

These are general guidelines for selecting resources based on the cognitive, social, and emotional development of students. Stages of development will vary by individual, and teachers should get to know their students before selecting resources.

Who are primary to grade 2 students?

Primary to Grade 2: Student Profile

Students are:

- increasingly able to understand story structure (e.g., beginning, middle, and end)
- able to remember and repeat stories
- able to enjoy riddles jokes, and the use of humour
- interested in how the world works
- developing a firmer sense of reality and fantasy
- imaginative
- developing more sensitivity to others' feelings
- able to understand the difference between right and wrong
- aware of social categories such as race and gender; they can hold strong race and gender stereotypes
- challenged by hypothetical situations and abstract concepts
- challenged by narrative elements like flashbacks, or sudden changes of scene or perspective
- not yet easily able to learn social lessons from stories, particularly from verbal descriptions or conversations between characters

Students need:

- learning opportunities to understand and practice skill for identifying what is "fair" and "unfair"
- learning experiences that involve concrete ideas
- book talks that are central to to plot of the story
- stories with settings and scenarios that are realistic or relatable to make it easier for children to understand and apply social lessons
- support noticing content that defies stereotypes

What is developmentally appropriate for primary to grade 2?

The information below is intended to provide guidance to teachers in the selection of resources for primary to grade 2. Resources need to be reviewed by the teacher to ensure it is developmentally appropriate for their students' learning needs. Where a category does not appear in earlier grades that does appear in later grades, it is not developmentally appropriate (e.g. violence). Teachers should know their students; if they have students who have experienced trauma, it is important to use resources in a way that does not retraumatize or cause further harm.

	✓ Use resources that:	✗ Avoid resources that:
<p>Healthy Relationships</p> <p><i>Healthy relationships involve individuals feeling respected, supported, and valued. They are characterized by open communication, trust, and a mutual commitment to each other's well-being and happiness. In healthy relationships, conflicts are resolved constructively, so that both parties can grow and thrive together.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ include healthy ways to cope and address problems in relationships ▪ reinforce messages to ask for help from safe adults ▪ provide opportunities to point out and discuss positive behaviours such as problem-solving in relationships ▪ reinforce that it is never acceptable to hurt another person's body or feelings ▪ talk about what healthy relationships look like, emphasizing communication, consent, and mutual respect 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ include violent or aggressive behaviour that children may imitate, especially if violent actions are depicted through visuals or shown as humorous ▪ show violence as a way to resolve problems ▪ discuss sexual attraction
<p>Discrimination and Stereotypes</p> <p><i>Discrimination refers to the unfair or unequal treatment of individuals or groups based on certain characteristics such as race, gender, age, or other factors. Stereotypes are oversimplified and generalized beliefs or ideas about people based on their perceived characteristics or group membership.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ portray diverse characters in positive ways ▪ feature diverse characters as main characters ▪ feature diverse role models in many different careers and prominent roles ▪ portray characters that have a variety of interests that are not tied to traditional gender roles and norms ▪ give equal voice to boys and girls and masculine and feminine behaviours and characteristics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ reinforce stereotypes or discriminatory behaviour ▪ depict negative behaviours without showing the harm they cause ▪ rely on stereotypes for humor ▪ include examples of disrespectful behaviour towards a person's gender identity and/or sexual orientation

	✓ Use resources that:	✗ Avoid resources that:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ provide opportunities to point out positive, non-stereotypical attributes of characters (e.g., the princess is brave and strong, the dad is nurturing) ▪ encourage students to be respectful and inclusive of differences ▪ contain authentic representations and storylines to help break down stereotypes and misunderstandings ▪ show a variety of family structures 	
<p>Safe and Healthy Behaviour</p> <p><i>Safe and healthy behavior refers to actions and choices that prioritize physical and emotional well-being while avoiding harm or risks.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ portray characters modelling healthy, safe behaviours such as wearing bike helmets, life jackets, and seat belts ▪ discuss outcomes of healthy behaviours ▪ introduce the concept of eating a variety of food and body positivity ▪ teach students different kinds of food ▪ importance of food to the social and emotional well-being of people, families and communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ portray risky or unhealthy behaviours without discussions of outcomes ▪ try to teach positive lessons through negative examples; students may only focus on the negative behaviour ▪ label foods as 'good' and 'bad' ▪ compare or shame people's bodies
<p>Language Use</p> <p><i>Language use refers to the presence of derogatory terms or profanities.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ positive language that models how to be respectful and friendly to others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ include any instances of swearing, racial or other kinds of slurs, hate speech

	✓ Use resources that:	✗ Avoid resources that:
<p>Climate Change</p> <p><i>Climate change refers to long-term alteration in the average weather patterns of a region, including shifts in temperature, precipitation, and other climatic factors, largely driven by human activities. These changes can have far-reaching impacts on ecosystems, and lead to extreme weather events.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ explain that the Earth has air and water, and that air and water are important for life ▪ emphasize the importance of taking care of the environment and being kind to nature ▪ focus on the idea of collective responsibility in looking after the planet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ instil fear for the future or a sense of guilt ▪ focus on the impacts of climate change
<p>Scariness</p> <p><i>Scariness is a quality or attribute associated with something that induces fear, anxiety, or a sense of dread in individuals.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ include fantasy with gentle fantasy elements (e.g. talking animals or magical adventures) ▪ contain positive messages, like overcoming fears in a supportive way ▪ depict real-life lessons like making friends or going to school for the first time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ include elements intended to frighten the reader including darkness, strange sounds, distorted faces or bodies, etc., ▪ contain plots that include scary suspense, lots of peril, or the separation of families from children (human or animal) ▪ involve scenes of intense arguing, physical or emotional danger ▪ include images or descriptions of real-world scenarios that involve harm, injury or distress ▪ portray bullying or coercion