



LIBRARIES
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN - MADISON

CBC Features. Vol. 44, no. 1 (January-June 1991)

New York, N.Y.: Children's Book Council, (January-June 1991)

<https://digital.library.wisc.edu/1711.dl/2YM6GEVK35J6E8B>

<https://rightsstatements.org/vocab/InC/1.0/>

The libraries provide public access to a wide range of material, including online exhibits, digitized collections, archival finding aids, our catalog, online articles, and a growing range of materials in many media.

When possible, we provide rights information in catalog records, finding aids, and other metadata that accompanies collections or items. However, it is always the user's obligation to evaluate copyright and rights issues in light of their own use.

CBC FEATURES

Vol. 44, No. 1

January-June, 1991



Reading Together

Featuring Books and Preschoolers
Poster by Diane de Groat for *Reading Together*

CBC Features is available from The Children's Book Council, Inc., 568 Broadway, New York, NY 10012. Telephone (212) 966-1990. Orders for CBC materials should be sent to Children's Book Council Order Center, 350 Scotland Rd., Orange, NJ, 07050. Telephone: 201-674-4422; credit card orders 1-800-999-2160. The Council is the official sponsor of National Children's Book Week, first observed in 1919. It engages in reading development activities both independently and with other national and international organizations. CBC maintains a new book examination center and library open 9:30 am-5:00 pm weekdays. The library is closed many days during the year for meetings; call before planning a visit.

BOOKS REMEMBERED

Rosemary Wells

My childhood had two homes simultaneously, my own, that is to say, belonging to my parents, and my grandmother's house by the sea. Both were filled with books and each in a different style. My mother would complain that my grandmother's bookshelves (which were always neat and orderly) were cold and forbidding because there were so many unread sets of great classics, twenty and thirty volumes long, their pages yet to be slit. She was right. My grandmother complained that our bookshelves were plugged and stuffed willy-nilly with all authors great and small and no one could find anything they were looking for because of the general chaos. She too was right.



Remembering my grandmother is to remember her among her books. It is to sit again in a corner of her cavernous and usually deserted living room when Sunday dinner was over, the blue haze of cigarette smoke had cleared and the decanters were still. She would be doing *The New York Times* crossword, with a dictionary, but in red ballpoint pen in what she called "the card room."

On one of the lower bookshelves were several collections of cartoons, mostly from *The New Yorker*. I pored over these for years, drinking in each Helen Hokinson and Peter Arno, trying to understand the sophisticated wit but not being put off when I couldn't. I was soaking in, without knowing it at all, just how artists got a whole world of character and feeling into a four by five square with a few strokes of a pen.

Another book that fascinated me Sundays over a period of years was a collection of David Low, the British political cartoonist who documented the Second World War in such a fashion that it came to life and made sense to me. To this day I can picture his evil Von Ribbentrop, his clueless Colonel Blimp and his wissy Neville Chamberlain. These wicked caricatures in brilliantly clear poses explained history to me in a time when that war loomed large and in a way I have never forgotten. It taught me more than a course at Harvard. I have the book still.

I don't have any of my grandmother's complete sets. Once she caught me slitting the tops and bottoms of pages in *The Count of Monte Cristo*, lowering its collector's value considerably. She bequeathed all these sets to some institution. What I have is the memory of these sentinel books in their linen bindings keeping vigil in the shelves like distant relatives who might not be interesting to talk to but who were important all the same.

What I have also is the sound in my head of my grandmother's dulcet voice reading poetry to me against the roar of the Atlantic ocean which lay a hundred yards from her door. If I wish to I can close my eyes and watch her place her knitting in its bag. She puts out her Lucky Strike and opens a heavy book. "I wandered lonely as a cloud," she says. The ivy clicks against the French doors in the wind and from the kitchen at the other end of the house comes the first fragrance of a German pancake she has put in the oven for me.

In my own house, which was dustier and much smaller than my grandmother's, where chaos reigned and one could relax in any position in any piece of furniture there was no end of books, dogs and different patterns of floral upholstery. If I go upstairs in my mind's eye now I find about two hundred books in my own room, all well thumbed and read many times. There was less publishing for children then and most households with libraries seemed to have all the same books, Francis Hodgson Burnett, Louisa May Alcott, Robert Lawson, Carolyn Keene, Hugh Lofting.

In the upstairs hall was another bookcase with a collection of Matthew Brady on Lincoln. In my absent brother's bedroom are "old books" meaning paperbacks. Down in the living room are at least three bookcases. In them is my father's unending love of history. There is Carl Sandburg, Winston Churchill and an immense chronicle of the First World War. My father is sitting in a wing chair reading a book called *Capricornia* for the dozenth time. It is about his beloved native Australia. He has made dinner. It is probably mashed potatoes and chops and green beans. I will be allowed a sip of my mother's beer and I will be told to finish the fat on the chops which I sneak to the dogs instead. Over dinner Daddy will tell us about the war and how it began, what might have happened if that son-of-a-bitch Clemenceau had not prevailed over Woodrow Wilson and set up the Treaty of Versailles as kindling wood for Hitler. My mother will get a little bored with this. My parents were a theater family and she will ask him to tell, instead, about Noel Coward.

Around the fireplace and on the porch there were books which reflected my mother's love of England, oddities of any kind, and anything related to her life in the theater.

There were also large full-color books with great paintings from the world's most splendid museums. I was not allowed to touch these books as a child but sat in her lap, after dinner, letting her turn the pages and talk about each painting. I can hear her voice saying, "and this is the Adoration of the Magi." I called the books of paintings "Mary books" because the mother of Christ seemed to be the most important and most oft-painted person in them. I can close my eyes and feel my mother sitting with me, a huge book on both our laps and I can hear her name the museums, "The Prado," or "The Louvre" and say to me, "Some-day you'll go there!" I have, by now. But where I cannot go is back to that sofa except in my mind.

I remember a certain book which I never touched. It sat high in one of the bookshelves on the sunporch. The title frightened me when I was easily prone to homesickness if away from my parents for more than a night. It frightened me so I averted my eyes from it. The same book is still stuffed between its mates, now in my own library, high away from the books I usually re-read. I still don't like to look at it too hard and I have never read it. It is Thomas Wolfe's *You Can't Go Home Again*.

SCIENCE, CHILDREN AND BOOKS

Lester L. Laminack

When we think of science we may remember test tubes, the lab, dissecting frogs, the squeak of a pulley or the stuff that bubbled over when we added too much of that whatever it's called to some blue stuff in a beaker. We may recall old movies with the "mad scientist," or we may have grown up on Mr. Wizard and the "home chemistry set." Whatever the image, most adults think of science as an experiment, a subject in school or something that older children are interested in.

Well folks, a three-year-old can be fascinated with science. For a three-year-old, watching an ant crawling along a leaf, or spilling a glass of juice and finding delight in the patterns of the free flowing liquid is science. For three-, four-, and five-year old children, science involves self-initiated investigation of everything around them. That means direct involvement in the processes of observing, classifying, predicting, inferring, communicating, measuring, and interpreting. Now, we do not expect children this young to be proficient with these process skills; however, they will use them naturally when given the opportunity to interact with their surroundings. For example, when Mark, Alex, and Brianna are clustered around a small toad on the playground watching, waiting, and hoping to see it hop, they are involved in observation. If you listen carefully and unobtrusively you may overhear Alex say, "C'mon frog, jump! Jump, frog, jump!" And Brianna may reply, "It's not no frog, it's a toad." Followed by Mark's demand for more information, "How do you know it ain't no frog, Brianna?" Brianna's explanation that, "toads got brown skin with bumps and frogs is green" can give you evidence of her early use of a system for classifying the information she has gained. In addition, the anticipation that the toad will jump also demonstrates the children's use of prior knowledge to make predictions. As they encourage the "frog" to jump they demonstrate that predictive ability.

Even such a brief encounter can demonstrate how young children openly and naturally engage in science processes and use language to communicate their understanding. Now you might ask where that information base comes from. Children are keen observers of the demonstrations of others and of nature. They naturally question and discuss their observations and perceptions when left to their own devices because children, like the rest of us, seek meaning and sense from every new experience.

Books for children are an excellent vehicle for bringing science and children together. For example, Tana Hoban's books (*Look, Look!*, and *Dots, Spots, Speckles and Stripes*) invite the children to find patterns (dots, spots, speckles and stripes), in crisp, sharp photographs of objects found in daily life. Such an experience leads children to compare and contrast patterns, establish categories and classify information observed in the photographs. Perhaps more important is the demonstration that such patterns do exist

in nature and in the children's natural environment thus inviting the children to observe all that surrounds them with a new perspective.

An adult could talk through such books with children, naming the objects and thinking aloud in a search for the patterns featured by the author. Other books, such as concept books like those by Bruce McMillan, could be used in a similar fashion. McMillan's *Fire Engine Shapes, Wet or Dry?* or *Growing Colors* can be springboards to various experiences such as 1) sorting things, both in the classroom and outside, into categories (shape, size, color, texture), 2) looking for things wet and dry on a walk around the premises early in the morning and later in the afternoon, or 3) looking for circles (or any shape) in their surroundings.

The point here is that books are connectors for children's natural curiosity and explorations in nature. An adult can use a book to introduce children to what occurs in nature, giving them the words to label what they experience. Books can also be used naturally to extend and refine the experiences of children. For example, Jeanne Titherington's *Pumpkin, Pumpkin* can be read with children who have become curious about the changes they observe in the growth of plants both at home and at school. After reading the book the children might choose to plant a pumpkin seed and watch for the changes that Jamie observed in the book. Such changes take much more time than it takes to turn the pages of the book. This provides a natural opportunity to initiate such experiences as 1) daily observation, 2) charting changes, 3) dictating in a "pumpkin log," 4) noting significant changes (i.e. those documented in the book) on the calendar and 5) developing a time line to show the changes, just to name a few.

For young children, science is not found in the science textbook or in a 50 minute period of the school day, nor should it be (at any age)! Rather science is living, a dynamic experience that involves more than just the content specified in a scope and sequence chart or in the table of contents of any book. Children interact with their world, naturally investigating those things that intrigue, fascinate, or puzzle them. We adults can facilitate their search for meaning through sharing carefully selected books. Books take children on a journey through the night to initiate them to the concept of nocturnal life. Books reveal the habitats and behaviors of animals only seen at a distance or through the bars of a zoo. Books demonstrate the process by which a building is constructed, how snow is removed from streets, or how milk ends up on the grocery shelf. Books help with establishing concepts of opposites, alike and different. Books provide opportunities for observing, classifying, measuring, communicating. Books introduce new ideas or extend and refine what children are beginning to understand for themselves. Adults can bring children and books together!

Lester L. Laminack is Associate Professor of Elementary Education and Reading at Western Carolina University in Cullowhee, NC. He is currently a member of the National Science Teachers Association-CBC Joint Committee which is responsible for selecting the annual list "Outstanding Science Trade Books for Children."

The Children's Book Council is planning a booklet about ways to celebrate Book Week and would like to include your ideas. Please send your descriptions of how you celebrate Book Week to: Book Week Celebrations, Children's Book Council, 568 Broadway, New York, NY 10012.

THE TALE OF PETER RABBIT

Judy Taylor

"The public must be fond of rabbits! What an appalling quantity of Peter," wrote Beatrix Potter to her publisher in 1903. Over eighty years later the public still appears to be fond of rabbits, with two rabbit books heading the *Publishers Weekly* 1989 list of All-time Best-selling Hardcover Children's Books. *The Tale of Peter Rabbit* was way out in front with recorded sales of nine million copies.

To some people the exceptional and continuing popularity of *Peter Rabbit* comes as a surprise, but to those who have ever shared the book with a child its position at the head of the list only confirms what they know to be true—that devotion to *Peter Rabbit* is universal and enduring. What is hard to define is the secret of the appeal of this story, first written in a letter to a five-year-old boy almost exactly a century ago.

Beatrix Potter was twenty-seven years old, on holiday in Scotland in 1893, when she wrote to Noel Moore and she appears to have been short of the news with which she usually filled her picture letters. "Dear Noel, I don't know what to write to you, so I shall tell you a story..." Seven years later she borrowed the letter back and turned it into a book, making few alterations but adding a scene here and there until she was entirely satisfied. Then for each small page of text she provided a picture, at first a quick sketch in pen and ink, later an exquisite and detailed watercolor. The first commercial edition of *The Tale of Peter Rabbit* was published in London by Frederick Warne in October 1902 and it was an immediate success on both sides of the Atlantic.

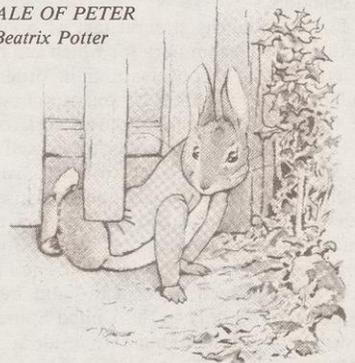
Beatrix Potter recorded in 1904 that she had received a letter "from a lady in Pittsburgh who is of the opinion that *Peter Rabbit* is 'exquisite literature,'" but the book was never Beatrix's personal favorite—that honor fell to *The Tailor of Gloucester*. She was always surprised and delighted by *Peter Rabbit*'s success, however, and when asked to write about the book's origins for *The Horn Book* in 1940 she said, "I have never understood the secret of Peter's perennial charm. Perhaps it is because he and his little friends keep on their way, busily absorbed in their own doings. They were always independent." She acknowledged that of all her little books *Peter Rabbit* was "the best for little children" and she probably came closest to pinpointing the reason for its success when she wrote to a friend only four years after its first publication. "It is much more satisfactory to address a real live child; I often think that was the success of *Peter Rabbit*, it was written to a child—not made to order." That direct approach to the child still works today, cutting through geographical, political and social barriers to the child of the 1990's.

In answer to the question "Why do you like *Peter Rabbit*?" children in England, Australia and the United States give remarkably similar answers. "Because it is so exciting," "I like it because he is chased," "Peter is really naughty," "He squeezes under the gate," and "Because it was the first book I ever had," no answer very profound but all delivered with the same passion. I met a teacher recently who had been working for two years in a school in the remote Cocos Islands in the Indian Ocean. There are no rabbits on the islands and not one of the children had ever seen a rabbit but *The Tale of Peter Rabbit* was consistently and easily their favorite book.

There are numerous accounts of the effect that *Peter Rabbit* has had on children, some of them from the author herself. In 1904 Beatrix Potter received a letter telling her about two young *Peter Rabbit*

fans, aged five and three, whose mother had recently died. When their father took them, with some trepidation, to the cemetery to see her grave he explained that when people died and went to heaven their friends made a little garden to remember them by, putting a stone to say who it was. The children looked at every "garden" demanding to know each name until they came to one marked McGregor. The older child was delighted. "Good, he must be dead now, so he can't go after Peter Rabbit any more." Their mother's garden was of quite a secondary consideration after that. And in her 1940 *Horn Book* piece, Beatrix Potter recorded another anecdote. "It is regrettable that a small boy once enquired whether the Apostle was Peter Rabbit."

from *THE TALE OF PETER RABBIT* by Beatrix Potter



©Frederick Warne & Co., 1902, 1987

There have been many attempts over the years to account for the appeal of Beatrix Potter's books but the best analysis I have yet encountered is that by Nicholas Tucker in his somewhat dauntingly entitled "Peter Rabbit and the Child Psychologist," a reprint by The Beatrix Potter Society of his 1986 Linder Lecture. In it he examines the challenge of the language used by Potter in all her books, the wide range of ideas and emotions, the sometimes demanding story forms and content, and he discusses the small-page format and "the unique mixture of simplicity and complexity in the illustrations."

There is not in *Peter Rabbit* such a famous example of Beatrix Potter's use of challenging language as the much quoted soporific effect of the lettuces in *The Flopsy Bunnies*, but there are phrases that roll off the tongue—"implored him to exert himself," "for a scarecrow to frighten the blackbirds"—and there is onomatopoeia in "lippety lippety" that attracts and appeals. There is also the unusual word "scutter" ("Peter scuttered underneath the bushes"), the use of which brought a query from Potter's publisher in 1908 when she repeated it in the text for *Samuel Whiskers*. She claimed then that "scutter" was "common Lancashire and probably good Anglo Saxon"; what she omitted was that she had also encountered it in Emily Bronte's *Wuthering Heights*, a book we know she read and liked.

As to the lasting quality of *Peter Rabbit* there is one thing that I am sure of and that is that it will continue to be loved by children for many years to come. Maurice Sendak summed it up in an address about the book he gave teachers and librarians in 1965. "Fantasy, rooted in the living fact: here, the fact of family, of fun, of mother and love. Altogether the book possesses, on no matter how miniature a scale, an overwhelming sense of life, and isn't that the ultimate value of any work of art?"

CHILDREN'S BOOKS AND HIGH QUALITY CHILD CARE

Elizabeth A. Ford

Maria, Thomas, Darren, Melissa, and Joanne cuddle closely to Alisha, their caregiver, as she reads the story *Brush* by Pere Calders to them with all the enthusiasm of an ancient storyteller. Melissa looks up at her peers and says, "Ooh, let's see what happens next, gang!"

The pleasure seen on the faces of these preschool children as they participate in an exciting reading experience reflects the enjoyment they derive from sharing this book together. Early childhood teachers who provide many opportunities for children to enjoy picture books plant the seed for children to develop a lifelong fondness and appreciation for literature. Scenes such as the one described above occur on a daily basis in child care centers accredited by the National Academy of Early Childhood Programs.

The Academy is sponsored by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), the nation's largest organization of early childhood educators with a current membership of more than 73,000. The goal of this organization is to improve the quality of services available to children and families by promoting professional development opportunities and setting standards of practice for the early childhood profession. To achieve these objectives, NAEYC developed the only national, voluntary accreditation system for early childhood centers and schools—The National Academy of Early Childhood Programs. The accreditation system establishes standards that delineate concrete indicators of high quality programs for young children. These standards address the ten components found in all child care programs: Interaction among Staff and Children, Curriculum, Communication with Parents, Staff Hiring and Qualifications, Staffing Structure (Group Sizes and Ratios of Adults to Children), Program Administration, Physical Environment, Health and Safety, Nutrition and Food Service, and Evaluation.

The accreditation system promotes children's learning by encouraging the use of age-appropriate literature and language arts experiences in the classroom on a daily basis. The accreditation standards require that caregivers provide a broad cross-section of children's books including multi-cultural, non-stereotypical picture books to assist children in learning about the cultural diversity of our society, as well as the traditional books found in child care centers. Too often, we have found that programs neglect the issue of cultural diversity. Many teachers think that because the children in their class are homogeneous, they do not need to expose them to other races and cultures. However, children develop attitudes about other cultures based on how they perceive their teacher or caregiver views these groups. One resource to help teachers plan for cultural awareness is *Anti-Bias Curriculum: Tools for Empowering Young Children* (Derman-Sparks and the A.B.C. Task Force, 1989.)

The setting in which books are used fosters the enjoyment of literature. The ideal environment for children to become engaged with books includes an inviting library or book center with soft cushions to sit on, stuffed animals to hold or lean on, a book shelf with a variety of choices changed frequently, a rocking chair or teacher's lap for cuddling in, and finally, a well-prepared, enthusiastic teacher who thoroughly enjoys books and reading. The setting should also encourage children to explore books on their own or with a friend in a quiet uninterrupted place in the room.

Throughout the accreditation system, standards emphasize the provision of developmentally appropriate practices. This means that the experiences provided must match the developmental level of the children



in the group. This concept applies to selecting age-appropriate books for the library center. For example, beginning literary experiences for infants include cloth or hard cardboard books which emphasize a single object or simple rhymes and chants. Books for toddlers include "point and say" books as well as those with clear pictures of familiar objects. Preschoolers are thrilled with books containing characters and situations, plots and human emotions. An excellent resource to assist in selecting developmentally appropriate picture books is *Choosing Books for Kids* (Oppenheim, Brenner & Boegehold, 1986).

Caregivers who prefer to explore the world of picture books on their own should determine whether a choice is developmentally appropriate. Can the children identify with the main character in the book? Consider the story and the setting from the child's perspective. Is a situation in a book familiar to your group of children? Can the book be read at a single setting not longer than 10 to 15 minutes, depending on the age of the group? Is the group small enough for each child to see and enjoy the pictures without waiting? Last, are the words interesting with distinctive sounds and repetition to captivate the listener? Young children frequently request to have their favorite books read over and over. But you will find this is true only when you select books with care. Books that match children's developmental levels are especially meaningful.

After the books have been selected, particularly for older, preschool-age children, teachers should introduce each book to children just as they would a new toy or game, and allow them to look through the book before the first reading. After the story is read, it needs to be discussed not only then, but later, too. Provide props to encourage children to dramatize the story. Books and young children are a natural blend. Once children are exposed to the beauty and wonder that comes from vicarious experiences, a real appreciation for literature blossoms.

Some suggested resources for improving the literary experience for young children are:

Accreditation Criteria and Procedures of the National Academy of Early Childhood Programs. NAEYC. (1984).

Anti-Bias Curriculum: Tools for Empowering Young Children. Derman-Sparks, L., and the A.B.C. Task Force, NAEYC. (1989).

"*Books for Everychild: Picture Book Classics*," in *Booklist*, American Library Association, September 1, 1983.

Choosing Books for Kids. Oppenheim, Brenner & Boegehold. New York: Ballantine Books. (1986).

Using Literature with Young Children. Jacobs, L. New York: Teachers College Press, Columbia University. (1965).

Young Children and Picture Books. Jalongo, M. NAEYC. (1988).

MATERIALS AVAILABLE

From CBC Member Publishers

Where you get it

CLARION BOOKS
Attn: Allison Wood
215 Park Avenue South
New York, NY 10003

CAROLRHODA BOOKS
Attn: Promotions Assistant
241 First Avenue North
Minneapolis, MN 55401

GREENWILLOW BOOKS
Attn: Children's Books
Marketing Department-CBC
105 Madison Ave.
New York, NY 10016

HBJ CHILDREN'S BOOKS
Attn: Tamara Clarke
1250 Sixth Avenue
San Diego, CA 92101

JEWISH PUBLICATION
SOCIETY
1930 Chestnut St.
Philadelphia, PA 19103

JOY STREET BOOKS
Attn: Kathleen Rourke
34 Beacon St.
Boston, MA 02108

LERNER PUBLICATIONS
Attn: Promotions Assistant
241 First Avenue
Minneapolis, MN 55401

LITTLE, BROWN AND CO.
Attn: Kathleen Rourke
34 Beacon St.
Boston, MA 02108

LOTHROP, LEE & SHEPARD
Attn: Children's Marketing
Department - CBC
105 Madison Ave.
New York, NY 10016

MORROW JUNIOR BOOKS
Attn: Children's Marketing
Department - CBC
105 Madison Ave.
New York, NY 10016

NORTH-SOUTH BOOKS
c/o Picture Book Studio
10 Central St.
Saxonville, MA 01701

SCHOLASTIC HARDCOVER
Attn: Elisa Geliebter
730 Broadway
New York, NY 10003

What you get

Two posters, one featuring *Hurricane* by David Wiesner, the other featuring *The Night Before Christmas*, illustrated by Wendy Watson.

- 20 postcards featuring various Carolrhoda titles.
- 30 bookmarks featuring various Carolrhoda titles.

Poster featuring *Old Turtle's 90 Knock Knocks, Jokes and Riddles* by Leonard Kessler.

5 postcards featuring *Many Moons* by James Thurber, illustrated by Marc Simont.

30 bookmarks featuring JPS biographies, picture books, and books for children and young adults.

Packet of a bookmark featuring *Arthur Meets the President* by Marc Brown and one poster featuring *Fire and Silk: Flying in a Hot Air Balloon* by Neil Johnson.

- 30 bookmarks featuring various Lerner titles
- 20 postcards featuring various Lerner titles.

Two posters, one featuring *Rabbit Inn* by Patience Brewster, the other featuring *Irene and the Big, Fine Nickel* by Irene Smalls, illustrated by Tyrone Geter.

Poster featuring *Eddie and Teddy* by Gus Clarke.

Poster featuring *High-Wire Henry* by Mary Calhoun, illustrated by Erick Ingraham.

Packet of four posters featuring *Little Polar Bear Finds a Friend* by Hans de Beer; *Shaggy* by Marcus Pfister; *The Nightingale* by Hans Christian Andersen, illustrated by Josef Palecek; and *Three Kings* by Kurt Baumann, illustrated by Ivan Gantschev.

Packet including four posters featuring *Mary McLean and the St. Patrick's Day Parade* by Stephen Kroll, illustrated by Michael Dooling; *The Secrets of Vesuvius* by Sara Biesel; *The Moonlit Journey* by Peter O'Donnell; *Nelson Mandela: No Easy Walk to Freedom* by Barry Denenberg and a multicultural brochure.

What you send to get it

Self-addressed 10 x 13" (min. size) envelope with 3 oz. first class postage affixed.

- Self-addressed business-size envelope (#10) with 5 oz. first class postage affixed.
- Self-addressed business-size (#10) envelope with 3 oz. first class postage affixed.

Self-addressed label with 3 oz. first class postage enclosed.

Self-addressed 6½ x 9½" envelope (min. size) with 2 oz. first class postage affixed.

Self-addressed business size (#10) envelope with 4 oz. first class postage affixed.

Self-addressed 10 x 13" envelope (min. size) with 6 oz. first class postage affixed.

- Self-addressed business-size (#10) envelope with 3 oz. first class postage affixed.
- Self-addressed business size envelope (#10) with 5 oz. first class postage affixed.

Self-addressed 10 x 13" (min. size) envelope with 6 oz. first class postage affixed.

Self-addressed label with 3 oz. first class postage enclosed.

Self-addressed label with 3 oz. first class postage enclosed.

Self-addressed 9 x 12" (min. size) envelope with 6 oz. first class postage affixed.

Self-addressed label with 5 oz. first class postage enclosed.

THE PUTNAM & GROSSET
BOOK GROUP
Attn: Marketing Services
Department
200 Madison Ave.
New York, NY 10016

Packet including four posters featuring *Tomie dePaola's Book of Bible Stories* by Tomie dePaola; *Walden* by Henry David Thoreau, illustrated by Robert Sabuda; *The Wild Christmas Reindeer* by Jan Brett; *A Brighter Garden* by Emily Dickinson, text selections by Karen Ackerman, illustrated by Tasha Tudor. Also 10 each of 5 bookmarks featuring *The Wild Christmas Reindeer* by Jan Brett; *Mice are Nice*, text compiled by Nancy Larrick, illustrated by Ed Young; *The Very Quiet Cricket* by Eric Carle; *Movable Mabelline* by Karen Ackerman, illustrated by Linda Allen; *Tomie dePaola's Book of Bible Stories* by Tomie dePaola.

Self-addressed 10 x 13" envelope (min. size) with 6 oz. first class postage affixed.

SIMON AND SCHUSTER BOOKS
FOR YOUNG READERS
Attn: Ken Geist, 12th floor
1230 Avenue of the Americas
New York, NY 10020

Packet including posters for *The Glorious Impossible* by Madeleine L'Engle, with illustrations by Giotto from the Scrovegni Chapel and *Charlie the Caterpillar* by Dom DeLuise, illustrated by Christopher Santoro with a special salute to Reading is Fundamental.

Self-addressed 10 x 13" (min. size) envelope with 7 oz. first class postage affixed.

ALA GRAPHICS
The American Library Association
50 East Huron St.
Chicago, IL 60611

From Other Sources

- a. *Children's Services Centennial Postcards*: twelve 7 x 4 1/4" postcards depicting early children's rooms and services in public libraries with sepia-toned photographs.
- b. *Reader Notecards*: twelve 4 1/2 x 6 1/4" blank notecards featuring original illustrations by Chris Van Allsburg, Graeme Base, Rafael Lopez Castro, and Jerry Pinkney.

a. Check or money order (no cash) for \$6.95 plus \$2.00 postage and handling.

b. Check or money order (no cash) for \$8.95 plus \$2.00 postage and handling.

AMERICAN BOOKSELLERS
ASSOCIATION
137 W. 25 St.
New York, NY 10001

The ABA Children's Bookselling Resource Handbook, a 120 pp., indexed guide to aspects of children's bookselling, including organizations involved in children's bookselling, specialized sources of supply, and a listing of award-winning children's books.

Check for \$12.95 made out to American Booksellers Association.

CHILDREN'S BOOK COUNCIL
Notable 1990 Children's Trade Books in the Field of Social Studies
568 Broadway
New York, NY 10012

A reprint of "Notable 1990 Children's Trade Books in the Field of Social Studies," an annotated list of books selected by the Book Review Subcommittee of the National Council for the Social Studies-CBC Joint Committee. The list first appears in the April/May 1991 issue of *Social Education*. The reprint is available in May, 1991.

Self-addressed 6 1/2 x 9 1/2" envelope (min. size) with 3 oz. first class postage affixed.

CHILDREN'S BOOK COUNCIL
Outstanding Science Trade Books for Children in 1990
568 Broadway
New York, NY 10012

A reprint of "Outstanding Science Trade Books for Children in 1990," an annotated list of books selected by a special book review committee appointed by the National Science Teachers Association in cooperation with the Children's Book Council. The list first appears in the March, 1991 issue of *Science and Children*. The reprint is available in May, 1991.

Self-addressed 6 1/2 x 9 1/2" envelope (min. size) with 3 oz. first class postage affixed.

OFFICE OF BRANCH
LIBRARIES
The New York Public Library
455 Fifth Avenue
New York, NY 10016

- a. *A List of Stories to Tell and Read Aloud*, a 100-page booklet for storytellers, including estimated times and subject categories.
- b. *Books for the Teenage 1991*, a 70-page booklet listing recommended books for young adults.

a. A check or money order (no cash) for \$6.00 plus \$1.00 postage and handling.

b. A check or money order (no cash) for \$6.00 plus \$1.00 postage and handling.

Mr. and Mrs. W. Fawkes
White House
Ugthorpe, Whitby
N. Yorkshire YO21 2BQ
ENGLAND

Reprint of Sixth Linder Memorial Lecture by Nicholas Tucker, "Peter Rabbit and the Child Psychologist," published by The Beatrix Potter Society.

A check for \$2.50

THE SEARCH FOR IRRESISTIBLE FIRST BOOKS

Elizabeth Segel and Joan Brest Friedberg

People who know children and books know that one of the keys to raising lifelong readers is reading to children regularly from the time they are infants, frequently from books of a child's choosing. But parents and caregivers of toddlers and preschoolers also know that very young children, turned loose in a library or bookstore, are likely to seize upon books which turn out to be disappointing. A small child may choose a book by its size, color, or location on a rack. Many of these books will turn out to be what writer Annie Dillard calls "duds," books which fail to spark the child's interest and emotion. As a result, they will never generate the ultimate positive review: "Read it again." No adult can know just what books will elicit those words, but making available an array of likely possibilities to the child is essential to the process of turning a young child into a book lover. And children who bloom into book lovers before they arrive at school are the ones most likely to become readers.

Concern about the disparities in the amount of experience with books and story which children bring with them when they start school, and the link between lack of this experience and later school failure, led us to found **Beginning With Books** in 1984.

Beginning With Books, a prevention-oriented literacy program now affiliated with The Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, is dedicated to seeing that more young children have access to appealing books, and that their parents and caregivers receive information about the pleasures and benefits of regular story times. We target families where little money is available for purchasing books, and where the adults may have grown up without a tradition of reading aloud or library visits.

Our Gift Book Program provides these families with packets of three paperback books, along with a pamphlet of tips on reading to children and a coupon to be redeemed at the library for a fourth free book. We get financial help for the program from local foundations, The Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, the Pennsylvania Department of Education, and individuals. Publishers offer discounts of 50% or better. We expect to distribute more than 5,000 packets this year in our region. We have developed a manual, "How to Start a Gift Book Program," and are pleased that sponsors around the country are introducing similar programs in their own communities.

The books are distributed through agencies that serve low-income or otherwise disadvantaged families with young children: Head Starts, teen parenting programs, well-baby clinics, shelters for the homeless.

Selecting the right books is imperative to the success of programs promoting home reading. Our selection process is designed to combine our children's book expertise with the judgment of those closely acquainted with the needs and interests of the families who will receive the books. We begin by selecting twenty to twenty-five appealing, high-quality paperback books. Whenever possible, we limit our choices to books retailing for under \$4. Then we schedule a meeting with staff members and representative parents at each agency, show each book and point out its special features, and ask them to select three of the books for their packets. This increases the chances that the books will be right for the recipient families, and in the process, the staff members and parents "buy into" the program.

In making our initial selection, we look for those qualities that make any book special: attractive illustration and design, good reproduction, reasonably sturdy binding, and interactive possibilities. Books that

have illustrations which both depict and extend the text help children become adept readers of picture language long before they can decode letters. In storybooks, we want a compelling narrative: touching, funny, or exciting. We seek distinguished writing: language that is fresh, playful and precise. We are always looking for the repeated phrases and rhythmic prose that young children love.



Braila and Corey Linnen, Teen and Toddlers Program, Arsenal Family and Children's Center, Clairton, PA

We are concerned that the books we select depict a variety of classes and cultures, as well as non-sexist gender models. Because most of the families we serve are African-American, it essential that our selections include titles with African-American characters. We include concept books, especially word-and-picture conversation-generating books for little ones, but strongly suggest that each packet contain at least one storybook. We also offer engaging board books for the very young.

A sizeable number of the parents who will be carrying home a packet of books are not confident readers, so we take care to offer some books with very little text and others with predictable elements. Whoever gives out the packets and encourages parents to read daily to their children also casually mentions that "even if you just look at the pictures and talk about them, your child will benefit." (We also make sure that parents hear about our **Read Together** program, in which volunteers read to children while their parents meet with a literacy tutor.) We often make follow-up inquiries after the book distribution and continually refine our selections based on their popularity with parents and children. "Can you tell me where I can get more books like *Goodnight Moon*? My daughter is bored with some books," and, "There were things in *500 Words to Grow On* that I never knew my son knew!" are typical comments about two of our families' all-time favorites (Harper Trophy; Random House). Other books that we order in the hundreds of thousands are *Jamaica's Find* (Houghton), *The Doorbell Rang* (Mulberry), *Corduroy* (Puffin), *Baby Sister Says No* (Golden), and *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* (Scholastic).

One mother reported that before participating in the program the only books she had bought her son were coloring books. Now he wants her to buy him "reading books." Parents often say that their child wanted one of the books read over and over, until "she knew it off by heart." When we hear that, we rejoice, knowing that another child is on the way to joining the happy company of lifelong readers.

MARGARET WISE BROWN, CLEMENT HURD, URSULA NORDSTROM AND *GOODNIGHT MOON*

Leonard S. Marcus

"We speak naturally," Margaret Wise Brown (1910-1952) once observed, "and spend all our lives trying to write naturally." The author of *Goodnight Moon* and more than a hundred other books for the very young had composed rhymes and been a storyteller since childhood. At the time of her early death, she was immersed in writing "silly, simple songs" that, she hoped, "might make any child feel that he could do just as well."

Becoming a picture book author was not, however, a future that Brown, the arrestingly attractive older daughter of prosperous Midwestern-bred New Yorkers, had imagined for herself. Three years out of college, in the fall of 1935, she enrolled in the teacher training program of New York's progressive Bureau of Educational Experiments (known today as the Bank Street College of Education), with vague thoughts of preparing herself for professional work with children. A teaching career was an obvious possibility for her, and although she soon decided that she was unsuited to managing roomfuls of precocious small persons, Bank Street's workshop in writing for the young deeply engaged her interest. Her first book, *When the Wind Blew*, was published by Harper & Brothers two years later, and was followed by a steady stream of innovative writing.

Lucy Sprague Mitchell, Brown's teacher and Bank Street's energetic founder, devoted much of her prodigious career to charting the stages of early childhood language development, and to devising a compatible "modern" nursery literature based on her findings. Mitchell had concluded that the very young were not (as was generally assumed) primarily interested in traditional once-upon-a-time-style rhymes and tales, but in stories about their own "Here and Now" world of clocks and socks, automobiles and (in those days) trolleys; in books in which the immediate sensory realm of colors, shapes, rhythms and sounds, which toddlers and babies related to as a matter of course, figured prominently.

Brown, as the author of *Red Light Green Light*, and the "Noisy Book" series, among others, was strongly influenced by Mitchell's unorthodox ideas. But as a writer of protean instincts, she was also keenly aware of the limitations inherent in "Here and Now" literalism, remarking once that while Bank Street writers had both feet on the ground, she preferred to keep one foot aloft. In *Goodnight Moon*, she dramatically enlarged Mitchell's vision of the small child's reality to encompass not just brushes and bowls but the moon and stars, the mysterious "nobody" and high-jumping cows of nursery nonsense.

Work on *Goodnight Moon*, which Brown wrote in

late 1945 and promptly sold to Harper, also marked the renewal of her collaboration with illustrator Clement Hurd. Hurd, a banker's son and graduate of St. Paul's and Yale, had gone to Paris in the early 1930's, studied painting there with Fernand Léger, then returned to New York where Brown, who was then an editor as well as a writer, suggested he try his hand at illustrating.

Their last pre-War collaboration, *The Runaway Bunny*, was published to good reviews in the spring of 1942, within weeks of Hurd's enlistment in the army. Three years later, following V-J Day, the artist, like many other servicemen, returned home with worries of restarting his career. Brown, who often played the good provider for her friends and colleagues, had, however, anticipated this concern. In the first weeks of 1946, on her instructions, Harper sent Hurd the spiral notebook in which she had written *Goodnight Moon*, with a request that he prepare sample art for the project as quickly as possible.

Brown had embellished the notebook with her old collaborator in mind. On the front cover, she gave the author as "Memory Ambrose" an actual name that had delighted them both once in conversation, and listed the illustrator as "Hurricane Jones," a character from a book coauthored by her and the artist's wife Edith Thacher Hurd. Hurd understood that Hurricane Jones was meant to indicate himself. For inspiration, she attached a small color reproduction of Goya's dashing "Boy in Red."

On page one of the manuscript, Hurd found a note from Harper's editor Ursula Nordstrom: "Interior of room—fabulous room...Little Boy Bunny in Bed." In a nearby note, Brown suggested the book's alternating visual pattern of panoramic interiors and spot illustrations. Over the next several months, numerous matters were discussed: whether, for example, the two figures in the room should be depicted as rabbits or

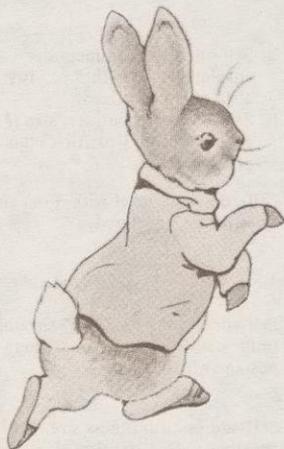
(continued on next panel)



Leonard S. Marcus' biography, *Margaret Wise Brown: Awakened by the Moon*, will be published by the Beacon Press in the fall of 1991. Marcus is the children's book reviewer for *Parenting* magazine and the book review editor of *The Lion* and the *Unicorn*, and is co-editor with Amy Schwartz of *Mother Goose's Little Misfortunes* (Bradbury). He teaches children's literature in New York City at the New School for Social Research and at the School of Visual Arts, and lectures widely before parent and professional groups.

LOVABLE LAPIN RUN-OFF

AND THE WINNER IS...



© Frederick Warne & Co., 1902, 1987

In the July-December 1990 issue of *Features*, our readers were given the opportunity to settle one of the burning questions of the late twentieth century: Who really is everybody's favorite rabbit, Bugs Bunny or Peter Rabbit?

The votes have been tallied and the results are very interesting. Bugs and Peter received over 3,000 votes between them. There were write-ins, too: two votes for Brer Rabbit, one for Roger Rabbit, one for the Velveteen Rabbit, and yes, even one for the Playboy Bunny.

Our readers gathered votes in a few ways: canvassing family members, faculty and staff, and students. When the votes started rolling in, we were sure that Peter would win—at one point Peter had over 700 votes while Bugs had received only three. We were



© 1989 Warner Bros. Inc.
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

happy to read in the *Times* that Bugs Bunny had reached Broadway in "Bugs Bunny on Broadway," a compilation of classic Bugs Bunny films accompanied by the Warner Bros. Symphony Orchestra. (A poor substitute for winning the Lovable Lapin Run-Off, but solace nonetheless.)

Then the votes from elementary students came. Wave upon wave of votes—for Bugs! On October 11, the most decisive vote arrived from Marie Klimkowski, Children's Librarian at Burlington County Library in Mount Holly, NJ: a whopping 761 votes for Bugs, tipping the count permanently in his favor. As of December 12, 1990, Bugs Bunny crushed Peter Rabbit, 1,724 votes to 1,096. We can infer one thing from this contest: adults love Peter passionately, but kids are looney over Bugs.

THAT'S ALL, FOLKS!™

(Marcus, continued)

humans. (It was finally decided that Hurd was better at drawing rabbits, and so rabbits it was.) Forseeing possible objections from the genteel librarian-critics of the day (the "Important Ladies," as Nordstrom called them), the editor barred the little mouse, which gambols mischievously around the room, from climbing aboard the bunny child's bed, and ordered that the udder of the "cow that jumped over the moon" be simplified almost beyond recognition. Among the last revisions was one that cunningly combined whimsy and self-advertisement. A framed map on the rabbit child's wall was replaced by a scene from *The Runaway Bunny*.

Journalist Bruce Bliven, Jr., who was researching a profile of Brown for *Life* magazine at the time, attended one of the last editorial meetings, where the cryptic exchanges between the author and her colleagues left him a bit bemused:

"I like the rabbit," someone had said, "He has real sleepiness."

"Yes, but I'm worried about the yarn; it loses personality and softness."

Such impressionistic "doubletalk," Bliven later wrote, was "essential, probably," to a medium in which visual images had to be precisely matched in mood and intention to an author's words.

Goodnight Moon was published in the Fall of 1947 to highly favorable reviews, though the influential *Horn Book Magazine*, in which omissions were never accidents, chose not to notice the book at all, and it would not be until the early 1970's that the powerful New York Public Library recommended *Goodnight Moon* for purchase. Brown herself thought that another of the three titles she had on the same Harper list, the now deservedly obscure *First Story*, was the likeliest to last.

Sales of *Goodnight Moon* were above average from the start, but only gradually rose to their present bestseller levels. In ever greater numbers, the book's first-generation audience, having grown up and become parents themselves, has passed along Brown and Hurd's poignant, happy hearted promise of peace and well-being.

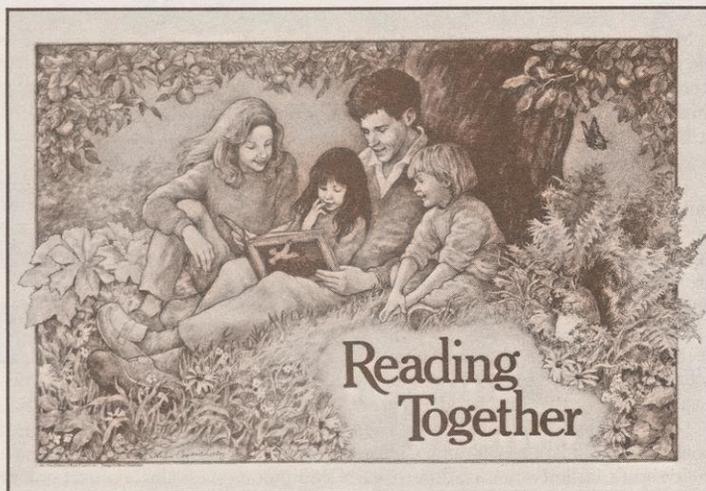
A change in attitudes also helps to explain the remarkable phenomenon of *Goodnight Moon's* still expanding popularity. During the 1940's, few books were published expressly for babies. In its initial advertising, Harper in fact listed *Goodnight Moon's* age level as from "three to seven." Today, in contrast, publishers and parents increasingly recognize that books can enrich the lives of even the youngest children. For countless one- and two-year-olds, *Goodnight Moon's* beguiling "great green room" has become the place to start.

READING TOGETHER

The Children's Book Council has selected "Reading Together" as its reading encouragement theme for 1991. Peter Catalanotto, Helen Cogancherry, Floyd Cooper, and Diane de Groat (see cover) have created beautiful posters encouraging families and friends to read together.

Each poster is 13" x 19" and is full-color. The posters are available as a set of four for \$18.50 from The Children's Book Council Order Center, 350 Scotland Rd., Orange, NJ 07050.

You may see the "Reading Together" posters (reduced) in full-color in our 1991 Spring Materials Brochure, which also features our other materials. If you are not on our mailing list please send a business size (#10), stamped (1 oz. first class postage), self-addressed envelope to Spring Materials Brochure, The Children's Book Council, 568 Broadway, New York, NY 10012.



Helen Cogancherry



Floyd Cooper



Peter Catalanotto

CHILDREN'S BOOK COUNCIL BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Brenda Bowen
Henry Holt and Co., Inc.
Patricia Buckley
Macmillan Children's
Book Group
Margery Cuyler
Holiday House
Margaret Ferguson
Farrar, Straus & Giroux, Inc.
Betsy Groban
Little, Brown and Co./
Joy Street Books
Regina Hayes
Penguin USA
Paulette Kaufmann
William Morrow & Co., Inc.

Ellen Krieger
Avon Books
John Mason
Scholastic Inc./Scholastic
Hardcover
Jane O'Connor
Grosset & Dunlap, Inc.
Frank Sloan
Crestwood House
Stephanie Spinner
Alfred A. Knopf/Random
House Books for Young
Readers
Dinah Stevenson
Clarion Books
Robert O. Warren
HarperCollins
Children's Books

OFFICERS

Chairman Paulette Kaufmann
Vice-Chairman/
Chairman-
Elect Regina Hayes
Secretary Brenda Bowen
Treasurer Margaret Ferguson

STAFF

President John Donovan
Executive Vice-
President Paula Quint
Vice-President Jeanette Brod
Assistant Vice-
President Lee Dennegar
Publications
Manager Alida Welzer

PUBLISHING

INTERNATIONAL RIGHTS AND CO-PRODUCTIONS

Mary Laychak

Whether discussing children's books or adult books, subsidiary rights are generally broken down into two main areas—domestic rights which include sales to book clubs, for paperback reprints, etc., and foreign rights which include sales of foreign translation rights and British publication rights.

Effect of color artwork

Particular only to children's books are the unique circumstances surrounding the sale of foreign rights to picture books. The color artwork that comprises at least fifty percent of all picture books together with the design of the text in relation to the artwork create some obvious and not so obvious reasons for this distinction.

First, unlike the straight text of a novel or non-fiction work, a summary for which can be relayed in a letter or in a conversation, in order to interest publishers in a picture book you must have some form of visual representation of the artwork to show them.

Second, the artwork must "travel well" overseas. It is an education in itself to learn from different publishers in various foreign countries just what is considered "too American" to sell in their markets. Included in this category are the uniforms worn by policemen, firemen, etc., the shape and color of certain vehicles such as taxicabs and buses, certain animals found only in the United States, as well as a variety of objects found both inside and outside the home.

Third, it is important that the text as well as any words that will appear in the artwork, be designed so that the foreign translation can replace the American text. Most picture books print in four colors—the three primary colors which combine to make all of the different colors used in the artwork, and black. Each color has its own plate. By having all words appear in black, only one plate change needs to be made for each translation. Failure to keep all words in the black plate can make inserting the foreign text an insurmountable problem or a prohibitively expensive one to correct. It is sure to render such a title unsalable in the foreign market.

Fourth, the sale of British and foreign translation rights to a picture book will also involve one of the following: either the sale of duplicate film from which the publisher can manufacture the book or the publisher's joining an international co-production with either a first printing or subsequent reprint of the book.

Print runs and costs

An international co-production occurs when a publisher or packager arranges to have two or more editions of a book printed simultaneously for the publishers that have licensed rights to that book. The primary benefit from such a printing is the cost savings gained on the production side from printing the highest quantity possible at one time. For example, say the cost to print 10,000 copies of a picture book is \$15,000 or \$1.50 per copy. The cost to print only 5,000 copies of the same book is \$8,750 or \$1.75 per copy. If we co-produce a 10,000 copy U.S. edition together with both a French and German edition of 5,000 copies each for a combined run of 20,000 copies, the printing cost will be \$25,000 or \$1.25 per copy. For the French and German editions we will also need to add the extra cost of the black plate; however, as this would be only an additional 15 to 20 cents per copy, the foreign publishers still enjoy a considerable savings by joining the co-production.

Another benefit of a co-production is that it enables

American publishers to sell rights in countries that could not otherwise produce the book for themselves. Foreign publishers in countries with small populations whose market can bear a printing of 1,500 or 3,000 copies of a picture book would not be able to afford to print such a small quantity for themselves. Joining a co-production makes it possible for such countries to obtain the quantities they need for their markets at a price they can afford.

Most American publishers have not had much experience in handling co-productions because our own printings have always been large enough to make them affordable to us. Unlike some of our British and European counterparts, we do not always need the cost savings of co-productions to enable us to print for ourselves. However, given the fairly consistent yearly increases in the cost of paper, printing, and binding and the fluctuating economies of foreign countries, we realize the importance of international co-productions for picture books and mass-market novelty books as a means of selling rights.

Bologna and Frankfurt

In turn, this has increased the importance of the overseas book fairs in Bologna and Frankfurt as showcases for picture books and as the forums where international co-productions are orchestrated.

To sell foreign rights and co-productions in Bologna and Frankfurt, it is important to have a book that will appeal to other cultures and to have the materials and information necessary to make it possible to talk in specific terms about a project. This involves the cooperation of the editorial, art, and production departments. As artwork is received in-house and as mechanicals are created to combine art and text so that a book can go into production, these departments make sure that full-color reproductions of the art are made in time to be taken to the overseas book fairs.

You also need to have production costs for publishers interested in joining your printing. These costs include a unit manufacturing cost, freight cost from our printer to the licensee's foreign port, a black plate charge for text changes, as well as a cut-off date by which interested publishers must commit to a final quantity in order to join your print run. The information and scheduling necessary to coordinate the co-production comes from the production department.

A cricket chirps

Eric Carle's fall 1990 title, *The Very Quiet Cricket*, is a good example of a book where a co-production was essential for the foreign market. The unique components of this book—a computer chip which simulates the chirping sound of a cricket implanted in the book cover and a plastic tab threaded through the last two pages which activates the sound mechanism when the last page is turned—make it a very costly one to manufacture.

Although the British, German, and Japanese publishers wanted to print what would normally be considered substantial quantities (between 10,000 and 15,000 copies each), they could not afford to print a book like this themselves and offer it at a reasonable retail price. The Dutch publisher, who could take only 4,500 copies for its market, would have found it prohibitively expensive to produce. By combining all four foreign publishers' quantities (39,500 copies) with our 75,000 copies, the book was made affordable to all four foreign publishers and less expensive for us to produce. The result was a most satisfying solution for all concerned.

THE CHILDREN'S BOOK COUNCIL

Order Center
350 Scotland Rd.
Orange, NJ 07050

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED