

The Anatomy of the Picture Book

Paratext This consists of all the information that is not part of the central story itself such as the author's name, publishing details, blurb, dust cover, preface and endpapers.

A postmodern picture book may deliberately question the paratextual conventions. *The Stinky Cheeseman and Other Fairly Stupid Tales* is a great example. The table of contents comes after the first tale, the back endpaper comes before the last tale and on the back cover, "Who is this ISBN guy?".

Jacket

Short for dust jacket, the paper wrapping around a hardcover book to help protect the actual cover. Originally made of fabric and intended to keep the book clean, today the jacket is highly designed and styled to catch the eye of a reader.

Front and Back Flaps

Extension of the jacket beyond the width of the cover that folds around the front and back covers of the book. The front flap text gives a brief description of the book's content; the back flap contains a biography and often a photo of the author and artist.

Cover

An outer wrapper of a hard cover or paperback book that protects the pages. The material can be almost anything that is flexible—such as cloth, paper, or plastic. A cover is not a jacket, and can actually have a completely different image to the jacket that covers it. "The cover of a picture book is often an integral part of the narrative, especially when the cover does not repeat any of the pictures inside the book. The narrative can indeed start on the cover, and it can go beyond the last page onto the back cover" (Nikolajeva and Scott, 2006, p.241).

Spine

The centre panel of a book's binding that connects the front and back cover to the pages. This is the outside part of the book that shows when the book is on a shelf.

End papers

The first pages you see when you open a hardback book will be the end papers. They are attached to the inside front and inside back covers of the book. Often, they feature elements from the story but just as often they are a single colour that complements the design. However, "a growing number of picturebook creators have discovered the possibilities of endpapers as additional paratexts that can contribute to the story in various ways" (Nikolajeva and Scott, 2006, p.247). These can form an exciting and fun part of the overall experience of the picture book. Often the story telling begins on the cover and carries on in the endpapers.

Half title

The first page when you open the cover of a book – just the title of what you are about to read (halfway up the page, hence the title).

Frontispiece

This is printed on the left side of the double page spread following the half title and includes an image or picture (not all books have this).

Title page

This is printed on the right hand page facing the frontispiece. It includes the title, author(s), name of the publisher.

Copyright page – IMPORTANT

This details who has the legal rights to the information in the book, credit to publisher, editor and illustrator, and the edition of the book.

Gutter The centre fold line between two pages of a book. If a designer or illustrator doesn't plan ahead for the gutter, illustrations and text can "disappear" into the gutter.

Dedication or acknowledgement page Usually at the front of the book, after the Title page. This is where the author/creator can dedicate their book to someone.

Recto Right-hand page

Verso Left-hand page

References

Nikolajeva, M. and Scott, C. (2006), *How Picturebooks Work*. New York: Routledge.