

The StoryWalk® Project

Frequently Asked Questions

March 2015 update

What is required of me if I would like to offer StoryWalk® in my community?

Please use the StoryWalk® trademark and include the following statement in all promotion of the project: "The StoryWalk® Project was created by Anne Ferguson of Montpelier, VT and developed in collaboration the Kellogg Hubbard Library. Storywalk® is a registered service mark owned by Ms. Ferguson."

All usage of the Storywalk® mark must comply with these guidelines, and must be limited to use in connection with educational, noncommercial projects consistent with the StoryWalk® Project mission to promote literacy.

Please note: When the project is offered in the following counties in Pennsylvania: Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Butler, Fayette, Greene, Indiana, Lawrence, Washington, and Westmoreland, the term "StoryWalk" can only be used by the Pittsburgh Association for the Education of Young Children ("PAEYC"). You can hold the event, just call it something else.

What are the costs involved?

For Vermont communities who would like to borrow StoryWalk® books from us, the cost is free! If you want to create StoryWalk® books yourself, here are the costs: We purchase 3 copies of each book (2 for mounting, one for damage repair/replacement); books cost between \$7 and \$17 each so that can range from \$25 to \$50. Lamination costs about \$3 for 10 ml – a range of \$90 - \$100 for each book depending on its length.

Stakes (good ones that don't splinter, aren't heavy, won't break easily) cost close to \$1 each - most books need about 30. Sticky-backed industrial strength Velcro® (to hold the pages onto the stakes) costs about \$35, for enough to accommodate a 30-page book.

Not including labor to assemble and mount the books, StoryWalk® costs run about \$200 - \$250 per book.

What basics should I know about preparing the books?

In general, we use 10 ml lamination pockets, Industrial Strength Sticky Back Velcro® (the lightweight indoor Velcro® isn't strong enough) and use four-foot mahogany stakes, (they are stronger and lighter than pine). Each page is mounted on card stock; we put the page number, book title and author, and contact info on the back of each page. We staple gun the Velcro® to the stake. We have the lamination done by a copy center.

I can't stress enough the importance of a wide margin of laminate around the edges of each page – this completely seals protects the page from moisture which will ruin the page.

What about copyright laws?

We contacted the head of the Children's Library Services for the State of Vermont - Grace Greene - who told us that if we purchased the book, we could do what we wanted with it. (Books are governed by the "first sale" doctrine.) The books cannot be altered in any way, and the pages cannot be scanned or reproduced. Simply mount them on card stock and laminate each individual page.

We make a point of purchasing new books not taking donations or buying used books so that the writers and illustrators get full benefit. We buy all our supplies (books, stakes, laminate, etc.) from local businesses.

As it turns out, comments from parents in the guest book have indicated that often they plan to purchase the book that they have seen at the StoryWalk® Project. The Kellogg-Hubbard Library also buys a copy of the books that we use if they do not already have them in their collection.

How do you select books for The StoryWalk® Project?

The ideal book has minimal text, illustrations that don't cross the center of the book, and a great story line. Smaller books work best for this project. We look for books that can be used in different seasons and are nature-based. Always, it is a great story line that is the key to this project – we also consistently look for books with a message of kindness and caring.

How far apart did you space the pages?

That depends on the length of the route available, the number of forks or intersections it has and the number of pages in the book. Make sure that the readers know where to find the following page, it is best if the next page can be seen. About 40 paces or so seems like a good distance between pages. We have found that a half-mile total distance works well for small children.

How can you tell how many people have seen the StoryWalk®?

We place a guest book at the end of the StoryWalk® and ask readers to tell us the date, number in party, and any comments or suggestions that they have for the project.

How did you set up a guest/comment book to be protected against the elements?

We have placed a loose-leaf binder in a weatherproof box along with pencils (pens freeze and won't write on damp paper). The boxes are ones developed for real estate information with lids that can be mounted or attached to stakes.

What suggestions do you have for someone interested in creating The StoryWalk® Project in his or her town?

If you live in Vermont, you can borrow StoryWalk® books for up to two weeks, contact Anne to arrange this. All books are picked up and returned to the Kellogg-Hubbard Library in Montpelier.

If you don't live in Vermont or would like to create a StoryWalk® yourself, start by finding some other like-minded people in your community to work with on this project. We work well as a team and offer different perspectives and experiences. This project combines the benefits of physical activity, time outdoors in nature, literacy, and family time. Because of that, many community partners are interested in it and it lends itself well to funding from different sources.

- Post StoryWalk® books on new trails and paths to draw people to walk there or introduce them to StoryWalk® by posting the books along popular routes.
- In winter, books can be posted in store windows where many people walk because the sidewalks aren't so slippery or outdoors along snowshoe trails.
- Try to involve other members of the community in the project in different ways; it lends itself to creative adaptations.
- Our senior center group translated a book into French for us. We have had the high school Spanish class translate one for us as well. A children's nature center was inspired to write and illustrate their own books.

How can anyone help to support the StoryWalk® Project?

Thanks for asking! Donations are always welcome. We suggest a donation of \$25 for borrowing a book. All donations can be sent to the Kellogg-Hubbard Library (see address below) – be sure to write "StoryWalk" on the memo line of the check. Thank you for your support!

If I have any other questions, how can I reach you?

Anne Ferguson, StoryWalk® Project Creator and Coordinator (Volunteer)
storywalkvt@yahoo.com

Rachel Senechal, Kellogg-Hubbard Library
135 Main St.
Montpelier, VT 05602
(802) 223-3338
rysenechal@kellogghubbard.org

The StoryWalk® Project was created by Anne Ferguson of Montpelier, Vermont and developed in collaboration with the Kellogg-Hubbard Library.