

## **SY - (15812) - EVOLUTIONARY BEDTIME STORIES: WHAT CAN CHILDREN LEARN FROM BOOKS THAT THREAT EVOLUTIONARY ISSUES?**

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### **Short Abstract**

The theory of evolution is a fundamental part of learning biology and scientific literacy. Yet, misconceptions that emerge in childhood hinder learners from grasping the theory of life. Implementing evolution in early education may enhance adequate reasoning, and thus, serve as basis for subsequent learning at school. Due to an increase of published children's books treating evolutionary issues, these days, more kids may get in touch with evolutionary theory before entering school. This study aimed to identify factors of current children's literature that might support or impede the development of scientific evolutionary ideas. A text-based qualitative content analysis of 31 children's books was conducted focusing on organismal context, evolutionary principles, and misconceptions. Despite evolution being a universal concept, children's books mainly promoted animal and human evolution. The selection principle, which concerns complex interactions between populations and environmental factors, was preferred over the principles variation and inheritance. Furthermore, the books more often covered phylogenetic history than basic evolutionary processes, and most of them used transformationist, teleological or anthropomorphic reasoning. Consequently, the examined books may bias children's initial ideas concerning evolution or burden them with misconceptions. In a subsequent qualitative study, children (aged 5 to 8 years) will be interviewed about their acceptance and knowledge of variation as well as their distinction between living and non-living.