

ANALYSING THE COMPONENTS OF A CHILDREN'S PICTURE BOOK

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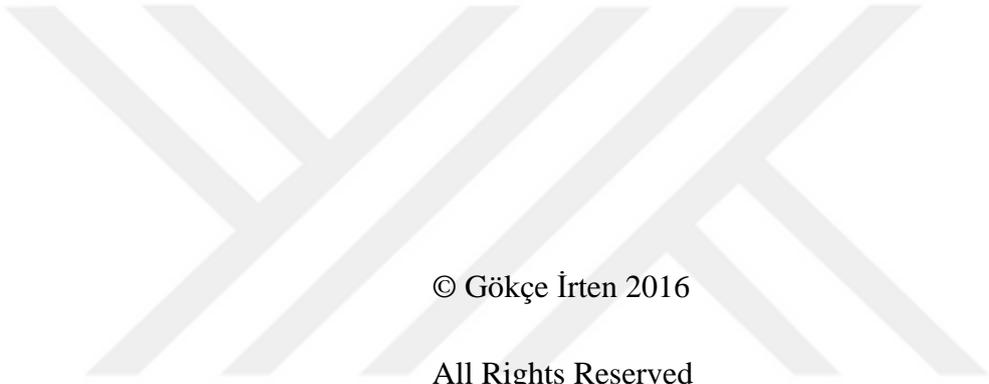
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# ABSTRACT

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Children's picture books are essential for children to improve their skills related to meaning making and visual perception. This paper will examine the design components of children's picture books to propose new approaches for children's book creators. In our present era, it is highly common to see products specifically designed for children almost everywhere. However, it is known that people, who lived during the Medieval period lacked awareness and appreciation regarding childhood as a formative stage in every individuals life. During the Renaissance, there was a rising awareness of the importance of the concept of child development. Noble families recognized the differences between a child and an adult. Some of them started to write educational books concerning their children's development, which could be viewed as an improvement of the concept of childhood in the family. This increased awareness was held in such high esteem with the parents that they hired tutors so their children could have a proper education. With this awareness children became a relevant part of the family, so much so that families started to ask artists to depict them as part of the household. From then on, childhood as a concept appeared as a crucial element of daily life. The creation of products specifically designed for children started with clothing, toys and children's books, whose numbers increased with the developments in technology and improvements in education. Writers of children's books realized that child's perception is not the same as an adult's, so they began using both visual and textual elements that they considered to be more enjoyable for young readers. Famous writers and painters of the time such as William Blake, Randolph Caldecott and Sir John Tenniel, became the pioneers of modern children's picture books. Over the years, picture books have improved considerably, taking into account children's visual perception, meaning making, and individual expectations as concepts of design. This paper aims to analyze the components of a children's picture book, ranging from fables to modern stories, with an examination of specific principles of design which developed over time, in particular layout, illustration and typesetting as visual communication, and variable techniques that have been used to create picture books since the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

**KEYWORDS:** Children, Children's Literature, Children's Book, Picture Book, Visual Communication, Illustration, Typography, Layout, Graphic Design

# ÖZET

## ÇOCUK RESİMLİ KİTAPLARININ ÖĞELERİNİN İNCELENMESİ

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Çocuk resimli kitapları, bir çocuğun anlam yaratma ve görsel algıdaki becerilerini geliştirmesinde büyük önem taşır. Bu çalışmanın amacı, çocuk resimli kitaplarının tasarımsal öğelerini inceleyerek, çocuk kitabı yaratıcılarına yeni yaklaşımlar sunmaktır. Bugünlerde her yerde çocuklar için yapılmış ürünleri görmek mümkün. Ancak, Ortaçağ'da insanlar, her birey için çok önemli olan çocukluk döneminin farkında olmadan yaşadı. Rönesans döneminde çocukluk kavramı gelişim göstermeye başladı. Soylu kandan gelen aileler çocuk ve yetişkin arasında farkı benimsedi. Bazıları, çocuklarının gelişimi için eğitici kitaplar yazarak çocuk kavramının ailede bir yer kazandığını gösterdi. Artan bu farkındalık üzerine aileler çocuklarının gelişimi için öğretmenler tuttu. Bu sayede, çocuklar ailenin bir parçası haline geldi ve ebeveynler ressamlardan, tablolarla onların da gözükmelerini talep etti. O dönemden sonra çocukluk kavramı ailede zamanla artan bir önem kazanmış oldu. Çocuklar için özel üretilen kıyafet ve oyuncaklarla başlayan bu üretim, teknolojinin gelişmesi ve eğitimdeki farkındalıkla çocuk kitaplarının üretimine geldi. Bir yetişkin ve çocuğun algısının aynı olmadığını fark eden çocuk kitabı yazarları, çocuğun eğlenerek öğrenebilmesi için resim ve yazıyı beraber kullanmaya başladı. Zamanın ünlü yazar ve çizerleri; William Blake, Randolph Caldecott, Sir John Tenniel, modern çocuk kitabının öncüleri oldular. Zamanla çocuk resimli kitapları, çocuğun görsel algısını, anlam yaratma becerisini ve bireysel beklentilerini göz önünde bulundurarak, tasarım alanında önemli bir yer kazandı. Bu çalışma, fabllardan günümüz modern örneklerle kadar bir incelemeyle, çocuk resimli kitaplarının tasarımsal prensipleri olan; ana düzen, illüstrasyon, tipografi ve 19. yüzyıldan beri çocuk resimli kitapları oluşturmak için kullanılmış teknik ve içerikleri inceleyecektir.

**ANAHTAR SÖZCÜKLER:** Çocuk, Çocuk Edebiyatı, Çocuk Kitabı, Resimli Kitap, Görsel İletişim, İllüstrasyon, Tipografi, Grafik Tasarım



*Yaşamlarının her dakikasında bana destek olan canım annem ve babam'a*

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES .....	ix
1. INTRODUCTION .....	1
1.1 A Brief History of Childhood.....	1
2. HISTORY OF CHILDREN’S PICTURE BOOKS.....	6
2.1 Folktales and Fables .....	19
2.2 Alphabet Books .....	24
2.3 Nursery Rhymes .....	30
3. CHILDREN’S PICTURE BOOKS .....	32
3.1 Analysis of the Components of a Children’s Picture Book .....	36
3.1.1 Layout .....	36
3.1.2 Illustration .....	41
3.1.3 Typography .....	52
3.1.3.1 Writing, Lettering, Type .....	57
3.2 Examination of Contemporary Samples.....	63
4. PICTURE BOOK DESIGN.....	73
5. CONCLUSION.....	77
BIBLIOGRAPHY .....	79
APPENDIX.....	82

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. <i>The Book of Kells</i> , illuminated manuscript gospel book, 384 AD. ....	2
Figure 2. (Left) Madonna and Child (detail), unknown artist, Byzantine, about 1290, Tempera and gold leaf on woven fabric over wood. National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C.....	5
Figure 3. Trajan’s Column, 113AD. ....	6
Figure 4. Ramesseum Papyrus, 1980BC. ....	7
Figure 5. <i>The Babees Book</i> , Harleian Manuscripts, the 14 <sup>th</sup> Century .....	8
Figure 6. Gutenberg’s Bible, 1450s. ....	9
Figure 7. <i>Der Edelstein</i> , Ulrich Boner, 1461.....	10
Figure 8. <i>The Children in the Wood</i> , York: R. Burkedin, 1820.....	11
Figure 9. <i>Orbis Sensualium Pictus</i> , Comenius, 1658. ....	12
Figure 10. An engraving illustration for <i>Little Red Riding Hood</i> , Charles Perrault, 1697. .....	13
Figure 11. <i>A Little Book for Children</i> , 1702.....	14
Figure 12. <i>Directions for Spelling</i> and illustrated alphabet from <i>A Little Book for Little Children</i> , 1702. ....	14
Figure 13. <i>Little Pretty Pocket Book intended for the Amusement of Little Master Tommy and Pretty Miss Polly with Two Letters from Jack the Giant Killer</i> , John Newbery, 1770.....	15
Figure 14. <i>Songs of Innocence</i> , William Blake, 1789. ....	16
Figure 15. <i>A Frog He Would A-Wooing Go</i> , Randolph Caldecott, 1883. ....	17
Figure 16. <i>A Book of Nonsense</i> , Edward Lear, 1846. ....	17
Figure 17. <i>Alice in Wonderland</i> , Lewis Carroll, 1865.....	18
Figure 18. Anthropomorphic cat guarding geese, Egypt, c. 1120 BC.....	20
Figure 19. Some pages from <i>Aesop's Fables</i> with modern instances by Randolph Caldecott, published in 1883. ....	21
Figure 20. An illustration for <i>Panchatantra</i> dated 1354. The rabbit fools the elephant king by showing him the reflection of the moon. ....	22
Figure 21. An engraving by François Chauveau, illustrator of the original edition of La Fontaine’s Fables, ca. 1720.....	23

Figure 22. Little Red Riding Hood illustrations by Walter Crane from <i>Children's and Household Tales</i> , 1886. ....	24
Figure 23. The Bremen Town Musicians illustrations by Walter Crane from <i>Children's and Household Tales</i> , 1886.	
Figure 24. The Rabbits Bride illustrations by Walter Crane from <i>Children's and Household Tales</i> , 1886. ....	24
Figure 25. Historic wooden alphabet block, covered with paper with relief illustrations. ....	25
Figure 26. The child's instructor or Picture alphabet, 1815. ....	26
Figure 27. Examples of a hornbook, presenting the alphabet with Lord's Prayer. ....	27
Figure 28. An example of a battledore, published by William Davison in 1830. ....	27
Figure 29. <i>Alphabet Universal: Anglais Et Francais</i> , 1830's. ....	28
Figure 30. <i>The Alphabet of Old Friends</i> by Walter Crane 1874-76. ....	29
Figure 31. The first page of <i>Tommy Thumb's Song Book</i> from 1815 edition. ....	30
Figure 32. Kate Greenaway, <i>Under the Window</i> , 1879. ....	31
Figure 33. <i>The Nursery Rhyme Book</i> by Andrew Lang, 1897. ....	31
Figure 34. <i>Songs of Innocence</i> , William Blake, 1789. ....	33
Figure 35. Illustration for <i>The Story of the Three Bears</i> by Henry Justice Ford, 1892. From <i>Lang's The Red Green Fairy Book</i> . ....	34
Figure 36. <i>A Description of Three Hundred Animals</i> by Thomas Boreman, 1730. ....	35
Figure 37. (Left) <i>The House that Jack Built</i> , 1807. ....	37
Figure 38. (Left) <i>Old Mother Hubbard</i> , 1858-99. ....	37
Figure 39. <i>Little Pretty Pocket Book intended for the Amusement of Little Master Tommy and Pretty Miss Polly with Two Letters from Jack the Giant Killer</i> , John Newbery, 1770. ....	38
Figure 40. <i>A history of animals: for the use of children</i> , Rufus Merrill, 1843. Includes 6 woodcuts, camel, bear, wolf, ibex, antelope, lion, 87x55mm. ....	39
Figure 41. <i>Metamorphosis</i> , believed to be created in New England, 1794. ....	40
Figure 42. An example by J. F. Schreiber, 1880's pop-up book. ....	40
Figure 43. Cave Painting in Tassili n'Ajjer, Southeast Algeria. ....	42
Figure 44. <i>The Book of Kells</i> , ca. 800, showing the lavishly decorated text that opens the Gospel of John. ....	43
Figure 45. Papyrus Oxyrhynchus, 3 <sup>rd</sup> Century, British Library, bear illumination. ....	43
Figure 46. Ottoman army at Tiflis, 1578. ....	44
Figure 47. <i>Bible of Wenceslaus IV</i> , ca. 1390. ....	44

Figure 48. Wood engraving by William Blake, 1820–21, for Robert John Thornton’s Pastorals of Virgil. ....	45
Figure 49. Kate Greenaway’s illustration of the <i>Pied Piper</i> , engraving, 1888.....	46
Figure 50. (Left) Beatrice Potter, <i>A Tale of Peter Rabbit</i> , first edition, 1902. ....	46
Figure 51. <i>The Story Of Babar</i> , Jean de Brunhoff, 1931. ....	48
Figure 52. <i>Goodnight Moon</i> , Margaret Wise Brown, illustrations by Clement Hurd, 1947. ....	49
Figure 53. <i>The Cat in the Hat</i> by Dr. Seuss, illustrated by Theodor Geisel, 1957. ....	49
Figure 54. <i>Where the Wild Things Are</i> , Maurice Sendak, 1963. ....	50
Figure 55. <i>Rosie's Walk</i> , Pat Hutchins, 1968. ....	51
Figure 56. <i>The Big Book of Nursery Rhymes</i> , Walter Jerrold, illustrated by Charles Robinson, an example for good leading for children.....	53
Figure 57. <i>The songs the letters sing: A preparatory primer</i> . London and Glasgow: The Grant Educational Company Ltd, c.1919. “An early example of the use of single storey ‘a’s and g’s in a series of reading books for young children... set in a large size with a generous amount of space between the lines. The very short heading (Rr) is set in the same typeface as the text, but in a larger size.” (Walker, 2006)	55
Figure 58. Blackletter, also known as Gothic type. A close up of <i>Gutenberg’s Bible</i> .	56
Figure 59. <i>Mariage de Girart et Berthe</i> , Miniature du Roman de Girart de Roussillon. Handwritten manuscript with illuminations on parchment, Western Calligraphy, ca. 1450. ....	58
Figure 60. A specific example of Western Calligraphy, with the illuminated first letter and decorative borders. The 14 <sup>th</sup> century <i>Anjou Bible</i> , was created at the court of Robert I of Anjou, King of Naples. ....	58
Figure 61. An example of Islamic Calligraphy, with floral borders and golden ornamentation. 14 <sup>th</sup> Century <i>Qur’an</i> , Egypt. ....	59
Figure 62. Lettering examples by William Blake, <i>Songs of Innocence</i> , 1789.....	60
Figure 63. <i>Hansel and Gretel</i> , Walter Crane, 1886. ....	60
Figure 64. <i>Daddy Darwin's Dovecot: A Country Tale</i> . A lettering example by Randolph Caldecott from 1887. ....	61
Figure 65. <i>The Scarecrow: A Fairytale</i> , by Kurt Schwitters, Kate Steinitz, and Theo van Doesburg, 1925. ....	62
Figure 66. A pictorial usage of typography, ‘A book about words’, spread from Ann and Paul Rand’s <i>Sparkle and Spin</i> , 1957.....	62

Figure 67. <i>Puff</i> , William Wondriska, 1960.....	63
Figure 68. <i>Puff</i> , William Wondriska, 1960.....	63
Figure 69. Květa Pacovská, <i>Flying</i> , 1995.....	64
Figure 70. Květa Pacovská, <i>Flying</i> , 1995.....	65
Figure 71. Sara Fanelli, <i>Pinocchio</i> , 2004.....	66
Figure 72. Sara Fanelli, <i>Pinocchio</i> , 2004.....	66
Figure 73. <i>Wolves</i> , Emily Gravett, 2006, Kate Greenaway Medal and the Nestlé Children's Book Prize Bronze Award Winner.....	67
Figure 74. Roger Olmos, <i>La cosa que más duele del mundo / The Thing That Hurts Most in the World</i> , 2005. ....	68
Figure 75. Bruno Munari, <i>Little White Riding Hood</i> , 2013.....	69
Figure 76. Maira Kalman, <i>Ooh-la-la (Max in Love)</i> , 1991.....	70
Figure 77. Maira Kalman, <i>What Pete Ate</i> , 2001.....	70
Figure 78. <i>The Dangerous Alphabet</i> , Neil Gaiman, illustrated by Gris Grimly, 2008.	71
Figure 79. <i>A Long Piece of String</i> , William Wondriska, 1963.....	72
Figure 80. <i>Wave</i> , Suzy Lee, 2008.....	72

# **1. INTRODUCTION**

## **1.1 A Brief History of Childhood**

Nowadays, both adults and children undoubtedly know the definition of childhood. However, what most people do not know is how this term and concept became a part of popular literature. There is a lack of evidence about how people before the Middle Ages approached the development of their children. However, with the Renaissance, a great deal changed regarding mentality and approach to children. This chapter will examine the changing perceptions, regarding the concept of childhood, which enigmatically had not existed in earlier centuries.

By the Middle Ages, children were educated in order to make a successful transition into their adolescence. However, the purpose of education in the Middle Ages was not aimed at children's point of view and interests, it was strictly about teaching them how to be efficient adults (Aries, 1962). For instance, children were used for working in places where an adult proportion was not convenient: cleaning chimneys, farming and so on. The people who lived in the Medieval period lacked awareness about the proper ways to care for their children. Because of this lack of knowledge, they did not have a concept of childhood. Evidence from the Medieval period depicts children as little adults. Even in the language of the period, terms such as boy, girl or child were not used as they are today; interestingly enough these terms were used for people of any age. The concept of childhood was not clearly defined before the modern period.

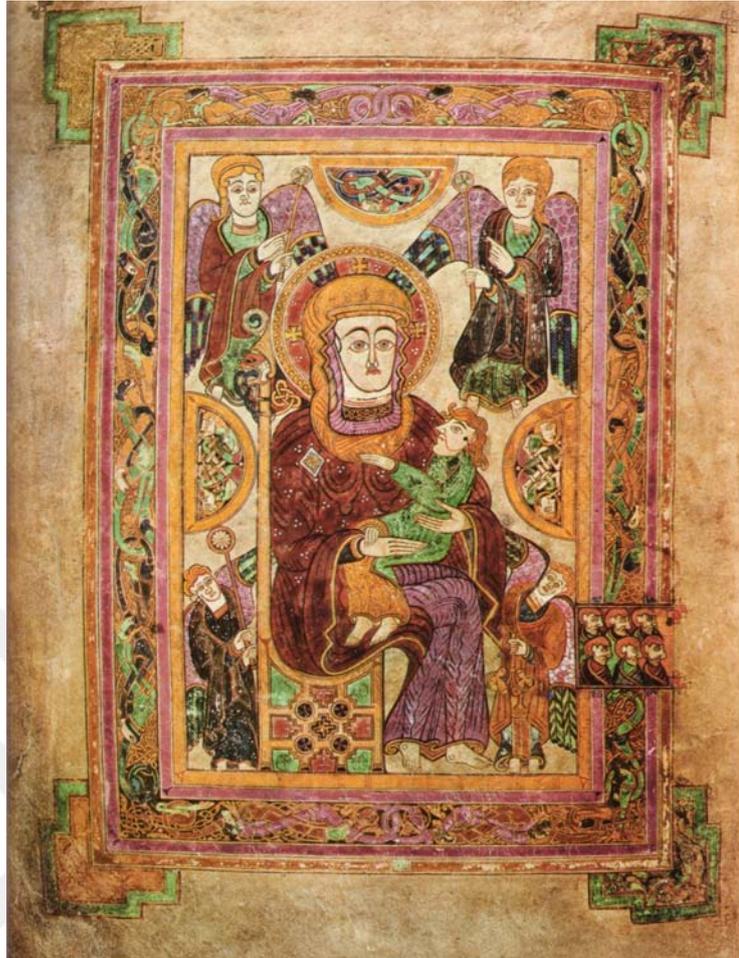


Figure 1. *The Book of Kells*, illuminated manuscript gospel book, 384 AD.

“Medieval art until about the twelfth century did not know childhood or did not attempt to portray it. It is hard to believe that this neglect was due to incompetence or incapacity; it seems more probable that there was no place for childhood in the medieval world.” (Aries, 1962)

According to my examination and research, some miniatures of children’s bodies from the twelfth century manuscript illuminations and portrait art provide examples of how some artists show children’s figure in their paintings. However, while the miniaturists drew the child figure, they depicted it on a smaller scale than that of an adult. There were no features of a child; the only way to express that they were children was to make them smaller than the adult’s. For instance, in *Maniera Greca*, children’s proportions were depicted as Little Eros together with other Hellenistic themes, but again there were no features referring to childhood.

In contrast to this disregard of childhood in the Middle Ages, a new tendency appeared through humanism in literature in Trecento. Most of the authors and poets of that time started to write with new themes in mind, which were reflecting the times realistically (Haas, 1998). A letter by a well-known humanistic writer, mentioned an uncommon feeling for a child for that time:

“Your Eletta, my delight, greeted me with a smile although she did not know who I was. I was not only overcome with joy: I took her into my arms eagerly imagining that I was holding my own little girl. What can I say? If you think I exaggerate ask William of Ravenna or our Donato, for they both knew her. Your child has the identical aspect of the child who was my Eletta, the same expression, the same light and laughter in her eyes, the same gestures and walk, the same fashion of carrying her little self, save that my Eletta was somewhat taller for her age at five and a half, when I saw her for the last time. She has the same way of talking, the same vocabulary. She has the same simple manner. In truth there is no difference between them except that your little one has golden hair while mine had locks of chestnut. Ah, how often, holding your child in my arms and listening to her prattle, the memory of my own lost little girl has brought to my eyes tears that I conceal from all.”

These lines come from a letter of a Florentine author, Giovanni Boccaccio. He wrote this letter to his friend Petrarch, in 1366 after his meeting with Petrarch's daughter. These lines give us an idea of his longing and love for his dead daughter. However, this emotional connection that he had with his daughter was not very common in that century. In the book *In Tuscans and Their Families* (1985) David Herlihy and Christiane Klapisch-Zuber explained that: “The behavior of Tuscan parents [lend] some support to Ariés's interpretation. Many of them did not really welcome the newborn baby into their hearths and hearts, at least not until it [had] survived the dangerous early years of life.” (Herlihy and Klapisch-Zuber, 1985)

Herlihy researched families in a social context and came up with certain conclusions. He discovered that husbands were older than their wives for many reasons, and the average age for a man to become a father was 40. Herlihy believes that the big

difference in the age between a father and his children led to difficulties in communication. According to Herlihy, because of this lack of conversation, some royal fathers wrote books of advice for their children. However, they did not communicate with their children face to face.

In contrast to this absence of fathers in children's lives, mothers took it upon themselves to change this perception when children were concerned. "The change in attitudes toward children had occurred in the past with the result being a narrowing of women's roles." (Haas, 1998) As Herlihy argued, the changes started with the 'narrowing of women's roles', is referring to the Holy Mother. As most art scenes from Middle Ages were inspired by religious themes such as the Book of Kells and Byzantine icons, childhood began to be pictured with these most common paintings: Madonna and the Baby (Infant) Jesus. With the concept of motherhood, which was connected to the Virgin, the Holy Mother, artists were inspired to depict her with the baby. This development, which is rooted in religion, allowed children to appear in pictures. With this tendency artists started to investigate how to draw child figures realistically. All of this religious iconography of children shed light on pictures from fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.



Figure 2. (Left) Madonna and Child (detail), unknown artist, Byzantine, about 1290, Tempera and gold leaf on woven fabric over wood. National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C.

(Right) The Virgin and Child (detail), about 1320/30, Giotto di Bondone. Tempera and gold leaf on panel. National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C.

On the other hand, there are historians and researchers who had argued against Ariés's interpretations about the formation of the childhood. "At this point we need to make a distinction between the concept of childhood and the conception of childhood. The concept of childhood exists in all societies, however the conception of childhood can differ from one society and age to another in the way of understanding how children are different from the adults. If we look at things in this way, we can say that there is a concept of childhood in the Medieval times, but the conception of childhood is far different from modern times." (Onur, 2005)

Either way, the books of advice and the pictorial representation of children show the advent of the perception of childhood in the Renaissance. All these developments regarding the concept of childhood create the basics of the modern childhood tendencies. In his book, *The History of Childhood in Turkey*, Bekir Onur mentioned that after the increase of the interest for the welfare of children in the Renaissance, the community believed that they were responsible for the protection of the children. Also the beginning of the reform movement in the 16<sup>th</sup> century affected the attitudes about childhood. Puritans revealed a child rearing method for the first time, which indicates that they did take raising children seriously. Puritans wrote child-rearing manuals for the first time to help parents. In addition, they were the first group of people that had written books only for children.

Childhood is a concept that was taken into consideration by the Renaissance. This awareness of childhood increased the interest in creating products specifically for children, including children's books in order to their perception.

## 2. HISTORY OF CHILDREN’S PICTURE BOOKS

“Pictorial storytelling can be traced back as far as the earliest paintings on cave walls, which were 30.000-60.000 years old.” (Salisbury and Styles, 2012) The paintings from ancient times would have been one of the most important skills of communication for that time and continued as a universal visual language after the exploration of spoken and written language.

Trajan’s Column in Rome is cited as one of the oldest example of storytelling with the relief carving stories circling around the column. These pictorial stories are accepted as the evidences of wars between the Romans and the Dacians, which shows the importance of storytelling even after almost 2,000 years.



Figure 3. Trajan’s Column, 113AD.

Tombs from ancient Egypt and the walls of Pompeii are also examples of pictorial communication. “The oldest surviving illustrated book is said to be an

Egyptian papyrus roll of around 1980 BC.” (Salisbury and Styles, 2012) In his book Kurt Weitzmann, an influential art historian examined this illustrated roll.

“It contains a ceremonial play written to celebrate the accession to the throne of Senusret I of the Twelfth Dynasty (...) The text of the roll is in linear hieroglyphs written in narrow, vertical columns. The text occupies the top four-fifths of the scroll and the illustrations the bottom. The scenes are arranged in a manner similar to a modern comic strip with the Pharaoh, in the role of Horus, appearing multiple times. Scenes are divided from each other by vertical lines. The drawing style is so simple that the figures are little more than enlarged hieroglyphs. This hieroglyphic figure style, as one might call it, suggests that we are not too far away in time from the beginning of papyrus roll illustration as a new branch of art, although it must be remembered that this roll is unique both as to its text and as to the period in which it was made.” (Weitzmann, 1970)

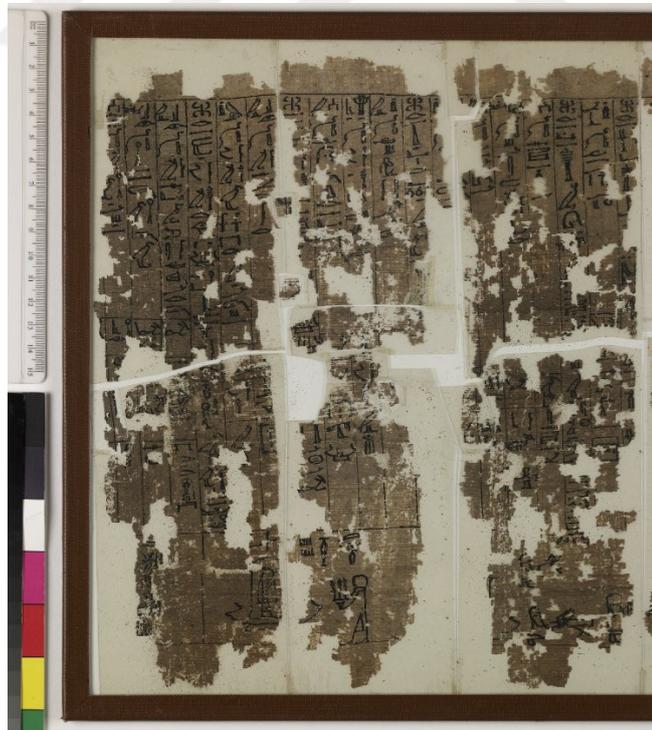


Figure 4. Ramesseum Papyrus, 1980BC.

As mentioned before in the previous chapter *The Brief History of Childhood*, adults who lived before the Middle Ages lacked an awareness about children’s

perception. This is the reason why many documents for children's literature do not exist. However, certain authors, philosophers and clergies wrote teaching texts and books for their students such as Venerable Bede's text on natural science in the 7<sup>th</sup> century and Alcuin of York and Anselm of Canterbury in the 11<sup>th</sup> century. Even if they were not arranged specifically for children, they could be given as the first examples of teaching books written by literate people of the Medieval time.

In the 14<sup>th</sup> century, *The Babees Book* in the Harleian Manuscripts was written for royal children to teach them general manners. For instance; to hold up their heads and kneel on one knee, not to turn their backs on someone, to look straight at whoever speaks to them and so on. In the book, it is stated: "... And so young babies, my book is only for your instruction; wherefore I pray that no man reprehend it, but amend it where it is at fault, and judge it not, for your own sake. I seek no other reward but than it may please men and give you some ease in learning..." (Rickert, 1913)

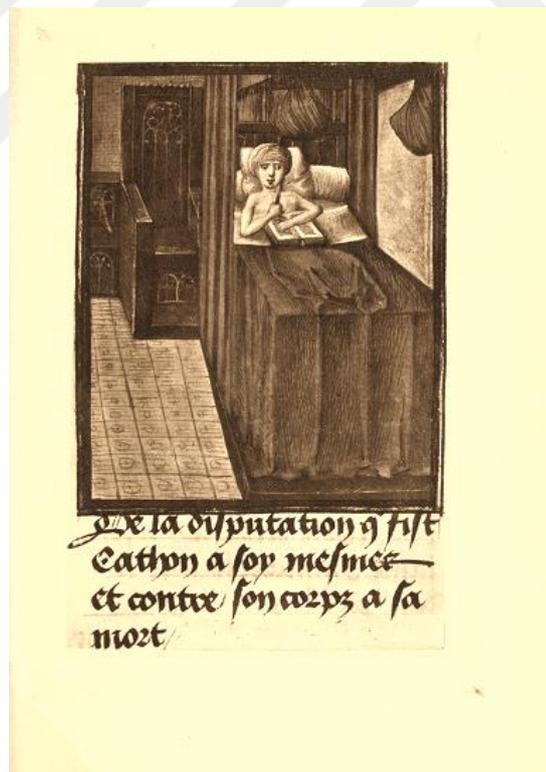


Figure 5. *The Babees Book*, Harleian Manuscripts, the 14<sup>th</sup> Century.

With the books like *The Babees Book* written for children of noble families, parents started to be aware about their children’s education, so much so that the fathers wrote books of advice for their children. These books were not written in a manner that would speak to a child’s mentality, but in a manner that would teach them how to behave well while they were growing up. Geoffrey Chaucer, an English poet, astronomer and philosopher of the Middle Ages, wrote an astronomy book called *Treatise on the Astrolabe* in 1391 for his son Lewis, which can be regarded as the beginning of a trend, where the parents start to pass down their knowledge to their children not only by verbally guiding them but also writing down these principles.

Following the raising awareness towards children’s welfare in the Renaissance, in the fifteenth century, a significant development increased the interest in books. Johannes Gutenberg’s invention of the movable type in 1440’s started the Print Revolution in Europe, which is considered to be the most significant event of the modern times. Gutenberg’s invention was the combination of using ink and movable metal type, which allowed the mass production of printed books.



Figure 6. Gutenberg’s Bible, 1450s.

The Gutenberg’s Bible is considered by most as the icon of printing, as it was

the first outcome of his invention. The Print Revolution led to the mass production of books. Twenty years later *Der Edelstein*, a collection of German fables written before 1330, appeared and became the first dated book that bore both type and image. *Der Edelstein*, was “printed in 1461 by the Swiss writer Ulrich Boner.” (Pollard, 1893) This book of fables contained 101 woodcuts.



Figure 7. *Der Edelstein*, Ulrich Boner, 1461.

After the invention of movable type, it became a common thing to use both type and image in the same book. Not only is the use of both type and illustration eye pleasing but also it is easier to read a text with images as text breakers. Regarding the books with both type and image, Leonardo da Vinci pointed out a remarkable point of the relation between visual image and textual context.

“... You, who wish to represent by words the form of man and all the aspects of his membrification, relinquish that idea. For the more minutely you describe the more you will confine the mind of the reader, and the more you will keep him from the knowledge of the thing described. And so it is necessary to draw and to describe.”

One of the most considerable examples on the combination of both image and text was an early type of popular literature, called the chapbook. Chapbooks were small and cheap publications that were mostly printed on a single sheet of paper. Chapbooks were purchased at either booksellers or chapmen and peddlers, during the late 1500s. They provided a wide variety of genres, which became the beginning of children's popular literature. These genres included alphabet books, fairy and folk tales, nursery rhymes and fables, which are the basis of the modern children's book.

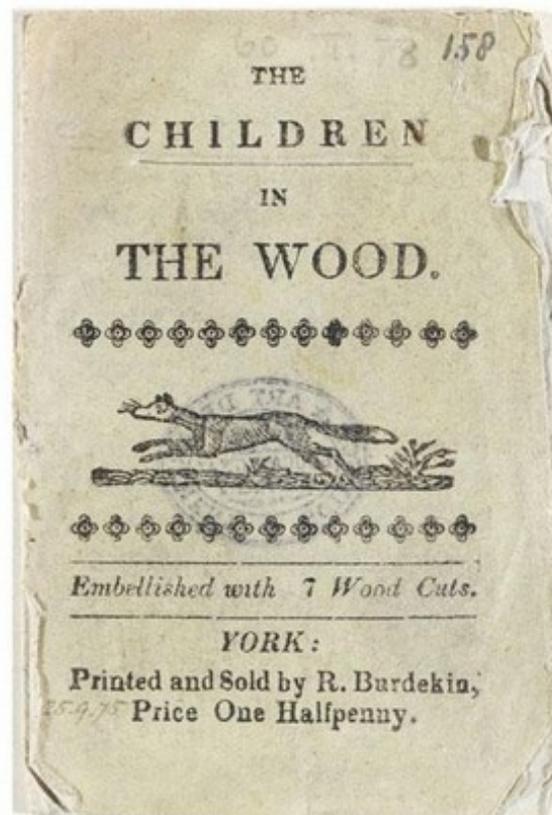


Figure 8. *The Children in the Wood*, York: R. Burkedin, 1820.

After these considerable steps taken in children's literature, the book *Orbis Sensualium Pictus* by Comenius was published in 1658, which is generally considered to be the first children's picture book, "in the sense that it contains pictures designed for children to read." (Salisbury and Styles, 2012) The book was intended to be a children's encyclopedia and it is divided into chapters with some woodcut illustrations. The children's encyclopedia has a wide range of subjects such as nature, zoology, religion, botanics, humans and so on.



Figure 9. *Orbis Sensualium Pictus*, Comenius, 1658.

As we can see in the images from *Orbis Sensualium Pictus*, some animals are depicted not only with their names but are also illustrated for the reader to recognize the species by appearance itself. The tendency of depicting an object with both image and text is an approach which provides with the necessary capabilities or children's understanding to work in both ways, which is actually one of the most significant techniques of today's teaching methodologies for beginner readers.

John Locke suggested the idea that children should read for pleasure only. Moreover, he was the pioneer who recommended the Aesop Fables and Reynard the Fox to children to read. In his book, *Some Thoughts Concerning Education*, he stated his point of view about children's education. "What other books there are in English of the kind above- mentioned, fit to engage the liking of children, and tempt them to read, I do not know, but am apt to think, that children, being generally delivered over to the method of schools, where the fear of the rod is to enforce, and not any pleasure of the employment to invite them to learn, this sort of useful books, amongst the number of silly ones that are of all sorts, yet have had the fate to be neglected; and nothing that I

know has been considered of this kind out of the ordinary road of the hornbook, primer, Psalter, Testament, and Bible.” (Locke, 1880)

Writing for children’s for the pleasure of reading is considered to be first developed in France with a version of *Mother Goose* written by Charles Perrault. In that book, Charles Perrault wrote some simple versions of the 'Little Red Riding Hood,' 'The Sleeping Beauty' and 'Puss in Boots'. However, it is unknown whether these cult stories are his creation or if they were passed on by previous generations. Nevertheless, the books were first published by Charles Perrault, *Little Red Riding Hood* known as *Le Petit Chaperon Rouge* and *The Sleeping Beauty* as *Sole, Luna, e Talia*. They were all rewritten by the Grimm Brothers, which are the versions we all know today. “The fairy-tales and wonder-stories sold in England by chapmen, and now treasured in libraries, were, many of them, of French origin, either from the old metrical romances, or tales collected by Perrault and the Comtesse d'Aulnoy. Cinderella, Valentine and Orson, The White Cat, The Yellow Dwarf, Beauty and the Beast, are all of direct French descent, and were once as dear to story lovers of all ages as they have always been to children.” (Hewins, 1888)



Figure 10. An engraving illustration for *Little Red Riding Hood*, Charles Perrault, 1697.

Charles Perrault's French editions of *Mother Goose* were translated to English in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century, which was a turning point of children's modern literature in Europe. In 1702, a 12-page chapbook called *A Little Book For Little Children* was published in London. The book is considered to be the first children's book written in a manner, which would appeal to children's way of thinking. The pages are structured in a basic plan that gives children the directions for spelling. Not much is known about the author, except the initials written in the book: T.W.

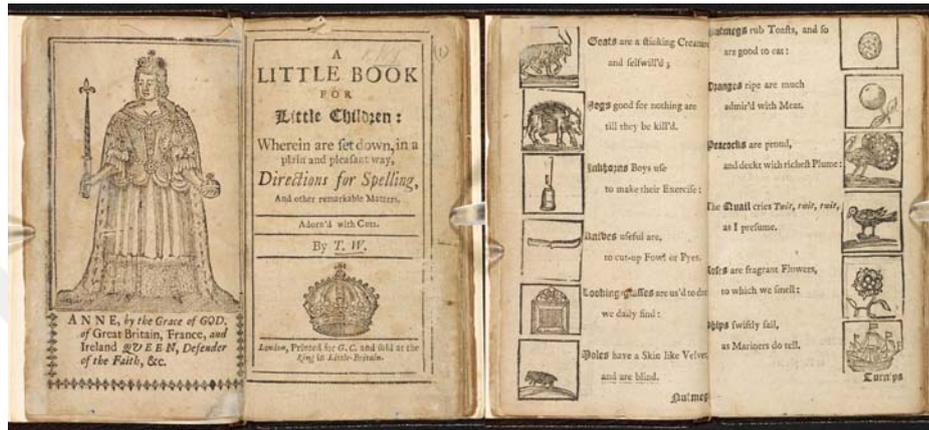


Figure 11. *A Little Book for Children, 1702.*

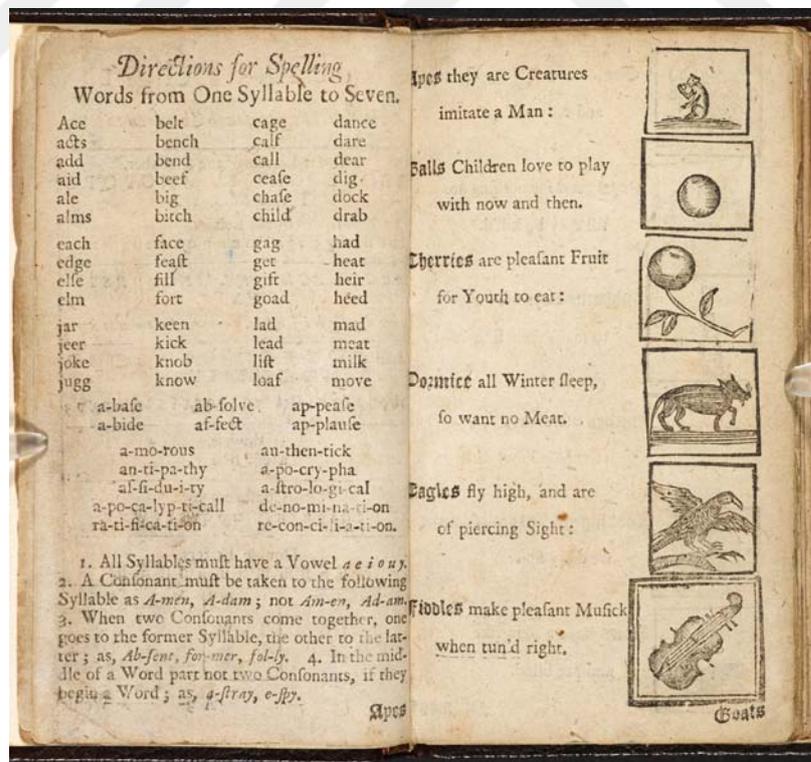


Figure 12. *Directions for Spelling* and illustrated alphabet from *A Little Book for Little Children, 1702.*

In the mid 1700's, a cluster of London publishers who realized there was a market for children's books began to produce them massively. One of the most well-known book publishers of that time is John Newbery who also published the first children's periodicals. His book *Little Pretty Pocket-Book, intended for the Amusement of Little Master Tommy and Pretty Miss Polly with Two Letters from Jack the Giant Killer* includes woodcut illustrations, which consist of simple rhymes, one of each that starts with a letter of the alphabet.

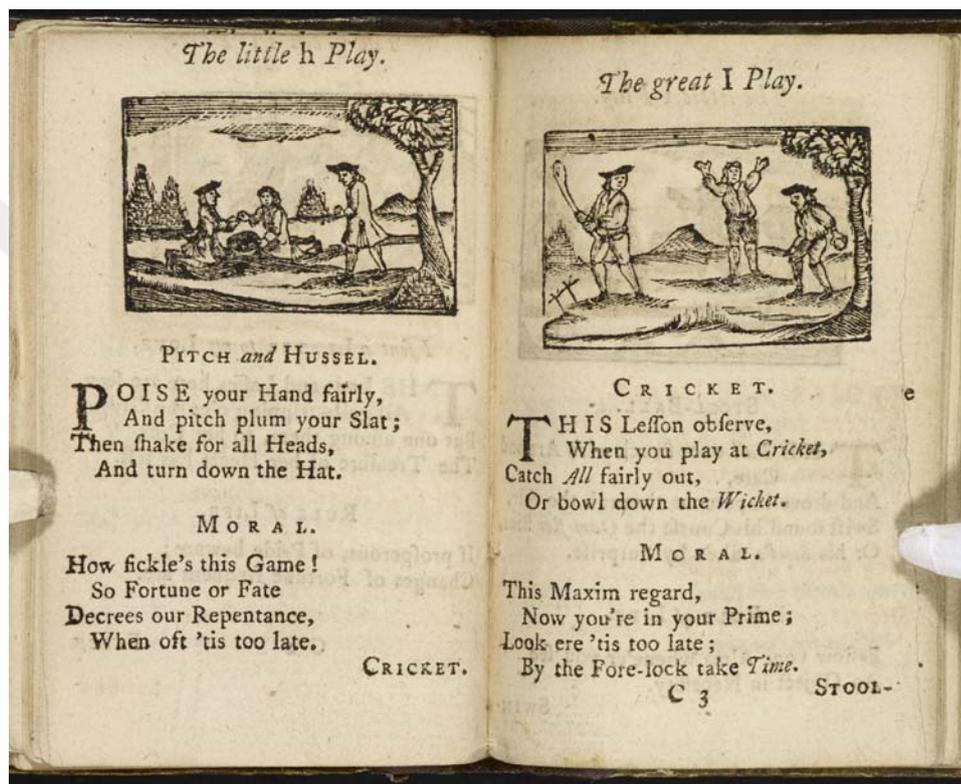


Figure 13. *Little Pretty Pocket Book intended for the Amusement of Little Master Tommy and Pretty Miss Polly with Two Letters from Jack the Giant Killer*, John Newbery, 1770.

“The painter and poet William Blake could perhaps be seen as the first one who has experimented with the symbiotic relationship between word and image, at least in the sense of their visual arrangement.” (Salisbury and Styles, 2012) His book *Songs of Innocence* was printed and published by himself in 1789. The book could be seen as a forerunner with its own style. In his book *Sing a Song for Sixpence*, Brian Alderson considers William Blake's work as a great sample of children's picture book of English literature. “So it comes about that the first masterpiece of English children's literature,

which is also the first great original picture book, stems from an impulse to integrate words and images within a single linear whole.” (Alderson, 1986)

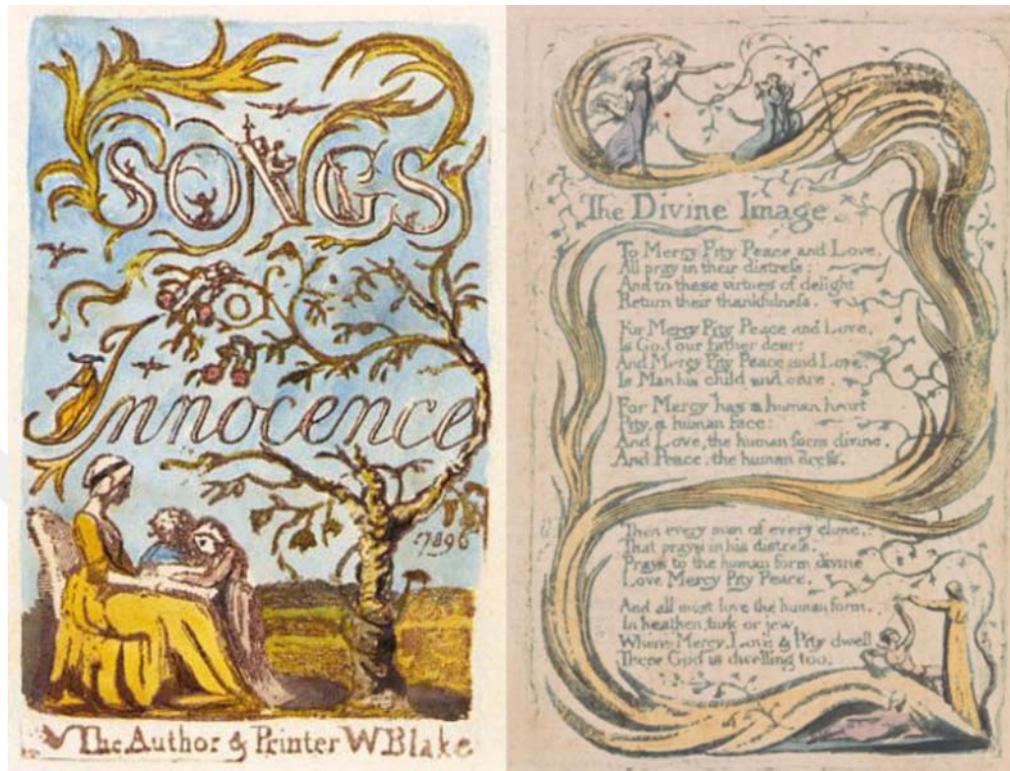


Figure 14. *Songs of Innocence*, William Blake, 1789.

The 19<sup>th</sup> century is considered to be the time of the birth of the modern picturebook. The invention of color printing changed the style as well as the point of view. “Randolph Caldecott, a British artist and illustrator, is generally acknowledged to be the father of the picturebook.” (Salisbury and Styles, 2012) Maurice Sendak, the writer of *Where the Wild Things Are*, who is a well-known children’s picture book of our time, explains Randolph Caldecott’s well-designed usage of image and text as: Caldecott’s work heralds the beginning of the modern picture book. “He devised an ingenious juxtaposition of picture and word, a counterpoint that never happened before. Words are left out- but the picture says it. Pictures are left out- but the word says it. In short, it is the invention of the picture book.” (Sendak, 1989) One of his notable books, *A Frog He Would A-Wooing Go*, also has an ease typesetting for a beginner reader. His use of animal characters in this book is a good early example of a modern fable, which will be examined in the next chapters.

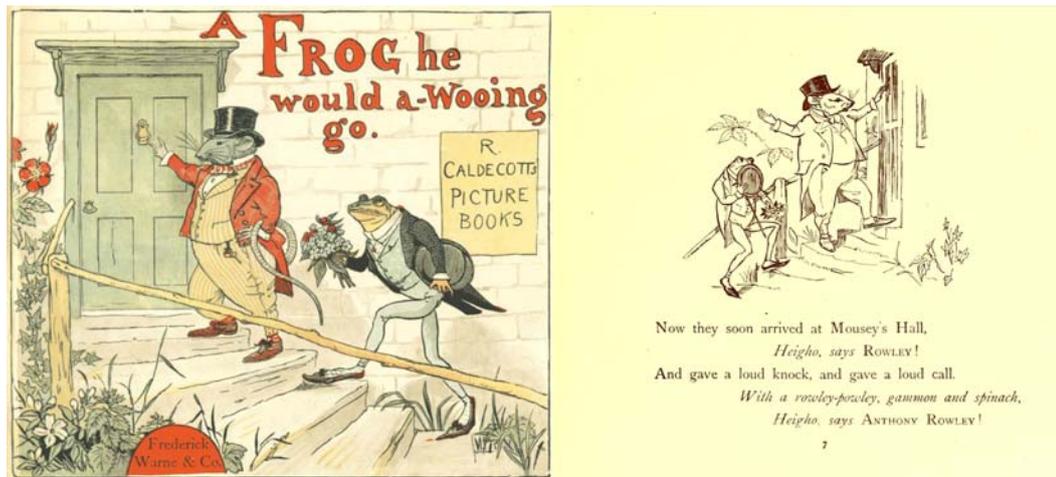
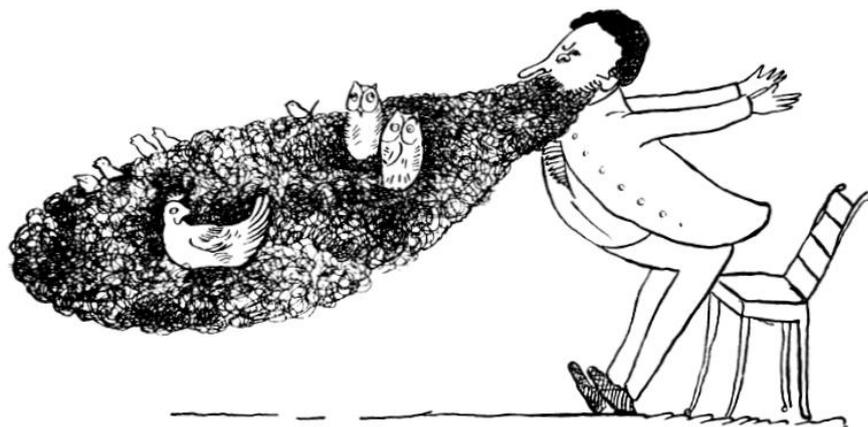


Figure 15. *A Frog He Would A-Wooing Go*, Randolph Caldecott, 1883.

Edward Lear is a writer and illustrator, famous for his book *A Book of Nonsense*. The book was published in 1846, and it includes poems and songs. All texts are shown with illustrations, which are suitable for the text. Even though Lear's storytelling is different than early 1900's book illustrations, the book *A Book of Nonsense* may be considered as a pioneer of contemporary rhyming book for children. According to Martin Salisbury and Morag Styles, "Lear's anarchic visual and verbal texts show no inclination to any rules of linear narrative." (Salisbury and Styles, 2012)

84

A BOOK OF NONSENSE.



There was an Old Man with a beard,  
 Who said, " It is just as I feared ! —  
 Two Owls and a Hen, four Larks and a Wren,  
 Have all built their nests in my beard."

Figure 16. *A Book of Nonsense*, Edward Lear, 1846.

The production of children's books has increased accordingly with the fast changing printing technologies and rising perception of visual communication. In 1865 Lewis Carroll's masterpiece, *Alice in Wonderland*, was first published with Sir John Tenniel illustration. This work became so influential in the history of children's books that recently 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its publication was celebrated with new illustrations all over the world.



Figure 17. *Alice in Wonderland*, Lewis Carroll, 1865.

In the second half of the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century, developments in printing technology changed the appearance of children's books. This started a whole new period, which is considered to be the golden age of the illustration.

The transition from illustrated books to picture books can never be explained with a single reason. Visual developments, educational psychology, technical improvements, entertainment factors regarding children's pleasure and increased interpretations of picture books may be considered as the main reasons of this transition. With Randolph Caldecott's new approach of using image and text harmoniously, picture books and their illustrations began to be considered not only as decorative

versions of textual books but also as art pieces with their own rhythmic storytelling. According to Martin Salisbury's researches, children described that the words need the pictures more than the pictures need the words. (Salisbury and Styles, 2012) Not only visual developments changed the appearance of children's books but also technical improvements led new illustration techniques. For instance, engraving, etching and lithography, which will be examined in the next chapters, introduced 'color' to printing. The examinations through educational psychology confirm that young readers are sensitive to color and they can analyze the significance naturally. (Salisbury and Styles, 2012)

Certain forerunning writers and illustrators as mentioned previously, played a significant role in increasing interpretations through visual storytelling. Martin Salisbury mentions this visual thinking in his book *Children's Picturebooks*. "From the 1950s an increasing number of graphic designers were drawn to the medium of the picturebook... This is perhaps where the unique nature of the picture book as a medium really began to assert itself. Now words became fewer as an understanding of the potential of the page as a multimodal visual stage grew." (Salisbury and Styles, 2012)

The revolution in printing techniques, new educational improvements, social awareness and how children respond to pictures changed the attitudes through picture books and formed the modern children's picture books that we all know today.

## **2.1 Folktales and Fables**

The word fable is derived from *fibula*, which is a Latin word that means story. Fables are ancient oral stories that describe animals and nature by giving them human attributes such as the ability to speak and to reason.

As I previously mentioned in the chapter *History of Children's Picture Books*, ancient paintings were one of the most important skills of communication for that time. In fact, they were so important that they were narrated verbally through centuries until publishers or well-known storytellers collected them into a book. Fables mostly consist

of animals that talk, in order to give moral lessons to the listener. This anthropomorphic (human-like) characters first appeared in ancient Egypt with cave drawings.



Figure 18. Anthropomorphic cat guarding geese, Egypt, c. 1120 BC.

Even though fables could be found in almost every country and culture, one of the most well known fabulist today is Aesop. Aesop was a storyteller, believed to have lived in ancient Greece between 620 and 560 BCE. “He is also regarded as the father of the folktales and fables.” (Patterson, 1991) “Aesop’s Fables were among the first books printed following the invention of the printing press, and an English language edition illustrated with woodcuts appeared in 1484.” (Weinstein, 2005)

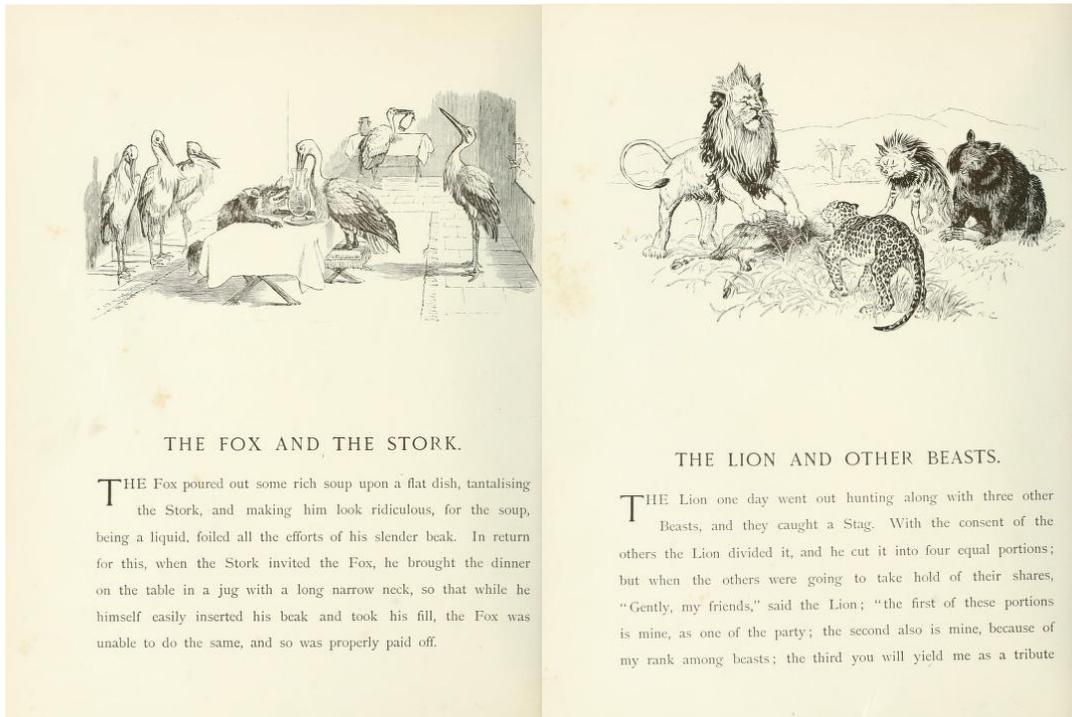


Figure 19. Some pages from *Aesop's Fables* with modern instances by Randolph Caldecott, published in 1883.

Even if there are many fables in almost every country and culture, *Aesop's Fables* and *Panchatantra*, which is an ancient Indian collection of animal fables, are most well known works from that time. Most children's books that we know today base their source of inspiration from them. Because folktales have been told since ancient times, we cannot attribute a tale to a specific person or culture. Moreover, some similar stories can be found across different countries and in very different cultures. For instance, some *Aesop's Fables* and *Panchatantra* have some tales in common, however, they differ in detail.



Figure 20. An illustration for *Panchatantra* dated 1354. The rabbit fools the elephant king by showing him the reflection of the moon.

“Almost nothing about Aesop is certain except the universal and unfading popularity of the fables associated with his name. We do not know exactly when or where he lived or what he did. We have no evidence that he put any of the fables he told into writing and only a few clues as to which fables were actually his. The twentieth-century research has established, moreover, that fables identical to Aesop's in form, and sometimes in substance, existed much earlier, in Meso-potamia. Yet the testimony of Aristophanes, Plato, Herodotus, and other eminent Greeks are firmly in accord on the fame of Aesop as a fable-maker, or fabu-list.” (Silvey, 1995)

After Aesop and Vishnu Sharma (who is believed to have written the *Panchatantra*), who both lived in around the 5<sup>th</sup> century BCE, no specified fabulist or writer has been mentioned in historic sources. According to my research, the reason why there were no writers for children for almost twelve centuries is the lack of awareness and appreciation regarding childhood. With the increase of the awareness towards children, fables became prominent in children's books, especially in Europe.

One of the most well known fabulists from France is Jean de La Fontaine (1621-1695), who lived during the 17<sup>th</sup> century. After *Aesop's Fables*, La Fontaine provided a

new model of fables, which inspired many subsequent fabulists in Europe. His collection is divided into 12 books, which includes 239 fables.



Figure 21. An engraving by François Chauveau, illustrator of the original edition of La Fontaine's Fables, ca. 1720.

While La Fontaine's books are divided into 12 volumes, the first six books are illustrated by François Chauveau (1613- 1676), who was also an engraver for Charles Perrault. As I have mentioned before, Charles Perrault was the first writer who created books for children's entertainment. His book *Mother Goose* contains some of the most well known fables today, which have been rewritten by the Grimm Brothers: *Little Red Riding Hood* and *Puss in Boots*.

Grimm Brothers, Jacob Grimm (1785-1863) and Wilhelm Grimm (1786-1859), "recorded folktales told by ordinary people in their native Germany and published their works in 1812 as *Children's and Household Tales (Kinder-und Hausmärchen)*" (Weinstein, 2005). This book has been translated into English in 1823, and has included many of the stories that were written by Perrault before. The book *Children's and Household Tales* holds the tales such as: Hansel and Gretel, Cinderella, The Frog Prince, Rapunzel and many other which are considered to be classics today.



Figure 22. Little Red Riding Hood illustrations by Walter Crane from *Children's and Household Tales*, 1886.



Figure 23. The Bremen Town Musicians illustrations by Walter Crane from *Children's and Household Tales*, 1886.



Figure 24. The Rabbits Bride illustrations by Walter Crane from *Children's and Household Tales*, 1886.

## 2.2 Alphabet Books

An alphabet book is a work primarily created with young readers in mind, which shows the letters of the alphabet along with a word, with an illustration of the given letter. Alphabet books may consist of sentences or paragraphs that depict the letter in a variety of formats to teach the basics of the language to beginners.



Figure 25. Historic wooden alphabet block, covered with paper with relief illustrations.

In her book *Children's Books and Their Creators*, Anita Silvey describes alphabet books as the beginning of the learning process. “Children's greatest growth in language comes during the preschool years. Infants make sounds. These sounds translate into words, the words into sentences, the sentences into stories. When they learn to read, youngsters link their oral language to its written counterpart. Their first alphabet books begin this transition.” (Silvey, 1995)

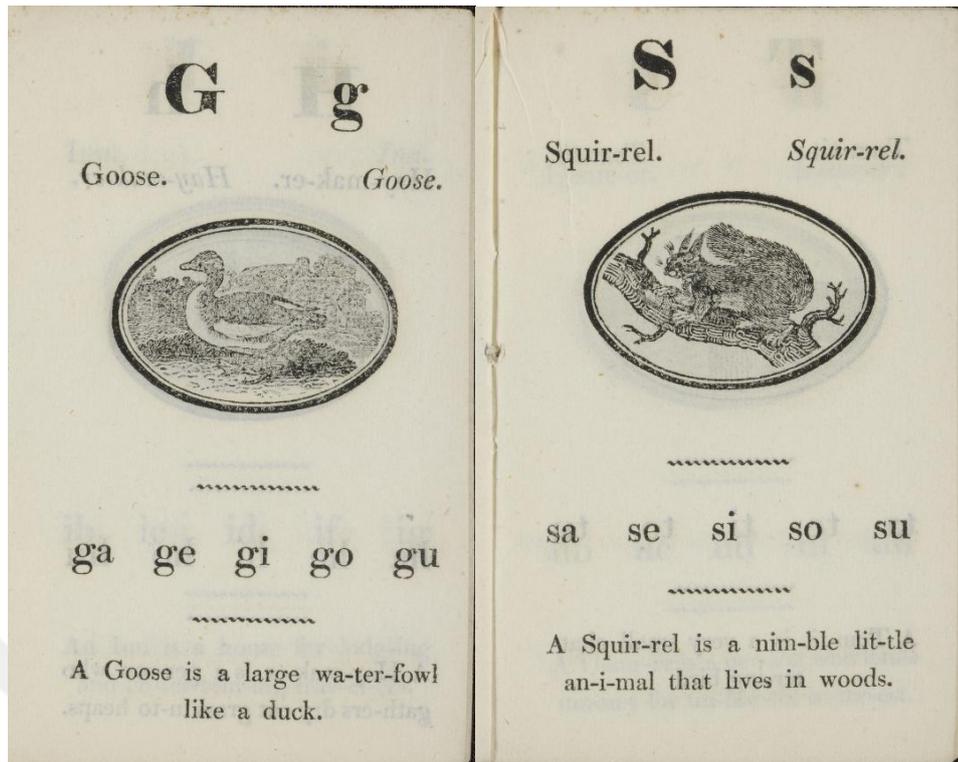


Figure 26. The child's instructor or Picture alphabet, 1815.

Alphabet books are examples of one of the earliest uses of instructional pictures, which are specifically created for children. They first appeared as hornbooks in England starting during the 15<sup>th</sup> century until the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Hornbook is a parchment or paper, displaying the alphabet often accompanied with the Lord's Prayer or other religious writings on a wooden board with a handle. The paper would show the letters both in capital and lower case forms. The use of the Lord's Prayer on hornbooks was the reason why the majority of children at that time were familiar with it, even before they learned how to read. This being the case, a familiar written form has been an aid to a quicker learning for children.



Figure 27. Examples of a hornbook, presenting the alphabet with Lord's Prayer.

Between the late 1700's to middle 1800's, battledores appeared as progressions to a known format of hornbooks. They were printed on thick paper, which was mostly folded into three parts. As opposed to hornbooks, battledores provided illustrations related with the letters used.



Figure 28. An example of a battledore, published by William Davison in 1830.

Further progressions from hornbooks and battledores look more like the alphabet books we know today. It was in the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century that writers and publishers perceived that illustrations for young readers are as important as the text used in the books.

“The very youngest child needs simple, uncluttered books. Words should represent familiar, concrete objects, with "A" beginning apple rather than atom. First alphabet books typically pair initial sounds with words, and these associations should depict regular phonographs. Pages that proclaim "K is for knife" or "G is for gnu" bewilder rather than educate.” (Silvey, 1995) With this point of view texts became words to keep clarity of the book together with the relating illustration. According to Anita Silvey’s point of view, “children interacting with their first texts are not reading in the traditional sense of relying solely on the printed word. Instead, they depend on illustrations to create meaning.” (Silvey, 1995)



Figure 29. *Alphabet Universal: Anglais Et Francais*, 1830's.

Alphabet books aim to teach the alphabet using both illustrations and letters in order to be more enjoyable and educative. They also improve skills such as spelling vocabulary and predicting. Even though there have been many different types of alphabet books since the 15<sup>th</sup> century, their general aim is to teach the alphabet and

improve language skills, connecting words and pictures specifically created for young children.

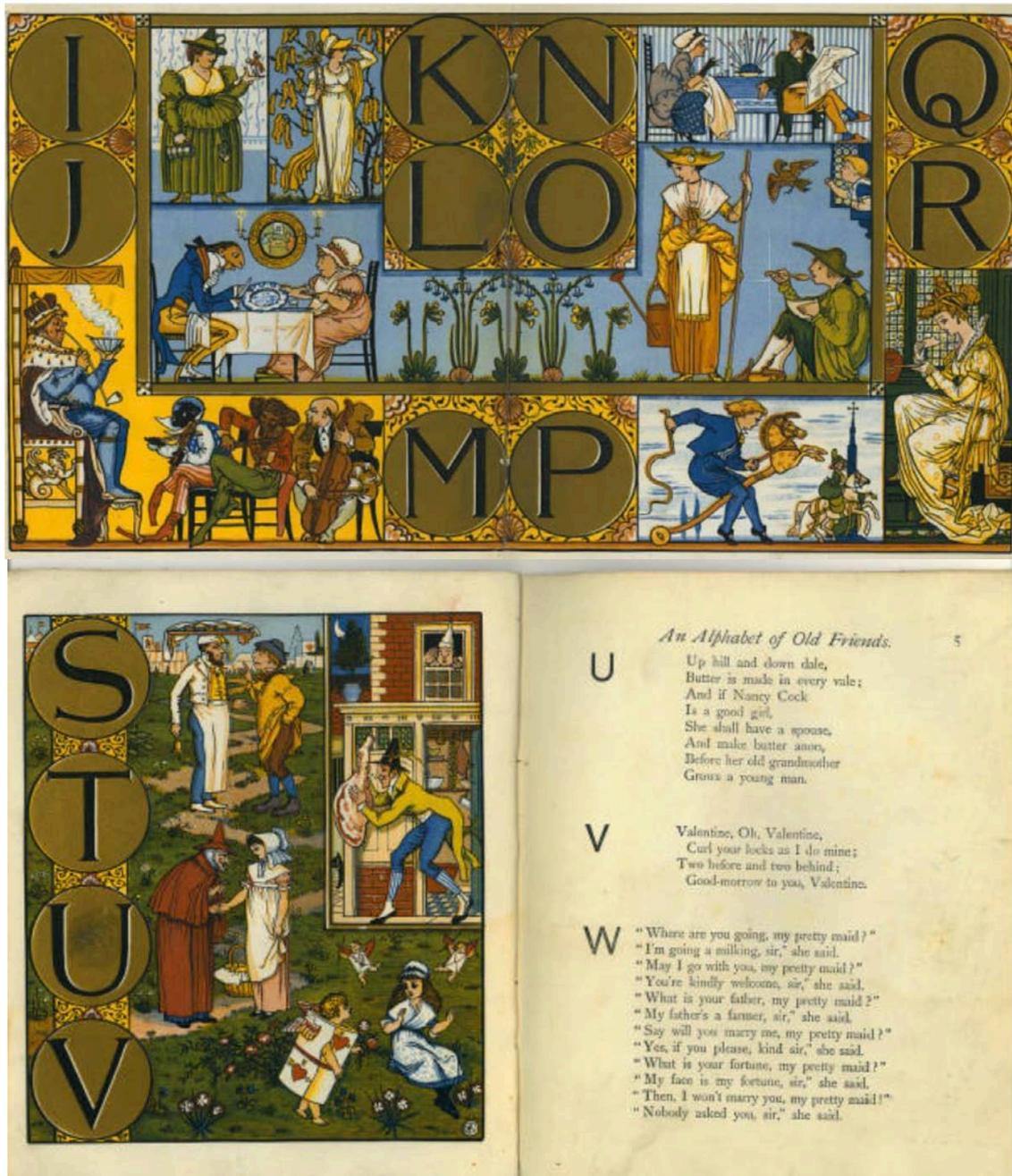


Figure 30. *The Alphabet of Old Friends* by Walter Crane 1874-76.

Some alphabet books like Walter Crane's *The Alphabet Of Old Friends*, not only displays the alphabet and the letters but also has accompanying rhymes for a quicker learning.

## 2.3 Nursery Rhymes

Nursery rhymes are traditional poems and songs, which were printed in Britain during the late 1500's as a part of chapbooks. As I mentioned previously, chapbooks provided variety of genres including nursery rhymes. Even though there were many non-readers in the late 1500's, chapbooks were very popular due to their wood engravings.

The first nursery rhyme collection was published in 1744, which is *Tommy Thumb's Song Book*. In 1781, Thomas Crane collected all English nursery rhymes in a book and published the first edition as *Mother Goose's Melody*, which is the first record of many classic rhymes we still know today.

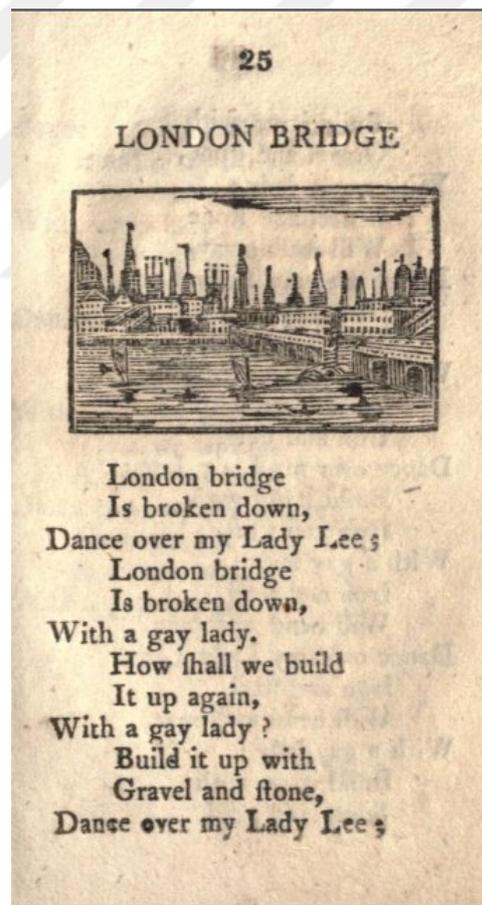


Figure 31. The first page of *Tommy Thumb's Song Book* from 1815 edition.

However, as with fables, it is possible to find the similar rhymes in a variety of sources. It could be said that nursery rhymes first appeared as lullabies. As lullabies are found in almost every culture, nursery rhymes can also be found as verbal songs or

poems. Most nursery rhymes were not written down until the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Not only are nursery rhymes entertaining, but also due to the phonetics behind the words, it is both easier to learn and to read.

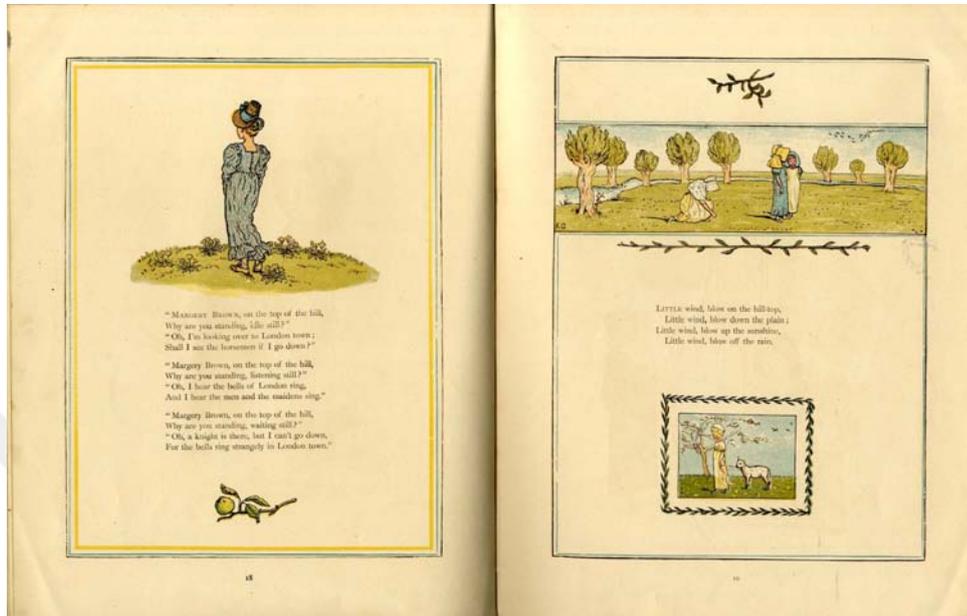


Figure 32. Kate Greenaway, *Under the Window*, 1879.

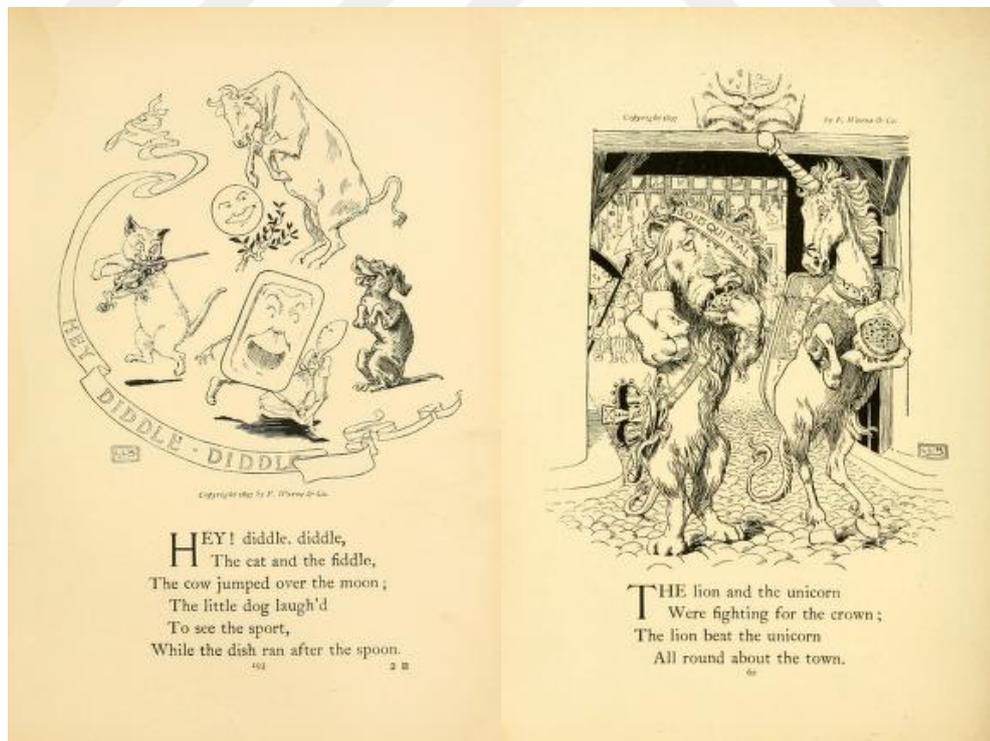


Figure 33. *The Nursery Rhyme Book* by Andrew Lang, 1897.

### 3. CHILDREN'S PICTURE BOOKS

“A picture book is text, illustrations, total design; an item of manufacture and a commercial product; a social, cultural, historical document and foremost an experience for a child. As an art form it hinges on the interdependence of pictures and words, on the simultaneous display of two facing pages, and on the drama of the turning page.” (Bader, 1976)

A picture book is a combination of both visual and verbal elements, specially created for young children. The American Library Association (2008) defined a picture book as “a collective unity of story-line, theme, or concept, developed through the series of pictures of which the book is comprised.”

During the Middle Ages, children's literature was not very popular. Even though there were some examples in the history of children's books, they were rare and created only for royal families' children. It was in the 18<sup>th</sup> century that children's books suddenly took an important place in literature. It is actually not known why children's books became that popular in a short span of time. However, both major improvements in printing technologies and the rise of the awareness on children's education gave importance to this field that we know today.

First, the development of paper made the production cost cheaper. Prior to use of paper, parchments were used in books, which were rare and expensive for mass production. Along with the paper production, woodblock printing was improved along with ink, which made it easier to print both visuals and text into a wooden block. One of the most important inventions was the movable type by Johannes Gutenberg, which started the commercial publications. Woodcut illustrated books took the place of the hand-illuminated books. Nevertheless, woodcut illustrations were still colored by hand and some illustrators kept making hand-drawn illustrations, for instance, William Blake's well-known illustrations in *Songs of Innocence*.



Figure 34. *Songs of Innocence*, William Blake, 1789.

With these improvements in printing and production techniques, children's book publications became common. Simultaneously, children's books became an important field of interest for publishers.

"The early use of pictures for their informational value obviously relates to the long-standing conviction that books for children should have a primarily educational purpose." (Nodelman, 1988) Children's education started with the use of religious components such as some well-known prayers. With time, children's entertainment became a prominent component in children's books. With the use of illustrations and text in early books, writers aimed to teach the basics of the language to young children. Since writers and publishers realized that it was easier for young children to understand verbal and visual elements together, they started to make more illustrated books in a childish manner, such as, board books, alphabet books and rhymed books.

According to Xinyu Yu, the combination of pictures and words creates a way for appreciating art. "Picture books are learning tools, information resources, and sign systems. As a distinct genre, picture books provide children with a narrative language

model and visual experience. Children can use picture books to appreciate art, learn a language, or gain experience about their environments.” (Yu, 2012)

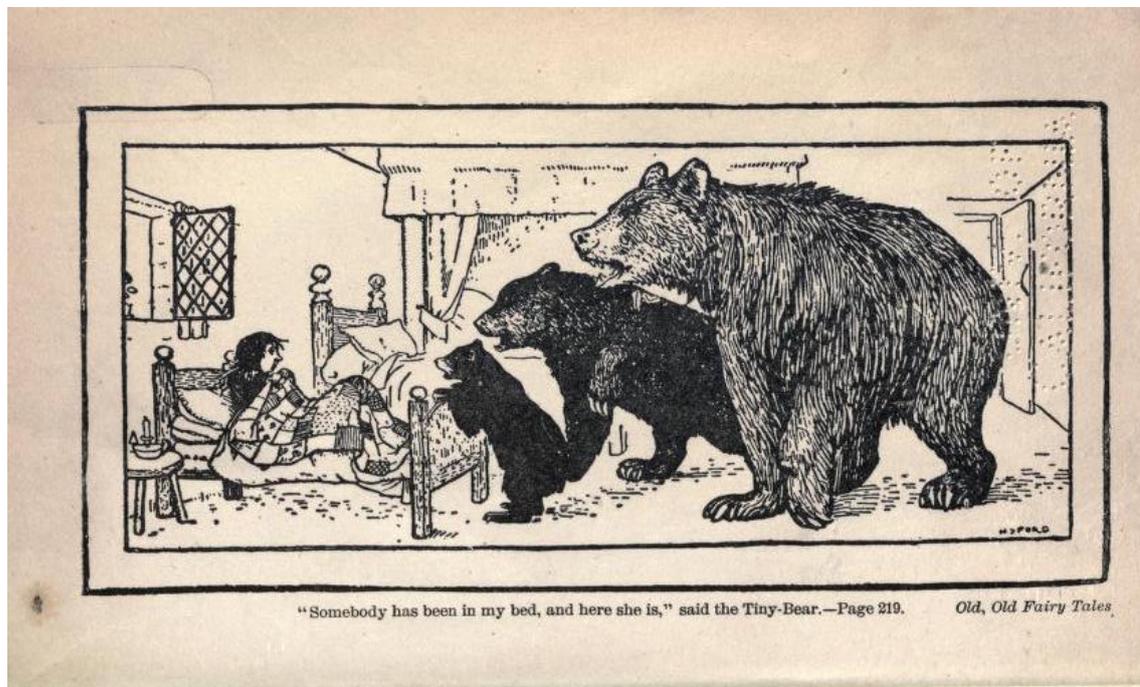


Figure 35. Illustration for *The Story of the Three Bears* by Henry Justice Ford, 1892.  
From *Lang's The Red Green Fairy Book*.

Picture books provide a variety of experiences for young children such as, meaning making, appreciating art, visual perception and most commonly acquiring language skills. Many writers, who wrote about children’s visual perception, defend that picture books for younger children, develop their aesthetic appreciation of art with the text. According to Zihui Fang, illustrations in picture books allow young readers not only to become aware of the variety of artistic styles and media that artists employ but also develop a sense of judging quality. (Fang, 1996) In accordance with James Gibson, picture books, providing visual and aesthetic experiences to children, demonstrate a connection between visual perception and children’s recognition of visual symbols and appreciation of art. (Gibson, 1971)

Since the first use of verbal and visual elements together, it has become accepted that children need pictorial guides for their verbal information in order to learn faster and easier. Picture books offer a unique opportunity for children to develop visual literacy because they are able to return to the visual images in books to explore, reflect

and critique those images. “As children explore illustrations and develop the ability to read images, they will attain deeper meanings from literature and an awareness of how visual images are used in their own meaning making.” (Galda, 1993) Picture books can also serve as an effective tool to stimulate and promote children's creativity. “By reading picture books without too much linguistic text, children learn to use their active imagination to interpret and (re)create a mental representation of the story. Children often associate pictures with their life experiences or familiar images, construct meaning based on their existing schemas or schemata. Children often come up with unique and creative interpretation of the plot, settings, and characters when they read picture books.” (Zhihui, 1996)

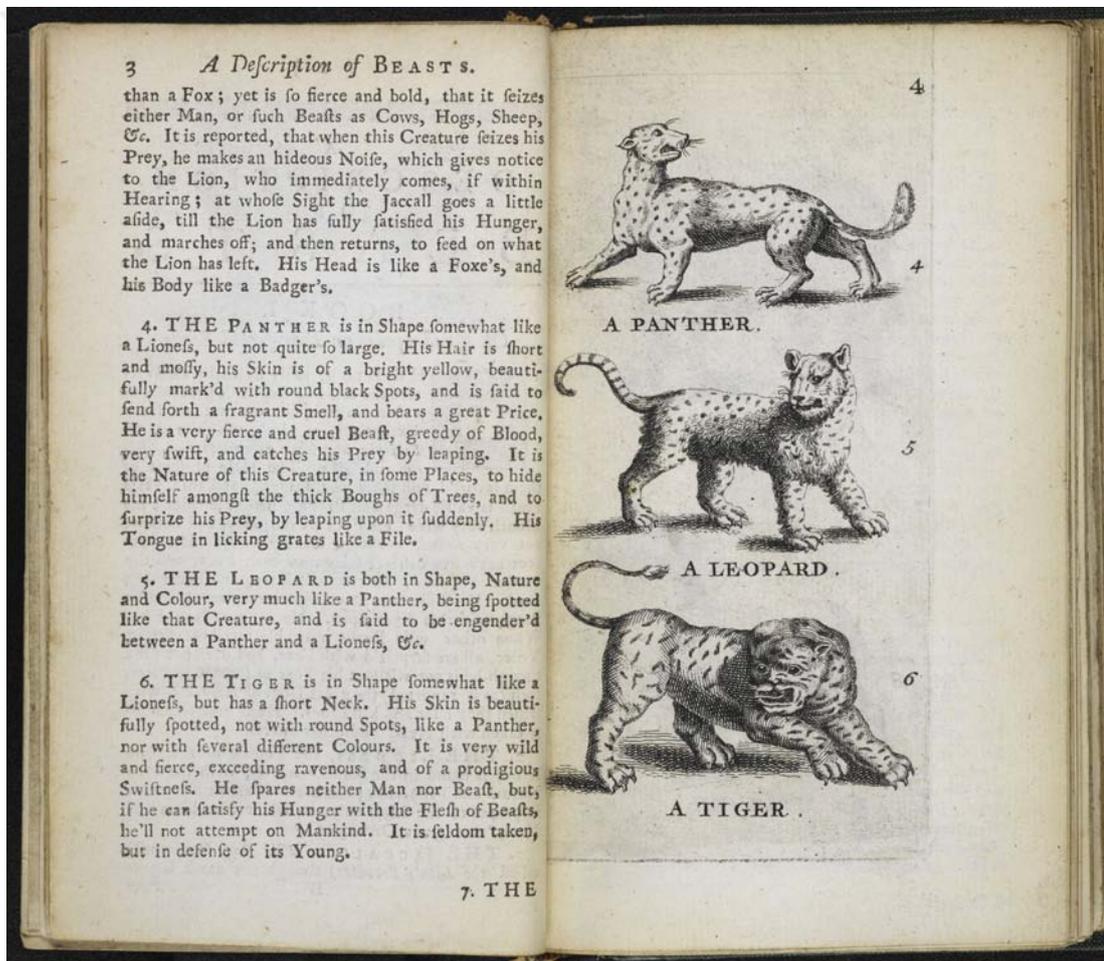


Figure 36. *A Description of Three Hundred Animals* by Thomas Boreman, 1730.

From the early-illustrated books to today's modern children's picture books, what has remained constant is the relation between children's visual perception and their acceptance of the verbal information. What has changed in time is the content and

techniques that have been used to create the picture book. In the next chapters I will examine the different use of materials and techniques used in contemporary samples.

### **3.1 Analysis of the Components of a Children's Picture Book**

#### **3.1.1 Layout**

Layout is an element of graphic design that consists of all visual elements on a page. For children's picture book layout design, the most important elements are the organizational principles of composition essentials such as: illustration, typesetting and the use of negative space in the composition. As much as it seems that the most important elements for a picture book are illustration and typography, the use of negative space constitutes a significant part of the composition.

Multi-page publications are based on a set of guidelines, which is called the grid. The grid provides specific measurements of a page in order to keep the layout flow consistent. The use of the grid depends on how much repetition is used in the composition. For a picture book, which has an illustration-text alignment, grid should be used to keep the continuity.

Children's picture books had a similar layout design before the late 19<sup>th</sup> century because of the woodblock printing techniques. "Traditionally, the grid structure of a book was based upon the principles of Greek aesthetics incorporating the series of golden ratios, principles that were rediscovered during the Renaissance. The ratio (1: 1.618) helped establish the facing pairs of text areas plus margins at the head, foot, spine and foreedge. The geometrically constructed grid structure has the advantage of requiring no calculations, the text areas being derived solely from the shape of the pages themselves. This also means that the proportion of text area to page area remained constant regardless of page size or its shape." (Jury, 2004)

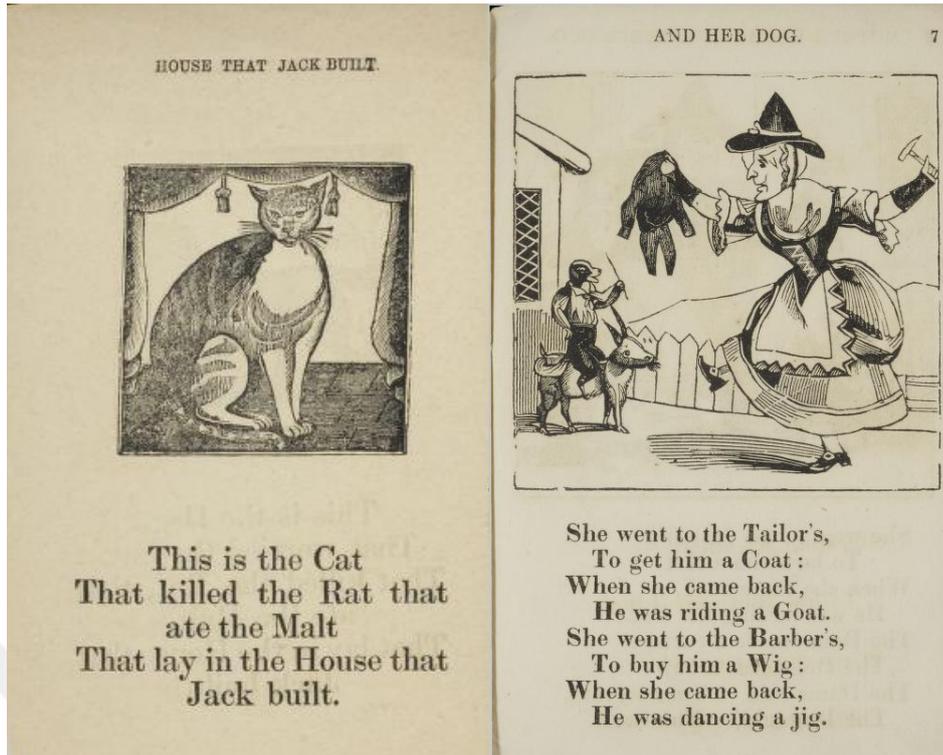


Figure 37. (Left) *The House that Jack Built*, 1807.

(Right) *The Droll Adventures of Mother Hubbard and Her Dog*, 1840.

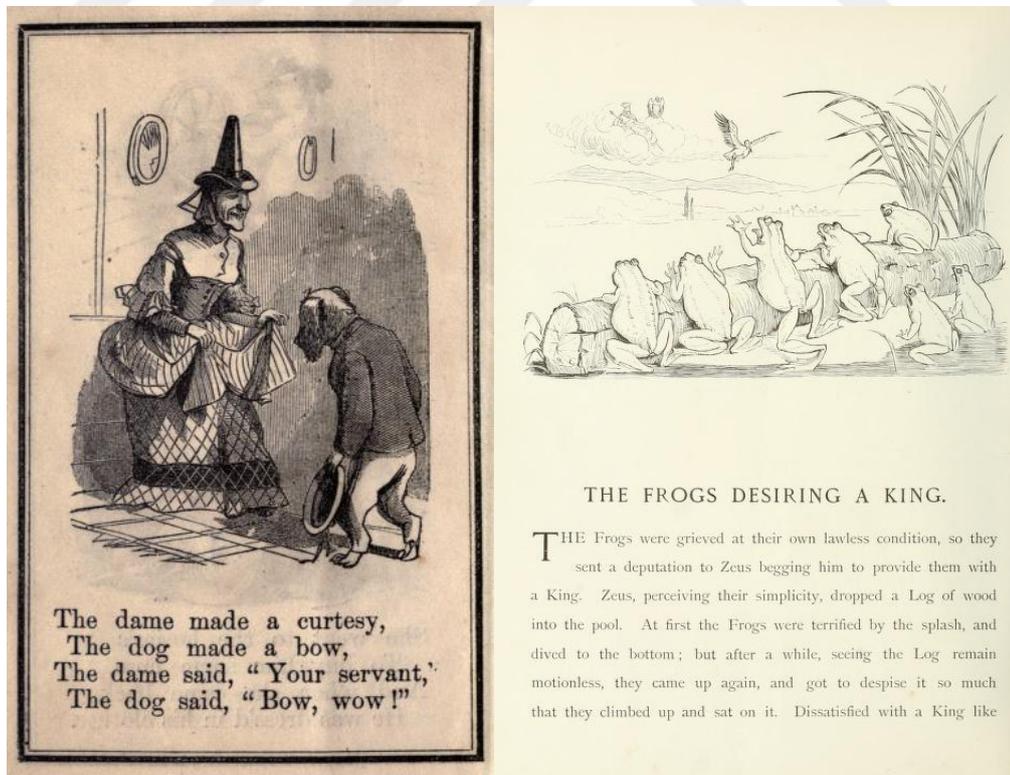


Figure 38. (Left) *Old Mother Hubbard*, 1858-99.

(Right) Some of *Aesop's Fables* with modern instances by Randolph Caldecott, 1883.



Figure 39. *Little Pretty Pocket Book intended for the Amusement of Little Master Tommy and Pretty Miss Polly with Two Letters from Jack the Giant Killer*, John Newbery, 1770.

According to my research on children's picture book page layout design, it can be said that the layout design has changed with the developments in technology, regarding the materials used and visual preferences of the illustrator considering children's perception.

Depending on when a book is produced, decisions taken about design and production can be made by authors, designers, typographers, illustrators or publishers. "Such decisions are likely to have been influenced by the technology they are working with, by their knowledge of the readers they are producing books for and about how they are likely to use the books, by the kind of content that they are dealing with, and by their awareness of the typical characteristics of the particular kind of book they are producing." (Walker, 2006)

A picture book layout design may include; format, margins, size, hierarchy, illustration, text, typeface, use of white space, page number and chapter title.

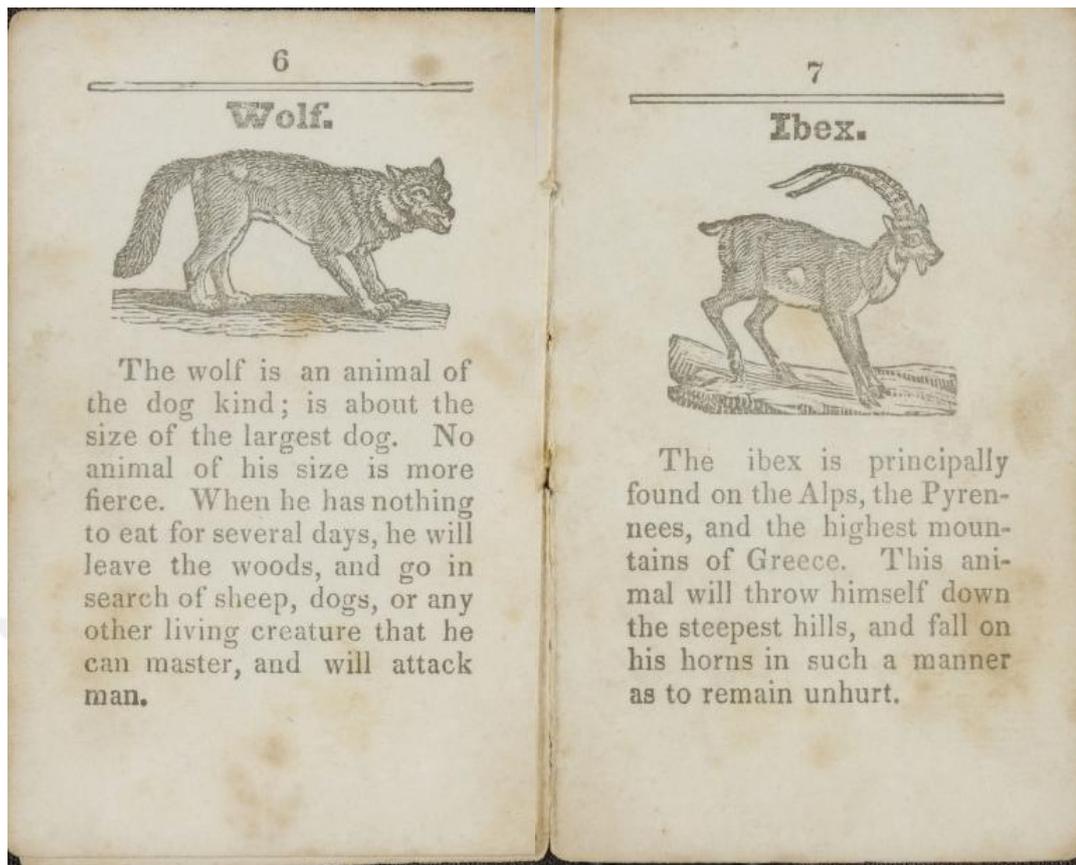


Figure 40. *A history of animals: for the use of children*, Rufus Merrill, 1843. Includes 6 woodcuts, camel, bear, wolf, ibex, antelope, lion, 87x55mm.

“The actual or perceived needs of the readers and the constraints imposed by the circumstances of use may have influenced decisions about typeface and type size, the content of the information and the way the books are intended to be used form part of an exploration of the functions of text and pictures, and consideration of the technology used (eg for typesetting and reproduction) is essential in discussion of the relationship between visual characteristics and production methods.” (Walker, 2006)

Including document structure, a book design layout may also concern; material attributes such as the size and the format of the book, paper type and the color usage. The size and the format of the book are as important as the composition elements.

A picture book may steer the visual attention with illustrations and the typography, as well as the use of layout and size. Likewise, pop-up books may be the best examples of material based book design with the use of format and paper. Pop-up books or movable books, which need advanced skills in paper engineering, rely on

folding and cutting paper to form the basis of the story. Not only does the three-dimensional use of paper draw the attention of children, but they are also interactive books, with basic games and movable parts inside.



Figure 41. *Metamorphosis*, believed to be created in New England, 1794.

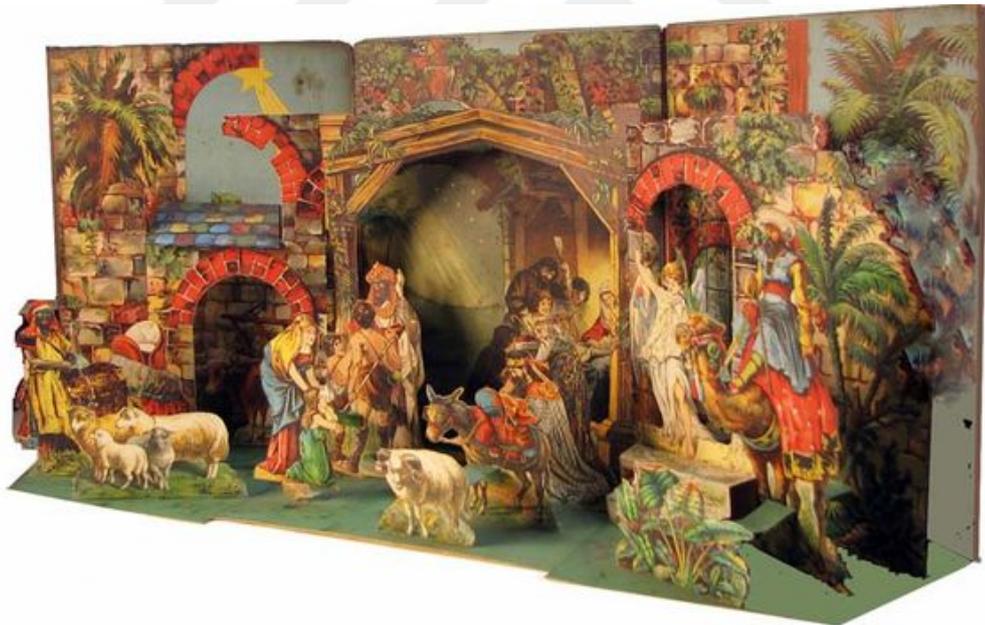


Figure 42. An example by J. F. Schreiber, 1880's pop-up book.

In the next chapter I will examine one of the most important parts of a children's picture book design, the illustration.

### 3.1.2 Illustration

Illustration is a depiction of a theme, idea, story, emotion or anything else visualized by the artist's graphical representation.

“As a discipline, illustration sits somewhere between art and graphic design. Another term often used to describe the discipline is commercial art, in recognition of the fact that much illustration is created for a client to fulfill a task or brief. This term describes illustration that is less about personal expression and more about satisfying a service, but to consider the discipline in this superficial manner is to barely scratch at the surface.” (Zeegen, 2009)

An illustration may depict the story of a book, magazine, poem, cinema, newspaper and so on. Illustrations provide the visual representation, imagined or remembered by the illustrator, using different techniques such as watercolor, gouache, oil, ink, collage, pastels, photograph or even older examples done with woodcut.

“The first marks made by humankind were probably drawn in the dirt with a finger or a stick. Alongside speech, the drawn image has played a vital role in communication between people, and before the development of written language it was the only method of recording stories and tales. Illustration came into existence to help us make sense of our world- to allow us to record, describe and communicate the intricacies of life.” (Zeegen, 2009)

As I mentioned in the chapter *History of Children's Picture Books*, cave paintings are accepted as the first pictorial storytelling. As the most direct form of visual communication, illustrations as we define them today, may date back as early as the first cave paintings.

“It could be argued that European cave paintings and Australian Aboriginal rock art dating back 40,000 and 60,000 years, Egyptian hieroglyphs from around 3,000BC, the murals of Pompeii painted around the first century A.D., the fourteenth century illuminated manuscripts, and Italian frescos, enjoying a golden age during the fifteenth

century, should all be considered part of illustrations past rather than belonging to the history of art.” (Zeegen, 2009)



Figure 43. Cave Painting in Tassili n’Ajjjer, Southeast Algeria.

One of the most common types of early illustrations that were produced in the Medieval Ages are known as manuscript illuminations. These illuminations were mostly hand-drawn over a coat or cow leather, including religious texts, which are supplemented with borders, initials and some other gold decorative elements, showing the Holy Family.

Many early illuminated manuscripts (600-1100) were written and illustrated on animal skin, however, there are some surviving manuscripts on papyrus and parchment as well. In the beginning of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, *Gutenberg’s Bible*, which is considered to be the first printed book, led to the use of illustration and text together. Even though early printings have decorations and illuminated initials, illuminated manuscripts could only be produced until the end of the Renaissance because of their costly and complex process.



Figure 44. *The Book of Kells*, ca. 800, showing the lavishly decorated text that opens the Gospel of John.



Figure 45. Papyrus Oxyrhynchus, 3<sup>rd</sup> Century, British Library, bear illumination.

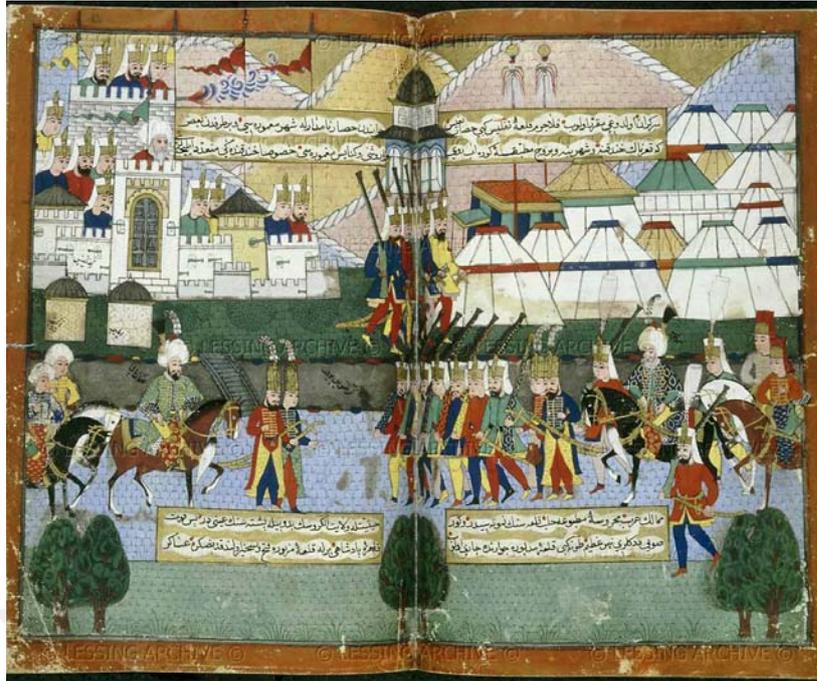


Figure 46. Ottoman army at Tiflis, 1578.



Figure 47. Bible of Wenceslaus IV, ca. 1390.

After the developments in technology, woodcut illustrations took the place of illuminated manuscripts during the 15<sup>th</sup> century, which is one of the oldest methods of printing. Woodcut is a handcrafted technique that is carved on a wooden block, which allows multiple prints. The combination of letterpress and woodcuts is called xylography, which is the first process for reproducing illustrations that provides a lock of both illustration and text blocks into one wooden block. The use of woodblock printing in the 15<sup>th</sup> century provided opportunities for early book illustrations intended for royal families.



Figure 48. Wood engraving by William Blake, 1820–21, for Robert John Thornton's *Pastorals of Virgil*.

During the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, engraving and etching were the common techniques of illustration. These new techniques in printing process allowed for a wider reach in audience. At the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, printing technologies improved rapidly with the Industrial Revolution. With the use of new techniques, which were suited for mass production, book publications started to be seen in a wider space. Also in the early 1800's some popular writers like Charles Dickens had their books illustrated, which made book illustrations more affordable and accessible.

At the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, a new technique, called lithography, was invented as a cheaper method of printing. *Encyclopedia Britannica* (2014) defines lithography as; planographic printing process that makes use of the immiscibility of grease and water. In the lithographic process, ink is applied to a grease-treated image on the flat printing

surface; nonimage (blank) areas, which hold moisture, repel the lithographic ink. This inked surface is then printed—either directly on paper, by means of a special press (as in most fine-art printmaking), or onto a rubber cylinder (as in commercial printing).



Figure 49. Kate Greenaway's illustration of the *Pied Piper*, engraving, 1888.



Figure 50. (Left) Beatrix Potter, *A Tale of Peter Rabbit*, first edition, 1902.

(Right) First trade edition with colored illustrations, 1903.

The late the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, with all the inventions and new techniques allowed for faster printing process and are considered to be the golden age of

illustration. In his book *Children's Picturebooks*, Martin Salisbury describes the reasons for the term the golden age of illustration.

“The period during the latter half of the nineteenth and the early twentieth century has come to be known as the golden age of children's books, a time when there was a coming together of developments in printing technology, changing attitudes to childhood, and the emergence of a number of brilliant artists. Sir John Tenniel's drawings for Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (Macmillan, 1865) perhaps heralded this new age. They brought a new kind of presence on the page; the images played a key role in the experience of the book and, subsequently, became definitive to our reading of it.” (Salisbury and Styles, 2012)

These changing attitudes regarding illustration increased the value of children's picture books. From that time onwards, illustrations in picture books were not only considered as decorative pictures of the text but also became the essential element of storytelling. Among the techniques used for color illustrations are watercolor, oil and gouache. At the beginning, hand coloring and stencil were common techniques for coloring. France had more advanced techniques than Britain in the early twentieth century. “Babar the elephant made his first appearance with *The Story Of Babar* in 1931, published in France by Condé Nast. The books were like nothing seen before, with their large, colorful format and handwritten text rendered with a simple, childlike clarity.” (Salisbury and Styles, 2012)



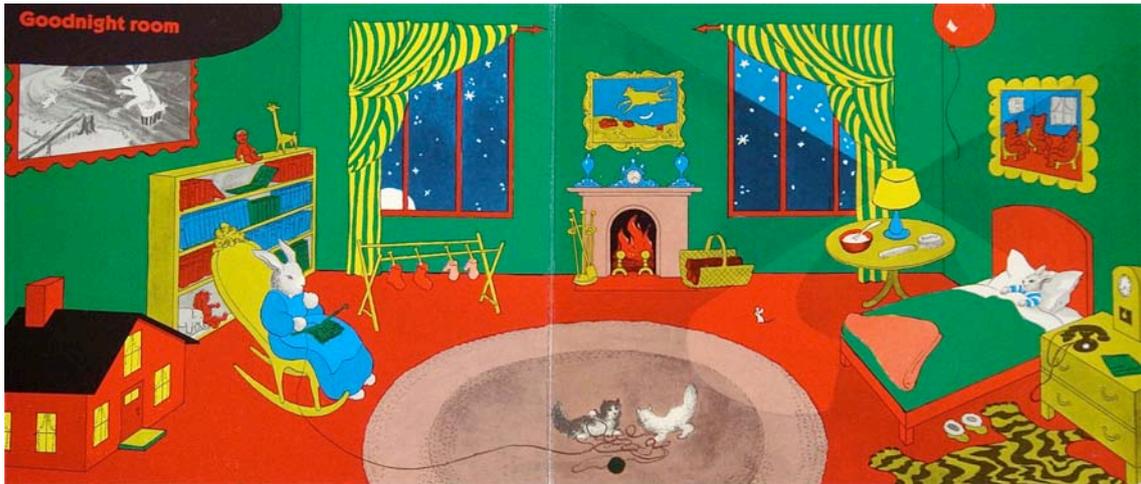


Figure 52. *Goodnight Moon*, Margaret Wise Brown, illustrations by Clement Hurd, 1947.

Despite the technical and budgetary limitations of color printing during the mid 1900's, as was the case with *The Story Of Babar* and *Goodnight Moon*, Theodor Geisel, who is the illustrator of *The Cat in the Hat*, used dominant color palette in his book. *The Cat in the Hat* is a rhyme book written by Dr. Seuss in 1957, which was published in U.S. The book is written for beginner readers with the basic use of nursery rhymes. Also it has plenty of white background for text, including minimal color usage with saturated red and blue.

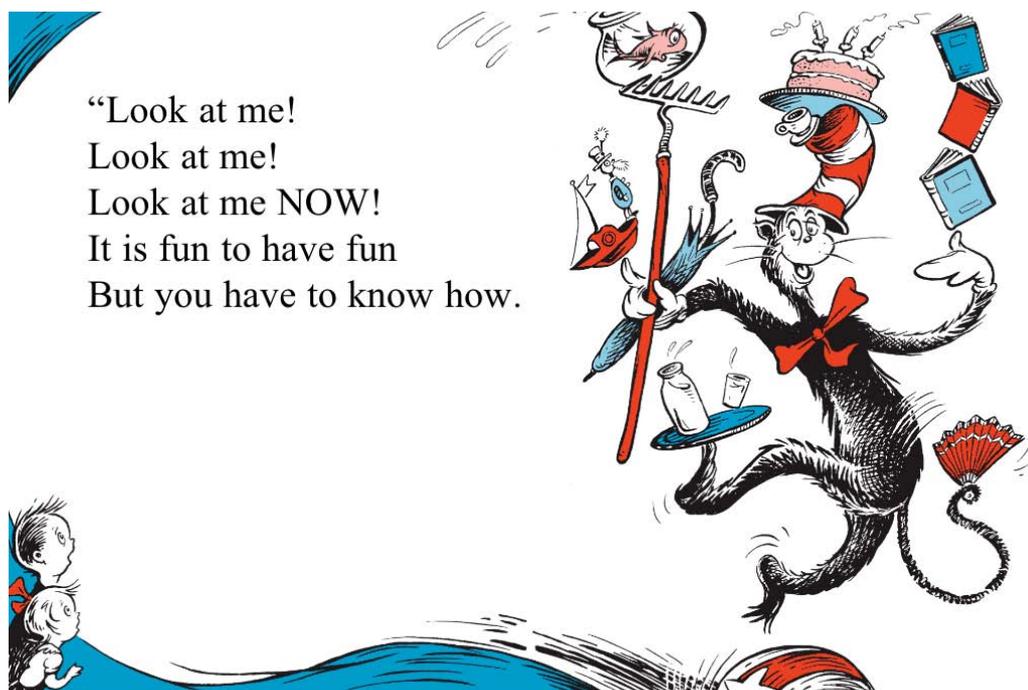


Figure 53. *The Cat in the Hat* by Dr. Seuss, illustrated by Theodor Geisel, 1957.

One of the most famous picture books from the mid 1900's is *Where the Wild Things Are*, which was first published in 1963 and has sold millions of copies in various languages. One of the most important features of the book is its communication between the pictures and the reader. Maurice Sendak, who is both the writer and illustrator of the book, shows the power of storytelling with pictures rather than telling the story in words. "In picture storybooks the plot can be extended or rounded a little by illustrations. For example, in the first three pages of *Where the Wild Things Are*, readers know that the mother sends Max to confinement without supper because of his mischievous deeds. Even though the words used thus far do not say what has gone wrong with Max, the pictures explain his problem. Although words alone tell little about what happens between the time Max leaves the wild things and returns home, the pictures compensate for such lack of details; the illustrations grow larger and larger as the story drama develops and then become smaller again as Max returns to his mundane life. The illustrations in *Where the Wild Things Are* play a crucial role in providing coherence to the story." (Fang, 1996)



Figure 54. *Where the Wild Things Are*, Maurice Sendak, 1963.

“Whether intended or not, illustrations sometimes tell a slightly different or even contradictory story than the text.” (Fang, 1996) As in *Where the Wild Things Are*, in *Rosie’s Walk*, Pat Hutchins also provides a different point of view for the reader. This meaning attribution to illustrations gives more space for children to improve their own meaning making rather than appreciating writer’s decorated texts. “In *Rosie’s Walk* (Hutchins, 1968), the text says that Rosie, the hen, takes a peaceful stroll around the farm and gets “back in time for dinner.” However, the illustrations relate another tale; a menacing fox lurks behind Rosie, ready to make the hen its dinner. It is as if Rosie (the printed text) is unaware of the fox (the pictured text).” (Fang, 1996)

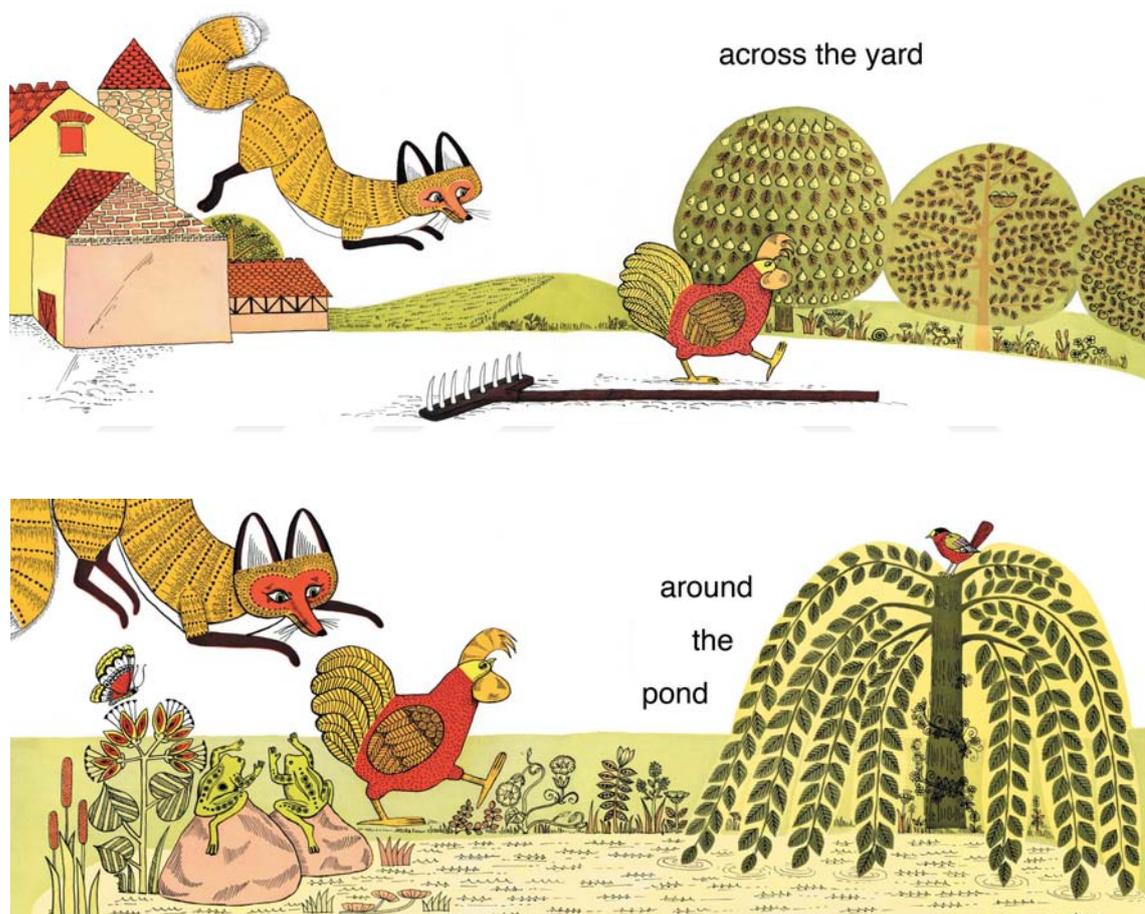


Figure 55. *Rosie's Walk*, Pat Hutchins, 1968.

The developments in new printing techniques, increasing appreciation of children and their visual perception made illustrations more affordable for illustrators, writers and publishers. Illustration after the late 19<sup>th</sup> century became a preferable way to tell the story not only with verbal matter but also with visual expression. This approach

to illustration could be accepted as the beginning of silent books, which are wordless picture books that became popular in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Even though there were many significant picture books from the early 1900's, the examples that were examined in the chapter, were not only the most popular books of their time but are still being printed worldwide in different languages. In the next chapters I will also investigate the contemporary works between the late 20<sup>th</sup> century and today's concept of children's picture books.

### 3.1.3 Typography

*Encyclopedia Britannica* defines typography as the design, or selection, of letter forms to be organized into words and sentences to be disposed in blocks of type as printing upon a page. One of the important elements of a children's picture book is typography. Because of its communicative function between the reader and the text, typesetting of a page is a keystone of the design.

“If writing is but a copy of spoken language, typography is a mode of representation even farther removed from the primal source of meaning in the mind of the author.” (Lupton, 1999)

“Typography is the design and layout of verbal language and is concerned with the ways in which the meaning and structure of language is affected by its visual appearance.” (Waller, 1987)

In her essay *The Crystal Goblet, or Printing Should Be Invisible*, Beatrice Warde depicts good typography as ‘invisible’, which is a metaphor of successful typography. Warde explains that typography should be perfect enough to not distract the reader. A public speaker is more ‘audible’ in that sense when he bellows. But a good speaking voice is one, which is inaudible as a voice... Type well used is invisible as type, just as the perfect talking voice is the unnoticed vehicle for the transmission of words, ideas. (Warde, 1956)

This transparency of typography should be considered as a childish manner for children's picture books. There are several important factors for a children's book typographic clarity. First, legibility, "which is the degree to which individual letters, can be distinguished from each other." (Jury, 2004)

For a beginner reader like a child, legibility of the text may be more important rather than the typeface used. "17 out of 24 children in one of the texts thought that the very tight letters spacing was the most difficult to read... Children described perceptions of space between the lines as differences in size, weight of type, ease of content and quantity of text suggesting that they may not have been consciously aware of line spacing but that it did affect their perception of a text." (Walker, 2005)

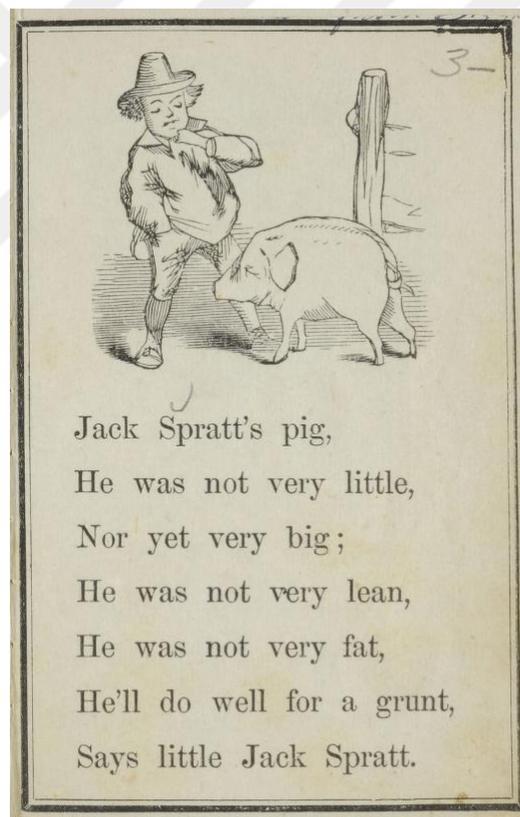


Figure 56. *The Big Book of Nursery Rhymes*, Walter Jerrold, illustrated by Charles Robinson, an example for good leading for children.

Secondly, font sizes and infant characters influence the readability of the text. In reviving the rules of typography, David Jury explains readability as an unaware activity of reading process, as in Beatrice Warde's *Crystal Goblet* essay.

“Except in the very earliest stages of childhood, we read to learn rather than learn to read. In the development of reading, the attainment of mechanical skills, such as left-to-right progression of perfection, accurate return sweeps of the eyes from the end of one line on to the beginning of the next, a sight vocabulary, recognition of words and the functions of accompanying punctuation, are all designed to promote understanding and interpretation of the meaning embodied in printed characters and symbols.” (Jury, 2004)

Many books for beginners employ large font sizes and generous leading to keep children’s motivation. “Good typography encourages the desire to read and reduces the effort required to comprehend. Comprehension is the reason for all reading... They must become automatic; the reader should not, normally, be aware of the ‘activity’ of reading at all.” (Jury, 2004)

In children’s books readability and legibility should be considered together regarding the readers age and the ability to read. One of the main arguments in children’s books is the use of infant characters. Infant characters are single-storey versions of a and g, which are generally designed for children. “Some typefaces have been designed with the perceived needs of children in mind; these may include infant a’s and g’s, and also other specially-designed characters, for example, variant forms of y, k, t, l and some numbers.” (Walker, 2005) According to Sue Walker’s surveys on typography in children’s books, most teachers prefer typefaces with infant characters. The argument for this is that children feel more comfortable with single-storey a and g, which are more similar to their handwritings. “A widely-held assumption (by teachers and parents) is that infant characters are appropriate for beginner readers because the forms correspond to those that children write. Many teachers, for example, think that sans serif types (with infant characters) are suitable for beginner readers and publishers respond to this by setting books in typefaces such as Helvetica and Frutiger, often with specially designed infant characters... Most children in our study were well aware that there were different forms of a and g, and some even made the point that a is what we write and a is what we read.” (Walker, 2005)

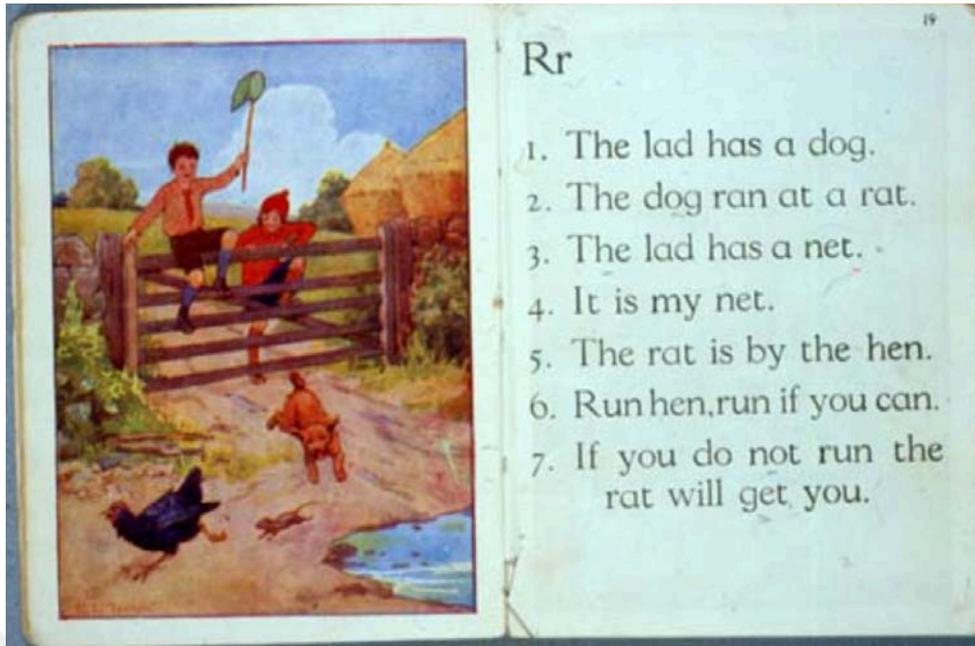


Figure 57. *The songs the letters sing: A preparatory primer*. London and Glasgow: The Grant Educational Company Ltd, c.1919. “An early example of the use of single storey ‘a’s and g’s in a series of reading books for young children... set in a large size with a generous amount of space between the lines. The very short heading (Rr) is set in the same typeface as the text, but in a larger size.” (Walker, 2006)

Another issue on children’s books is the use of serif and sans serif typefaces. According to Sue Walker’s researches on serif and sans serif typefaces in children’s books, there is no big difference between the two. In their examinations, Gill and Century typefaces were used to test children’s reading, regarding legibility and readability. Although several children mentioned that infant characters are easier to read, most of them recognized the differences but did not affect motivation. “Some children noticed that Century had serifs and Gill did not... They commented favourably about what they perceived as the ‘normal’ g used in Gill Schoolbook... The children’s comments revealed that they had clear opinions about typography, which they were well able to articulate... Our study supports that children may not necessarily find non-infant characters (in particular double-storey a’s and g’s) problematic. Most children in our study were well aware that there were different forms of a and g, and some even made the point that a is what we write and a (single storey) is what we read. Some children however perceive a and g as harder than a and g (single storey) while this may not affect their ability to read, it may have some impact on their motivation. Our recommendation,

based on these findings, is that both Gill and Century are appropriate typefaces to use for reading material for beginners.” (Walker, 2005)

In that case, it could be accepted that spacing between words, lines and letters are the most important features for a beginner reader. Most picture books from the 17<sup>th</sup> century used serif typefaces, because even printing is a very recent term for bookmakers. It was during the 15<sup>th</sup> century that Gutenberg invented first movable type and created the 42-line Bible, set in gothic type.

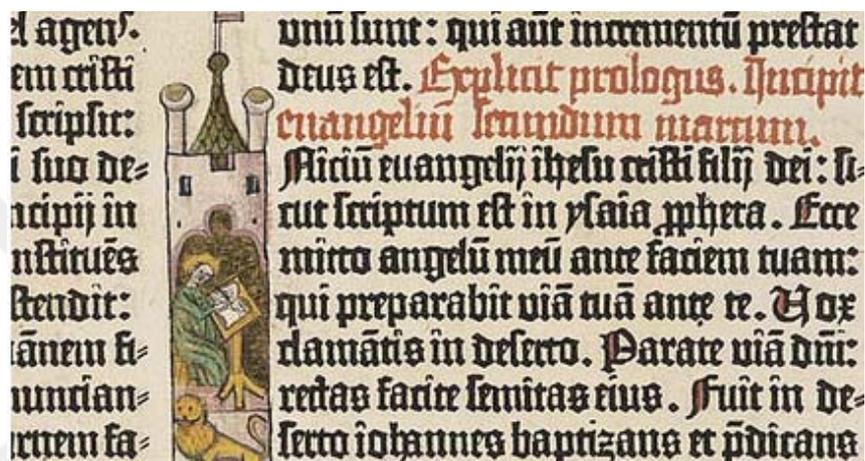


Figure 58. Blackletter, also known as Gothic type. A close up of *Gutenberg's Bible*.

Before his invention, medieval manuscripts were all handwritten. “In the fifteenth century... the new script, called ‘lettera antica’ was paired with classical roman capitals... The roman typefaces were based on a formal script used for books.” (Lupton, 1999) A rapidly written version of roman letters, then called Italic, which mostly used to make emphasis. “Boldface fonts were not common until the nineteenth century, when display advertising created a demand for big, black types.” (Lupton, 1999) After the rise of digital production, different styles of typefaces became available for writers, designers and publishers, including specially designed typefaces for children. Due to demands, various typefaces were created since Gutenberg’s Blackletter to today’s digital typefaces. Before the invention of movable type in early manuscripts, handwriting was the only way. After printing and digital technologies, type has become the preferable way to write because of its fast and duplicatable ease. However, today’s typographic use varies from the early use. There are many different handwritten and lettering examples as well as typeface examples in children’s picture books.

### 3.1.3.1 Writing, Lettering, Type

Writing, lettering, and type represent three distinct methods of creating letters. “A written letter or word is created with very few strokes of the writing implement think of cursive handwriting or a hastily scrawled note. Lettering builds the form of each character from multiple, often numerous, strokes or actions- a love note meticulously carved into a tree trunk or a hand-drawn letterform in graffiti, for instance. Type is a palette of ready-made shapes, enabling the reproduction of similar- or identical-looking letters through a single action—like summoning digital characters from a keyboard or pressing a rubber stamp on a sheet of paper.” (Willen, 2009)

Handwriting today is generally considered to be casually written communication. However, before the 15<sup>th</sup> century, handwriting was a significant ability of the author, which was regarded as a part of literacy and education. It was not only considered to be a communication skill but also many books were written with a decorative manner, which is related to calligraphy. *Encyclopedia Britannica* defines calligraphy as the art of beautiful handwriting. The term may derive from the Greek words for ‘beauty’ (kallos) and ‘to write’ (graphein). Calligraphy is a writing skill that needs an experience in letter proportions and forms, to make a harmonic ordering.



Figure 59. Mariage de Girart et Berthe, Miniature du Roman de Girart de Roussillon. Handwritten manuscript with illuminations on parchment, Western Calligraphy, ca. 1450.



Figure 60. A specific example of Western Calligraphy, with the illuminated first letter and decorative borders. The 14<sup>th</sup> century *Anjou Bible*, was created at the court of Robert I of Anjou, King of Naples.



Figure 61. An example of Islamic Calligraphy, with floral borders and golden ornamentation. 14<sup>th</sup> Century *Qur'an*, Egypt.

Like writing, lettering is a one-of-a-kind creation, designed for a specific application. Lettering differs from handwriting in that its main focus is usually on technique and visual appearance. “The uniqueness of each lettering treatment allows its designer flexibility and creativity to respond to a given context in very specific ways. Letters can be compressed, warped, or interlocked to fit a particular space. Words can be built from the most appropriate medium or material, from pencil to stainless steel to chocolate syrup.” (Willen, 2009)

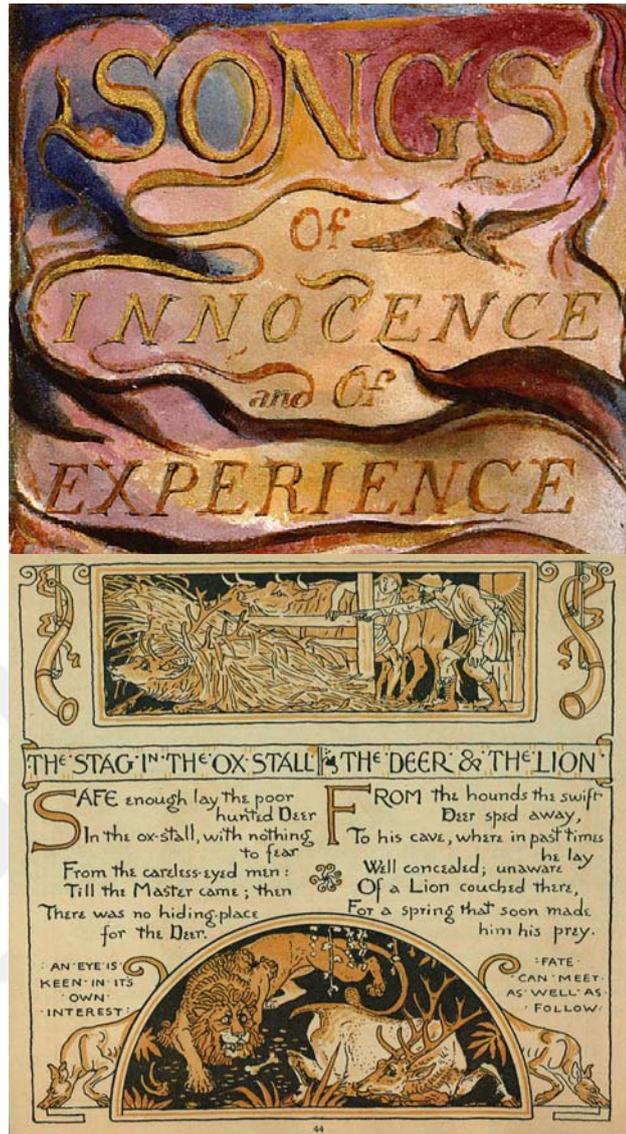


Figure 62. Lettering examples by William Blake, *Songs of Innocence*, 1789.

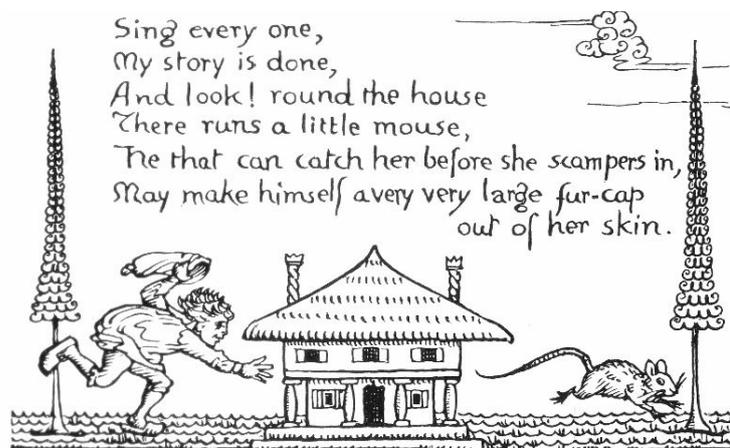


Figure 63. *Hansel and Gretel*, Walter Crane, 1886.

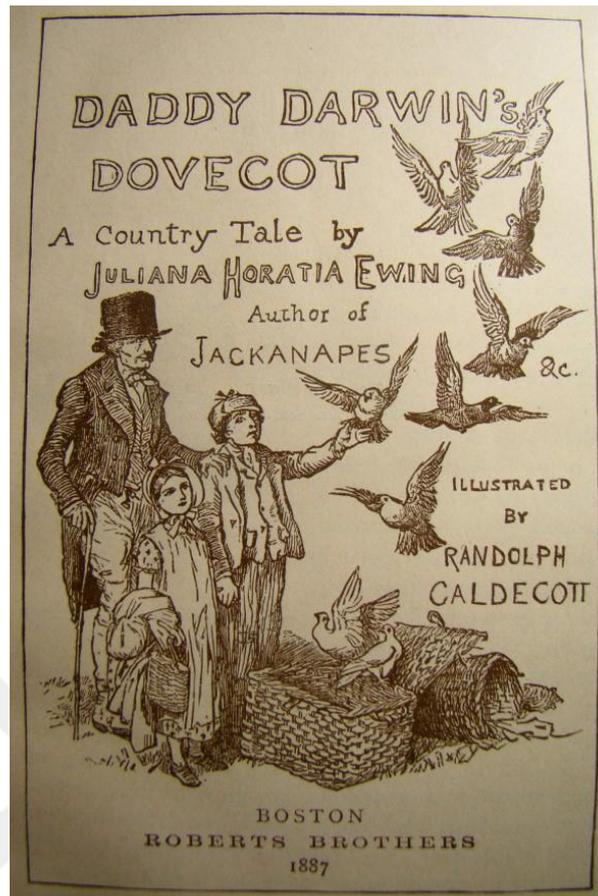


Figure 64. *Daddy Darwin's Dovecot: A Country Tale*. A lettering example by Randolph Caldecott from 1887.

“Handwriting is usually more casual and efficient than lettering. Where lettering is mainly concerned with the visual appearance of the text, writing focuses on putting information quickly to page. Both handwritten and lettered characters can be reproduced to become a type. Type is a system of relation between letters, which could generate constant combinations. The ability to create and reproduce preexisting characters through a single action differentiates type from writing and lettering. Unlike lettered and written characters, each typographic glyph must be ready to redeploy into a new word formation at any time.” (Willen, 2009)

Typefaces can be examined in different ways according to their design parameters: modern, transitional, humanist, geometric, etc. The classification of letters is made in order to clarify the differences between typefaces. The clarification of

typefaces helps designers to make a proper choice of type. Just as good typeface use may provide a different characteristic to text, wrong use may give an incorrect influence to the reader. The books shown in Figure 68 and 69 were the early examples of type use as pictorial storytelling. After the golden age of children's picture books, in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century many typographic experiments could be seen in books, including handwriting, lettering or type. In the next chapter, contemporary examples will be examined, considering the elements of children's book, mentioned in this chapter.



Figure 65. *The Scarecrow: A Fairytale*, by Kurt Schwitters, Kate Steinitz, and Theo van Doesburg, 1925.

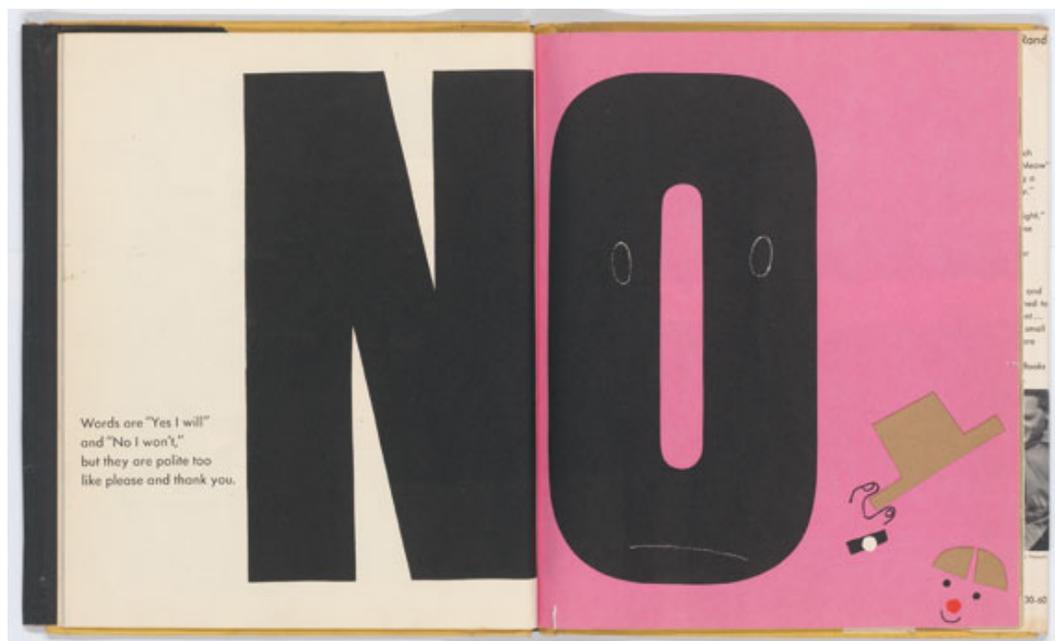


Figure 66. A pictorial usage of typography, 'A book about words', spread from Ann and Paul Rand's *Sparkle and Spin*, 1957.



Figure 67. *Puff*, William Wondriska, 1960.

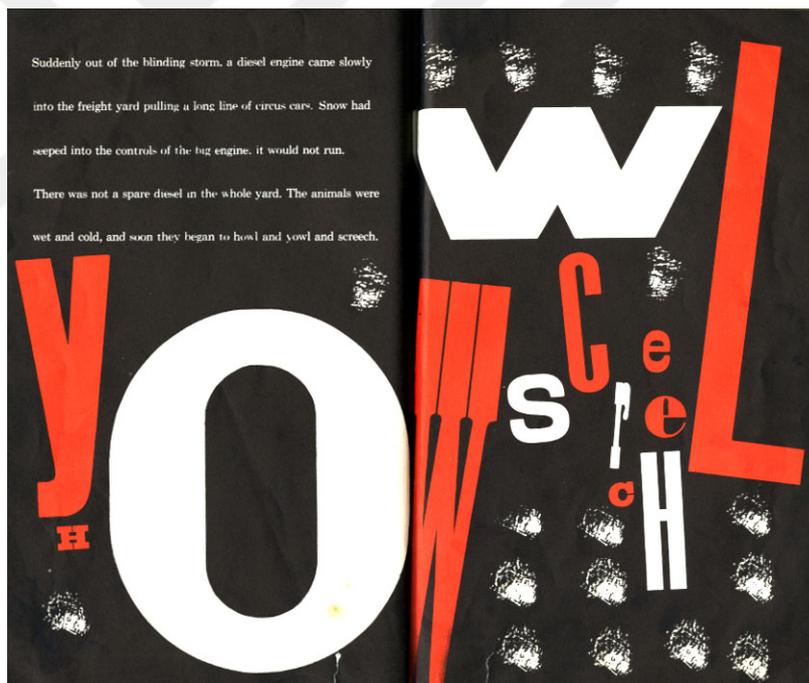


Figure 68. *Puff*, William Wondriska, 1960.

### 3.2 Examination of Contemporary Children's Picture Books

Developments in printing technologies, development of new illustration techniques and the rising awareness of children created a demand for children's picture books. After the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century, illustrators and writers created a variety of children's books presenting new techniques. However, several artists still used traditional techniques such as oil, gouache, watercolor and pen, while the new modern techniques included collage, photograph, 3d modeling and digital drawing.

Due to the rise of interest in children's picture books, in order to support new artists and to bring together illustrators, writers and publishers, Bologna Children's Book Fair has been taking place every year, since 1963. Throughout the event, over fifty emerging illustrators' work are introduced with an exhibition. This also becomes an opportunity for publishers to showcase the selected brand new picture books. It has become a very large and inspiring market regarding the background of children's picture books. In this chapter, contemporary samples from all over the world will be explored, with respect to their layout design, illustration and typography.

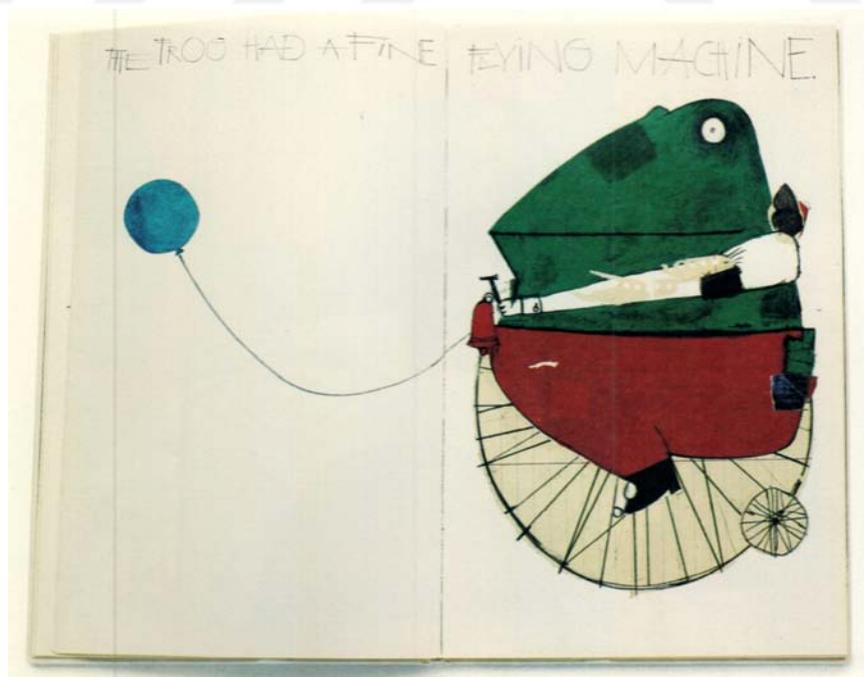


Figure 69. Květa Pacovská, *Flying*, 1995.

In her book *Flying* (Figure 67); Květa Pacovská used various media and crafting techniques. The book has its own color palette with saturated reds, yellows and greens as in Pacovská's other children's picture books. Also the text is written by Pacovská, which forms the completeness of the page. All aspects of the book's form are controlled by the artist- size, shape, binding, typography etc. Many of her books contain cut-out shapes, holes, folding sections and extended pages. "Pacovská has, in many ways, raised the art of the picture book to new levels." (Salisbury, 2007)

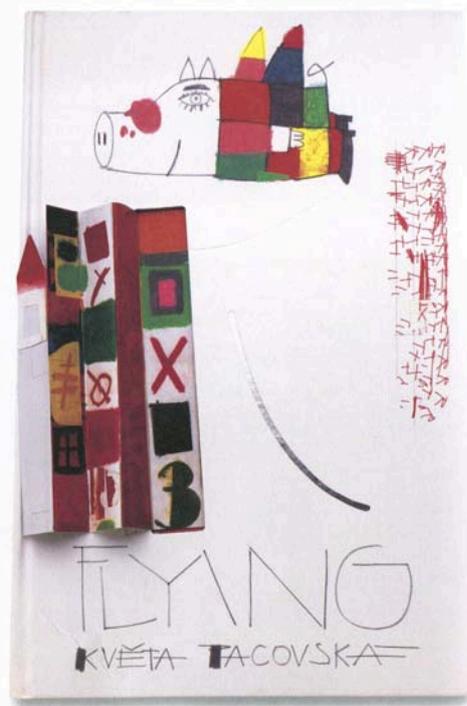


Figure 70. Květa Pacovská, *Flying*, 1995.

As in the most of Sara Fanelli's work, *Pinocchio* (Figure 68) has a different take on visual expression. Fanelli's use of collage is considered to be unusual and inappropriate for children's picture book. However, her works have been published in the UK and accepted as a beginning of an improving market. Her childish handwriting, use of textured paper and different brush use are the prominent features of her works.

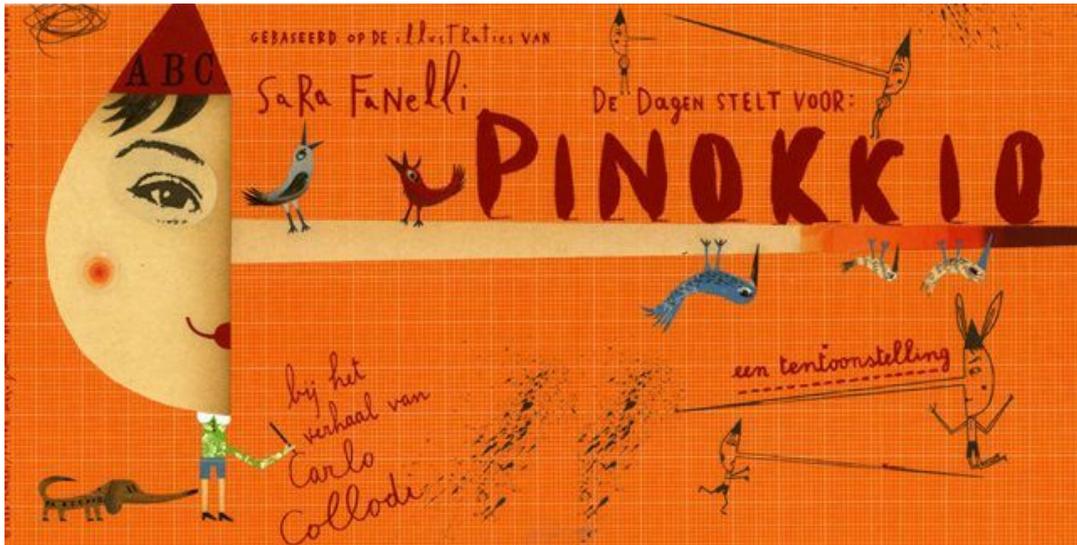


Figure 71. Sara Fanelli, *Pinocchio*, 2004.



Figure 72. Sara Fanelli, *Pinocchio*, 2004.

Emily Gravett is a writer and illustrator of several popular books, such as *Wolves* (Figure 69), *Little Mouse's Big Book of Fear* and *Again*. Gravett mostly combines pencil and collage with digital editing in her books. Her book *Wolves*, which is a winner of Kate Greenaway Medal, Gravett defines the manner of how she chooses the color palette in her book. She explains that: "I wasn't confident with colour, so I limited my palette, and restricted where each colour was used. I drew my main character (rabbit) realistically (albeit in muted tones), with page backgrounds denoting the "real" world in cream. The physical book I bound in red for danger, and then I scanned the cover I had

made and used it as part of the illustrations, hoping that the reader would feel as if they were reading along with the rabbit. For the non-fiction element about wolves I stuck strictly to black and white.” Gravett’s book about wolves and rabbits may be considered as a contemporary example of fables.

Another example of a modern fable is Roger Olmos’s award winning book, *The Thing That Hurts Most in the World* (Figure 74) in which a hare and a hyena speak about everyday matters. Olmos’s drawings of animals might be considered as too explicit for children, however his humorous and childish details with a wide range of colors, provide a different visual perception for children.



Figure 73. *Wolves*, Emily Gravett, 2006, Kate Greenaway Medal and the Nestlé Children's Book Prize Bronze Award Winner.



Figure 74. Roger Olmos, *La cosa que más duele del mundo / The Thing That Hurts Most in the World*, 2005.

While the examples given in the chapter were ‘common’ children’s picture books, there is an experimental children’s picture book I would like to address as well. This book is Bruno Murani’s reinterpretation of the well-known book of *Little Red Riding Hood* as *Little White Riding Hood*. Murani’s experimentation of an unusual picture book is characterized by the removal of any visuals. In the white pages of the book, nothing could be seen, however it is known that there is a girl dressed in white and lost in the snow. The ‘white space’ in the book is used as the most important component regarding the idea of the story.



Figure 75. Bruno Munari, *Little White Riding Hood*, 2013.

As well as modern examples of fables, there are several picture books that used typographic elements as visual components. There are many contemporary examples of alphabet books that use typographic elements as an essential element. For instance, in Maira Kalman's children's picture books, Kalman used lettering with her watercolor illustrations. In the first page of the book *Ooh-la-la* (Figure 76), she used informational text as illustrative objects. Even though it is sometimes hard to recognize the differences between handwriting and lettering, her book *What Pete Ate* (Figure 77) can be considered to be a lettering example with its type-like features.

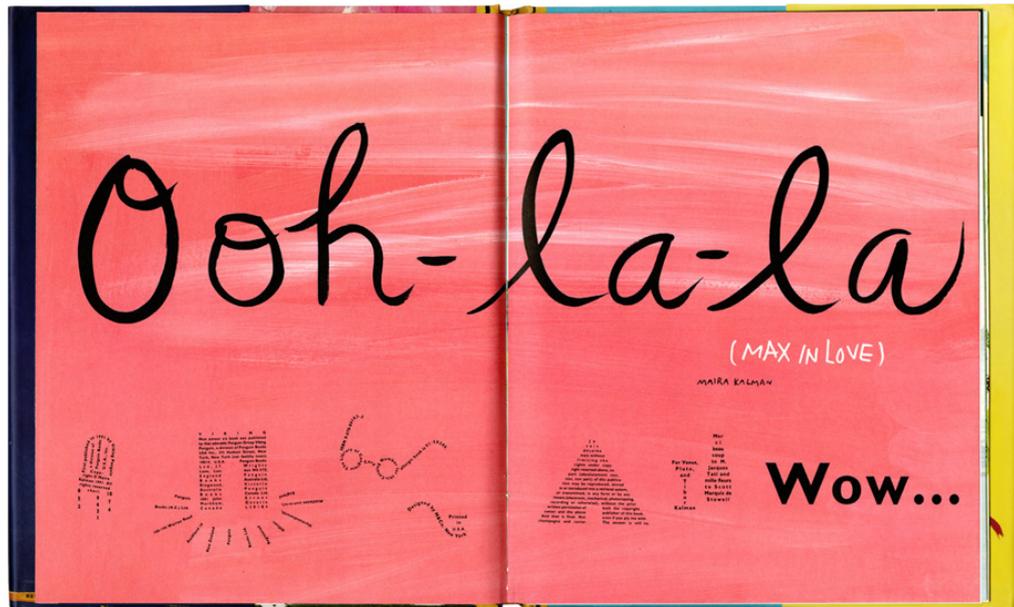


Figure 76. Maira Kalman, *Ooh-la-la* (Max in Love), 1991.

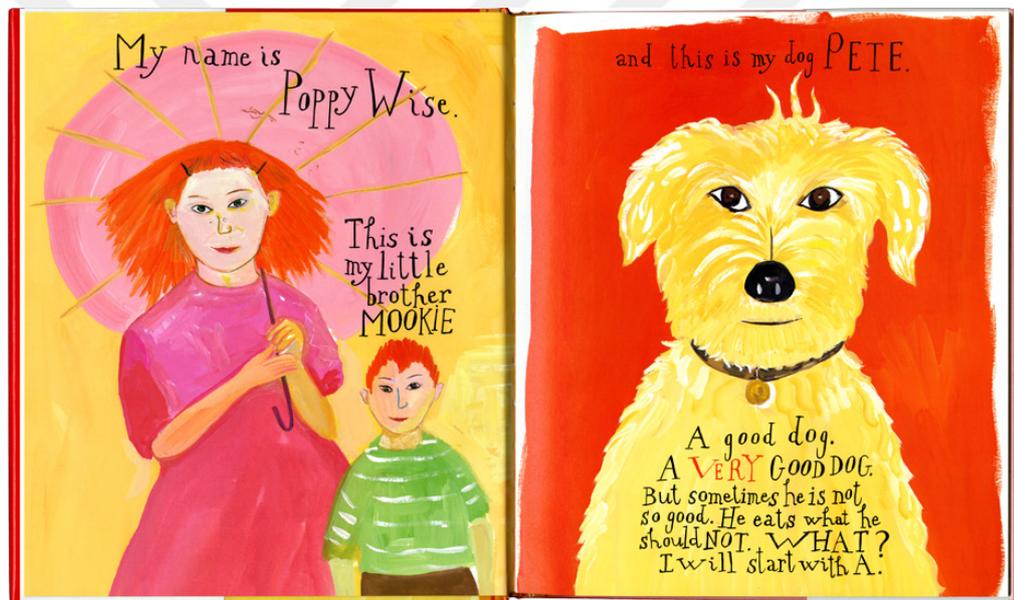


Figure 77. Maira Kalman, *What Pete Ate*, 2001.

Another example of an alphabet book is *The Dangerous Alphabet* by Neil Gaiman, illustrated by Gris Grimly. The book has its own illustration style with Grimly's handwritten text accompanying the tales of adventure journeys. The convenience of the illustrations might be reconsidered however, since the alphabet use and the very perspective of the illustrations of the heroic and pirate adventures take children's attention away from the story.

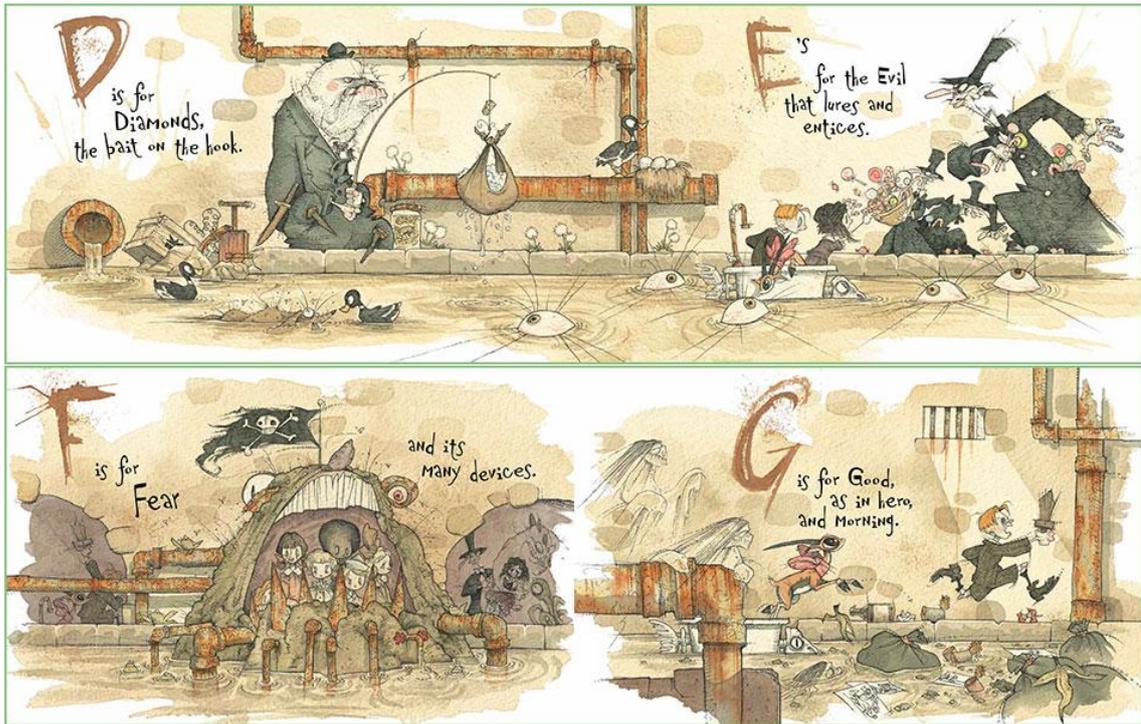


Figure 78. *The Dangerous Alphabet*, Neil Gaiman, illustrated by Gris Grimly, 2008.

Another kind of children's picture books are silent books, which gained popularity after 1960s. The most significant feature of a silent book is that it doesn't have any textual communication. The storytelling in silent books is shown with illustrations. An example that combines both a silent book and an alphabet book is *A Long Piece of String* by William Wondriska. The book has been written in 1963, with simple illustrations made with orange ink monochrome print with black. The story is about a long piece of string that ties the objects on each page. It's most attractive quality is its object selection that is chosen to represent the letters of the alphabet respectively.



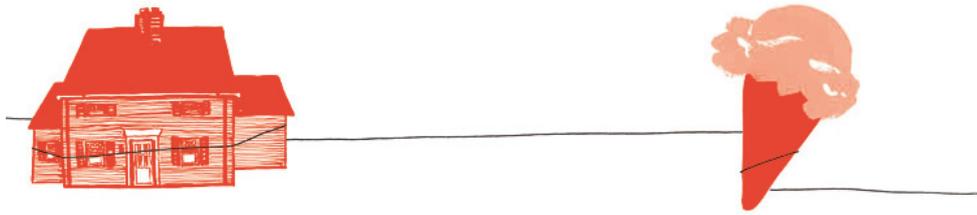


Figure 79. *A Long Piece of String*, William Wondriska, 1963.

Another silent book that has an importance regarding creativity and simplicity is award-winning *Wave* by Suzy Lee. The story is about a girl who is afraid of the sea. In one of her explanations, Lee expressed that the centerline of the spread pages is dividing her illustrations. So, she found the solution with using the centerline as a part of the story. Lee, in the story, used the centerline as a border between two pages. The book expresses its simplicity with the use of white, black and blue. The storytelling starts with a girl who is afraid of passing the line and reaching the sea. In the end, the character passes the limits and removes the borders between herself and the sea.

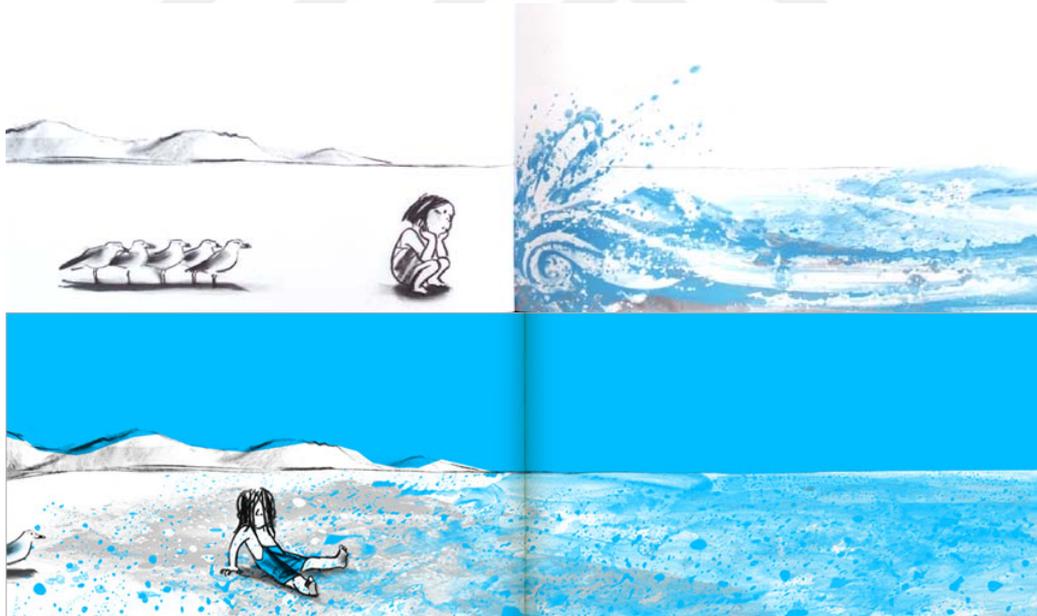


Figure 80. *Wave*, Suzy Lee, 2008.

#### 4. PICTURE BOOK DESIGN

In order to propose new approaches to children's book creators, I have created a picture book based on my historical research. Starting with questioning the differences between an illustrated book and a picture book, I investigated the term in relation to the concept of childhood. Because of the improving contemporary examples regarding this type of publishing in Turkey, I aimed to improve the market with the examination of cultures that had the concept of literature intended for children for centuries.

When I wrote the story I recognized that the pictorial storytelling of the book does not need a textual support. Even if the support of the text sometimes eases the storytelling, I preferred to present it in a way in which the readers could create their own take on the story.

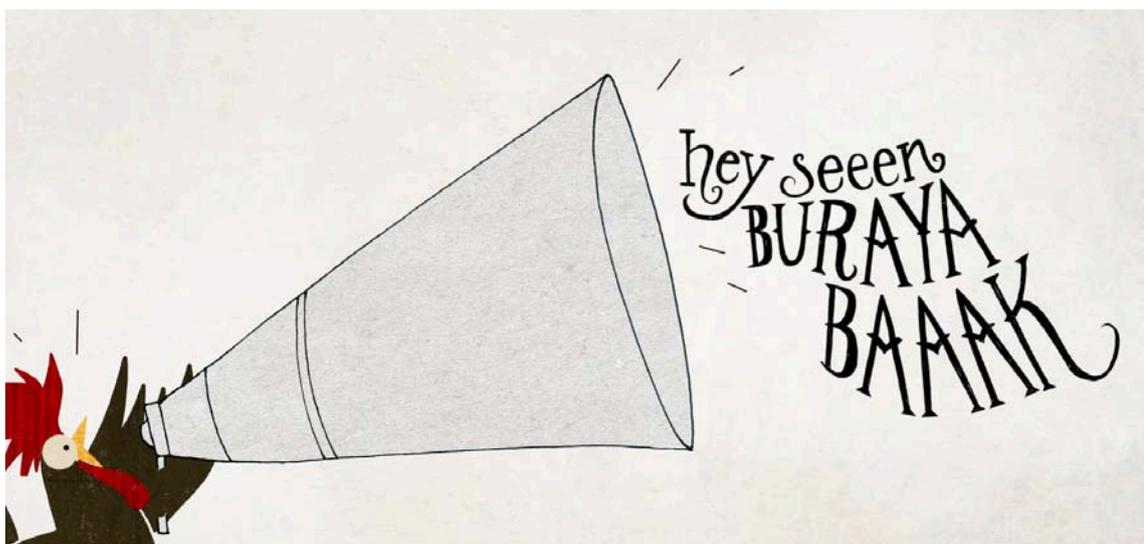
The book may be considered as a modern fable that consists of four animals, which are a pig, a rooster, a frog and a giraffe. *Kim Bu Gelen?* (*Who is Coming?*) is a story that emphasizes the importance of communication. As in former examples in the history of children's picture books, animals are used to teach some basic rules or to teach children lessons. Because I intended to raise awareness to the issue of communication with my work, I have chosen animals as fables did since the dawn of storytelling.



The adventure starts with the pig, the rooster and the frog playing cards. Then the giraffe comes into the frame, however the head of the giraffe cannot be seen until the end. With the humorous proportions shown in spreads, the adventure starts with three little characters that are trying to reach the giraffe. Although their various efforts to reach the giraffe, they can not achieve this until they dare to call out to the giraffe.



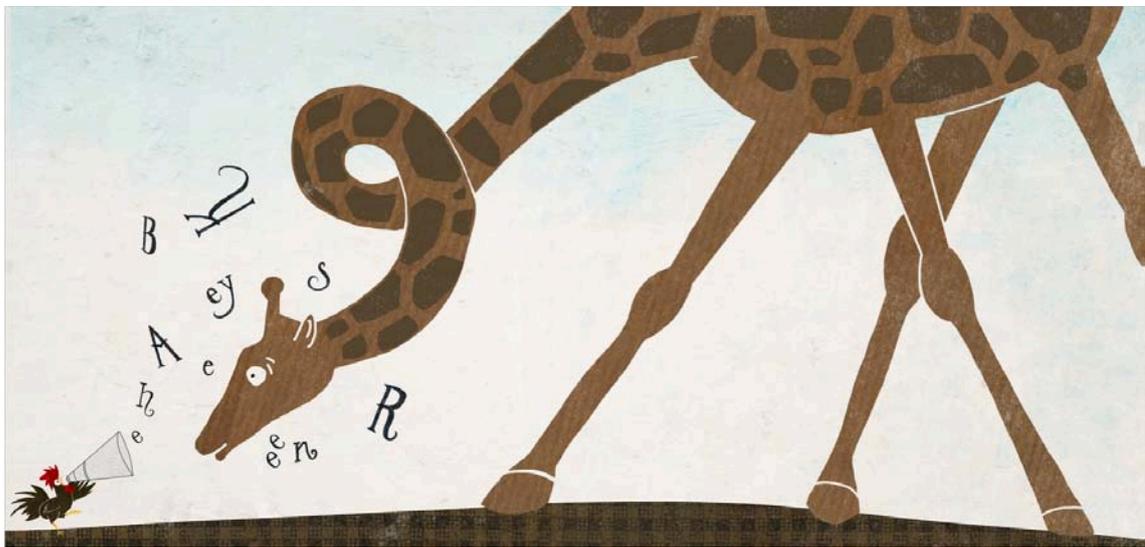
The proportions are sometimes exaggerated to show that the size is not important in the end when communication is involved. To increase the importance of the communication, a huge hauler is used while the rooster is crowing.



The animals were chosen accordingly with their characteristics. Frog is the cleverest character that plans everything and it has the ability to jump in order to reach

something. Rooster is the communicative character since its ability to crow. And finally the pig is the foolish member of the team that others are using for hard tasks and manual labor.

When it comes to layout, a square size is preferred since it gives enough space for both the adventurous illustrations and the giraffe, accordingly with their proportions. The matte color palette is chosen to give a natural feeling to children so that they can pay more attention to the story itself. As far as the technique of the illustrations is concerned, digital collage and drawing is mostly used in the book.



Since I didn't intend for the work to be a silent book, there are some sound effect used to create more effectiveness to the actions of the characters. Lettering is used to make a connection between the illustrations and typography.

With my work, I was influenced by some of the picture books that I mentioned in the previous chapter. I preferred a simple expression in my book in order to draw the children's attention to the story itself.



The historical investigation I have made has influenced me when it comes to the visual language of the book. What impressed me most about silent books is that readers could create their own stories based on the foundation of my own storytelling. I hope that the research and the book I have made will influence the publishers and the makers of children picture books, and that this particular branch of art will improve in time considering the importance of its role as a meaning maker when children are concerned.



## 5. CONCLUSION

This paper has focused on investigating children's picture book components in order to establish connections between their elements and the approaches of their creators when making contemporary books for children. In this manner, the following components: layout design, illustration and typography, have been examined with examples ranging from the Middle Ages to 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Nowadays, picture books have become essential to the educational development of young children. Picture books are being used to provide meaning making and art appreciation, develop visual perception and improve language skills. Although the concept of childhood did not exist before the Middle Ages, the perception has increased accordingly with developments in technology and the rising awareness regarding children.

The history of children's books started with religious language education, which did not include entertainment. Later, with increasing knowledge and awareness regarding perception of young children, writers asked artists to visualize their work. During the 19<sup>th</sup> century, illustration in children's books gained in importance, which we are aware of today, with the invention of new printing technologies and faster and more accessible illustration techniques.

Since the 19<sup>th</sup> century artists have experimented with new and modern techniques to create their illustrations, and writers have also researched various stories and publishers have supported them by publishing different kinds of layouts and craft works. Picture book production became a process, which did not separate illustrators or writers work, but a collaborative effort that all publishers became a part of in a developing market which was more aware of children's welfare.

The importance of picture books regarding children's educational psychology and visual development gained its priority during the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century. After researchers

confirmed that visual storytelling is significant for young readers, various media have been used to create picture books. Not only illustrations but also typography and format of the book have been used for visual representation.

To analyze how the picture book culture improved, the history and components of a picture book have been examined with examples from different ages. In order to propose a modern picture book design according to these examinations, a picture book design has been created as a case study. The aim of the designed work is to make a connection between the reader and the illustration, to give importance to visuals rather than textual communication and to suggest new approaches to the improving publishing sectors and makers.

According to my studies, the content of the book should be carefully selected accordingly with the age range, educational background and cultural differences. Design parameters of a picture book could be change regarding artist's style and the chosen story. For a flowing storytelling especially in a wordless book, creating a storyboard may be considered before designing the book. Because there is not any supportive text in wordless books, scenes should be arranged in a flow to tell the significant parts of the story.

This research can be a reference and support for future studies, which are focused on children's picture book design. From this study perspective, an examination can be developed on a single picture book in order to combine historical research and design parameters in an analysis of different visual perceptions of illustrators. Additional study might focus on a country or culture's specific picture book design and its historical background.

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## APPENDIX

