

# Checklist of Criteria to Evaluate Children's Books

Criterion	Questions to Consider	Yes	No	Comment
Check the illustrations	Are the illustrations free of stereotypes about disabled people? Examples of stereotypes include a child with blindness always wearing dark sunglasses or a child who uses a wheelchair being pushed by another person.			
	Do disabled individuals appear to have their own unique features, rather than all looking the same?			
	Are disabled people shown engaging in activities, self-help, and leadership roles, rather than being shown as outsiders or observers?			
Check the story line	Does the storyline show acceptance of diverse abilities, rather than suggesting that disabled people need to be extraordinary or meet "normalized" standards to be accepted?			
	Is the storyline free of suggestions that disability needs to be "fixed?"			
	Do disabled people contribute to solving the story "problem?"			
Look at the lifestyles	Are disabled people shown doing a variety of activities and jobs?			
	When disabled people do things differently, is it depicted in a positive way?			

**Note.** Adapted from Nasatir and Horn (2003)

Criterion	Questions to Consider	Yes	No	Comment
Weigh the relationships between people	Do disabled people have power to make choices, demonstrate their strengths on a team, and/or engage in reciprocal relationships?			
	Is the story free of depictions that disabled people should be pitied, treated more delicately, or “saved” by people without disabilities?			
Consider the effects on a child’s self-image	Are disabled people depicted as positive and constructive role models in one or more areas?			
	Is the story free of messages that might make students feel like disability is “bad,” “ugly,” or “inferior”?			
Consider the author’s or illustrator’s background and perspective	Do the author(s) and illustrator(s) have personal or professional experiences that help them understand disability?			
Watch for loaded words	Is the story free from loaded words. Examples of loaded words include “slow,” “lazy,” “weird,” “wheelchair bound,” or “suffering from...”			
Look at the copyright data and targeted age	Is the story free of outdated beliefs about disabled people?			
	Is the language used in the book to describe disabilities (e.g., autistic, disabled) consistent with current trends in the disabled community?			

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