan Lloyd

### **Big Pumpkin**

By: Eric Silverman and S.D. Schindler

## Birch Room

### **In My Heart**

By: Jo Witek

### **Not A Stick**

By: Antoinette Portis

### **The Dot**

By: Peter Reynolds

### **The Snail and the Whale**

By: Julia Donaldson and Axel Scheffler

## Willow Room

### **The Mitten**

By: Jan Brett

### **Pete the Cat and His Four Groovy Buttons**

By: Eric Litwin

### **Not a Box**

By: Antoinette Portis

### **Not a Stick**

By: Antoinette Portis