

# Grey Literature and Childrens' Storytelling: Growing up With the Citizen of The Future

Luisa De Biagi

CNR - National Research Council of Italy - Central Library 'G. Marconi', Rome/IT

## Background

- The world of children's books continues to express a good capacity for **cultural affirmation** also through an intense and branched promotion activity: the materials of gray literature - in the sense of documents distributed outside the commercial channels - and the minor materials produced by this work are articulated through channels that **must be enhanced, so that they do not remain hidden in the eyes of the same public as the specialized operators**. Because of their nature and the purposes for which they are produced, are of **limited circulation and therefore difficult for operators interested in following the most significant experiences carried out at national level**.
- **These materials include** catalogues of exhibitions and libraries, bibliographies, acts and reports promoting reading, work projects and technical-advertising documentation, directories, publications of and for children, etc. - which are born in the majority not as products with internal circulation of the producing body, but as publications that the bodies address to the operators of the territory of reference and are not homogeneous in terms of shape, origin, consistency and importance.
- **They are mainly produced by public bodies:** municipal administrations through the department of culture and public libraries, provinces through library systems, schools and school libraries, museums, but.. **private ones such as bookshops, publishing houses, etc. are not absent in this production**

## Conclusions

It's a matter of fact that digital storytelling is an efficient and trendy way for the library of 21st century to engage with their community.

**The future:** in many ways, digital storytelling embodies what the Library of XXI century is about: user-centred, "inviting user participation in the creation of both the physical and the virtual services they want" (Casey & Savastinuk, 2006). A digital story is not created to die on a shelf but shared with the rest of the civil society, at every age in an optics of permanent education.

*A new language for growing up with the citizen of the future, in any level and worldwide!*



## Focus, methods

- In Italy, The reporting of these materials that since 1990 has been carried out by *the magazine LiBeR*, through the heading "Grey Matter" - present in the Dossier "Reading signals" - has allowed many operators to socialize knowledge about what is produced, at national level, in support of public reading activities for children;
- Since 1990 the Documentation Center "Biblioteca Gianni Rodari" of Campi Bisenzio (active at the Library of Villa Montalvo) collects and documents through *Grigia database* all the publications of gray literature produced in Italy by the bodies operating in the book sector for children and young people;
- **Regarding citizenship and public health** : an emblematic example of best practices in Italy for Medicine and pediatric oncology is the 'Biblioteca scientifica per pazienti, Centro di riferimento oncologico di Aviano IRCCS → playful-therapeutic information material and fairy tales relating to the disease, by virtue of their function as an information vehicle and a stimulus to communication, represent a contribution in this direction.
- **So...The importance of valorising children's literature in public libraries is now felt worldwide because of its multitarget and multitasking nature: from children and teens to adults as professionals in this field: academics, librarians, teachers, educators, parents and relatives.**



## Evolution and new missions:

- **Classic and contemporary material**, the "highbrow and the popular", ranging across works for infants, young adults and education professionals
- This production is also precious mirror of new trends not only in narrative, but also in illustration, divulgation and permanent education.
- Many libraries, both public and academic, have embraced digital storytelling. Some libraries use it for educational purposes, developing technology literacy, while others, like the **DOK's Agora** project, have used it to engage the community. In fact **Narrative storytelling is both an advocacy tool and a therapeutic process also for adults: A sort of 'esperanto' in social communication, from social to audio-visual, frequently used in persuasive communication and marketing strategies.**

→ **A new feature/tool of the modern library:** In many ways digital storytelling reaches analysis of **fiction, poetry, drama and non-fictional material (plus studies in other media: film, TV, computer games, online works); visual narratives from picture books and comics to graphic novels; interviews with writers and artists;**



## References

Casey, M.E.; Savastinuk, L.C., Library 2.0. Service for the next generation library, *Library Journal* 131, 40-42 (Sep 2006), p. 40  
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