



Story Time Policy

PURPOSE

Story time is intended to help provide an opportunity for children to experience the joys of reading and literature, and to focus on developing literacy skills needed for being successful in school. Story time sessions are conducted by a qualified and experienced Children's Librarian and other supporting library staff.

Toddle Times Story time (18 mos-3 years)

Toddlers are active and curious. This interactive story time will feature short stories, finger plays, action rhymes and song. Our Story times are designed to help young children acquire the skills they need to start school ready to learn. Parents will be provided with information and handouts to help interact with children. 20-30 minute program.

- Parents are asked to stay with their children and participate in toddler story times with their children.
- Three six week sessions for Toddlers are available: fall, winter and summer.
- Attendance is limited to 25 children accompanied by a caregiver
- Registration for these story times is encouraged, but walk-ins are welcomed if the attendance limit is not filled.

Preschool Story time (3-5 years)

Pre-readers will improve literacy skills needed to get ready for school during preschool story time. This program will feature longer books and a variety of activities such as simple crafts, flannel board stories, interactive stories, puppets, games, and dramatics. (45 minute program)

- Story time sessions and planning are based on age appropriate materials and content. Library staff will only accept a child for sessions that are appropriate for that child's age.
- Parents/guardians/caretakers (at least 11 years of age or older) bringing children, age 6 5 and younger, to Preschool story times must remain in the building while the child attends the program.
- Pre-school story time sessions are designed for children ages 3-5 during the fall, winter and summer
- Parents are encouraged to leave their pre-school child with the librarian for the story time session.
- Parents will often be provided with materials, reading lists and other interactive activity suggestions for use at home.



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After School Story Times (Kindergarten-Second Grade)

These story times are intended for school children in grades Kindergarten through second grade whether in public, private or home school.

- After school programming is provided once monthly. A variety of literacy enhancing, interactive activities are provided by librarians of the Le Mars Public Library. These programs are designed to increase a child's love of reading, to incite curiosity, and to increase interactions with books!
- We expect parents to be prompt in picking up children from after school program.
- Occasionally snacks will be served during library story times/programs. Please advise library staff if your child has any allergies or food concerns.
- When registering children for story time, please keep in mind that once space is reserved, we expect attendance will occur. Please call ahead if your child will be absent from story time.
- Habitual late arrivals could be asked to forfeit their spot to another child.
- After school programs or story times will be automatically cancelled if school is cancelled because of bad weather. (i.e. blizzards) Rescheduling these programs will be determined by the Children's librarian.

After School Enrichment Programs (Third-Fifth Grades)

The Le Mars library offers a once a month enrichment opportunity for students in the third, fourth and fifth grades.

This program is designed to Foster a love of learning. It includes literacy enrichment activities as an integral part of this after school program. Activities include games, crafts, experiments, puzzles, and books and more.

- Occasionally snacks will be served during library story times/programs. Please advise library staff if your child has any allergies or food concerns.
- When registering children for story time, please keep in mind that once space is reserved, we expect attendance will occur. Please call ahead if your child will be absent from story time
- After school programs or story times will be automatically cancelled if school is cancelled because of bad weather. (i.e. blizzards) Rescheduling these programs will be determined by the Children's librarian.



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OWLS Program (Elementary)

- The Owl's Nest Program is a mentoring program designed to encourage children to read, offering a supportive environment to develop strong literacy skills, and most importantly, make reading fun!
- The Owl's Nest Program pairs a volunteer with a student who needs extra help with reading.
- The volunteer meets with their Little Owl at least once a week at Le Mars Public library.
- The Owl's Nest Program helps to increase awareness and use of library resources, services and programs.

Behavioral Expectations:

- Parents are also asked to monitor their child's behavior while in the library before and after library programs.
- Children attending are expected to behave appropriately during story times. Children will be given 2 warnings to attempt to control any misbehavior. After this, the child may be asked to leave the room and be turned back over to a waiting parent, or be asked to leave the room and sit at a table in the library. After a brief period of time, they will be asked to re-join the group.
- Parents will be notified of misbehavior and may be asked to remove their child from the library program indefinitely.

General Guidelines for any of our story times:

- **Be playful:** Please join in and show your child that storytime is fun. The time to visit with other adults is before or after storytime.
- **Distractions:** Arriving late is sometimes impossible to avoid, but please enter the room with as little disruption as possible. Toys and food should be put away, and phones should be turned off or set on vibrate.
- **Those bad days:** Remember, we all have bad days. If your child becomes upset, please step out of the room to "regroup," then quietly return.
- **Those insecure days:** Please be patient with your child if he or she wants to observe instead of joining in. We completely understand that for some children this will be their first group experience in the library, and that it may take a few visits for them to feel comfortable.
- **Choosing a storytime:** Our storytimes are geared toward specific developmental levels: baby, toddler, preschool, family. If you are not sure which one to attend, please ask your librarian which one is best for your child.



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- **Bring books home too:** An important part of the storytime experience for children is checking out books to read or share at home. Children of *any* age may have their very own library card. We believe the age a child gets their own card is the parents' decision.
- **Group visits:** Our storytimes are designed for parents and children; arrangements for school, daycare, or other group visits larger than five should be made in advance.

Approved and Adopted by the
Library Board of Trustees
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