

Picture–book Perfect Selections

“Creative science depends crucially upon habits of mind that are most readily acquired by children:

- **curiosity;**
- **voracious observation;**
- **sensitivity to rules and variations within the rules;**
- **fantasy.**

Children’s books that instill these habits of mind sustain science.”

(Raymo, 1992)

- **Story is one of the most powerful cognitive tools students have available for imaginatively engaging with knowledge.**
- **Stories shape our emotional understanding of their content.**
- **Stories can shape real-world content as well as fictional material. It is this real-world story-shaping that promises most value for teaching.**

(Egan, 2005)

“If we want to raise children who will grow up to understand science, who will be citizens who are curious, skeptical, undogmatic, imaginative, optimistic, and forward-looking, then let’s put into the hands of children books that feed imagination and fantasy.”

(Raymo, 1992)

Comprehension Strategies

- **Asking questions**
- **Determining Importance**
- **Inferring**
- **Making Connections**
- **OWL (Observe Wonder Link)**
- **Synthesizing**
- **Visualizing**

(Moline, 1995)

What is Visual Literacy?

- **Reading for information (both fiction and non-fiction text)**
- **Communicating information (both orally and in writing)**
- **Reading and creating illustrations**

(Moline, 1995)

A good story is a strong teaching tool, which gives a concrete, "contained" perspective for learning or thinking about a topic (Carr, 2001, p. 147).

The simple, but imaginative worlds within picture books can provide students with an excellent and motivating introduction to complex curriculum topics. It is a great way to introduce a topic, especially to struggling learners in that it allows you to work from concrete, "simple" examples, before moving onto more abstract and complex examples (Carr, 2001, p. 148).

In a good picture book, the whole is greater than the sum of its parts: the pictures do more than reflect the text, but serve to move the story forward in a way that the text cannot do alone. **The interplay of text and picture in a good picture book engage the reader on a deeper level,** "on both an intellectual and an emotional level" (Huck, 1997, p. 199).

Picture books are "**bicultural**, that they share qualities of books and the visual arts" (Hammond, 1994, p. 11). For instance, "reading" a picture book engages a child in **both the visual arts and the language arts.**

The use of literature to teach curricular concepts helps relate the concept being taught to real-life situations, bringing the concept into the child's world (Whitin, 1992, p. xii).

Some will argue that picture storybooks can promote misconceptions in areas such as science and technology. This, in fact, can be true unless we provide students with ways in which to disseminate information for truth and accuracy. Students can be taught to **read** illustrations as well as text at a young age. When reading text and illustrations, students can learn to ask themselves a series of questions as to the truth and accuracy of the information being given.

The following are some sample questions that may help to get your students started in using picture books for scientific information: Ask yourself...

1. Is there new scientific terminology presented in the text? What are the meanings of the new vocabulary words and how do they relate to the topic of study? Are the new words defined in the text?
2. Can I find the facts presented in the story supported in another source (non-fiction book, encyclopaedia, on the internet)?
3. Is there other information included in the illustrations, not mentioned in the text, which can support my topic?
4. Does the text support other information shown in the illustrations?
5. Does the book contain more than one font type in the text to differentiate meaning (fact vs. fiction)?

Books to Inspire Content Teaching

(2007 publications in red 2008 publications in green)

Science

A Log's Life written by Wendy Pfeffer, illustrated by Robert Brickman

A Seed is Sleepy written by Dianna Aston, illustrated by Sylvia Long

About Amphibians written by Cathryn Sill, illustrated by John Sill

About Birds written by Cathryn Sill, illustrated by John Sill

About Insects written by Cathryn Sill, illustrated by John Sill

About Mammals written by Cathryn Sill, illustrated by John Sill

About Reptiles written by Cathryn Sill, illustrated by John Sill

An Egg is Quiet written by Dianna Aston, illustrated by Sylvia Long

Animals in Flight written by Robin Page, illustrated by Steve Jenkins

Around One Cactus written by Anthony Fredericks, illustrated by Jennifer DiRubbio

Bugs Are Insects written by Anne Rockwell, illustrated by Steve Jenkins

Butternut Hollow Pond written by Brian Heinz, illustrated by Bob Marstall

Close to the Wind written and illustrated by Peter Malone

Cloud Dance written and illustrated by Thomas Locker

Creatures Great and Small written and illustrated by Karen Patkau

Daft Bat written by Jeanne Willis, illustrated by Tony Ross

Did a Dinosaur Drink this Water? written and illustrated by Robert Wells

Dirt on Dirt, The written by Paulette Bourgeois, illustrated by Martha Newbigging

Dory's Story written by Jerry Pallotta, illustrated by David Beidrzycki,

Dumpster Diver written by Jan Wong, illustrated by David Roberts

Eliza and the Dragonfly written by Susie Rinehart, illustrated by Anisa Hovemann

Feed the Good Wolf written by Frank Glew, illustrated by The Marna Twins

How Do You Lift a Lion? written and illustrated by Robert Wells

If I Built a Car written and illustrated by Chris van Dusen

In One Tidepool written by Anthony Fredericks, illustrated by Jennifer DiRubbio

It's a Butterfly's Life written and illustrated by Irene Kelly

It's a Hummingbird's Life written and illustrated by Irene Kelly

Jump into Science: Dirt written by Steve Tomecek, illustrated by Nancy Woodman

Jump into Science: Sand written by Ellen Prager, illustrated by Nancy Woodman

Jump into Science: Sun written by Steve Tomecek, illustrated by Carla Golembe

June 29, 1999 written and illustrated by David Wiesner

Living Color written and illustrated by Steve Jenkins

Meerkat Mail written and illustrated by Emily Gravett

Moonflower written by Peter Loewer, illustrated by Jean Loewer

Mountain Dance written and illustrated by Thomas Locker

Move! Written by Steve Jenkins and Robin Page, illustrated by Steve Jenkins

Near One Cattail written by Anthony Fredericks, illustrated by Jennifer DiRubbio

On One Flower written by Anthony Fredericks, illustrated by Jennifer DiRubbio

Pest Fest written by Julia Durango, illustrated by Kurt Cyrus

Paperbag Prince, The written and illustrated by Colin Thompson

Rex written by Ursula Dubosarsky, illustrated by David McIntosh

Sky Tree written and illustrated by Thomas Locker

Sprog Owner's Manual, The written and illustrated by Babette Cole

Sticky Burr written and illustrated by John Lechner

Under One Rock written by Anthony Fredericks, illustrated by Jennifer DiRubbio

Up Down and Around written by Katherine Ayres, illustrated by Nadine Bernard

Velma Gratch and the Way Cool Butterfly written by Alan Madison, illustrated by Kevin Hawkes

Water Dance written and illustrated by Thomas Locker

What Do You Do When Something Wants to Eat You? written and illustrated by Steve Jenkins

What Do You Do With a Tail Like This? written by Steve Jenkins, illustrated by Robin Page

What's Smaller Than a Pygmy Shrew? Written and illustrated by Robert Wells

White Owl, Barn Owl written by Nicola Davies, illustrated by Michael Foreman

Who Likes the Sun? written by Etta Kaner, illustrated by Marie Lafrance

Who Likes the Wind? written by Etta Kaner, illustrated by Marie Lafrance

Who Likes the Rain? written by Etta Kaner, illustrated by Marie Lafrance

Who Likes the Snow? written by Etta Kaner, illustrated by Marie Lafrance

Wiggling Worms at Work written by Wendy Pfeffer, illustrated by Steve Jenkins

Wolves written and illustrated by Emily Gravett

Math

Albert 3 written and illustrated by Lani Yamamoto

Bean Thirteen written and illustrated by Matthew McElligot

Birdsongs written by Betsy Franco, illustrated by Steve Jenkins

Great Math Tattle Battle written by Anne Brown, illustrated by Jaime Zollars

How Do You Know What Time It Is? written and illustrated by Robert Wells

How Many Mice? written and illustrated by Michael Garland

How Many Seeds in a Pumpkin? written by Margaret McNamara, illustrated by Brian Karas

If a Chicken Stayed for Supper written by Carrie Weston, illustrated by Sofie Fatus

Is a Blue Whale the Biggest Thing There Is? written and illustrated by Robert Wells

Magic Beads written and illustrated by Susin Nielsen-Fernlund

One Grain of Rice written and illustrated by Demi

One is a Snail, Ten is a Crab written by April Pulley and Jeff Sayre, illustrated by Randy Cecil

Warlord's Alarm written by Virginia Pilegard, illustrated by Nicolas Debon

Warlord's Beads written by Virginia Pilegard, illustrated by Nicolas Debon

Warlord's Fish written by Virginia Pilegard, illustrated by Nicolas Debon

Warlord's Kites written by Virginia Pilegard, illustrated by Nicolas Debon

Warlord's Messengers written by Virginia Pilegard, illustrated by Nicolas Debon

Warlord's Puppeteers written by Virginia Pilegard, illustrated by Nicolas Debon

Warlord's Puzzle written by Virginia Pilegard, illustrated by Nicolas Debon

What's Older Than a Giant Tortoise? written and illustrated by Robert Wells

Social Studies

A Small Dog's Big Life written and illustrated by Irene Kelly

Arctic Adventures: Tales from the Lives of Inuit Artists written by Raquel Rivera, illustrated by Jiriana Marton

Harmonica, The written by Tony Johnston, illustrated by Ron Mazellan

Inuit Thought of It written by Alootook Ipellie and David MacDonald

John Willy and Freddie McGee written and illustrated by Holly Meade

Looking Down illustrated by Steve Jenkins

My Mother's Sari written by Sandhya Rao, illustrated by Nina Sabnani

Museum Book, The written by Jan Mark, illustrated by Richard Holland

Show Way written by Jacqueline Woodson, illustrated by Hudson Talbot

Snow Leopard written and illustrated by Jackie Morris

Wall, The written and illustrated by Peter Sis

War, The written and illustrated by Anaïs Vaugelade

Why Explore? written by Susan Lendroth, illustrated by Enrique Moreiro

Why War is Never a Good Idea written by Alice Walker, illustrated by Stefano Vitale

The Arts

3-D ABC written and illustrated by Bob Raczka

Art Is written and illustrated by Bob Raczka

Attack of the Killer Video Book written by Mark Shulman and Hazlitt Krog, illustrated by Martha Newbigging

Because written by Mikhail Baryshnikov, illustrated by Vladimir Radunsky

Blue Goose written and illustrated by Nancy Tafuri

Blues Journey written by Walter Myers, illustrated by Christopher Myers

Celebrity Cat written by Meredith Hooper, illustrated by Bee Willey

Dali and the Path of Dreams written by Anna Obiols, illustrated by Joan Subirana

Dog's Night written Meredith Hooper, illustrated by Mark Burgess & Alan Curless

Flotsam written and illustrated by David Wiesner

Follow the Line written and illustrated by Laura Ljungkvist

Four Pictures by Emily Carr written and illustrated by Nicolas Debon

Here's Looking at Me written and illustrated by Bob Raczka

Look! Body Language in Art written and illustrated by Gillian Wolfe

Look! Seeing the Light in Art written and illustrated by Gillian Wolfe

Micawber written by John Lithgow, illustrated by C. F. Payne

More Than Meets the Eye written and illustrated by Bob Raczka

No One Saw written and illustrated by Bob Raczka

Picturescape illustrated by Ella Gutierrez

Scribble written and illustrated by Deborah Freedman

Snow Music written and illustrated by Lynn Rae Perkins

Unlikely Pairs written and illustrated by Bob Raczka

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Huck, Charlotte S., & Helper, Susan, & Hickman, Janet, & Kiefer, Barbara Z. (1997). *Children's Literature in the elementary school*. (6th ed.) Madison, WI: Brown & Benchmark.

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