A kindergartner or first grader is now moving into the world of “real” readers. He has a longer attention span, and he needs experience with many books of various types at different levels of difficulty.

Tips for selecting books for 5 or 6-year-olds

• Picture books are the best type of book for this age. In these books, there is a balance between words and pictures. The illustrations tell as much about the story as the printed words. The illustrations help pre-reading children “read” the action even if they can’t read the words yet.

• A child will enjoy books about real-life situations appropriate to her life – books about going to school, about families and community figures, and stories about friendships.

• Select books that present real-life facts in a story format. An example of this would be a story of a bird who is learning to fly.

• Introduce folktales that explain how or why something is the way it is – for instance, “Why the tiger has stripes.”

• Fables are popular because they have a moral. Children will enjoy books where good behavior is rewarded and bad behavior is punished.

• Get ready to laugh with children. They will delight in books that put adults in humorous situations.

• A 5 or 6-year-old is becoming less egocentric and more curious about others. Introduce stories about other lands and people.

• Continue to enjoy old traditional favorites – rhythms, rhymes, word plays, silly stories.

• Introduce short chapter books and level reading books.

• Make available a variety of books on many subjects – animals, careers, space, etc.
• When choosing story books for children, always choose good literature. Select books that have illustrations that fit the story and language that is a pleasure to read.

• Introduce some factual books like simple first dictionaries and reference books.