

The Project Approach to Learning at

RisingOaks
Early Learning

Saint John Paul II

Project Name: Books! For the love of books!

Age Group: Infant (11-16 months)

Project Start Date: April 12, 2021

Project End Date: June 28, 2021



RisingOaks
Early Learning

Growing minds through play

Background

Our book project officially started on April 12, 2021 with the infants in our program ranging from 11 months to 16 months. Connie Cunningham RECE, Judy Hackbart RECE, Tami Sutton RECE and Jennifer Silva RECE are the educators whom facilitated in putting this project together. The interest in this project continued over the course of a few months and ended on June 28, 2021

Phase 1: Beginning the Project

Over the past few months, the infant educators have been observing the infants and their interests, to find a new project. We have really taken notice that the infants are interested in books. They can often be found sitting on an educator's lap reading or finding their own quiet spot to read. The Infants have also come to find their favourite books that we read continually.

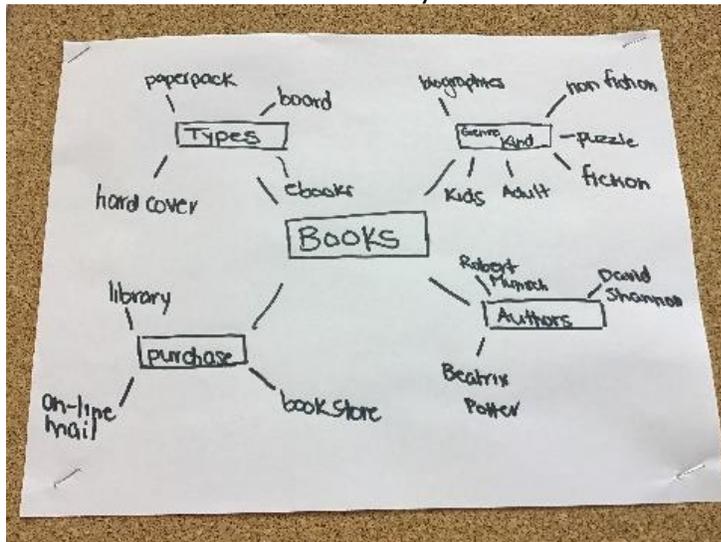


Figure 1 The web the infant educators created to help start the book project.

While writing our web we came up with three questions the Infants may want to know about books. 1. How are books made? 2. How are Ideas created for a book? 3. What kinds of books are our favourite? We also, came up with three people we could ask these questions too. An Author, Publisher and Librarian. To engage the Infant families, we sent out a short survey to ask about their child's reading, while at home. <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/RKD372P>

Phase 2: Developing the Project

As our book project was growing, we brought out different types of books to see what would be a favourite or hold their attention span a little further. The more we got into the project, we realized they liked books with noise, with a song and books that the pages popped out at you or hid a picture, like peek-a-boo.

As the Infants were engaging more and more in book reading, their educators thought how could we expand on their language through books. Jen remember that we had a Brown Bear book with signs that was created at a make and take. Unable to find that book, she searched you tube and found a video with the signs to Brown Bear. It was amazing to see some of the Infants watch the video and use their hands to try the signs.



Figure 2 on the right, Rhys 18 months is using his signs as he mimics what he sees on the Brown Bear sign language video



Through our observations and reading a variety of books to the Infants, we have noticed that they seem to enjoy tape stories that have a song with them, where they are able to follow along. We posted Fire Truck on our project board at their level and when we play the story, the Infants would follow along looking at the different words and pictures.

This is a great way to bring in early literacy as they can see and hear the words and follow along with the story.

Our observations have also shown us that pop up books were something to get use to at first, but have quickly become a favourite as they watch the pictures jump out to the book and come to life. The infants are also very attracted to books with sound and were eager to request Vroom. Logan would walk over to the counter and say vroom repeatedly until we found Snappy Little Sounds Vroom. As we read, he is quick to make all the sound he hears in the book, while his educator reads.

To expand on some of our favourite books like Brown Bear, Brown Bear we had animal cutouts and glue for the children to engage in a creative experience, by creating a collage. During this experience, the educators gave the Infants the name and colour of the animal

We also increased hand eye coordination and fine motor skills as the Infants were given markers to colour a page from some other favourite books that we are reading.



To find out how books are made, we watched a video on YouTube called "How books are made" by owl kids, where we learned that the magazine Chirp is made in Alberta. We also learned that 4 colours are used for their book black, yellow, magenta and sienna. To have other colours created it is all in the way the pictures and ink layers itself. 10, 000 pages are printed in an hour and the extra paper not used is recycled. We reached out to an author named JiJi who is a fellow RECE and wrote a book during COVID. We asked where she came up with her book Idea and how it all came about. Her answer was, "My first children's book, The Nest in the Evergreen Tree, helps a child cope with a loss of a loved one. It is a special story for me that honors someone and based on a real events mixed with a little imagination to make it more interesting I always wanted to honor this person in a special way and this what I came up with".

The second story, "Cheers to our Volunteer as an educator, I always struggled finding a simple story to kids that shed light on volunteers. Something I can use as an introduction to kids whenever we have a volunteer starting with us and I could never find any, so I wrote it!"

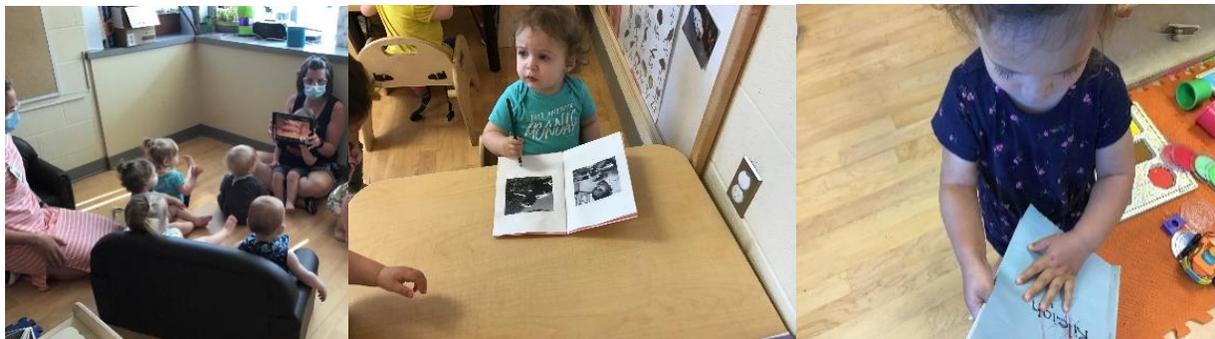
The steps as followed:

- Make your story or manuscript
- Get it professionally edited and usually it goes through three to four steps of editing. Usually I get it edited by a company called book baby
- Find a good illustrator. Mine is brilliant. His name is Jose Gascon and you can find his work and reach him at www.josegascon.com the illustrator will start then working on your story and put the final file together
- Find a company that will print and publish your book. Most people go with IngramSpark which gives you option of either make it limited as book being ordered from your website only OR you can widely publish it to amazon and all book stores

It sounds like many steps; it takes patience but it is a beautiful journey.

Phase 3: Concluding the Project

To conclude our project, the educators were in contact with the KPL a virtual tour was set up on July 6, 2021. Michelle from the KPL sang songs and read us Early Bird and Good Morning Farm Friends. The infants were quite interested in what was happening on the iPad. They mimicked the actions of their educators to the words of the song and explored saying different animal sounds along with the stories.



We created books for the Infants with pictures of them doing different things at school. They were provided an opportunity to colour the pages and take their books home to read with their families. Rhys really enjoyed reading a book that had pictures of him in it. He and his educators read it repeatedly. Rhys then wanted to look at the book himself, he was pointing to the pictures saying "Rhys!" We decided it was a good time to wrap up the project as we have some of our Infants moving to the toddler room and some new friends are going to be welcomed into our program room.

Teacher Reflections

Before starting the project in the Infant room, I noticed that books are always something the Infants enjoy. The small group time spent reading was a wonderful experience as they were learning what books they liked to read again and again and which books they did not care for. As they used their expressive language through simple words and sounds to indicate what book they wanted to hear. As well as gaining their own independent skills by walking over to where the special books were and trying to reach them on their tippy toes, increasing patience as they waited for an educator to help them with their request. As we continue to introduce a love for books. I am hoping to create book lovers for life! Jennifer Silva RECE

As the book project started, I was excited to search my mini library at home to share some of my favourites with the infants. Snappy sound books became one of their favourites as well. Pointing out the different animal/transportation sounds and pictures as time continued we had many of the infants repeating/imitating sounds and words such as: "woof" "meow" "hop" "snap" "vroom" "beep beep" "bus" "airplane" and even more difficult ones like "helicopter". It is quite interesting that some books we will start to read and they will lose interest or walk away, while other books we could read 10 or more times in a row and keep them engaged and interested. It brought me pure joy as the infants had such a love for reading, turning pages, pointing to pictures, sliding peekaboo pages, seeking out and getting excited for their favourite books/stories all while they develop early literacy skills. Connie Cunningham RECE

Our book project has been a very rewarding opportunity for the children to hear and learn new words and express their emotions. There is lots of excitement as they choose special books for us to read to them they love the sound books and they love the pop up books. Their attention span has grown over the last few months with all of the extra book reading we have been doing. It is a pleasure to see the enjoyment coming from book reading as this is a wonderful opportunity for children to learn and develop many new interests.

Judy Hackbart RECE

The concentrated focus on literature really showed just how curious and knowledgeable this group is. The joint attention that happened whenever there were stories being read supported relationship building as we gotten to know individual preferences. The length of time that this group of infants could stay engaged grew over the course of our project. It was fun to see the excitement and hear the requests once we mentioned reading books. We kept their interests by adding different book sizes, sound books and lots of flip the flap style too. Independent book reading happened more frequently, especially with the books off the educator's shelf. The infants demonstrated their capacity for learning new things when they picked up the animal signs to "Brown Bear, Brown Bear



What Do You See?" they imitated others actions and showed their ability to memorize. We did go through quite a few board books during the course of the project.....the infants were resourceful and used the books to ease their teething discomfort! Tami Sutton RECE