



## **THE ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF TEACHING CHILDREN'S LITERATURE**

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**Annotation:** This article deals with the children's literature and the theoretical view of teaching it. However, specialists take approach how to teach and daiose phsychologically the acquirer's interest. The scientists of the world gain knowledge through children's literature and it gives good opportunity and improve the teaching method. In this article also discusses a particular needs for childrens liturature in education and different point of views given.

### **INTRODUCTION**

The definition of "children's literature" lies at the heart of its endeavour: it is a category of books the existence of which absolutely depends on supposed relationships with a particular reading audience: children. The definition of "children's literature" therefore is underpinned by purpose: it neediness to be something in particular, because this is supposed to connect with reading audience-"children"-with which it declares itself to be overtly and purposefully concerned.

Academic argue that there is more to this genre than meets the eye. Once a neglected literary field, children's literature is the focus of many studies today. The reason behind that lies in the concept of child image, which is closely associated with children's literature and in itself hard to determine: "Child image is a very complex issue: on the one hand, it is something unique, based on each individual's personal history; on the other hand, it is something collectivized in all society". In order to enter the adulthood, every person first experiences childhood.

The underlying principle behind childhood is always the same, whether viewed from an individual or collective perspective: children's vivid imaginations allow them to see the world in different ways. Children's books bring their world to life with tales of fairies, princesses, flying carpets, and dragons. These tales are both entertaining and instructive, preparing kids for life in the real world: "With its rich artistic and aesthetic worth, children's literature inspires children's feelings and benefits children's minds through education and leisure.

Nowadays the society values children's literature for the positive effect it has on a child's development. It is directly associated with the notion of childhood, which is from today's point of view a precious time in a man's life, which helps a child in shaping their character and adopting the proper values for adulthood. However, this has not always been the case. Looking back, the concept of childhood, as we understand it today and children's literature were highly neglected throughout the history.

### **THE MAIN PART**

Children were seen as small adults. The society back then did not put any effort in recognizing a child's needs. Children's books were written only occasionally and it became obvious that the time has come to change system. This happened in the nineteenth century when the notion of childhood and what it stood for finally gained recognition from the society: "Children were now regarded as delicate creatures who had to be reformed and safeguarded; and the way to reform them was through education and through books issued primarily as pedagogic vehicles.

Hence, the society's new perception of childhood created for the first time both the need and the

demand for children's books". For the first time people see the need for writing children's books, and a massive boom in children's literature production emerges. Establishing the true meaning of childhood paved the way for children's literature to take its honorable place in the literary polysystem: "the creation of the notion of childhood was an indispensable precondition for the production of children's books and determined to a large extent the development and options of development for children's literature". Children were no longer trapped in the unnatural role of playing the adults but rather for once they could be what they truly are just innocent and playful children, as Townsend states: "Before there could be children's books, there had to be children-children, that is, who were accepted as beings with their own particular needs and interests, not only as miniature men and women".

When talking about the features of children's literature, Miles McDowell's famous explanation offers a pretty good sum up: Children's books are generally shorter; tend to favor an active rather than a passive treatment, with a dialogue and incident rather than description and introspection; child protagonists are the rule; conventions are much used; the story develops within a clear-cut moral schematism which much adult fiction ignores; children's books tend to be optimistic rather than depressive; language is child-oriented; plots are of a distinctive order, probability is often discarded; and one could go on endlessly talking of magic, and fantasy, and simplicity, and adventure. To perform a more detailed analysis of the features of children's literature, three levels of observation come into question: content, language and cultural specificity. Content-wise, children's literature is all about, as Zhao and Jiang called it in their paper, "dualism"<sup>1</sup>.

The term dualism represents in this context two concepts that are always contradictory or opposing one another. That is why a hero, in order to be one, requires a presence of a villain or a world where there is good implies the existence of evil as well. This way of writing has an educational purpose and that is to teach a child the difference between right and wrong.

Language-wise, children's literature is accurate, simple, vivid and pervaded with rhythmicity. For taking the language to a higher level of complexity would potentially ruin the reader's experience: Its educational function suggests too much language variation and untraditional ways would mislead children with regard to mental and physical characters, obscure words also deprive them of interest of reading". Rhythmicity, on the other hand, helps the child sail into their imaginative world. An audio-visual approach is the best tool in creating a mental image of a story, while at the same time it will keep the child's attention and make it memorable: "The rhyme means that the language of children's literature presents a sense of music and beauty. Imaginal thinking, as the primary thinking pattern of children, let them be accustomed to thinking in terms of images concrete, audio-visual language inspire sense of image in children.

Culture-wise, children's literature is intended to be educational and to transfuse a sense of belonging to a specific culture: children's literature is used as an indispensable tool to conveying moral values and ethnic identity, which is widely applied in school and family learning. In the process of narration, the author builds a cultural utopia for children to some extent. In this way, the authors of children's literature and the society they belong to make sure that the children already in the earliest years of their lives learn about tradition and adopt certain values, which this society aspires and which are believed to shape their character the proper way.

When researching children's literature, scholars consider various important features to understand the influence of books on young readers and to examine how children's literature functions in different educational, cultural, and psychological contexts. Below are the key features of researching children's literature:

Target Audience and Age Appropriateness-Children's literature is typically categorized by age groups and the content and style of a book should match the developmental stage of the intended audience. Research in this area investigates how literature is designed for different age groups,

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/259382421\\_The\\_Paradox\\_of\\_Labor\\_Force\\_Dualism\\_and\\_State-Labor-Capital\\_Relations\\_in\\_the\\_Chinese\\_Automobile\\_Industry/citations](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/259382421_The_Paradox_of_Labor_Force_Dualism_and_State-Labor-Capital_Relations_in_the_Chinese_Automobile_Industry/citations)

including early childhood, middle-grade readers and young adults. This includes considerations of language complexity, themes and narrative structure. Picture books, like *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* by Eric Carle, use simple text and repetitive patterns to engage younger children, while novels like *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* by J.K. Rowling are suited for older children due to more complex language and themes.

**Themes and Moral Lessons**-Children's literature often explores themes such as friendship, morality, social relationships, and personal growth. Researchers examine the presence of these themes and how they contribute to a child's understanding of the world. Many books also present moral lessons, whether directly or indirectly, and researchers look at how these themes align with societal values or challenge traditional norms. Example: *Charlotte's Web* by E.B. White explores themes of friendship, loyalty, and mortality, teaching readers about life, death, and the importance of kindness.

**Language and Literacy Development**-Language plays a critical role in children's literature, particularly in supporting the development of literacy skills. Research examines how books aid in vocabulary building, phonetic awareness, and reading comprehension. The use of repetition, rhyme, and rhythm is particularly important in early childhood literature as it helps in language acquisition and retention. Example: Dr. Seuss's *Green Eggs and Ham* use repetitive and rhyming text to help young children learn new words and concepts, fostering early literacy skills.

**Visual Storytelling and images**: The narrative and emotional tone of children's books, particularly picture books, are greatly influenced by the images. Researchers look into how pictures enhance or add to the text, how they aid young readers in comprehending abstract ideas, and how they emotionally connect with kids. The visual component frequently increase the book's impact and accessibility. For instance, Ezra's "The Snowy Day" Jack Keats enhances the text's emotional relevance by using straightforward yet impactful pictures to capture the beauty of a child's wintertime experience.

**Cultural and historical context** of children's literature is deeply influenced by the time, culture, and social environment in which it was written. Research into cultural and historical context helps understand how books reflect societal attitudes, norms, and issues. Analyzing how certain books have been shaped by or contributed to historical events, political climates, or social movements can offer significant insights. Example: *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* by Mark Twain reflects 19<sup>th</sup>-century American society, addressing themes like class, race, and societal norms.

**Representation and Diversity**-An important feature in current research is how children's literature represents various groups, including race, gender, class, disability, and family structures. Diverse representation in children's books has been shown to influence how children perceive themselves and others. Researchers investigate the ways in which marginalized voices are included or excluded from children's books, and how these depictions affect young readers' understanding of diversity. Example: "The Snowy Day" by Ezra Jack Keats was groundbreaking for its portrayal of an African American boy as the protagonist in a children's picture book, addressing the lack of diversity in early children's literature.

**Psychological and Emotional Development**-Children's books often deal with complex emotions, social interactions, and psychological development. Researchers analyze how these books help children navigate emotions like fear, sadness, joy or anger, and how they can act as tools for emotional learning and resilience. Stories also offer models for conflict resolution, empathy, and self-regulation. Example: *Where the "Wild Things Are"* by Maurice Sendak deals with the emotional experience of anger and the journey of self-regulation, which is highly relatable for young children.

**Gender Roles and Power Dynamics**-Gender representation and power dynamics are key areas of focus. Researchers analyze how gender roles are portrayed in children's literature and whether these books reinforce or challenge traditional stereotypes. They also examine how power is distributed among characters, whether through authority, relationships, or societal structures. Example: *Matilda* by Roald Dahl subverts traditional gender norms by portraying a

young girl who is intellectually superior and outwits authority figures, challenging traditional ideas of gender roles.

**Educational Value and Pedagogical Implications-** Children's literature has a profound impact on education, both formally in classrooms and informally in homes. Researchers examine how children's books can be used as educational tools for teaching literacy, critical thinking, and moral reasoning. Books often help children learn new concepts, whether academic, social, or emotional. Example: *The Chronicles of Narnia* by C.S. Lewis is often used in educational settings to discuss themes of morality, good versus evil, and faith, while also introducing concepts like mythology and philosophy to young readers.

**Narrative Structure and Genre-**The way a children's book is structured-whether it is a picture book, chapter book, or graphic novel-affects how a child interacts with the text. Researchers look at how different genres (fairy tales, fables, realistic fiction, fantasy, etc.) and narrative structures (linear vs. non-linear, episodic vs. continuous) serve to develop specific skills or engage children's imaginations. Example: *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* by Lewis Carroll uses a non-linear, episodic narrative structure that sparks the imagination and encourages readers to think abstractly.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, a multidisciplinary approach involving disciplines like linguistics, psychology, sociology and education is required when studying children's literature. Through an examination of the aforementioned characteristics—age appropriateness, themes, language, visuals, cultural context, diversity, emotional development and more—researchers can gain a deeper understanding of the ways in which children's literature affects social development and young minds. Language units are known to be used to express certain objects and phenomena. On the other hand, an intellectual-emotional speech form emerges based on the speaker's worldview. A person's subjective attitude toward the item and his psycho-physiological state are primarily expressed by this speech form.

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