

Who is the point person for Phone-a-Story?

Alberto Pellicer from ELD

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Who can do Phone-a-Story?

Any interested staff member that has approval from their supervisor and can record on the assigned Tuesday/Wednesday can participate.

As of 2020, customers and community members can also volunteer to read and sing. [LINK TO FORM](#)

If you are a staff member interested in the service, you can also contact Alberto.

Do I need to be Tech Savvy to participate as a reader or singer?

Not at all! We do not use any software to record. You just need to feel comfortable recording a voicemail and having some sort of phone device available.

What is the time commitment?

The commitment for staff is at least one year. At present, we have a healthy amount of readers so each reader is needed 4 to 6 times a year.

Guest readers usually read one story on a specific date and depending on the context their story might stay for longer in the system.

Is there training to be able to start recording?

Not at the moment. Based on what you are assigned to read, you can follow the steps on the instruction sheets below. The process is simple - we are basically recording several voicemails each week. If you have questions or concerns about this highly advanced technology, I am happy to guide you through it. Just give me a call at 720-865-0320. At the moment, most branches have a Phone-a-Storier, so you may ask to observe when they do theirs. Listening to Phone-a-Story is also a great way to have an idea on how to do it.

[LINKS TO EACH INSTRUCTIONS](#)

What if I am out the week I am supposed to record?

If you know in advance, let Alberto Pellicer know so we can change the week you are assigned. If it is a last minute thing see if a coworker can do it, if not, tell Alberto and he will find a sub.

For staff who aren't used to reading/singing for kids, do you have recommended resources that you point people to to find selections?

You can look at the [LINK TO PREVIOUS RECORDINGS](#) to have an idea of what has worked in the past. For books, [CLEL](#) and [Best an Brightest](#) can be pretty useful. For songs and rhymes, [lbrary.com](#), the [RDA channel](#) or [Storyblocks](#) have great selections. You can also have a look at our storytellers at youtube.com/denverlibrary

How long are the recordings?

You have up to 5 minutes. Two to four minutes is what we recommend, based on the age of the audience.

How often do stories change?

Biweekly in Vietnamese

Monthly for Classic English and Amharic.

Weekly for everything else

This might change depending on the circumstances, like guest readers, global crisis or just people being sick.

How do I know which week I am supposed to record?

There is a MASTER SCHEDULE LINK. If there needs to be an adjustment, please inform Alberto Pellicer (apellicer@denverlibrary.org).

Is there a specific day or time to record?

All assigned dates are Wednesdays. You will record your story or song on the Tuesday before or on your assigned Wednesday. You will receive a reminder the Monday before. You can also save your dates in your Google Calendar after looking at the Master Schedule Link

What are some tips to do Phone-a-Story?

- Choose stories that you enjoy reading. Your enthusiasm will come through in your voice.
- Remind your fellow staff members of when and where you will be recording as the background needs to be completely quiet.
- You are "live" when you are reading. Please refrain from profanity when you make a mistake.
- Listen to your reading to check for background noise and clarity. If necessary, record again.
- Talking into the mouthpiece of the phone is better than using speakerphone.
- You are allowed to use instruments and other special effects.
- We are recording stories and songs under the "fair use" premise. Everything gets erased in 30 days max.
- For the 6th to 8th grade recordings, we suggest you read introductory chapters, poetry, interesting passages with a cliffhanger, scary stories, jokes or tongue twisters.

Is there a list that I can check to know which books have been read recently?

A LIST OF RECORDING Links folder shows what has been recorded recently. Please update it with your new recordings. You can repeat materials after a year, but this is the library! So many good books!

Are there statistics on how many people use Phone-a-Story?

We receive around 1500 calls per month with peaks of around 3000 sometimes. We broke our record in March 2020 with 5200. Here you can check the LINK TO STATS

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
January			575	2237	2112	3490
February			520	1410	2737	3313
March			567	1544	2458	5200
April	205		623	1356	3129	
May		322	589	1457	2995	
June		722	1129	2113	2489	
July			1065	1745	2710	
August		507	844	1383	2192	
September		620	809	1428	2335	
October			1108	1801	2305	
November	465		1553	2119	3013	
December			1562	2167	3094	

VIETNAMESE	AMHARIC	
97	62	June 2018
41	60	July 2018
40	28	August 2018
26	39	September 2018
66	28	October 2018
88	57	November 2018
71	51	December 2018
94	53	January 2019
137	118	February 2019
55	118	March 2019
108	47	April 2019
301	112	May 2019
52	61	June 2019
174	142	July 2019
191	142	August 2019
158	161	September 2019

115	112	October 2019
109	91	November 2019

Do I always have to read to the same audience forever and ever for the rest of my life?

No. Feel free to email Alberto if you want to change the option assigned.

What happens if I mess up my recording?

You may record your story again at anytime by pressing # 2 and follow directions starting with 5. To listen to your story and check how it sounds, call 720-865-8500.

Do you have any tips for choosing a book and recording?

- Check the list to make sure you aren't picking a book that has been done recently.
- Choose books that are short, but still have a good storyline.
- Choose books with descriptive text, so the kids can easily visualize the pictures.
- Books with a rhythmic pattern such as rhyming books are fun to listen to. Feel free to add other elements like noises or voices.
- Pick books that are fun, so kids keep coming back for more. Books about serious topics are often hard for kids to understand without a parent helping to give more context.
- If the book is humorous, make sure the humor comes across in the text without relying on the pictures and isn't sarcastic humor.
- For older kids, pick books with suspense or stories that require prediction.
- Feel free to use instruments
- Collaborations with more than one person reading are also fun

Here you have more specific instructions:

English Preschool	Spanish Preschool	Traditional English	K-5th English	6th to 8th English	Spanish Song	English Song	Vietnamese	Amharic
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use picture books • Easy plots • Be enthusiastic • Make voices when possible • Rhyming or repetitive books can work great • Make sure the story does not rely too much on the illustrations • For Traditional, use widely known stories, folktales or new classics • Traditional stories can also be oral stories. 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use picture books with a more elaborate plot • Beginning readers are also a good choice • Make voices when possible • More complicated vocabulary is OK • Tongue twisters and riddles can also work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't necessarily a whole book • Cliffhangers • Mystery and action are ok • Poetry or short passages are also great 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure you describe the movements if any • Explain if the song has a dance • Suggest different versions or extra lines • Tips and benefits of music are welcome • A brief history of the song is ok • Instruments are great 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It can be a song, a poem or a story • Not necessarily from a book • It can be a translation • Think of an All Ages Storytime 	