After Emergency Response Mode

Approaching Virtual Storytimes with Intention
CLEL Training for CLRC
2021
Agenda

● Session Norms
● Introduction
● Starting With Why
● Interaction Opportunity: Share Your Why
● Exploring Why’s
● Interaction Opportunity: Brainstorming What If’s
● The Last Step: How
● Questions & Opinions
● Contact Information
Norms for Our Time Together

- We have one hour together today.
- Please keep cameras and microphones turned off until designated opportunities to turn them on.
- Optional opportunities for interaction will include the chat box, unmuting and speaking, and contributing a collaborative Google Jamboard.
- Please use the chat for questions throughout the session and designate questions with a capital Q first.
  - Q: How do we reach families who are not on social media?
- Please take care of yourself! Fidget, doodle, knit, manage children learning remotely.
  - This training will be recorded and available for later viewing, so please don’t worry about forgetting something or missing anything!
Introduction

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- ALSC Virtual Storytime Services Guide Project Coordinator
- Teacher Turned Librarian

Colorado Libraries for Early Literacy (CLEL)

- Established in 2008
- Annual Conference
- CLEL Bell Awards
- StoryBlocks
- Membership is free!
Virtual Storytime Services Guide

www.ala.org/alsc/virtual-storytime-services-resource-guide
VSS Guide Structure

- 8 Sections:
  - Introduction
  - Copyright
  - Promotions
  - Serving Diverse Children and Families
  - Suggested Practices
  - Technology Tools
  - External Resources to Support Early Literacy
  - Other Virtual Children’s Program Ideas

- Each section begins with targeted suggestions and information for library leadership, virtual program editors/marketers, and virtual storytime providers.

- Each section contains additional subsections. For example:
  - Suggested Practices
    - Screen Time
    - Content
    - Messaging
    - Management
    - Presentation
Starting with Why

- Why - What If - How
  - Book Recommendation: A More Beautiful Question by Warren Berger
  - Shorter Article from Farnam Street
- For many of us, our first virtual storytime “why” was something like, “well, we have to do this because can’t do storytimes in person.”
- ...Why else?
Share Your Why
Why: Relationships Reduce Toxic Stress

- Maintain Existing Relationships
- Build New Relationships
- Incorporate Opportunities for Live Interaction and Connection
  - Through chat and/or unmuting during designated opportunities.
- Share Ownership
  - Ask for book/song suggestions for next time.
- Invite Feedback
  - Ask for immediate feedback (e.g. what part did you like best today?)
  - Follow up with teacher afterwards.
What If We...

- Advertised WHO our virtual storytimes will be with, so families know when to tune in and watch their favorite faces?
- Consistently schedule storytime providers to a specific live storytime day/time, so they can bond as a group and build relationships?
- Made virtual storytime videos available for on-demand viewing, so families can see their favorite faces over and over again?
- Asked our families for feedback and found out what they want/need?
- What Else?
Why: Accessibility Benefits Everyone

● Create a Welcoming Environment
  ○ Reduce background noise and visual business.
  ○ Wear a microphone!
  ○ Ensure one person speaks at a time.

● Slow Down for the Screen
  ○ Count for 7-10 seconds after asking a question.

● Provide Multiple Means
  ○ Adapt songs and rhymes for various levels of motor skills.
  ○ Build in audio description for visuals and verbal directions for activities.
  ○ Use variation beyond color in flannels.

*Modified Mouse House Flannel with Multiple Types of Houses*
What If We...

● Made virtual storytimes available for on-demand viewing, so that all families can engage with the content on their own time and schedule?
● Ensured accurate captioning, so that all caregivers are better able to participate in the experience and retain the early literacy messages they see and hear?
● Provided tactile experiences (e.g. pick-up sensory bags) to go with virtual storytime, so that all families are able to engage in the experience through multiple modalities?
● Simplified the path to engagement with our content?
● Reached out to families across the digital divide with Phone-A-Story or radio storytimes?
● What Else?
Why: Provide High-Quality Screen Time

- Incorporate principles from Zero to Three’s E-AIMS Model for choosing media content for young children:
  - Engaging
    - Use names (if appropriate).
  - Actively Involved
    - Ask questions.
  - Meaningful
    - Choose developmentally appropriate content.
  - Social
    - Encourage interaction with caregivers.
What If We...

- Build interaction into live virtual storytimes?
- Build interaction into pre-recorded virtual storytimes?
- Offered age-specific virtual storytimes, so that children interact with developmentally appropriate content?
- Read diverse books, so that all children see themselves meaningfully represented and valued in our virtual storytimes?
- What else?
How: The Last Step

- The devil’s in the details!
- Putting “how” last allows you to brainstorm without self-censoring and fully explore all the potential “what-ifs.”
- If one “how” doesn’t work, try asking - “how else?” or exploring another “what if?”

Virtual Storytime Services Guide

ALSC & CLEL
Virtual Storytime Services Guide
Questions & Opinions
Let’s Connect!

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