

## Online Children's Storytimes – Fall 2020 and Early 2021

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### Background and summary:

Prior to Covid restrictions, the library offered weekly onsite Thursday Storytimes and bi-weekly Saturday Storytimes. In March 2020, we began an online version of our weekly Thursday Storytime on Facebook Live, as well as a short daily mini-Storytime. In Fall 2020, we also added short online After School FunDay Friday sessions (1-2 minutes) with jokes and riddles.

### Description:

#### Online Thursday Storytime (Thursdays at 10:30am – 15-20 min.)

Online Thursday Storytime offers toddlers and preschoolers stories, songs, rhymes, guessing games, fingerplays, and puppetry. Although I'm unable to see viewers, I strive to create an interactive experience by asking children questions throughout the session and by offering parents the opportunity to make online comments. During Storytime, I also add information about early literacy strategies for parents and caretakers.

#### Mini-Storytimes (aka Fun with Gilly\*) (M, W, Th, F & alt. Tues. at 12:30pm – 5-8 min.)

Favorite Book Monday – Books requested by viewers

Arts & Science Tuesday – Simple STEAM activities with common household items

Wordplay Wednesday – Poems; language and phonetic awareness

Double Thursday – Second reading of the Online Thursday Storytime book

FunDay Friday – Humorous books & submitted jokes or riddles

*\*Gilly is the well-loved goat puppet who lives at the library.*

### Publicity:

Events are publicized on the Mitchell Public Library Facebook Page, Mitchell Public Library Website, and the City of Mitchell calendar. In Spring 2021, I plan to expand publicity.

### Impact:

Our online Storytimes help children to develop a love for books and to engage in early literacy activities. As a result, groundwork is laid for future school success. Additionally, our online Storytimes allow children and families to remain connected to the library, especially if they aren't entering the building due to the pandemic. Although families miss on-site Storytime, they enjoy the flexibility of watching online Storytime according to their schedules (i.e. bedtime).

We average 40-50 views/session for Online Thursday Storytime. Views for the Mini-Storytimes range from 20-80 views/session. These online Storytimes are also viewed by adults without children at home. One woman confessed, "Call me strange, but I just love to watch Gilly." We've also received comments from viewers in other states and Canada.

**Future:**

## Plans for Storytimes (January – May 2021)

- Continue Online Thursday Storytime & After School FunDay Friday.
- Continue Mini-Storytimes with these changes:
  - \* Add “Meet the Staff Monday.” We hope to feature Library staff members reading their favorite books. (Board member are also welcome to read. 😊)
  - \* Add “Spanish Word Friday” (*Viernes de Espanol*) on alternating Fridays in preparation for biweekly bilingual Saturday Storytime.
- Add online Bilingual Saturday Storytime (*Sabado de Historias*) on alternating Saturdays. Ada Morales and I plan to video these sessions ahead of time.
- Provide online options for local preschools and colonies. Prior to Covid restrictions, I provided in-person Storytimes for First Lutheran, Headstart, Palace City Preschool, and Rosedale Colony. I hope to resume some form of an online Storytime with each of these places, perhaps with Zoom.