



THE OHIO STATE
UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF
EDUCATION AND HUMAN ECOLOGY

Teacher's Guide for Using **KEEP BOOKS®**

School to Home Reading for Preschool, Kindergarten, and Primary Children

Introduce KEEP BOOKS
in the classroom...



...then send KEEP BOOKS
home to read again & again!

KEEP BOOKS at The Ohio State University

1100 Kinnear Road, Columbus, Ohio 43212 * 800.678.6484 * 614.292.2869

www.keepbooks.org

KEEP BOOKS

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Introduction to KEEP BOOKS

Joyful, competent literacy is the right of every child. As parents, teachers, and citizens, our goal is to establish the skills of literacy for every child so that they can use literacy as a tool for learning and living their lives. More than that, our hope is that children become engaged, **voluntary** readers, who gain information from reading, collect books, find themselves in the texts they read, and experience the real joy of reading. To be readers, children must:

- know what reading and writing are used for;
- read with understanding and write to communicate; and
- use reading and writing as tools for learning.

The research is clear. The more children read, the better they get at reading.¹ From the beginning of their experience in school, it is important for children to read successfully every day; and it is just as important for them to read at home. All of this reading must be successful, interesting, enjoyable, and full of opportunities to learn more. Of course, most children cannot read when they enter kindergarten, and some are just beginning to read as they move into first grade. But, with support and help, they quickly learn to read and enjoy very simple stories that usher them into the world of reading. That is just what KEEP BOOKS are designed to do.

This collection of little books is designed to support children in developing beginning reading skills while involving them in enjoyable reading. The stories are written with young children's interests in mind. They focus on everyday events that will be familiar to children, such as eating pizza or catching a bug. In these books, children will meet child characters like themselves and will enjoy reading about animals with which they are familiar.

These books can be introduced to children by parents, teachers, tutors, school volunteers, and classroom assistants—anyone who works with young children. The children read the books because they enjoy them and learn important skills and concepts, such as:

- You can get information from pictures, but you **read** the print. That is where the message is.
- Letters and sounds can help you figure out words.
- It helps to think about what would make sense when you are trying to figure out a new word.
- If you get stuck, it helps to start over and think what would sound right (and look right with the letters in the word).
- Punctuation helps you read better.

Seemingly simple ideas such as these are only part of the enormous amount of information that a young child needs to acquire and coordinate when learning to read. During all of this learning, it is very important that the reading be fun and easy for the child. Without those qualities, learning will not be effective.



¹ Gibson, S. A., & Scharer, P. L. (2007). *Studying a Kindergarten School-Home Literacy Project: Questions of Classroom Use and Student Response*. *Literacy Teaching and Learning*, 11 (2), 33-47.

Gibson, S. A., & Scharer, P.L. (2001). *"She Can Read Them by Herself!": Parents and Teachers Respond to a Kindergarten School-Home Literacy Project*. *National Reading Conference Yearbook*, 50, pp. 238-247.

How Were KEEP BOOKS Developed?

KEEP BOOKS were developed through a research project at The Ohio State University. With the support of grants from the Martha Holden Jennings Foundation and the Charles A. Dana Foundation, university researchers and classroom teachers worked as partners in several major projects designed to improve literacy education for children. A problem that emerged was the need for beginners to gain more reading experience both at school and at home. Research indicates that:

- Children need a great deal of reading experience to become fluent, competent readers.
- Young readers profit greatly from rereading texts.
- When children are just beginning to read, they need access to very easy books, and those are sometimes hard to find.
- While children can borrow books from school, it is a wonderful experience for them to collect and own books that they can “keep.”

In response to these needs, KEEP BOOKS were designed and tested in classrooms.

What Are KEEP BOOKS?

KEEP BOOKS are little books that children can take home to keep and read again and again. These little books support beginning readers by offering enjoyable stories and a chance to read with independence. The stories in KEEP BOOKS are about children’s everyday lives, and they are simple but interesting and often amusing. They are illustrated with black-and-white line drawings and have colorful covers. Most KEEP BOOKS have eight pages and measure 5½" by 4¼"—just the right size for a child’s hands. Children will enjoy writing their names in their books and coloring or adding to the pictures. KEEP BOOKS also offer a good model for children as they begin to write: They can write their own books using My Own KEEP BOOKS®.

What Is the Purpose of KEEP BOOKS?

KEEP BOOKS serve a number of purposes, because they:

- provide a great deal of easy reading material so children get lots of practice;
- include many high-frequency words that children read again and again, thus building word knowledge;
- provide opportunities for children to notice how words “work” and learn phonics skills;
- make it possible for children to read on their own rather than always depending on adults;
- motivate children to write;
- build a library of books at home that children can access any time;
- help children learn to store, care for, and retrieve books; and,
- help children build confidence in themselves as readers.

Some KEEP BOOKS sets have special purposes. For example, the *Letters, Sounds, & Words* sets are designed to help children learn more about letters, sounds, and words. The *Nursery Rhymes* and *Rhymes & Songs 1* sets are designed to help children learn traditional rhymes and songs and connect them with written language. *Letters, Words, & Numbers* and *Letters, Words, & Numbers Caption Books* sets focus on math concepts, so children are learning to “read” and figure out the kinds of problems that require mathematical reasoning. The *Fact & Fiction 1* set contains 8 paired books. Each fictional title offers an interesting story that is paired with a factual book on the same topic. All are designed to increase children’s confidence and their value for reading.

How Are KEEP BOOKS Used in the Classroom?

These books are designed to be introduced at school or any other organization where children are learning literacy. KEEP BOOKS are not specifically designed for formal reading instruction nor do they take the place of children's literature, which should be included in every classroom library. They do not replace the books that teachers read aloud to children or the leveled book collection that teachers use for small-group reading instruction. Instead, KEEP BOOKS are sources for "extra" reading that begins in the classroom and moves to the home and community. Because of their low cost, personalized appeal to children, and easy portability, KEEP BOOKS are ideal for volunteers and tutors to use with children.

What Is the Best Book for This Child to Read at This Time?

When selecting appropriate books for a particular child or small group of children, adults should consider the **reading level** of the child, the **instructional setting** within which the book will be used, and the **instructional purpose** for using the book.

Reading Level

First of all, books are selected to match the reading level of the reader. Teachers might ask themselves, "What child will be expected to read this book?" and "Is this child an emergent, early, transitional, or self-extending reader?" Emergent readers, age 2–5, are just beginning to read simple stories. Early readers, age 5–7, are reading simple stories. Transitional readers, age 5–7, are reading longer, more complex texts. Self-extending readers, age 6–9, read a variety of texts. Different sets of KEEP BOOKS are written and formatted with these readers in mind.

Emergent readers

- use pictures to predict text;
- begin to match spoken and written word;
- identify some words;
- move their finger left to right/top to bottom; and
- use language to predict text.

Early readers

- use print information to predict;
- use pictures for checking;
- begin to match text with eyes;
- know some words; and
- use several sources of information to solve problems.

Transitional readers

- can read many lines of print;
- do not rely heavily on the pictures;
- know a large number of words by sight; and
- read new words that are more complex.

Self-extending readers

- read more difficult texts with ease;
- read new words with many syllables; and
- use many sources of information to read unknown words.

KEEP BOOKS are designed to have a range of difficulty from very, very easy for young children who are just starting out to more difficult texts for the first and second graders who need a greater challenge. For example, emergent readers can remember a nursery rhyme, notice something in the picture, or follow a repetitive text. Alternatively, early readers need texts that are not so predictable, have varied sentence patterns, and demand problem-solving. *Fact & Fiction 1* chapter books are larger with more pages, paired topics, and more complex text to challenge self-extending readers.

Instructional Setting

The second determiner of book selection is the instructional setting within which the book will be used. Teachers might ask themselves, “Is this book best suited for reading aloud to children, shared reading, guided reading, or independent reading?” In these four settings, reading is accomplished for students, with students or by students (Mooney, 1990):

Reading aloud to children: teachers read to students

Shared reading: teachers read with students

Guided reading: students work in groups to read a book with teacher guidance

Independent reading: student reads alone or with a peer

These instructional settings are graduated depending upon level of teacher support. The teacher takes over most of the task during reading aloud and the students take over most of the task during independent reading.



KEEP BOOKS are written to be used as independent reading material for kindergarten, first-, and second-grade students. Additionally, they may be used for guided reading lessons or as read-alouds that relate to ongoing themes. Some teachers may want to enlarge a KEEP BOOK for use in shared reading. BIG KEEP BOOKS® are suitable for shared reading with small groups and are available in the *Caption Book, Rhymes & Songs 1, Emergent Reader 1, Nursery Rhymes, Spanish Caption Books, Spanish Emergent Reader 1*, and *Spanish Nursery Rhymes* sets.

Most often, books that are selected for reading aloud contain literacy language, complex plots, and advanced vocabulary. They are selected from a variety of genre. Books that are selected for shared reading have features that make them particularly fun to read out loud, such as repeated patterns and wordplay. They are slightly above the children’s level of ability. The books have print that is large enough for all of the children to see and exaggerated spacing between words. Books that are selected for guided reading will be on the children’s instructional level. This means that the children can read the books with 90–94% accuracy. These books challenge children and provide for problem solving. (For early readers, it may be helpful if books are short enough to read in one sitting.) Books that are selected for independent reading are on or below the children’s ability level and will offer just the right amount of challenge. This means that children can read the books with 95–100% accuracy. These books allow children to practice reading books over and over again.

Instructional Purpose

The third reason for selecting a particular book depends on the instructional purpose of the book. Teachers might ask themselves, “What are the learning opportunities inherent in the use of this book?” Different books lend themselves to different learning opportunities. For example, books that have strong picture support with less predictable vocabulary encourage readers to use both the meaning-based picture cues and letter-sound relationships in the text. KEEP BOOKS can be used for a variety of instructional purposes depending upon the reading level of the child and the features of the particular book.

Introducing KEEP BOOKS to Children

KEEP BOOKS are designed to be introduced at school or in any other context supporting children's early literacy, and then to travel home with children. The books have instructional value both at school and at home, because they are used in a carefully planned and structured program.

How Should I Introduce the Concept of KEEP BOOKS to Students?

Before giving books to children to take home, it is best to introduce the books and teach children how to use them. There are several ways to introduce these little books to children.

- The adult can read the book to the child several times, inviting the child to “join in” as the story becomes familiar. Gradually, the child will begin to read the book for himself.
- The adult and child can read the book in unison, with the adult (and later the child) pointing to the words.
- The child can read the book independently after a short introduction.

You want to help your students understand that a KEEP BOOK is a ***different kind of book***. You could say, “This is a book that you get to keep for yourself. You can write your name in it. If you want, you can color the pictures. Most of the other books at school cannot be written or colored in. A KEEP BOOK is a book that you will read over and over, and soon you can take it to your home. When you read it, you point to the words.” Have the children point to the distinctive KEEP BOOKS logo—that is how they will be able to tell that it is a KEEP BOOK.

An effective way to introduce some KEEP BOOKS is to use a special enlarged version of the book. BIG KEEP BOOKS correspond to their smaller counterparts and are available for the ***Caption Books, Emergent Reader 1, Nursery Rhymes, Rhymes & Songs 1, Spanish Caption Books, Spanish Emergent Reader 1, and Spanish Nursery Rhymes*** sets. BIG KEEP BOOKS measure 8½” x 11” and their print has been designed so that it is easy for children to see. You introduce the book through shared reading and then children read the little books for themselves.

What you are really teaching is how to become an owner and collector of books. In a step-by-step process, you teach children what to do when they own a book, which builds in the routines that you expect to see them use at home. The more students know about the routines for handling and using books, the greater the likelihood of their using the KEEP BOOKS productively at home.

How Do I Introduce KEEP BOOKS to Parents?

1. Send a letter home to parents telling them about KEEP BOOKS. (See sample letter following page 15.)
2. Make a special event of introducing the first KEEP BOOKS. Have children read their books together, color the pictures, and put them away in their decorated shoe boxes with their names on them. The purpose of this extra attention is to help children learn how to keep their books in a special place at home so they will be available for rereading.
3. Distribute one or two books a week for the next two weeks, initially, and have children keep their boxes at school. Each time you introduce a book, remind children to put it away in their boxes. During the reading time, KEEP BOOKS can be one of the reading choices, so that children can practice taking their books out, enjoy reading them, and put them away.
4. After the children have collected about four books, let them take home their boxes and KEEP BOOKS. Then, each week, distribute another KEEP BOOK to take home and put in their box.

What Is the Best Way to Introduce KEEP BOOKS for Guided Reading?

Introducing a book to be used during guided reading is different from introducing one to be used during independent reading. When children are asked to read books at their instructional level, they need more support before they begin reading than they do when they are asked to read a book at their independent level.

A KEEP BOOK introduction involves discussion between an adult and a child before the book is read by the child. This preparatory talk is important, because it makes reading the book easier for the child and shows him/her what he/she needs to do before reading the book alone. The discussion enables the child to gather new knowledge, to draw on prior knowledge, and to make predictions about the text (Bierle & Lynes, 1993). Book introductions are supportive “only if the teacher’s introduction has engaged the children’s attention, and they have been encouraged to be active participants in the introduction” (Clay, 1991b, p. 265).

KEEP BOOK introductions should differ from setting to setting depending on the particular needs of the child or group of children who will read the book. Teachers often plan ahead for introductions and jot down what they want to say in their lesson plan books. The way you choose to introduce a book will depend on how much your students already know about reading. This introductory talk includes interactions that focus on the title of the book, the book’s main idea, special concepts, language patterns, and a discussion of the pictures in the book. Sometimes particular features of the printed word may also be pointed out.

During KEEP BOOK introductions:

1. The teacher reads the title of the book.

- The title is tricky, because it is removed from the context.
- The title is treated as a label, not as part of the reading.

2. The teacher tells the book’s main idea.

- Provide a summary of the story; do not discuss the purpose of the book.
- Give explicit, not implicit, information.

3. The teacher and students discuss special concepts.

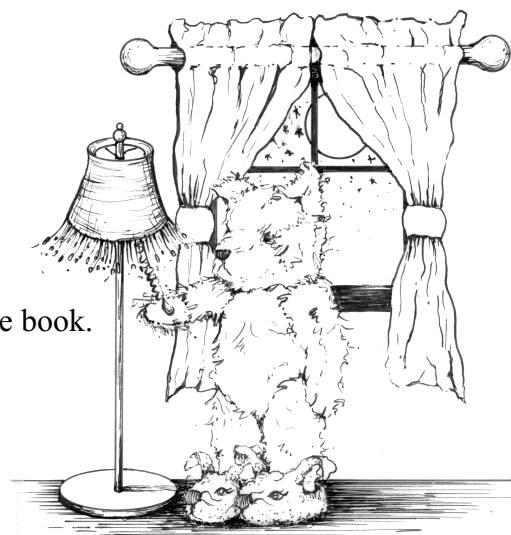
- Concepts include such things as “weddings.”
- The teacher discusses concepts that children do not understand.
- The teacher relates concepts to something the children understand.

4. The teacher and students note unusual language patterns.

- An example of an unusual language pattern is “bye-bye.”
- The teacher introduces unusual language structures in the book.
- The teacher and children use the pattern two or three times.
- The teacher has the children say it, not just hear it.

5. The teacher and students discuss the pictures in the book.

- The teacher and students look through the book, but do not read the words.
- The teacher and students discuss information that is inferred from the text.
- The teacher links the story to the students’ lives.
- The teacher motivates students’ interest in the story.



If KEEP BOOKS are used for guided reading instruction, then the teacher gives a more thorough introduction. This introduction should include attention to the features of the print in the context of the whole story, not in isolation. Students may be asked by the teacher to locate a word in the text. The teacher says, “What letter would you expect to see at the beginning of the word _____?” “Can you find the word _____?”

During a thorough book introduction, stress new and important words.

- Select one or two new and/or important words.
- Have the children say the word and give the beginning letter.
- Have the children find the word in the text.
- Ask for words you think the children will be able to find.
- Link known words and concepts to unknown words and concepts.
- Teach unfamiliar words with magnetic letters or ABC books.
- Save some “reading work” for the children.

This thorough book introduction focuses on the three types of information children use to help them read text. These types of information are meaning (semantic), language (syntactic), and visual (graphophonic) cues.

M	meaning	=	title, main idea, concepts, and discussion
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Does it make sense?

S	syntactic	=	language patterns
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(structural)

Can we say it that way?

V	visual	=	say beginning letter and find word
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What would you expect to see?

(Adapted from Clay, 1993)

Book introductions can be rich or lean depending upon children’s needs. The teacher gradually withdraws support as the children become able to take over the task of reading independently.



Using KEEP BOOKS Throughout the Year

If you are using KEEP BOOKS in a classroom, make these books an integral part of the literacy program.

How Can I Structure a KEEP BOOKS Program to Use Throughout the Year?

It does not take much instructional time to use KEEP BOOKS as a regular part of your literacy program. After the books have been introduced and the routines for handling them have been taught, children need only a brief introduction before using the books independently. This introduction takes but a few minutes. (For less experienced readers, however, you may want to introduce and read each book at school for a couple of days, before letting children take the books home.)

Of course, different children have different abilities. In general, you want to select KEEP BOOKS that are a little easier than the books children are reading for classroom instruction.

Research has shown that the more children read, the more their skills increase. As children read, they build their awareness of how books work, how to look at one word at a time as they match one spoken word to one written word, how space is used, and how letters and sounds can help them read. In easy reading, such as when children read KEEP BOOKS, all of that knowledge can come together at once.

But children will read more only if they are confident in their ability to read successfully—i.e., only if they can enjoy reading. This is why KEEP BOOKS are designed to increase children's ability to read with ease, fluency, and understanding. A teacher can either choose to introduce the same books to the entire class or use different books based on the ability levels of individuals or groups of students within the class.

Using the Same KEEP BOOKS With Your Class

When using the same books with the entire class, you should choose books at a level appropriate for the majority of the class. Be sure that every book you send home is within the powers of the reader. If a child has difficulty with every book, put a sticky note for the child's caregiver on the KEEP BOOK that reads, "Please read this book to me."

Some teachers give all children the same books simply because of the logistics involved and also because children will then share some texts that they all know. KEEP BOOKS are sources for extra reading to give students more practice, build fluency, and make the connection between school (or another organization) and children's homes.

Using Differentiated Instruction With Your Class

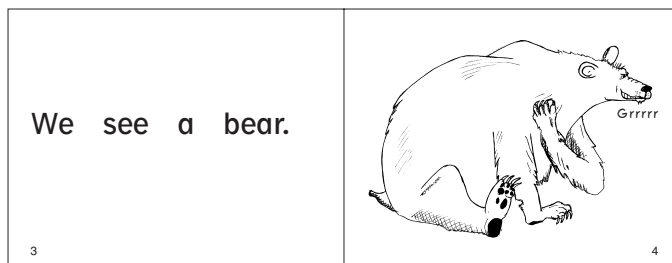
Some classrooms have children with a greater range of ability levels. You may decide that differentiated instruction is necessary if books are clearly well above or below the reading capabilities of some students. Differentiated instruction is more challenging for teachers because it requires working with small groups of students to introduce new books. You can teach the routines of KEEP BOOKS to the whole group using easy books and then switch some children to more challenging books.

Keep track of the books students have taken home. The less experienced students will be taking the harder books home later in the year.

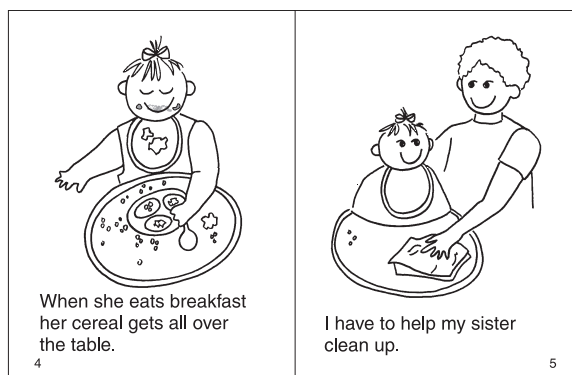
For struggling readers, use books that are significantly easier than classroom instruction books (for instance, emergent or early reader books). These simpler books pose a few problems to solve, such as figuring out an unfamiliar word or two, but this problem solving occurs in the context of accurate reading. Therefore, the texts appropriately challenge struggling readers instead of overwhelming and discouraging them.

In addition, home reading should be a pleasant experience for both children and their caregivers. If children struggle through a book, parents become concerned and children learn to avoid reading because it becomes an uncomfortable situation.

You can address the needs of readers at various skill levels by giving different books to different groups of children. For example, for beginning readers, you can select books such as ***Zoo Animals***.



This text has one line of print and a lot of easy words. For more advanced students, you can select books such as ***My Messy Sister***.



This text has several lines of print, many more words, and a more complex story.

How Often Should I Distribute KEEP BOOKS?

If you have enough different titles for your class, you can introduce a new book every week for children to take home. If you have fewer titles, you may want to designate a special time of the year to use KEEP BOOKS (for example, the ten weeks before summer vacation). It is best if they are used intensively during a short period (one or two a week for several weeks) rather than being used and distributed infrequently through the year. If more than a week goes by between distributions, children may forget the routines and it will be harder for them to feel the satisfaction of seeing books build up in their collections.

The ideal situation is to have 48 titles for each student, one per week. You can supplement your collection by writing books for your students yourself and duplicating them; however, we caution against including too many of these reproducible books in the collection. You want the children to consider these books “real.” The covers and the “finished” look of the books are important.

How Do KEEP BOOKS Connect Reading and Writing?

Rereading has been shown to have great instructional value for beginning readers. Rereading allows them to practice the early reading skills of moving the eyes left to right, turning pages while moving through the book, and matching one spoken word with one written word.

As children read a book for the third or fourth time, they are free to notice more about the print—to connect sounds with the letters in words, or to notice letter combinations that frequently occur (like **t** and **h** together or double letters). When children reread, the “inner workings” of words become more available to them. It is important for children to read a book several times, with pointing, before they take it home. Emphasize the process of rereading and demonstrate it for children, so that they remember to do it at home.

As they use KEEP BOOKS, children not only read; they also do some writing. This begins when children write their own names in their books. Writing one’s name can give a child a sense of accomplishment, because although it may seem to be a simple task, it is quite a challenge for beginning writers. Children have to learn how to make the motions to form each letter, for example, and must remember to place the letters in sequence. Children also learn to write by composing their own stories using My Own KEEP BOOKS (see page 11).

Making Your Own KEEP BOOKS

KEEP BOOKS are a wonderful way to increase home reading for beginning readers. The appearance, format, and contents of the “little books” are composed in such a way that they provide for easy access and successful reading. Additionally, KEEP BOOKS may be the inspiration that encourages young readers to become young authors.

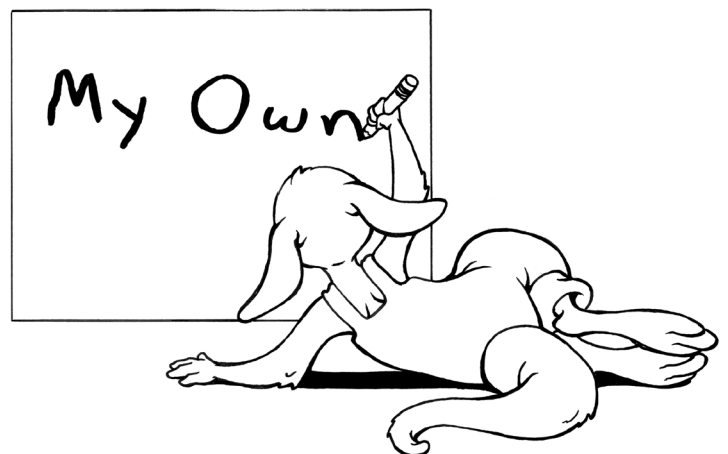
When thinking about writing “little books” of their own, however, teachers, children, and parents often have questions. Some of the most frequently asked questions are listed and discussed below.

Why Do I Need to Make My Own Books?

There are a variety of reasons as to why teachers, parents, or children might want to make their own KEEP BOOKS.

Some of these reasons may be to:

- provide more books at specific ability levels.
- meet budget constraints.
- have multiple copies of a text.
- match to unit themes.
- satisfy a creative urge and have fun.



What Makes Books More or Less Challenging?

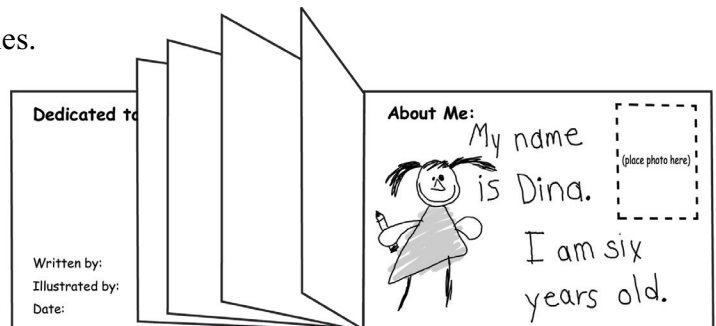
Barbara Peterson has done extensive work in relation to appropriate book selection for young readers (Peterson, 1992). Her work takes a close look at what makes books more or less challenging, how to level books, how to assess children's abilities to determine appropriate book selection, etc. A book's appearance, format, and content are factors that help determine its level of difficulty.

Appearance	Format (print)	Content (story)
size	page placement	degree of predictability
shape	line number	topic/genre
type of cover	print size and style	vocabulary
picture support	amount of spacing	complexity

How Can I Help Students Write Books in the Classroom?

My Own KEEP BOOKS can be used to reinforce a variety of lessons. Many children enjoy writing their own KEEP BOOK and are easily able to follow the format of their favorite story. My Own KEEP BOOKS can become:

- ABC, color, or number books.
- Individual stories (*All About Me, My Family, I Like...*).
- A word-study book for collecting words with common spelling patterns, synonyms, opposites, etc.
- Informational books for science or social studies.
- Math story problems.
- A sketch book for art or science.
- Illustrated versions of songs or poems.
- Observation logs for field trips.
- A final version of a wonderful writing workshop.
- Story retellings.
- Pattern books (I see a..., My mom is..., A ... goes fast.).
- Recipe books.
- "How to..." books.
- Gift books for special occasions.



Helping Parents Use KEEP BOOKS Effectively

The more parents know about using these KEEP BOOKS at home, the more effective the books will be. It is important to communicate with parents at the onset of the program and continue to gain feedback and ideas from them.

What Should I Tell Parents about KEEP BOOKS?

A letter should be sent to parents when the first KEEP BOOK is given to your students. Families need to know that this is a different kind of book from the other books their children bring home. In these books, drawings are designed to be colored with crayons or colored pencils. Children are encouraged to write their names (and sometimes text) in each book. If used extensively, these books can form the nucleus of a family literacy program for the primary grades. Another good use for KEEP BOOKS is to create a summer mailing program for children between kindergarten and first grade or first grade and second grade.

How Will Families Use KEEP BOOKS at Home?

KEEP BOOKS can be used at home in a variety of ways. These books are not intended to take the place of the children's literature books that are provided through the library system, but they do represent an inexpensive way to greatly increase young children's literacy experiences in the home. For example, KEEP BOOKS may be:

- read in the car.
- read in bed.
- taped on an audiocassette so that others may listen.
- used as a format that children can follow for making "little books" of their own.
- used as encouragement to turn a child's favorite song into a KEEP BOOK.
- used to copy the text into a blank book so that children can make illustrations of their own (or vice versa).
- used to add some blank pages so that children can write about "what happened next".
- used as a stimulus to make a "little book" about every member of a child's family.
- used as an incentive to write a KEEP BOOK about a child's teacher.

An optional place to store KEEP BOOKS is in a shoe box. Children can decorate and write their names on the box to show ownership of the KEEP BOOKS inside.

What Resources are Available to Help Parents Use KEEP BOOKS?

We would like to help you use KEEP BOOKS to create positive communications with parents and caregivers. These resources will assist you in gaining support and funding for a KEEP BOOKS program, using the books effectively in the classroom, and allowing parents to discover easy ways to experience reading with their child. Free downloadable guides by age are available at <http://www.keepbooks.org/guides.html>.

How Can I Encourage Parents To Get Involved?

There are several ways to further engage parents in the program. You may conduct workshops for parents and children to encourage involvement using both KEEP BOOKS and My Own KEEP BOOKS.

Conducting a KEEP BOOKS Workshop for Parents & Children

Hold a KEEP BOOKS Workshop to introduce the books to parents and to demonstrate how to use them with their children.

Materials: Two or three KEEP BOOKS for each participant and child. Have a few extra KEEP BOOKS in some plastic sandwich bags just in case younger children come with parents.

shoe box for each participant

KEEP BOOK handouts (A sample handout is located on page 16 of this guide.)

Time: 30–45 minutes

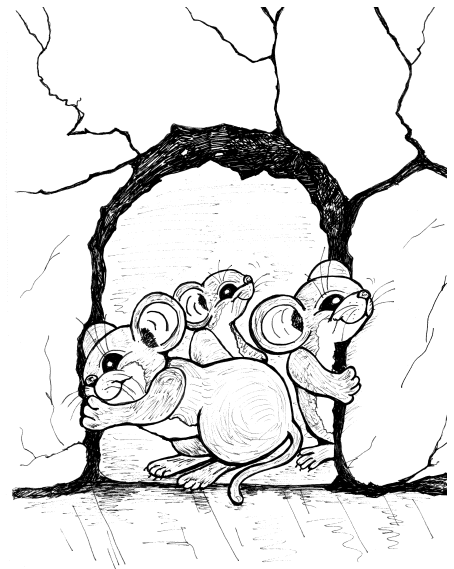
Introduce the idea of KEEP BOOKS to parents at the workshop. Provide parents with handouts so that the information is clear and complete. They can follow the information during the workshop, and then refer to the handout at home. A sample handout is located on page 16 of this guide. Show parents how to use the KEEP BOOKS with their children. You can demonstrate introducing a book to one of the children there or show a videotape of yourself introducing, reading, and rereading a book to a child. (If you use a videotape, it is a good idea to show the first reading of a book and then the fourth or fifth reading.)

In this workshop, the parents can help their children decorate and write their names on shoe boxes to help the children make the books their own. Be sure to explain why the children need opportunities to read the book many times. For example, through rereading, children:

- really understand the meaning of the book.
- enjoy the book over and over.
- have the chance to read fluently.
- become familiar with the words and language patterns.
- learn high-frequency words over time.
- solve new words within a story that is meaningful and familiar.

Suggest to parents that they:

- make sure the experience is fun.
- do not make children struggle (if the book is too hard, read it aloud to the child or read it together).
- focus on reading the whole book, not on isolated words.
- praise children for their efforts.



Conducting a My Own KEEP BOOKS Workshop for Parents & Children

Materials: One My Own KEEP BOOK

Markers and crayons (or colored pencils if included in set)

Pictures from the Sunday newspaper, magazines, grocery store ads, and catalogs

Scissors

Glue or glue sticks

Bookmaking handouts (a sample handout is located on page 17 of this guide)

Time: 0–45 minutes

Purpose: This workshop is designed to help participants make a little book to read with their children at home. If children attend the workshop with their parents, the parents and children can work together to make a book.

Introduce the idea of the little books to participants and explain that it is easy to make these little books. Some characteristics of the books are that they:

- have clear, easy-to-read print (not too small and not too large).
- have spaces between words, making it easy to point to the words.
- use pictures that are easy to find in everyday materials, such as the newspaper. (clear pictures are important because they provide clues to what the print says).
- have complete sentences that are easy for children to predict.
- have only one, two, or three lines of print; the topics are interesting; and the pictures are easy to interpret (because these books are for beginning readers).

You might like to go over some of the advantages of homemade books, for example:

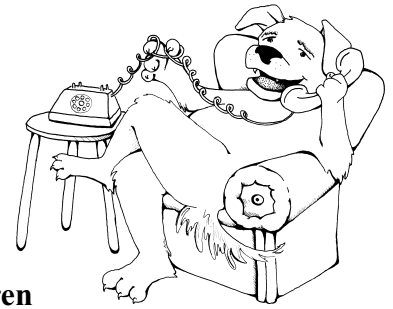
- As they begin to read, children need many experiences in reading simple texts. With these inexpensive, homemade little books, hundreds of experiences are available at a minimal cost.
- Because the books are so easy and familiar, children can focus on the meaning of the story while beginning to notice the details of print.
- Children can practice looking at the illustrations for information and try to match them with the language of the book and the visual information in print.
- Children can practice using the pictures and/or visual information to check on themselves while reading.
- Children will have the opportunity to practice early skills such as word-by-word matching and moving left-to-right across print or through a book.
- Parents can make reading meaningful for children. Suggest that they use family snapshots to make special books.

Conducting a parent survey

To further engage parents in the program, you may also want to use a parent survey to allow them to provide feedback about the use of KEEP BOOKS at home. (A sample survey is supplied on page 19 of this guide.)

Letters and Handouts

- **Sample Letter Introducing KEEP BOOKS**
- **Handout for KEEP BOOKS Workshop for Parents & Children**
- **Handout for My Own KEEP BOOKS Workshop for Parents & Children**
- **Parent Survey**



On the following page is a sample letter introducing KEEP BOOKS to parents.

Dear Parents,

As you know, your child is enjoying learning about books this year. To promote more home reading, our school is going to provide something special for your child: KEEP BOOKS®. KEEP BOOKS are special books created for children to take home, write their names in, color in, and read again and again.

Today your child is bringing home the first of a series of KEEP BOOKS. We know you will enjoy reading these books with your child. A special box is the best place for your child to keep the books. Please find a special and convenient place in your home for the box.

Most of these books are easy enough to allow your child to read them to you. Reading the same book many times helps young children get the feel of reading, sound like good readers, and grow more confident as readers. So, encourage your child to read this book to everyone in the family, especially younger brothers, sisters, and family friends.

If the book is hard for your child, you might want to read it together a few times so that it will become easy for your child to read. It is important to read the entire book rather than just work on a single word. It is also important to have a fun experience while reading.

KEEP BOOKS are good models for writing. You and your child may want to write and illustrate your own books using My Own KEEP BOOKS®. Pictures from magazines, catalogs, or the Sunday newspaper make good illustrations for these little books.

Your child will begin bringing home a KEEP BOOK each week this year. Our school will be providing _____ of these books this year.

Sincerely,

Dear Parents,

As you know, your child is enjoying learning about books this year. To promote more home reading, our school is going to provide something special for your child: KEEP BOOKS®. KEEP BOOKS are special books created for children to take home, write their names in, color in, and read again and again.

Today your child is bringing home the first of a series of KEEP BOOKS. We know you will enjoy reading these books with your child. A special box is the best place for your child to keep the books. Please find a special and convenient place in your home for the box.

Most of these books are easy enough to allow your child to read them to you. Reading the same book many times helps young children get the feel of reading, sound like good readers, and grow more confident as readers. So, encourage your child to read this book to everyone in the family, especially younger brothers, sisters, and family friends.

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Your child will begin bringing home a KEEP BOOK each week this year. Our school will be providing _____ of these books this year.

Sincerely,

Handout for KEEP BOOKS® Workshop for Parents & Children

KEEP BOOKS for Beginning Readers

What Are KEEP BOOKS?

It is widely known that children benefit from reading many books at home. KEEP BOOKS are little books, specially written for beginning readers that children can take home to keep and read again and again. They have simple but interesting stories about children's everyday lives. These books sometimes have an interactive element. The stories are illustrated with black line drawings and have colorful covers. Children may enjoy coloring the pictures at home.

KEEP BOOKS is a not-for-profit program sponsored by The Ohio State University and developed through grants from the Martha Holden Jennings Foundation and the Charles A. Dana Foundation.

How Can I Use KEEP BOOKS at Home?

KEEP BOOKS are intended to be read and reread by children, although they are equally suitable for parents and other caregivers to read aloud to children. Children often like to read these books to their younger brothers and sisters. The drawings in KEEP BOOKS may be colored with crayons or colored pencils. Children write their names in their books and keep them in a special place. The ideal place to store KEEP BOOKS is in a special box, which will hold the child's book collection as it grows. Have your child personalize the box by writing their name on it, then find a special place at home to keep it.

When reading KEEP BOOKS with your child:

- Make sure the experience is fun.
- Do not make children struggle to read (if the book is too hard, read it to the child or read it together).
- Focus on reading the whole book, not on isolated words.
- Praise children for their efforts.

It is important for children to read these little books many times. Through rereading, children:

- really understand the meaning of the book.
- enjoy the book over and over.
- have the opportunity to read fluently.
- learn many words over time.
- become familiar with the words and with language patterns.
- solve new words within a story that is meaningful and familiar.



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Handout for My Own KEEP BOOKS® Workshop

For Parents & Children

One way to provide extra reading experiences for preschool, kindergarten, first-grade, and second-grade children is to have them create stories of their own using My Own KEEP BOOKS.

Directions: Use the Sunday newspaper, magazines, or catalogs to find pictures. Put the book title and first page on page one and number both sides of each additional page. After numbering each page, write and illustrate the book. Use cut-out pictures or draw your own.

When developing text for the book:

- It is best to use only one or two lines.
- Print clearly using lowercase letters with capitals to begin sentences.
- Use sentences instead of phrases.
- Be sure to leave enough space between each word.
- Be sure that the pictures help the reader predict the print.
- Use predictable patterns to help the reader.



Some typical patterns for little books are listed below.

Use personal pronouns, common objects, and children's names in very simple language patterns.

I like _____. (This is one of the easiest patterns. Make it more complicated by ending with "What do you like?" Use colors, activities, food, etc.)

We like _____. We like to _____.

[Name] likes _____. [Name] likes to _____. (You have many options here, for example, "eat," "play with," or any other kind of action.)

Here is a _____. This is _____. This is a _____.

I can _____. Mom [or any name] is _____ [action words]. I can see _____.

I can see a _____. I can see the _____. (Use "we" and a name of a person, an animal, etc.)

Children can write about what they see around the classroom or school or can use common objects such as toys. You can write more difficult books by lengthening sentences or by changing the pattern at the end of the book.

Use questions and answers.

Where is _____ [name of person or animal]? Is he [or she] in the _____?

Do you like _____ [food or any kind of activity]? Yes! [or, No!]

Can [name] _____? Yes, he [or she] can.

Use dialogue.

"I like _____," said [name].

"I like to eat _____," said [name].

"Let's go swimming [or any other activity]," said [name].

"No, it's too cold," said [name].

"I want to go to [store or fast food restaurant]," said [name].

[Name] ate some ice cream, but it was too cold.

Use family photos to make special books.

"I see _____."

"Tomika [or name of other family member] can [action]."

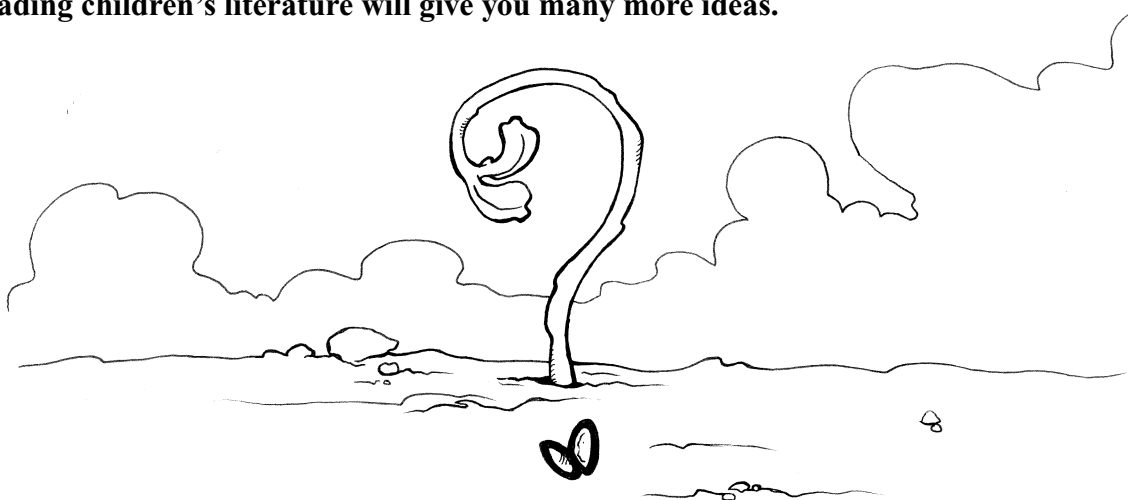
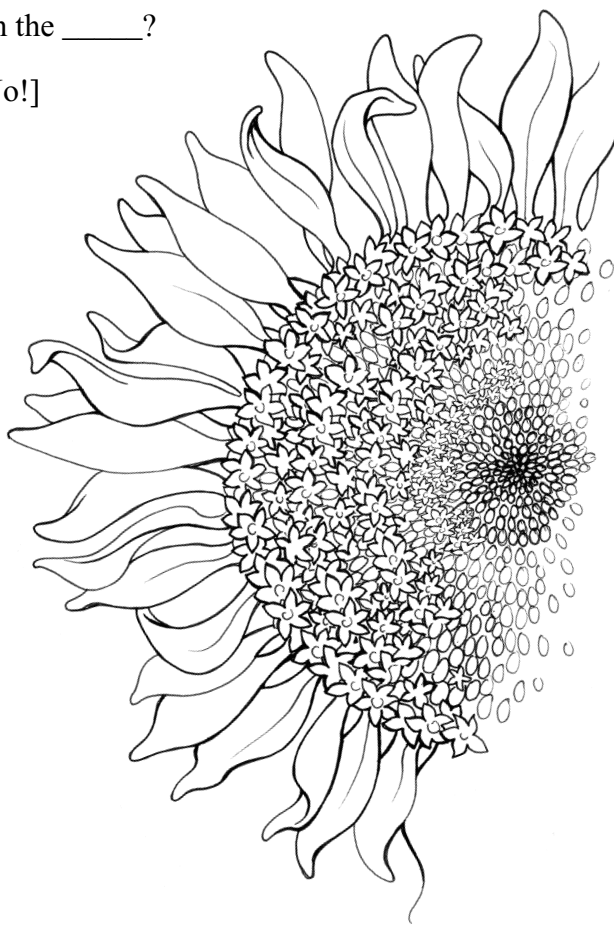
"We like to _____."

"At my birthday party, _____."

"Mom [or name of other family member] can see _____."

"I love _____."

Hint: Reading children's literature will give you many more ideas.



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Parent Survey

Dear Parents,

For the last few months, your child has been bringing home KEEP BOOKS® for home reading. We hope that you have enjoyed having these books at home. Could you please take a little time to provide me with some information about the use of these books? Your answers will help me make future decisions regarding the program.

1. My child likes to bring KEEP BOOKS home to read (1=not much, 6=a great deal).

1 2 3 4 5 6

2. My child reads more at home because of the KEEP BOOK program (1=no, not much; 6=yes, a great deal more).

1 2 3 4 5 6

3. Our family has enjoyed having KEEP BOOKS at home (1=no, not very much; 6=yes, a great deal).

1 2 3 4 5 6

4. I would recommend the KEEP BOOK program to other parents (1=no, not likely; 6=yes, very likely).

1 2 3 4 5 6

5. I have seen improvement in my child's reading ability (1=no, not at all; 6=yes, a great deal).

1 2 3 4 5 6

6. I hope our school will continue the KEEP BOOKS program (1=strongly opposed, 6=strongly agree).

1 2 3 4 5 6

7. What did you like about the program?

8. What suggestions would you offer to improve upon the program?