

Ec390.1.1 childrens literature lesson 6

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CHILDREN'S LITERATURE Children's literature Why is it important to give children choices when working with literature? Grossman 2008 , outlines the various reasons for offering choices to children. Offering children choices he argues minimizes conflicts and maximizes learning. Literature choice gives the young reader an opportunity to select a material that fascinates him and captures his ego and as a result the natural feeling of rebellion against the teacher is caged. In addition, the children feel that they are in control of the learning process and this boosts their self esteem as they feel some sense of autonomy by making their own decision regarding the choice of literature material that suites their interest. Moreover, free choice contributes to the moral and cognitive development of the child as making choices is part of problem solving skills. The child feels that his wishes have been respected and learns to respect other people's wishes too. This instills some sense of obedience into the child and he learns to conform to the set norms.

Considering a class of children with different abilities, varied ways can be used to offer choices to the children. One such method is by making direct suggestions for example on the book titles to choose from. This enables children who are not used to making their own decisions to do so with ease. Another way is by limiting the options as young learners do well with fewer options . The teacher may suggest two or three genres for the children to choose from (Reynolds 2011).

Even though the learners have the opportunity to make choices, this is monitored from a pool of options which is in the teacher's custody. The teacher thus has the role of helping the young children make appropriate and responsible choices by controlling what comes out from his ' option bank' in the form of alternatives to the learners (Grossman 2008)

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The young need to learn to accept the outcome of their choices which can either be satisfaction or disappointment. Good choice of literature moulds and shapes a child's skills in the discipline and this builds self-confidence in the child. Wrong choice made a material written in ungrammatical language for example, the child learns to be keen in making wiser choices in future and this is reinforced by constructive criticism from the teacher. Accepting responsibility for the outcomes of their choices is only but a way of strengthening their character and boosting their self confidence.

Literature is a broad field of study which constitutes a wide range of materials produced by different authors for different purposes. For this, the suitability of the literature is a major concern particularly if young readers are the destined consumers of such works. There is therefore the need for guiding young learners in making appropriate choices as what they read influences their perception and conception of issues as they grow up.

Reference

Grossman, S. (2008). Offering Children Choices: Encouraging Autonomy and Learning While Minimizing Conflicts. Retrieved on 26th October 2012 from http://www.earlychildhoodnews.com/earlychildhood/article_view.aspx?ArticleID=607

Reynolds, K. (2011). Children's Literature: A Very Short Introduction. New York: Oxford University Press http://www.earlychildhoodnews.com/earlychildhood/article_view.aspx?ArticleID=607