

THE NATIONAL COLLEGE OF ART AND DESIGN

THE ROLE OF ILLUSTRATION  
IN CHILDRENS EDUCATIONAL BOOKS

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO:  
THE FACULTY OF HISTORY OF ART AND DESIGN & C.S.  
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DIPLOMA

FACULTY OF DESIGN  
DEPARTMENT OF VISUAL COMMUNICATIONS

BY

MARY MOORKENS

APRIL 1979



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## INTRODUCTION.

"Illustration is pictorial literature" (1)

Most people will agree that the education of the young is a very responsible occupation, and that the founding years of a child's life are of vital importance to his or her later development. Yet, few pay more than a passing interest in the tools with which we educate. A young child is influenced from many sources, not least of which, is illustration. In fact, this may be one of the strongest educational influences a child is open to, especially in his earliest years.

Children are always hard to assess, and studies done with them to date, have failed to come up with many absolute conclusions or answers. Many interesting theories have been documented, but above all, the strongest message coming over and over again from the research carried out, was the necessity for further experiment.

...."more research is needed into the relative effectiveness of different types of pictorial representation, particularly with the slow learner". (2)

It must be noted that not all children have the same reading needs.



The thesis is divided into two main parts.

Firstly, it will include a general history of what childrens educational books have been like, and an examination of the type of book offered to children to day. Secondly, the thesis will look at experiments already done in this field, coupled with an original experiment.

Walter Crane, a well known illustrator, mentioned in his notes on his own books, that children can learn definite ideas from good pictures long before they can read or write, and that realising this, much can be done educationally. As is the case with most things, if illustration is abused or used in an uncontrolled and uneducated way, it is capable of doing just as much harm as good.

The following questions need to be dealt with and will be considered in the thesis;

Is illustration being used to its best potential in Ireland?

Are all groups of children being catered for ? -- What about the slow learners?.

Do specific types of style of illustration facilitate learning or understanding for the slow learners?.

A thesis can only raise certain questions such as these, it cannot hope to find solutions or definite answers. What is



important however, is that it can show the great necessity to find these answers, and perhaps shed a little light, however inconclusive, on their understanding.



FOOTNOTES.

Introduction.

1. Roger Duvoisin, Childrens Book Illustration -

Pleasures and Problems.

2. Michael Weller, The school Librarian, vol. 26: no.1.

March 1978.



Chapter 1.

General History of Children's books, with special note  
to educational books.



## Chapter 1

### General History of Children's books, with special note to educational books.

The early history of childrens books can be divided into two main parts. According to John Rowe Townsend, the first of these is, material not especially meant for children, but which they nevertheless enjoy- books like Aesop's Fables and Reynard the Fox. In the second category are those books which although designed for children, were neither creative nor pleasurable.

The first picture books for children tended to be educational, religious or moral, or a combination. Reecognised as the first picture book designed especially for children was Orbis Pictus (Visible World) by John Amos Comenius in 1657. It was solely educational, and depicted the many creatures in the world, including man. A Historie of four footed Beastes. by Edward Topsell in 1607 was also a listing of various animals but, not intended for children in particular.

In 1727, a primer was printed The New England Primer, which was a combination of an A.B.C. book, and a catechism. It was complete with woodcuts, and had verses such as,

In Adam's Fall,

We sinned all.



and

The idle Fool

is whipt at school.

Many books for children at this time were of the same format - a strict method of instruction. In 1693, John Locke, an english philosopher, said that he felt that children should "enjoy" learning, and that books should be for enjoyment as well as for knowledge. Not many printers or publishers held this view at the time. In fact, the whole attitude to education was one of punishment rather than reward.

In 1740, a publisher and printer named Richardson, produced an edition of Aesops Fables especially for children. However, other publications from the same press were of a heavier nature. These were great volumes of books with strong moral messages, - certainly not light reading for children. By 1744, another writer and publisher had begun printing a series of Young Master and Misses books, starting with Little Pretty Pocket Book and included well known titles such as Little Goody two-shoes. - His name was Newbury. His books were for both learning and entertainment. By 1745. Newbury had opened a children's book shop, - the first of its kind.



Knowledge was beginning to be seen as safe to enjoy.

The Tales of Peter Parley series in 1827, carried this on. They were in the form of stories told by a kindly old man.

It was not just these types of books however, that appeared in print at the time. In 1898, William Nicholson a poster designer, produced an A.B.C. book which had very strong illustrations. It is interesting to note that later in 1923, another poster designer, Charles Falls, designed and produced an A.B.C. book (fig.1), with bold contrasting shapes strong solid colours, and woodcuts that filled the entire page.

It is impossible in this short history, to mention all of the books published in the early years of children's books, only to speak of a few which seemed to make an impression for one reason or another.

In 1823 another type of book was published for children. This was Grimms Fairy Tales illustrated by George Cruikshank. Another fairy tale published in 1851, although written in 1841, was The King of the Golden River (fig.2). The illustrations which Richard Doyle drew for this book were very modern in their approach. They had a flow of design which suited its subject very well.





A.B.C.  
Illus. Charles Falls.  
fig. 1.





The King of the Golden River.  
Illus. by Richard Doyle.  
fig. 2.



In the 1860's well known and well loved books appeared, namely Alice (fig 3) and The Water Babies. and the 1870's saw the introduction of Tom Sawyer (fig.4) and Black Beauty. The drawing style was of the same detail.

In 1871, a book with a new concept in illustration was published - At the back of the North Wind illustrated by Arthur Hughes.(fig.5). The illustrations filled the page with rich flowing lines. They even tended to frighten a little, which children for some reason, seem to thrive on. Yet it was a different sort of fear than that which was produced in the very early books, such as Max und Moritz (fig.6) illustrated by Wilhelm Busch, and Shock-headed Peter.(fig.7) by Heinrich Hoffman, which were criticised for the cruelties they contained. Yet these books were well loved by children, and the illustrations are regarded as some of the greatest in early book production. The stories first appeared as broad-sheets, and later as books. In many cases it was the illustrator who wrote and published his own books. However, much is owed to individual engraver/printer such as Edmund Evans (1826 -1905) who saw and filled the need for "quality" picture books. They encouraged and used the illustrations of talented people, and Evans was influential in the establishment of Walter Crane (fig.8)., Randolph Caldecott and Kate Greenway as well loved illustrators.

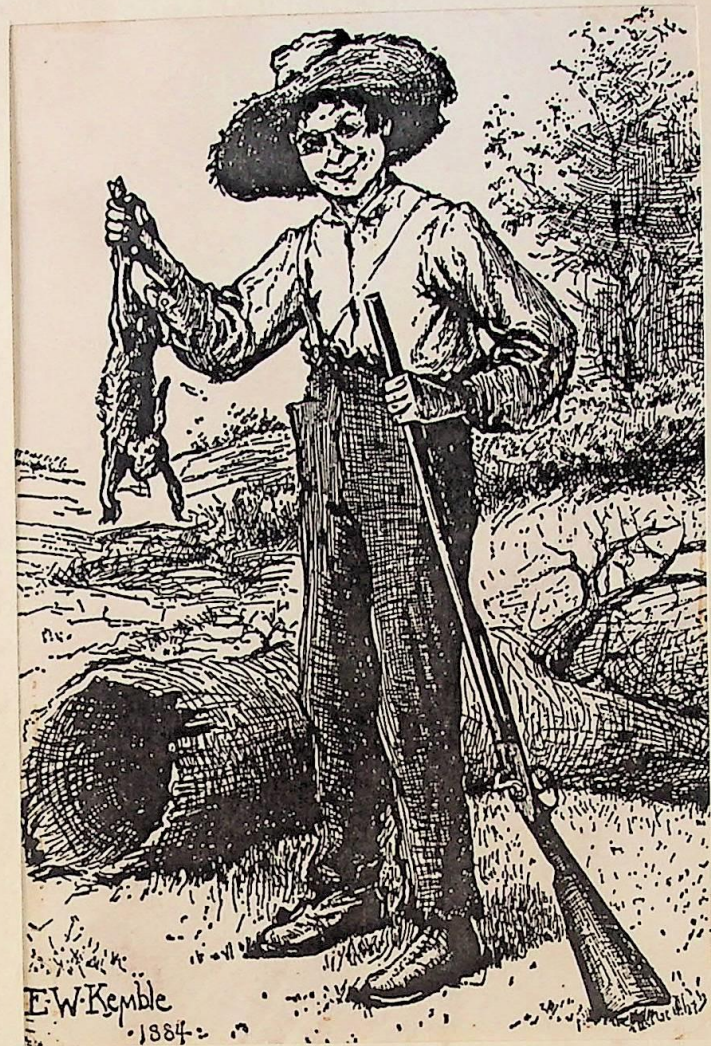




Alice in Wonderland.

Illus. by Tenniel.  
fig. 3.





Tom Sawyer.

Illus. by E. W. Kemble.  
fig. 4.

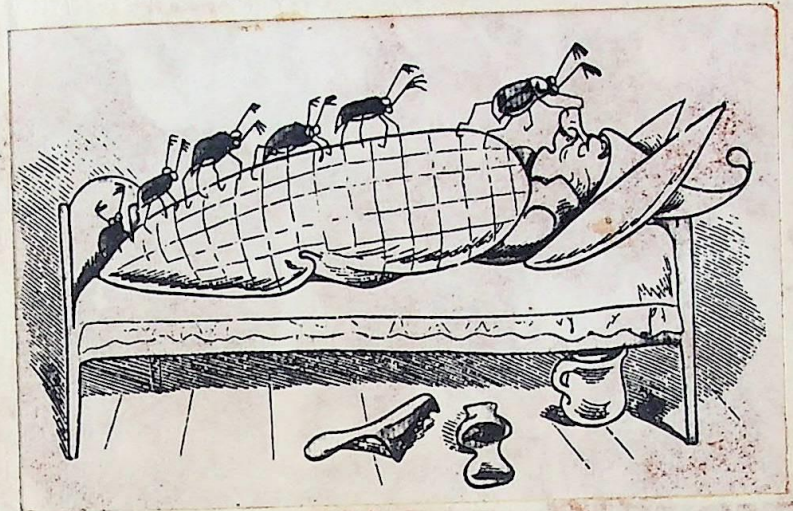
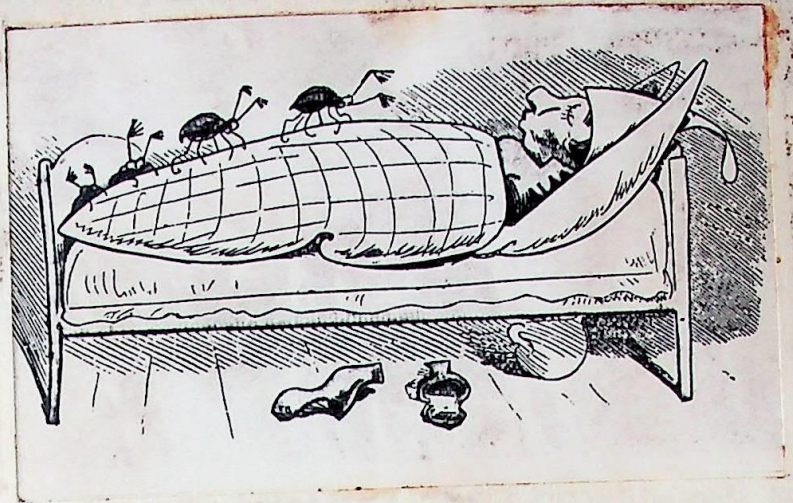




At the back of the North Wind.

Illus. by Arthur Hughes.  
fig. 5.





Max und Moritz.  
 Illus. by Wilhelm Busch.  
 fig. 6



I. Der Struwelpeter.



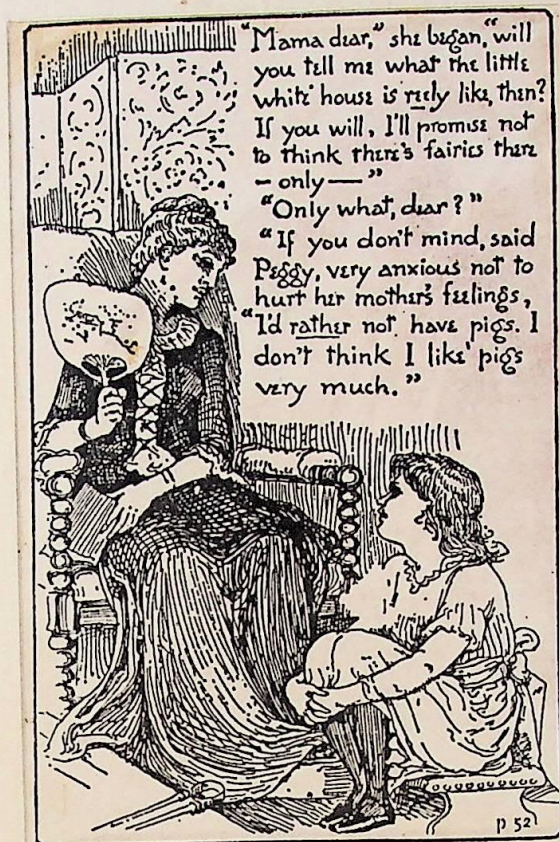
Sieh einmal, hier steht er,  
 Pfui! der Struwelpeter!  
 An den Händen beiden  
 Ließ er sich nicht schneiden  
 Seine Nägel fast ein Jahr;  
 Kämmen ließ er nicht sein Haar.  
 Pfui! ruft da ein Jeder:  
 Was! der Struwelpeter.

(2)

Shock-headed Peter.

Illus. by Henrick Hoffman.  
 fig. 7





Little Miss Peggy.

Illus. by Walter Crane.  
fig. 8



Overall, the history of children's books has been such that now we have reached a stage of production, where all aspects are catered for. However, we may find that we have moved a little too fast. Perhaps production has become so much a separate stage, that we may have strayed away from the early days when, a book would have been produced from beginning to end in the one building. How much of this is for the better, or how much we have lost, is a question anyone concerned with children's books must ask. Has progress all been good?. Should an objective look be taken at the division which exists between the production and construction of a book?. This is a subject which requires in -depth study.



FOOTNOTES.Chapter 1.

General History of Children's books, with special note  
to educational books.

1. John Rowe Townsend, Written for Children. Penguin Books.
2. Wilhelm Busch, Max und Moritz. 1865 (Broadsheet), 1870 (Book).  
facsimile edition published 1974 by Diogenes, Zurich.
3. Heinrich Hoffman, Der Struwwelpeter. (shock-headed Peter) 1845.  
lithographs and woodcuts, hand- coloured by women working at home.



## Chapter 2.

### Experiments and research on children and their books.



## Chapter 2.

### Experiments and research on children and their books.

Some experiments have been documented in the field of children's educational illustration, as well as in the general area of legibility and the use of colour. All of these will be considered, as they concern the overall quality of the educational book. Great changes have come in all aspects of book illustration and presentation during the last decades, influencing greatly the present state of educational books. Virginia Haviland, in Children's Literature; Views and Reviews, points out that the sophistication of technology and experimentation of new effects by commercial and other artists has brought about a new internationalism. This has meant an overseas exchange, and many new influences through coproduction and copublishing between countries. In a letter to Miss Haviland in 1970, Louise Seaman Bechtel, also discussing the great new developments, mentions that the style of book illustration is influenced by the great interest in modern art in adult painting and sculpture. Children's own art has been encouraged more, and so, they can understand more and demand more of their books. The last twenty years has seen far greater changes in the art and make-up of children's books than the thirty years preceeding.



However, care must also be taken when handling these new advances. Louise Seaman Bechtel (1) also says that we seem to have lost Mr. Disney of the original Mickey Mouse, and gained the technical wonders and artistic banalities of Snow White, with the result that our most popular art now seems to be that of the photograph and the comic strip.

Technological advances should not dictate the type or form of illustration or book simply because new techniques exist. Exciting new illustration does not necessarily mean good educational pictures. At the same time, however, dull stereotype books are of no lasting value, and do nothing for the child's imagination or development. So, what is the special recipe?.

A man who himself has contributed greatly to the growth of the modern picture book, Edward Ardizzone, feels that the text can really only give bones to the story, but the pictures must do much more than just illustrate it, - they must elaborate it. It is even more important therefore in educational illustration that the text and picture work together. If the picture confuses the text, then it only defeats its purpose. If the relationship and connection between the text and picture is not absolutely clear, then, in trying to find it, a child may be



27  
confused, and lose completely the information in the text.

A young child who cannot yet read, depends on the picture to gain meaning. It must be clearly defined without lacking totally in imagination.

Some writers on the subject argue that, when young, a child is blessed with eyesight at its best, and therefore, has no need to be subjected to the conventional "large print/large pictures". This may be true certainly with normal children, but have these writers considered those other groups of children? - the slow learners, children with handicaps, and those born with slight brain damage, whose eyes cannot focus to the same extent. This point is discussed in greater detail in the next chapter. For all children whatever mental and physical ability, so much important detail can be lost in small illustrations, to say nothing of the influence of type size, on the speed of reading. It is therefore, generally accepted that children prefer large bold print, and large colourful pictures. However, this must be seen to change with age, intelligence and reading ability.

I would now like to go into the three main aspects of research in the area of the educational graphics of a child's book, namely, colour, legibility and reactions to illustration.



First, let us consider the area of colour and legibility.

"perfection in picture books is not to be sought in the predominance of one element over another, but in the easy interlocking of all the parts"(2).

The overall design of the child's educational book is just as important as the content of the text. Above all, the elements must be considered as one whole, as each has a vital influence over the other. Children find it difficult to isolate their reactions. They will tell you what they feel about a book but, they will be reacting to all the elements. Through experiment however, certain elements have been broken down, but mostly for the convenience of analysis. Walter Crane notes that young children react like the ancient Egyptians, and see most things in profile (3). They tend to like definite statements in design, and prefer well defined forms and bright colours. From a research by Lynne Watts and John Nisbet,(4), children's preference has generally centered around warm shades over cool, high contrast over low, and naturalistic over unnaturalistic colour.

Yet, the more one researches, the more one finds that things are not quite as simple as that. There are certain definite elements concerning colour and legibility which must be considered. The use of some colour combinations can greatly



reduce the legibility of print, and this can be particularly vital to young readers.

On this aspect, a study has been done in 1965 by Tinker.

He found that, firstly, legibility of printed material does not depend primarily on the colour hues of the ink and paper as such, but on the contrast in the brightness between them. In other words, some colours react in a negative way as far as legibility is concerned and obviously would be best avoided in reading books. Secondly, he found that the brightness contrast is not the same as colour contrast. Simply, Tinker's findings show that for example, dark red and blue have high hue contrast but little brightness contrast. Similarly, light orange and grey display saturation contrast but have only slight brightness contrast. When printing, for high legibility, the ink should be a shade (or dark colour), and the paper a tint (or light colour). Thirdly, Tinker revealed that close attention should be given to the change in visual appearance of a colour when printed on a coloured background as opposed to printing on white. His experiments concerned printing coloured inks on coloured paper. (It must be noted that a totally different answer would have resulted had letters and background been printed on white paper) A chart of his findings may be seen --- table 1.



TABLE 1.

- Signifies less legibility than Black and White.

| Trade Name. | Percentage of difference in legibility. |
|-------------|---|
|-------------|---|

|                          |         |
|--------------------------|---------|
| Black on White.          | 0. 0    |
| Grass Green on White     | - 3. 0  |
| Lustre Blue on White     | - 3. 4  |
| Black on Yellow          | - 3. 8  |
| Tulip Red on Yellow      | - 4. 8  |
| Tulip Red on White       | - 8. 9  |
| Grass Green on Red       | - 10. 6 |
| Chromium Orange on Black | - 13. 5 |
| Chromium Orange on White | - 20. 9 |
| Tulip Red on Green       | - 39. 5 |
| Black on Purple.         | - 51. 5 |



Overall, it must be noted that in all experiments done with printed material, the familiarity of black and white will always be a determining factor in its higher legibility over other colour combinations.

Children have often been attributed with a preference for primary colours. Duthie, in 1971, researched the reactions of older children to colour. He found that high contrast was the overall key to preference. Children did indeed seem to prefer primary colours. Duthie however, went a step further and he repeated his experiments with adults, and found their reactions and preferences to be very similar to those of the children. Interestingly enough, however, he also gave the same test to a group of art teachers and a group of designers. His results are in line with those of Child (1968), who suggests that past experience effects colour preference, as they were directly opposite to the results of the experiment done with adults and children. They concluded that designers like art teachers, may be said to have a greater consciousness of the dimensions of colour, and may as a result, perceive colour in a different context to that of the general population.

In a book, all the elements hold equal importance. In the normal reading situation, a subject never reacts to a



single stimulus. The shape of the configuration is however of great importance, and a symmetric form is very legible. The symmetry and unity of a book brings one automatically to the subject of type.

In the book Legibility in Children's Books two main points are made about the choice of type. Firstly, to choose typographic layouts so as to facilitate speed reading and the development of immediate comprehension of the written text. Secondly, to provide reading material that will motivate a child to read the necessary number of books to make him a fluent reader. There are certain vital points which must be considered when laying out a child's book. Consider the use of upper and lower case print; the type face and the use of serifs; the size of type; the spacing between the lines; the length of line; the boldness of print; the size of margins; the use of justified and unjustified composition; the thickness and nature of the paper surface to be used for printing, and the use of colour both in print and in illustration.

Experiments have shown that when a child is learning individual letters, the uppercase is preferred. However, when a word is being read - and not isolated letters- the poorer legibility of the lowercase is eliminated.



Spacing and clear type are very necessary, as young eyes have not yet developed the fine control needed to scan small print. Webster's experiments with type sizes(5),found that a child will often score more highly on a reading test, if the text is presented in large print. At the same time, it must be pointed out that this general rule although applying equally to the slow learner,must be used with care. Webster comments that, enlarging material for backward readers to the point where inherent perceptual difficulties are eliminated, has the psychological disadvantage of tending to make the pages look babyish. So that,despite mature illustrations and content, this can diminish their appeal especially to the older groups. They are too like the first books, which may have been overused, and so, no progress is seen to be made by the child.

In actual type size, 18 pt. for large print,and then 14 pt. which is still very clear, and large enough to reduce perceptual difficulties. A change from 18 pt.to 14 pt. in a more advanced primer, can also have the advantage of disguising the increase in story length,while still allowing plenty of room for illustration.

The actual placing of the illustration in the overall layout is very important. When a child first learns to read, he is slowly learning to scan,and to take in a whole sentence at a time



and then line by line. It is therefore preferred that the illustration be placed either at the top or the bottom of a page, or even on a separate sheet, so that the illustrations do not break up the continuity of the text. This would only tend to interfere with the rhythmic eye movements that are necessary for fluent, easy reading. Usually, at first, a small amount of type is best on each page, as the young reader gains a sense of achievement when he moves on to the next page. Type, colour and illustration must combine to the best degree.

The third aspect of research covered in the field of a child's book, is illustration- a child's reaction to pictures. The issue of children's reactions to pictures and illustrations is a vital but much unresearched one. Nicholas Tucker(1974)(6), stresses the point that parents, educators, and libraries to a certain extent, rely on experts for informed judgments, - and where are the experts or their judgments?. He considers that this issue be taken a lot more seriously. If we brush aside, or allow a total lack of knowledge of the habits and perceptions of a young child, we tend to grow into an adult -oriented judgement that is not necessarily always correct. Mr Tucker points out the sad lack of substantial work done on psychology of child versus illustration.



When it comes to educational illustration, so much is demanded of the picture, and yet simplicity is one of its most vital demands. The illustrations must be clear and bold, without being dull. They must have enough detail to have educational content, yet be without fussy detail which would only tend to confuse information for the child.

"when a child attempts to de-code a picture, he employs visual discrimination".(7)

A child must be able to gain from the illustrations, both information value and motivation value, with the result that he is learning by being motivated to learn. Initially, good illustration can interest a child in a book. However, it has been proven that to some degree, it is the interest in the subject, especially with older children, that makes him continue his use of the book beyond the scanning stage. In an article on The Illustration of children's books in Brazil by Regina Yolonda Maltosa Werneck, it is pointed out that a book for children must include details which enrich a child's imagination and which help him to interpret words and illustrations in his very exclusive way. The variety of good quality illustration strengthens perception, develops his sense of observation, and



creates in the young reader a kind of protection against the daily bombardment with inferior visual material.

When a child first begins to look at books, his ideas and concepts are as yet unformed. It must be realised that he cannot ever be expected to learn from illustration if the picture content is totally unknown to him. If he cannot understand an illustration, it is automatically low in information and in motivation value. Therefore, it is important on the one hand that the illustrator and writer should consider carefully which subjects to approach, and that on the other hand, the teacher explains to the child, the illustration in relation to the text. To provide the correct material is only the first step, as, with many things it is the educated use of this material which makes it work efficiently. If the illustration is closely related to the text, and the child is encouraged to talk about it, he will then accept and remember the printed word it describes. A child first relies on remembering a full phrase or sentence, and he repeats this from memory when he recognises its shape in conjunction with an illustration. The child believes himself to be reading, and therefore feels successful. Gradually, he truly begins to read and can recognise words in other contexts.



Illustration related wisely to the text is invaluable to a young reader,- in fact Vernon, in his studies of 1953, found that it was useless to expect younger children to study books without pictures.

Often, a young child's first introduction to the world of books is through the A.B.C. book, this form of educational book being one of the most historic methods of instructing the young reader. Often, it was poster designers who produced the old A.B.C. books, however, this seemed to change as educational books developed. In The History of Book Illustration, David Bland comments that while most illustrators were excellent picture makers, only a few were designers as well,- interested in the entire book as a design unit. In fact, to produce an A.B.C. type primer for young readers, is basically a design problem. The elements which I have already mentioned, i.e. colour and legibility must be carefully considered along with illustration and content. And so, one comes to the question,- what type of illustration ?. Accepting the need for continuity and clarity, what style of illustration educates the young best ?. Generally, children have been attributed with a taste for simple realism and cartoon shapes when very young, then, when older, to a fascination for intricate detail. However, one must be very careful when



generalising about children. So many preferences attributed to them are really those which adults, publishers and teachers feel they have, but as yet no concrete research has been actually done.

One special experiment has however been carried out to test how children see illustration. It tested a child's capacity to make a distinction between realism and abstract. In a later chapter, an original experiment will test various style of illustration on a detailed scale. Firstly, Gerald Smerdon's account of the experiment (8), which was limited to the analysis of a child's response to the abstract/representational continuum. One such experiment had been done in 1948 by Matter, but it failed because of the high degree of variables, owing to a wide choice of illustrations ranging from ink-drawings to oil paintings. Another, by Peel, also had far too many variables. The subject was limited to landscape, but diverse technique, colour and style and even size, made it difficult for any significant analysis to be made. A yardstick was necessary for the comparison of responses.

In the abstract/ representational experiment, some more limits were put on the variables. The judges deciding on the



continuum were all professional art teachers. They came from the various branches of art education, pottery, painting, textile design etc., so that both two and three dimensional art was represented.

Secondly, the pictures were all drawn by one man, all were of uniform size and all in black and white. The latter was to cut out completely the choosing of a picture solely by colour preference. The content was also limited to a castle. This subject was chosen as it was felt to be "neutral" but stimulating to both sexes, and to a wide variety of children. The drawings were labelled from one to twelve, and the judges asked to say which was more representational as opposed to abstract in terms of style and execution (figs.1-8). They saw each picture as a pair with another, for five seconds. The resulting choice of the judges was encouragingly consistent.--see table 2. (also fig.9)

Having established the six pictures to make up the continuum, it was decided to limit the inquiry to three specific areas. Firstly, a comparison of the children's ordering of the six pictures with the Judges. Secondly, a comparison of results by age groups. Finally, a comparison of the choices made by boys and girls.



TABLE 2.

Results of judges' choices.  
 Number of choices for each picture.  
 Resulting rank order.  
 Pictures \* = Six selected for project with children.

| PICTURE NO: | NUMBER OF TIMES<br>CHOSEN: | RANK ORDER: |
|-------------|----------------------------|-------------|
| * 1         | 4                          | 11          |
| 2           | 46                         | 3           |
| * 3         | 21                         | 8           |
| 4           | 24                         | 7           |
| 5           | 1                          | 12          |
| * 6         | 52                         | 1           |
| * 7         | 25                         | 6           |
| 8           | 14                         | 10          |
| 9           | 51                         | 2           |
| 10          | 39                         | 4           |
| * 11        | 20                         | 9           |
| * 12        | 33                         | 5           |



The children were selected from a number of state schools in Exeter City, Devon County Educational Authorities, and four groups were made. A full range of ability was attempted. see Table 3 for grouping.

Before these actual pictures were shown to the grouped children, a set of four pictures, each of a bird (fig.10) were prepared in a format closely similar to the original castles. This was to give the children practice, firstly, with viewing black and white varying in style and not content, and secondly, in recording responses and understanding instructions. This cut down on mistakes which could have occurred when showing the castles. The castles were paired each with every other castle, and slides were made. They were photographed twice-once side by side, and then with the positions reversed, so that no choice could be made purely by position relative to another picture. Five seconds was the viewing time allowed. On seeing each pair, the children had to respond by making their preference.

The results of this experiment consisted of the votes cast by each child for each picture, and a rank order was then made from these results ...see table 4.



TABLE 3.

CHILDREN'S GROUPS

| AVERAGE AGE: |              | BOYS: | GIRLS: | GROUP TOTAL: |
|--------------|--------------|-------|--------|--------------|
| Infants:     | 6. 7 Mths.   | 41    | 53     | 94           |
| Junior:      | 9. 7 Mths.   | 52    | 39     | 91           |
| Secondary:   | 12. 10 Mths. | 56    | 43     | 99           |
| Leavers:     | 14. 9 Mths.  | 60    | 37     | 97           |
|              |              | —     | —      | —            |
| TOTAL: ..... |              | 209   | 172    | 381          |

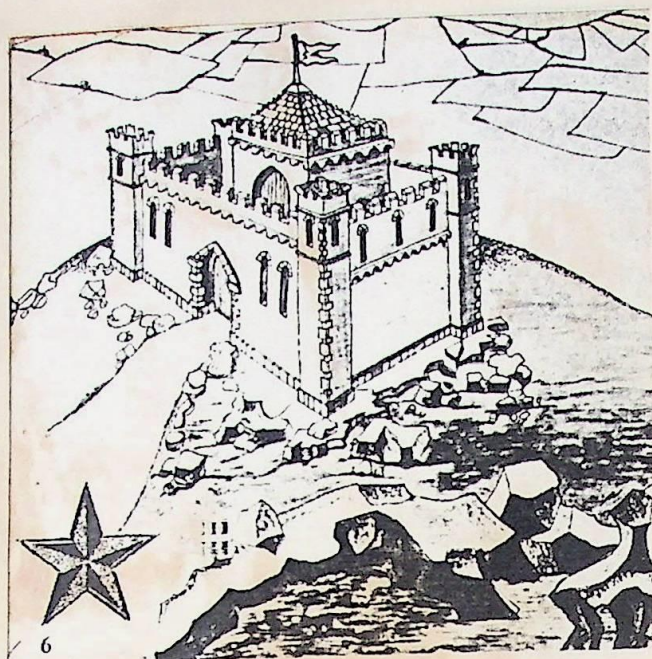


TABLE 4.

| RANK<br>ORDER: | <u>INFANTS:</u> |        | <u>JUNIOR:</u> |        | <u>SECONDARY:</u> |        | <u>LEAVERS:</u> |        |    |
|----------------|-----------------|--------|----------------|--------|-------------------|--------|-----------------|--------|----|
|                | BOYS:           | GIRLS: | BOYS:          | GIRLS: | BOYS:             | GIRLS: | BOYS:           | GIRLS: | J: |
| 1              | 7               | 7      | 6              | 6      | 6                 | 6      | 6               | 6      | 6  |
| 2              | 6               | 6      | 7              | 7      | 7                 | 7      | 7               | 3      | 12 |
| 3              | 3               | 3      | 3              | 3      | 3                 | 3      | 3               | 7      | 7  |
| 4              | 12              | 12     | 12             | 12     | 12                | 12     | 12              | 12     | 3  |
| 5              | 11              | 1      | 11             | 11     | 11                | 11     | 11              | 11     | 11 |
| 6              | 1               | 11     | 1              | 1      | 1                 | 1      | 1               | 1      | 1  |

J = Judges Rank Order:





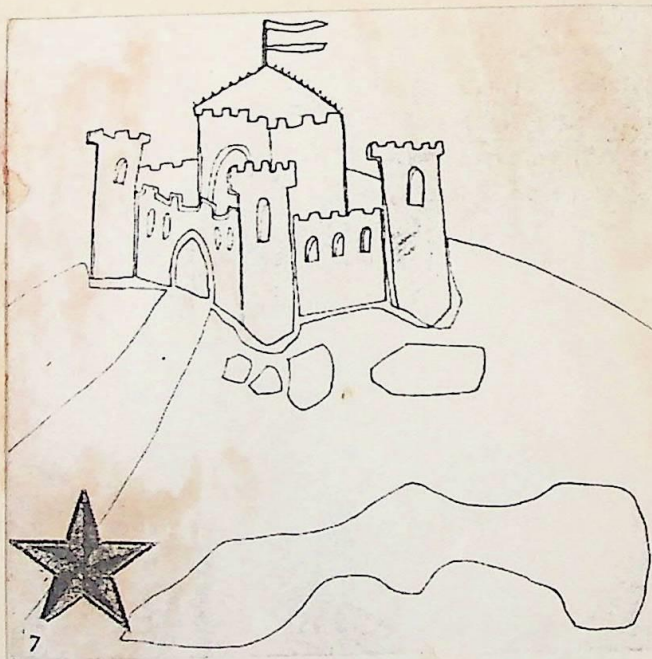
6  
Rank Order 1

a.



12  
Rank Order 5

b.



7  
Rank Order 6

c.



3  
Rank Order 8

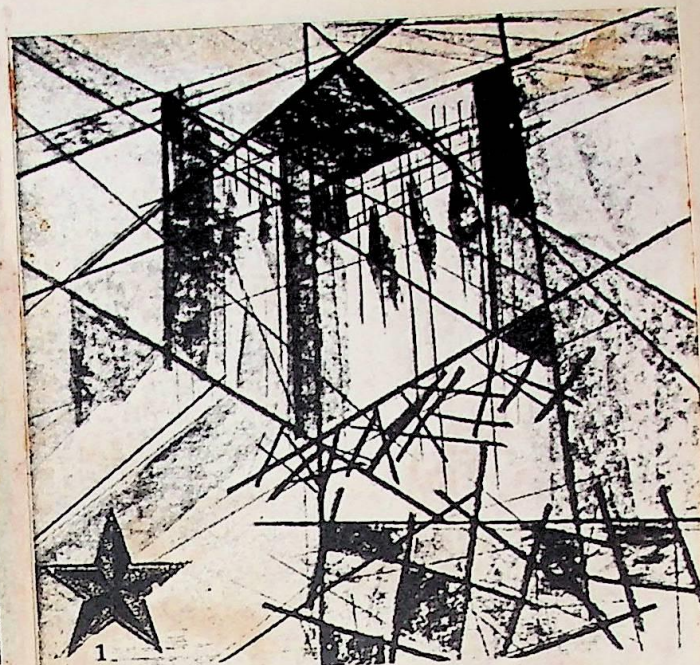
d. Childrens preferences in illustration.  
fig. 9.





Rank Order 9

e.



Rank Order 11

f.



(a)



(b)

Trial illustrations.  
fig. 10.



In conclusion, the experiment found, firstly, the comparison between the results of the children and those of the judges. With the exception of the Infants, all the children liked best the judges "most representational" picture (no.6) and liked least the least representational (no.1). The remaining picture preference was less straightforward. Children seemed to respond emotionally to black as a colour.

Secondly, in the comparison of results by age group, - the groups seemed to agree remarkably, with the exception of the infants. They showed a clear preference for picture no.7. No.7 is a simpler version of the castle, but it still has bold form. The infants could not cope with too much detail, and they may also have been used to this amount of detail (no.7) in their first books. Familiarity may have been a determining factor in their choice. The infants group was also the only group to vary the choices according to sex.

Often, it may be concluded, it is the very young child who seems to have the greatest creative freedom. The older the child gets, the more concerned he is with the detail and the "rightness" of an illustration. It may be concluded also, that the older children can regain, perhaps, greater confidence in ability and surroundings, the creativeness of their earlier years.



years. In the different group comparison, often the greatest similarity of preference was shown as between Infants and Leavers. - the infants with their lack of sophistication and knowledge, and the Leavers with their increased and gained knowledge and their acceptance of ambiguity in illustration. Finally, the experiment concluded that there was no marked difference in choice between boys and girls.

All of these conclusions may be classed as the "wants" of children. It must be noted that this does not necessarily mean their "needs". Gerald Smerdon concludes that this experiment naturally points to the need for further work. In particular, he suggests that these experiments be done with children of mixed ability. A limited trial with children from a school for the educationally subnormal has already suggested that differences do exist.



# FOOTNOTES.

## Chapter 2.

### Experiments and research on children and their books.

1. Louise Seaman Bechtel, The art of illustrating books for younger readers. L.S.Bechtcl was head of the first children's book dept. established by the American publishing house Macmillan from 1924- 1934. She was editor of Books for boys and girls for the New York Herald Tribune Book Review from 1949-1956. Juror a number of times for the American Institute of Graphic Arts; also associate editor 1940-1957; director 1958-1969; Hon.director 1970- of Horn Book magazine.
2. Alderson, Looking at Picture Books, catalogue for exhibition, National Book League of London.
3. Walter Crane, Signal. Approach to Childrens Books.no.13.Jan.'74.
4. Lynne Watts & John Nisbet, Legibility in children's books - a review of research. N.F.E.R. Publishing Co.Ltd.
5. J.Webster, Rescue Reading. Ginn 1969.
6. Nicholas Tucker, Childrens Literature in Education.- Looking at Pictures no.14.1974.
7. J. Webster, Rescue Reading.
8. Gerald Smerdon, Childrens Literature in Education. - Childrens preferences in illustration. Spring 1976.



### Chapter 3.

#### The Slow Learner --Books and Illustrations.



### Chapter 3.

#### The Slow Learner -- Books and Illustrations.

There is a percentage of children in our schools to day who find more than normal difficulty in learning. These are usually called the slow learners. Obviously, a detailed study of slow learners is a life's work in itself, and even a general attempt to introduce the subject is difficult. The study in itself is an individually orientated one. Slow learners are slow because of particular and specific individual problems. Often, absence from school because of illness in early years, may cause the child to fall behind, and he may never really be able to "catch up" on his companions. Irregular attendance because of home problems or an uncaring family, can break up the learning process. Because of home problems or a lack of security, children can suffer emotional disturbance. Some young children have speech, hearing or sight defects which hamper learning and isolate them. Each case is in itself individual and must be treated as such. Even so, there are many ways in which we can help in the learning process of these children. Well illustrated and carefully designed books are regarded as one of the best ways.

Newell C. Kephart<sup>(1)</sup> points out that, since one cannot directly experience the results of lack of pattern that a slow learner



feels when trying to read, we can only analyse intellectually what our generalisation does for us. We can only try to imagine what it would feel like if we could not think in this way, if it were not so. We cannot experience what, for example, a chair would be like if it appeared only as a collection of sticks. We can therefore only guess at what would result if the words on the page broke apart, and the letters would not hold together.

One must admit to the great power that books and their illustrations have in the learning process of children. Vernon in an article in 1953 (2), comments, that the motivational effect of pictorial material varies greatly with age, intelligence and education. The younger and less intelligent child pays more attention to illustration. Illustration and careful choice of book cannot of course be said to be more important in the case of the slow learner.- It is vital in the case of any child. However, it may be said that, with so many paths of contact cut off due to whatever retarding reason, books have been found to be a link with progress and learning,- a means to help the slow child. So much extra help could be given to slow learners in our schools if research and educated analyses could be carried out with control.



One of the greatest proofs of the extent of help which illustration and book design has had on the slow child is from the study of the child called Cushla (3). It shows what print and pictures have to offer a child otherwise cut off from the world, but proves that it takes an effort on the part of adults to see this opportunity and to use it.

At birth, Cushla was underweight and heavily jaundiced, and had an extra finger on each hand which were removed without complication. By six months it was realised that she was making almost no developmental progress, she was unable to use her arms, could scarcely focus her eyes, and had constant ear and throat infections. From the age of two months she had been beset by a convulsive jerking which was clearly abnormal, she had both physical defects and abnormal brain impulse pattern. It became clear that there was no cure. At eighteen months, chromosome tests showed that Cushla's defects were genetic, - every cell was abnormal, For the next number of years she was beset by unremitting illness.

At four months, books were introduced. The baby could only, because of total lack of focus power, see objects close to her face. From the beginning, she would stare intently at a book for hours on end.



The first books introduced to Cushla were by Dick Bruna, namely, B is for Bear (fig.11) and A Story to tell. B is for Bear, an alphabet book, has large black letters on one page, and bold bright primary colour shapes against a contrasting background on the opposite page. The baby would stare at the letter, and with much deliberation move her eyes over the picture. This progress had never been expected. A Story to tell, a book with no text, taught her to follow the adult's finger from object to object, as each one was talked about. She even began to refuse to move to the next object when she wished to see one that especially interested her. In fact, she had begun in a small way to respond intelligently to another person through pictures. She soon began to smile at a familiar and well liked illustration and to kick her legs in approval. Books which had intense clarity of form in illustrations, clearly depicted in colour, were favourites. The size of the books at this stage were unimportant, as Cushla could not use her arms. Music was also introduced, but it never got her attention as books did.

At eleven months, the "book programme" was well under way. Another book Brown Bear was a favourite, - it again had extra clear illustrations, with no background clutter. Also, at this time, Cushla's mother had by mistake, placed the book upside down,



and the child without hesitation, tried to turn her head to restore normal order. By fifteen months she could say "upside down"- pronouncing it "uppa-tida-darna" and recognising its meaning.

Suddenly at about one year, she began to sound the initial letter of words when the letter and picture was shown to her. New books were added all the time and old favourites were reread. The starkness of outline, and special use of colour in all of them were immediately helpful. Cushla examined both picture and text with intense interest and for long periods. Her young cousin, who was four months older, although like Cushla exposed to books from an early age, reacted differently. He could climb, walk, manipulate objects and was altogether an active healthy child, but he only wanted to turn pages of a book, and would only give cursory inspection to pictures, unless particularly interested.

Lois Lenski's books with their clear outlines against a white background, gave Cushla her first conclusive "story" as such. Certain books of a more particular function were also introduced. The Noisy Book, - each page illustrating a noise, and "manipulative" books, flap books that reveal picture within picture. By now Cushla was using her hands and was helped to find animals etc. until she delighted in doing so for herself.



Concepts were taught through books such as Little, Big, Bigger.

In Books Before Five by Dorothy Neal White, a report on her daughter Carol's reactions to books (1954); can be compared to the progress Cushla was making. When the study was done, the children were the same age. At eighteen months, Carol would not look at an illustration of anything unfamiliar to her. It was not until she was two years old that she began to do this. Cushla, unable to enjoy a normal active life, was less discriminating, her attitude was less selective. Carol responded with interest to colour only, Cushla, perhaps because of its clarity, also enjoyed stark black and white.

Cushla by now was introduced to a wider range of books, including Ladybird and Beatrix Potter. Beatrix Potter books along with books like Little Bear by Minarik, illustrated by Maurice Sendak (fig.12) had an appropriateness of theme and of subject matter. Cushla appreciated the accurate representation of her world and of the animals and their world. It is pointed out that the use of words also, in books must be approached with precision and yet explore and actively move along. At an early age, it is better that a story proceeds in a straight line so as not to confuse.

Books which stayed favourites were the ones that had the



significant action displayed in the illustrations in a controlled ordered way. In illustration, it is advised to consider the world from a child's height, and with a child's limited vision.--not so much to cut down on content, but to make it more particular.

It is interesting to note the different reactions of Carol and Cushla to seeing part of an object only in an illustration. Seeing a rabbit hidden in a watering can, Carol would ask where the rest of him was. Cushla did not enquire, and so when asked, would reply "in there", pointing without hesitation, to the can. Carol rejected anything she could not understand. She also rejected such books as Nonsense Songs, whereas Cushla loved the sensory sounds it made. Both children did react similarly to the secure feeling of happy home stories, stressing a universal feeling for security felt by all young.

Real Stories was introduced at three years. Bruna's The Christmas Book was much loved. The Kings and Angels, square, stylized, clearly outlined, with crowns and wings respectively denoting their roles, were examined, re-examined, patted, kissed and loved. Cushla could also accept the concept that an object although shown in the picture, might be imagined. When a subject in the story wonders who is at the door, for instance, the various possibilities are illustrated.



Carol refused to believe them not to be at the door. Dorothy White suggests that if objects do not exist in the story, it is advised to leave them out of the illustration. Carol could not accept a person cut off at the waist in an illustration either. Cushla however, understood both concepts without need to explain, and accepted them readily.

Cushla began to repeat sentences out of books if appropriate occasions came up in her day. She began to make connections. She also began to spend more and more time choosing books and reading aloud to herself. Cushla also delighted in the endpages and title-pages of her books. She noticed consistency in books also, and the carry through of a set of illustrations. In one case, a child in the story had her name on her pillow. In the next picture it was gone. Cushla pointed this out saying it must have been turned under. She was taken to a library, and enjoyed borrowing new books. She became so attached to some of these that she refused to return them until provided with her own copy.

At the time of research, Cushla was four years and nine months old. Her handicaps will stay with her, but her powers of observation and speech reveal a capacity for thought that outstrips that of the average five year old. Her concentration is intense, her determination to extract meaning unwavering. Her cognitive



development in general, her language in particular, is clearly because of the wealth of words and pictures she was and is exposed to. Cushla is recorded as saying, after settling down on a chair with her doll, "now I can read to Looby Lou, 'cause she's tired and sad and she needs a cuddle and a bottle and a book."

It cannot be doubted that pictures are an extremely valuable means of educating young children, and that they can also be the means to break through to children who otherwise would have virtually no contact with our world. This being the case, surely more research is necessary and could be carefully integrated into the school system. Books are chosen for slow learners, and care is taken with the reading of these books, but so much more could be done. We have at our disposal a very powerful tool of education, and as yet we have not exploited it to our advantage and to the advantage of those who need it most. Nicholas Tucker comments that we still have to agree on a firm criteria when assessing picture books that will be meaningful to critics, consumers and publishers alike.

"Whether anyone can actually get further with some of the questions, it is impossible to say, but it would be nice if someone could at least try" (4).



# FOOTNOTES.

## Chapter 3.

### The Slow Learner- Books and Illustrations.

1. Newell C. Kephart, The slow learner in the classroom.
2. Vernon, The value of pictorial illustration.1953.
3. Dorothy Butler, - Signal- Approach to Children's Books.  
Jan.1977.- extract from - Cushla, A case study. Three years  
of enrichment in the life of a handicapped child. An original  
investigation presented for the Diploma in Education, University  
of Auckland, New Zealand 1975.
4. Nicholas Tucker, Childrens Literature in Education.--  
Looking at Pictures.no.14 1974.



#### Chapter 4.

#### Original Test with Slow Learners.



#### Chapter 4.

##### Original test with slow learners.

If the results and conclusions of a research test are to have any validity or concrete value, the test must have firstly, been supervised by a person reasonably expert in the field; Secondly, the variables should be limited so as not to effect the results; thirdly, the numbers tested should justify the results. Obviously, for this thesis, it cannot be hoped to fulfil any of these points, with the confining elements of time, expertese, numbers of children available etc.. It can only be hoped therefore, to be used as a pointer to what can be done, a start or an introduction. Looking at it in this light, it may be regarded as a pilot test.

Realising the inadequate conditions and therefore, the inconclusive results that such a test would give, it can be regarded as part of a learning process in writing this thesis, and as a means of gaining practical experience in dealing with slow learners and testing. It was decided to test a group of these children's reactions to various styles of illustrations and to try and determine in some small way, if any style best aided their learning.

Firstly, the construction of the scale was worked on. A scale of detail was decided upon, based on four divisions



loose cartoon, line drawing, detailed drawing and photograph.

Secondly, the size was made uniform. The drawings were presented by means of four story-boards, each 270mm by 240mm. and on each story-board, four steps of a sequence each 127mm/112mm

Thirdly, the colour was limited to black and white to eliminate factors of colour preference.

Fourthly, it was decided, because of the standard of intelligence, and in consultation with the children's teacher, to limit the content of the story-boards to one simple sequence, a conceptual sequence that the children could follow without difficulty. The concept and sequence chosen, was the making of a jig-saw. The children were already familiar with the jig-saw as a play object in the classroom, but had never attempted to make their own. The sequence had four equally sized and spaced parts, the first part showing the simple implements necessary i.e. stiff paper for backing, illustration, scissors, pencil and glue and brush; The second part shows the stiff paper being glued - and the picture stuck on to it; the third part shows two curved lines drawn on the picture, one vertical, one horizontal, dividing it into four; the fourth part shows the picture being cut out to make the jig-saw.



This sequence was first photographed as simply as possible.

The illustration used and photocopied for each child was an elephant- a recognisable shape, easily cut into four. The cartoon line and detailed drawings were carried out closely following the format of the photographs (figs.13-16). There were twelve children in the group - ranging in age from 5 -7. Their ability was somewhat varied, but all were slow, and unable to keep up to the standard required of children of their own age group for various reasons. On the day of the test only eleven children were present.

The class was divided into four groups and separated as much as possible. Each group was shown one story- board for five minutes and during this time each part of the sequence was explained in detail. It was carefully pointed out how to draw the lines, and how many pieces there should be. The children were allowed to ask any questions they wished.

Next, the groups of children were divided, within the space and scope of the classroom, as far apart as possible. Each child was given stiff paper, the photostat of the elephant, a pencil, scissors and glue. No questions were allowed at this stage, and the children were told to follow the instructions they had seen and heard- now without any help. When they felt they had finished



they were to place every piece in a folder with their name, and hand it up. Results are documented in Table 5.

Ten of the eleven children reached the glueing stage successfully. They remembered exactly what to do. The only child who did not, reacted in a very unusual way - by putting glue on the stiff paper, and then drawing an elephant over the wet glue. She then separately cut up the photostat into five. At this point most of the children had forgotten what they had seen. Slow learners often are hampered by short-term memories. Only four reached the pencil stage successfully. Three of them totally disregarded the pencil stage, and when later asked why, could only say that they had forgotten about it. One pupil divided the photostat into five, using pencil, and another made three divisions. Of the two remaining, one divided the elephant into many parts with the pencil, the last child making the unexplained drawing of the elephant herself. The division of the elephant into many small parts, either with the pencil, or in the next stage with the scissors, might show the children's idea of a jig-saw as being stronger than the instructions given.

The four children who got to the pencil stage successfully, managed the cutting out stage also. The only child not to reach this stage at all, had glued the stiff paper and the photostat,



TABLE 5.

| USE OF GLUE:     |              |                    | USE OF<br>PENCIL:                                    | USE OF<br>SCISSORS:                                  |
|------------------|--------------|--------------------|--|--|
| GROUP LINE 1.    | a. Lisa. O.  | Glued Successfully | Drew Lines all around elephant & divided up in parts | Cut into four, started to cut further but stopped.   |
| *                | b. Joanne.   | Glued Successfully | Pencil Successful                                    | Scissors Successful                                  |
| *                | c. Linda.    | Glued Successfully | Pencil Successful                                    | Scissors Successful                                  |
| GROUP CARTOON 2. | a. Maria. H. | Glued Successfully | Used pencil but divided in five.                     | Cut into five parts extra vertical line from centre. |
|                  | b. Sharon    | Glued Successfully | Divided into three.                                  | Cut around elephant and cut elephant into three      |
|                  | c. Joyce     | Glued Successfully | No use of pencil                                     | Cut elephant out and cut into many parts.            |

CONTD/.....



TABLE 5..... CONTD/.....

| <u>USE OF GLUE:</u> |              |                         | <u>USE OF PENCIL:</u>                           | <u>USE OF SCISSORS:</u>                                       |
|---------------------|--------------|-------------------------|---|---|
| GROUP<br>DETAIL 3.  | a. JANE      | Glued Successfully      | No use of pencil                                | Cut elephant out & cut into parts... trunk/ear/legs/tail etc; |
|                     | b. MARIA. D. | Glued Successfully      | No use of pencil                                | No use of scissors  |
|                     | c. LIZA. M.  | Glued stiff paper only. | Drew copy of elephant on stiff paper over glue. | Cut elephant into five without stiff paper.                   |
|                     |              |                         |   |   |
| GROUP<br>PHOTO 4.   | a. MIRIAM    | Glued successfully      | Pencil successful                               | Scissors successful   |
| *                   | b. KATHERINE | Glued successfully      | Pencil successful                               | Scissors successful   |



and had forgotten the rest. The two who had divided the illustrations in five and three, cut them accordingly, and one cut the photostat only into five. Three cut the entire elephant out and one of these divided it into three, while the other two cut it up completely. Even in this complete cutting up there was some order. They cut out the head/ ear/ legs/tail/ and body. The final child could have been successful, and might be just about called such. She carried out the test successfully but for the fact that she divided the elephant with her pencil started to cut it as such, but settled in the end for just cutting into four. Although she considered cutting more sections, she did in fact, decide in the end on the correct solution. The children who successfully completed the test were, two from group 1., and two from group 4. - group 1 being line drawing, and group 2 cartoon; group 3 detail; group 4 photography. The results are not as simple as this however, and it cannot be easily said that this demonstrates that line drawing and photography work best. Firstly, due to lack of numbers there was one less in group 4. There were also too many variables, mainly because of the physical area of the classroom. The children could not be spaced apart sufficiently to ensure that there would be no possibility of copying. It is accepted that



there may have been the influence of one child over another. Although the amount of influential variables make it impossible to come to any definite conclusion, it can be said that groups 1. and 4. did have the children who successfully completed the test. Perhaps a simple line drawing is easier to comprehend. Yet, it has been said that photography is never as successful as drawing, as it cannot omit the background detail that illustration can, and slightly exaggerate the point to be made. An illustration makes for easier recognition, while photographs only tend to confuse in their complexity.(1). Yet, in this test photography gave good results.

Obviously for any conclusive result to be obtained however, it would be preferred that the numbers be significantly larger, that another test be given, giving the children who used the line and photography story-boards, other styles instead. This could more easily test if it is the method and not the child that is succeeding. The children are however, eager and interested in taking part and many who are slow to read and write, have quick keen minds in other respects. If their best points are found and worked on gradually they can be taught the basic learning they will require to follow whichever career they might choose.



Simple bold illustration, presented in an imaginative but repetitive way will gradually teach a point. Care and patience must be given to both the preparation and use of children's books.



FOOTNOTES.Chapter 4.Original Test with slow learners.

1. Michael Weller, "photographs may appear more realistic than drawings and paintings, although the drawing can allow significant detail to be highlighted more efficiently and cartoon imagery may have some of the advantages of diagrams".

The school Librarian. vol.26;no1. March 1978.



## Chapter 5.

### Examination and analyses of Present Day Illustration in

#### Children's Books.



## Chapter 5.

### Examination and analyses of present day illustration in

#### Childrens books.

With the new development of offset-lithography and the growing recognition of the importance of a child's first books, we are faced with one very real danger,- that of over production. To day our bookshelves and our libraries are so loaded with expensive examples of factual material, that Maurice Sendak has complained;-

"We are not supposed to be having fun, we are back to learning again. Its these great boring pendulum swings from one thing to the other- in the face of Vietnam, and in the face of ecology, and in the face of everything that seems to be so dooming and karate- chopping across the back of our necks, why plague children to that extent ?" (1)

With so many books on offer to the Irish child, it is very difficult to isolate a cross-section for comment. Many of these books are produced at home, but most are foreign or of foreign translations. The Educational Library, Wellington Quay, chose a selection from their shelves of the most popular books in their opinion, at present. It is sad to say that as yet, no home produced book seems to be as popular as its foreign rival.



Picture books have best effect in their telling and re-telling of a story. The individual flavour of an artist's work, the creation of a character or a place, best follows the story - telling tradition. Books should be sturdy and durable, able to withstand much handling by young children. If a book looks tatty, it cannot infuse a respect and caring attitude to literature.

Taking these books in sections and attempting to analyse the reasons for their popularity, one finds;

Firstly, many books for young children have little text and large bright illustrations. They also tend to take the shape of a definite repetitive story line, with a story which often ends at the beginning again. Three such stories are-

Pig Tale by Helen Oxenbury (fig.17); Rosie's Walk. by Pat Hutchins (fig.18); and buzz, buzz, buzz. by Byron Barton (fig.19).

The most detailed pictures are from Pig Tale, with a simple rhyming text. Two pigs are seen to wish for wealth and smart living, and when they finally do achieve these things, they find that looking after a house, a car and swimming pool is not all fun. "Oh Briggs" Bertha sobbed, "what a miserable day"!

"I've been working so hard, I've no time to be gay".

The Illustrations are comic and fill the pages with activity.

Even the inside cover of the book has a delightful series of pigs



stripping off their clothes (fig.17). This is a story with a moral that children can understand.

Rosie's Walk is a well loved picture book with very little text. The hen goes for a walk with no idea or knowledge of the various tricks a crafty fox tries to play on her, or of his failure. The hen is shown in the same position of movement in all of the pages, - only the scenery changes. The text tells of her journey across the yard, past the barn, past the mill etc. and home again in time for tea. Children seem to enjoy the fact that the fox and all his tricks are not mentioned. Block shapes are used with texture details.

A continuous story of a different type is told in the book "buzz, buzz, buzz". It can be read as a never ending sequence of events of the comic mishaps that occur when the bee first stings the bull, and ends with the story coming full circle. Children love repetition. The bee stings the bull, who makes the cow nervous, who kicks the farmer's wife, who yells at the farmer, - who hits the mule, who kicks over the shed, scaring the goat who butts the dog into the pond, who barks at the goose. She bites the cat who jumps at the bird who dives at the bee, who stings the bull.. .. . The illustrations are in black distinct colours, with a flow of picture from page to page, as well as text. It is



interesting to note that all of the text is in lower case, Olive Antique Bold.

These three books are very simple in their design and are easy to follow. The story in each case, is original and quickly understood and even memorised.

There are so many A.B.C. books, with the usual "A is for Apple B is for Ball " content, that it is refreshing to find that unusual approaches have been taken with this subject.

The ABC Bedtime story, by Tony Palladino (fig.20) does just that.

Printed on dark blue, the white illustrations are very loose and symbolic. The whole book is crisp and to the point. One page

stands out in white - "Owls sleep when we are awake" It has such lines as - Dogs enjoy sleeping anywhere; Elephants never forget

where they sleep; Giraffes sleep when their necks get tired.

John Burningham's ABC (fig.21) is more conventional, yet it has brightly coloured pages, with not just "B is for bird" but a

whole page of bright colourful different sized birds. The text is printed on paper reminiscent of scrap book colours.

Suzanna Gretz; Teddy bears ABC (fig.22) shows another approach.

It shows the same bears in various ABC activities. D; dancing

F, finding fleas in their fur; etc. The colours again are bright,



bright but against a stark white background. The Irish ABC book Aibitir na nAinmhithe. (fig 23) seems to be a poor rival. The illustrations have no apparent connection or link with the text, and only tend to spot the book here and there. The colour and reproduction are of poor quality; although in price it is only a third of the other ABC productions.

Dick Bruna's b is for bear (fig.11) already mentioned in a previous chapter, like his Miffy books (fig.24) has a very simple strong style of illustration which captivates children. The pictures seem so simple, yet their effect is so strong. Bruna's series of books including b is for bear are reasonably priced and clearly produced with strong covers. They are also of uniform size to stand together as a library.

Still in the area of sequence books are A Bookload of Animals by Maureen Roffey (fig.25) and Finding 1-10 by George Adamson (fig.26). A Bookload of Animals has little text and simple illustrations that fill the double page or even run off it. It is based on sayings such as -"as big as an elephant"; as slow as a snail; as mad as a March hare" etc. Although children delight in simplicity, they also enjoy the challenge of finding some hidden element in the pictures. It is a game, or a puzzle or a challenge. However, this must be handled very carefully.



In Finding 1 - 10, although all of the necessary elements are present, the book itself seems far too complex, and some of the elements are quite difficult for adults to find.

It is interesting to note the way two books tell the same story. In The apple and the butterfly by Iela and Enzo Mari (fig.27) the story is told by illustration only, in what may be one of the strongest picture books available. Each page has an element of the previous illustration to continue the flow of the story. Although it is simply told, the detail is there for those who need it. The caterpillars story by Achim Bröger and illustrated by Katrin Brandt (fig.28) is told in the form of a story of a caterpillar who wishes to fly, -resembling the story of the ugly duckling who wished to be beautiful. Where as The apple and the butterfly is illustrated in a design way, the latter story is in soft watercolour drawings. Two books which use colour in an especially free and strong way are The Lazy Bear by Brian Wildsmith (fig.29) and Dreams by Ezra Jack Keats (fig.30). The Lazy Bear seems to be practically a collage of colour and a little unreal. Its use of colour is decorative, while colour is used in a more dramatic way in Dreams. It creates the rich moods and sudden drama, by the film type illustrations which are used.



Drama also comes into illustrations with picture and story content in Maurice Sendak's Where the wild things are.(fig.31). Much of Sendak's early work had been in black and white, which held a drama of its own. In this book the illustrations grew from postcard size, to near page size, to full pages and page and a bit, until they fill three pages. This book is accused of frightening children, yet the fact that everything turns out well in the end seems sufficient to allow the reader to delight in the excitement. Maurice Sendak also wrote and illustrated such books as the Little Bear.(fig.12), in which gentle soft illustrations and bordered floral pages contrast with the boldness of Where the wild things are. The charm of Little Bear is inescapable and its stories have a familiar ring to them which children may recognise from their own experiences. Other softly handled books which were mentioned were, Convent Cat by Barbara Willard, illustrated by Bunshu Iguchi (fig.32) Little Train by Graham Green, illustrated by Edward Ardizzone (fig.33), and Waltzing Matilda; illustrated by Desmond Digby(fig.34). Convent Cat has very free watercolour drawings with a simple text with such lines as, " I was so sad, I thought I'd never purr again". and is a popular story with both children and adults. The Little train is traditional in its illustrations and story, and Edward Ardizzone, a much



admired picture book illustrator. Waltzing Matilda was awarded the book of the year award in Australia in 1976. Although the pictures are quite beautiful, each an oil type painting in its own right, it is difficult to see it as a child's book. Illustration may be admired, and still fail to fulfil its role. Perhaps it is the fact of country and tradition which makes the difference, Environment can influence a reaction to a book. In Australia, the tradition and familiar quality of story may be recognisable to children, yet this cannot be expected to work equally well in Ireland.

Many of the old style books have also been published, or books have been based on them. An obvious example is Butterfly Ball(fig.35). Less obvious perhaps, is the style of Matthew Blows Soap Bubbles(fig.36). which is based on the primer text book type illustration. The Runaway Tram (fig. 37)., although modern in illustration, has qualities of age to reflect the telling of a story by a Grandfather.

In the home produced section chosen by the Library, the main books were, King Longbeard illustrated by Pat Walsh(fig.38), Có Có agus Anna, illustrated by Síbeal Mac Anraoi(fig.39), Taímin illustrated by Marian King(fig.40); Triopall Trapall illustrated by



Clíodna Cussen (fig.41) and An Sicin agus an Mac Tíre, illustrated by Altilio and Karen, (fig.42). The latter is a translation from Italian to Irish. The other books are produced and illustrated in Ireland, but their quality is sadly lacking. King Longbeard although it has diverse styles of illustration, is reasonably well presented and bound. However, by and large, the bulk of our home produced books are badly laid out and have no obvious continuity. There are few recent publications, other than translations. It must be concluded that of the books on offer to children, either as text books or as school library books, the majority are imported, or copies of foreign books, and the remaining numbers a selection of books on average of bad quality, and obviously with no back-up research into children's needs. In the area of the slow learner, we seem to be able only to offer The Ladybird selection. Although, these books have been proved to be both successful and popular, surely the time has come to further progress.



# FOOTNOTES.

## Chapter 5.

### Examination and Analyses of present day Illustration in Childrens Books.

1. Maurice Sendak, from an article by Muriel Whitaker.

Childrens Literature in Education- Louder than Words. the didactic  
use of illustration in books for children. no. 16. 1975.



### CONCLUSION.

In the research and writing up of this thesis, four main points have been learnt. Firstly, the tremendous importance of graphics in children's educational books. Secondly, the great necessity for further research on this subject. Thirdly, the lack of "quality" home produced books due to low demand, or funding or perhaps a degree of ignorance of their importance. Fourthly, because of the numbers of our population in Ireland, we cannot always hope that publishers can produce specially designed books for slow learners. Having considered these points it is imperative that the Government, through the Department of Education, be made aware of the situation, and be requested to make monies available by way of grant, in order to publish such books for slow learners. This should not be looked upon as just an advantageous project, but as an essential and urgent need. Every year that goes by without the implementation of such a scheme, is a loss to a whole section of children, and therefore, to the community. The benefits would be far reaching, and rewarding. This, at least, we owe to the next generation.



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