

Storytime Observation

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I observed the storytimes of the Buena Park Library (“A New Home”, May 14) and Fullerton Library (“How to Take Care of Your Dinosaur”, May 14).

The storytime at the Buena Park Library starts every Tuesday at 11 am and is performed virtually due to the pandemic. To participate in the storytime, registration is needed and the Zoom ID is sent to join. It was 4 minutes long and the title of the book was “A New Home,” a story with detailed pictures. The storytellers name was Aram Kim and it was designed for preschoolers. Animal puppets were used in order to assist in telling the story. In the intro, a pig puppet appeared with music giving a morning greeting. Along with it, pictures of the sun, flowers, and clouds appeared together, which, I think, helped attract the children’s attention and interest. The stage was prepared with white fabric and small lights. As she read the story, the storyteller used her right hand to hold the book and her left hand to turn the pages. It was not easy to see the words in the book even though the font was large. However, the story could be understood with the help of the story telling and pictures. The storyteller’s voice was clear and she spoke with a comfortable tone that made it easier to understand.

The storytime at the Fullerton Library is posted and made accessible every Tuesday with a prerecorded video clip. In the session I attended, the storyteller’s name was Miss Jina. The storytime was over 5 minutes long and was also for preschoolers. The background of the stage was made blue with white clouds. There was a moderate level of lighting with some shadows in the back. The storytime started with a short greeting and a short introduction of the book. The title of the book was “How to Take Care of Your Dinosaur.” The storyteller held the book with her right hand and turned the pages with the other. There was no special music or sounds used in

the background. In the middle of storytelling, the storyteller asked questions to the children in order to draw their attention and get them interested. Her tone was high and the storytelling was not boring because it was done at the appropriate speed with suitable intonation. And, after the storytelling, additional explanation of the story was provided with additional comments. In my opinion, the storyteller's powerful voice tone was good.

In comparing the two storytimes, the first similarity was that the two storytellers were woman. One storyteller at Buena Park library started the storytime with songs while the other storyteller (Fullerton Library) started with a short introduction of the book. In the first one, more visuals and music were used to gain the children's interest. The second storytime did not include as many decorations and music. Instead, the storyteller asked the children questions and kept them engaged to maintain their attention. They also both used a clear tone to make it easier to understand their voice. Also, both storytellers maintained a good speed while reading the stories. A main difference between the two library storytimes were how they were accessed. The Buena Park Library had live sessions online on Zoom while the Fullerton Library prerecorded the videos and posted them online for anyone to view.

What I learned through the storytimes is that display and lightening is important in storytimes. They make the story more interesting and also help gain the children's attention. Also, a comfortable atmosphere is important because they are meant for children. Especially in virtual story times, these are even more important in order to keep children interested and help them enjoy it. In addition, a story stretcher is powerful as it also helps keep the kids' attention. Additionally, I agree that "Storytelling is a very personal art..." in chapter 18 in *Foundations of Children's Services* (p.221). *The voice, tone, and speed are different to each storytellers.* So, I believe that it is important to develop their own style to maximize their storytelling ability.

For me, I prefer the first storytime at Buena Park Library which began with songs. In my opinion, it was better to start with songs and music because it was virtual storytime and would immediately attract the children. As for the background, I learned that a brighter background such as the first one is more effective. The Buena Park Library background was I think more engaging with the kids vs the Fullerton one. The way that the Buena Park Library read their storytime I believe fits the virtual environment much better than the Fullerton. But overall both libraries did a good job of telling their story.