

Thanks for asking about the books we use! We accept storybooks, board books, chapter books, recent nonfiction (< 5 years old, and graphic novels for children ages birth – 12 years old.

Bernie's Book Bank distributes children's literature. The children we serve have few if any books at home. We strive to provide children with books they can be proud to show their parents, call their own and keep in their home library. We accept a wide variety of storybooks, chapter books and board books in excellent condition for children 12 and under. Our mission focuses on books that tell a story or provide constructive information for a child – not just words or facts on a page. While those type of books involve reading, they just aren't part of our mission.

We ask that you remove donated books that that don't fit our mission. This is such a big help for us – thank you.

Physical Condition – Please keep in mind that all the books will be handled several more times before they end up in a child's hands. With this handling we have found that books that aren't in great condition to start with don't make it through our process successfully.

Here are some common physical traits that don't work for us. (some photo examples at end):

- Torn or bent covers
- Torn pages
- Heavy marking
- Mildew/mold
- Off odor
- Very yellow pages
- Reference books (dictionaries, atlases)
- Cracked bindings
- Hardcover books with cardboard showing at the corner
- Textbooks – including classroom sets that are showing their age.
- Books with less than 17 pages (board books are OK)
- Noise making buttons that don't all work
- Magazines (like Highlights, comic books printed on newspaper like paper)

In addition to physical condition, we also have other parameters we consider such as age appropriateness, whether a book is a reading book and if it is religious/foreign language. We do take Spanish books and English/Spanish books now.

Here are some common non-physical traits that don't work for us.

- Outdated nonfiction (technology books published before 2017)

- Young Adult (Hunger Games, Golden Compass, John Green novels)
- Adult Books – both fiction and non fiction
- “Chicken Soup” books
- Religious books (non-secular Christmas is OK)
- Dictionaries, Atlases, Encyclopedias, Thesaurus
- Test Prep books
- Science project books
- Books that help with math or how to print or write in cursive.
- Foreign language – except Spanish or Eng/Spanish mix
- Activity Books – cookbooks, sticker books with no story or with missing stickers, gaming books with no story.
- Self-help books – *The Care and Keeping of You*, why parents get divorced, how to deal with death, bullying etc. We feel these topics are best discussed with parents or teachers.

On behalf of Bernie's Book Bank, thank you for taking the extra time to ensure the books you're donating are useable and in good condition. We strive to distribute quality reading material to the children we serve so they have a sense of pride in the books they receive. Your efforts are greatly appreciated. Please let me know if you have questions.

**Carol Collier**  
**Community Development Lead**

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