



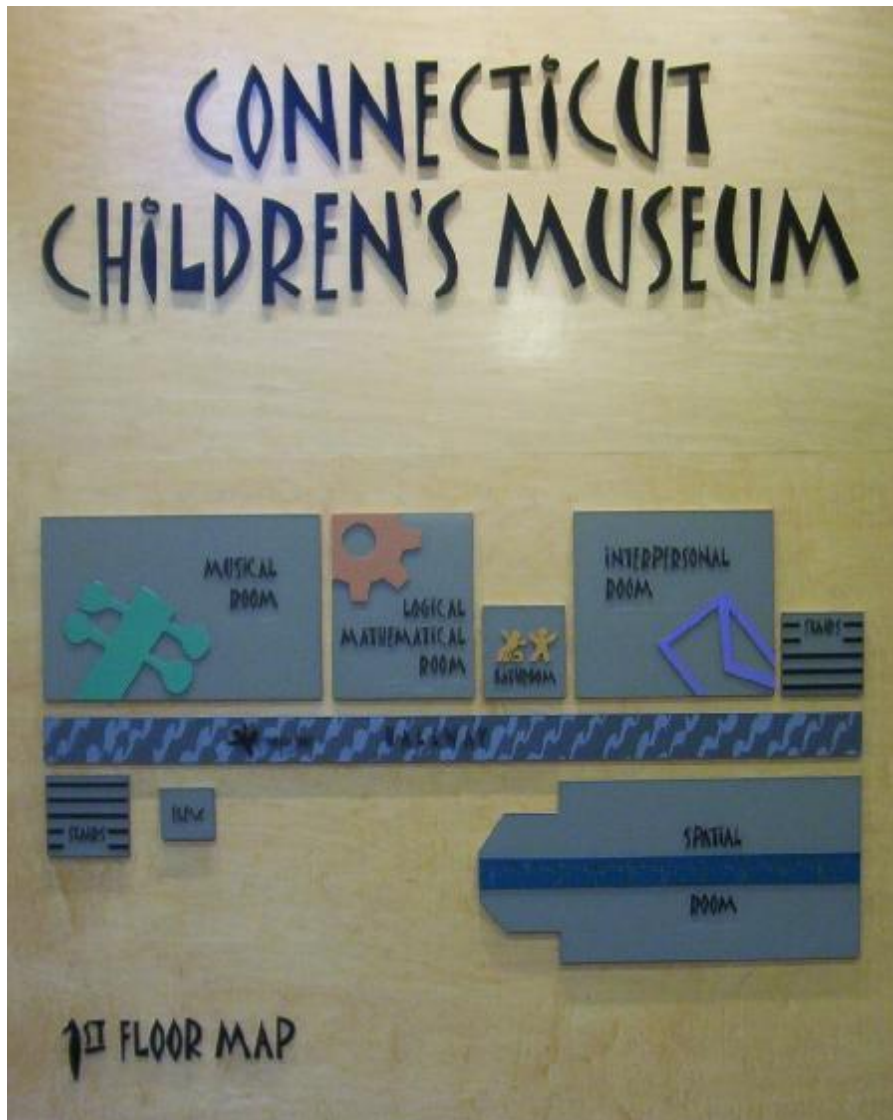
CONNECTICUT
CHILDREN'S
MUSEUM

The Form of the Museum

**We begin by talking about the
Connecticut Children's
Museum and the role of touch
as you enter its literacy-based
and arts-rich, textured
spaces.**

Visitors are greeted by these four life-size, touchable, flat metal sculptures of children frolicking right side up, upside down and in a wheelchair on the grassy lawn. They are holding up rectangular signs that spell out the name of the building in raised letters.





Once inside, visitors traverse the small foyer, turning right and proceeding up the stairs or taking the elevator to one of the two floors of the Museum.

On each landing is a large wooden floor map to direct visitors to the rooms. Like this first floor map, both are wall-mounted, tactile and in Braille.

On the maps and at the doorway of each exhibit room, there is a raised icon that symbolizes that room.



For example, this Naturalist Room icon features hexagonal bee cells, signaling that there is a beehive exhibit inside.

The Content of the Museum

**Exhibits.
Experiencing the textures.**

Inside the rooms, visitors find bold and colorful painted murals, large, touchable floor sculptures, such as this bear from Blueberries for Sal, and Brailled 'factoids' that convey information about the exhibits.





Musical Room

This full-sized brass saxophone is mounted at a child's height on the wall.

Children, like little Sam, are invited to feel the keys and run their hands over the bell-shaped instrument.

Logical-Mathematical Room



A set of three wooden pegboards, measuring 2 feet by 4 feet, are on the wall.

Dozens of smooth hardwood gears are stored in square tin buckets on the shelf below.

The large and small gears have ‘teeth’ evenly spaced along their perimeters and a brass peg on the back that fits into the pegboard holes.

These children are placing them side by side, meshing the teeth to form a long gear train.



Spatial Room



These four children dressed up like construction workers in hard hats and used the wooden blocks to build a skyscraper. Behind them, a partially completed house reveals the normally hidden frame made of authentic 2-inch by 4-inch wooden studs.

Interpersonal Room



This child wrote a letter to a friend using the Perkins Braillewriter, is weighing it on a textured scale, and can use the tactile globe to determine its destination.

Inside the pint-sized post office, this child mails her carefully crafted paper missive in an authentic, wall-mounted metal, mailbox.

Note that the word 'LETTERS' is embossed on the front.



Intrapersonal & Bodily-Kinesthetic Room

This visitor is actively being a new character, a frog. Inspired by the children's picture book, Jump, Frog, Jump, he is wearing rubber frog boots, with bulging frog eyes, to jump on giant felt lily pads.



Children become the peddler from Caps for Sale when they find the stack of authentic woolen caps next to the large monkey sculpture and practice carrying their ‘wares’ on their heads. They quickly switch identities by donning the plush monkey tails and refusing to give the peddler back his caps!



Naturalist Room



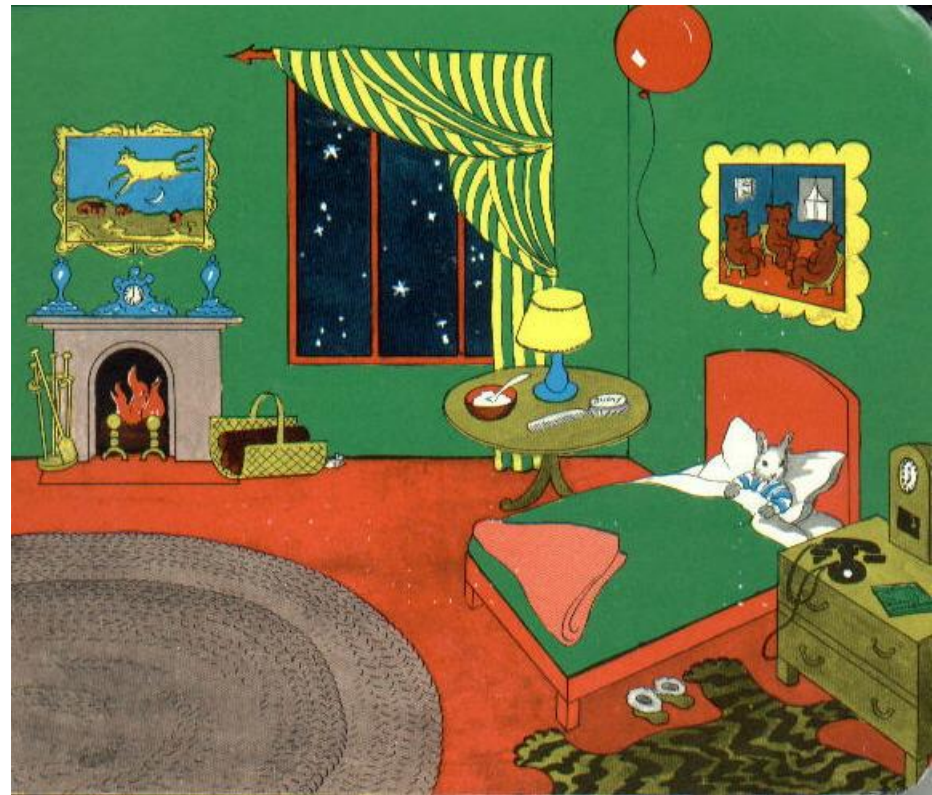
Children can listen to the 10,000 buzzing honeybees in the beehive or use the super magnifiers to help them spy on the queen bee.

Children can play tactile tic tac toe with wooden X's made from two small tree branches and O pieces made from round slices of a small tree trunk.

Linguistic Room

Children experience the children's classic book, Goodnight Moon, when they wander into a life-sized, exact replica of the great green room.

They can find and touch ... the telephone and the red balloon ... the comb and the brush and the bowl full of mush ... and join the bunny in the bed.

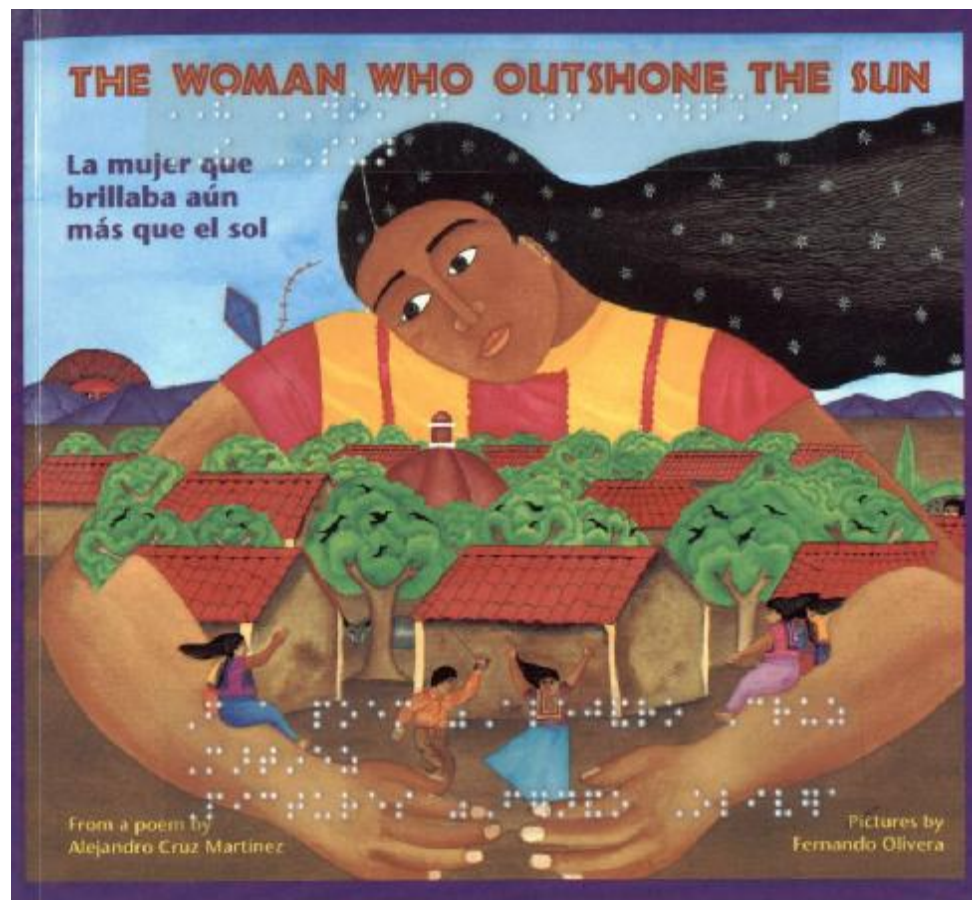


The Content of the Museum

Events.

**TEXTured Literacy as the
template.**

The Museum integrates its collection of 450 children's picture books into the exhibits and uses books to anchor all of its events. They are small works of art. Like this title, books are available in English, Spanish and Braille.



Creating Readers

Through the weekly Creating Readers program, books are read, experienced interactively and interpreted in American Sign Language. Here, children hold a live boa constrictor while the reader reads “E ... an elegant Emerald Tree Boa”, a page from the book, A Walk in the Rain Forest.



Family Field Trips

Family field trips are organized for children who are blind or visually disabled. Each child receives a TEXTured Literacy Box with a Brailled book and tactile props.

In the We're Going on a Bear Hunt box, there are small wooden trees, a teddy bear, the pink blanket to hide under and dolls to match the book characters ready to go on a bear hunt.



To make literacy resources available to all children, each child who is blind receives his or her book in Braille. Here, Brianna reads her copy of We're Going on a Bear Hunt.



Accessible Art Works

The Museum organizes touchable art events such as this bird sculpture exhibit.

Called Accessible Art Works, the tactile exhibits welcome touching and are linked to a children's picture book that is Brailled for children who are blind.



The Connecticut Children's Museum is a community resource inspired by the tenets of universal design and dedicated to nurturing children, their families and teachers in a literacy-based and arts-rich, textured place.



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MUSEUM**

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