



KIDS READ THE BEST STUFF

AN OPENLY SOURCED TEXTBOOK COVERING THE STUDY OF CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

Kids Read The Best Stuff

An Openly Sourced Textbook Covering the Study of Children's Literature

Studying Children's Literature was first written and compiled by Kathryn Behrens at the North Dakota State College of Science; that version – version 1 – was created in 2020, licensed CC-BY-NC-SA.

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Acknowledgements and Dedication

I'd like to acknowledge Katie's hard work in creating the first version of this textbook, which gave me an easy jumpstart into what topics to include and what the outline should be. I'm grateful to have had this resource; I've learned so much!

I dedicate this openly-source textbook to all the children who've read a book and found themselves mirrored back to them. I dedicate this ALSO – and even more so – to kids who haven't seen themselves in a book, YET. Here's hoping that it all changes, and evolves, to match who you are and what the world needs.

CHAPTER ZERO | The Land of Nod

Source.¹



From breakfast on through all the day
At home among my friends I stay,
But every night I go abroad
Afar into the land of Nod.

All by myself I have to go,
With none to tell me what to do—
All alone beside the streams
And up the mountain-sides of dreams.

The strangest things are there for me,
Both things to eat and things to see,
And many frightening sights abroad
Till morning in the land of Nod.

Try as I like to find the way,
I never can get back by day,
Nor can remember plain and clear
The curious music that I hear.

¹ Edited by Dickinson, Joshua. Readings in Children's Literature. Compiled from Copyright-Cleared Materials Available on Project Gutenberg or the Web. 03 Nov 19. Email: Jdickinson15@gmail.com

This Textbook Was Designed for This Sort of Course

This course is an introductory survey of literature for children from infancy through puberty, with emphasis on the analysis of literary characteristics which determine age-appropriateness. Through the readings of picture books, poetry, folklore, fantasy, realistic fiction, biography, and informational books, students will gain an awareness of the history, genre, and theme in children's literature. In their reading, students will also develop a familiarity with important authors and illustrators as they confront such issues as racism, sexism, multiculturalism, and censorship.

Course Goals

Through reading, analyzing, discussing, and writing, students will be introduced to critical literary theory as well as aesthetics of literature through the complex, purposeful, dynamic, multi-cultural perspective of children's literature.

Course Objectives²

- Discuss, analyze, and write about children's literature with the concepts and terminology used by professionals who study, create, catalog, or review children's literature³
- Research the background, history, and cultural context of children's literature
- Identify specific instances of genres of children's literature
- Discuss, analyze, and evaluate the literary characteristics, age appropriateness, and cultural/developmental sensitivity
- Combine and apply the informative and analytical skills acquired in this course in research papers using credible reference/literary resources
- Apply MLA guidelines accurately to cite sources

² These objectives will be connected to their appropriate chapters/content.

³ This specific objective will be an overall goal for each chapter and project and activity.

- Discuss and experiment with the art of storytelling

CHAPTER ONE | Introduction

Source.⁴⁵

Children's literature is important because it provides students with opportunities to respond to literature; it gives students appreciation about their own cultural heritage as well as those of others; it helps students develop emotional intelligence and creativity; it nurtures growth and development of the student's personality and social skills; and it transmits important literature and themes from one generation to the next. —Through the Eyes of a Child by Donna North (2010)

It is no surprise that reading to kids and getting them to read is extremely important, but why? Donna Norton makes it clear in her book Through the Eyes of a Child that young people need to read a variety of literature for many reasons. They have been distilled down to the five essentials:

1. **Children's literature provides students with the opportunity to respond to literature and develop their own opinions about the topic.** It is in this way that children's literature strengthens young people's ability to think critically. Good literature does not tell a child what to think, rather it enables young readers to infer. It empowers them to add meaning to what is written and that meaning comes from the relationships, environments, experiences, and meaningful objects in the persons' lives. The very same piece of writing evokes a different meaning according to each child's lived experience. The meaning created from good children's literature may be as varied and vast as each reader that reads it. A reader may assign unique dialogue and story from the pictures; a reader may imagine the literary scene from a chapter book. In these ways, young readers innately create meaning as well as opinions about the children's literature they are consuming.
2. **Children's literature provides an avenue for students to learn about their own cultural heritage and the cultures of other people.** Having a positive view of both the young reader's heritage and culture and that of cultures different than their own is crucial for personal and

⁴ Written by Kathryn J. Beherns CC-BY-NC-SA and adapted from Through the Eyes of a Child by Donna North (2010).

⁵ This chapter applies this course objective: "Discuss and analyze the importance of children's literature."

social development. Reading books about a child's familial culture reaffirms their cultural connections as well as their cultural identity. Children's literature allows young audiences to comfortably explore cultures different than their own from the comfort and safety of their chosen environment, thus, viewing difference with curiosity and wonder rather than powerlessness and overwhelm.

3. **Children's literature helps students develop emotional intelligence. Stories have the power to promote emotional and moral development.** Time and time again children's books provide moments of crisis and conflict in which the character(s) process and figure out how to process and eventually make some sort of "right" decision—an important process to see modeled. Children's literature helps young readers understand deep, complex emotions and events they experience—grief, war, death, loneliness.
4. **Children's literature also encourages creativity. It nurtures and expands the way a young reader views the world.** For example, in Zoe Miller and David Goodman's book Faces, everyday objects become faces. Kids are urged to think-outside-the-box and expand their sense of imagination. Joy Richardson's book Looking at Pictures delves deep into many aspects of art such as the hidden meanings in works of art, how artists use color, and the different types of paintings such as portraits, still life and landscapes. These books' design and interactivity encourage young people to imagine and learn about art and creating.
5. **Children's literature is of value because it fosters personality and social development.**

Literature encourages students to be considerate and friendly people, and these traits may be consistent with developing students into quality citizens. Exposing children to quality literature can contribute to the creation of responsible, successful, and caring individuals.

+



meer

@karkhana_blues



Children's literature is such an important, cultural heritage and so brutally ignored. We're not interested in the inner lives of our children, so they end up reading and watching whatever western cultural capital transfers in.

8:05 AM · Oct 22, 2022 · Twitter for Android

1.1 The Child in Children's Literature

Source.⁶

What is this thing — on which we adults spend so much time that we call children's literature?

It would be interesting to compile a survey regarding the circumstances as well as the motivations, which bring people to the world of writing for children. I believe the popular vision of the criteria for writing for young people is contained in this description of a children's literature course given at a local Rhode Island university. "Writing for children," it says, "requires three things: knowing what children read. Knowing the elements of good prose and poetry. Feeling like a child again."

"Writing for children," it says, "requires three things: knowing what children read. Knowing the elements of good prose and poetry. Feeling like a child again."

I first want to consider that last requirement. One night my wife and I were visiting a couple, colleagues of hers from the university where she teaches. These people have two children, ages three and five. We were there for dinner, and these two boys were not happy about it. After all, they were going to have to go to bed earlier than usual. In any case, they were being reminded that they were not the center of the universe. On the contrary, they were about to be shunted aside by adults. As a result, they were unhappy and grumpy.

To placate their sense of being excluded, the eldest boy, Nicholas, was allowed to go around and ask the adults what drinks they would like. And Nicholas did it with a deeply serious look on his face, an unconscious imitation, I suspect, of the adult world. Anyway, he made his rounds. One adult requested sherry. Another, wine. And so forth. When it came my turn, I leaned forward and whispered, "Please, Nicholas, I'd like a glass of spit."

⁶ Avi, *Horn Book Magazine*, 00185078, Vol. 69, Issue 1. Avi is the author of numerous novels for children, including the highly praised *True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle* and *Nothing but the Truth* (both Orchard). His article is based on a number of talks he delivered in 1990 and 1991. Reproduced with permission from The Horn Book © Copyright Library Journals, LLC a wholly owned subsidiary of MSI Information Services.

"What?" said Nicholas, his eyes suddenly very large." A glass of spit, please."

Those deep, dark eyes gazed at me intently for a moment. Then across that angelic face spread a wicked grin. Turning, Nicholas cried out at the top of his voice, "He wants a glass of spit!"

What happened next was extraordinary. The two boys reacted as if a cage had been opened, their handcuffs removed. They began running about the room, whooping and hollering. And, indeed, as justice would have it, I got my glass of spit. On the rocks. The primacy of infantile desire had been restored to its rightful, central place. At which point the mother of these children turned to me and said, "Now I know why you write for children."

What she was suggesting, I believe, is that my talent for being childish — my ability to feel like a child — was an indication of my insight into children. So, logically, I should be writing for children.

But the logic of this view is played out in another anecdote. My wife and I were at yet another academic gathering. A learned astronomy professor said to me, "Tell me something which I've never been able to grasp. How can you, an adult" — he paused to fuss pretentiously with his pipe — "How can you, with an adult's mind, think down to a child's level?"

I told the professor that I did not think like a child, much less think "down." "If anything," I assured him, "I'm more often than not reminded of my complexity."

"But your books," he said — not that he had read any of them, and I was fairly certain he never would — "are for kids, and they are not adults." Children, he might as well have said right out, are not smart.

"You are an astronomy professor," I said. "You teach freshmen. Do you teach those freshman astronomy students the accepted facts, principles, and concepts of your science?"

"Of course," he said. "A fact is a fact."

"Yes, but do you teach your freshmen in the same way you teach your graduate students?"

"Not at all."

"In other words," I reminded him, "the substance of your course is essentially the same, but your means of presentation does change."

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"Ah," he said, "now I understand. Everything is simple in kids' books."

"No," I said. "Simplicity has nothing to do with it. The facts — if you will — are presented so they have meaning within the context of children's experience."

"Kids have no experience," he insisted. "That's what makes them kids. "I changed the subject.

Let's turn now to that second requirement for writing for children: knowing what children read. **What are children reading?** The Center for the Learning and Teaching of Literature, in its 1989 "Study of Book-Length Works Taught in High School English Courses," indicated that Shakespeare is far and away the most widely read required author in schools.

My experience, based on country-wide school visits, is that the one author young people ask me about most is Stephen King. A few years ago it was V. C. Andrews.

These authors write what Jerry Weiss calls "underground children's literature." But I don't think anyone would describe these writers as creators of what we call children's literature. By the same token, I'm sure

we would all agree that Alice in Wonderland is a work of children's literature. But it is not currently being read much by children today.

Consider what a course in children's literature would cover if it treated only materials actually read by masses of children. Ask yourself this: if you placed a volume by your favorite writer of children's literature on a table next to a volume of Garfield the Cat, or The Baby-sitters Club, or Sweet Valley High, and said, "Pick one," which book would today's child pick?

In my view, of the three criteria cited above, only "knowing the elements of good prose and poetry" contributes meaningfully to an understanding of what is children's literature. But if children's literature is not about being childish, if it is not about simplifying, or writing down, what is it? Let's start by asking a basic question: Who and what is this child for whom this literature is written? Is it the twelve-year-old toting a gun on the streets of the inner city? Or is it the American college graduate who comes home weekly to ask mom to wash his clothes? A history of childhood I've been reading suggests that childhood is far less a biological construct than an economic

one. For although we talk of childhood as some universally understood period of time, in fact each culture, each historical period, each socioeconomic group has its own definition of childhood. There is no universal understanding of what constitutes childhood. In other words, the "child" of children's literature is not specific.

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Today, urban areas are full of children who are killers. But these killers are only children in terms of age. Why do they act this way? Let me give you some reasons. Our culture has rejected them as children. It allows them no childhood. To survive, these young people act like adults. They kill people. So that when one talks of children's literature, it is important to ask, which child? One of the interesting things about children's literature is that it is different according to time, place, and even ethnic group.

Not long ago I was reading an excerpt from my ghost tale, Something Upstairs (Orchard), to a group of children, something I had been doing that spring with much success. But after this reading, the librarian informed me that one large group of my listeners was deeply offended because in their Southeast Asian culture, ghosts — or spirits — were to be treated as sacred. Here was a reminder that one person's children's literature is another's sacred text.

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Consider that curious form of picture-book literature called comic books. When I was a child, in the 1940s, my friends and I read them by the ton. Childhood literature, to be sure. In that standard history of the literature, Meigs's Critical History of Children's Literature (Macmillan), comic books are not even mentioned. But look at this irony: chapbooks — those eighteenth-century comic books — are! In 1991 no children are reading chapbooks, though I read recently of an attempt to revive Classic Comics. What is children's literature? What is not?

What is children's literature? What is not?

To help solve the puzzle, let's consider the role of the child in children's literature. I write the book. I give it to my agent, who gives it to a publisher. They then make the decision to publish it or not. If published, it is designed by adults, edited by adults, physically made by adults, promoted by adults, evaluated by adults, and even given awards by adults. Finally, these books are purchased by adults and placed on shelves by adults.

Then, and only then, do children get their eyes and hands on the book. Then, and only then, do they come into the complex world of children's literature. Thus, in regard to children and what we call children's literature, children are at the end of the line. They are the readers. They are the consumers. They are not the creators.

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They are the consumers. They are not the creators.*

Is this a crucial distinction to make? I believe so. Because if we make it, we acknowledge that the entire world of children's literature is hedged about by adult choices. To the extent that children buy children's books, it is usually paperback titles, but these are books that have usually already been issued in hard cover. And, after all, the way children select books indicates that a selection process has been imposed on them by schools, parents, and, of course, television — all controlled by adults. Anyone who writes for children has had a suggestion for revision put to him or her by an editor with the introductory phrase, "Your story may be true, but kids today don't like ..."

Let me then be blunt in making this reality clear: children's literature has very much more to do with adults than with children. While that may appear contradictory, it is the case. It is affirmed historically. Children did not demand what came to be known as children's books. Children's literature was created by adults who were troubled about the kind of texts children were reading, works which were considered unsuitable from a political or religious point of view. Indeed, the idea of a distinct children's literature came about when the religious-educational establishments of the day felt the need to control what kids read, to shape the child's image of the world. So Plato wrote in his Republic.

Shall we permit our children without scruple to hear any fables composed by any authors indifferently, and so receive into their minds opinions generally the reverse of those which, when they are grown to manhood, we shall think they ought to entertain?

... Our first duty will be to exercise a superintendence over the authors of fables, selecting their good productions, and rejecting the bad. And the selected fables we shall advise our nurses and mothers to repeat to their children, that they may thus mold their minds with the fables, even more than they shape their bodies with the hand.

And here is what Sarah Trimmer — considered to be the first true critic of children's literature — had to say in the 1780s in her "Essay on Christian Education":

Novels ... however abridged, and however excellent, should not be read by young persons, till they are in some measure acquainted with real life; but under this denomination we do not mean to include those exemplary tales which inculcate the duties of childhood and youth, without working too powerfully upon the feelings of the mind, or giving false pictures of life and manners.

Given the vast array of adult choice, we adults select what constitutes the relevant experience for children and express it in children's literature. Crucially, in what we write, we define childhood for them. Children's literature has become one of the important ways the adult world defines childhood, or, as Plato said it, so as to "mold their minds" with the fables. Or as Mrs. Trimmer had it, "inculcate the duties of childhood and youth."

Crucially, in what we write, we define childhood for them.

But what are the implications if everything we express in our children's books is filtered through our adult beings? First of all, we are reviews; never adults being children. It is impossible to be a child once one becomes an adult. We are adults writing for children, adults who write these books out of adult desire and experience. Even if we remember our childhood, it is memory based on the adult vantage point. The best that we can do is represent children in our books as we adults perceive them.

So to fully grasp what is happening in the writing of children's books, we must look, not to childhood itself, but to adult conceptions of childhood. I think this is easier to see in the field of nonfiction. The facts presented in nonfiction are, at least to the best of our abilities, objective. We do not alter our knowledge of reality to conform to children's views; rather, we alter our means of communicating that reality.

Take a children's book on astronomy. The child's empirical observation may be that the sun travels around the earth. But we adults know

otherwise. Or do we? It's not beside the point to mention that I'm not sure how I know this fact. I never checked myself. I can't give the proof of it. But I do know it is the proper adult view.

Some years ago I was told by a Texas librarian that a parent had come to the school objecting to a book on astronomy. Why? Because some of the constellations were named after pagan gods! And this violated the parent's perception of true religion. Of course, whereas stars are real, the visual arrangement of stars into constellations is artificial. That arrangement is — if you will — art. So that parent was not objecting to stars, only to the way we perceive them.

In the same way, our children's book of astronomy does not give a child's view of the universe. We present the adult understanding of astronomy, but in terms that a child can understand.

In the same way, our children's book of astronomy does not give a child's view of the universe. We present the adult understanding of astronomy, but in terms that a child can understand.

In children's fiction, we present our complex experiences in narrative terms that will be understandable to the child. We do not alter our adult experience of reality. We shape it so that it has meaning to a child. That's not simplicity. Rather, it is a system of representing reality so as to be grasped by people who have had less experience than adults do — who have new constellations of reality.

Children have a full range of experience even before they learn to read. They are capable of love, hate, and anger. But two things differentiate them from adults. First, because they have not lived as long as adults, they do not have the passage of time by which to judge experience. Second, and as a result of the first, they focus intensely on their own lives and beings, which, after all, constitute their primary experience. Even as the earth is perceived as the center of the universe, the child believes that he or she is the center of the social universe. Growing up is, to a large degree, the process of finding one's place in the social structure as a

whole, as well as gaining a sense of mortality. Growing up means learning two key things: our possibilities and our limitations.

Even as the book of astronomy seeks to present reality, the fiction we write is equally an attempt to present reality on adult or grown-up terms to children.

Even as the book of astronomy seeks to present reality, the fiction we write is equally an attempt to present reality on adult or grown-up terms to children.

In teaching the writing of children's literature, I find two kinds of would-be authors. The majority of writers come to the field because their association with children is the primary factor of their lives. Often excluded from the world of adults — you may read that as the world of white male adults — these people are often forced to identify exclusively with children. They make the sad presumption that if one is childlike, one can write well for children. This notion fails — fails miserably, embarrassingly. It fails because these people often are childlike. In fact, it is difficult for children to create literature because they are, naturally, self-centered. Children are quite capable of producing images. In terms of literature, they do produce good poems, most of them images of self. But children only very rarely produce more complex works of art.

Indeed, the typical progress of children's writing is instructive. Poems first. Then the short story. Then the novel. And they are written in radically diminishing numbers. I once tried to track down the number of teenagers who had published novels. I came up with something like twenty-four. But there is a second group of writers — they are in the minority — and they see the field as a form of literature. They write from an adult perspective. And, in my view, they write far better than the first group.

So to be most effective in writing for children, one must be effective first in being an adult. Yet, ironically, it must be acknowledged that we see in the stereotypical artist a certain childishness. What kind of childishness? A refusal to go along with authority. Indeed, if adults do not conform to social structures, we say of them that they are immature, childlike. The

child is held up as a metaphor for unsocial behavior. The artist, as a person, is thus childlike; but the artist as a creator is a fusion of opposites, of child and adult. In other words, there is a certain childlike way of being that becomes a means of adult liberation. By using children as our protagonists to fight our adult battles, we are on safer ground. But if we do this in the adult world, we are viewed critically.

Indeed, if adults do not conform to social structures, we say of them that they are immature, childlike. The child is held up as a metaphor for unsocial behavior.

After all, when I asked for a glass of spit, it was only acceptable because I asked it of a child. Can you imagine what would happen if I were to ask for such a thing in an adult social situation? At best I would be thought odd. Do it for children, and I gain a measure of acceptability. The point is, the reason I was able to get away with antisocial behavior was because those children were protecting me.

Notice that those works of children's literature which seem to last the longest appear to do so precisely because they appeal simultaneously to both adults' and children's culture. They strike a chord in both. A singular harmony of opposites is created in the artform itself. But when the harmony of opposites is not there, we have an explanation for the split in the field, where those books judged best by adults are often not read by children. Simultaneously, often the children's choice — the Garfields, the Stephen Kings — we pronounce the worst forms of children's literature.

Who is in charge? Central to our present culture is the idea expressed by the poet Wordsworth that the child is the parent of the adult. Later that idea was extended into an entire system of psychology by Freud. Wordsworth's concept was presented at the historical moment when the idea of childhood was taking on new shape and form. There was an increased conviction that the child was different from the adult, a break from the previous view. The first English novel about childhood per se, Dickens's Oliver Twist, appeared in 1836, roughly at the same time Wordsworth offered his image.

I believe we write about the child to get back to beginnings, as a means to start afresh. But that begs the question: start what afresh?

Look closely at the novel in children's literature. Is it life itself? No. It is merely a representation, representing life in certain patterns even as we arrange the stars in visually defined constellations. Consider then the typical protagonist in children's literature: the child alone, resolving issues of control — more often than not adult authority. Asserting self. Being self. Determining who is in charge. Getting back home. You could not think of two more different books in form, in style, in ideas than Dr. Seuss's The Cat in the Hat (Random) and Paula Fox's One-Eyed Cat (Bradbury). But both books are energized by the tensions brought on by parental control or lack of it. Indeed, the question of control — parents, teachers, police — is absolutely fundamental to children's literature.

Indeed, the question of control — parents, teachers, police — is absolutely fundamental to children's literature.

Now, if we look at the children's novel that way, the question we are led to is: Why do writers of children's books so often write about questions of control? I believe that it is not out of concern about childhood, but from a profound feeling of unease about the adult world.

What is it that makes us uneasy? Although children do have the full range of emotions, what they don't have yet is the ability to compromise. I suspect that it is just that passionate consistency, that almost defiant integrity, which makes children so attractive a subject. It is my view that in children's literature we adults are writing stories that inform the child of our being uneasy with adult society at the very point where idealism and social control clash. Things are wrong in the adult world. Our childhood ideals did not come true. Children's literature allows us, as adults, to change this if we go back to the beginning. The child shall set it right. Therefore, we write books about children because they represent the ideal of relative freedom from constraint, a constraint we feel in our adult world. In other words, we mask our anxiety about confronting this issue in an adult world by writing about and for children. And we call this writing children's literature.

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Fiction in children's literature is about unfairness, inconsistency, and lack of justice in the adult world. The constant struggle to adjust good with bad. Save us, we are saying to the children, save us from what you are becoming. Save us from what we are teaching you to become. The ultimate irony is that the plots of children's literature fiction are more often than not about the passage into adulthood. So, children's literature is a cry for help from adults to children.

Look at the endings of so many children's novels. The end of narcissism. The need to leave childhood. These endings are presented as triumph. A commitment to real self-knowledge. Things which spell out adulthood. But, at the same time, with that knowledge, with that success, comes a profound sense of loss, creating that element of nostalgia that is so pervasive in the literature.

What is this story we are telling? It's one of the oldest stories of our culture, a metaphor for the transition from childhood to adulthood. It is the story of Eden and of being driven from Eden.

At random, I picked some novels from my shelves. I looked at the endings. I noticed how often there is a return to home, but I noticed, too, that home often looks different to the child protagonist. This is from Paula Fox's [A Place Apart](#) (Farrar).

I felt a great swoop of regret as though my heart, like the kite that morning, had fallen through space to the ground. I didn't want to feel that way anymore. I hurried on toward home. But I looked back. Just once.

And [The Wizard of Oz](#).

"My darling child!" [Aunt Em] cried, folding the little girl in her arms and covering her face with kisses; "where in the world did you come from?" "From the Land of Oz," said Dorothy gravely. "And here is Toto, too. And oh, Aunt Em! I'm so glad to be at home again!"

Children's literature, in the deepest sense, most often tells the tale of the acquisition of knowledge, but it is knowledge which in itself brings about — by fact or metaphor — the end of childhood. These triumphant endings, by virtue of the fact that they usher the child into adulthood, are, ironically, a kind of defeat. This is because, more often than not, these endings constitute an end to idealism. Children's literature often seems to be saying to children, "Don't do what we have done. Do better. Please make the world into what I, like you, once believed it capable of becoming. Don't make the mistake I made. Don't grow up."

Children's literature often seems to be saying to children, "Don't do what we have done. Do better. Please make the world into what I, like you, once believed it capable of becoming. Don't make the mistake I made. Don't grow up."

And yet, at the same time we seem to be saying that growing up is the sad fate of humankind. You are doomed to it. Like travelers who learn most about home by visiting foreign shores, we discover Eden by leaving it.

But wait! There is a "subversive" children's literature, a literature in which the protagonist does not go back home, but rather leaves home. Escapes might be the better word. Generally speaking, these are the books the adult world of children's literature find most disturbing.

Which books are these? Starting with older titles, there is Huckleberry Finn. And, interestingly enough, Little Women, if you remember that it is in reality two books, the second half, Good Wives, having been urged on by Alcott's publisher because of the success of the first book. Little Women ends, for its day, on a radical note: Jo is not married!

What about modern titles? Catcher in the Rye is our classic. There are others, like Harriet the Spy (Harper), Robert Cormier's books, and some of Paul Zindel's. Notice how these kinds of books end. Here's the ending from Jenny Davis's first novel, Good bye and Keep Cold (Orchard).

Mama walked off from the people who raised her and never looked back. I don't want to do that. But I do want to be free of them, want them in perspective, want myself apart. I need to shake them loose, let go. Charlie says everybody has to raise their parents. Is that true? He says the time comes for all of us when we have to kiss them good-bye and trust them to be okay on their own. I've done the best I could with mine. Good-bye, you all, and good luck. Good-bye and keep cold.

In these kinds of books our protagonists are leaving Eden, and not looking back. And we who write these endings are troubling the adults. Are we troubling the children? I don't think so. I think we're challenging them to leave home, a metaphor for changing the world. Thus, those of us who write this way seem to be trying to say,

"Good-bye, Eden. Hello, world. Here comes the millennium."

Chapter 1.1 Questions for Reflection:

- What do you think of the conversations the narrator has with adults at the beginning of this passage?
- Look at the standout quotes – do any of them connect to you? Why?
- True or False: "In other words, we mask our anxiety about confronting this issue in an adult world by writing about and for children."
- Find a "Golden Line" in the pages you just read. This line can be one that you love or hate or are confused by. Write down the line and reflect/respond to it in a few sentences.
- <insert questions created by students>

Chapter 1.1 Exercises for Reflection:

- A. Interview a child you know, whether it is your own child, a niece or nephew OR if you don't know any children on a personal level, interview a parent: What do kids like to read and why?
- B. <insert more exercises created by students>

1.2 “Kiddy Lit” IS Literature

Source.⁷

What makes books for children literature? Many people like to think of children's literature as “kids stuff,” assuming that this literary form—if someone from this point of view would even call it literary—is inferior to its adult literature counterpart. Historians have left writings for children out of the cannon and scholarly discussions. Yes, it is true, in recent years children's literature has been written about and legitimized by its mere presence in academic publications and discourse, however, by and large “kiddy lit” has been most definitely ignored and overlooked for much longer than not. In this way, children's literature has been unconsciously degraded, or put down.

Children deal with many of the same life challenges adults endure because as an adult endures so too does their child. So the themes in children's literature are the same as that found in adult literature. Some people who are inexperienced in the world of children's literature think that these themes are written about in a simplified or dumbed down way; it is quite the contrary. Writers for children must communicate mature themes and topics in a way that children will understand. This does not mean the author dumbs down or simplifies the writing; he or she instead communicates the theme or topic in a context that young readers will understand. In other words, a writing teacher teaching the basics of a thesis statement to sixth graders will teach thesis again to college freshman, however, each instructor will use examples and vocabulary that are relevant to their intended audience – whether it's sixth grade or college freshman.

| Kiddy Lit Example Below | Adult Lit Example Below |
|--|--|
| The train screeched to a halt. A flock of pigeons took flight as the conductor announced, “We'll be stuck here for a few minutes.” | Lost in my thoughts, I shuddered as the train ground to a full stop in the middle of an intersection. I was surprised, jarred by the unannounced and abrupt jerking of the car. I sought clues for our |

⁷ Written by Kathryn J. Beherns CC-BY-NC-SA

| | |
|--|--|
| | stop outside the window. All I saw were pigeons as startled and clueless as I. |
|--|--|

Writers for children have an added challenge: the child's prefrontal cortex—the part of the brain that regulates focus and reward. Unlike authors for adults, children's book authors must keep every page engaging because at any point the reader can lose interest and close the book because children read for entertainment first and then are informed.

Children's literature is a body of written work, often with illustrations, written for infants, children, teens, and young adults. And yet, that plain definition fall short. It is an industry created entirely by adults. Thus, comes the conundrum: is any book release written from a child's point of view? No. Adults author; adults revise; adults illustrate; adults publish; adults market; adults even shelve these books that are for young people. And yet, is that all bad? Part of why there are so few books written by kids for kids is because of their social and cognitive development; they are egocentric. A six-year-old could write a story with silly randomness that may be somewhat entertaining but difficult to follow. An adult can write a story with relative continuity but lacking the levity needed for children's literature. It is the children's book author that walks the delicate balance between head in the clouds while being rooted in the continuity of story that creates the books young people want and need to read.

Authors of children's literature are shaping the future. No matter what the young readers' ethnicity, children can learn about a real world full of diverse life experiences through diverse representation in the books they are being told to read.

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through diverse representation in the books they are being told to read.

Chapter 1.2 Questions for Reflection:

- Why do YOU think some critics don't consider children's literature to be "real literature"?
- What were your favorite books as a child? You might have to ask your parents/family for help? Why were these books your favorite?
- What do you already know about children's literature?
- <insert more questions created by students>

1.3 Definitions and Classifications

Source.⁸

Children's literature⁹ or juvenile literature includes stories, books, magazines, and poems that are enjoyed by children. Modern children's literature is typically classified in two different ways: genre or the intended age of the reader.

Definition #1

The International Companion Encyclopedia of Children's Literature notes that "the boundaries of genre... are not fixed but blurred." Sometimes, no agreement can be reached about whether a given work is best categorized as literature for adults or children. Some works defy easy categorization.

Definition #2

There is no single or widely used definition¹⁰ of children's literature. It can be broadly defined as the body of written works and accompanying illustrations produced in order to entertain or instruct young people. The genre encompasses a wide range of works, including acknowledged

⁸ Some of these snippets come from Write or Left, Sybil's Creative Writing OER Textbook.

⁹ Wikipedia contributors. "Children's literature." Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, 3 Jun. 2019. Web. 22 Jun. 2019. Text is available under the Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike License.

¹⁰ Wikipedia contributors. "Children's literature." Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia. Wikipedia, 1 Nov. 2022. Web. 3 Nov. 2022.

classics of world literature, picture books and easy-to-read stories written exclusively for children, and fairy tales, lullabies, fables, folk songs, and other primarily orally transmitted materials or more specifically defined as fiction, non-fiction, poetry, or drama intended for and used by children and young people. One writer on children's literature defines it as "all books written for children, excluding works such as comic books, joke books, cartoon books, and non-fiction works that are not intended to be read from front to back, such as dictionaries, encyclopedias, and other reference materials". However, others would argue that children's comics should also be included: "Children's Literature studies has traditionally treated comics fitfully and superficially despite the importance of comics as a global phenomenon associated with children."

Despite the widespread association of children's literature with picture books, spoken narratives existed before printing, and the root of many children's tales go back to ancient storytellers. Seth Lerer, in the opening of Children's Literature: A Reader's History from Aesop to Harry Potter, says, "This book presents a history of what children have heard and read.... The history I write of is a history of *reception*."

Definition #3

"Children's literature¹¹ is a label for collections of texts that are specifically written and/or illustrated for and/or about youth as well as texts that are not specifically written and/or illustrated for and/or about youth but which youth choose to read, view, and/or write. Adults are welcome to read children's literature too – many do."

Definition #4

Children's literature¹² is any literature that is enjoyed by children. More specifically, children's literature comprises those books written and published for young people who are not yet interested in adult literature or who may not possess the reading skills or developmental understandings

¹¹ Schneider, Jenifer Jasinski. "A Working Definition." *The Inside, Outside, and Upside Down of Children's Literature: From Poets and Pop-ups to Princesses and Porridge*: 2016. University of South Florida, jschneid@usf.ed – CC-BY-NC-ND.

¹² Ilhomjon, Ubaydullayev. ISSN 2792-1883 (online), Published in Volume: 9 for the month of September-2021
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necessary for its perusal. In addition to books, children's literature also includes magazines intended for pre-adult audiences.

Classifications

Children's literature can usually be divided into categories, either according to genre or the intended age of the reader.

The criteria for these divisions are vague, and books near a borderline may be classified either way. The categories with an age range are these:

- Picture books, appropriate for pre-readers or children ages 0–5
- Early reader books, appropriate for children ages 5–7. These are often designed to help children build their reading skills
- Chapter books, appropriate for children ages 7–12
 - Short chapter books, appropriate for children ages 7–9
 - Longer chapter books, appropriate for children ages 9–12
- Young adult fiction, appropriate for children ages 12–18

Chapter 1. 3 Questions for Reflection:

- Which of the four definitions seems the most valid to you? Why?
- How would YOU define children's literature vs adult literature?
- <insert questions created by students>

1.4 Children's Literature to Promote Students' Global Development and Wellbeing

Source.¹³¹⁴

Myths, fables and fairytales – originally founded on oral tradition – allowed adults to communicate with young people in an uninterrupted process until nowadays. Tales have been told everywhere and, in every time, to educate, entertain and increase individuals' awareness about moral principles and customs, thus representing an important part of traditional heritage as well to reinforce tolerance and mutual knowledge among different populations.

Reading or listening to tales can be considered significant community practices, capable to impact on young generations, empowering and preparing them for the future. Since culture is crucial for learning, stories have a fundamental part in shaping individual's role in the society, becoming a helpful resource from didactic, psychological/therapeutic and pedagogic perspectives.

From a didactic point of view, storybooks can provide children with new information about the world, enrich vocabulary and enhance specific language skills (in the classroom or at home), nurturing communication between the storyteller (teacher, parent, or other professional staff) and the listeners.

It is known that stories – by reproducing fictional situations that match with children's real problems – allow them to feel comfortable and safe in difficult circumstances, ensuring emotional security and providing healthier ways to deal with internal struggles, life adversities and stressors. Story-tales compensate what young people may lack, by presenting them positive patterns of behaviors and constructive models through the characters they could identify with.

¹³ Pulimeno M, Piscitelli P, Colazzo S. Children's literature to promote students' global development and wellbeing. *Health Promot Perspect*. 2020 Jan 28;10(1):13-23. doi: 10.15171/hpp.2020.05. PMID: 32104653; PMCID: PMC7036210. Copyright © 2020 Pulimeno M, Piscitelli P, Colazzo S. This is an open access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

¹⁴ This is a very complex reading; it's readability scores beyond ungraduated level.

...stories allow them to feel comfortable and safe in difficult circumstances, ensuring emotional security and providing healthier ways to deal with internal struggles, life adversities and stressors.

Storybooks (or digital tales) are easier to understand for all children compared to abstract notions or theories and might become special instruments for mapping the reality and conveying health contents, especially to the most vulnerable groups.

As suggested by the World Health Organization (WHO), health literacy should be incorporated in school curricula, in the context of a health-promoting classroom environment, in order to provide new generations with useful knowledge about healthy lifestyles.

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Children's Literature as Narrative Tool in Education: Pedagogic Dimension

In the globalization era, characterized by deep socio-economic changes and collapse of the traditional social tissue (i.e. new forms of poverty, increase of inequalities, family mobility etc.), the cultural heritage of folktales – easily available both for parental and teachers' use – could represent a helpful tool for promoting individual personal growth, social cohesion and sustainable development.

Tales were told and are still told in every society and in many different settings to share experiences, customs, norms, and values, providing the listeners with entertainment and new knowledge. In the "culturalistic" perspective, children's stories belong to a specific cultural niche that could help young people to move into the life, allowing them to

understand who they are as human beings and how they can contribute to the progress of the world.

A big part of children's literature is represented by fairytales, which have the final goal of transmitting the basic universal values and raising children's awareness on many aspects of the life. That's why, even before printing press was invented, fairytales have been used by parents to transmit culturally appropriate moral norms to their children from an early age, equipping them with information, attitudes, and skills that could act as a kind of "vaccination" against all kind of threats to individual or collective health.

Tales are very interesting for children because they show real aspects of family and community life, reinforcing the relations with the parents and highlighting ethical values related to social life. Through implicit meanings embodied in the stories, children indirectly acquire pedagogical messages, able to influence their global personality and stimulate a social sense of duty.

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Children's stories are the place of endless possibilities, so that young people can open their mind to wide horizons, generate new viewpoints, find possible alternatives or solutions to problems, cultivating their points of strengths such as self-confidence and resilience.

The role and importance of children's books have changed in modern society, but even today, children's literature (including movies and digital resources) influences our daily lives and contributes to the development of young people in a number of ways, ranging from the transmission of values to didactic purposes. The presence of digital technology

represents a challenge but also an opportunity for traditional fairytales' or fables' existence. Digital storytelling (the combination of the art of telling stories with a variety of multimedia tools) is a helpful instrument to generate more appealing and stimulating learning experiences.

Printed publications tend to be expensive, while the Internet-based resources are a cheap alternative (usually available online for free) and might raise children's interest towards books in many different ways. Combining narrative possibilities and technological potentials can be more powerful in terms of access to information, sharing of work, differentiated and motivated learning models. However, there is a fundamental distinction (at least in terms of establishing good relationships with educators) between watching a fairy tale on monitors (static and passive approach or even by computer-based interactive mode) and listening to a live re-telling of it.

Didactic Dimension of Children's Literature

The didactic intention of narrative works was discovered on clay tablets in Sumerian and Babylonian texts, dated back many centuries before Aesop's fables (successively put into Latin verses by Phaedrus). Myths initially transmitted orally became well-known throughout the Mediterranean area thanks to Greek manuscripts of Alexandrian scribes, who used them in their daily education activities. Also, philosophers (i.e. Plato) introduced myths and fables in their academic lessons with students and disciples: the rules of grammar and style were learned through the stories, encouraging young scholars to create new ones. Fables of Aesop were considered as useful didactic means also in medieval schools to teach Latin and rhetoric.

Even today, children's literature – as integral part of primary school curriculum – could be a significant experience in the lives of children, with fables and fairytales being used as motivating teaching tools in both humanistic and scientific disciplines. Educators are aware that all creative and artistic activities, including literature – while entertaining listeners or readers – can play a fundamental role in improving students' knowledge, but also in the acquisition of daily life skills, useful to cope with any problematic situations.

Childhood is a crucial stage for language development, so it is important to make it a pleasing experience: reading or listening to stories could be a joyful way for language training, able to overcome all the possible learning barriers. Thanks to the recurring narrative passages intrinsic in the fairy tales' or fables, child is able to deal with some complicated concepts or patterns, which require more repetitions to be better interiorized. That's why tales are a valuable resource in teaching foreign languages and improving language skills (writing, reading, speaking, and listening). The use of narrative in teaching foreign languages has been found to lower the level of anxiety, allowing students to take risks in the language classes, thanks to the familiarity with stories and the relaxing learning environment generated by storytelling. Therefore, telling or reading stories is a successful strategy to acquire grammar structures, syntax, new vocabulary, increasing oral/written competences, and therefore the ability to communicate effectively and successfully.

By reading or listening to stories, students enhance their verbal proficiency and learn to accurately express their thoughts and feelings in everyday relations, making practice of peace-making skills (i.e. negotiation and discussion).

Learning from stories can stimulate and offer promising insights in other areas of children's cognitive development such as problem-solving and reasoning skills. Educators should awaken children's interest towards reading and, at the same time, encourage them to use imagination, finding themselves inside the story; once children become attached to their favorite characters, they can reproduce them while playing, following the time chain and cause-effect relation of narrated events, so that the educational message of the stories can be better interiorized. Educators should also be aware about their own responsibility when selecting children's books for didactic purposes (not necessarily following popular titles or "best sellers") and read the stories in a caring and warm environment. Storybooks are accessible to students of all ages and can be borrowed from libraries or friends, while digital storytelling can be easily and quickly found on the Internet, even for free.

Therapeutic Dimension of Children's Literature

Children's storybooks not only provide new knowledge – by enriching children's vocabulary and enhancing their communication skills – but also ensure emotional support during problematic circumstances of the life. Encouraging children to overcome fears and inner conflicts, tales act as promoters for change, positively influencing their social behavior.

When parents or teachers provide children with a book, they usually hope that they will absorb the moral values that it contains. Actually, fairytales can produce positive effects on personality development, satisfying all psychological needs of the children such as contact, entertainment, and cognitive demand. In the Freudian perspective, assuming the absence of a well-defined superego and moral standards in childhood, fairytales are useful to show proper patterns of behaviors needed by children.

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Children's literature – as a form of artistic creativity – presents a therapeutic potential for readers and listeners, in the same way that Greek tragedy was able to “heal” the spectators. In the vision of the cathartic role of literature, we can say that it may influence children through psychological mechanisms, primarily consisting in involvement, imitation, identification, insight and universalism. Story-tales could be used in school-setting for primary prevention programs with the ultimate goal of preventing risky behaviors among young people, thanks to the potential of creative and artistic means such as specifically developed children's storybooks. Narrative-based approach as a teaching and learning strategy is omnipresent in the classrooms, but it is infrequently used to promote students' health.

Literature, as well as other forms of art (music, dance, drama, drawing, painting etc.) can be used to empower and motivate children towards the adoption of healthy behaviors, contributing to the improvement of pupils' quality of life. The educational properties of the stories allow young

people to accept their own differences, while showing how the characters of the tale cope with difficulties, enabling readers to enter in a fantastic world of entertainment, and – at the story's end – to come back into reality in a comfortable way.

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Within the broad umbrella of art therapy, we can find “library therapy”, which S.M. Crothers in 1916 has turned into the term “bibliotherapy”, characterized by the fact that the treatment is carried out by the means of literature, using books to foster individual emotional wellbeing. Understanding the principles and practices of bibliotherapy is essential for teachers and educators, working with children, who may take benefit from the exposure to reading materials related to their specific problems.

The “healing” potential of books was known since the time of the ancient Greece and even before: Ramses II in Egypt identified a group of books in his collection as “remedies for the soul”. Aristotle and other Greek philosophers believed that literature could deeply heal people, while the ancient Romans recognized the existence of a relationship between medicine and reading, with Aulo Cornelius Celso explicitly associating the reading with medical treatment. This attitude towards therapeutic opportunities of books was cultivated even in the Middle Age and Humanism/Renaissance times, but also in the late eighteenth century books were proposed as a remedy for different types of illnesses. Today, literature is somehow considered as psychological therapy, especially in childhood, and even as a cure for psychosomatic disorders.

In the therapeutic approach, bibliotherapy also includes discussion and reflection on the story's topics that overlap with the individual needs and have an evocative function that relies on projection and identification mechanisms. Proper storybooks work as a strategy for attitudinal change

and self-improvement, acting through a compensatory function in children who lack of positive experiences which are often missing in their family or community. Therapeutic reading can also represent a form of prevention as the readers acquire a more flexible mind to recognize problems and eventually ask for help. There are books that address questions concerning physical appearance, emotions and character traits, family relationships, and socioeconomic problems.

Efficacy of Narrative-Based Strategies to Promote Health and Wellbeing in School Setting

Health is defined by WHO Constitution as “a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing”.

Primary prevention should start as early as possible and school has the opportunity to guide people since childhood on the right path towards healthy life. Education and health are intertwined, and it is undoubtable that wellbeing has also a remarkable impact on students' learning outcomes.

School represents the ideal setting to convey proper contents about risk and protective factors by using motivating approaches (including “teaching narratively”), able to capture the interest of pupils and generate a harmonic and non-competitive learning environment. Narration can be regarded as an interesting way to trigger students' motivation and develop a “narrative thinking”, which is fundamental for every human experience, including learning and interiorization processes.

Specifically developed storybooks can foster children's self-responsibility towards health and stimulate critical thinking about the consequences of adopting risky behaviors (i.e. unhealthy eating habits), thanks to psychological processes based on the identification with the characters of the stories. Children's literature and storytelling have been proved to be effective in specifically conveying health knowledge: the persuasive effects of narrative engagement have been illustrated in many researches and reviews. De Graaf et al have specifically performed a systematic review of 153 experimental studies on health-related narrative persuasion with a focus on the narrative characteristics as potential explanatory factors in the effectiveness to convey a health message. The

results showed that stories that presented a healthy behavior were more often associated with effects on the intention to adopt it, and stories with high emotional content were usually more effective, as well as the use of a first or second-person perspective in the text.

Discussion

At the start of 21st century, school system faces new challenges worldwide, pushing educators to display innovative strategies in order to motivate students and engage them in stimulating and “transformative” learning. This perspective goes beyond the passive acquisition of knowledge, moving toward a more active, experiential, and participatory approach to lifelong learning. The adoption of cooperative practices into daily classroom activities can contribute to the enhancement of students' wellbeing, lowering the competition and anxiety due to the pressure of success, currently detectable among schoolchildren.

To achieve these goals, narrative interventions may be considered as one of the possible strategies for teaching and learning because children's stories create the comfortable atmosphere that is usually lacking in school setting.

From fairytales and fables – plenty of adventures, heroes, personified animals, enchanted forests, and magical objects – children gain additional experiences, feelings and thoughts, learning to cope with inhibitions, vulnerability, and shyness. According to the psychoanalytical interpretation, children's stories lead readers towards a deep level of consciousness, dealing with the fundamental human questions expressed in the language of symbols. Beyond its educational purposes, children's literature can positively influence mental wellbeing, nurturing thoughts, feelings, and behaviors of young generations.

Conclusion

Children's literature offers young people the possibility to acquire a system of values (educational role), to be engaged in motivating learning activities (didactic aspect), and to deal with inner conflicts and life difficulties (psychological value). Based on international evidence, children's literature and specifically developed storybooks can

encourage the adoption of healthy choices and represent a useful preventive tool to foster young people's global wellbeing, helping them to better cope with emotional/social problems while proposing proper patterns of behaviors and conveying health contents. Children's literature is a helpful tool to "educate", "teach" and "heal", so that narration could be considered among the possible educational strategies which can be used for pedagogic, didactic and therapeutic applications in the promotion of children's global development both at home and at school.

1.5 Subjectivity and Motivated Readers

Source.¹⁵

I was about to interview people – little kids, mostly – for this textbook creation, but I then a thought occurred to me: “Wait, I’ll just find out that they all like different authors and different books for different reasons...”

“Wait, I’ll just find out that they all like different authors and different books for different reasons...”

And this would’ve proven this point to me, once again: Reading is just as subjective as writing. We like what we like. We write in ways that make sense to us, and when other writers do that same thing and we read it: we like it or we don’t. We connect to their story, or we don’t. And what works for one person might not work for another.

Reading is just as subjective as writing.

Why would children’s literature be any different? It wouldn’t. So, instead of creating a chapter about WHAT MAKES A GOOD BOOK – because, yes, that word “good” is so darn subjective – or composing a chapter about WHAT GOOD ILLUSTRATIONS LOOK LIKE, I’d rather ponder how we can create more readers of ANY genre. No matter if they read the “good stuff” or not because we have no idea what the “good stuff” is or the “bad stuff.”

In my family alone, there are three readers and three who would rather watch the movie of the book... within the readers, my dad likes those thick fiction books by authors with very famous names, my youngest sister likes fiction by particular people and both of them rarely venture into nonfiction, yet that is my forte. I read a lot of nonfiction AND I write a lot of nonfiction. But that’s what I like, and that’s what they like.

If my goal was to create readers out of my nieces and nephews, what could I do about it? What could YOU – the reader of this lovely textbook –

¹⁵ Sybil Priebe, CC-BY.

do if you wanted more readers in your life? Well, let's summarize what another children's literature textbook speaks to when it comes to the idea of the "motivated reader," shall we?

Motivated Readers¹⁶

Two ideas underscore the concept of the "motivated reader." Those ideas are: "(1) Reading is personal, and (2) reading is a natural process."

Here are the common elements we find in "motivated readers" based on those two ideas:

1. Motivated readers read for themselves. Period.
2. Motivated readers have likes and dislikes that might not make sense to anyone else.
3. Motivated readers find joy in the process of reading.
4. "Motivated readers don't feel trapped by a book." They will drop a book faster than a hot potato if it doesn't interest them.
 - a. It took me a while to finally do this; I used to struggle through a book because someone told me "it was good."
5. Motivated readers are judgmental, in a good way, about what they like to read, and they don't apologize for it.
 - a. I used to apologize for reading comedians who are authors (Chelsea Handler, Jim Gaffigan, Mindy Kaling, George Carlin), but I like that the words on a page can make me laugh; that's amazing and enjoyable!
6. Motivated readers read at their own speeds. Sometimes they skip pieces, sometimes they skim, and sometimes they try to read more than one book at the same time.
7. Motivated readers might not remember everything they read; they read to experience the words on the page and what the words create in their heads. They do not memorize.
8. Motivated readers are flexible and will try to read just about anything at least once.
9. "Motivated readers develop personal attachments to some books. They speak of love for a particular book. It becomes like a treasured friend."

¹⁶ Summarized from: Young, Terrell; Bryan, Gregory; Jacobs, James S.; Tunnell, Michael O. (2020-03-04T22:58:59.000). *Children's Literature, Briefly* (p. 827). Pearson Education. Kindle Edition.

10. Motivated readers read often; it's important to them.

Chapters 1.4 and 1.5 Question for Reflection:

- What is your favorite theme of Chapter 1.4?
- Give your own example of how reading is subjective to you. Elaborate, too.
- How do the elements of motivated readers connect to children's literature?

CHAPTER TWO | History

Source.¹⁷¹⁸

Literature shared with children has existed before written language; it was merely adult literature told through word-of-mouth; there was no separate category for young people. *Aesop's Fables*, Greek and Roman myths, and cultural fables and folklore were passed on through oral tradition—one person telling another. And before the fables and myths, there were most certainly cave drawings¹⁹ and indigenous tribes²⁰ sharing stories orally.

Overall, oral literature attempted to articulate the process of becoming an upstanding adult and to explain the complex topics challenging most adults living before the age of the printing press. And as societies examined adulthood in their stories, the stage of childhood also emerged. Later, western civilizations would craft stories to meticulously carve out how a child person was to look and behave within the context of their times and culture through the emerging literary form of children's literature.

A Brief Timeline of Children's Literature

| DATE: | TITLE OR GENRE OR AUTHOR: |
|-------------------|--|
| Unknown | <i>Aesop's Fables</i> |
| 1530 | <i>On Civility in Children</i> ²¹ |
| 1646 | <i>Milk for Babes</i> |
| 1657 or 1658 | <i>Orbis Sensualium Pictus</i> |
| 1671 | <i>A Token for Children</i> ²² |
| Mid to Late 1600s | Chapbooks and Hornbooks |

¹⁷ Written by Kathryn J. Beherns CC-BY-NC-SA.

¹⁸ This chapter applies this course objective: "Research the background, history, and cultural context of children's literature."

¹⁹ "Children's prehistoric cave paintings discovered." 30 Sept 11. *The Telegraph*.

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/earth/earthnews/8798392/Childrens-prehistoric-cave-paintings-discovered.html>

²⁰ Due to their oral traditions, and the white-washing of education, it's difficult to find information on this history and their stories.

²¹ This book of etiquette in Latin gave out advice like "don't wipe your nose on your sleeve," as well as advice on how to not give the impression you were farting as you sat in your seat.

²² The subtitle of this book is "An Exact Account of the Conversation, holy and Exemplary Lives and Joyful Deaths of Several Young Children." Yes, children – on their death beds – give accounts of their sins and ponder how salvation awaits them and that they're happy to be going to heaven.

| DATE: | TITLE OR GENRE OR AUTHOR: |
|-------|--|
| 1730 | <i>A Description of Three Hundred Animals</i> |
| 1744 | <i>Tommy Thumb's Pretty Song Book</i> ²³ |
| 1744 | <i>A Little Pretty Pocket-Book Intended for the Instruction and Amusement of Little Master Tommy and Pretty Miss Polly</i> |
| 1800s | Brothers Grimm |
| 1863 | <i>The Water Babies: A Fairy Tale for a Land Baby</i> ²⁴ |
| 1865 | <i>Alice's Adventures in Wonderland</i> |
| 1868 | <i>Little Women</i> |
| 1884 | <i>The Adventures of Robinson Crusoe</i> |
| 1900 | <i>The Wonderful Wizard of Oz</i> |
| 1901 | <i>The Tale of Peter Rabbit</i> |
| 1922 | <i>The Velveteen Rabbit</i> |
| 1926 | <i>Winnie the Pooh</i> |
| 1952 | <i>Charlotte's Web</i> |
| 1963 | <i>Where the Wild Things Are</i> |
| 1970 | <i>Are You There God, It's Me Margaret</i> |

The Earliest Stories

Aesop's Fables,²⁵ or the Aesopica, is a collection of fables credited to Aesop, a slave and storyteller believed to have lived in ancient Greece between 620 and 564 BCE. Of diverse origins, the stories associated with his name have descended to modern times through a number of sources and continue to be reinterpreted in different verbal registers and in popular as well as artistic media.

Initially the fables were addressed to adults and covered religious, social and political themes. They were also put to use as ethical guides and from the Renaissance onwards were particularly used for the education of children.

²³ This book included classics such as: "Bah, Bah, a Black Sheep," Hickory dickory dock," and "London Bridge is falling down."

²⁴ Written by a reverend, this story was a satire against child labor.

²⁵ Wikipedia contributors. "Aesop's Fables." [Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia](#). Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, 21 Oct. 2022. Web. 8 Nov. 2022.

Initially the fables were addressed to adults and covered religious, social and political themes. They were also put to use as ethical guides and from the Renaissance onwards were particularly used for the education of children.

1500s.

The first Danish children's book²⁶ was The Child's Mirror by Niels Bredal in 1568, an adaptation of a courtesy book by the Dutch priest Erasmus. A Pretty and Splendid Maiden's Mirror, an adaptation of a German book for young women, became the first Swedish children's book upon its 1591 publication. Sweden published fables and a children's magazine by 1766.

In Italy, Giovanni Francesco Straparola released The Facetious Nights of Straparola in the 1550s. Called the first European storybook to contain fairy-tales, it eventually had 75 separate stories and written for an adult audience. Giulio Cesare Croce also borrowed from some stories children enjoyed for his books.

Russia's earliest children's books, primers, appeared in the late sixteenth century. An early example is ABC-Book, an alphabet book published by Ivan Fyodorov in 1571. The first picture book published in Russia, Karion Istomin's The Illustrated Primer, appeared in 1694. Peter the Great's interest in modernizing his country through Westernization helped Western children's literature dominate the field through the eighteenth century. Catherine the Great wrote allegories for children, and during her reign, Nikolai Novikov started the first juvenile magazine in Russia.

1646.

The first such book was a catechism for children, written in verse by the Puritan John Cotton. Known as Spiritual Milk for Boston Babes, it was published in 1646, appearing both in England and Boston. Another early book, The New England Primer, was in print by 1691 and used in schools for 100 years. The primer begins with "The young Infant's or Child's morning Prayer" and evening prayer. It then shows the alphabet, vowels, consonants, double letters, and syllables before providing a religious

²⁶ Wikipedia contributors. "Children's literature." Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia. Wikipedia, 1 Nov. 2022. Web. 3 Nov. 2022.

rhyme of the alphabet, beginning "In Adam's fall We sinned all...", and continues through the alphabet. It also contained religious maxims, acronyms, spelling help and other educational items, all decorated by woodcuts.

In 1634, the Pentamerone from Italy became the first major published collection of European folk tales. Charles Perrault began recording fairy tales in France, publishing his first collection in 1697. They were not well received among the French literary society, who saw them as only fit for old people and children.

1658.

In the 15th century the emergence of the printing press promoted mass education and copies of books accessible to the masses. This brought rise of educational books. However, it was not until the mid-1600's that the first book was printed written for kids: In 1658, Johannnes Amos Comenius in Bohemia published the informative illustrated Orbis Pictus, for children under six learning to read (figure 1). It is considered to be the first picture book produced specifically for children.

Orbis Sensualium Pictus²⁷ was the first widely used children's textbook with pictures, published first in Latin and German and later republished in many European languages. The revolutionary book quickly spread around Europe and became the defining children's textbook for centuries. The book is divided into chapters illustrated by copperplate prints, which are described in the accompanying text. In most editions, the text is given in both Latin and the child's native language. The book has 150 chapters and covers a wide range of subjects.

²⁷ Wikipedia contributors. "Orbis Pictus." Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, 28 Jun. 2022. Web. 7 Nov. 2022.



A late 18th-century reprint of *Orbis Pictus*, published in Pressburg/Pozsony, Kingdom of Hungary. This edition is in four languages: Latin, Hungarian, German and Czech)

Figure 1: Joh. Amos Commenii *Orbis sensualium pictus*: : hoc est, Omnium principalium in mundo rerum, & in vita actionum, pictura & nomenclatura By Comenius, Johann Amos
Photo credit: Boston Public

Puritans were concerned with the spiritual welfare of their children, and there was a large growth in the publication of "good godly books" aimed squarely at children. Some of the most popular works were by James Janeway, but the most enduring book from this movement, still read today, especially in modernized versions, is The Pilgrim's Progress (1678) by John Bunyan.

Chapbooks, pocket-sized pamphlets that were often folded, instead of being stitched, were published in Britain; illustrated by woodblock printing,

these inexpensive booklets reprinted popular ballads, historical re-tellings, and folk tales. Though not specifically published for children at this time, young people enjoyed the booklets as well. Johanna Bradley says, in From Chapbooks to Plum Cake, that chapbooks kept imaginative stories from being lost to readers under the strict puritan influence of the time.

Hornbooks also appeared in England during this time, teaching children basic information such as the alphabet and the Lord's Prayer. These were brought from England to the American colonies in the mid-seventeenth century.



1744 – Origins of the Modern Genre.²⁸

The modern children's book emerged in mid-18th-century England. A growing polite middle-class and the influence of Lockean theories of childhood innocence combined to create the beginnings of childhood as a concept. In an article for the British Library, professor M.O. Grenby writes, "in the 1740s, a cluster of London publishers began to produce new books designed to instruct and delight young readers. Thomas Boreman was

²⁸ Wikipedia contributors. "Children's literature." Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, 1 Nov. 2022. Web. 3 Nov. 2022.

one. Another was Mary Cooper, whose two-volume Tommy Thumb's Pretty Song Book (1744) is the first known nursery rhyme collection. But the most celebrated of these pioneers is John Newbery, whose first book for the entertainment of children was A Little Pretty Pocket-Book."

A growing polite middle-class and the influence of Lockean theories of childhood innocence combined to create the beginnings of childhood as a concept.



Newbery's *A Little Pretty Pocket-Book*, originally published in 1744

Widely considered the first modern children's book, A Little Pretty Pocket-Book was the first children's publication aimed at giving enjoyment to children, containing a mixture of rhymes, picture stories and games for pleasure. Newbery believed that play was a better enticement to children's good behavior than physical discipline and the child was to record his or her behavior daily. The book was child-sized with a brightly colored cover that appealed to children—something new in the publishing industry. Known as gift books, these early books became the precursors to the toy books popular in the nineteenth century. Newbery was also adept at marketing this new genre. According to the journal The Lion and the Unicorn, "Newbery's genius was in developing the fairly new product category, children's books, through his frequent advertisements..."

and his clever ploy of introducing additional titles and products into the body of his children's books." Professor Grenby writes, "Newbery has become known as the 'father of children's literature' chiefly because he was able to show that publishing children's books could be a commercial success."

Newbery believed that play was a better enticement to children's good behavior than physical discipline...

The improvement in the quality of books for children and the diversity of topics he published helped make Newbery the leading producer of children's books in his time. He published his own books as well as those by authors such as Samuel Johnson and Oliver Goldsmith; the latter may have written The History of Little Goody Two-Shoes, Newbery's most popular book.

1780.

Another philosopher²⁹ who influenced the development of children's literature was Jean-Jacques Rousseau, who argued that children should be allowed to develop naturally and joyously. His idea of appealing to a children's natural interests took hold among writers for children. Popular examples included Thomas Day's The History of Sandford and Merton, four volumes that embody Rousseau's theories. Furthermore, Maria and Richard Lovell Edgeworth's Practical Education: The History of Harry and Lucy (1780) urged children to teach themselves.

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Rousseau's ideas also had great influence in Germany, especially on German Philanthropism, a movement concerned with reforming both

²⁹ Wikipedia contributors. "Children's literature." Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, 1 Nov. 2022. Web. 3 Nov. 2022.

education and literature for children. Its founder, Johann Bernhard Basedow, authored Elementarwerk as a popular textbook for children that included many illustrations by Daniel Chodowiecki. Another follower, Joachim Heinrich Campe, created an adaptation of Robinson Crusoe that went into over 100 printings. He became Germany's "outstanding and most modern" writer for children. According to Hans-Heino Ewers in The International Companion Encyclopedia of Children's Literature, "It can be argued that from this time, the history of European children's literature was largely written in Germany."

Early 1800s.

The Brothers Grimm³⁰ preserved and published the traditional tales told in Germany. They were so popular in their home country that modern, realistic children's literature began to be looked down on there. This dislike of non-traditional stories continued there until the beginning of the next century. In addition to their collection of stories, the Grimm brothers also contributed to children's literature through their academic pursuits. As professors, they had a scholarly interest in the stories, striving to preserve them and their variations accurately, recording their sources.



Image from Wikipedia.

³⁰ Wikipedia contributors. "Children's literature." Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, 1 Nov. 2022. Web. 3 Nov. 2022.

A similar project was carried out by the Norwegian scholars Peter Christen Asbjørnsen and Jørgen Moe, who collected Norwegian fairy tales and published them as Norwegian Folktales, often referred to as Asbjørnsen and Moe. By compiling these stories, they preserved Norway's literary heritage and helped create the Norwegian written language.

Danish author and poet Hans Christian Andersen traveled through Europe and gathered many well-known fairy tales and created new stories in the fairy tale genre.

In Switzerland, Johann David Wyss published The Swiss Family Robinson in 1812, with the aim of teaching children about family values, good husbandry, the uses of the natural world and self-reliance. The book became popular across Europe after it was translated into French by Isabelle de Montolieu.

E. T. A. Hoffmann's tale "The Nutcracker and the Mouse King" was published in 1816 in a German collection of stories for children, Kinder-Märchen. It is the first modern short story to introduce bizarre, odd and grotesque elements in children's literature and thereby anticipates Lewis Carroll's tale, Alice's Adventures in Wonderland. There are not only parallels concerning the content (the weird adventures of a young girl in a fantasy land), but also the origin of the tales as both are dedicated and given to a daughter of the author's friends.

Mid to Late 1800s: The Golden Age

The shift to a modern genre of children's literature occurred in the mid-19th century; didacticism³¹ of a previous age began to make way for more humorous, child-oriented books, more attuned to the child's imagination. The availability of children's literature greatly increased as well, as paper and printing became widely available and affordable, the population grew, and literacy rates improved.

The availability of children's literature greatly increased as well, as paper and printing became widely available and

³¹ From Merriam-Webster: "Didactic: usually disapproving; making moral observations; intended to teach proper or moral behavior"

affordable, the population grew, and literacy rates improved.

Tom Brown's School Days by Thomas Hughes appeared in 1857 and is considered to be the founding book in the school story tradition. However, it was Lewis Carroll's fantasy, Alice's Adventures in Wonderland, published in 1865 in England, that signaled the change in writing style for children to an imaginative and empathetic one. Regarded as the first "English masterpiece written for children" and as a founding book in the development of fantasy literature, its publication opened the "First Golden Age" of children's literature in Britain and Europe that continued until the early 1900s. The fairy-tale absurdity of Wonderland has solid historical ground as a satire of the serious problems of the Victorian era. Lewis Carroll is ironic about the prim and all-out regulated life of the "golden" Victorian century.

One other noteworthy publication was Mark Twain's book Tom Sawyer (1876), which was one of the first "boy books", intended for children but enjoyed by both children and adults alike. These were classified as such for the themes they contained, consisting of fighting and work.

In 1883, Carlo Collodi wrote the first Italian fantasy novel, The Adventures of Pinocchio, which was translated many times.



A mother reads to her children, depicted by [Jessie Willcox Smith](#) in a cover illustration of a volume of fairy tales written in the mid to late 19th century.



The Adventures of Pinocchio (1883) is a canonical piece of children's literature and [one of the best-selling books](#) ever published.^[1]

Images from Wikipedia.

Rudyard Kipling's The Jungle Book was first published in 1894, and J. M. Barrie told the story of Peter Pan in the novel Peter and Wendy in 1911. Johanna Spyri's two-part novel Heidi was published in Switzerland in 1880 and 1881.

In the US, children's publishing entered a period of growth after the American Civil War in 1865. Boys' book writer Oliver Optic published over 100 books.

In 1868, the "epoch-making" Little Women, the fictionalized autobiography of Louisa May Alcott, was published. This "coming of age" story established the genre of realistic family books in the United States. So, yes, in addition to the rise in fantasy,³² there is also a rise in realistic fiction with Little Women. This book in particular was one of the first "girl" books in which the protagonist breaks social norms by not getting married. Anne of Green Gables by Lucy Maud Montgomery was another "girl" book that challenged what it meant to be a "good" girl in society. These stories are still hailed for their strong female protagonists and unflinching look at

³² Alice's Adventures in Wonderland, L. Frank Baum's The Wonderful Wizard of Oz (1900), and Beatrix Potter's The Tale of Peter Rabbit (1901)...

women's roles in society. The characters' need for volition and autonomy helped to ushered in what would someday be called feminism.

In 1880 another bestseller, Uncle Remus: His Songs and His Sayings, a collection of African American folk tales adapted and compiled by Joel Chandler Harris, appeared.

Early to Mid-1900s

The 20th century, A.A. Milne created one of the most popular children's book characters of all time: Winnie-the-Pooh (1926). It was a four-book series starring Pooh, a stuffed bear with an addiction to honey. The four books starring Pooh have been published in dozens of languages and are one of the first children's stories to focus on the impermanence of childhood and the sad sweetness of growing up. Milne also continued one of the oldest traditions of children's literature: anthropomorphic animals.

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The Caldecott Medal award was created in 1937 to honor prestigious and outstanding picture books. In the same year, Dr. Seuss published his debut book entitled And to Think I Saw It on Mulberry Street. It was a claimed for capturing the imagination of both children and parents. With uncanny illustrations and playful rhyme schemes, he is still a favorite of young children. Around the same time, J.R.R. Tolkien published The Hobbit, the prequel to his masterpiece, The Lord of the Rings. His writing of fantasy would spark the conventions and tropes we find in the genre of fantasy. C.S. Lewis also shared the world of fantasy with Tolkien, publishing the first book, The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe (1950), of his iconic series Chronicles of Narnia.

The already vigorous growth in children's books became a boom in the 1950s, and children's publishing became big business. In 1952, American journalist E. B. White published Charlotte's Web, which was described as

"one of the very few books for young children that face, squarely, the subject of death."

Maurice Sendak illustrated more than two dozen books during the decade, which established him as an innovator in book illustration. The Sputnik crisis that began in 1957, provided increased interest and government money for schools and libraries to buy science and math books and the non-fiction book market "seemed to materialize overnight."

Late 1900s

The 1960s saw an age of new realism in children's books emerge. Given the atmosphere of social revolution in 1960s America, authors and illustrators began to break previously established taboos in children's literature. Controversial subjects dealing with alcoholism, death, divorce, and child abuse were now being published in stories for children. Maurice Sendak's Where the Wild Things Are in 1963 and Louise Fitzhugh's Harriet the Spy in 1964 are often considered the first stories published in this new age of realism.

Laura Ingalls Wilder began publishing her Little House on the Prairie series. Though the nine novels (one of which was published posthumously in 1971) are based on her own experiences growing up on the American frontier during the late 19th century, while the nine-novel series, are loosely based on her experiences growing up on the American frontier during the late 1800s, are widely considered fiction.

After World War II there is a rise in a new type of realism where the characters are more frank, authors are less didactic. Judy Blume's Are You There, God? It's Me, Margaret (1970) writes about puberty and death. Topics that were considered taboo only a short time ago are being presented in good taste. Young readers from ten to fourteen can read well-written fiction that deals with death, child abuse, economic deprivation, alternative lifestyles, illegitimate pregnancy, juvenile gang warfare, and rejected children. By the early twenty-first century, it had

become more nearly true than ever before: children may explore life through literature.³³

In books for a younger age group, Bill Martin and John Archambault's Chicka Chicka Boom Boom (1989) presented a new spin on the alphabet book. Laura Numeroff published If You Give a Mouse a Cookie in 1985 and went on to create a series of similarly named books that is still popular for children and adults to read together.

The modern children's adventure novel sometimes deals with controversial issues like terrorism, as in Robert Cormier's After the First Death in 1979, and warfare in the Third World, as in Peter Dickinson's AK in 1990.

The range of subject matter discussed in children's fiction has been extended remarkably throughout the 20th century into the 21st century.

Current

<insert more updated history, created by students, since 1990>

Chapter 2 Questions for Reflection:

- What shocks you about the history of children's literature? What doesn't shock you?
- Is anything missing from this history chapter? Is anything missing from the timeline?
- If you were to write about the current state of children's literature in the US - with just the knowledge you have right now - what would the outline of that section look like?
- <insert more questions created by students>

Chapter 2 Exercises for Reflection

- A. View the timeline in this chapter and recreate it based on themes instead of authors and book titles.

³³ Another major change in publishing for children has been the increase in multicultural children's literature. More on this topic in upcoming chapters...

- B. Create an infographic based on the history of children's literature – the use of color in illustrations, the use of certain words, etc.
- C. Research the current scope of children's literature and create the "Current" section above for future editions of this textbook. This might be done collaboratively as a class on a web site (Canva, Google, etc.).

“We tend to see children’s literature³⁴ as providing imaginative spaces for children, but are often short-sighted about the long and didactic history of the genre. And as historians, we continue to seek out more about the autonomy and agency of pre-modern children in order to understand how they might also have found spaces in which to exercise their imagination beyond books that taught them how to pray.”

³⁴ Susan Broomhall (Director, Centre for Medieval and Early Modern Studies, The University of Western Australia) & Joanne McEwan (Researcher, The University of Western Australia) & Stephanie Tarbin (Lecturer in medieval and early modern history, The University of Western Australia). The Conversation. <https://theconversation.com/once-upon-a-time-a-brief-history-of-childrens-literature-75205> 29 March 17.

CHAPTER THREE | Characteristics

Source.³⁵³⁶

1. **The protagonist is a child.** This characteristic is first and foremost in children's literature because the books must reflect the identity of the intended audience. If the protagonist is not a young adult, teen, child, or baby, then it probably is not children's literature.
2. **The use of the fantastical and imaginative** to express life's complexities and difficulties is a common feature. The emphasis in imagination and fantastical elements of story reflect the creativity of the intended child audience. For children, the line between reality and fantasy is very thin, believing that a fat bearded man can fit through their chimney, or a fairy can flutter into their bedroom and leave money where a tooth once was. Authors use this merging of the child's physical world and imaginary world to build a story that can express the complex feelings and difficult topics children bump into almost daily.
3. **The use of concrete details** allows the reader to create the literary scene in their mind. By writing in this way, the young reader imagines what is happening in the story and then is able to feel the emotions of the protagonist rather than the author telling the young reader how the main character feels; in other words, the author shows through concrete details rather than explaining using abstract words. The brains of children are not fully developed so abstract thinking is difficult and potentially, depending on the child's age, impossible. Thus, enabling young readers to paint the scene in their minds is much more effective, especially when the book is tackling complex emotions and difficult topics.
4. **Parents are obstacles** in children's literature so for centuries children's book authors have been trying to get parent out of the way! Why are parents a challenge in children's literature? The child protagonist must be able to act and have volition to create plot, solve the conflict, and ultimately change as a character. Parents,

³⁵ Kathryn J. Beherns CC-BY-NC-SA.

³⁶ This chapter applies the following course objective: "Discuss and experiment with the art of storytelling."

by their very nature, get in the way of that through supervision, and the teaching familial rules and community etiquette.

5. **Didacticism is a common characteristic.** Adults simply cannot help but put their two cents in; many books written for young people have a moral lesson in them. This dates back to oral literature and English puritanism. In fact, the birth of children's literature came from this idea that children must be taught lessons through the books they read. The didacticism is still found in the majority of today's children's literature.
6. **Hopeful optimism** is promised in almost all children's literature, even if it is in the final chapters when the happy ending unfolds. With some exceptions, a mindful reader of children's literature will notice after a few books that "happily ever after" is a common occurrence. One reason for this phenomenon is the perspective of a child's innocence; adults know happy-endings are not a regular occurrence in life, but in an attempt to preserve the young readers innocence an optimistic view of the world, adult authors make everything work out by the end of the book.
7. **Repetition** is used often in children's literature. In picture books, it is often found through the language itself utilizing rhyme, alliteration, or a chorus phrase. In chapter books, repetition is more subtle using motifs, an action or habit of the protagonist, or certain elements of the setting. Repetition creates levity, engages the child reader, emphasizes plot elements, aids in the characterization, and is a good practice when writing for developing readers.

3.1 Archetypes

Source.³⁷

What Are Archetypes?

They are the basic building blocks of stories that all writers use to create a world to which readers can escape. Almost all cultures around the world use them to build their stories.

Examples of archetypes are: the hero, the damsel in distress, the battle between good and evil, etc.

CHARACTERS

THE HERO—larger-than-life character, often goes on some kind of journey or quest; hero must demonstrate the qualities and abilities valued by his culture

Examples: Prince Charming; Luke Skywalker (*Star Wars*); Frodo (*The Lord of the Rings*); Harry Potter

ANTIHERO – A protagonist without heroic qualities; A non-hero, given the job of failure, frequently humorous. He is not the typical hero because he does not always possess purely good qualities or personality traits.

Examples: Homer Simpson, Holden Caulfield, Jack Sparrow in *The Pirates of the Caribbean*

THE INNOCENT – An inexperienced character that is exposed to the evils in the world

Example: Dorothy in *The Wizard of Oz*

THE TRICKSTER OR FOOL – Characters who tricks others to get them to do what he/she wants—they can be both virtuous or evil

Example: the Roadrunner, Weasley in Harry Potter

THE UNDERDOG – Characters who are always in the wrong place at the wrong time, but who usually win something of value in the end

Examples: The Ugly Duckling & Neville Longbottom (*Harry Potter*)

³⁷ This chapter summarizes the information found on two PPTs created by teachers:

<https://www.wsfcs.k12.nc.us/cms/lib/NC01001395/Centricity/Domain/1404/archetypes.ppt> &

https://www.d11.org/cms/lib/CO02201641/Centricity/Domain/4274/Archetypes%20PowerPoint_Durland.pptx

FRIENDLY BEAST—a beast on the side of the hero shows that nature sides most often with the forces of good

Example: Groot?

DEVIL FIGURE—evil incarnate; offers worldly goods, fame, or knowledge to the hero in exchange for possession of the soul

Example: The Giant in *Jack and the Beanstalk*

EVIL FIGURE WITH GOOD HEART—redeemable evil figure saved by the nobility or love of the hero.

Example: Gru in *Despicable Me*

SCAPEGOAT—animal or human who is unjustly held responsible for others' sins; sacrificed but they often become more powerful force dead than alive

OUTCAST—figure banished from a social group for some crime against his fellow man (could be falsely accused of a crime or could choose to banish himself from guilt)

TEMPTRESS—sensuous beauty; brings about the hero's downfall because he is physically attracted to her

Example: The White Witch (*The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*)

DAMSEL IN DISTRESS – A woman who needs to be rescued; female figure, usually young & beautiful, who is placed in a dire predicament by a villain or monster and needs a hero to rescue her

Examples: Rapunzel, Sleeping Beauty

CREATURE OF NIGHTMARE—animal or creature disfigured or mutated; monsters who are the antagonists in the story

SETTINGS

THE CROSSROADS – A road or path: the place of suffering and decision; journey of life

Example: Wizard of Oz?

THE UNDERWORLD – The place where the hero encounters fear or death, descent into hell

THE MAZE OR LABYRINTH – Represents a puzzling dilemma or great uncertainty; complex journey of the human mind

THE CASTLE – A strong place of safety

WATER SOURCE – Life giving or cleansing properties

Example: Huck Finn

THE ISLAND – Isolation

Examples: *Robinson Crusoe* & *Lord of the Flies*

FOREST OR WILDERNESS – Dangerous world of beasts and darkness; jungle = wild and uncontrollable

Examples: *Little Red Riding Hood*, *Tarzan*

THE MOUNTAIN – Center of universe, climbing = spiritual, emotional journey; powerful, mysterious places

THE DESERT – Wasteland; emotionally/physically barren place or time in a character's journey, usually emerges stronger

PLOTS³⁸

OVERCOMING THE MONSTER

The protagonist sets out to defeat an antagonistic force (often evil) which threatens the protagonist and/or protagonist's homeland.

Examples: *The Hunger Games*, *Shrek*.

RAGS TO RICHES

The poor protagonist acquires things such as power, wealth, and a mate, before losing it all and gaining it back upon growing as a person.

Examples: *Cinderella*.

THE QUEST

The protagonist and some companions set out to acquire an important object or to get to a location, facing many obstacles and temptations along the way.

Examples: *The Lord of the Rings*, *The Land Before Time*, *The Wizard of Oz*

VOYAGE AND RETURN

³⁸ Wikipedia contributors. "The Seven Basic Plots." Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia. Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, 20 Nov. 2016. Web. 20 Nov. 2016. Text is available under the Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike License.

The protagonist goes to a strange land and, after overcoming the threats it poses to him or her, returns with experience.

Examples: Alice in Wonderland, The Wizard of Oz.

COMEDY

Light and humorous character with a happy or cheerful ending; a dramatic work in which the central motif is the triumph over adverse circumstance, resulting in a successful or happy conclusion. Most romances fall into this category.

Examples: Bridget Jones Diary, Four Weddings and a Funeral.

TRAGEDY

The protagonist is a hero with one major character flaw or great mistake which is ultimately their undoing. Their unfortunate end evokes pity at their folly and the fall of a fundamentally 'good' character.

Examples: Bonnie and Clyde, Romeo and Juliet, Breaking Bad.

REBIRTH

During the course of the story, an important event forces the main character to change their ways, often making them a better person.

Examples: Beauty and the Beast, A Christmas Carol, Despicable Me, How the Grinch Stole Christmas.

SYMBOLS

LIGHT VS. DARKNESS—light suggests hope, renewal, or intellectual illumination; darkness suggests the unknown, ignorance, or despair.

DEATH AND REBIRTH—grows out of a parallel between the cycle of nature and the cycle of life. Thus, morning and springtime represent birth, youth, or rebirth; evening and winter suggest old age or death.

NATURE VS. MECHANISTIC WORLD—Nature is good while technology and society are often evil.

HEAVEN VS. HELL—gods live in the skies or mountaintops; evil forces live in the bowels of the earth

INNATE WISDOM VS EDUCATED STUPIDITY—uneducated characters can often be wise using their common sense while some very educated characters have no common sense

SUPERNATURAL INTERVENTION—the gods most often intervene on the side of the hero to assist him in his quest

HAVEN VS. WILDERNESS—for the hero, places of safety are required for time to regain health and resources; these hideouts are often in unusual places

FIRE VS. ICE—fire can represent knowledge, light, life, and rebirth while ice can represent ignorance, darkness, sterility, and death

MAGIC WEAPON—some object used to fight the forces of evil that has magical properties

COLORS

- **Color = positive (negative)**
- *Black* = power (death, mourning)
- *Blue* = nobility, tranquility (depression)
- *Brown* = Earth, nature (confusion)
- *Gray* = neutral (passionless)
- *Green* = fertility, renewal, wealth (greed, envy)
- *Orange* = adventure, change (forced change, disruptiveness)
- *Purple* = royalty, positive personal growth (injury)
- *Red* = sex, love (sacrifice, taboo, humiliation, danger)
- *White* = purity, wholesomeness, rebirth (emptiness)
- *Yellow* = enlightenment (cowardice, illness)

3.2 Creating Illustrations

Source.³⁹

Pictures have almost always accompanied children's stories.

Modern children's books are illustrated in a way that is rarely seen in adult literature, except in graphic novels. Generally, artwork plays a greater role in books intended for younger readers (especially pre-literate children). Children's picture books often serve as an accessible source of high-quality art for young children. Even after children learn to read well enough to enjoy a story without illustrations, they (like their elders) continue to appreciate the occasional drawings found in chapter books.

According to Joyce Whalley in *The International Companion Encyclopedia of Children's Literature*, "a good, illustrated book is one where the pictures enhance or add depth to the text."

"a good, illustrated book is one where the pictures enhance or add depth to the text."

How to Illustrate a Children's Book⁴⁰

Writing an excellent story for a children's book is only half the battle. Even the most engaging plots simply won't come to life without vivid illustrations to match the text. Luckily, by brainstorming, communicating with the book's author, and using a simple method of watercolor illustrating, you can bring vibrancy and joy to your children's books.

Conceptualizing and Brainstorming

Obtain and study the writer's brief. If you are contracted to illustrate a book, oftentimes writers will provide you with a brief--a list of notes suggesting the main actions in each spread of the book. Study this carefully and try to remain faithful to the author's intentions. If you are illustrating your own book, you have unlimited creative license!

³⁹ Wikipedia contributors. "Children's literature." Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia. Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, 5 Nov. 2022. Web. 9 Nov. 2022.

⁴⁰ "How to Illustrate a Children's Book." Wikihow Staff. Wikihow.com. 14 March 22. <https://www.wikihow.com/Illustrate-a-Children%27s-Book> CC BY-NC-SA

Tailor images based on reading level. Different age ranges of readers require different kinds of illustrations. If you are writing for very young children, each major plot movement may need to be portrayed in your illustrations in obvious and easy-to-follow ways. Slightly older readers who can read most or all of the story themselves, however, may only require illustrations that portray central themes and moments in a chapter.

Gain inspiration from the work of other artists. There's no shame in consulting the styles of other successful children's books for ideas. Additionally, look to other forms of art--such as paintings, textiles, or film--to get ideas for the general aesthetic of your images.

- If you're writing for younger audiences, the works of Dr. Seuss might be a great place to start; his whimsical and original style paved the way for a great deal of other children's artists.
- Try to look at art related to the setting of your story. For example, if you're illustrating a tale about knights and castles, you should try researching art from the Middle Ages.

Sketching Basic Images

Draw thumbnail sketches of the book. These small, un-detailed sketches--only a square inch or two in size--will allow you to trace out the visual flow of the whole book. There's no need to erase or revise these; just quickly draw and let your ideas flow. Focus on landscape design, focal points, and general scene layout.

Draw some study sketches of your story. Focus on character development, exploring a range of potential expressions, postures, and moods for each character you intend to illustrate. You can use these as references throughout the whole illustration process.

- For example, if your main character begins the book in a sad state and ends happy, try drawing him or her in both poles of emotion, developing intermediate expressions in between.

Create a sketching template. Each illustration you produce will eventually cover one or two pages of a physical book, so it's important to match the dimensions of your sketch with those of your final product. Try creating a precise grid with a pencil and a ruler on your sketch paper before sketching your scenes.

- If your illustrations cover two pages, make sure to mark the area occupied by the spine of the book, and avoid sketching important details in this space.
- Make sure to determine where the author intends to place the text on each page. Mark these areas with a grid and avoid sketching over them with details.

Work with the text. Your illustrations should seamlessly follow the plot of the book as printed on each page. Try to capture details portrayed in the story and look for ways to subtly foreshadow events in coming pages with your images.

Check for consistency. Make sure each of your characters are easily identifiable across the entire book. Check for consistent clothing, coloration, and expressions. If characters are hard for children to identify across multiple spreads, they may struggle to follow the plot of the book.

Share your sketches with your client. If you are illustrating for a client, be sure and run your sketches by them before proceeding. At this stage, images are relatively easy to alter or replace, and it is important to have the author's full approval and feedback before you move on to painting.

Prepare final sketches of each spread. Using your study sketches for reference, resize your images to their target size and add any extra details--objects, textures, or scenery--you want to put in the illustration. To scale accurately, try creating a measured grid over your study sketches, and simply reproduce them one quadrant at a time in a larger grid scaled to your final dimensions.

*For other "How To" Guides related to Children's Literature:
<https://www.wikihow.com/Category:Writing-for-Children>*

Chapter 3 Questions for Reflection

- Think of as many fairytales as you can. What archetypes do they use?
- <insert more exercises created by students>

Chapter 3 Exercises for Reflection

- A. Create your own snippet of a children's story using the characteristics, archetypes, and illustration lessons in this chapter. Use an Author's Note to point out the usage of all three.
- B. Find at least one children's literature/book example for each of the archetype categories in this chapter – characters, setting, plot, symbols, colors. Maybe refer to the history chapter to get a jump-start on books to look up or think about?
 - o If groups of students are created, maybe 2-3 books/stories per category is manageable.
- C. <insert more exercises created by students>

CHAPTER FOUR | Genres

Source.⁴¹⁴²

Contents, in Alphabetical Order:

- Biography
- Graphic Novels
- Historical Fiction
- Informational
- Modern Fantasy
- Multicultural Literature
- Poetry
- Picture Book
- Realistic Fiction
- Traditional Literature

Biography By Beth Constantine and Cheryl Hartman⁴³

A biography falls under the category of Non-Fiction/Informational Books. It is a vast category which is usually approached in one of several ways. In the past, biographies were fictionalized because many experts felt that children would not read a biography unless it read like a good story. This approach to biography often fell victim to inaccuracies in order to make the story compelling. In order to meet the needs of children, today's trend in biographies is to approach the story of a subject's life both authentically and in a compelling, entertaining manner. As challenging and technical as this sounds, the biographical author is mostly driven by their primary goal, which is to reveal the subject's inner mind and feelings and get the reader to emotionally connect with the subject, thereby making the subject more human and memorable.

⁴¹ "Choosing High Quality Children's Literature." Wikibooks, The Free Textbook Project. 7 Jan 2022, 15:05 UTC. 8 Nov 2022, 19:15

<https://en.wikibooks.org/w/index.php?title=Choosing_High_Quality_Children%27s_Literature&oldid=4022421>. This chapter was written by practicing teachers in a graduate children's literature class at Ashland University.

⁴² This chapter applies the following course objective: "Identify specific instances of genres of children's literature."

⁴³ "Choosing High Quality Children's Literature/Biography." Wikibooks, The Free Textbook Project. 14 Sep 2022, 07:53 UTC. 8 Nov 2022, 20:02

<https://en.wikibooks.org/w/index.php?title=Choosing_High_Quality_Children%27s_Literature/Biography&oldid=4107475>.

Categories

Often confused by the differences among biographies of the same person or event, readers of biographies are left wondering about the authenticity and accuracy of each book. The answer is simple: it lies in the inherent purpose of the book and the intended audience. There are six categories in biographies, each offering a different perspective and appeal. All six are listed here with descriptions and examples.

Picture-Book Biographies

Biographies under this category are mainly directed at young children. They may cover a certain part of the person's life or span the person's whole life. The illustrations carry much of the story and connect the reader emotionally to that person. Many of the facts are woven throughout the story and conveyed through the illustrations. An excellent example of a picture-book biography is Moses: When Harriet Tubman Led Her People to Freedom by Carole Boston Weatherford, illustrated by Kadir Nelson. Weatherford's main purpose of this book is to convey the spiritual journey of Tubman. Nelson's illustrations beautifully portray Tubman's struggle to freedom and the intensity of emotions she experienced along the way.



Simplified Biographies

Created especially for the newly independent or lower skilled readers, simplified biographies tend to provide straightforward accounts of people's lives. These biographies are short and contain many illustrations, so they receive high marks for readability. On the other hand, due to the simplistic nature of this category, many of the complexities and details are left out. Because the sentences are manipulated in such a way to make the text more readable, many of these books sound choppy. However, an example of a well written biography from this category is F. N. Mojo's I Can Read History Book The One Bad Thing About Father. This story reveals the life of a boy, (Theodore Roosevelt's son) living in the White House with his uncontrollable sister, Alice.

Partial Biographies

The partial biography covers only a part of a person's life, usually a dramatic or high interest event. Many authors choose this category because of their own interest in a certain event or aspect of the subject's life and because covering the subject's entire life would make the book too long and difficult for primary readers. Many of the partial biographies not only address the events of the subject's life, but act as a social history of what life was like for a group of people. This is the case in the book Rosa by Nikki Giovanni. While this book is specifically about the bus incident of Rosa Parks, it also is a social history of how black Americans struggled long and hard to win their civil rights and what life was like for them in America in the 1950's.

Complete Biographies

The complete biography covers the subject's entire life. Complete biographies, although typically long and detailed, can also be conveyed in other categories, such as in picture-books and even in fictionalized versions. The reader can expect an in-depth and complex look at both the positive and negative aspects of the subject. Many complete biographies will contain reproductions of original maps, journal entries, direct quotes, and photographs. Amos Fortune, Free Man, by Elizabeth Yates is a Newberry Medal winning book revealing the moving story of a man born in Africa, enslaved in America, who managed to purchase his and others' freedom.

Collective Biographies

Collective Biographies were written to provide a brief explanation about specific groups of people, such as presidents, sports heroes, and scientists. Some of these biographies detail the lives of lesser-known individuals who have performed some great contribution to their trade or had a great impact on their culture, others' lives, or the world. A notable example from this category is Leagues Apart by Lawrence Ritter. This book reveals the contributions and racial struggles faced by twenty-two African Americans who played baseball in the Negro Leagues.

Autobiographies

Under this category we have stories written by the subject about the subject. The reader can expect great insight into the subject's life, although biased and subjective. Most of the books in this category for primary children are partial biographies, meaning they do not cover the subject's entire life. Some of these books are not about the person's personal life, but their work. And still others reveal much about themselves through personal memories, journals, letters, and photographs.

In terms of journal writings/memoirs, nothing is perhaps more famous than the Diary of Anne Frank. Although written by an older child, it is an example of an autobiographical journal, which recounts her life as a Jew hiding from Nazis. Due to the traumatic nature of events in American and World history, like the Holocaust, such autobiographical work is not as welcome within young children's literature as other topics. Publishers of children's literature have struggled in the past to provide an accurate, yet protective, personalized view of the Holocaust as Frank in her autobiographical journal.

On a more positive note, current trends within this category reflect the child's growing interest in favorite authors. Newberry Honor book, Homesick, My Own Story by Jean Fritz tells a revealing story about life in 1920's China, her father's stories of America and her ensuing desire to go to America, followed by her feelings of displacement once she arrived there.

Graphic Novels

Graphic novels⁴⁴ are compilations and original works published in a sequential art format. They are reminiscent of cartoons or comic books, and they can have varying amounts of text. They can feature fictional, nonfiction, descriptive, or argumentative content.

Notable Authors and Illustrators

Dav Pilkey, G. Neri, Jeff Kinney, Jullian Tamaki, Hope Larson, Lucy Knisley, Faith Erin Hicks, Kevin O'Malley.

Best-of List

- ALA Graphic Novels Reading List⁴⁵
- Goodreads Best Graphic Novels for Children⁴⁶
- First Second Books is a publisher of graphic novels and their website highlights creators and collections of graphic novels for all ages⁴⁷

Historical Fiction⁴⁸

What is Historical Fiction? Sarah Johnson, Assistant Professor, Eastern Illinois University, states that "the obvious definition that comes to mind is that historical fiction is simply "fiction set in the past" (March 2002). The words "historical fiction" themselves represent a controversy of meaning. To be considered historical means that the story is based on fact or attained from research. To be considered fiction means that the story is not true. So how is it that this literary genre can be both? Historical fiction uses real characters along with fictitious characters to talk about factual events which occurred more than 50 years ago. In this way the story can give shape to the past while also making it come alive in the present. It allows children to see that those characters also dealt with problems that we still face today. Johnson (March 2002) concludes that the "very best historical

⁴⁴ Schneider, Jenifer Jasinski. "A Working Definition." *The Inside, Outside, and Upside Down of Children's Literature: From Poets and Pop-ups to Princesses and Porridge*: 2016. University of South Florida, jschneid@usf.ed – CC-BY-NC-ND.

⁴⁵ <http://www.ala.org/alsc/graphicnovels2013>

⁴⁶ https://www.goodreads.com/list/show/5038.Best_Graphic_Novels_for_Children

⁴⁷ <http://www.firstsecondbooks.com/>

⁴⁸ Historical Fiction by Mary Leininger and Becky McMichael. "Choosing High Quality Children's Literature/Historical Fiction." Wikibooks, The Free Textbook Project. 14 Jun 2017, 21:46 UTC. 8 Nov 2022, 20:01 <https://en.wikibooks.org/w/index.php?title=Choosing_High_Quality_Children%27s_Literature/Historical_Fiction&oldid=3230298>.

fiction presents to us a TRUTH of the past that is NOT the truth of the history books, but a bigger truth, a more important truth - a truth of the HEART."

Types of Historical Fiction

According to Tunnell and Jacobs, (Children's Literature, Briefly, 2000) there are four types of Historical Fiction:

1. A Story of Historical Events Happening Before the Life of the Author
Stealing South by Katherine Ayres Katherine Ayres
2. A Contemporary Novel Becomes Historical Fiction with the Passage of Time
The Sound of Music, 1949 The von Trapp Family Story
3. An Author Chronicles his/her Own Life Story in a Fictional Format
The Little House books by Laura Ingalls Wilder are books of this type. Laura Ingalls Wilder, Frontier Girl
4. The Protagonist Travels Back into History
The Magic Tree House books Mary Pope Osborne

Examples of High-Quality Historical Fiction

Picture Books

Rudy Rides the Rails: A Depression Era Story written by Dandi Daley Mackall and illustrated by Chris Ellison

This story weaves an accurate picture about the lives of hoboes during the Great Depression. The theme is of family love that drives "Rambling Rudy" back to his home in Akron, Ohio. The author and illustrator share symbols, dialogue, and action from this time period with the reader so that one feels as if they are riding the rails, searching for work and food, along with the characters.

The Wall written and illustrated by Peter Sis

This story depicts Peter Sis' view of growing up behind The Iron Curtain in Czechoslovakia during the Cold War. The author is true to the time period and does not shield the reader from the atrocities of the brainwashing done by the government in the Soviet Union. His illustration horrifically reveals the mindset of the time by the Soviet leaders. Together the story and illustrations show one little boy's "awakening" of a better life because of the crack that rock-n-roll had put in the wall that kept him from the western world.

Hot Air: The (Mostly) True Story of the First Hot-Air Balloon Ride written and illustrated by Marjorie Priceman

This book is a light-hearted story about the first hot-air balloon ride. It recounts the travels of a sheep, a rooster, and a duck who were the first to take flight in a hot-air balloon. Luckily, theirs was a happy ending which led to Jean-Francois Pilatre de Rozier making the first public flight.

Chapter Books

Worth by A. LaFaye

This is a heart-felt story about the struggles of two boys during the late 1800's when orphan trains were a way of life for some unwanted children. The author's word choices and use of figurative language throughout the book pull the reader into the text. The dialogue gives the reader the feeling that they have stepped back in time to the old west. There is a mix of historical facts and literary elements that make this story's theme come alive as the plot unfolds. This book leads to many enriching discussions about friendship, family, and right versus wrong. Kids really enjoy reading this story.

The Breadwinner by Deborah Ellis

This story is truly written to touch the reader's heart as it draws us into the lives of several women in war-torn Afghanistan. The struggle, fear, and raw perseverance of the main character truly reflects the depth of despair that the human spirit can be capable of enduring. The author successfully conveys the horrific lives of Afghan women without too many details about their plight. The plot, setting, and characters bring this historical time period alive for the reader.

Remember My Name by Sara H. Banks

This story is a masterpiece of emotions ranging from courage to heart-breaking defeat about the Indian Removal Act of 1838. The author's word choice and dialogue help the reader envision a much less "sophisticated" world.

Elijah of Buxton by Christopher Paul Curtis

This is the story of Elijah Freeman, the first free black person born in the settlement of Buxton, Canada. His claim to fame is throwing up on Fredrick Douglas when he visited the colony when Elijah was a baby. Elijah is an eleven-year-old boy who is treated like an adult because he is an only child. He is born into freedom which makes him innocent and gullible

so when he experiences the evil of slavery and crime his mind is opened to the cruelty around him. What is so special about this book is its authenticity. The settlement of Buxton, Canada actually existed as a place for runaway slaves. Douglas did visit this settlement at one time. The fear and treatment of the slaves is accurately detailed, they hide from the slave traders while trying to survive in a new place. The book is written in southern twang with a slightly educated tone to it because Elijah is going to school and the teacher is from New York. Elijah faces many decisions that the students can relate to.

Informational⁴⁹

Informational books have evolved in the last several years. These books are no longer left on the library shelf. Illustrations have improved and the books are targeted to younger audiences. Authors of informational books are working hard to make learning enjoyable for children. Informational books are nonfiction books that present current and accurate knowledge (Tunnell and Jacobs, 130). Students can use informational books to write reports, develop critical reading and thinking skills, and expand vocabulary. Authors of informational books often write them to encourage self-reliance. A great reason to read informational books is for their enjoyment value. Children can spend hours reading and discovering new facts and ideas (Norton, 501).

Excellent Informational Books

Secrets of a Civil War Submarine Solving the Mysteries of the H.L. Hunley By Sally M. Walker

This book tells the story of the H.L. Hunley. A Civil War stealth weapon. It was the first submarine to sink an enemy ship in 1864. After the attack, something happened to the submarine because it never returned to port. Decades later the H.L. Hunley was found on the ocean floor. This Robert F. Sibert Medal winning book uncovers the mystery of what happened to the H.L. Hunley.

Sequoyah The Cherokee Man Who Gave His People Writing By James Rumford

⁴⁹ Informational By Brittany Dudgeon. "Choosing High Quality Children's Literature/Informational." Wikibooks, The Free Textbook Project. 14 Jun 2017, 21:46 UTC. 8 Nov 2022, 20:01 <https://en.wikibooks.org/w/index.php?title=Choosing_High_Quality_Children%27s_Literature/Informational&oldid=3230299>.

This Robert F. Sibert Honer book is about a man named Sequoyah who created a writing system for the Cherokee Indians. In the 1820s, Sequoyah invented letters to spell out the sounds of his language. The Cherokee honored Sequoyah by naming him after redwood trees called Giant Sequoias.

Brooklyn Bridge By Lynn Curlee

Brooklyn Bridge is a Robert F. Sibert Honer book about the eighth wonder of the world. The Brooklyn Bridge is a monument that has an interesting and scandalous history. Lynn Curlee presents the story in fascinating text, informative maps, and realistic illustrations.

Modern Fantasy⁵⁰

Modern fantasy is literature written by a known author that is set either in a make-believe or imaginary world in which places, people and creatures could not exist, and/or have events that could not possibly happen such as tiny people, talking animals, or traveling through time.

Categories of Modern Fantasy

According to C. Huck, S. Hepler, J. Hickman, B. Kiefer (Children's Literature in the Elementary School 1997) there are several categories of children's modern fantasy books.

Animal Fantasy

The category of animal fantasy is often given to stories about animal characters that still maintain their animal characteristics, such as Wilbur in Charlotte's Web, by E.B. White, who lives in a barn and eats slop, but also displays human characteristics such as being able to talk with other animals.

Toys and Objects

This category is about toys and objects that have a secret life with or without the knowledge of their owner. For example, the Velveteen Rabbit who wants to become real and of course the well known and loved Winnie the Pooh by A.A. Milne.

⁵⁰ Modern Fantasy By Heidi Payne and Andrea Schmidt. "Choosing High Quality Children's Literature/Modern Fantasy." Wikibooks, The Free Textbook Project. 9 Apr 2020, 14:40 UTC. 8 Nov 2022, 20:00 <https://en.wikibooks.org/w/index.php?title=Choosing_High_Quality_Children%27s_Literature/Modern_Fantasy&oldid=3673132>.

Tiny Humans

This category is about humans who are extremely tiny. They have human traits and have real human situations but are just little. Some examples are The Borrowers by Mary Norton and Thumbelina by Hans Christian Andersen.

Unusual Characters and Preposterous Situations

This category is about strange and unusual characters such as Willy Wonka, Mary Poppins, and the Mad Hatter. These types of characters portray human characteristics but put themselves in strange situations. Some books that fall into this genre would be Alice in Wonderland by Lewis Carroll and Mr. Popper's Penguins by Richard and Florence Atwater.

Imaginary Worlds

Imaginary Worlds begin in the realm of reality then move rapidly into a world of make believe where situations seem impossible but still have a realistic quality. For example, Wizard of Oz by L. Frank Baum and Charlie and the Chocolate Factory by Roald Dahl.

Supernatural

Books under this category capture the attention of children because they enjoy the different types of characters and places that appear in supernatural books. Places such as Hogwarts school found in the Harry Potter series by J.K.Rowling⁵¹ are intriguing in the minds of its readers.

Time-warp

Time warp books start out in the "real world" with characters who find a way to travel back in time or to the future. In the book The Golden Hour, by Maiya Williams, four children find themselves in the middle of the French Revolution while trying to discover the secrets surrounding the town and the abandoned Owatannauk resort. In Tuck Everlasting, by Natalie Babbitt, Winnie falls in love with Tuck who is a character that has the gift of everlasting life, a person from the past must now help a friend in need.

High Fantasy

⁵¹ This author is a known TERF, and this book acknowledges that.

High fantasy includes popular books like The Hobbit and The Lord of the Rings by J.R.R Tolkien and The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe by C.S.Lewis. These books involve the battle between good and evil and their characters may include elves, dwarves, witches, dragons, and other mythical beings as well as humans. High fantasy books typically have a quest for a lost or stolen object of power that the protagonist and antagonist need for different reasons and purposes.

Science Fiction

Science Fiction books are those that contemplate future worlds and may often include space travel. Readers will find real scientific information included in these books. Literature books such as A Wrinkle in Time by Madeline L'Engle or The Giver by Lois Lowery are included in this category.

Multicultural Children's Lit⁵²

In the past, children's books generally treated minority groups badly or ignored them completely (Tunnell, M., & Jacobs, S., 2008, p.192).

In the 1960's-1970's, Children's libraries were supported by federal government. This encouraged publishers to produce many ethnic groups' books (Huck, C., & Hepler, S., & Hickman, J., & Kiefer, B., 1997, p.123). Banks (1979) stated that "It would be difficult to pinpoint its origin, but it may be safe to assume that the term multicultural literature came after the advent of the multicultural education movement in the 1960s" (As cited in Dyson & Genishi, 1994, p.57). In 1965, Nancy Larrick wrote "The All White World of Children's Books" to report almost no African Americans appeared in any of America's children's books. People began to recognize and include African Americans and other minority groups in the books (Tunnell, M., & Jacobs, S., 2008, p.192). In 1966, the Council on Interracial Books for Children (CIBC) was founded. CIBC encourages authors to write about their own cultures. In 1969, the American Library Association (ALA) gave the Coretta Scott King Award to excellent African American writers and illustrators (Tunnell, M., & Jacobs, S., 2008, p.192).

⁵² Multicultural Children's Lit by Kim Rice & Lin Chieh Huang. "Choosing High Quality Children's Literature/Multicultural Literature." Wikibooks, The Free Textbook Project. 5 Nov 2013, 03:10 UTC. 8 Nov 2022, 20:00 <https://en.wikibooks.org/w/index.php?title=Choosing_High_Quality_Children%27s_Literature/Multicultural_Literature&oldid=2578734>.

In 1974, the National Council for the Social Studies gave the Carter G. Woodson Award to excellent minority and race children's books (Tunnell, M., & Jacobs, S., 2008, p.192). In 1985 only 18 books were eligible for the Coretta Scott King Award (Huck, C., & Hepler, S., & Hickman, J., & Kiefer, B., 1997, p.123).

In the last decade, multicultural literature has begun to flourish. Nowadays, multiculturalism is a big issue. Understanding multicultural issues is important. Banks (1991) stated "By the year 2020, one of every two students in the United States will be a person of color" (As cited in Dietrich & Ralph, 1995). Dietrich & Ralph (1995, p.1) stated that "educators should help students explore their own cultures and contribute to intercultural understanding."

Excellent Multicultural Literature Examples

***My Name Is Maria Isabel** by Alma Flor Ada is an excellent example of multicultural literature. In this story many important topics are dealt with delicately and admirably. One's given name is very important for one's family has chosen it in memory or honor of someone or some occasion and one's name should remain special and honored for what it is. The author Alma Flor Ada had the misfortune of having a teacher Anglosize her name and she based this story on some of her childhood recollections. This book also deals with the diversity of religious celebrations: Christmas and Hannukah and how the main character was drawn to customs and culture different from her own. Maria Isabel is intrigued by Hannukah, the story of Amahl and the Night Visitors, dreidels and latkes. Maria becomes more confident in herself and demands to be addressed by her given name of Maria Isabel Salazar Lopez and not Mary.

***The Funny Little Woman**

In Japan, a funny little woman who liked to laugh, "Tee-HE-HE-HE" liked to make dumplings out of rice. One day, when she was making a rice dumpling, the rice dumpling rolled and fell to the floor. She followed her dumpling and tried to catch it and encountered many Japanese Onis or evil demons. Onis caught her and asked her to make rice dumplings for them. One day, she looked to the right and left and saw no Onis there. She escaped and went back to her house.

***The Snowy Day**

Peter, an African-American boy, woke up and found out it was snowing outside. He ran outside and made a snowman, and snow angels. He loved snow, so he picked up a handful of snow to make a snow ball and put it in his pocket for tomorrow. Unfortunately, the snowball was gone when he checked his pocket before he went to bed. He was upset and went to sleep. He dreamed that the winter was gone. He woke up and found out snow was still everywhere. He was so happy.

Poetry⁵³

Like anything else, kids need to explore poetry. They should be exposed to poetry, in many different forms, throughout the year.

"Poetry needs to be performed and dramatized. Take some chances and try out different effects (using different voices, elongating words, singing, shouting, whispering, pausing dramatically, and so on) as you read poems aloud. Your voice is a powerful tool: You may change it from louder to softer to only a whisper; you may start at a deep, low pitch and rise to a medium and eventually high pitch; you may speak very quickly in a clipped fashion and then slow down and drawl out the words." (Lynch-Brown/Tomlinson: Essentials of Children's Literature. p.70)

Let kids discover their own meanings in poetry and discuss those meanings without making them conform to an understood critical meaning. Some poems would lend themselves well to having the students act them out. Kids need to discover that poetry can be sweet or silly, short or long, fun, thoughtful, or personal. It can have more than one voice.

Some Terrific Poetry Books to Check Out

Rainy Day Poems - 2012. Poems and artwork by James McDonald. A fantastic collection of new poems from a relatively obscure poet whose

⁵³ "Choosing High Quality Children's Literature/Poetry." Wikibooks, The Free Textbook Project. 30 Aug 2022, 17:43 UTC. 8 Nov 2022, 20:00
<https://en.wikibooks.org/w/index.php?title=Choosing_High_Quality_Children%27s_Literature/Poetry&oldid=4097479>.

first foray into the published word has released a collection of poems revolving around the adventures of two kids, Sami and Thomas, that take place in the Pacific Northwest. Other books by James McDonald are: Through the Milky Way on a PB&J.

Monday's Troll - 1996. Poems by Jack Prelutsky. Pictures by Peter Sís. This is my favorite book by Prelutsky. It begins and ends with great poems about wizards and there are all kinds of delightfully dreadful creatures in between. He uses some great language in this book. "I escalated my harangue and blared triumphantly." These are advanced words that many poets would leave out of children's poetry, but it will sound great to kids and they may even add some very impressive words to their vocabulary along the way. Other Prelutsky books I highly recommend: The Dragons Are Singing Tonight, The Gargoyle on the Roof, Tyrannosaurus Was a Beast.

A Light in the Attic - 1981. Poems and drawings by Shel Silverstein. Silverstein's popular work is loaded with small, silly, fun poems. Some are fabulous and you'll pick your favorites. My favorites include Nobody, Messy Room, and Homework Machine, as well as the sweet introduction to sign language Deaf Donald. There will be other poems you are less fond of, but there are so many great ones, you'll ignore the occasional dud. Silverstein's Where the Sidewalk Ends is another terrific collection very much like this one.

Casey at the Bat: A Ballad of the Republic Sung in the Year 1888 - 2000. Poem by Ernest L. Thayer. Illustrated by Christopher Bing. This poem originally appeared in the San Francisco Examiner in 1888 and is a treasure in and of itself. Christopher Bing, however, has enriched the poem with spectacular illustrations in the style of newspaper clippings of the day with terrific details scattered throughout. Christopher Bing also does a magnificent job of illustrating The Midnight Ride of Paul Revere by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

If Pigs Could Fly... And Other Deep Thoughts - 2000. Poems by Bruce Lansky. Illustrated by Stephen Carpenter. A terrific collection of fun poems that will leave you smiling. I Like My Nose is a terrific little poem about what would happen if our noses were upside down. What I'd Cook for My

Teacher would be a fun treat for kids to hear. Out of Control, where the TV station keeps getting switched after a quick catchphrase, would be so much fun reading in parts - in fact, I plan to try that tomorrow.

Insectlopedia - 1998. Poems and paintings by Douglas Florian. Really cool poems all about bugs with great illustrations. Highlights include The Hornet, The Whirligig Beetles, and The Army Ants.

Picture Books⁵⁴

Typically, the first books that children will read are picture books; they should, therefore, be a positive experience for children. In addition to teaching children that reading is fun, picture books have an important role in a child's development. When books are read to children, and as they look at the pictures, language development and auditory discrimination are stimulated. Early concepts of reading such as how to turn the pages and which way to hold a book come into play. Concepts of print such as recognizing sound-symbol relationships and the position and order of words are introduced. It teaches children that shapes and symbols on the page have meaning. Of course, picture books can be used to teach young children to read, but readers of all ages can gain so much more. Readers can use the illustrations to find further meaning, value symbolism, and practice higher level thinking skills. It allows people of all ages simple, aesthetic pleasure.

What Are Picture Books?

Typically picture books have pictures on almost every page. The illustrations are so essential to the story that sometimes they could tell the story by themselves. In fact, there are picture books with no words at all. Sometimes the pictures expand the story line or give more significance to the words. The books are either intended to be read aloud to children or for children to read themselves with guidance. (Lynch-Brown, 2008)

Types and Excellent Examples of Picture Books

Baby Books

⁵⁴ "Choosing High Quality Children's Literature/Picture Book Illustrations." Wikibooks, The Free Textbook Project. 30 Oct 2020, 13:42 UTC. 8 Nov 2022, 19:59
<https://en.wikibooks.org/w/index.php?title=Choosing_High_Quality_Children%27s_Literature/Picture_Book_Illustrations&oldid=3756863>.

Intended for children 0-2, these books must be durable for little mouths and hands because children of this age need to experience books through feel. They may be made of plastic, vinyl, cloth, or board books. The content is usually focused on developing vocabulary, familiar objects, and routines such as bedtime or bath time. There is usually little or no text.

Interactive books

Intended for children 2-6, this type of picture book encourages a child to participate through rhyme, repetition, predictability, or movement such as clapping or dancing. One classical interactive book is Dorothy Kunhardt's Pat the Bunny. In this book children are encouraged to lift flaps and feel different types of material in the book.

Wordless books

Children must rely on pictures and their imagination to figure out the story line. They teach children about book structure typically before they can read words. However, Reading A-Z.com, the Online Reading Program⁵⁵ lists 150 books that are available and suggested at various levels. There are also lesson plans available for primary and intermediate teachers. These types of books often encourage children to invent words to the story which promotes language skills on multiple levels.

Alphabet books

This type of book can have an audience of a large age range. They usually present letters one at a time usually with a theme such as animals, foods, ocean life, or some kind of device such as showing pictures that start with the sound of a letter. Most are intended for the pre-reader or beginning reader, however there are rather complex alphabet books that can be enjoyed through adult age. One example is The Z was Zapped where the letter is related to an action that begins with that letter. The easier books encourage print-sound correlations, phonics skills, and vocabulary.

Counting Books

This type of book introduces children to numerals and words that represent numerals. It allows children to practice one on one correspondence. Children count hidden pigs in Arthur Geisert's Pigs From

⁵⁵ <http://www.readinga-z.com/more/wordlessbooks.html>

1 to 10. Counting books for older children focus on math concepts such as addition, subtraction, or multiplication. Inez Ramsey, Professor Emeritus in Library Science, James Madison University has identified the criteria she uses to evaluate counting books.⁵⁶ First, it must be clear what is being counted. The children must be able to identify the objects. The numbers themselves must be clear, especially for young children. It should also be clearly accurate. The number of legs on spiders, for instance, may be easily confused with the number of spiders. There should be plenty of open space and uncluttered illustrations. Even though a book is advertised as a counting book, advanced math concepts may be taught as well.

Concept Books

Intended for children 2-4: These types of books teach concepts such as opposites, fast/ slow shapes, and seasons. Eric Carle's My Very First book of Colors is a wordless book where a child is to match a color block to a picture of an object with that color. These books usually do not have a plot. The Internet School Library Media Center⁵⁷ lists several recommendations in the following categories: How to Draw, Time, Calendar/ Clocks, Days, Months, Colors, and Opposites.

Nursery Rhymes

Bobbie Crane and Andrea Owens have explained that many basic skills are taught through rhythm, rhyme, and melodies. They teach concepts such as counting, ABCs, body parts, and vocabulary. Of particular interest on this site is works by Mother Goose. Each nursery rhyme is a little story unto itself. In many ways they function as simple parables. Traditionally, nursery rhymes have been a vehicle for children to safely explore age-appropriate questions about identity and their emotions. Many of these rhymes help children to confront their fears about losing things, getting in trouble or getting hurt. Numerous collections feature charming illustrations full of descriptive detail which explore and expand the rhyme's theme in a comforting and entertaining way.

⁵⁶ <http://falcon.jmu.edu/~ramseyil/counting.htm#TOP>

⁵⁷ <http://falcon.jmu.edu/~ramseyil/concept.htm>

What is Realistic Fiction? Realistic Fiction books are those that have plots, characters, and settings that could be found in real life, but the stories are fiction (not true). Realistic Fiction is divided into two parts: historical and contemporary fiction. Historical fiction takes place in a time remote enough to be considered history, rather than contemporary fiction which takes place today or in the recent past.

Types of Realistic Fiction

There are many types of Realistic Fiction: Coming of Age/Friendship, Death and Deadly Disease, Dysfunctional Families, Foster/Adoptive Families, Mental/Psychiatric illness, Novels in Poetry Form, School Stories, Survival, and Documentary.

Examples

- Taking Sides by Gary Soto which is a story about Lincoln Mendoza, an aspiring basketball player, who must come to terms with his divided loyalties when he moves from the Hispanic inner city to a suburban neighborhood.
- Are You There God? It's Me, Margaret by Judy Blume which is about a girl who is faced with difficulties of childhood and choosing a religion.
- Dear Mr. Henshaw by Beverly Cleary which is a story about a boy named Leigh who deals with his problems of coping with his parents' divorce, being in a new school, and finding his own place in the world.
- On My Honor by Marion Dane Bauer which is a story about two boys swimming in a dangerous river and one accidentally drowns.

⁵⁸ Realistic Fiction By: Melody Diosi and Jennifer Yutzy. "Choosing High Quality Children's Literature/Realistic Fiction." Wikibooks, The Free Textbook Project. 14 Jun 2017, 21:47 UTC. 8 Nov 2022, 19:58 <https://en.wikibooks.org/w/index.php?title=Choosing_High_Quality_Children%27s_Literature/Realistic_Fiction&oldid=3230302>.

Traditional Children's Literature⁵⁹

Children's traditional literature refers to stories, tales, and books that have been passed down throughout several generations, often have no known author, and have a clear theme.

"Literature serves an important function in our society, for children shape their reality about themselves and others based on much of what they read. Students' attitudes, values, and beliefs are influenced by children's literature" (As cited in Diamond, B.J., & Moore, M.A. 1995, p. 11). Young (2004) gave a clear description of traditional literature in the introduction to the book Happily Ever After: Sharing Folk Literature With Elementary and Middle School Students:

Also known as traditional literature, folk literature is essentially the canon of tales or stories of a people, passed down orally through many generations. Folklore referring to a variety of oral lore including greetings, jokes, remedies, stories, etc. emerges from the folk, or grass roots, culture and becomes folk literature when it is recorded in written form. (p. 2)



Tales circulated orally.

⁵⁹ "Choosing High Quality Children's Literature/Traditional Literature." Wikibooks, The Free Textbook Project. 3 Nov 2022, 20:56 UTC. 8 Nov 2022, 19:57
<https://en.wikibooks.org/w/index.php?title=Choosing_High_Quality_Children%27s_Literature/Traditional_Literature&oldid=4199420>.

Traditional literature:

- was transmitted from one generation to another through oral storytelling
- was narrated mostly
- had no identified authors
- explained the origin of natural events and reveals the social, political, and spiritual beliefs of society

Traditional literature includes these features:

- Short plots
- Concentrated and fast paced action, which adds interest
- Two-dimensional characters that could easily be identified as either good or bad
- Unimportant setting
- Limited themes, such as good vs. evil and right vs. wrong
- Happy endings

Types of Traditional Literature

Folktales

Folktales, literally, were the tales of the folk. Folktales were understandable light literature, which flew orally from the general public. Folktales were divided into several categories: Cumulative tale - repetitive tales that were added on to as the story progressed (i.e. The Gingerbread Man); Pourquoi tale - tale used to explain why animals or humans have certain characteristic (i.e. Why Mosquitoes Buzz in People's Ears); Beast tale; Trickster tale; Realistic tale - tales based on an actual historical event or figure in history (i.e. Blue Beard), and the Fairy Tale.

The Grimm Brothers, Jacob (1785–1863), and Wilhelm Grimm (1786–1859), were both well-known linguists in Germany and famous for collecting fairy tales and folktales. Their household tales such as The Bremen Town-Musicians, Rapunzel, and Hansel and Grethel were diffused worldwide.

Tall Tales

Tall tales were unique to American folk literature because the characters were based on historical figures or folk heroes who were just as **EXAGGERATED** as the situations they were put in. Most of the characters were usually larger than life and their occupations were included within

the tall tales to further define the characters' traits. Two famous characters were Pecos Bill and Paul Bunyan.

Reminiscent of Paul Bunyan, Doña Flor: A Tall Tale About a Giant Woman with a Great Big Heart by Pat Mora, was about a giant woman who helped her neighbors and the surrounding animals with her big heart and physical strength.

Fables

Fables were short, brief stories that were intended to teach a moral lesson. Talking animals were featured as having human characteristics in these stories. Aesop's Fables are the best-known fables.

Epics

Partitioned into The Folk Epic and the Literary Epic, epics were long narratives in verse form that told about the adventure of a hero or some historical events. In some classification systems, an epic was a sub-category of a myth, such as The Odyssey and The Iliad. These major ancient Greek epic poems were created by Homer, a legendary ancient Greek blind poet.

Myths

A myth is a sacred story from an ancient time. It explained people's origins and beliefs of the universe and of life, or the culture's moral values in human terms. Myths also included the powers that control the human world and the relationship between those powers and human beings. Atlantis: the Myth was a famed example. Although Greek, Roman, and Norse myths were some of the most famous myths, other myths from around the world had similar attributes. For example, the characters, in general, were gods and goddesses observing human life from a setting that was high above earth.

Legends

A legend was a saga that concerned people, places, and events from the past. They were usually about a saint, a historic hero, or a major incident that was based on either a true historical happening or associated with a particular place and time in history: for instance, Arthurian Legend and The Story of El Dorado.

Religious Stories

Most people did not like to classify religious stories with traditional literature because it insinuates that these stories were fictionalized, like myths, and denounced religion. However, religious tales did have features of traditional literature. According to Tunnell and Jacobs (2000), religious tales involved a "human's quest to discover and share with one another the truth concerning the spiritual aspects of existence" (p. 72), which were first told through oral storytelling. Some examples of religious tales were The Bhagavad Gita - The Divine Song of God and The Old Testament. Also, tales associated with religious celebrations and holidays were considered religious stories, such as the Christmas story of La Befana from Italy.

Cinderella Tales

Cinderella Tales were types of fairy tales that shared characteristics and motifs with hundreds of other versions from around the world.

Chapter 4 Questions for Reflection:

- What book(s) from this chapter are you familiar with? Which one have you never heard of?
- Which genre/category of children's literature are you most familiar with and why do you think that is?
- <insert more questions created by students>

Chapter 4 Exercises for Reflection:

- A. COMPARE AND CONTRAST #1: Pop back to the Biography section and select at least two books about the same historical figure. Then dissect!
- ⇒ Did you find conflicting information? Different versions of the same story?
 - ⇒ What source materials did the authors use? How do you know? Which sources are more likely to be accurate? Which are less likely to be accurate?
 - ⇒ What was the main theme of each biography? How did you determine this?

- ⇒ What information did the biographer choose to include and how was it presented?
- ⇒ Is there information about how the author became interested in the historical figure?

B. RESEARCH: Choose a book you have never heard of from this chapter and research it – find out as much as you can online. Then compose a report on what you discover.

C. COMPARE AND CONTRAST #2: What genres or categories or topics are missing above OR are meshed into the categories/genres above?

- ⇒ Cookbooks,
- ⇒ “How to” Guides,
- ⇒ Medical/Self-Help/Mental Health,
- ⇒ Weather/Climate,
- ⇒ Politics,
- ⇒ “Bad Stuff” like divorce, cancer, covid, death, depression...

*Take any of these topics and find 3-5 children's books that cover them. How do they cover the topic vs how an “adult” book would?

THE READING NOOK | Snippets from the Public Domain



Image from Gaelle Marcel on Unsplash.

Alice's Adventures in Wonderland (1865).

Source.⁶⁰

Chapter I: Down the Rabbit-Hole

Alice was beginning to get very tired of sitting by her sister on the bank, and of having nothing to do: once or twice she had peeped into the book her sister was reading, but it had no pictures or conversations in it, 'and what is the use of a book,' thought Alice 'without pictures or conversation?'

So she was considering in her own mind (as well as she could, for the hot day made her feel very sleepy and stupid), whether the pleasure of making a daisy-chain would be worth the trouble of getting up and picking the daisies, when suddenly a White Rabbit with pink eyes ran close by her.

There was nothing so VERY remarkable in that; nor did Alice think it so VERY much out of the way to hear the Rabbit say to itself, 'Oh dear! Oh dear! I shall be late!' (when she thought it over afterwards, it occurred to her that she ought to have wondered at this, but at the time it all seemed quite natural); but when the Rabbit actually TOOK A WATCH OUT OF ITS WAISTCOAT-POCKET, and looked at it, and then hurried on, Alice started to her feet, for it flashed across her mind that she had never before seen a rabbit with either a waistcoat-pocket, or a watch to take out of it, and burning with curiosity, she ran across the field after it, and fortunately was just in time to see it pop down a large rabbit-hole under the hedge.

⁶⁰ This work is in the public domain. Alice's Adventures in Wonderland by Lewis Carroll With illustrations by John Tenniel
This .pdf file was made available through Lenny's Alice in Wonderland site: www.alice-in-wonderland.net



In another moment down went Alice after it, never once considering how in the world she was to get out again.

The rabbit-hole went straight on like a tunnel for some way, and then dipped suddenly down, so suddenly that Alice had not a moment to think about stopping herself before she found herself falling down a very deep well.

Either the well was very deep, or she fell very slowly, for she had plenty of time as she went down to look about her and to wonder what was going to happen next. First, she tried to look down and make out what she was coming to, but it was too dark to see anything; then she looked at the sides of the well, and noticed that they were filled with cupboards and book-shelves; here and there she saw maps and pictures hung upon pegs. She took down a jar from one of the shelves as she passed; it was labelled 'ORANGE MARMALADE', but to her great disappointment it was empty: she did not like to drop the jar for fear of killing somebody, so managed to put it into one of the cupboards as she fell past it.

'Well!' thought Alice to herself, 'after such a fall as this, I shall think nothing of tumbling down stairs! How brave they'll all think me at home! Why, I wouldn't say anything about it, even if I fell off the top of the house!' (Which was very likely true.)

Down, down, down. Would the fall NEVER come to an end! 'I wonder how many miles I've fallen by this time?' she said aloud. 'I must be getting somewhere near the centre of the earth. Let me see: that would be four thousand miles down, I

think--' (for, you see, Alice had learnt several things of this sort in her lessons in the schoolroom, and though this was not a VERY good opportunity for showing off her knowledge, as there was no one to listen to her, still it was good practice to say it over) `--yes, that's about the right distance--but then I wonder what Latitude or Longitude I've got to?' (Alice had no idea what Latitude was, or Longitude either, but thought they were nice grand words to say.)

Presently she began again. `I wonder if I shall fall right THROUGH the earth! How funny it'll seem to come out among the people that walk with their heads downward! The Antipathies, I think--' (she was rather glad there WAS no one listening, this time, as it didn't sound at all the right word) `--but I shall have to ask them what the name of the country is, you know. Please, Ma'am, is this New Zealand or Australia?' (and she tried to curtsy as she spoke--fancy CURTSEYING as you're falling through the air! Do you think you could manage it?) `And what an ignorant little girl she'll think me for asking!

No, it'll never do to ask: perhaps I shall see it written up somewhere.'

Down, down, down. There was nothing else to do, so Alice soon began talking again. `Dinah'll miss me very much to-night, I should think!' (Dinah was the cat.) `I hope they'll remember her saucer of milk at tea-time. Dinah my dear! I wish you were down here with me! There are no mice in the air, I'm afraid, but you might catch a bat, and that's very like a mouse, you know. But do cats eat bats, I wonder?' And here Alice began to get rather sleepy, and went on saying to herself, in a dreamy sort of way, `Do cats eat bats? Do cats eat bats?' and sometimes, `Do bats eat cats?' for, you see, as she couldn't answer either question, it didn't much matter which way she put it. She felt that she was dozing off, and had just begun to dream that she was walking hand in hand with Dinah, and saying to her very earnestly, `Now, Dinah, tell me the truth: did you ever eat a bat?' when suddenly, thump! thump! down she came upon a heap of sticks and dry leaves, and the fall was over.

Alice was not a bit hurt, and she jumped up on to her feet in a moment: she looked up, but it was all dark overhead; before her was another long passage, and the White Rabbit was still in sight, hurrying down it. There was not a moment to be lost: away went Alice like the wind, and was just in time to hear it say, as it turned a corner, `Oh my ears and whiskers, how late it's getting!' She was close behind it when she turned the corner, but the Rabbit was no longer to be seen: she found herself in a long, low hall, which was lit up by a row of lamps hanging from the roof.

There were doors all round the hall, but they were all locked; and when Alice had been all the way down one side and up the other, trying every door, she walked sadly down the middle, wondering how she was ever to get out again.

Suddenly she came upon a little three-legged table, all made of solid glass; there was nothing on it except a tiny golden key, and Alice's first thought was that it might belong to one of the doors of the hall; but, alas! either the locks were too large, or the key was too small, but at any rate it would not open any of them. However, on the second time round, she came upon a low curtain she had not noticed before, and behind it was a little door about fifteen inches high: she tried the little golden key in the lock, and to her great delight it fitted!



Alice opened the door and found that it led into a small passage, not much larger than a rat-hole: she knelt down and looked along the passage into the loveliest garden you ever saw. How she longed to get out of that dark hall, and wander about among those beds of bright flowers and those cool fountains, but she could not even get her head through the doorway; 'and even if my head would go through,' thought poor Alice, 'it would be of very little use without my shoulders. Oh, how I wish I could shut up like a telescope! I think I could, if I only know how to begin.' For, you see, so many out-of-the-way things had happened lately, that Alice had begun to think that very few things indeed were really impossible.

There seemed to be no use in waiting by the little door, so she went back to the table, half hoping she might find another key on it, or at any rate a book of rules for shutting people up like telescopes: this time she found a little bottle on it, (which certainly was not here before,' said Alice,) and round the neck of the bottle was a paper label, with the words 'DRINK ME' beautifully printed on it in large letters.



It was all very well to say `Drink me,' but the wise little Alice was not going to do THAT in a hurry. `No, I'll look first,' she said, `and see whether it's marked "poison" or not!'; for she had read several nice little histories about children who had got burnt, and eaten up by wild beasts and other unpleasant things, all because they WOULD not remember the simple rules their friends had taught them: such as, that a red-hot poker will burn you if you hold it too long; and that if you cut your finger VERY deeply with a knife, it usually bleeds; and she had never forgotten that, if you drink much from a bottle marked `poison,' it is almost certain to disagree with you, sooner or later.

However, this bottle was NOT marked `poison,' so Alice ventured to taste it, and finding it very nice, (it had, in fact, a sort of mixed flavour of cherry-tart, custard, pine-apple, roast turkey, toffee, and hot buttered toast,) she very soon finished it off.

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`What a curious feeling!' said Alice; `I must be shutting up like a telescope.'

And so it was indeed: she was now only ten inches high, and her face brightened up at the thought that she was now the right size for going though the little door into that lovely garden. First, however, she waited for a few

minutes to see if she was going to shrink any further: she felt a little nervous about this; 'for it might end, you know,' said Alice to herself, 'in my going out altogether, like a candle. I wonder what I should be like then?' And she tried to fancy what the flame of a candle is like after the candle is blown out, for she could not remember ever having seen such a thing.

After a while, finding that nothing more happened, she decided on going into the garden at once; but, alas for poor Alice! when she got to the door, she found he had forgotten the little golden key, and when she went back to the table for it, she found she could not possibly reach it: she could see it quite plainly through the glass, and she tried her best to climb up one of the legs of the table, but it was too slippery; and when she had tired herself out with trying, the poor little thing sat down and cried.

'Come, there's no use in crying like that!' said Alice to herself, rather sharply; 'I advise you to leave off this minute!' She generally gave herself very good advice, (though she very seldom followed it), and sometimes she scolded herself so severely as to bring tears into her eyes; and once she remembered trying to box her own ears for having cheated herself in a game of croquet she was playing against herself, for this curious child was very fond of pretending to be two people. 'But it's no use now,' thought poor Alice, 'to pretend to be two people! Why, there's hardly enough of me left to make ONE respectable person!'

Soon her eye fell on a little glass box that was lying under the table: she opened it, and found in it a very small cake, on which the words 'EAT ME' were beautifully marked in currants. 'Well, I'll eat it,' said Alice, 'and if it makes me grow larger, I can reach the key; and if it makes me grow smaller, I can creep under the door; so either way I'll get into the garden, and I don't care which happens!'

She ate a little bit, and said anxiously to herself, 'Which way? Which way?', holding her hand on the top of her head to feel which way it was growing, and she was quite surprised to find that she remained the same size: to be sure, this generally happens when one eats cake, but Alice had got so much into the way of expecting nothing but out-of-the-way things to happen, that it seemed quite dull and stupid for life to go on in the common way.

So she set to work, and very soon finished off the cake.

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The Velveteen Rabbit (1922).

Source.⁶¹

THERE was once a velveteen rabbit, and in the beginning he was really splendid. He was fat and buncy, as a rabbit should be; his coat was spotted brown and white, he had real thread whiskers, and his ears were lined with pink sateen. On Christmas morning, when he sat wedged in the top of the Boy's stocking, with a sprig of holly between his paws, the effect was charming.

There were other things in the stocking, nuts and oranges and a toy engine, and chocolate almonds and a clockwork mouse, but the Rabbit was quite the best of all. For at least two hours the Boy loved him, and then Aunts and Uncles came to dinner, and there was a great rustling of tissue paper and unwrapping of parcels, and in the excitement of looking at all the new presents the Velveteen Rabbit was forgotten.



⁶¹ This work is in the public domain. The Velveteen Rabbit Or How Toys Become Real by Margery Williams; Illustrations by William Nicholson; Brought to you again by <http://TheDiamondsMine.com>

Christmas Morning

For a long time he lived in the toy cupboard or on the nursery floor, and no one thought very much about him. He was naturally shy, and being only made of velveteen, some of the more expensive toys quite snubbed him. The mechanical toys were very superior, and looked down upon every one else; they were full of modern ideas, and pretended they were real. The model boat, who had lived through two seasons and lost most of his paint, caught the tone from them and never missed an opportunity of referring to his rigging in technical terms. The Rabbit could not claim to be a model of anything, for he didn't know that real rabbits existed; he thought they were all stuffed with sawdust like himself, and he understood that sawdust was quite out-of-date and should never be mentioned in modern circles. Even Timothy, the jointed wooden lion, who was made by the disabled soldiers, and should have had broader views, put on airs and pretended he was connected with Government. Between them all the poor little Rabbit was made to feel himself very insignificant and commonplace, and the only person who was kind to him at all was the Skin Horse.

The Skin Horse had lived longer in the nursery than any of the others. He was so old that his brown coat was bald in patches and showed the seams underneath, and most of the hairs in his tail had been pulled out to string bead necklaces. He was wise, for he had seen a long succession of mechanical toys arrive to boast and swagger, and by-and-by break their mainsprings and pass away, and he knew that they were only toys, and would never turn into anything else. For nursery magic is very strange and wonderful, and only those playthings that are old and wise and experienced like the Skin Horse understand all about it.

"What is REAL?" asked the Rabbit one day, when they were lying side by side near the nursery fender, before Nana came to tidy the room. "Does it mean having things that buzz inside you and a stick-out handle?"

"Real isn't how you are made," said the Skin Horse. "It's a thing that happens to you. When a child loves you for a long, long time, not just to play with, but REALLY loves you, then you become Real."

"Does it hurt?" asked the Rabbit.

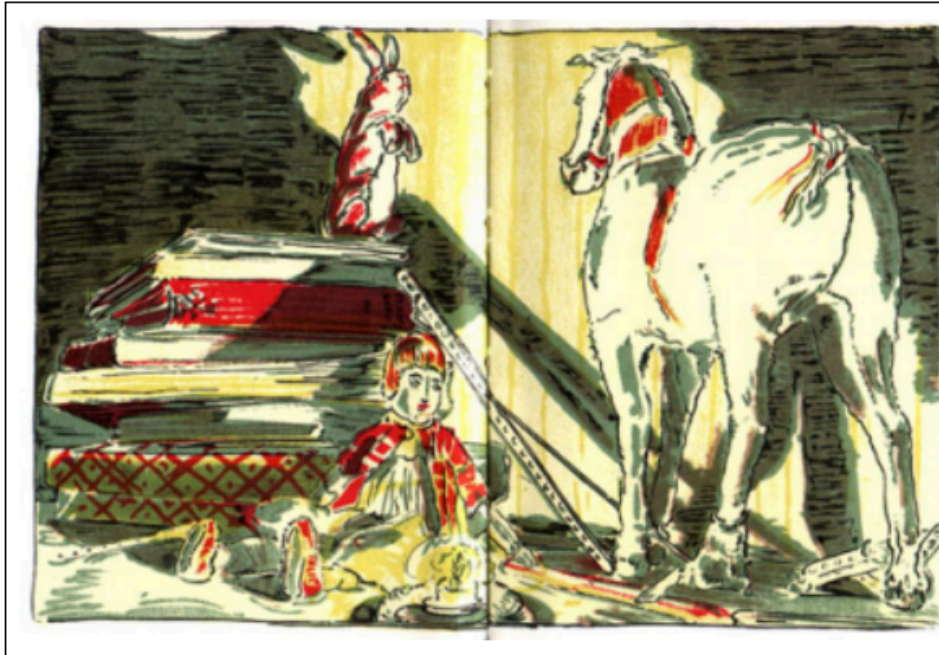
"Sometimes," said the Skin Horse, for he was always truthful. "When you are Real you don't mind being hurt."

"Does it happen all at once, like being wound up," he asked, "or bit by bit?"

"It doesn't happen all at once," said the Skin Horse. "You become. It takes a long time. That's why it doesn't happen often to people who break easily, or

have sharp edges, or who have to be carefully kept. Generally, by the time you are Real, most of your hair has been loved off, and your eyes drop out and you get loose in the joints and very shabby. But these things don't matter at all, because once you are Real you can't be ugly, except to people who don't understand."

"I suppose *you* are real?" said the Rabbit. And then he wished he had not said it, for he thought the Skin Horse might be sensitive. But the Skin Horse only smiled.



The Skin Horse Tells His Story

"The Boy's Uncle made me Real," he said. "That was a great many years ago; but once you are Real you can't become unreal again. It lasts for always."

The Rabbit sighed. He thought it would be a long time before this magic called Real happened to him. He longed to become Real, to know what it felt like; and yet the idea of growing shabby and losing his eyes and whiskers was rather sad. He wished that he could become it without these uncomfortable things happening to him.

There was a person called Nana who ruled the nursery. Sometimes she took no notice of the playthings lying about, and sometimes, for no reason whatever, she went swooping about like a great wind and hustled them away in cupboards. She called this "tidying up," and the playthings all hated it, especially the tin

ones. The Rabbit didn't mind it so much, for wherever he was thrown he came down soft.

One evening, when the Boy was going to bed, he couldn't find the china dog that always slept with him. Nana was in a hurry, and it was too much trouble to hunt for china dogs at bedtime, so she simply looked about her, and seeing that the toy cupboard door stood open, she made a swoop.

"Here," she said, "take your old Bunny! He'll do to sleep with you!" And she dragged the Rabbit out by one ear, and put him into the Boy's arms.

That night, and for many nights after, the Velveteen Rabbit slept in the Boy's bed. At first he found it rather uncomfortable, for the Boy hugged him very tight, and sometimes he rolled over on him, and sometimes he pushed him so far under the pillow that the Rabbit could scarcely breathe. And he missed, too, those long moonlight hours in the nursery, when all the house was silent, and his talks with the Skin Horse. But very soon he grew to like it, for the Boy used to talk to him, and made nice tunnels for him under the bedclothes that he said were like the burrows the real rabbits lived in. And they had splendid games together, in whispers, when Nana had gone away to her supper and left the night-light burning on the mantelpiece. And when the Boy dropped off to sleep, the Rabbit would snuggle down close under his little warm chin and dream, with the Boy's hands clasped close round him all night long.

And so time went on, and the little Rabbit was very happy—so happy that he never noticed how his beautiful velveteen fur was getting shabbier and shabbier, and his tail becoming unsewn, and all the pink rubbed off his nose where the Boy had kissed him.

Spring came, and they had long days in the garden, for wherever the Boy went the Rabbit went too. He had rides in the wheelbarrow, and picnics on the grass, and lovely fairy huts built for him under the raspberry canes behind the flower border. And once, when the Boy was called away suddenly to go out to tea, the Rabbit was left out on the lawn until long after dusk, and Nana had to come and look for him with the candle because the Boy couldn't go to sleep unless he was there. He was wet through with the dew and quite earthy from diving into the burrows the Boy had made for him in the flower bed, and Nana grumbled as she rubbed him off with a corner of her apron.

Spring Time

"You must have your old Bunny!" she said. "Fancy all that fuss for a toy!"

The Boy sat up in bed and stretched out his hands.

"Give me my Bunny!" he said. "You mustn't say that. He isn't a toy. He's REAL!" When the little Rabbit heard that he was happy, for he knew that what the Skin Horse had said was true at last. The nursery magic had happened to him, and he was a toy no longer. He was Real. The Boy himself had said it.

That night he was almost too happy to sleep, and so much love stirred in his little sawdust heart that it almost burst. And into his boot-button eyes, that had long ago lost their polish, there came a look of wisdom and beauty, so that even Nana noticed it next morning when she picked him up, and said, "I declare if that old Bunny hasn't got quite a knowing expression!"

That was a wonderful Summer!

Near the house where they lived there was a wood, and in the long June evenings the Boy liked to go there after tea to play. He took the Velveteen Rabbit with him, and before he wandered off to pick flowers, or play at brigands among the trees, he always made the Rabbit a little nest somewhere among the bracken, where he would be quite cosy, for he was a kind-hearted little boy and he liked Bunny to be comfortable. One evening, while the Rabbit was lying there alone, watching the ants that ran to and fro between his velvet paws in the grass, he saw two strange beings creep out of the tall bracken near him.

They were rabbits like himself, but quite furry and brand-new. They must have been very well made, for their seams didn't show at all, and they changed shape in a queer way when they moved; one minute they were long and thin and the next minute fat and bunchy, instead of always staying the same like he did. Their feet padded softly on the ground, and they crept quite close to him, twitching their noses, while the Rabbit stared hard to see which side the clockwork stuck out, for he knew that people who jump generally have something to wind them up. But he couldn't see it. They were evidently a new kind of rabbit altogether.



My Father's Dragon (1948).

Source.⁶²

Chapter One - MY FATHER MEETS THE CAT

One cold rainy day when my father was a little boy, he met an old alley cat on his street. The cat was very drippy and uncomfortable so my father said, "Wouldn't you like to come home with me?"

This surprised the cat—she had never before met anyone who cared about old alley cats—but she said, "I'd be very much obliged if I could sit by a warm furnace, and perhaps have a saucer of milk."

"We have a very nice furnace to sit by," said my father, "and I'm sure my mother has an extra saucer of milk."



My father and the cat became good friends but my father's mother was very upset about the cat. She hated cats, particularly ugly old alley cats. "Elmer Elevator," she said to my father, "if you think I'm going to give that cat a saucer of milk, you're very wrong. Once you start feeding stray alley cats you might as well expect to feed every stray in town, and I am *not* going to do it!"

This made my father very sad, and he apologized to the cat because his mother had been so rude. He told the cat to stay anyway, and that somehow he would

⁶² This work is in the public domain. My Father's Dragon was written by Ruth Stiles Gannett; Illustrations by Ruth Chrisman Gannett. Retrieved from: <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/30017/30017-h/30017-h.htm>

bring her a saucer of milk each day. My father fed the cat for three weeks, but one day his mother found the cat's saucer in the cellar and she was extremely angry. She whipped my father and threw the cat out the door, but later on my father sneaked out and found the cat. Together they went for a walk in the park and tried to think of nice things to talk about. My father said, "When I grow up I'm going to have an airplane. Wouldn't it be wonderful to fly just anywhere you might think of!"

"Would you like to fly very, very much?" asked the cat.

"I certainly would. I'd do anything if I could fly."

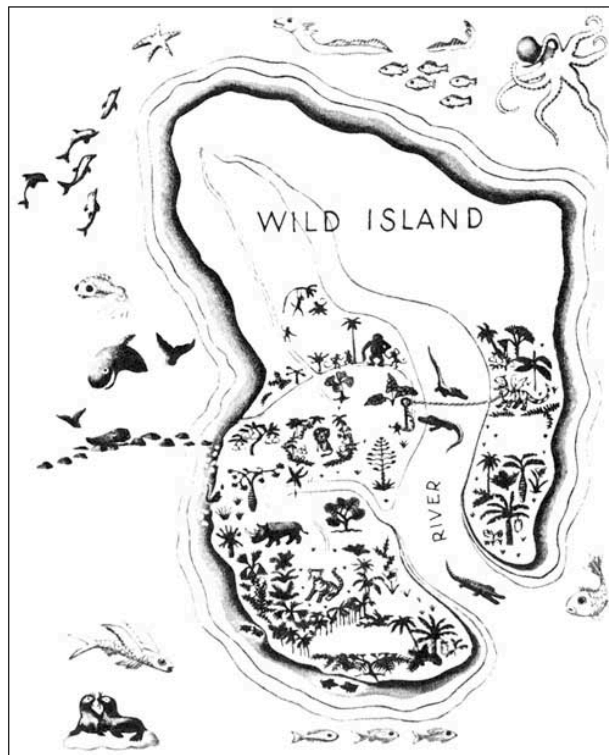


"Well," said the cat, "If you'd really like to fly that much, I think I know of a sort of a way you might get to fly while you're still a little boy."

"You mean you know where I could get an airplane?"

"Well, not exactly an airplane, but something even better. As you can see, I'm an old cat now, but in my younger days I was quite a traveler. My traveling days are over but last spring I took just one more trip and sailed to the Island of Tangerina, stopping at the port of Cranberry. Well, it just so happened that I missed the boat, and while waiting for the next I thought I'd look around a bit. I was particularly interested in a place called Wild Island, which we had passed on our way to Tangerina. Wild Island and Tangerina are joined together by a long string of rocks, but people never go to Wild Island because it's mostly jungle and inhabited by very wild animals. So, I decided to go across the rocks and

explore it for myself. It certainly is an interesting place, but I saw something there that made me want to weep."



Chapter Two - MY FATHER RUNS AWAY

"Wild Island is practically cut in two by a very wide and muddy river," continued the cat. "This river begins near one end of the island and flows into the ocean at the other. Now the animals there are very lazy, and they used to hate having to go all the way around the beginning of this river to get to the other side of the island. It made visiting inconvenient and mail deliveries slow, particularly during the Christmas rush. Crocodiles could have carried passengers and mail across the river, but crocodiles are very moody, and not the least bit dependable, and are always looking for something to eat. They don't care if the animals have to walk around the river, so that's just what the animals did for many years."

"But what does all this have to do with airplanes?" asked my father, who thought the cat was taking an awfully long time to explain.

"Be patient, Elmer," said the cat, and she went on with the story. "One day about four months before I arrived on Wild Island a baby dragon fell from a low-flying cloud onto the bank of the river. He was too young to fly very well, and besides, he had bruised one wing quite badly, so he couldn't get back to his cloud. The animals found him soon afterwards and everybody said, 'Why,

this is just exactly what we've needed all these years!' They tied a big rope around his neck and waited for the wing to get well. This was going to end all their crossing-the-river troubles."



"I've never seen a dragon," said my father. "Did you see him? How big is he?"

"Oh, yes, indeed I saw the dragon. In fact, we became great friends," said the cat.

"I used to hide in the bushes and talk to him when nobody was around. He's not a very big dragon, about the size of a large black bear, although I imagine he's grown quite a bit since I left. He's got a long tail and yellow and blue stripes. His horn and eyes and the bottoms of his feet are bright red, and he has gold-colored wings."

"Oh, how wonderful!" said my father. "What did the animals do with him when his wing got well?"

"They started training him to carry passengers, and even though he is just a baby dragon, they work him all day and all night too sometimes. They make him carry loads that are much too heavy, and if he complains, they twist his wings and beat him. He's always tied to a stake on a rope just long enough to go across the river. His only friends are the crocodiles, who say 'Hello' to him once a week if they don't forget. Really, he's the most miserable animal I've ever come across. When I left I promised I'd try to help him someday, although I

couldn't see how. The rope around his neck is about the biggest, toughest rope you can imagine, with so many knots it would take days to untie them all.

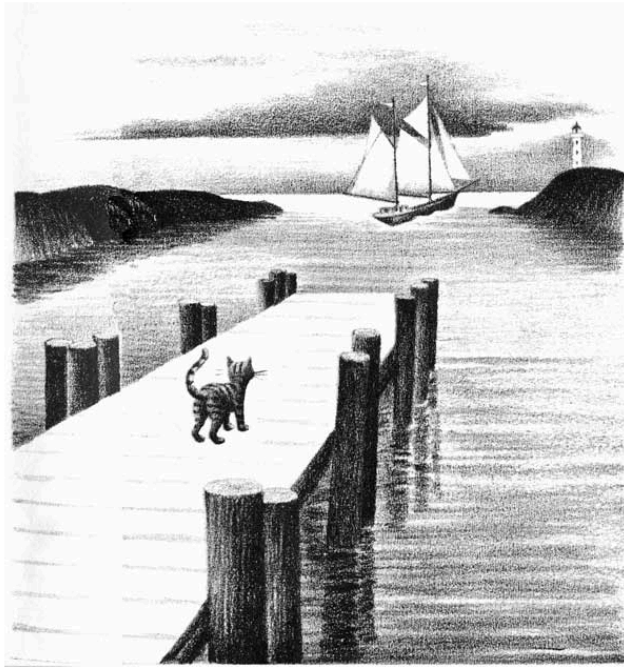
"Anyway, when you were talking about airplanes, you gave me a good idea. Now, I'm quite sure that if you were able to rescue the dragon, which wouldn't be the least bit easy, he'd let you ride him most anywhere, provided you were nice to him, of course. How about trying it?"

"Oh, I'd love to," said my father, and he was so angry at his mother for being rude to the cat that he didn't feel the least bit sad about running away from home for a while.

That very afternoon my father and the cat went down to the docks to see about ships going to the Island of Tangerina. They found out that a ship would be sailing the next week, so right away they started planning for the rescue of the dragon. The cat was a great help in suggesting things for my father to take with him, and she told him everything she knew about Wild Island. Of course, she was too old to go along.

Everything had to be kept very secret, so when they found or bought anything to take on the trip they hid it behind a rock in the park. The night before my father sailed he borrowed his father's knapsack and he and the cat packed everything very carefully. He took chewing gum, two dozen pink lollipops, a package of rubber bands, black rubber boots, a compass, a tooth brush and a tube of tooth paste, six magnifying glasses, a very sharp jackknife, a comb and a hairbrush, seven hair ribbons of different colors, an empty grain bag with a label saying "Cranberry," some clean clothes, and enough food to last my father while he was on the ship. He couldn't live on mice, so he took twenty-five peanut butter and jelly sandwiches and six apples, because that's all the apples he could find in the pantry.

When everything was packed my father and the cat went down to the docks to the ship. A night watchman was on duty, so while the cat made loud queer noises to distract his attention, my father ran over the gang-plank onto the ship. He went down into the hold and hid among some bags of wheat. The ship sailed early the next morning.



Questions for Reflection:

- Which of these stories – from the public domain – have you already read before?
- What are some common themes between these three snippets?
- What archetypes are being used in each snippet?
- What are the genres of these snippets?
- If you compare and contrast the illustrations between these pieces, what do you discover?
- Find a “Golden Line” in the pages you just read. This line can be one that you love or hate or are confused by. Write down the line and reflect/respond to it in a few sentences.
- <insert questions created by students>

CHAPTER FIVE | Diversity

Note.⁶³

DIVERSITY IN CHILDREN'S BOOKS 2018

Percentage of books depicting characters from diverse backgrounds based on the 2018 publishing statistics compiled by the Cooperative Children's Book Center, School of Education, University of Wisconsin-Madison: ccbc.education.wisc.edu/books/pcstats.asp

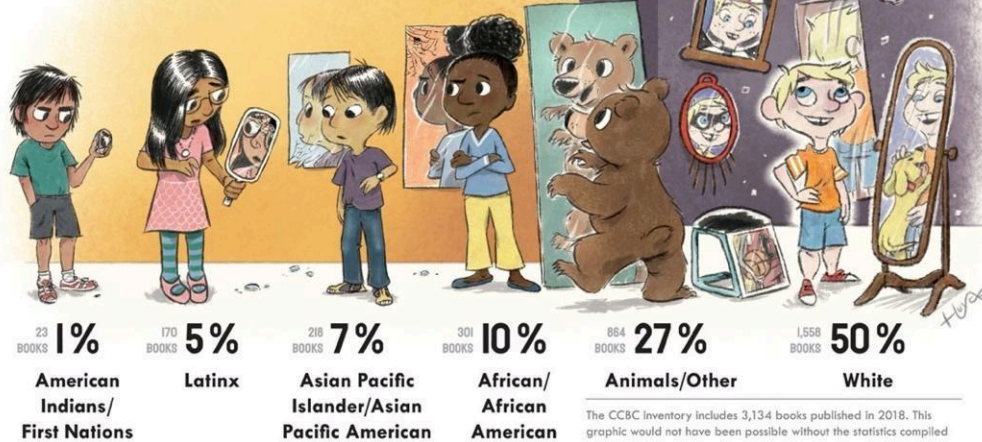


Illustration by David Huyck, in consultation with Sarah Park Dahlen
Released under a Creative Commons BY-SA license: <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/>

The CCBC inventory includes 3,134 books published in 2018. This graphic would not have been possible without the statistics compiled by the CCBC, and the review and feedback we received from Edith Campbell, Molly Beth Griffin, K. T. Horning, Debbie Reese, Ebony Elizabeth Thomas, and Madeline Tyner. Many thanks.

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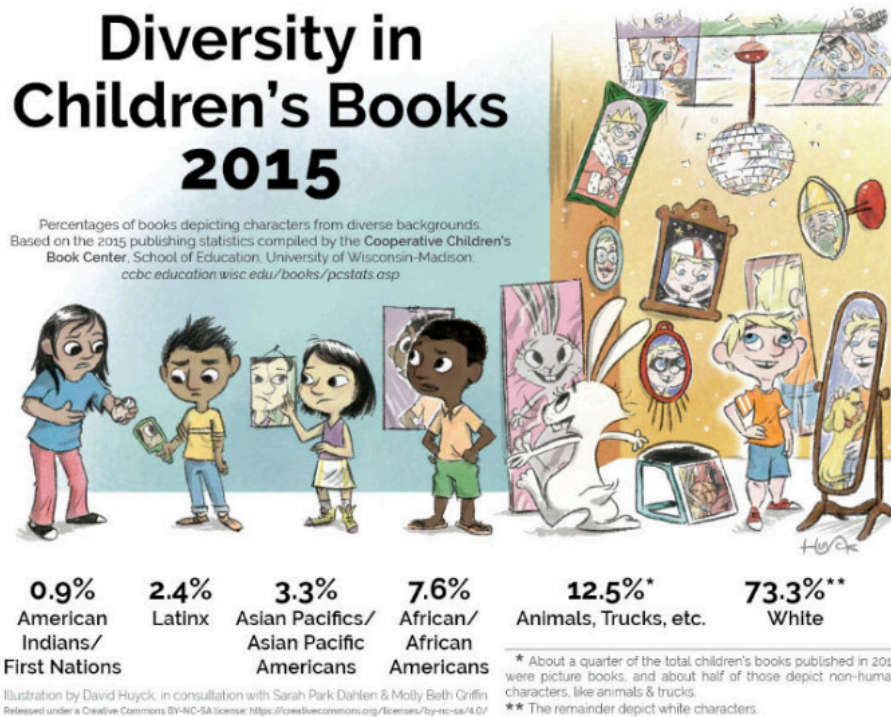
Multicultural literature⁶⁵ allows young people to see themselves and their culture within the writing and the illustrations creating a sense of belonging and affirming who they are as individuals. This literature even makes young students more successful in academia. However, the opposite is true: when a child does not see themselves reflected in the literature, they are more likely to struggle with reading and less likely to engage in the corresponding activity or lesson. Even worse, they may even perceive themselves as less than as they see other cultures races and backgrounds more important and valued because they have more representation in the child's literature.

⁶³ This chapter applies the following course objective: "Discuss, analyze, and evaluate the literary characteristics, age appropriateness, and cultural/developmental sensitivity."

⁶⁴ Infographic citation: Huyck, David and Sarah Park Dahlen. (2019 June 19). Diversity in Children's Books 2018. sarahpark.com blog. Created in consultation with Edith Campbell, Molly Beth Griffin, K. T. Horning, Debbie Reese, Ebony Elizabeth Thomas, and Madeline Tyner, with statistics compiled by the Cooperative Children's Book Center, School of Education, University of Wisconsin-Madison: ccbc.education.wisc.edu/books/pcstats.asp. Retrieved from readingspark.wordpress.com/2019/06/19/picture-this-diversity-in-childrens-books-2018-infographic.

⁶⁵ Adapted by Kathryn J. Beherns from Michelle Lawson's research entitled, "Multicultural Literature: The Impact it has on Today's Students" (2013) CC-BY-NC-SA; Lawson, Michelle, "Multicultural Literature: The Impact it has on Today's Students" (2013). Education Masters. Paper 245.

Multicultural children's literature can give young people the opportunity to develop the skills—both Socio emotional and cognitive— they need to handle the challenges in their lives. Multicultural literature is extremely diverse. They have characters of color, cultures from around the world, are multilingual, and varying family structures — single-parent homes, homes with same-sex parents, homes with friends or family members raising the young characters, foster care families, and homes with extended family sharing a roof. Multicultural kiddy lit address is a wide range of topics such as divorce, bullying, sexual identity and orientation, mental illness, inclusiveness, and being the “other.” Young readers who connect with these diverse books are affirmed of their identity, culture, and that of the important people in their lives. Multicultural literature also gives young people the opportunity to see other cultures, family structures, and complex topics in a sheltered environment where they can begin to form their own perception and viewpoints.



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⁶⁶ 2015 Infographic citation : Huyck, David, Sarah Park Dahlen, Molly Beth Griffin. (2016 September 14). Diversity in Children's Books 2015 infographic. sarahpark.com blog. Retrieved from readingspark.wordpress.com/2016/09/14/picture-this-reflecting-diversity-in-childrens-book-publishing
Statistics compiled by the Cooperative Children's Book Center, School of Education, University of Wisconsin-Madison: ccbc.education.wisc.edu/books/pcstats.asp
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Benefits of Reading Multicultural Literature⁶⁷

Multicultural Literature Helps Readers Be Themselves and Respect Others

Diamond & Moore, (1995, p.13) stated, "Multicultural literature further heightens understanding, respect, and affirmation of differences because it acknowledges that it is alright to be who you are." Royce (2006, p.33) stated that reading multicultural literature about their own culture can help minority children increase self-esteem and help majority children know people who are different from them. "Multicultural literature helps children identify with their own culture, exposes children to other cultures, and opens the dialogue on issues regarding diversity" (Colby, S. A., & Lyon, F. 2004, p.24). De Leon (2002) stated that adolescents are interested in novels which talk about their own culture and these novels make them more open to others.

Teachers and Students both Benefit from Reading Multicultural Literature

Davis, Brown and Liedel-Rice (2005, p.176) stated, "Teacher candidates can understand differences through multicultural literature reading." Dietrich & Ralph, (1995, p.1) stated, "When multicultural literature becomes an integral part of the curriculum and teachers act as models and guides, classrooms can become arenas for open exchange."

Multicultural Literature Constructs Children's Version of the Truth

Children often see other's perspective through characters who are their age. After children see these multicultural characters suffering from social injustice, they will make a decision to redress social injustice. Diamond & Moore, (1995, p.14) stated, "Once students understand the harmful effects of social injustice and inequities, they can make informed and rational decisions about the most effective ways to correct injustices in their community."

Multicultural Literature Prepares Children for a Future in an Increasingly Multicultural World

The world demographic is quickly becoming more diverse and Multicultural Literature provides an excellent opportunity to teach and understand compassion and cultural understanding. In order to combat

⁶⁷ Multicultural Children's Lit by Kim Rice & Lin Chieh Huang. "Choosing High Quality Children's Literature/Multicultural Literature." Wikibooks, The Free Textbook Project. 5 Nov 2013, 03:10 UTC. 8 Nov 2022, 20:00 <https://en.wikibooks.org/w/index.php?title=Choosing_High_Quality_Children%27s_Literature/Multicultural_Literature&oldid=2578734>.

racism and break down cultural barriers, literature provides the perfect vehicle to inspire and educate children in understanding the benefits of cultural diversity. Multicultural Literature provides children the tools to live, work and participate for the future in an increasingly multicultural world.

Effect on Early Childhood Development⁶⁸

Bruno Bettelheim, in The Uses of Enchantment, uses psychoanalysis to examine the impact that fairy tales have on the developing child. Bettelheim states the unconscious mind of a child is affected by the ideas behind a story, which shape their perception and guides their development. Likewise, author and illustrator Anthony Browne contends the early viewing of an image in a picture book leaves an important and lasting impression on a child. According to research, a child's most crucial individual characteristics are developed in their first five years. Their environment and interaction with images in picture books have a profound impact on this development and are intended to inform a child about the world.

Children's literature critic Peter Hunt argues that no book is innocent of harboring an ideology of the culture it comes from. Critics discuss how an author's ethnicity, gender and social class inform their work. Scholar Kimberley Reynolds suggests books can never be neutral as their nature is intended as instructional and by using its language, children are embedded with the values of that society. Claiming childhood as a culturally constructed concept, Reynolds states that it is through children's literature that a child learns how to behave and to act as a child should, according to the expectations of their culture. She also attributes capitalism, in certain societies, as a prominent means of instructing especially middle-class children in how to behave.^[151] The "image of childhood" is said to be created and perpetuated by adults to affect children "at their most susceptible age". Kate Greenaway's illustrations are used as an example of imagery intended to instruct a child in the proper way to look and behave. In Roberta Seelinger Trites's book Disturbing the Universe: Power and Repression in Adolescent Literature, she also argues adolescence is a social construct established by ideologies present in literature. In the study The First R: How Children

⁶⁸ Wikipedia contributors. "Children's literature." Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia. Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, 5 Nov. 2022. Web. 9 Nov. 2022.

Learn About Race and Racism, researcher Debra Ausdale studies children in multi-ethnic daycare centers. Ausdale claims children as young as three have already entered into and begun experimenting with the race ideologies of the adult world. She asserts racist attitudes are assimilated using interactions children have with books as an example of how children internalize what they encounter in real life.

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5.1 Black Stories Matter: On the Whiteness of Children's Books

Source.⁶⁹

In September 1965, an article titled 'The All-White World of Children's Books' appeared in the influential American magazine The Saturday Review of Literature. Its author, the editor and educator Nancy Larrick, noted that African-American children were learning about the world 'in books which either omit them entirely or scarcely mention them'. In one award-winning volume from 1945, black children were portrayed with bunion-covered feet and popping eyes, living in dilapidated shacks with gun-wielding adults. Meanwhile, white children were 'nothing less than cherubic, with dainty little bare feet or well-made shoes', Larrick wrote. After years of complaints, she said, the publisher finally solved the problem by simply removing all black faces from the book.

More than 50 years later, the problem persists. Imaginary black children remain almost as marginalized as real ones, at least in mainstream publishing. In literature, as in life, the belief that children are valuable, vulnerable and in need of protection has mostly been denied to black children in the United States. Black children learn fast that their childhoods have very strict boundaries, in which any small slip or mistake can put their lives in danger, often from police or other agents of the state.

In this context, what children read is more than just frivolous entertainment. It's an imaginative, safe space in which they can experiment with different modes of selfhood and citizenship. So what does the history of the representations of black children in the US reveal about the cultural tools they've been handed, and with which they'll need to fashion their own lives and futures?

Depictions of black characters in the late 19th and early 20th century tended to promote negative stereotypes. Childhood favorites such as The Story of Little Black Sambo (1899), Tarzan (1912), and The Story of Babar: The Little Elephant (1931) are transparently propagandistic portrayals of Western and white superiority over Africa. In Tarzan of the Apes, Tarzan

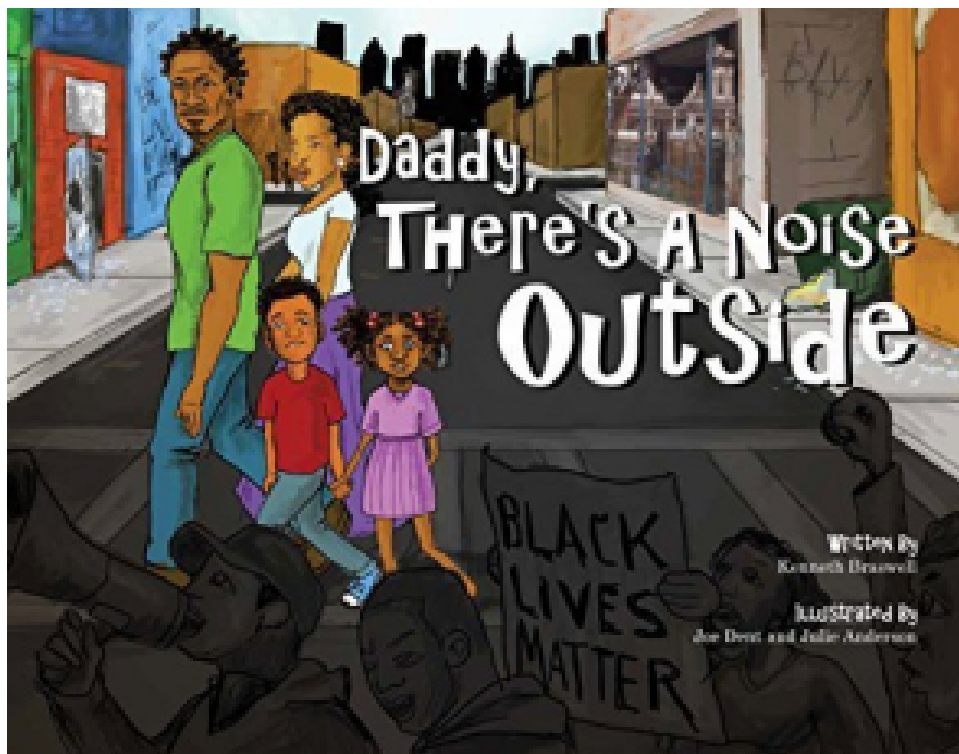
⁶⁹ Black stories matter: on the whiteness of children's books - aeon.co by Andrea Adomako, PhD; CC BY ND. For more information on reading and teaching social justice check out this link: <https://thetoolkit.wixsite.com/toolkit/for-youth-children-1>

writes in a note that Jane reads: 'This is the house of Tarzan, the killer of beasts and many black men.' For the black child who seeks to identify with the hero but is categorized as the villain, these depictions produce a mental and conscious disconnect.

It wasn't until the early 20th century that a more positive strand of black children's literature developed. In 1920, the African-American scholar and activist W E B Du Bois created *The Brownies' Book* – the first black children's magazine, he said, that would help 'black children to recognize themselves as normal, to learn about black history, and to recognize their own potential'. *The Brownies' Book* was one of the first attempts to try to normalize and dignify black childhood.

In the 1960s, children's books became a powerful ideological tool during times of protest and civil unrest. In *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961), the French-Algerian writer Frantz Fanon talked about the importance of literary representation as a site of political influence. Fanon believed that black children learned self-hatred and alienation through early contact with the white world, partly because of the storybooks, comics and cartoon images to which they had access. Finding alternative representations was therefore an urgent necessity.

In the civil rights era in the US, black children and teenagers played a crucial role, both symbolically and on the ground. They were participants in marches and meetings, and often subject to violence and imprisonment. But black children's lives also became politicized in other ways, as activists used literature and culture to galvanize the youth and foster a sense of purpose and pride in their identity. Factions such as the Black Arts Movement tried to create counter-narratives that pushed back against the brutality that white children's literature inflicted on young black psyches. For example, Virginia Hamilton's young adult novel *Zeely* (1967) centers on the realistic, everyday



aspects of black childhood. Its 11-year-old black protagonist, Elizabeth, is a smart and strong-willed girl, who becomes intrigued by a tall black woman who lives on a nearby farm. Books such as *Zeely* represented a watershed moment in culture. They served to counteract previous distortions of black youth, allowing children to develop a sense of imaginative possibility about their own lives, and empowering them as agents of social change.

In the 21st century, black authors have continued the tradition of using literature to rally young people. Often, writers depict black children who are active participants in the struggle for liberation. One example is the picture book *Daddy, There's a Noise Outside* (2015), by the community activist Kenneth Braswell. Inspired by the death of Freddie Gray when he was under arrest in Baltimore, Braswell uses children's literature to discuss protest in black communities. The story begins as a brother and sister wake up in the middle of the night after hearing chanting outside their window, and their parents try to explain the nature and value of protest for black communities. The young characters in the story are learning about the many forms of activism that are accessible to children, which include creating signs, writing letters, participating in protests and organizing.

These narratives pay homage to earlier black liberation efforts and give children the tools necessary to understand themselves as actors in the political process. Children's literature becomes a means of education, offering a safe space for experimentation and a supplement to the organization of formal movements.

In an opinion piece for The Guardian in 2015, the American young-adult author Daniel José Older wrote: **'Literature's job is not to protect young people from the ugly world; it is to arm them with a language to describe difficult truths they already know.'** He added that it's vital for literature's creators and publishers not to sit on the sidelines of movements such as Black Lives Matter, where most of the actors are young people.

Children are not just the passive recipients of what they read. They should be seen as active subjects, creating, and recreating themselves in relation to the representations that surround them. In this way, literature is an arena in which children can safely play with and develop an understanding of the state, and their role and relationship to it. Children's literature not only shows how important children have been to black social movements. It also highlights the power of books to rescue childhood from a culture that has dehumanized black children and denied them healthy and expansive models for growing up.

5.2 Gender Roles and Representation of Women⁷⁰

Some of the earliest children's stories that contain feminist themes are Louisa May Alcott's Little Women and Frank L. Baum's The Wonderful Wizard of Oz. With many women of this period being represented in children's books as doing housework, these two books deviated from this pattern. Drawing attention to the perception of housework as oppressive is one of the earliest forms of the feminist movement. Little Women, a story about four sisters, is said to show power of women in the home and is seen as both conservative and radical in nature. The character of Jo is observed as having a rather contemporary personality and has even been seen as a representation of the feminist movement.

It has been suggested that the feminist themes in The Wonderful Wizard of Oz result from influence of Baum's mother-in law, Matilda Gage, an important figure in the suffragist movement. Baum's significant political commentary on capitalism, and racial oppression are also said to be part of Gage's influence. Examples made of these themes is the main protagonist, Dorothy who is punished by being made to do housework.

In recent years, there has been a surge in the production and availability of feminist children's literature as well as a rise in gender neutrality in children's literature.

In addition to perpetuating stereotypes about appropriate behavior and occupations for women and girls, children's books frequently lack female characters entirely, or include them only as minor or unimportant characters. In the book Boys and Girls Forever: Reflections on Children's Classics, scholar Alison Lurie says most adventure novels of the 20th century, with few exceptions, contain boy protagonists while female characters in books such as those by Dr. Seuss, would typically be assigned the gender-specific roles of receptionists and nurses. The Winnie-the-Pooh characters written by A. A. Milne, are primarily male, with the exception of the character Kanga, who is a mother to Roo. Even animals and inanimate objects are usually identified as being male

⁷⁰ Wikipedia contributors. "Children's literature." Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia. Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, 1 Nov. 2022. Web. 3 Nov. 2022.

in children's books. The near-absence of significant female characters is paradoxical because of the role of women in creating children's literature.

Even animals and inanimate objects are usually identified as being male in children's books.

According to an article published in the Guardian in 2011, by Allison Flood:

Looking at almost 6,000 children's books published between 1900 and 2000, the study, led by Janice McCabe, a professor of sociology at Florida State University, found that males are central characters in 57% of children's books published each year, with just 31% having female central characters. Male animals are central characters in 23% of books per year, the study found, while female animals star in only 7.5%.

During the 20th century, more than 5,000 children's picture books were published in the U.S; during that time, male characters outnumbered female characters by more than 3 to 2, and male animals outnumbered female animals by 3 to 1. No children's picture book that featured a protagonist with an identifiable gender contained only female characters.

In her book, professor Kimberley Reynolds claims gender division stayed in children's books prominently until the 1990s. She also says that capitalism encourages gender-specific marketing of books and toys. For example, adventure stories have been identified as being for boys and domestic fiction intended for girls. **Publishers often believe that boys will not read stories about girls, but that girls will read stories about both boys and girls; therefore, a story that features male characters is expected to sell better.**

therefore, a story that features male characters is expected to sell better.

The interest in appealing to boys is also seen in the Caldecott awards, which tend to be presented to books that are believed to appeal to boys. Reynolds also says that both boys and girls have been presented by limited representations of appropriate behavior, identities and careers through the illustrations and text of children's literature. **She argues girls have traditionally been marketed books that prepare them for domestic jobs and motherhood. Conversely, boys are prepared for leadership roles and war.**

5.3 Eight LGBTQ-Positive Children's Books in Time for Pride and Year-Round Learning

Source.⁷¹

What kind of storybooks should be read to children? This question has been contentious — so much so that when I was teaching in a public elementary school in Ontario 10 years ago, certain books were kept in a separate room in the library apart from regular circulation. These were books featuring stories about same-sex families or gender diversity.

In 2010, I left full-time teaching to pursue graduate studies and explore the ways young children make sense of diverse gender and sexual identities. These identities are intertwined as the ways we express our gender is often perceived as aligning with our sexuality. My research was also tied to debates surrounding the health curriculum and what was considered appropriate for young children. I also learned that other teachers also had challenges in using children's literature that showed gender and sexual diversity.

What age children should learn about sexual activities may be up for debate, but learning about and discussing a diversity of sexual identities should not be questioned. In Canada, we have the right to love who we choose, and in Ontario June is the month of LGBTQ Pride celebrations.

Children of same-sex families in school

In 2005, Canada became the fourth country to legalize same-sex marriage. Between 2006 and 2011, according to Statistics Canada, "the number of same-sex married couples nearly tripled."

According to the 2016 Census, there were 72,880 same sex couples in Canada in 2016, representing 0.9 per cent of all couples and "at the time of the 2016 census, 10,020 children aged 0 to 14 were living in a family with same sex parents." These children are now or will soon be attending schools across Canada.

As early as kindergarten, children begin to perpetuate learned gender identities. They make decisions about what is for boys or for girls, and how

⁷¹ Pamela Malins, Assistant Professor, University of New Brunswick and Instructor, Western University; This article is republished from The Conversation under a Creative Commons license: CC-BY-ND. 17 June 19.

boys and girls should behave. Children re-enact what they have learned from the media and adults in their lives, and learn very quickly what performances get awarded with attention and praise.

Gender studies scholars Harriet Bjerrum Nielsen (retired Professor of Gender Studies at the University of Oslo) and Bronwyn Davies (University of Melbourne) explored how gender identity unfolds in the schooling environment. By age two children “develop an emotional commitment to their gender” and many already behave and speak in conformity with conventional gender images by the time they arrive at preschool.

Children are not only aware of sexual identities, but they also know the power that is associated with heterosexual identities in society and how it provides them access to various rights as citizens.

In summary, children are very familiar with gender and sexual identities. The question has become: what gender and sexual identities?

Equitable classrooms

How society values some identities over others produces hierarchies of identity and power relations that influence how children make meaning about diverse identities.



Pink is for Boys. (Running Press)

Children need the skills to navigate ongoing messages about gender and sexual identities found in popular culture marketing through everything from TV to toys to fast-food packaging, all of which have implications for children's identities, particularly their gendered identities.

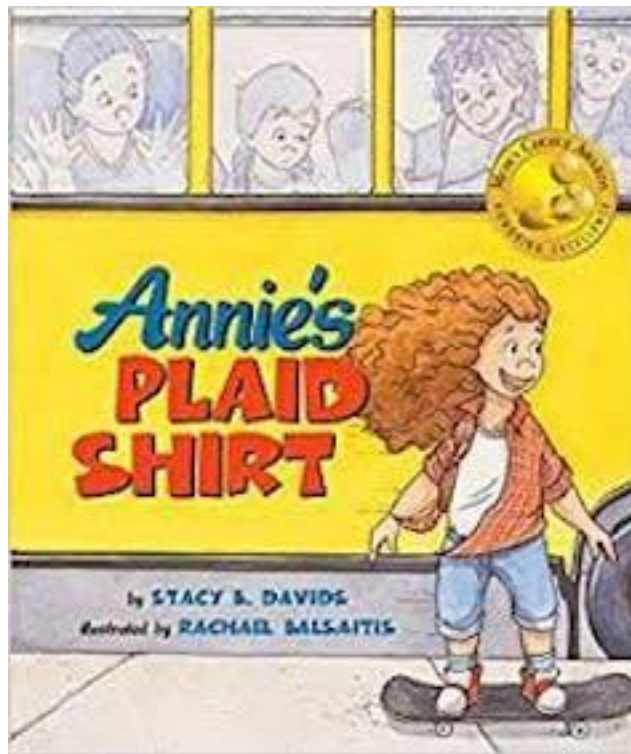
Education researchers Wayne Martino and Wendy Cumming-Potvin conducted research in Australia and Canada with people studying to become teachers. They found that when these students were presented the possibility of using picture books to address same-sex parenting and non-normative sexuality, they expressed concerns about potentially upsetting classroom parents, being perceived as pushing a “gay agenda,” or being too “in-your-face.” They also worried parents would question the age-appropriateness of the material.

Yet what is discussed at home, or the beliefs and cultural upbringing at home, should not silence the different viewpoints students may encounter at school. Social justice in education calls on students and teachers to dialogue about difference and refrain from judgement of what is right or wrong, but rather understand the context for beliefs and opinions and act equitably and respectfully.

Picture books are a great way to approach conversations about diverse gender and sexual identities with young children. I ask teachers and parents alike, what gendered stories do you perpetuate to your children? Do they believe all identities are acceptable?

Let's prepare our children to live and work in a world of diversity and inclusion. Engage in critical questioning, be mindful of your bias, and develop respect for perspectives that are not your own. Create opportunities for children to see same-sex relationships, even if this falls outside your personal values.

I invite you to find ways to challenge gender stereotypes and encourage multiple viewpoints with these books.



Annie's Plaid Shirt. (Upswing Press)

1. Annie's Plaid Shirt By Stacy B. Davids (2015, Upswing Press)

Annie loves her plaid shirt and wears it all the time. One day, her mom announces her uncle's wedding and tells Annie that she must wear a dress. This makes Annie miserable as she hates wearing dresses and wishes her mom understood.

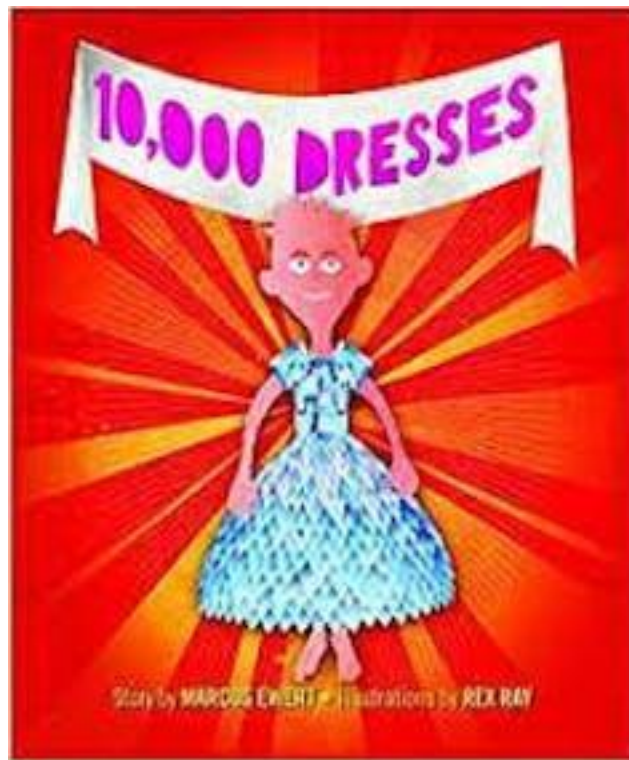
2. The Sissy Duckling By Harvey Fierstein (2002, Simon & Schuster)

Elmer likes to clean, do crafts and bake, but he is not accepted by his peers or his own father. Through Elmer's struggles, he learns about acceptance and difference, and eventually, so do the others.

3. King and King By Linda De Haan & Stern Nijland (2000, Tricycle Press)

A mother introduces her young prince to various princesses with the intention of marriage. One day a princess arrives escorted by her brother, Prince Lee. To everyone's surprise the prince is much more interested in the brother than he is the princess.

4. 10,000 Dresses By Marcus Ewert and Rex Ray (2008, Triangle Square)



10,000 Dresses. (Triangle Square)

Bailey dreams about magical dresses, but no one ever wants to hear about them. Then Bailey meets Laurel who is inspired by Bailey's imagination and courage. They begin making dresses together and Bailey becomes the girl she always dreamed of becoming.

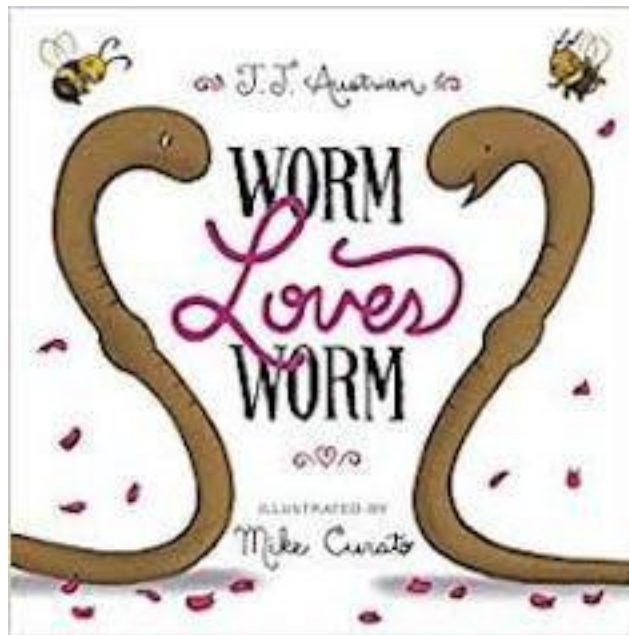
5. Pink is for Boys By Robb Pearlman (2018, Running Press)

This book challenges stereotypes around blue for boys and pink for girls, and empowers kids and adults to express themselves in every colour of the rainbow.

6. A Tale of Two Daddies By Vanita Oelschlager (2010, VanitaBooks)

A boy on the playground questions a girl about her two Dads, wondering which Dad does what. The girl explains, quite simply, that one Dad does some things and the other Dad does the others.

7. Worm Loves Worm By J.J. Austrian (2016, Balzer + Bray)



Worm Loves Worm. (Balzer + Bray)

Two worms fall in love and decide to get married. Their friends want to know who will wear the dress or the tux, but the worms assure them that it doesn't matter because they love each other.

8. Mom and Mum are Getting Married! By Ken Setterington (2004, Second Story Press)

Rosie comes home to happiness when one of her two mothers announces, "Your Mum and I are getting married!" They can't wait to start planning the big day. At this party, family, friends and fun come together for a joyous celebration of love.

5.4 If You Want to Publish a Truly Subversive Novel, Have a Main Character Who's Fat

Source.⁷²

Banned Books Week, held this year from Sept. 25 to Oct. 1, is an annual event designed to draw national attention to the harms of censorship. Created in 1982 by the American Library Association in response to a growing number of “challenged” books in schools and libraries, the week is really about celebrating the freedom to read.

Much of the practice of book banning takes the form of challenging a book deemed subversive and objectionable, with profanity or sexual content often the book challengers' source of ire.

These days, such campaigns can elicit an eye roll: everyone knows that teens are regularly exposed to profanity and sex online and on TV. (Rather than try to ban books, a better approach is to instead teach media literacy so young people are better able to contextualize what they're exposed to.)

The problem is that when you go after books for swears or sex, you might also be threatening books that are truly subversive: the ones that confront our unconscious biases, whether it's weight or race, and question the way we tend to think about ourselves and others. One frequently challenged book – Rainbow Rowell's 2013 young adult novel Eleanor & Park – does just that.

Challenged in Minnesota

Eleanor & Park is a romance novel about two misfits who become friends, fall in love and endure the cruelties of the world: abusive parents, poverty and bullying.

The same year it was published, a parent group in the Anoka-Hennipin school district in Minnesota tried (and failed) to get the book removed from the curriculum and school libraries. But they did manage to get the author's visit to Anoka High School canceled.

⁷² Beth Younger, Associate Professor of English & Women's and Gender Studies, Drake University; This article is republished from The Conversation under a Creative Commons license: CC-BY-ND. 27 Sept 16.

Citing 227 instances of profanity, the parents alleged that Eleanor & Park was “littered with extreme profanity and age inappropriate subject matter that should never be put into the hands and minds of minor children, much less promoted by the educational institutions and staff we entrust to teach and protect our children.”

What are we afraid of?

Banning books in the United States is nothing new, and there's a long history of trying to prevent people (mostly kids and teens) from reading things some think they shouldn't read.

It seems that the only thing worse than sex or the “f word” in young adult literature is being a lesbian. Depicting a gay couple got copies of Nancy Garden's 1982 lesbian romance novel Annie on My Mind burned on the steps of the Kansas City School District headquarters in 1993.



Young adult author Judy Blume. Carl Lender/flickr, CC-BY

Judy Blume's books are famous for pushing the “decency” envelope. Her 1972 novel Forever... is also frequently banned for sexual content and for

profanity. (Pretty much yearly since its publication, "Forever..." has been challenged by Focus on the Family or The Christian Coalition.)

But there's another aspect to Forever... that's rarely discussed: It has a fat character who has lots of sex. Sybil is often seen as a foil to the main character Katherine, a rail-thin control freak who loses her virginity deliberately and with purpose.

Sybil is the other side of the body image spectrum: She's fat and "has been laid" by six guys. At least she gets to have sex, which is pretty uncommon for a fat girl in 1972 young adult fiction. (And there's a penis named Ralph in the book, yet another reason to read this classic.)

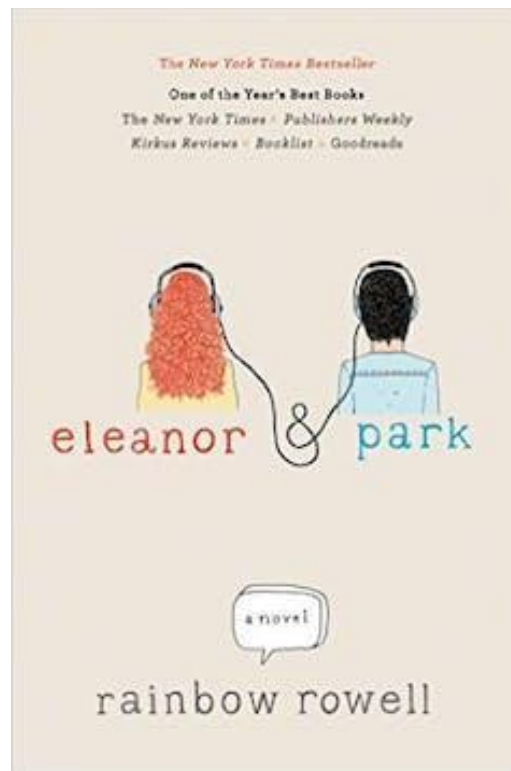
But Forever... is an extreme outlier. The way the media depicts fat characters – and fat people – has been a problem for generations. In 2011 NPR aired a piece on fat stereotypes in pop culture. The report dissected the typical fat character in TV shows and films: someone "self-loathing" and "desperate to be loved."

Of course, the lives of fat people aren't much different from those of thin people. But you wouldn't know that from the way fat bodies are portrayed on TV and in film. Research on "weight bias in the media" suggests that most representations of fat people in media are stigmatizing. More research suggests that shows like The Biggest Loser and More to Love reinforce anti-fat bias rather than fat acceptance.

We were all teenagers once

This is why Eleanor & Park is so refreshingly different.

Like many protagonists in young adult novels, Eleanor is a teenager who's desperate to be an adult so she can escape her awful circumstances. But while the parents trying to ban the book pounced on the profanity, they ignored one of the novel's biggest triumphs: Eleanor is fat. Yes, Eleanor is a fat female protagonist in a young adult romance novel and she's in love – she even has a cute boyfriend named Park.



The cover art for Rainbow Rowell's 'Eleanor & Park.' Amazon

As author John Green wrote in a review of the novel, "...the obstacle in Eleanor & Park is simply the world. The world cannot stomach a relationship between a good-looking Korean kid and Big Red." (Big Red is Eleanor's nickname.)

Last year, Buzzfeed writer Kaye Toal penned a beautiful personal essay about discovering Eleanor in an airport bookstore. Part of what struck Toal as significant about Eleanor is that she is fat yet is not required to become thin or change in order to be loved. Despite the recent increase in fat characters appearing on television and in movies, many of them are required to change in order to be accepted. Not surprisingly, another study published in 2013 connects the prevalence of the "thin ideal" in popular literature to low self-esteem in female readers.

Letting Eleanor be fat and be loved is much needed in today's climate of "the obesity epidemic" and misplaced concerns with fatness. Park loves Eleanor; she loves him back. A simple story, but with a difference. Eleanor's fat is not really a crucial aspect of her being. She doesn't need to be fixed.

That's what makes this lovely and painful novel subversive – and what makes efforts to ban it all the more misguided.

Chapter 5 Questions for Reflection:

- What sticks out to you about the infographics at the beginning of the chapter? What are the statistics for the current year?
- How do the benefits and effects – mentioned in Chapter 1.4 – connect to this chapter?
- If we combine the people from these chapters, we could ask how many children's books have a fat Black girl as the protagonist? How many children's books have fat queer kids in them? How many children's books have Mexican nonbinary children at the forefront?
- What also sets us apart as humans? Having disabilities or being neurodivergent, right? Do those children's characters exist?
- What unique kinds of people are being missed when we view white neurotypical cis-gender heterosexual thin boys as the main characters?

Chapter 5 Exercises for Reflection:

- A. As a class, or on your own, create the diversity infographic for the current year.
- B. <insert exercises created by students>

CHAPTER SIX | Controversies

Note.⁷³

Debate Over Controversial Content⁷⁴

A widely discussed and debated topic by critics and publishers in the children's book industry is whether outdated and offensive content, specifically racial stereotypes, should be changed in new editions. Some question if certain books should be banned, while others believe original content should remain, but publishers should add information to guide parents in conversations with their children about the problematic elements of the particular story. Some see racist stereotypes as cultural artifacts that should be preserved. In The Children's Culture Reader, scholar Henry Jenkins references Herbert R. Kohl's essay "Should We Burn Babar?" which raises the debate whether children should be educated on how to think critically towards oppressive ideologies rather than ignore historical mistakes. Jenkins suggests that parents and educators should trust children to make responsible judgments.

Some books have been altered in newer editions and significant changes can be seen, such as illustrator Richard Scarry's book Best Word Book Ever. and Roald Dahl's book Charlie and the Chocolate Factory. In other cases classics have been rewritten into updated versions by new authors and illustrators. Several versions of Little Black Sambo have been remade as more appropriate and without prejudice.

Chapter 6 Questions for Reflection:

- What are the arguments made by those who wish to ban certain books?
- What are the arguments for NOT banning books?
- If the arguments are divided between political lines – conservative vs liberal or Democrat vs Republican – why is that so?
- How has children's literature contributed to gender roles?

⁷³ This chapter applies the following course objective: "Discuss, analyze, and evaluate the literary characteristics, age appropriateness, and cultural/developmental sensitivity."

⁷⁴ Wikipedia contributors. "Children's literature." Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia. Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, 5 Nov. 2022. Web. 9 Nov. 2022.

- How has children's literature contributed to the patriarchy?
- How has children's literature indoctrinated kids with religious ideals?
- How has children's literature been white-washed?
- How has children's literature been used as a medium for propaganda?
- How has children's literature contributed to heteronormativity?
- How have the illustrations in children's literature contributed to fatphobia?
- How have the illustrations in children's literature contributed to lookism?
- How have the illustrations in children's literature contributed to sexism?
- How has children's literature contributed to ableism?
- Does children's literature represent all types of children?

Chapter 6 Exercises for Reflection:

A. Take a question from above and dig into it. Then choose one product below to display your answer(s), or the instructor might choose one product below for the entire class to create individually or collaboratively:

- ⇒ A multi-genre essay.
- ⇒ An annotated bibliography.
- ⇒ An infographic.
- ⇒ A series of memes.
- ⇒ A book cover collage.

B. <insert exercises created by students>

6.1 When It Comes to Children's Books, It's Time to Put the Propaganda Away⁷⁵

While many of America's parents are worried about how well their children can read and do math, as well how much they know, the helpful people at Lifehacker are concerned about what we should do to teach social justice.

They have recommended a list of books to ensure that our children are thinking correctly—not, mind you, that they are thinking well, but only that they are taking the right political and social thoughts.

Think your children should be learning about our nation's founding and the basis for our republic. NOT. Why do that when your children could be reading Hillary Rodham Clinton: Some Girls are Born to Lead. Never seen that one on the great books list? Maybe they needed something to balance the books on Ronald Reagan. Oh, wait, there are no books about Ronald Reagan on the Lifehacker list. In fact, there are none on any conservative figure. Just Hillary.

And forget about Little House on the Prairie or Anne of Green Gables. Laura Ingalls Wilder is racist. Hadn't you heard? And L. M. Montgomery was clearly a shill for the Patriarchy. Instead, try Rad Women Worldwide. This one even has "cut-paper portraits" of radical, revolutionary women. Who needs books that teach you how to think when you can teach kids how to protest and chant slogans?

Don't bother with Virginia Lee Burton's Mike Mulligan and His Steam Shovel, or Bill Beet's classic dog story, The Wingdingdilly, or any other book that most boys would actually, you know, *like*. No. How about Sparkle Boy? a book about cross dressing for that active boy in your family?

There are other books on the list covering racism, sexism, ableism, LGBTQ issues, and immigration.

⁷⁵ Martin Cothran. "When It Comes to Children's Books, It's Time to Put The Propaganda Away." Intellectual Takeout. <https://intellectuالتakeout.org/2018/12/when-it-comes-to-childrens-books-its-time-to-put-the-propaganda-away/> CC-BY. 03 Dec 18.

But if our cultural commissars had any familiarity with classic children's and young adult literature, they would know that many of these issues are already addressed in these books, and addressed better than preachy, partisan texts designed to indoctrinate children. You can teach children important social issues and familiarize them with their history and literary heritage at the same time.

Want to inoculate your younger child against racism? Have them read Call me Charley, by Jesse Jackson. Yes, *that* Jesse Jackson. Older children can read To Kill a Mockingbird and Cry, The Beloved Country. They are beautiful stories that address racism from a *human*, not a *political* viewpoint.⁷⁶

Want to read about strong women? Young readers can read about Betsy Ray in Maud Hart Lovelace's endearing Betsy-Tacy stories or Sarah, Plain and Tall. And older readers should try Beryl Markham's West with the Night, the classic story of the woman who was the first person to fly east to west across the Atlantic.

And for immigration, try Mama's Bank Account by Kathryn Forbes, the book that was the basis for the classic film, I Remember Mama. Or the wonderful Papa's Wife, by Thyra Ferre Bjorn.

Put the propaganda aside. There is a right way to familiarize students with important social issues through real literature.

⁷⁶ What's the difference between a human viewpoint and a political one?

6.2 Little red children and ‘Grandpa Xi’: China’s school textbooks reflect the rise of Xi Jinping’s personality cult

Source.⁷⁷

When students in China returned to classrooms in September 2021, they were provided with a new series of textbooks outlining China’s president Xi Jinping, or “Grandpa Xi’s”, political philosophy.

Each textbook on “Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for the New Era”, as Xi’s political philosophy is officially called, is tailored to students at primary, secondary, and tertiary levels.

⁷⁷ Shih-Wen Sue Chen (Senior Lecturer in Writing and Literature, Deakin University) & Sin Wen Lau (Senior Lecturer in China Studies, University of Otago). The Conversation. 22 Nov 21. <https://theconversation.com/little-red-children-and-grandpa-xi-chinas-school-textbooks-reflect-the-rise-of-xi-jinpings-personality-cult-168482> CC-BY--ND.



Ling Li
@lingli_vienna · Follow



New-era childhood memory:

4-volume textbooks of Xi Jinping Thought for primary and high school students, to be launched in the fall 2021.



9:20 AM · Jul 10, 2021



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“Xi Jinping Thought” was enshrined into the Chinese Communist Party’s (CCP) Constitution in 2017. Although the main stated aims are to remain committed to reform and build a “moderately prosperous society”, the realities of this political philosophy has been a tightening of party discipline and curtailing of social freedom.

While prior textbooks were focused on the CCP, the new versions centre on China’s paramount leader. In this way they reflect the growing personality cult of Xi Jinping, eerily reminiscent of the days of China’s founding father Mao Zedong.

The rise of the personality cult

According to China’s National Textbook Committee, the

textbooks reflect the will of the Communist Party of China and the nation and directly impact the direction and quality of talent cultivation.

In particular, the Committee stated:

Primary schools should foster love and right understanding for the Party, country and socialism in students.

The core socialist values highlighted in the textbooks include prosperity, patriotism and friendship.

Targeted at children, the moniker of “Grandpa Xi” is part of the ongoing strategy towards creating a personality cult in China. Authoritarian regimes like the Soviet Union also used the grandfather figure (“Grandpa Lenin”) as part of propaganda aimed at children. This enhanced Lenin’s personality cult across the Soviet nations.

Political scientist Pao-min Chang defines the personality cult as *The artificial elevation of the status and authority of one man [...] through the deliberate creation, projection and propagation of a godlike image.* Like Lenin, a personality cult around Mao Zedong emerged during China’s Cultural Revolution (1966–1976). Although later leaders Deng Xiaoping, the architect of China’s economic reform, and Wen Jiabao, who was Premier between 2003 and 2013, are popularly known as “Grandpa Deng” and “Grandpa Wen,” they did not overtly push for this image.



Deng Xiaoping, the architect of China's economic reform, was popularly known as 'Grandpa Deng'. VINCENT YU/AP

Xi returns to Mao in his efforts to build a personality cult around himself. Since coming to power, he has cultivated the image of being “a man of the people” in a bid to make his authoritarianism more palpable to the masses.

Little red children and Grandpa Xi

The new primary school textbooks emphasise Xi's wisdom, friendliness and care for the children. Early signs of this strategy can be seen in government propaganda video, Grandpa Xi is Our Big Friend, that circulated online in 2015.

The video was recorded at Yan'an Yucui Primary School in Shaanxi. The location is significant because the school was founded by Mao Zedong in 1937.

In the video, Xi Jinping is not presented as a distant authority figure. Instead, Grandpa Xi is a caring “big friend.” The children sing that his “warm smile” is “brighter than the sun.” Images of children waving sunflowers and lyrics that describe Xi's visit as “better than the warmth of a spring day” serve to accentuate his friendly disposition.

Most importantly, the children sing about the need to “study diligently” to “achieve the Chinese Dream”. This dream is Xi Jinping's vision for China to become a prosperous society.



A personality cult around Mao Zedong was a large part of the propaganda during China's Cultural Revolution. Shutterstock

The children wear red scarves and red stars in the video. These symbols represent the national flag. The colour red alludes to the blood of revolutionary martyrs. They remind children of their connection to the nation and the Party.

Xi wears a red scarf in the video. In one scene, he places a red scarf over the shoulders of a child. This accessory and gesture are depicted in the 2021 primary school textbooks as well. The act of placing a scarf on a child signifies children taking on the mantle of happily fulfilling Grandpa Xi's vision.

The CCP's Young Pioneers

The textbook for lower primary students contain photos of Xi planting trees with children and meeting them at school.

The books include statements such as:

Grandpa Xi Jinping is very busy with work, but no matter how busy he is, he still joins our activities and cares about our growth.

Xi shares his memories of being emotional when joining the Young Pioneers of China (the CCP's youth organisation) in 1960. He then invites readers to describe their own feelings about becoming a part of the Young Pioneers, thus encouraging young people to join.

当第一次戴上红领巾，唱响中国少年先锋队队歌时，每个同学都会感到骄傲和自豪。你还记得入队仪式的情形吗？让我们先来听听习近平爷爷入队时的故事吧。

和同学们一起重温入队仪式，说说你入队时的难忘情形吧。



2014年，习近平爷爷来到北京市海淀区（diàn）区民族小学，给同学们讲了自己加入少先队的故事。

“我是1959年上学，1960年入队，因为年龄稍小，不是第一批，当时还哭了鼻子……我记得入队的时候心怦怦跳，很激动。”

习近平爷爷接着问同学们：“不知你们有没有这种感觉？”孩子们回答：“有。”

“为什么会这样？因为是一种荣誉。”习近平爷爷郑重地说。

41

Xi Jinping tying a red scarf around a child at a Beijing primary school. 'Page from Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics For the New Era' textbook for lower primary.

The textbooks use illustrations with speech bubbles to make the ideological content more interesting. Some illustrations are of students sitting around a table teaching each other Grandpa Xi's expectations to become a person of “good moral character” and who is “diligent and thrifty”.

The books also emphasise acquiring knowledge about “science and technology,” as well as being “creative and innovative”.

The children must cultivate these markers of good citizenship to become what the books refer to as “qualified builders and successors of socialism”. This rhetoric of children as the hope of the nation has been in use since the late nineteenth century.

The emphasis on being “qualified” suggests children must live up to the expectations set out by Xi. The textbooks imply this is only possible because of Grandpa Xi’s continued care for them.

This image of Grandpa Xi as a “big friend” is a gentler form of propaganda than that seen during Mao’s Cultural Revolution. Propaganda aimed at children during the Cultural Revolution positioned the Party as the surrogate parent. It also highlighted children’s violence as they fought for the socialist cause. Young Red Guards sang patriotic songs and read the Little Red Book. These rituals fostered Mao’s cult of personality.

It remains to be seen whether the new school curriculum is a harbinger of future deification of Xi Jinping.

Chapters 6.1 and 6.2 Questions for Reflection:

- What are these writers’ definitions of propaganda? (Review the Oxford definition below.)
- With Martin’s post, is that propaganda or is he “upset” with how more diversity is showing up in children’s literature?
- If the books he (Martin) lists are the appropriate ways to cover certain topics, what’s wrong with other books that cover those same topics?
- <insert questions created by students>

Propaganda:⁷⁸ information, especially of a biased or misleading nature, used to promote or publicize a particular political cause or point of view.

⁷⁸ Definition from Oxford.

6.3 What Banned Books Can Teach Us

Source.⁷⁹

“Every burned book enlightens the world.” -Ralph Waldo Emerson

Libraries, schools, along with parents and teachers, are facing a difficult conundrum. Books are a facet of media that are continually banned and challenged for containing subjects deemed ‘unsuitable for children.’ They may include topics, characters, or conversations that parents may believe are inappropriate for their young children to be exposed to. LGBTQIA+ identities in literature lead to some of the most common challenges by parents. Books containing characters who are a part of this community are thought of as inappropriate, but these books are necessary for young people to get a sense of what the world is like outside of their home. Leaving books on the shelves that contain LGBTQIA+ related conversations can allow for children discovering themselves to feel accepted if they identify as a member of these communities. It can also lead to a better understanding of the community as heterosexual children grow up, which helps prevent bullying and marginalization. Books containing LGBTQIA+ subject matters should never be removed from the shelves if they are educational, accessible and helpful for young people.

Children’s exposure to complex topics at a young age has proven to benefit their growth and development.

Children's exposure to complex topics at a young age has proven to benefit their growth and development. If a young person is left unexposed to components of their culture, it can be difficult for them to accept these things when they are in the ‘real world’ outside of their youth. Books are a leading source of exposure for young people, as learning to read is a fundamental aspect of growing up. Literature can contain references to

⁷⁹ By JILLIAN LANDSMAN. New Voices, New Visions 2021-2022: The Best Student Writing from The Composition Program, SUNY New Paltz. CC-BY-NC. <https://pressbooks.pub/newvoicesnewvisions21/chapter/what-banned-books-can-teach-us/>

new ideas and themes that children have yet to discover and can allow for children to read about these new subjects in an accessible, helpful manner. Some subjects are deemed unsuitable for young people. Parents challenge books containing these subjects more often than any other demographic (Ediaz). They may challenge books if they include sexually explicit material, offensive language, depictions of violent acts, racial language, or topics like sex and gender, which can often be deemed as inappropriate for young people (Banned Books). This desire to challenge and ban books is an aspect of the ever-popular cancel culture has been a facet of censorship in America. Censorship has existed for hundreds of years, as the first recorded "banning" of a book was in 1637, when Thomas Morton criticized the Puritan lifestyle in his book, New English Canaan and received backlash (Bush). Since then, cancel culture has become more prevalent. When books are talked about, so are banned books. Libraries have begun to take action against censorship, forming programs to allow children to be exposed to and aware of banned books.

The LGBTQIA+ community is one that faces marginalization, discomfort, and distress because of a certain aspect of their identity. The acronym stands for each identity that makes up the members of this community, most of whom are similar through the fact that they are not heterosexual. An exception would be the T, which stands for Transgender, as this is a gender identity and not a sexual orientation, as many of the others are. Folks who identify as non-heterosexual or non-cisgender are very often subject to feeling ostracized by peers, as well as feeling insecure about their own identities due to the social climate around them. In fact, according to The Trevor Project, youth in the LGBTQIA+ community are four times more likely to attempt suicide as their peers who are not in this community. Causes of suicidal intentions, depression and anxiety in queer youth are often related to how these youth are treated by their family members and peers. As openly identifying as a member of the LGBTQIA+ community is frowned upon and even criminalized in some parts of the world, it can be difficult for a person to feel secure in and proud of their identity. This is why young people should be educated about the truths and misconceptions about folks in the LGBTQIA+ community. As children grow up, they use the knowledge and perspectives they were exposed to as kids to form their own perspectives and opinions. A part of media that

children in America are consistently exposed to is literature. Books uncover new ideas and themes for children that they may not have learned about before. Books containing depictions of folks in the LGBTQIA+ community can be so important for young people, as it could be their first instance of exposure to that community. Accessible, educational books about this topic can prevent ignorance as a child grows up.

Alyssa Niccolini addresses the effect banning books may have on young people in [Precocious Knowledge: Using Banned Books to Engage in a Youth Lens](#). She discusses how she often feels that a piece of literature deserves to be challenged at first glance. This is likely due to the discomfort one may feel when exposed to a topic in literature that they're not used to. She then addresses the ignorance that can come with banning books, and the fact that, as kids are growing up, they have perspectives that are influenced a lot by what they read. If literature is provided to children that displays a supportive, positive outlook on being a part of the LGBTQIA+ community, this dangerous ignorance can be avoided.

What makes ignorance dangerous? According to [Banned Books Remind Us of the Power of the Written Word](#), biases in children become imbedded in their behavior by the age of seven. If a child is only exposed to a certain perspective, they will grow up without a well-rounded view of the world around them. And when a person is unfamiliar with something, it can be difficult to fully accept and feel comfortable around that topic. As society is changing, folks who are ignorant to these changes are the ones who will fall behind. Having knowledge about the LGBTQIA+ community as a child allows for acceptance of others as a child grows up. This will also lead to the awareness of societal changes, sparking an interest in learning about how the community is growing and changing. Once a young person has a starting point reading books, they will find it easier to ask questions and talk to people directly about things they may be unsure about.

...biases in children become imbedded in their behavior by the age of seven. If a child is only exposed to a certain perspective, they will grow up without a well-rounded view of the world around them. And when a person is unfamiliar

with something, it can be difficult to fully accept and feel comfortable around that topic.

Keeping books on shelves is also incredibly important because it can give kids a sense of validation and representation. Growing up can be difficult without knowing that there are others out there who share a similar experience or identity. As books are a great way to get a sense of what the world is like, it is incredibly beneficial for kids to know there are others like them out there in the LGBTQIA+ community. Without books to educate children on queer identities, queer kids who are discovering their identities will not understand what it means to be a part of the community. Feelings of being misunderstood can present themselves within a young person, and that lack of acceptance can cause mental wellness to diminish. Children who are a part of the LGBTQIA+ community tend to deal with “confusion and loneliness... as they struggle to discover, understand, and accept themselves” (Garden). This sums up the mental and emotional trials that come with discovering one’s identity. While children are already facing inner stressors, they don’t need outside stress. This outside stress can be from peers not treating them with the respect. Kids can grow up believing they don’t deserve respect if they don’t have books to teach them that they are valid and understood. A 2021 poll by Statista shows that 37% of adults believe elementary school libraries in the US should not contain books discussing homosexual or transgender topics. Only 39% of responders answered that they didn’t support banning of these kinds of books anywhere. In modern times, adults who aren’t comfortable with the subject of LGBTQIA+ identities have opinions that can lead to that dangerous ignorance.

Some believe books should be banned when containing LGBTQIA+ subjects are trying to ‘protect’ young people from a topic that might be uncomfortable. But if they are never exposed to this kind of ‘discomfort,’ they will never learn to accept it and understand the truths about such a misunderstood topic.

Some believe books should be banned when containing LGBTQIA+ subjects are trying to ‘protect’ young people from a topic that might be uncomfortable. But if they are

never exposed to this kind of 'discomfort,' they will never learn to accept it and understand the truths about such a misunderstood topic.

Children need to be educated about our ever-changing society; learning to understand the truths and fallacies about current events will help them become comfortable with topics like LGBTQIA+ communities. The best way for young people to be more understanding is for them to become educated first. We can help contribute to this increase in education by allowing books to be taught in schools and kept on library shelves. When children are reading about such topics, their parents can learn with them as they read these books aloud. Teaching is one of the best ways for a person to learn. And when children in the LGBTQIA+ community see their peers and the adults around them beginning to educate themselves, they will be so much more open and willing to accept themselves.

Hiding from one's own identity is not uncommon for young people, and I am no stranger to this. As a young person, I didn't even know gay people existed until I was in middle school. It was such a taboo topic that I was seldom informed about, and when I began to realize what my sexual orientation was, I yearned for a sense of community and acceptance. Since I wasn't exposed to this kind of identity in media, I was unable to fully accept myself for the queer person I was. It was a part of my identity that I set aside out of fear and discomfort, as well as out of anxiety that I would never be looked at the same way by my parents and friends. I would want nothing more than to completely remove this kind of experience from any young queer person, as it was difficult growing up being half-ashamed of myself. When a person is educated, they create a better quality of life for themselves as well as for those around them.

When a person is educated, they create a better quality of life for themselves as well as for those around them.

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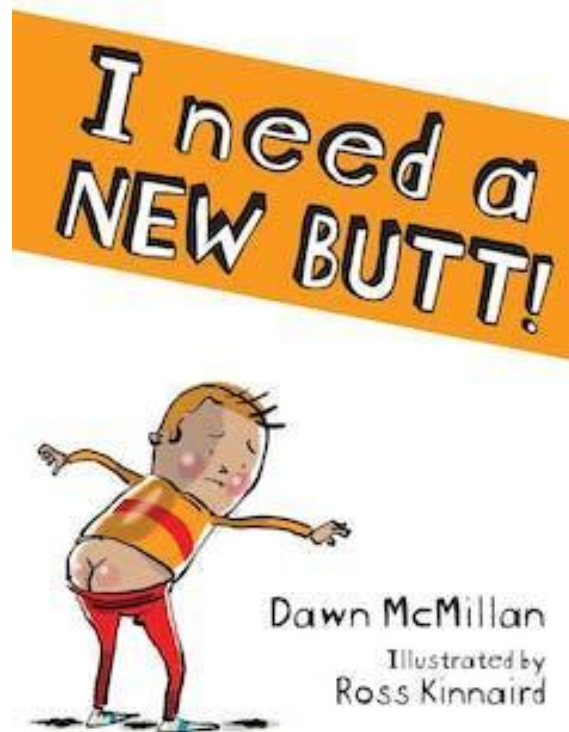
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6.4 Teacher Sacked for Reading Bum Book to Students: The Latest Conservative Book Ban

Source.⁸⁰

On March 1, 2022, Toby Price, an assistant principal at Gary Road Elementary School in New Byrum, Mississippi, faced a problem. The reader booked for a Zoom session for 240 grade two students hadn't shown up. So Price grabbed one of his favourite books, I Need a New Butt, and began reading.

He was fired two days later.



In Price's termination letter, Hinds County Schools Superintendent Delesicia Martin cited "unnecessary embarrassment, a lack of professionalism and impaired judgment" on Price's part. The

⁸⁰ Simon Ryan, Associate Professor (Literature), Australian Catholic University; This article is republished from The Conversation under a Creative Commons license: CC-BY-ND. 15 March 22.

superintendent was particularly disturbed by the word “fart”, which he called “inappropriate”.

However, the book, which features a character who sets out to find a replacement bum after he discovers his has a crack in it, is recommended for the same age group as Price’s audience.

Ban sets a dangerous precedent

Why – apart from depriving young children of entertainment – does this matter? Making decisions about who can access books on the basis of whether they offend the sensibilities of those in authority, rather than whether they’re a good match for their target audience, sets a dangerous precedent.

Conservatives in the United States have recently focused on school boards as easy pressure points in the ongoing culture wars.

Late last year Rabih Abuismail, a member of the Spotsylvania County School Board in Virginia, proposed that books be not only be removed from school libraries, but also burned for good measure. In Florida, Governor Ron DeSantis supports a bill (colloquially known as the “Don’t Say Gay Bill”) which has this wording:

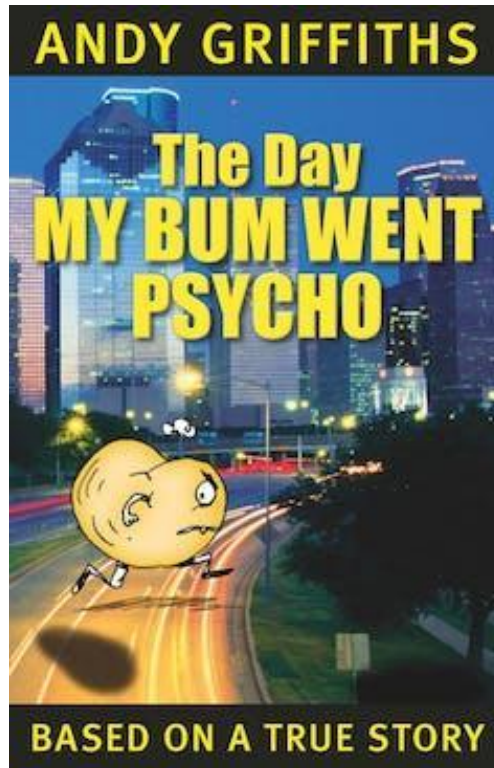
Classroom instruction by school personnel or third parties on sexual orientation or gender identity may not occur in kindergarten through grade 3 or in a manner that is not age appropriate or developmentally appropriate for students in accordance with state standards.

This joins with some dozens of other bills in state legislatures across the US which seek to repress discussion of gender, race or sexual identity. The terms are deliberately vague so that teachers can never know whether they’re on safe ground.

In this kind of atmosphere, what chance does a good bum joke have?

Breaking taboos and attracting reluctant readers

Bums have a foundational role in literature. Chaucer's The Miller's Tale, Shakespeare's frequent play on the word "ass" and Swift's scatological obsessions are part of this rich inheritance. In children's literature, bums have found a ready audience: children love to read about bodily functions. They know there is some level of taboo-breaking here and they love to break the rules.



So, books such as Stéphanie Blake's Poo Bum, Dave Pilkey's The Adventures of Super Diaper Baby, Mark Norman's Funny Bums and Kate Maye and Andrew Joyner's The Bum Book, sell very well.

And I'm not sure what the Mississippi school superintendent would make of Andy Griffith's international bestseller The Day My Bum Went Psycho. Here, the protagonist, Zack Freeman, finds that his own bum is part of a global conspiracy to cause a methane eruption that could render everyone unconscious while the bums take the place of people's heads.

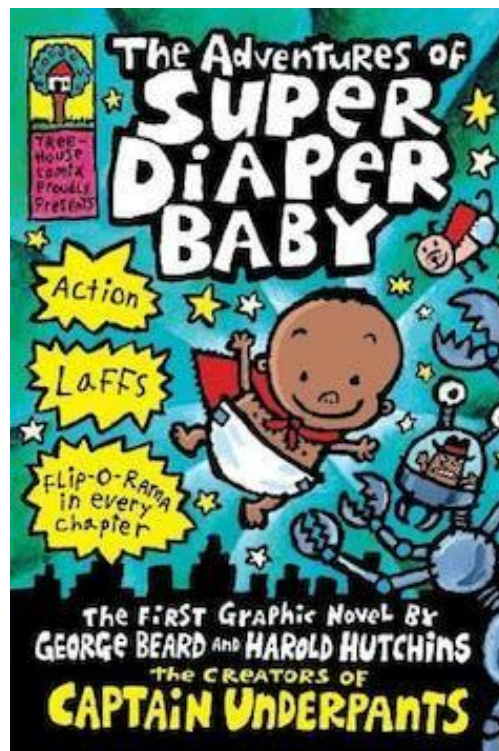
Griffiths, a former teacher, says he started writing humorous books as a way to engage reluctant readers. "Kids respond to humour. They are naturally playful with words and ideas. If you want a sure way to engage children, especially reluctant readers, then humour is necessary."

Michelle Jensen, president of the School Library Association of NSW, agrees. “The book often needs to be funny, so that’s probably why they like Captain Underpants.”

Irony, anxiety and why kids love bum books

Kids love bum books for reasons that are not immediately obvious, too. They know that use of words with light taboos will gain laughter and approval from peers. They learn that these words have a kind of power, and enjoy experimenting with this power.

When children call you a “poo poo” (knowing you are not, in fact, a “poo poo”), they are experimenting with irony, where they intentionally use the wrong word. They are showing that there’s no natural connection between a word and a thing, an understanding that helps them to absorb picture books, where there is often a disjunction between the word and the illustration.



Adults joke about things that make us anxious. So do children, who often have concerns about toilet accidents and can use language to discharge some of this worry. These books can also be used to initiate

conversations about bodily processes, showing that they should not be embarrassing and we do not always control them.

And “disgust”, however it can be theorised, exerts a weird dynamic of attraction and repulsion on all of us. How else can you explain that there is a TV show called Dr. Pimple Popper?

Teachers fired for sharing LGBTQ+ books

In the United States right now, we can also imagine Toby Price being fired for reading a book about a queer kid, or about racial history.

In late 2021, Glen Ellyn, Illinois, third grade teacher Lauren Crowe was suspended because her TikTok site showed the LGBTQ+ material she used in class. Crowe was subsequently reinstated, as Illinois laws support the teaching of LGBTQ+ perspectives. But the incident seems likely to discourage other teachers from using similar books.

In 2015 in North Carolina, teacher Omar Currie felt compelled to resign after he read a gay-themed fairytale to his third grade students and caused a controversy that culminated in a town hall meeting with 200 participants.

Queer books for younger readers have saved lives, as children and teens who struggle with their own developing identity increasingly see their challenges reflected in fiction and know they are not alone.

Bum books, for all their good points, aren't quite so noble.

But if they can ban the bum, they can ban anything – and that should worry us.

But if they can ban the bum, they can ban anything – and that should worry us.

6.5 From Sleeping Beauty to the Frog Prince – Why We Shouldn't Ban Fairytales

Source.⁸¹

Recently, an English mother, Sarah Hall, prompted worldwide media coverage in response to her suggestion that Sleeping Beauty should be removed from the school curriculum for young children because of the “inappropriate sexual message” it sends about consent.

It's not the only time fairytales have come under scrutiny recently. They are increasingly being targeted for “banning” within schools or avoidance by parents because of their perceived sexism, passive princesses, and reinforcement of marriage as girls' ultimate goal. But can fairy tales actually be harmful as their critics believe?



'Snow White' by the Brothers Grimm, as illustrated by Camille Rose Garcia. Flickr CC

Fairy tales were once told – and then written – by adults for adult audiences. Early versions of many tales were often bawdy, salacious and

⁸¹ Michelle Smith, Senior Lecturer in Literary Studies, Monash University; This article is republished from The Conversation under a Creative Commons license: CC-BY-ND. 02 Jan 18.

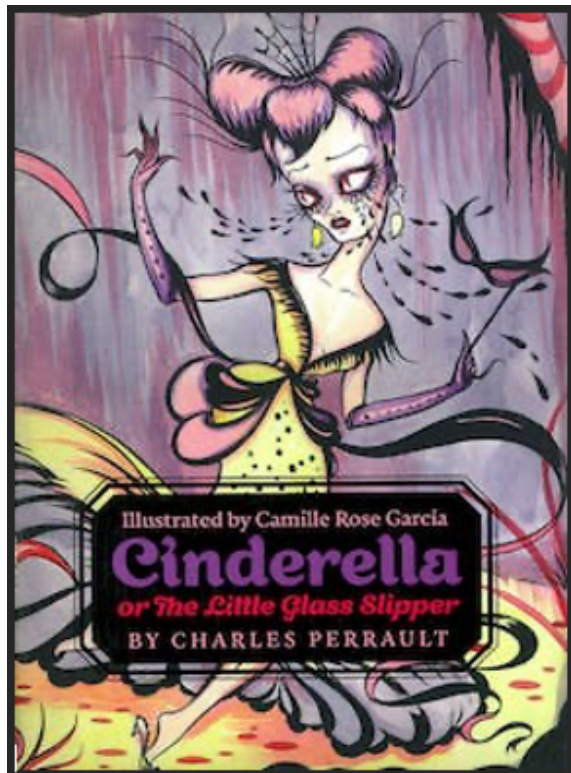
replete with sexual innuendo. Since the Grimm Brothers removed these elements to reconfigure the fairy tale for children in the early 19th century, fairy tales have been seen as ideal, imaginative stories for young people. Almost all of us know the most popular stories from childhood reading or Disney films.

Tradition is not reason enough to continue a cultural practice that has become outmoded. Nevertheless, there are a range of reasons why these calls to restrict children from reading fairy tales such as Sleeping Beauty are misguided.

Children's literature needn't model 'ideal' behaviour

Initially, most children's literature was didactic and preoccupied with instructing children in correct morals and drilling them with information.

Adult readers today would struggle to find any pleasure in children's literature prior to 1850, let alone today's kids. In order to provide "delight" as well as "instruction", children's books represent a range of behaviour, including, in the case of fairy tales, the attempted murder of children, and punishments such as feet being severed and birds pecking out human eyes.



In Charles Perrault's version of Cinderella, or the Little Glass Slipper (illustrated by Camille Rose Garcia) Cinderella leaves behind a glass slipper. Flickr CC

Charles Perrault was the French author who added the famous motifs of the glass slipper and pumpkin coach to the Cinderella tale. In his version of *Sleeping Beauty*, after the Princess and the Prince marry in secret and have two children, the Prince's mother is entirely unimpressed. Unsurprisingly within a fairy tale, the Prince's mother is descended from ogres and she demands that the two children be killed and eaten for dinner by the whole family, with the macabre detail that the boy is to be served with Sauce Robert.

As in *Snow White*, in which the Huntsman refuses to kill the heroine and substitutes an animal heart for that of Snow White's, no actual harm comes to the princess or her children but not before the ogress has prepared a tub full of vipers in a typical last-ditch attempt at villainy.

When we consider the norms of evil and violence in fairy tales – most of which are usually punished – it is bizarre to imagine every detail serving as a behavioural model for children. If we insisted that every character in children's literature behaved precisely as we wish to teach children to

behave then we would likely be presenting bland stories that no child would actually read.

Considering plot points in context

If we focus on one plot point, like the kiss in Sleeping Beauty, we can overlook the overall narrative context.

Within the tale, it becomes legend that the sleeping spell that has been cast on the Princess will only be broken after one-hundred years by the kiss of a king's son. The narrative premise includes a premonition about how the magic will unfold and demands the resolution of the prince's kiss to "save" the princess who must wait to be returned to consciousness.

While we might critique the emphasis on romance and passivity from a feminist perspective, the idea that the tale is promoting the equivalent of a Steubenville scenario in which an unconscious young woman is sexually assaulted ignores the magical logic of the fantasy world.

By that measure, we might see Prince Charming as a maniacal stalker as he demands all women in the kingdom try on the glass slipper in order to track down the attractive girl who failed to slip him her address before running off from the ball.

In Sleeping Beauty, it is significant that the Prince is told about the Princess being doomed to sleep until she is awakened by a king's son. The Prince recognises that he is one of few people who can end the curse and resolves to tackle the brambles and thorns that surround the castle in which she is trapped in slumber.

Significantly, in the Grimms' version, Little Briar-Rose, numerous young men try to push themselves through the thorny hedge and die miserably in the attempt. However the hedge turns into flowers for the Prince and allows him through. Only the right man, with the right motivations, and the one who can release the Princess from the curse – is permitted through.

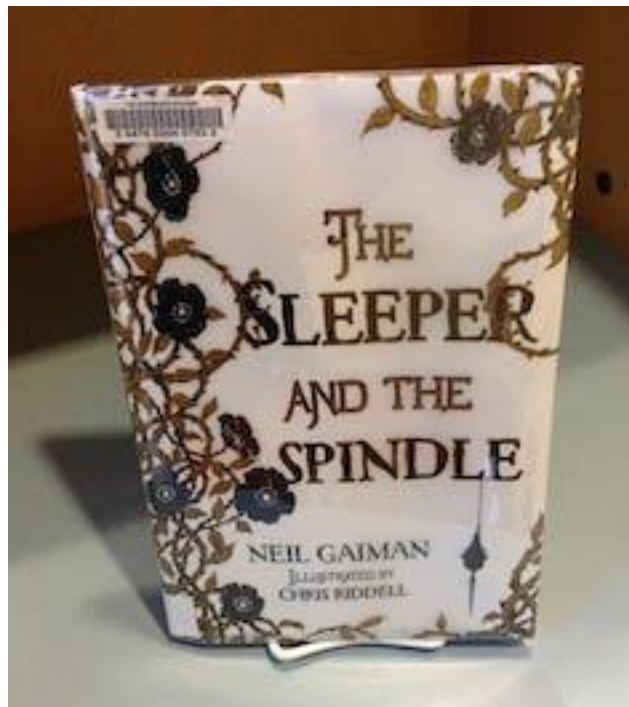
Rather than being a parallel to a kiss taken without consent, the Sleeping Beauty kiss is akin to a paramedic giving mouth-to-mouth resuscitation to an unconscious person who would most usually want to be revived.

Many versions of every fairy tale

The version of Sleeping Beauty targeted in the UK is part of the “Biff, Chip and Kipper” series designed to teach children to read. These books aim to educate children in the mechanics of reading and, as such, some of the literary nuance, symbolism, and visual artistry present in many fairy tales and picture books based upon them are no doubt lacking.

It is important to recall that there is no definitive version of a fairy tale. Calls for “bans” of a particular tale ignore variations between, say, Perrault's Sleeping Beauty complete with cannibalistic, viper-wielding ogress and the Grimms' less violent adaptation.

Rather than eschewing fairy tales entirely, parents and educators would be better placed to look to quality adaptations and retellings by outstanding children's authors, such as Neil Gaiman's The Sleeper and the Spindle, which merges Snow White and Sleeping Beauty.



Neil Gaiman's The Sleeper and the Spindle. Flickr CC

In this tale, the Queen sets out on a journey armed with a sword to save the Princess and is the one who rescues her through a kiss.

There is even a picture book version called Sleeping Bobby in which the gender roles are entirely reversed. Numerous parodies such as John Scieszka's The Frog Prince Continued, in which the Princess's married life with the frog is far from "happily ever after", can also be a way for older readers to begin to question and play with the conventional gender expectations of some fairy tales.

Reweaving old stories into new

Fairy tales have been undergoing a continuous process of being rewoven into new stories for hundreds of years.

Just as many old tales have fallen out of favour and are no longer known, so too might some contemporary favourites eventually stop being told to children, potentially replaced by reworked versions or entirely new stories.

This storytelling method of old wine being poured into new bottles has a rich tradition and does not require our intervention. After all, the people who ban books in stories are always the villains, not the heroes.

6.6 Cat in a Spat: Scrapping Dr. Seuss Books is Not Cancel Culture

Source.⁸²

Let's start by putting aside the bugbear that it is even possible to “cancel” children's author Dr Seuss.

As Philip Bump wrote yesterday in The Washington Post,

No one is ‘cancelling’ Dr Seuss. The author, himself, is dead for one thing, which is about as cancelled as a person can get.

Laying aside a multimillion-dollar publishing business, tattered copies of Dr Seuss books clutter children's bedrooms around the globe. Parents still grapple nightly with the tongue-twisters of Fox in Socks, Horton Hears a Who! or Hop on Pop, and try their best to keep their eyes open through a 20th reading of Green Eggs and Ham.

However, on Tuesday (what would have been Dr Seuss's 117th birthday), the company that protects the late author's legacy announced its plan to halt publishing and licensing six (out of more than 60) Dr Seuss books.

Few would know some of the discontinued titles, like McElligot's Pool and The Cat's Quizzer. However, many will recognise If I Ran the Zoo and And to Think That I Saw it on Mulberry Street, which have been criticised for racist caricatures and themes of cultural dominance and dehumanisation.

In If I Ran the Zoo, young Gerald McGrew builds a “Bad-Animal Catching Machine” to capture a turbaned Arab for his exhibit of “unusual beasts”.

⁸² Kate Cantrell, Lecturer in Writing, Editing, and Publishing, University of Southern Queensland & Sharon Bickle, Lecturer in English Literature, QLD rep for Australian Women's and Gender Studies Association, University of Southern Queensland; This article is republished from The Conversation under a Creative Commons license: CC-BY-ND. 03 March 21.

“People will stare,” Gerald marvels, “And they’ll say, ‘What a sight!’”. Chinese “helpers” with “eyes at a slant” hunt exotic creatures in the mountains of Zomba-ma-Tant.

A reading recorded for Dr Seuss Day in 2019, removes the racist taunt. Instead of helpers who “wear their eyes at a slant”, the helpers “all wear such very cool pants”.

Nevertheless, pervasive racial imagery and subservient typecasting remain. That doesn’t mean Dr Seuss books should — or can — be scrapped altogether. Instead, these books present an opportunity to build awareness and teach young readers about history and context.

Censorship in children’s titles

Children’s books are among those most often banned or censored. In this case, removing the Dr Seuss titles recognises that he was writing in a time and place when racial stereotyping was commonplace and frequently the focus of humour.

Elsewhere, controversy over golliwogs as racist caricatures was confrontingly played out in Enid Blyton’s Noddy stories. In her original telling of In the Dark, Dark Wood, Noddy is carjacked by three golliwogs who trap him, strip him naked, and leave him crying. “You bad, wicked golliwogs!” Noddy says. “How dare you steal my things!”

Similarly, in the first edition of Roald Dahl’s Charlie and the Chocolate Factory, the Oompa-Loompas are African pygmies who have been “rescued” by Willy Wonka and enslaved in his factory. When Charlie says, “But there must be people working there,” Grandpa Joe responds, “Not people, Charlie. Not ordinary people, anyway.”

In his political cartoons, which appeared in a New York newspaper in the early 1940s, Dr Seuss ran the gamut of racist depictions, from African-American people as monkeys to Japanese characters with yellow faces and “rice paddy” hats.

In the now-suspended The Cat's Quizzer, there is “a Japanese” depicted in conical hat and stereotypical dress. On Mulberry Street, a Chinese man with bright yellow skin wears geta shoes and carries a bowl of rice.

In early editions, the caption underneath reads “A Chinaman who eats with sticks”. In 1978, over 40 years after the book was first published, the character's skin tone and braid were changed. The caption was changed from “Chinaman” to “Chinese man”.

If I ran the library ... by today's standards

Dr Seuss's work contains racism and xenophobia, but should we judge him by today's standards?

Children's literature has always been subject to socio-historical shifts. It is a product of its time and the context in which it is created. Viewed through the changing lens of history, childhood itself is an unstable concept.

In other words, it is impossible to separate children's literature from the ideological structure of our world, and from the particular historical moment in which it is produced.

While Dr Seuss's best-loved characters — the Cat in the Hat, Horton the elephant, the Grinch — have earned their place in the canon, what we should be concerned about is the question of diversity in children's literature.

We know from numerous studies that white children dominate children's books, with talking animals and trains outnumbering the representations of First Nations, Asian, African and other minority groups.

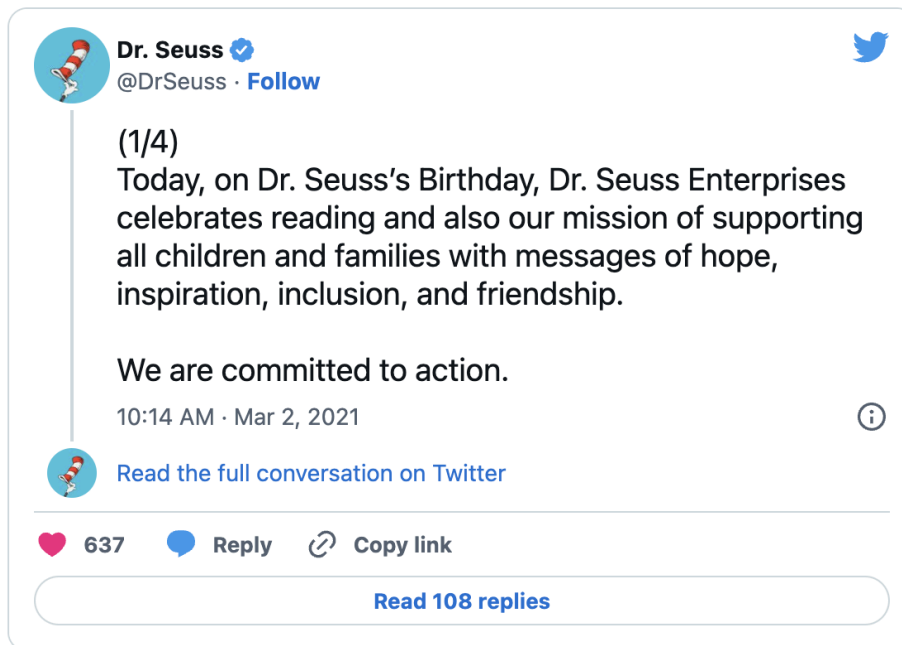
No quick fixes

Although never perfect, other beloved children's literature series have sought solutions to similar dilemmas.

Enid Blyton's stories have been continuously revised since the 1990s. Noddy is now carjacked by goblins, and, in the Faraway Tree series, Dame Snap replaces Dame Slap, with Fanny and Dick getting a makeover as Frannie and Rick.

More recently, Richard Scarry's books were updated to depict Daddies cooking and Mummies going to work, while the latest film adaptation of *The Witches* cast actor of colour Jahzir Bruno as the boy protagonist.

Not surprisingly, queer representation in young adult fiction is still problematic, with most queer stories authored by writers who do not identify as queer.



On one level, the decision to discontinue half a dozen Dr Seuss books because “they are hurtful and wrong” seems a simple gesture (and one with relatively small financial impact). Racism permeates the Dr Seuss catalogue, including *The Cat in the Hat*'s origins in blackface minstrel performances. Like Dr Seuss's Yertle, it's turtles all the way down.

Instead, finding meaningful ways to contextualise these historical aspects for young readers today might be a better focus, rather than withholding a few and letting more prominent titles slide by.

Kids and teens, like adults, need to see themselves in the books they read, and young white readers need to see other cultural groups as something more than illegal, or violent, or criminal.

As children's literature expert Perry Nodelman notes: "Stories structure us as beings in the world". In the same week a Lowy study found one in five Chinese Australians have been threatened or attacked, it could not be more important to invest in an inclusive future for our kids.

Chapters 6.3-6.6 Questions for Reflection:

- Have you read a banned book?
- "Books don't brainwash. They represent ideas." (Jason Reynolds in June 2022 on a CNN segment about book bans) Is this true or false? Why?
- Why do we need to protect children's innocence?
- How can we have uncomfortable conversations?
- "Not surprisingly, queer representation in young adult fiction is still problematic, with most queer stories authored by writers who do not identify as queer." What do you make of this statement?
- <insert questions created by students>

6.7 Four Celebrity Children's Book Authors Who Are Actually Worth a Damn

Source.⁸³

There was an article a few weeks ago on [Deadspin](#) – titled “If You Give A Mouse A Cookie, You're F*****: 10 Tips For Avoiding Terrible Children's Books” by Drew Magary – that I thought was fantastic because, beneath Magary's good-natured vitriol and snark, he gave some really perceptive, insightful advice about trying to steer your kids away from lowest common denominator reading material. (His recommended reading list at the end of the article is particularly good.)

While I couldn't stop nodding at tips like “Avoid repetitive books”, “Do not buy fancy pop-up books,” or “NEVER buy a DK reader book”, I was surprised to actually find myself pausing when I got to Magary's last tip – “**NEVER buy a children's book written by a celebrity.**” (He then adds: “You already knew this. But just in case you were walking by [I Already Know I Love You](#) and thought, ‘Hey, maybe that one won't suck,’ SHUT UP. You should know better.”)

I'd admit, on the surface, **that is a fairly good tip.** There are a ridiculous number of celebrities who have dipped their toes into the children's literature arena – Madonna, Bill Cosby, Katie Couric, Billy Crystal, Ricky Gervais, Joy Behar, Gloria Estefan, Jeff Foxworthy, Jay Leno, Jerry Seinfeld, Terrell Owens, LeAnn Rimes, Brooke Shields, Maria Shriver, John Travolta, George Foreman, Jimmy Buffett, and Glenn Beck, to only name a small few. ([The Atlantic](#) published an intriguing article last year called “Dr. Seuss vs. Madonna: Can Celebrities Write Good Children's Books?”) While, full disclosure, I haven't read all of those particular celebrities' children's books, I've read enough of them to agree with the broad generalization that most celebrities need to realize that just because they **CAN** write a kids' book, it doesn't mean that they **SHOULD**.

However, the key phrase in that generalization is “MOST celebrities” because, again, if I'm being honest and I HATE to admit this, I **DO** know some wonderful kids' books that have been written by celebrities. And,

⁸³ Used with permission from blogger Tom Burns.
<https://www.buildingalibrary.com/picture-books/four-celebrity-childrens-book-authors-who-are-actually-worth-a-damn/382> CC-BY-NC-ND.

while, yes, MOST celebrities do write underwhelming, self-indulgent, half-assed kids' books, there are a few legitimately famous people who have written some really strong, savvy children's titles that I'm proud to have in our home library. So, to add a quick addendum to the whole "avoid celebrity kids' books" rule, here are my picks for **four celebrity children's book authors who are actually worth a damn.**

Michael Ian Black

I'm actually surprised that more comedians don't write children's books. A strong sense of humor and a skewed worldview seem to be two qualities that both kids' authors and comedians would share in spades. However, I just haven't encountered many children's titles authored by famous comedians and the few I have (I'm thinking of Jay Leno and Jerry Seinfeld's books) seemed disjointed, overwrought, and weirdly reliant on the reader having a working knowledge of the comedian's on-stage persona, which, c'mon, is an odd expectation for the 7 and under crowd. That being said, there are a few professional funny people who have been able to translate their humor for young readers and, case in point, I think Michael Ian Black, in particular, has done a first-class job in really proving that he's a skilled and shrewd author for children.

For those unfamiliar, Michael Ian Black is a very funny comic actor and writer whom you know from MTV's The State, NBC's Ed, VH1's I Love the Decades series, Wet Hot American Summer, and the Comedy Central series Stella and Michael & Michael Have Issues. He's also gotten into publishing as of late, releasing a recent essay collection and memoir, and, most importantly to me, authoring some very, very funny picture books. What I really respect about Black's kids' books is that he didn't just take his established comedic persona and try to graft it onto 32-pages of kid-appropriate material. (That'd be like Louis CK trying to do a 10-minute, G-rated set at a Chuck E. Cheese.) Instead, Black took his twisted comedic perspective and used it to create some really fun, silly, and engaging story scenarios that are perfectly suited for a kid's sensibilities.

In The Purple Kangaroo, Black offers a hysterical riff on the old "don't think of pink elephants" scenario, in which a very animated monkey talks directly to his readers, promising to read their minds. The monkey then offers an over-the-top description of a crazy purple kangaroo – complete

with hula-hoops, roller skates, and more – ends with the declaration that, if you weren't thinking of a purple kangaroo before, "You're thinking of one now!" (My daughter reacted to this final punchline like a college student watching the end of The Usual Suspects for the first time. She was delightfully floored.) He also authored Chicken Cheeks, a great picture book about a bear stacking up a bunch of animals to reach some honey – and the majority of the text is just short, extremely funny ways to describe the rear-ends of animals. As the animal tower grows and each creature is forced to deal with the posterior of the animal above them, Black keeps dropping brief phrases like "duck tail," "moose caboose," "chicken cheeks," and "polar bear derriere", which... it's a book about finding creative ways to name animal butts – it's like *The Wire* for a four-year-old.

Black just seems to understand how children appreciate absurdist humor. If he's going to write a book about animal butts, he's going to write a really crazy, clever, and fun book about animal butts. In his third book, A Pig Parade Is a Terrible Idea, he takes something that is fundamental and familiar in children's books – animals acting like humans – and gets into a very funny discussion of why that concept would just be a disaster waiting to happen in reality (for example, "the only floats pigs care about are root beer floats"). And Black gets extra points for picking such fantastic collaborators to work with. Some celebrity kids' books look like they were illustrated by Microsoft clip art, but Black has chosen to work with talented, acclaimed artists like Peter Brown (Children Make Terrible Pets, The Curious Garden), Kevin Hawkes (Library Lion, Weslandia), and Debbie Ohi, who's illustrating his new book, I'm Bored, which comes out later this year. Black isn't just writing children books to create cute gift items for parents who are into his stand-up act. He's writing kids' books FOR KIDS and he's working with some of the best people in the children's lit industry to bring those books to life. He definitely deserves to be an exception to the "no celebrity authors" rule.

Julianne Moore

This one came as a big surprise to me. It's just not fair that a gorgeous Oscar-nominated actress, who has also proven that she's funny as hell on shows like 30 Rock, can write lovely and perceptive kids' books too. (Don't you have enough, Ms. Moore?!) But I have no problem admitting

that Julianne Moore's Freckleface Strawberry books are completely charming and wonderful for a whole host of reasons.

We discovered Freckleface Strawberry thanks to Save the Children's 2012 Valentine's Day cards, a series of valentines, illustrated by big-name kids' book creators, that were sold to help raise money to fight children's poverty. My daughter was SO excited to have these cards to pass out for her first Valentine's Day in kindergarten and she loved that she was familiar with almost all of the illustrators, a killer group including Mo Willems, Ian Falconer, Brian Selznick, and Kevin Henkes. BUT there was one valentine that we weren't familiar with – a really cool picture of a cute, freckled girl and her friend that was illustrated by someone named LeUyen Pham. A few weeks after Valentine's Day, we were at a bookstore and my daughter excitedly declared, "Look, Dad! It's the people from my valentine! Can we read this?" And that was our introduction to Freckleface Strawberry.

We've only read two of Moore's three books so far – Freckleface Strawberry and Freckleface Strawberry: Best Friends Forever (haven't gotten to Freckleface Strawberry and the Dodgeball Bully yet) – but they've quickly become family favorites. Moore's writing style reminds me of the great Florence Parry Heide, in that, like Heide, Moore is able to write in very simple, clever, and clear prose in a way that sounds just so perfectly kid-like that it always feels like the book is being narrated straight out of a child's subconscious. The characters in the Freckleface books just seem alive and multifaceted – no one feels like a cliché or a stock character. The first book, Freckleface Strawberry, is all about how a girl named Helen, a girl with a shock of red hair and a ton of freckles, deals with her anxieties about looking different than the rest of her classmates. Her freckles are a big source of concern for Helen, particularly after she's given the nickname "Freckleface Strawberry," but she soon comes to revel in her freckled self and finds ways to appreciate her individuality.

In Freckleface Strawberry: Best Friends Forever, Freckleface and her best friend Windy Pants Patrick (who has an even better nickname) find themselves draw apart by playground gender politics – simply put, the boys ask Patrick why he's always hanging out with a girl and the girls ask Freckleface why she'd want to hang out with a boy. I particularly

love Best Friends Forever because, with a kid in her first year of kindergarten, I'm seeing our daughter living through some very similar scenarios – she was recently the only girl invited to a *Star Wars*-themed birthday party – and Moore really captures the ways that children can get caught up in worrying about how other kids perceive the concept of “being different”.

Ultimately, the Freckleface Strawberry books are about children learning to embrace their unique qualities and celebrating their differences as strengths, and what I really like about Moore as an author is that she's able to pull off stories like that without resorting to schmaltz, drama, or heavy moralizing. There are brief moments of thoughtfulness and angst in Freckleface Strawberry, but they're handled in such a subtle fashion that Moore is able to convey a ton of emotion in small understated ways. And, while I was really impressed with Moore's smart command of story and humor, it has to be said that illustrator LeUyen Pham does more than her share of heavy lifting in the Freckleface books. Frankly, Pham is my favorite new illustrator I've encountered in a long while – her deft animated style does an amazing job of bringing emotion to her characters and reminds me, in a very positive way, of the work Tony Fucile did on the Geisel Award-winning Bink & Gollie.

So, to sum up, life's not fair. Pretty, award-winning actresses can also write whimsical, insightful children's books too. Ah well. But Julianne Moore's Freckleface Strawberry is such a great literary creation that it's kind of hard to hold it against her.

Jamie Lee Curtis

I'm just going to put this out there – even though I am an enormous fan of Jamie Lee Curtis, particularly her work in movies like Trading Places, A Fish Called Wanda, and True Lies – I didn't really think I was going to like her children's books. Curtis got on my radar very early once I started my “building a library” project because, to be frank, she's probably the best known (and best-selling) celebrity children's author writing today. Her books are baby shower staples, they're some of the few kids' titles you can find at big, non-bookstore outlets like Target... they're everywhere. And, on the surface, Curtis' titles like I'm Gonna Like Me: Letting Off a Little Self Esteem and Is There Really a Human Race just seemed way too

earnest and corny to break through my cynical, anti-establishment exterior. I lumped Curtis' books in with all the other Guess How Much I Love You gift books out there and dismissed them completely.

And then, inevitably, we got several of her books at our baby shower and, after begrudgingly reading a few to our young daughter, I quickly realized why Curtis' books are seemingly everywhere nowadays.

It's because they're good. They're really, really good.

Yes, Curtis wears her heart on her sleeve. SO WHAT? Is it so wrong to create a snark-free environment for kids? Is it so wrong that Curtis wants to actually and openly address emotions like parental and familial love without resorting to fart jokes and sarcasm? The answer, of course, is NO, and, in her tremendous partnership with illustrator Laura Cornell, Curtis has created a series of very astute and entertaining picture books that do a marvelous job of helping kids grasp some extremely abstract concepts. Fair warning – we haven't read all of Curtis' books, but thanks to her titles like Is There Really a Human Race and Today I Feel Silly: And Other Moods That Make My Day, I've had some fantastic discussions with my daughter about emotions, humanity, cultural differences, growing up, being angry – a whole host of big, big topics that Curtis and Cornell make accessible and explainable for young minds.

Our particular favorite of Curtis' books is Big Words for Little People, a book that, on more than one occasion, my daughter has hugged it to her chest and declared, "This is my very favorite book EVER." (Granted, she does that with a different book every few weeks, but it's still a big honor and Big Words has worked its way into that rotation more than once.) Big Words does a really fantastic job of explaining to kids how big emotions and concepts can be expressed through vocabulary, which is a really interesting way to get children thinking about language. My daughter was determined to learn many of the big words Curtis describes throughout the book, and there's one page, in particular – where the cast of characters act out words like "stupendous", "superb", "kingly," "gracefully", etc. – that I will always adore because it was one of the first pages, in any book, where my daughter memorized every single word. Heck, we've read Big Words enough that I've almost got it memorized

myself and Laura Cornell's illustrations are so intricate and deep that it seems like we find new details every time we read it.

So, are Jamie Lee Curtis' books sarcastic, meta, or too clever for their own good? Are they dripping with hipster klout and references that your kid won't get until they're teenagers? No. And that's a good thing. Because, while I'm a big fan of meta and clever myself, there is something to be said about occasionally leaving cynicism at the playroom door and being able to talk to your kids about concepts like love, respect, and family without worrying that you're not being cool enough. Yes, Curtis' prose is earnest and sometimes falls on the wrong side of the cheesy line, but, a large majority of the time, her books do a very admirable job of helping children digest and express all of the tricky abstract emotions that come with being a kid. And, as a parent, I find that way more impressive than farting dogs or pop culture references.

Weird Al Yankovic

Speaking of pop culture references... let's just get this out of the way, as a kid, I was OBSESSED with Weird Al. Totally obsessed. Thanks to him, I don't think I bought a non-parody music album until I was in high school and I fondly remember organizing my friends and family to go see a preview screening of UHF, which I saw in the theatres 3 or 4 times. Weird Al was a huge part of my childhood, so, full disclosure, he ranks pretty high on my nostalgia meter.

That being said, when Al Yankovic released his first kids' book in early 2011, When I Grow Up, I actively avoided it. Why? Because I was convinced that either a). I'd be unable to judge it objectively without wearing rose-colored glasses or b). it wouldn't be good and I'd hate it. So, a few months ago, when my daughter came up to me at our local library, handed me a copy of When I Grow Up, and asked me to read it to her, I was definitely apprehensive. I just didn't know what to expect.

Fortunately, When I Grow Up turned out to be a really pleasant surprise. There are hundreds, perhaps thousands, of books about show and tell and/or kids discussing what they want to be when they grow up, so, on the surface, the premise of Yankovic's picture book wasn't really anything to write home about. However, Yankovic was able to turn his take on the

subject into a truly unique experience by utilizing two of the most dominant traits of his songwriting – his absurd sense of humor and his skill with lyrical meter. Simply put, When I Grow Up is a tremendous read-aloud book. I know some parents don't like books that rhyme, but Yankovic's text is so expertly crafted and has such a fun, easy-to-lock-onto rhythm that I found it a joy to read aloud. A lot of children's authors don't understand that rhyming isn't everything – that poetry not only needs rhyme, but it also needs rhythm and meter – and I've encountered way, way too many awkwardly phrased “rhyming books” where you can't go two pages without tripping over a clumsy passage.

Fortunately, the phrasing of When I Grow Up is fast, rhythmic, and clear, which allows you, as a reader, to pay way more attention to what's actually being said. And that's great because When I Grow Up is also packed with fun wordplay and a nicely bent sense of humor. The story revolves around eight-year-old Billy, who's giving an epic show-and-tell presentation, where he's waxing rhapsodic on all of amazing potential jobs he could try when he finally grows up. The jobs are where Yankovic's humor really shines as Billy imagines professions like a gigantic lathe operator, a gorilla masseuse, a sumo wrestler, or a pickle inspector, to name a few.

Wes Hargis' illustrations do a great job of keeping up with Billy's flights of fancy and, again, I can't compliment Yankovic enough for the way in which he turned When I Grow Up into a really lyrical read-aloud experience. My daughter loved the ongoing lunacy of Billy's presentation and, as the text reached a crescendo – the way in which the best songs do – I could feel her excitement follow right along with it. Yankovic has only written the one picture book at the moment, but I think he brings something really unique and fun to the world of kids' lit, so I hope it's not his last.

Final Addendum and Honorable Mentions

There are two other celebrities that I didn't include on this list that I wanted to mention – if only because my daughter ADORES both of them, thanks largely to their appearances on The Muppet Show. The first is the legendary Julie Andrews, who has written a wealth of children's books throughout her career. I have heard that she's an excellent writer, but, full

disclosure, we haven't actually read any of her books yet, so I felt odd including her on the list. But we will now be checking out some Julie Andrews' books from the library soon.

The second celebrity is the great Steve Martin. He's written two children's titles: Late for School, which we haven't read yet, and The Alphabet from A to Y With Bonus Letter Z!, illustrated by Roz Chast. My daughter spent months obsessed with Martin's alphabet book and still loves it to this day. I'm planning on writing a longer review of The Alphabet from A to Y soon, which is why I left it off this list. But, if you're interested, it's definitely worth a damn and my daughter recommends it highly.

6.8 3 Campaigns Spreading the Joy of Reading to Children at Home

Source.⁸⁴

- More than 90% of students worldwide have been affected by lockdowns.
- Children's authors, illustrators and teachers are reading books and providing lockdown tips via social media.
- More than 100 celebrities have read books on Instagram to raise money to provide lunches to American children.

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected more than 1.5 billion students across the globe with 192 country-wide closures, according to UNESCO's latest figures. To help calm children in isolation, authors and celebrities have put together unique digital storytime initiatives to help spread the joy of reading until school can start again.

#ReadTheWorld Campaign

On 2 April – International Children's Book Day – the International Publishers Association, UNICEF and World Health Organization (WHO) launched the #ReadTheWorld campaign.

The virtual series features children's authors reading excerpts of their books online for millions of children to enjoy.

Italian author Elisabetta Dami was the first to participate, sitting alongside her protagonist Geronimo Stilton, a character known and loved around the world. Together, they read, answered questions and explained the importance of staying at home to young viewers.

To the delight of the adults listening over their children's shoulders, Elisabetta and Geronimo even suggested fun ways for kids to contribute around the house and help alleviate their parents' workload.

⁸⁴ Kaya Bülbül, Digital Producer; World Economic Forum. "3 campaigns spreading the joy of reading to children at home." 14 Apr 2020. <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/04/covid19-coronavirus-reading-books-online-social-media-authors/> World Economic Forum articles may be republished in accordance with the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International Public License, and in accordance with our Terms of Use. The views expressed in this article are those of the author alone and not the World Economic Forum.

Save with Stories

American actresses Amy Adams and Jennifer Garner launched Save with Stories, an Instagram account where celebrities read children's books aloud to raise money for charity.

In the US alone, 30 million children rely on school lunches in order to be fed. For this reason, the duo teamed up with charities [Save the Children](#) and [No Kid Hungry](#) to raise money for students at home who may need food, books and more.

In the three weeks since the launch of their account, more than 100 celebrities have already joined the cause and posted videos of themselves reading.

#OperationStorytime

Meanwhile [Romper](#), the self-titled "digital destination for millennial moms," has created #OperationStorytime. The campaign has a constant stream of authors, illustrators and teachers reading books to children. This includes Scott's [Studio Storytime](#), where children's author Scott Magoon reads and draws stories in front of viewers once a week.

His latest video story stars Hugo, an artist who thinks he's already seen and painted everything in his house – a sentiment that no doubt resonates for many stuck inside right now.

All of these authors and celebrities offer opportunities for children around the world to travel without leaving their homes – and as Hugo learns in his story, sometimes a change of perspective is all it takes, for inspiration to strike.

Chapters 6.7 & 6.8 Questions for Reflection:

- Have you read a children's book – or any book – by a "celebrity"? What did you think?
- Do you think "celebrities" should be children's literature authors? Why or why not?

- Without doing any research, how do you think a pandemic affects literacy skills in children and teens?
- What other topics – controversial or not – are missing from this textbook?



Image by Annie Spratt on [Unsplash](#).

CHAPTER SEVEN | Projects

Source.⁸⁵ Note.⁸⁶

Large Projects in Alphabetical Order

Annotated Bibliography #1: Have the students choose one text that was read for class, and then search for every piece of critical material that they can find on the text. The students will write one-paragraph summaries of the articles that they found. This can be used as a springboard for a later project, or it can be an ending point itself as an exercise in research and learning the topics and issues in children's literature. You may want to consider having the students give presentations on what they found, to expose the class to different aspects of children's literature studies.

Annotated Bibliography #2. Each student will find 10 picture books on one topic or by one author or illustrator. They will then compile an Annotated Bibliography, with annotations that not only summarize the text, but discuss the visual aspects of the books, as well.

Author Project. The students will choose one author and read at least two of his or her works; students who choose picture books should choose at least three to five texts. They will then find one or more theme, image or motif that runs through all of this writers' work. The students will then create a project/report doing a close reading that explores how this same theme works through multiple texts.

Book Award Project. There are many awards given to children's books for many different things.⁸⁷ Examples include The Coretta Scott King Award, The Phoenix Award, and the Mythopoeic Fantasy Award for Children's Literature. The students will begin by choosing an award that sounds interesting to them and researching it. The first part of the project will explain what the award is given for, who gives the award, how long it has been in existence and anything else that is interesting or important about it. Then the students will read one book that has received that award and discuss it in light of the issues that have been brought up in class.

⁸⁵ Various random assignments from syllabus samples for a textbook titled *Crosscurrents of Children's Literature*. Creative Commons license unknown. Original source was linked from Merlot.org: <http://www2.ferrum.edu/thanlon/cocl/instructorresources.htm>

⁸⁶ This chapter applies the following course objective: "Combine and apply the informative and analytical skills acquired in this course in research papers using credible reference/literary resources & Apply MLA guidelines accurately to cite sources."

⁸⁷ There is an award chapter, or sub-chapter, in this textbook to assist you in choosing an award to dive into.

Book to Movie Project. For this project, the students will read one book and watch one movie based on that book. For the first part of the project, the students will compare changes: what is different between the two? For the second part, they will look at the cultural implications of these adaptations: what does it mean that these things have been changed? Changes may be based on gender, race, imagery, etc.

Challenged Book Project – YA. Many books labeled YA are the very books that are banned or challenged; often that challenge has something to do with gender or sexuality. Each student will read one challenged YA book and do some background research. They will then give a five-minute presentation (or create an infographic/slidedeck/etc.) explaining where, when and why the book was challenged, and will give any responses to that challenge that they can find or deduce.

Challenged Book Project – Children’s Lit. Each student will choose one children’s book that has been challenged or banned somewhere in America. They will research the nature of the challenge, and then, using specific examples from the book as well as other sources, they will explain their own analysis of the text.

Comparison of Language Project. The purpose of this project is to make the student more consciously aware that there are differences in English-speaking cultures, and that therefore, America has a distinct culture of its own that can be explored and studied. For this paper, students will need to read two books. The first will be any American children’s text that they choose; the second will be an English, Canadian or Australian book of the same genre, with the same basic themes, published at roughly the same time. An example would be Little Women and Anne of Green Gables. The student will then choose one main point of comparison between the two, such as gender, or the way both books deal with death (etc.). The student will then create a project exploring the differences and similarities in the way that an American writer and a non-American, English-speaking writer present the same issues.

Critical Review Project. This paper serves multiple purposes: first, to familiarize students with the journals that publish articles on children's literature; second, to get students to begin to think about topics they find interesting in children's literature; third, to have students begin thinking about their own assumptions regarding children and children's literature. Students will pick an author, book, or topic in children's literature that they would like to read about. At this point, help students discover library resources that are available. In the paper, the students will do three things. First, they will explain how they found their articles; then they will write a quick summary of the article. The final part of the project will focus on the students' response. Students can focus on what aspects of the article were difficult to understand and show exactly what was unclear. Students can choose to explain why they feel that the article is either right or wrong. Students should also write about what they would do next if they wanted to continue researching this particular topic.

Disney Project. Pick a Disney movie and analyze the cultural implications of what it does with the story it is based on.

Fairy Tale Project. Students will choose one fairy tale and find at three to five versions of it. They will then create a project/report with three parts: first, they will introduce the time and place in which each version was produced. Then they will write about changes that have occurred across time and culture. Finally, the students will spend time analyzing the cultural implications of the variations. The students don't need sources other than the variants of the fairy tales, but if they want to use them, that is fine. Be sure to discuss dangers of oversimplifying the cultural significance of fairy-tale images before students complete this project.⁸⁸

Fairy Tale Redo. Revise the middle and/or ending of a famous fairy tale.

Fantasy Project. Each student will read one YA fantasy book and show how, even though it is fantasy, it explores the same issues that realistic or historical young adult fiction does.

⁸⁸ SurLaLuneFairyTales.com by Heidi Anne Heiner is a great source for locating variants of classic fairy tales.

Historical YA Project. Each student will choose one YA novel and create a project/report explaining how the book reflects the values of its time and showing where the text fits in with the history of YA literature.

Media YA Project. Young Adults take in their stories from many other sources besides the traditional book. This includes Manga, graphic novels, video games, film, television series and commercials, anime, magazines, web sites.... This project involves researching one media form for young adults, exploring the history and development of that form, as well as exploring the issues involved with that medium that directly relate to teens. That could include issues discussed in the media themselves; it could include issues that are brought up regarding that media.

The American Folktale Presentation. Each student will choose a different American folktale to work with. That student will research the background of the tale, and then find as many different versions of the story in as many different media as available. Obviously, some stories, such as Paul Bunyan, are going to be available in more forms than others, such as the African American folktales about John the Conqueror. The student will then give a presentation (or create an infographic/slidedeck/etc.), first telling the story to the class, then giving the background, followed by an explanation of what retellings have been found, audio, visual, and textual. The presentations could be enhanced by multimedia materials, if available on that particular story.

Small Projects

Collaborative Annotation and Collaborative Slidedecks. Using an app like Hypothesis or an editable Google Doc, students will comment and question a passage in the textbook or book. The same activity could be completed using an editable Google Slidedeck.

- ◇ Annotation is defined as: "a note of explanation or comment added to a text or diagram."

Padlet Collage. The class will create a visual collage using the web site Padlet. This might also be completed using the web site Canva.

Response Papers. At regular intervals, students may hand in one-page responses. In these papers the students will apply terms and concepts that have been discussed in class. Students can have a lot of freedom in these responses – the purpose is to get them thinking about what they are reading for class.

- ◇ They may compare a text read for class with a story they have encountered elsewhere. The goal here is to spend some time thinking about and working with the things we deal with in class. Bear in mind that “I like/I don’t like” are not valid responses in an academic setting.

Chapter 7 Exercises for Reflection:

- A. Your instructor may ask you to review all of these projects and give your feedback on which ones seem the most intriguing to you. You might be asked to rank the top 3-5 Large Project ideas from this chapter.
- B. <insert exercises created by students>

7.1 Example Exploratory Paper Draft

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Professor Laskin
Children's Literature
October 3, 2020

Exploratory Essay for Fairytale

There are many fairytales out there that start off with this phrase "Once upon a time..." and it ends with an "...happily ever after" that often happens to the main protagonists. Because these books contain supernatural's and magic, it makes young readers imagine all kinds of fantasies in this world that we do not know of. What young audience do not know is that there are often morals that are meant for these readers to understand, and not thrown at them like reality. The book The Red Shoes by Han Christian Anderson is one of the fairytale/folktale that I would like to explore with the help of The Uses of Enchantment by Brett Bettelheim to discover the meanings and symbolism behind this old folktale.

The story starts off by "Once there was..." which is what normal fairytales often start with, letting children or the reader think that this will often end with a happy ending for the protagonist. The girl while introduced is described as poor but beautiful and delicate. Introduces character with a hard past with a loss of a parent or both means that she loses the guidance that she needs to mature. In Bethlehem, "the child needs most particularly to be given suggestions in a symbolic form about how he may deal with these issues and grow safely into maturity." (19) She does not have shoes but will wear the big wooden shoes that rubbed her instep until quite red. Red can symbolize many things here. When the old shoemaker gifts little Karen with a red pair of shoes, the old shoemaker then becomes a "mother" figure for Karen as she feels bad for her and gives her a "red" material shoe. Red represents entering adolescence age, a sign for this girl to be mature and step out on her own. Mother dies and she goes to her grave, a way for her to move away from the past and start again. "it is here that fairy tales have unequal value because

⁸⁹ This example from Jessie is licensed CC-BY-NC-SA. <https://xzheng08.commons.gc.cuny.edu/exploratory-essay/>

they offer new dimensions to the child's imagination which would be impossible for him to discover as truly on his own" (18)

An old kind lady that decides to take care of little Karen was something special that happened to her. Her red shoe which then becomes her source of power. Red there can symbolize energy and vitality as she thinks its because of the shoes the old lady notices her and helps her out. "Karen has given neat, clean clothes. Now she had to learn to read and sew, and people said that she was pretty. But the mirror said, "You're much more than pretty – you're beautiful" shows that after accepting the shoe, she goes into this stage on "reborn", having a new type of life that she knows she will not have to suffer like in the past. The old kind lady, who is anonymous becomes the "mother" figure as she takes care of Karen for all her needs and making sure she lives in a better environment. The princess who was wearing a "lovely red shoe" gets spotted by Karen. When she picks it out from the shop, her temptations to wear a red shoe symbolizes her growing desire to get more people's attention. Because she wore a red shoe in the past, the lady takes notice and she now live a better life. She thinks of having more or "becoming like a princess" can satisfy a young girl's dream. She only notices her Id and does not realize that wanting something that does not belong to them can bring consequences. The old lady's blindness in the story gave Karen a chance to rebel because she knows that red is not a color to be confirmed in. She wants the red shoe no matter what, and with deception, in the end, she got the red shoe that I am assuming that the princess later did not want.

Everyone who stares at her knows that a person should not wear such colors to church. Red symbolizes the color of blood, and since it is a god-fearing church, they would avoid angering any deity, but for Karen, all she can think about are her red shoes. As children give in more into temptations, it becomes a dangerous obsession. Even when she is reminded that it is inappropriate and a horrible thing to do, she again still rebels because she is giving in to her obsession and would not let anything stop her. Up until she could not stop dancing, she would keep wearing the shoes wherever she goes, and people would stare. When her shoes could not stop dancing until they were forced and taken off for the first time, it was a warning sign that it is something that she should not again wear the shoe. To warn of the danger and to avoid it because the old lady got ill.

The old lady took care of her, so mutually trusted her that she will take care of her the same way. Religion was an important part of the story, but many times Karen has disobeyed the rules and continue with what she likes to do. As she sneaks out when the old lady was ill, and dancing during the night that was where she gets her punishment. In enchantment, "the girl cannot resist these temptations; she lies about it and in consequence, has to return to earth, mute" (25) Karen gets the same consequences for lying and not listening to the rules and is then cursed to dance until she can no longer dance or dies. It was a consequence for giving in to her temptations, for wanting more than what she already has. Like Cinderella, the stepmother already has an obedient daughter that would listen to her command, but instead, she mistreats her harshly which in the end suffers the consequence of dying wearing the hot red shoes. In Red Riding Hood, where the wolf could have left the forest full but gives in temptations and obsession of eating more, that he in the end fall to his demise.

Even when that the end, the executioner had to cut off her feet, the dancing shoes that still dances represent that even when you have decided on this road, it is going to follow you until you admit your mistake. What she is doing is just only running away from what happened, and by not facing her fears the shoes will continue to haunt her over and over, no matter where she runs. Whenever she decides to go to church but sees her red shoes and her feet still dancing in them, she begins terrified. This symbolizes that if one's heart is not truly feeling repentance for their action or sin, their fear will not go away. But when her prayer was wholehearted, she was finally able to face her fears, and face God that she has ignored for a while because of her temptations on her shoes, to ask for forgiveness. In the end, as her final moments where she truly felt repented for her sins, her soul flew up. In the fairytale, this type of ending is rather sad, it is not a normal happy ending or a sad ending. It has meanings that it teaches us that being too obsessed with something can lead to bad decisions but if truly want forgiveness, there will be eventual redemption. "a voice used to tell lies leads only to perdition; better we should be deprived of it...but a voice used to repent, to admit our failures and state the truth, redeems us." (24)

I believe in the end, the red shoes not actually real but are a constant reminder but eventually haunts her because that way it will always remind her. When she devices to the old lady about the color of the shoe, it causes her to be blind and only prioritize her own happiness and not the other important things in life. The life lesson that I got from exploring this fairytale is that chasing after things that makes us feel happy would make us blinded to the things around us, and without knowing it can lead to a dangerous path up ahead.

MLA Citation Page

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"The Uses of Enchantment : The Meaning and Importance of Fairy Tales : Bettelheim, Bruno : Free Download, Borrow, and Streaming : Internet Archive." Internet Archive, 2014, archive.org/details/usesofenchantmen00brun/page/n13/mode/2up. Accessed 6 Oct. 2020.

Chapter 7 Question for Reflection:

If you were to assess this example paper above, what would the "grade" be? Why?

HELLO, APPENDIX!



Image by Ying Ge on [Unsplash](#).

A.1 Publishing Your Own Children's Book

Source.⁹⁰

- **Step 1:** Decide if you want an agent, whether you want to self-publish, or if you are going to start a blog and post your writing under a Creative Commons License in order to publish to the creative commons global network:
<https://network.creativecommons.org/>
- **Step 2:** Do research on what has already been written in the genre you wish to publish in. Use Amazon and Google to see if your topic has been covered. Check those sites for possible titles you might use.

Editor's Note:

How did I write and publish a children's book (called Foo Foo Fancypants)? Well, I read other children's books, noticed types of words used and length of sentences and considered age group (what would they find interesting and fun?), found images to accompany story line (using Creative Commons on Flickr or could have drawn my own).

I did the same with the story about my breast reduction surgery (The Big-Boobed Bridesmaid). When I was recuperating, I went to Amazon to download a book on the topic and there weren't any. So, I decided to journal about my experience and self-publish.

When it comes to finding an agent versus self-publishing or going the Creative Commons route, here are few things to consider. If it's important to you to get your writing out to a massive group of people, then finding an agent will have the biggest impact. They will probably market for you, etc. It's a harder path to take, but it's more fruitful in the long run if you can find an agent and/or publishing company who will "sell you" and your book for you.

⁹⁰ This information comes from Sybil Priebe's experiences. Text available under Attribution 4.0 International (CC BY 4.0).

If you want to have a lot of control over everything, the self-publishing route and/or using a Creative Commons license is your best bet. Using the Independent Publishing Service through Amazon (or any other entity) allows a writer more royalty money and total control over the end product. Granted, your book may not get to the masses like if you were to use an agent/publishing company, but that's the "price" one pays for doing their own thing.

If you are already a blogger, and like to write a variety of things, and want your name OUT THERE more than you want money in your pocket, then the Creative Commons route is right up your alley. You could simply keep a blog, write and post an assortment of genres and lengths of literature, and then ask that if anyone comes across those items and wants to use them in their OER (open-source) textbooks or classrooms, that they use a Creative Commons license like the one you've seen in this book – you can choose to allow the person to use your piece of writing if they give you credit, you can choose the noncommercial license so they can't make money off of it, and you can choose non-derivative, too, which means they cannot change the writing either.

Agents and Publishing Companies:⁹¹

There are hordes of aspiring writers out there, besides the well- established ones.

Many people believe a literary agent will help with the publishing process. It can be tricky to find the one that is right for you, but agents know about the business, have contacts in the business, would know what publishers would be most receptive of your work, and generally they can get a better contract than you would be able to negotiate yourself. Many new authors do not know how much money they should get up front, how royalties work, or many other aspects of the business. Agents take care of this for you.

Writer Beware: look for agents that will disclose their satisfied clients list. If they are not willing to disclose names, they could very well be a fly-by-night agency. When in doubt, check your favorite author's books for

⁹¹ "Creative Writing/Novels." *Wikibooks, The Free Textbook Project*. 4 Mar 2011, 19:49 UTC. 16 Nov 2016, 21:26 <https://en.wikibooks.org/w/index.php?title=Creative_Writing/Novels&oldid=2064408>. Text is available under the Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike License.

the agency they use, or check with the A.A.R. (Association of Author's Representatives.)

It should also be noted that many of the larger publishing companies have what is called an "open call" for unpublished authors. Many of these even accept submissions from authors without agents. Be aware, however, that most of these companies have very strict guidelines of how a manuscript should look when submitted. Check with your favorite publisher's website to see if they have an open call.

Tips for Getting Published with a Publishing Company:⁹²

- First, identify the publisher that is right for your work. Make a list of books that are similar to yours and note their publishers. If four out of five books you chose are from the same publishing house, your best bet is to start there.
- Second, consult the publisher's website for submission guidelines. Follow those instructions as carefully as possible; that will show editors you are professional and serious about your craft. Get hold of a guide for information on how to write a cover letter, query, and format your manuscript. (Note: Many publishers do not accept unsolicited manuscripts, especially novels. They may instead ask for a query. Often publishers do not accept unsolicited queries either. If that is the case, you need an agent to submit to that house. Unfortunately, finding an agent can be as tough as finding a publisher.)
- Third, wait. This step can be one of the most frustrating to the author and the urge to submit to multiple publishing houses may arise but be careful. When you consult the publisher's website pay attention to their policy on simultaneous and exclusive submissions. Not doing so can be harmful to your long future with a publishing house. Fortunately, publishers are becoming more accepting of simultaneous submissions as they realize it can take six months or longer for them to respond to an author. Publishing houses that do accept simultaneous submissions are a blessing to authors and should not be abused. Do not submit to anywhere that your work is

⁹² "Creative Writing/Publication." *Wikibooks, The Free Textbook Project*. 20 Aug 2009, 22:22 UTC. 9 Nov 2016, 20:19 <https://en.wikibooks.org/w/index.php?title=Creative_Writing/Publication&oldid=1613374>. Text is available under the Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike License.

- not appropriate. Doing so is a waste of your money and it encourages publishers to not accept simultaneous or unsolicited submissions.
- Fourth, you will most likely get rejected. It's part of being a writer and should be viewed as an accomplishment and opportunity to refine your work. (Note: Most rejected submissions receive a form letter. If an editor takes the time to comment specifically on your submission, that is a major accomplishment.)
 - Fifth, don't give up.

Tips for Getting Published Without a Publishing Company:⁹³

- Sign up for a service that offers independent publishing, like Amazon's Kindle Direct Publishing (KDP); it's the service used by Sybil to publish this textbook on paper.
 - Since this book is OER, she doesn't take royalties, but KDP offers 30-70% royalties.
- Use their templates and cover makers once you have a final draft you want published.
- Price your book and link a banking account to KDP in order to receive your royalty "checks."
- Market on your own using social media, etc. Sybil has a Facebook page for her books, both OER and non-OER ones.
- Reach out to others who self-publish (like Sybil) for advice.
- Keep writing!

"Creativity itself doesn't care at all about results - the only thing it craves is the process. Learn to love the process and let whatever happens next happen, without fussing too much about it. Work like a monk, or a mule, or some other representative metaphor for diligence. Love the work. Destiny will do what it wants with you, regardless."

⁹³ More information from Sybil's brain.

– *Elizabeth Gilbert*

A.2 For [Future] Teachers

Source.⁹⁴

One morning a young 2-year-old named Adelyn was sitting with a favorite book from home, Dora and the Rainy Day. Ms. Faith, Adelyn's home care provider, watched on as Adelyn flipped back and forth between the pages of the well-loved boardbook. She repeatedly came back to a page in the beginning and pointed to the words and the pictures and said, "It's time to come inside now. It's raining." Then she would flip to the middle of the book and stop. Clearly mimicking the intonation of an adult who had read the book before, she said, "We are making hot chocolate...need to wait for the cookies to bake!" Then she moved to a page at the end of the book and pointed to the characters in the picture saying, "That's the mom...there's the dad...it's raining." Then she closed the book and announced, "THE END!"

Ms. Faith walked over to the child and commented on what a good job she did reading the book. Ms. Faith also asked Adelyn to show her some of the parts of the book, noting that this child was clearly showing signs of print awareness. For instance, she observed that Adelyn was holding the book right side up, she turned the pages from right to left (even though she skipped some), and she was able to use known words and concepts from the story in her retelling. It was clear to Ms. Faith that Adelyn was developing a sense for story structure and how to use pictures and words to understand text. And best of all, Adelyn was finding great joy and pleasure in rereading this book on her own.

Introduction

Watching a young child, like Adelyn in the opening vignette, begin to understand how reading works is such an exciting time for both families and early childhood educators. As has been discussed in previous chapters of this textbook, there are many interwoven elements that create proficient readers and many things adults can do to support reading development. Through continuous exposure to a variety of text, repeated readings of favorite books, and conversations between adults and children about text, children like Adelyn learn that reading is

⁹⁴ Early Childhood Literacy: Engaging and Empowering Emergent Readers and Writers, Birth - Age 5 by Christine Pegoraro Schull; Leslie La Croix; Sara E. Miller; Kimberly Sanders Austin; and Julie K. Kidd is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International License, except where otherwise noted. https://pressbooks.nsc.ca/earlychildhoodliteracy/chapter/_unknown_-7/

ultimately about making meaning and communicating a message. Even though this particular child has not yet learned to read in the formal sense, she knows a lot about print and how books work. These emergent reading skills are critical to future reading success and an ability to ultimately “crack the code” and recognize that letters and symbols connect to sounds and meanings (Scarborough, 2002). Knowing that text conveys a message supports children’s developing abilities to understand and eventually decode that message independently.

For some children, it might seem that reading starts to happen “like magic” but learning to read is not intuitive. This differs from how children acquire language. The human brain is wired for language and children naturally gain language skills as they develop (Chomsky, 1968; Geary, 1995; Snow, 1983). Some researchers refer to language as “biologically primary” because it is found across cultures and needed to help people survive (Geary, 1995). However, this is not the case for reading the printed word because what we read—our alphabetic script—is an invention, only available to humankind for the last 3,800 years (Dehaene, 2009). As a result, our brains have had to accommodate new pathways for translating the squiggles that are letters into the sounds of the spoken words they symbolize.

The seemingly simple task of reading is, in actuality, a complex feat. Reading skills require a complex interplay of various regions of the brain working together simultaneously (Wolf, 2007). Reading skills are considered “biologically secondary” because they do not develop without specific experiences and instruction (Sénéchal et al., 2001). Children need intentional and explicit opportunities to learn skills and strategies to become proficient readers. In this chapter, we will use a Framework for Developing Emergent Literacy (Puranik & Lonigan, 2014), including conceptual knowledge, procedural knowledge, and generative knowledge, to unpack the complex elements of reading.

This framework was designed to explain the dimensions of emergent writing. But in this textbook⁹⁵, we will use the framework to parallel both the

⁹⁵ For a **whole lot** more information, click here and read a helpful chapter in a free textbook devoted to Early Childhood Literacy: https://pressbooks.nsc.ca/earlychildhoodliteracy/chapter/unknown_-7/ = Early Childhood Literacy: Engaging and Empowering Emergent Readers and Writers, Birth - Age 5 by Christine Pegoraro Schull; Leslie La Croix; Sara E. Miller; Kimberly Sanders Austin; and Julie K. Kidd is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International License, except where otherwise noted.

reading and writing processes. The first dimension, **conceptual knowledge**, will focus on the functions of reading, such as learning new information, completing a task, or reading for enjoyment. The second dimension, **procedural knowledge**, will focus on the mechanics of reading, such as decoding, print orientation, and story structure. Lastly, the third dimension, **generative knowledge**, will focus on application of skills, such as understanding the author's meaning and applying information or ideas in the real world. Using the Framework for Developing Emergent Literacy, this chapter will answer the following questions:

- ⇒ How do young children develop an understanding that reading is about making meaning?
- ⇒ How do emergent readers progress on a continuum of development?
- ⇒ What can early childhood educators do to support emergent readers using effective instructional strategies and literacy assessments?



Image from Jonathan Borba on [Unsplash](#).

Instructional Practices that Support Reading

Developing A Print-Rich Environment

- Label classroom spaces and objects using words
- Use names of children throughout the room
- Find meaningful symbols and pictures to support children's access to materials
- Infuse familiar text into centers
- Create print materials designed by the students
- Supply nonfiction and fiction texts
- Display student work with documentation (adult dictates student's ideas and posts next to their artwork)
- Diversify print materials (magazines, travel brochures, menus, etc.)

Playing with Language

- Share nursery rhymes and poems
- Sing songs throughout the day (transition times, good morning greeting)
- Read and revisit rhyming books encouraging children to say common refrains
- Select a word of the day/week (have children use, draw, find, etc. the word)
- Teach children idioms, alliterations, and other fun ways to play with words
- Use children's names to examine letter names, sounds, and shapes
- Build on students' interest in letters and words

Creating Play-Based Text Experiences

- Use felt boards and options for children to create their own story or retell a familiar story
- Provide puppets and a space for a "theater" to allow children to develop puppet shows
- Develop a space for drawing and writing with various tools
- Design a dramatic play area with familiar items from home (including text-based items)
- Observe children's play and find ways to bring in text materials to enhance their experiences
- Develop signs or labels that children can use in their play
- Dictate words for students to record experiences

Providing Diverse Reading Experiences

- Engage in daily read alouds of age-appropriate texts
- Build in independent reading time where students can select their own books to “read” and retell using pictures and background experience
- Develop small group and buddy reading moments
- Regularly engage in shared reading where the teacher models their thinking about a text
- Reread familiar and loved stories
- Allow children to participate in interactive reading where they help the teacher “read” parts of the book
- Use print referencing techniques to point out elements of the text (e.g., page numbers, title, where to start reading, the direction of the text, author and illustrator)
- Examine text features of non-fiction books (e.g., table of contents, glossary, maps, charts, labels)

Literacy Assessments for Emergent Readers

There are a number of assessment options to understand what students know about the constrained skills of phonological awareness, alphabetic principle, and concepts of print as well as the continuous components of comprehension, vocabulary, and fluency.

Because young children, birth to age five, are typically showing emergent reading abilities but are not yet proficient readers, observation is the early childhood educator's most important tool. Carefully watching children as they interact in whole groups, small groups, and individual settings can tell us a lot about what children know about reading and what they are ready to learn. Additionally, it is critical that educators develop methods of documenting these observations over time.

Educators can use assessment options such as anecdotal notes, observational checklists, and artifacts to document children's emergent reading behaviors. For instance, we may observe an older four-year old child showing signs that they have mastered the alphabetic code (e.g., the child can name all the letters easily) and are ready to start a more focused look at the connection between letters and sounds as well as familiar words in their environment. However, we may also observe

significant lags in development (e.g., the child demonstrates indicators of early and later infancy at 3 years of age). Observational assessment options can be just as important to document these concerns. Using well-constructed assessments can open up discussions with families and caretakers about factors impacting the child's reading development and serve as a guidepost for what supports the child needs to continue building their reading foundation. Intentionally selecting emergent literacy assessment routines and practices ensures that our instructional strategies will match students' needs.

A.3 Awards

Source.⁹⁶

How do you find the best literature? Begin with those books that have won awards for excellence. In an age of classification of literature into genres attractive to specific social groups, the number of awards created for recognizing high quality children's literature has grown in recent years, but it is still a manageable list. The table below is a listing of the most significant U.S. children's book awards.

Keep in mind that, in most cases, award winners are selected by adults with extensive exposure to children's literature.

They judge books based on specific criteria and the award-winning books, though they may be technically superior to other books under consideration at the same time, may not strike the reading audience in the same manner as they did the judges. The selected books may also not be as popular as other books published within the same time frame as the winner. However, the long track record of the success and major influence of award-winning books is undeniable.

The most reliable resource parents and teachers have is the knowledge they possess of the strengths, weaknesses, likes, and dislikes of their child(ren) or students. I suggest to adults that they read or research the books they want children to read prior to introducing the books to the children. Just as there is no one movie that appeals to all moviegoers, so it is with award-winning books. There generally is no one book that will appeal to every reader. Excellence does not imply acceptance, understanding, or appreciation, but quality is a permanent attribute. Use discretion, knowledge, and resources before asking your children to read a book. Take care to select books they will learn to know, enjoy, love, and share with others.

⁹⁶ "Choosing High Quality Children's Literature/Children's Literature Awards." Wikibooks, The Free Textbook Project. 14 Jun 2017, 21:46 UTC. 8 Nov 2022, 20:18 <https://en.wikibooks.org/w/index.php?title=Choosing_High_Quality_Children%27s_Literature/Children%27s_Literature_Awards&oldid=3230297>.

Reading is a wonderful skill that can provide a lifetime of enjoyment. Allow your readers to develop their imaginations, their language, and their insight into how and why others behave as they do. Understanding is the beginning of knowledge and books are a perfect means to set our readers on that course. Reading is fundamental.

John Newbery Medal

The Newbery Medal is America's oldest and most prestigious children's book award. Since 1922, The American Library Association has annually awarded the Newbery Medal for the best children's book published in the previous year. Those books worthy of consideration, which also have been considered for the medal award, often are selected as Honor books.

The importance of the Newbery Medal and Honor books is evident by the long-lasting appeal of many of the books that have received the award. Award-winning books that were of excellent quality in the year chosen, are still of excellent quality today. Charlotte's Web, a 1953 Honor book, is still read by children today with as much enjoyment as when it was first selected. Quality remains, no matter the passage of time.

Randolph Caldecott Medal

Since 1938, The American Library Association annually awards the Caldecott Medal for the most distinguished illustrations in a children's American picture book, published in the previous year. Those books worthy of consideration, which also have been considered for the medal award, often are selected as Honor books.

Michael L. Printz Award

Since 2000, The American Library Association annually awards the Michael L. Printz Award for the best young adult's book published in the previous year. Those books worthy of consideration, which also have been considered for the medal award, often are selected as Honor books.

Coretta Scott King Award

The American Library Association annually awards the Coretta Scott King Award to African American authors and illustrators for outstanding

inspirational and educational books published in the previous year. Books selected for the award must promote understanding and appreciation of the culture of all people. Those books worthy of consideration, which also have been considered for the award, often are selected as Honor books. The first Coretta Scott King Award for authors was presented in 1970, while the award for illustrators was initially presented in 1974. Honor Book awards for authors began in 1978 and for illustrators in 1981. A careful examination of the Past winners will reveal years when no Honor Book awards were made. In 1985, no book was awarded for illustrator.

Pura Belprè Award

Since 1996, The American Library Association biannually awards the Pura Belprè Award for the best literature for children and youth, which is representative of the Latino cultural experience and published in the prior two years. Those books worthy of consideration, which also have been considered for the award, often are selected as Honor books. Beginning in 2009, the award will be presented annually.

Schneider Family Book Award

Since 2004, The American Library Association annually awards the Schneider Family Book Award to an author or illustrator of a book that communicates to readers the experience of living with a disability. The disability may be that of a friend or family member and be physical, emotional, or mental. The portrayal of life with that disability is required within each book considered for the award. The award is given in age groups that approximate elementary school, middle school, and high school readers. There are no awards for Honor books.

Theodor Seuss Geisel Award

Since 2006, The American Library Association annually awards the Theodor Seuss Geisel Award for the best beginning reader's book published in English in the United States in the previous year. Those books worthy of consideration, which also have been considered for the medal award, often are selected as Honor books. Judges look for creativity and imagination in books that engage children in reading.

Orbis Pictus Award

In November each year, the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) awards the Orbis Pictus Award for the best children's nonfiction book published in the United States in the previous year. Those books worthy of consideration, which also have been considered for the award, often are selected as Honor or Recommended books.

Children's and Young Adult's Book Awards

The International Reading Association annually awards the Children's Book Awards for the best fiction and nonfiction books for children through young adults, published in the previous year. There is not an award for Honor books. Books published in any country and in any language are eligible for consideration.

Robert F. Sibert Award

Since 2001, The American Library Association, with support from Bound to Stay Bound Books, Inc., annually awards the Robert F. Sibert Award for the best children's informational book published in English in the previous year. Those books worthy of consideration, which also have been considered for the medal award, often are selected as Honor books.

Boston Globe-Horn Book Award

The Boston Globe and The Horn Book annually award the Boston Globe-Horn Book Award for the best children's books published in the previous year. The number and name of categories have changed over the years, which is evident in a listing of Past Winners. Except for the initial award year of 1967, those books worthy of consideration, which also have been considered for the award, often are selected as Honor books.

Global Awards⁹⁷

Many noted awards for children's literature exist in various countries, parts of the world, or for specific languages:

- Africa – In Africa, The Golden Baobab Prize runs an annual competition for African writers of children's stories. It is one of the

⁹⁷ Wikipedia contributors. "Children's literature." [Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia](#). Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, 1 Nov. 2022. Web. 3 Nov. 2022.

- few African literary awards that recognizes writing for children and young adults. The competition is the only pan-African writing competition that recognizes promising African writers of children's literature. Every year, the competition invites entries of unpublished African-inspired stories written for an audience of 8- to 11-year-olds (Category A) or 12- to 15-year-olds (Category B). The writers who are aged 18 or below, are eligible for the Rising Writer Prize.
- Australia – In Australia, the Children's Book Council of Australia runs a number of annual CBCA book awards. There are also the annual Prime Minister's Literary Awards which since 2010 include categories for children's and young adult literature.
 - Canada – In Canada, the Governor General's Literary Award for Children's Literature and Illustration, in English and French, is established. A number of the provinces' school boards and library associations also run popular "children's choice" awards where candidate books are read and championed by individual schools and classrooms. These include the Blue Spruce (grades K-2) Silver Birch Express (grades 3–4), Silver Birch (grades 5–6) Red Maple (grades 7–8) and White Pine (high school) in Ontario. Programs in other provinces include The Red Cedar and Stellar Awards in BC, the Willow Awards in Saskatchewan, and the Manitoba Young Readers Choice Awards. IBBY Canada offers a number of annual awards.
 - China – In China, the National Outstanding Children's Literature Award is the highest award given to children's literature.
 - Japan – In Japan, there are many awards for children's books.^[174]
 - Philippines – In the Philippines, The Carlos Palanca Memorial Award for Literature for short story literature in the English and Filipino languages (Maikling Kathang Pambata) has been established since 1989. The Children's Poetry in the English and Filipino languages has been established since 2009. The Pilar Perez Medallion for Young Adult Literature was awarded in 2001 and 2002. The Philippine Board on Books for Young People gives major awards, which include the PBBY-Salanga Writers' Prize for excellence in writing and the PBBY-Alcala Illustrator's Prize for excellence in illustration. Other awards are The Ceres Alabado Award for Outstanding Contribution in Children's Literature; the Gintong Aklat Award (Golden Book Award); The Gawad Komisyon para sa Kuwentong Pambata

(Commission Award for Children's Literature in Filipino) and the National Book Award (given by the Manila Critics' Circle) for Outstanding Production in Children's Books and young adult literature.

- UK – In the United Kingdom and Commonwealth, the Carnegie Medal for writing and the Kate Greenaway Medal for illustration, the Nestlé Smarties Book Prize, and the Guardian Award are a few notable awards.

International awards also exist as forms of global recognition. These include the Hans Christian Andersen Award, the Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award, Illustrarte Bienale for illustration, and the Bologna Ragazzi Award for art work and design.

Additionally, bloggers with expertise on children's and young adult books give a major series of online book awards called The Cybils Awards, or Children's and Young Adult Bloggers' Literary Awards.

A.4 Resource List

Author and Illustrator Links: Links to web sites by and about authors, illustrators, and literary works represented in Crosscurrents of Children's Literature. Many of these sites contain biographies, portraits, and illustrations from literary works, among other resources.

Many of these links were checked on August 23, 2010. Other outdated links will be corrected soon.

<http://www2.ferrum.edu/thanlon/cocl/authorlinks.htm>

Best Children's Books in the Public Domain, by GoodReads.com:

https://www.goodreads.com/list/show/11877.Best_Children_s_Books_in_the_Public_Domain

Book Arts & Rare Book Collections: Historical Children's Literature; University of Washington:

<https://guides.lib.uw.edu/research/bookarts/childrensliterature>

Category:Children's Literature, by Wikimedia Commons:

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Children%27s_literature

Children's books in the public domain, by Bookriot.com:

<https://bookriot.com/public-domain-childrens-books/>

Children's Literature; a CLCD company. <https://www.childrenslit.com/>

Children's Literature at the University of Michigan:

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*There are many great items on the Internet Archive, too, and you can check them out for free if they aren't in the public domain, etc.:
<https://archive.org/>

Appendix Questions for Reflection:

- Have you thought of writing your own children's book? Does the publishing chapter cover all the questions you have about doing that?
- Look back at the Public Domain snippets. Which illustrations are "good ones" to you? Does it matter?

- What sorts of illustrations do you think you could draw or create on screen?
- In the chapter for future teachers, do you have other questions that aren't answered there?
- Which of these awards have you already read before or heard of?
- <insert questions created by students>

Appendix Exercises for Reflection:

Choose anything on this Resource List and dig into it. What did you discover? Write up a report of your findings.

A.5 Escape at Bedtime⁹⁸

The lights from the parlour and kitchen shone out
Through the blinds and the windows and bars;
And high overhead and all moving about,
There were thousands of millions of stars.

There ne'er were such thousands of leaves on a tree,
Nor of people in church or the Park,
As the crowds of the stars that looked down upon me,
And that glittered and winked in the dark.

The Dog, and the Plough, and the Hunter, and all,
And the star of the sailor, and Mars,
These shone in the sky, and the pail by the wall
Would be half full of water and stars.

They saw me at last, and they chased me with cries,
And they soon had me packed into bed;
But the glory kept shining and bright in my eyes,
And the stars going round in my head.



⁹⁸ Readings in Children's Literature Compiled from Copyright-Cleared Materials Available on Project Gutenberg or the Web: 11/3/19. Edited by Joshua Dickinson, Jdickinson15@gmail.com