



Teacher's Guide

Why Picture Books Belong in Our Classrooms

- *Packed with engaging ideas and activities to bring picture books into the ELA, Math, Science, and Social Studies curriculum!*
- *Complete with information on aligning lessons to the CCSS for ELA and Math and other state-mandated learning standards.*

Become a Picture Book Month Ambassador.
Register at www.PictureBookMonth.com
& join the celebration!

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Learn more at: www.thisismarciecolleen.com and www.picturebookmonth.com.
Picture Book Month logo by Joyce Wan www.wanart.com

What is Picture Book Month?

Picture Book Month is an international literacy initiative that celebrates print picture books during the month of November.

Founder, Dianne de Las Casas (author & storyteller) www.diannedelascasas.com, and Co-Founders, Katie Davis (author/illustrator) www.katiedavis.com, Elizabeth O. Dulemba (author/illustrator) www.dulemba.com, Tara Lazar (author) taralazar.wordpress.com, and Wendy Martin (author/illustrator) wendymartinillustration.com, put together their worldwide connections to make this happen.

Every day in November, there is a new post from a picture book champion explaining why he/she thinks picture books are important.

In this digital age where people are predicting the coming death of print books, picture books (the print kind) have so much to offer that they must be celebrated and shared. And the world needs picture books. There's nothing like the physical page turn of a beautifully crafted picture book.

What You Can Do to Celebrate Picture Book Month?

- * Become a Picture Book Month Ambassador and place the Ambassador badge on your website, with a link to www.PictureBookMonth.com.

- * Register at www.PictureBookMonth.com so that you can pledge to celebrate your love of picture books throughout the month of November. You will also be added to the Picture Book Month mailing list.

- * Create posters and hang them around your school and library. Posters are available for download online in the media kit. Be sure to include the book covers of your favorite picture books.

- * Download the theme calendar for Picture Book Month to help you create a month-long celebration of picture books.

- * Count how many picture books are checked out and keep a running total. At the end of the month, let us know how many your school or library read!

- * Tweet the cause and/or reviews of your favorite picture books. Use the hashtag #picturebookmonth

- * Get the Picture Book Month Twibbon, a digital ribbon that can be added to your Twitter avatar or Facebook profile picture. Details online.

- * Ask a picture book author/illustrator to visit or do a Skype visit to your school or library.

- * Post a review of your favorite picture book to Amazon.com, Goodreads, Library Thing, or your blog.

- * Follow Picture Book Month (@picturebkmonth) and founder Dianne de Las Casas (@AuthorDianneDLC) on Twitter for updates every day in November. You can find Picture Book Month on Facebook, too.



November is Picture Book Month. Read * Share * Celebrate!

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How To Use This Guide

This teacher’s guide for Picture Book Month is designed to help teachers integrate picture books into English language arts (ELA), mathematics, science, and social studies curricula. Art and drama are encouraged throughout the guide and all activities were created in conjunction with relevant content standards in ELA, math, science, and social studies.

The Heart of Learning: Why Picture Books Belong in Our Classrooms

With the rise of bullying in our schools, how can we deny that our classrooms need more heart? The danger is that with the implementation of mandated learning standards, teachers feel forced to spend more time teaching to “the test,” in lieu of teaching matters of the heart—or worse yet, teaching *with* their hearts.

Picture books can address both heart and the standards. Picture books allow for story. Picture books teach empathy. Picture books help relate human experiences to academic concepts and address complex issues and content. And because picture books have a short focused format, the academic concepts and complex issues become readily accessible to children.

This guide is not meant to be an instruction book on what exactly to do to bring picture books into your classroom. Instead it serves as a celebration and call-to-action to springboard your own ideas for using picture books in your classroom. By focusing on the academic concepts deemed necessary by state and federal mandated learning standards, this guide sets out to empower teachers to consider picture books as valuable resources, which connect students with content and inspire their humanity. Any picture book can be tied into the CCSS and other state standards. Therefore, teachers should feel authorized to choose the texts they want to teach and find alignment from there, not the other way around.

Lately, non-fiction picture books have been getting a lot of attention and although non-fiction picture books provide wonderful content for inclusion within the classroom, it is my wish that fiction picture books would be given the same attention and opportunity to thrive within the academic environment.

My hope is that this guide provides inspiration, validation, and celebration for *all* picture books in every classroom.



Marcie Colleen, Picture Book Month's Education Consultant, has been in education for 18 years. She is a former New York classroom teacher and has served as a curriculum creator for the Central New York Institute of Aesthetic Education, Syracuse Stage, Tony Randall's National Actors Theater, and various Broadway and Off-Broadway shows. She was the Director of Education for TADA! Youth Theater in NYC creating and managing educational programming reaching over 30,000 students and families in the NYC Metro area a year. Her Teacher's Guides for picture books and middle grade

novels can be found at www.thisismarciecolleen.com.

English Language Arts

Based on the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science and Technical Subjects and the National Council of Teachers of English and the International Reading Association Standards for the English Language Arts.

Concepts:

* **Reading**

* **Writing**

* **Speaking & Listening**

* **Language**

Why Picture Books?

- Picture books are wonderful tools for teaching story structure, key ideas, and details because of their simple linear plot lines and setting, with a few highly developed characters.
- Picture books prompt a variety of creative writing assignments.
- Picture books lend themselves nicely to technical writing assignments, including but not limited to letters to authors or illustrators, book reviews, research papers based on a theme found within the story.
- Picture books are specifically and technically crafted. Due to the concise and simple nature of the genre, word choice and structure is extremely important.

- Picture books are meant to be read-aloud, which automatically makes them a social experience.
- The very nature of reading a picture book invites conversation and questions that support students developing understandings of language and their world.
- Picture books contain many literary conventions including but not limited to, rhyme, onomatopoeia, alliteration, hyperbole.
- Visuals in the illustrations build skills for determining meaning through context.

Classroom Activities:

How I See It ~ Choose a character, other than the main protagonist, and write the story from their Point of View. Use *The True Story of the 3 Little Pigs* as told by Jon Scieszka and illustrated by Lane Smith, as an example. For another challenge, the students could place themselves in the story and tell their own version.

Reader's Theater ~ Create a Reader's Theater version of the story. Cast students as the characters and have them read the book's dialogue or develop their own lines to best re-tell the story.

Diaries, Letters, Journals, and Messages ~ These creative writing assignments require students to use appropriate vocabulary, point of view, content and form, as well as enable students to experiment with different purposes for writing. For example, using the traditional story of *Goldilocks and the Three Bears*, students could write:

- Goldilocks' letter of apology to the bears;
- Baby Bear's letter to his best friend describing his experiences;
- Newspaper articles by reporters regarding the "break-in";
- Police reports and witness statements;
- Estimates for furniture repair from the Guild of Furniture Makers;
- Goldilocks' diary entries the day before the incident and the day after;
- A letter to the author or illustrator of the book.

Vocab Detectives ~ Re-read sections of the book aloud and ask students to listen carefully for words they do not know. As soon as they come across a new vocabulary word, they raise their hand. Repeat the phrase using the unknown word. What might it mean, based on context? Look up the word in the dictionary. Read the definition. Come up with a way to remember what the word means. *Using Total Physical Response, students can create an action that symbolizes the word and helps them remember it.* Create a list of the vocabulary words and hang it on the wall. Revisit it again and again.

Instructional Read Alouds ~ Reading a story aloud in class includes pre-reading, during reading, and post-reading activities to make sure the class understands and makes connections with the story. This constant verbal interaction can help build a student's desire and confidence to read independently.

Picture Books as Mentor Texts for Writing by Marcie Flinchum Atkins

Picture books matter. They matter because they can be loved and used on so many different levels. I teach fourth graders. Many people think that's the age when kids are "too old" for picture books. They can read harder books by this age, usually. But picture books are for so much more than just stepping stones in reading. I use them extensively in teaching children how to write.

Picture books are the perfect mentor text for writing. They are short, yet the language and structure are complex. Picture books allow for pleasure reading, but they also leave room for revisiting. *Owl Moon* is a book that my students have usually heard a half-dozen times before they enter fourth grade. When I pull it out and they say, "Oh, I've read this book," I'm thrilled. This means that they don't have to concentrate on *what* happens, they can concentrate on *how* Yolen uses her writing techniques to give us sensory details of that owling night.

When I introduce Denise Fleming's *In the Small, Small Pond*, it appears to be a book for toddlers—much too young for fourth graders. Yet, Fleming's use of poetic language and her vivid verbs make this short book perfect for wrapping students in word choice.

Even Michael Ian Black's hilarious *A Pig Parade is a Terrible Idea* seems like just a laugh-out-loud funny read. It is. But what a great example of tone—something that's very hard to find examples of.

The Quiet Book by Deborah Underwood is also a very short text but serves as a great example of choosing the exact right word for what you want to convey. Not just quiet. What kind of quiet?

Picture books matter in the classroom—even in the intermediate elementary classroom. They shouldn't disappear and be replaced with middle grade novels just because kids can now read them. We need to continue to revisit favorites from early childhood and introduce students to new titles because stories in picture books are some of the greatest writing examples we can give to students.

Marcie Flinchum Atkins teaches fourth graders by day and writes picture books, middle grade and YA novels in the wee hours of the morning. She also writes mentor texts lesson plans for her website: <http://www.marcieatkins.com/for-teachers-2/mentor-text-lessons/>

Math

Based on the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics and The Curriculum and Evaluation Standards for School Mathematics and Focal Points from the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics.

Concepts:

*** Numbers and Operations**

*** Algebraic Thinking**

*** Geometry**

*** Measurement and Data**

Why Picture Books?

- Picture books aid students in visualizing mathematics within a narrative context.
- Picture book illustrations lend themselves nicely to counting exercises (“how many apples can you find?”).
- Picture books help students visualize number quantities and number comparison (“how many *more* apples does this tree have *than* that tree?”).
- Picture books provide excellent scenarios for word problems, using a plot line and characters that students know and relate to.
- Picture book illustrations serve as wonderful models of how shapes are used to create pictures.
- Picture books help students visualize what they are reading

and make sense of the content which is a big component in spatial learning and problem solving.

- Picture books provide context, which supports developing understandings of mathematical concepts such as measurement and time

Classroom Activities:

Scavenger Hunt ~ What’s more fun than a scavenger hunt to sharpen counting skills? In line with a theme or item in a story, ask students to find 1 of something, 2 of something, 3 of something, and so on until you reach 10 (ex. Find 1 pencil, 2 markers, 3 books, 4 erasers, etc)—or allow kids to determine what items to collect themselves, as long as they meet the quantity requirements.

The Geometry of Illustration ~ Using simple shapes cut out of various colored paper, have students recreate a character or illustration from a picture book. As an added challenge, provide several three-dimensional “found objects”. The recycling bin can be a haven for cubes, spheres and cones. Using these objects have students create a three dimensional sculpture of a picture book character.

The Secret Message Code game ~ Although this activity is in the Math section of this guide, it definitely has cross-over with ELA as it teaches letter recognition, spelling, and reading depending on the level of the students. Assign a number to each letter in the alphabet (ie. A=1, B=2, C=3, and so on). Create the message (based on the story) , only using a blank to represent each letter. Under each blank, place a math equation that would lead to the necessary letter. For example 1+3 under a blank means that that blank should contain a D, because D=4. Do this with the entire message and have students try and figure out the Secret Message. Depending on the level of the students, this activity can be done as a class or individually.

Data Collection & Surveys ~ This activity is a great get-to-know-you activity for the beginning of the year.

- As a class, create a survey about favorite things. For example: Favorite character; Favorite book; etc.
- Take a tally from the class, and then construct a graph to record everyone's answers. Analyze the graph (9 out of 25 like Little Red, and 4 out of 25 like Rapunzel).
- Together, make up a list of survey questions to ask 100 people.
- Groups of 5 ask 20 people each (so you have a sample size of 100) by visiting other classes, the library, the office, and so forth. Once collected, the groups work to sort and classify the results, and create graphs. Have the groups depict findings in fraction form, too. Using the number 100 allows a brief introduction to decimals and percentages.

GUESS WHAT?

Although books come in many shapes and sizes, picture books are designed to be easily held and transported by kids.

As a class, gather some favorites. Using a measuring-tape and a scale determine the book's weight and dimensions.

Who is the intended age group? Why do you think the publisher chose this size, weight and shape for the book?

Science

Based on the learning standards developed by the National Research Council (NRC) of the National Academy of Science, which argue for more depth, understanding, and thinking and less memorization, mechanics and mimicry.

Concepts:

***Science as Inquiry**

***Physical Science**

***Life Science**

***Earth and Space Science**

***Science and Technology**

***History and Nature of Science**

GUESS WHAT?

There is a wide variety of non-fiction and informational picture books which are excellent resources, however, fiction books can introduce scientific concepts, as well. This section was created with both non-fiction and fiction picture books in mind.

Why Picture Books?

- Children are born scientists; and picture books, like Science, are about the spirit of curiosity and exploration.
 - Although fiction picture books provide fantastical elements, these stories provide wonderful springboards for conversation about fact vs. fiction and can spark the desire for further research.
 - Literature takes us to places we cannot go when inside a classroom; and additionally, through the use of illustrations and photographs picture books can *show* us places we are unable to go to ourselves.
- Picture books offer a narrative and humanization to several scientific concepts.
 - Picture books give us a more intimate look at scientific concepts that are often abstract and difficult to understand.
 - The technological debate of traditional vs. digital picture books and whether technology always means progress is a great topic for the classroom.
 - Picture books provide opportunities to develop students' background knowledge and for frontloading before the beginning of a new unit.

Classroom Activities:

Text-pplorers ~ Real scientists are always asking questions and seeking answers. Ask your students to be scientists or "text-pplorers." Page by page read the story aloud. Ask students what questions they have after each page. Make sure to record all questions. No questions are silly. At the end of the book, review the list of questions and discuss possible answers. Some questions may have been answered in the story. Maybe some kids would want to guess or "hypothesize" the answers that are still unknown.

Now research the answers in the library or on the computer. Assign certain questions to specific students or the entire class may research together as a way to demonstrate good research skills to those who might not be as experienced.

Optional: Explain what a “footnote” is. Create index cards for each question/answer and fix them with tape to the appropriate pages in the book as a reference.

Non-fiction Show ‘n Tell ~ Ask students to bring in a non-fiction book or a “found fact” from the Internet that corresponds with topics within a story studied in class. For example, if the class reads *Blueberries for Sal*, a non-fiction book/“found fact” about black bears or blueberries would be suitable. Students then share the information with the rest of the class.

Fact vs. Fiction game ~ This activity focuses on listening skills and knowing the difference between fact and fiction. The teacher stands at the front of room and the students line up across the back of the room.

The teacher calls out a statement.

The students move one step if they hear a fact.

When a fictional statement is given, the students should not move. Those who move at the wrong time must go back to the beginning.

Students who reach the front, create the factual and fictional statements for the next round.

The Scientist’s Eye ~ Compare the illustrations in a Picture Book to a photograph of the real person, animal, place, or thing.

What are similarities and differences between the photo and the illustration?

Students take their own photos of something in the natural world (nature, animals, land, etc) and create their own illustration of that photograph.

Choral Speak ~ Using excerpted non-fiction text with a similar theme to the picture book being studied and the picture book itself, students create a choral reading juxtaposing the two. After half of the students read each page of the picture book aloud together, the other half of the class will read a piece of the non-fiction text. At the conclusion, students discuss their reactions to hearing the two pieces read together.

GUESS WHAT?

The Scientific Method isn’t just for Science class anymore!

The scientific method can be used whenever there is curiosity. It is a way to ask and answer scientific questions by making observations and doing experiments. Most scientists do this without even thinking.

However, there are specific steps to the Scientific Method:

- Ask a Question
- Do Background Research/Collect Information
- Form a Hypothesis or “possible explanation”
- Test Your Hypothesis by Doing an Experiment
- Record and Study Data
- Draw a Conclusion

Two Teachers, Countless Possibilities

I have been teaching for over 20 years using picture books not only for reading and writing, but for math as well. Children learn best when they can make connections to their own lives. This is the way they make sense of things. Picture books do that for children—they help them make connections and they illustrate (no pun intended) how seemingly abstract ideas are meaningful. Many young children might wonder why learn about measurements, shapes, or numbers? But when they listen to a story about how big a foot is, learn about geometry through triangles that are characters, they can relate. Better yet, picture books spark students' interest, which begins a never-ending cycle of connections—that are so necessary for learning.

Karen Kavalin is an Elementary School Teacher currently teaching 1st grade.

Picture books can be an amazing resource for teachers when introducing new content, specifically in social studies and science. The beauty of picture books is that they are written in a way that makes difficult concepts accessible to children. The illustrations also provide more opportunities to connect with the text and therefore the information. I've often used picture books at the beginning of a unit to build students' background knowledge, as well as to develop common vocabulary and specific academic language so the class can engage in deep and authentic learning. I've also developed many topic specific text sets – so students read and learn about a topic through various types of picture books. For example, a text set might include picture books written in prose, narrative, or straight information. Showing students how information can be presented in different ways broadens and deepens students' understandings, as well as provides multiple entry points for students to connect with and access the information. Picture books are the perfect resource in any classroom because they address so many topics in truly engaging ways through well crafted, beautifully illustrated text.

Rosanne L. Kurstedt, Ph.D., Adjunct Professor, Fordham University, co-author of Teaching Writing with Picture Books as Models (Scholastic, 2000) and former upper elementary school teacher.

Social Studies

*Based on Expectations of Excellence:
Curriculum Standards for Social Studies,
created by the National Council for the
Social Studies (NCSS).*

Concepts:

***Culture**

***Time, Continuity, and Change**

***People, Places, and
Environment**

***Individual Development and
Identity**

***Individuals, Groups, and
Institutions**

***Power, Authority, and
Governance**

***Science, Technology, and
Society**

Why Picture Books?

- Picture books allow students to have vicarious experiences through characters who are not like them.
- Picture books teach the universality of many experiences.
- Picture books help students make sense of the world.
- Picture books help students develop empathy.
- Picture books place a human face to historical, political, environmental, and cultural events.
- Picture books provide an emotional core which helps connect the students to the content.
- Picture books build empathy which is an important tool for navigating through society.
- Picture books not only tell a story of a culture or historical time, they also provide a visual into the world through illustrations.
- Picture books provide opportunities to develop students' background knowledge and for frontloading before

the beginning of a new unit.

Classroom Activities:

Find the Similarities ~ Create Venn diagrams of the student and the main character. Focus on the similarities between the two. If possible, add an additional real-life person in the same circumstances as the main character as a third circle.

This is My Story ~ Invite a guest speaker to visit or Skype with the classroom about either a cultural, political, historical, environmental or thematic element in the story.

Book Pen Pals ~ Arrange to have another classroom in a different town, city, state, or country read the same story. Assign Pen Pals to your students and have them share book reviews. Pen Pals include information about their own life and how they related to the story in their corespondence.

Write a Face to An Event ~ Students write stories of a kid their own age during a historical, political, environmental, or cultural event.

Map it or Timeline it ~ Understanding how the world of a story looks or the timeline of an event can help students understand the event itself. Students create timelines or maps of their own worlds for comparison.

What Would I Do? ~ Read a Picture Book right up to the main conflict. Brainstorm with the students different resolutions and what their outcomes would be. Students can then place themselves physically on an imaginary line linking two alternatives. An open mind is indicated through placing oneself centrally, while the closer one stands to a chosen alternative the stronger one's support. This allows students to see the potential range of opinion within a group. Students can share why they placed themselves where they did on the spectrum.

Collective Drawing ~ As a class, create a piece of artwork to represent the people and places in the story.

Still Image Sculpture ~ Students devise an image using their own bodies to crystallize a moment, idea or theme from the story. These still images are a form of expression and reflection for those inside the image, but also a sign to be interpreted or read by the observers. Often, for tricky emotional moments, these still images communicate more than students could with words alone. Observers create caption for the physical illustrations.

GUESS WHAT?

Social Studies is not just about government and history. Social Studies is about people, the world and the inter-connectedness of all.

Story, even when fictional, can help students make sense of their world through "text to self" and "text to world" connections.

Helpful Resources

The Standards

The Common Core State Standards	www.corestandards.org
ELA standards	www.ncte.org/standards/ncte-ira
Math standards	www.nctm.org/standards
Science standards	www.nap.edu/openbook.php?record_id=13165
Social Studies standards	www.socialstudies.org/standards

Informational Websites

Mentor Texts Lesson Plans	www.writingfix.com/picture_book_prompts.htm www.julieballew.com/A_Literate_Life/Mentor_Texts.html
Common Core Projects	www.teacherjodieblack.com/A-year-in-projects.html
Picture Book Database (Perfect Picture Book Friday)	http://susannahill.blogspot.com/p/perfect-picture-books.html
Article - <i>Using Picture Books to Empower and Inspire Readers and Writers in the Upper Primary Classroom</i>	http://www.alea.edu.au/documents/item/495
Instructional Read Aloud	http://readingandwritingproject.com/public/themes/rwproject/resources/ela/support_materials/ela_support_chapter4.pdf
An Introduction to Total Physical Response	http://www.onestopenglish.com/support/methodology/teaching-approaches/teaching-approaches-total-physical-response/146503.article

Books

Using Picture Books to Teach 8 Essential Literary Elements: An Annotated Bibliography of More Than 100 Books with Model Lessons to Deepen Students' Comprehension (Scholastic Teaching Resources, 2012)

Teaching Writing with Picture Books as Models: Lessons and Strategies For Using the Power of Picture Books to Teach the Elements Of Great Writing in The Upper Grades (Scholastic Professional Books, 2000)

Teaching Literary Elements with Picture Books: Engaging, Standards-Based Lessons and Strategies (Scholastic Teaching Resources, 2009)

Using Picture Books to Teach Comprehension Strategies: 30 Lessons That Teach Students the Six Comprehension Strategies They Need to Actively Engage With Text and Read for Meaning (Scholastic Teaching Resources, 2008)

Using Picture Books to Teach Writing with the Traits (Scholastic Teaching Strategies, Grades 3 and Up) (Scholastic, Inc., 2004)

Teaching about Nonfiction with Picture Books: Engaging Lessons, Activities, and Reproducibles that Introduce Key Nonfiction Features and Build Comprehension (Scholastic Teaching Resources, 2008)

The Power of Picture Books in Teaching Math, Science, and Social Studies: Grades PreK-8 (Holcomb Hathaway, 2009)

We would love to hear from you! Share your ideas with us!

How will you celebrate Picture Book Month?

Do you have plans to incorporate picture books into your daily classroom instruction? Do you want to share a project you have in mind?

To tell us your ideas, please visit: www.PictureBookMonth.com

OR

email: [**picturebookmontheducation@gmail.com**](mailto:picturebookmontheducation@gmail.com)

Also, be sure to connect with like-minded educators on Twitter and Facebook — simply **tweet with hashtag #picturebookmonth**, or “like” the **Picture Book Month Facebook page**: www.facebook.com/PictureBookMonth.

Special Thanks to...

Dianne de Las Casas, Carter Higgins, John Schumacher, Colby Sharp, Marcie Flinchum Atkins, Joanna Marple, Karen Kavalin, and Rosanne Kurstedt.