



# Literature for Children



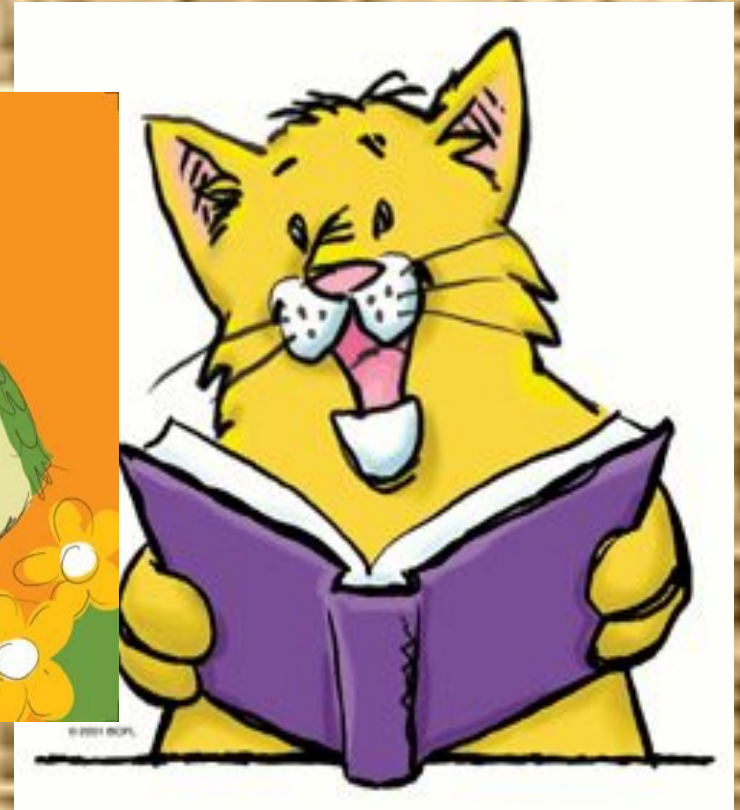
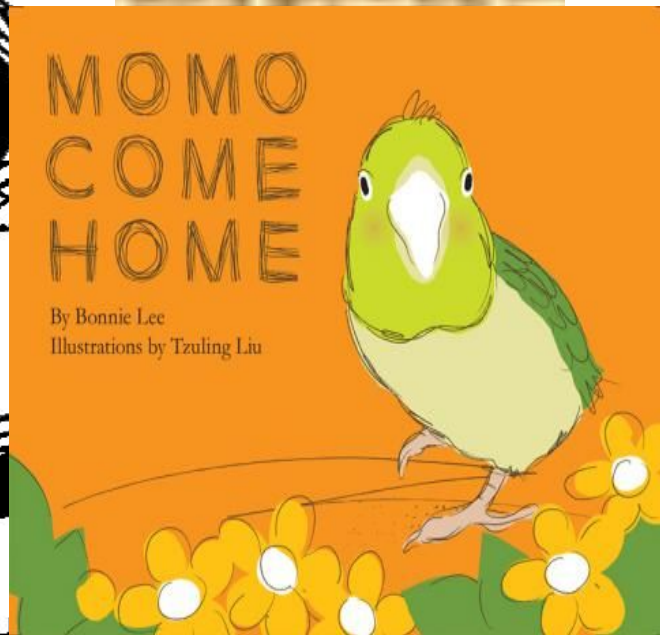
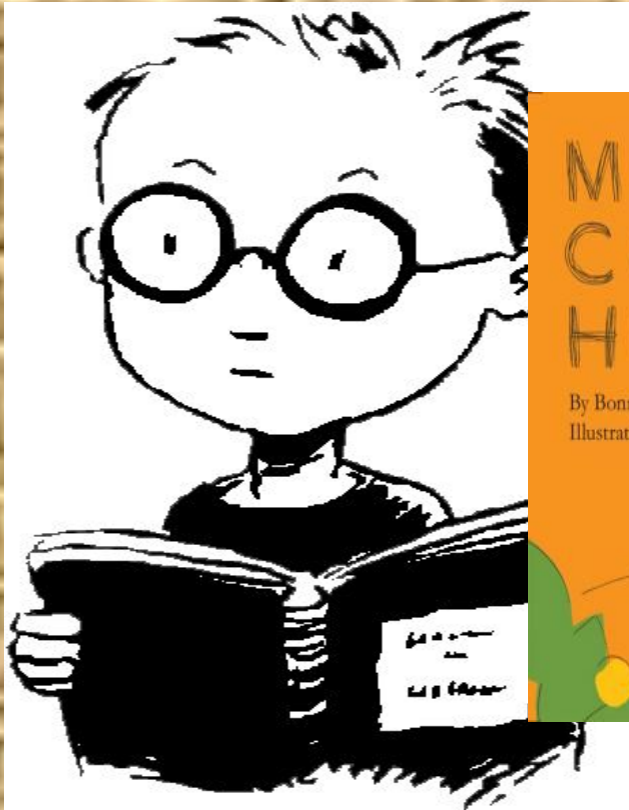


**Books written especially for children are called children's literature. Children's literature includes stories, fairy tales, fables, poems, and novels. It also includes nonfiction (factual) works on history, science, and other subjects.**





Children's literature can come in the form of picture books or chapter books. Picture books usually have a smaller amount of text, or words, and pictures on every page. They are written for younger readers.





**Chapter books have few or no pictures and much more text, which is divided into sections called chapters. Chapter books are written for older children**





**Many countries give good children's books special attention through awards and prizes. In the United States the two most important prizes for children's literature are the Newbery Medal and the Caldecott Medal.**





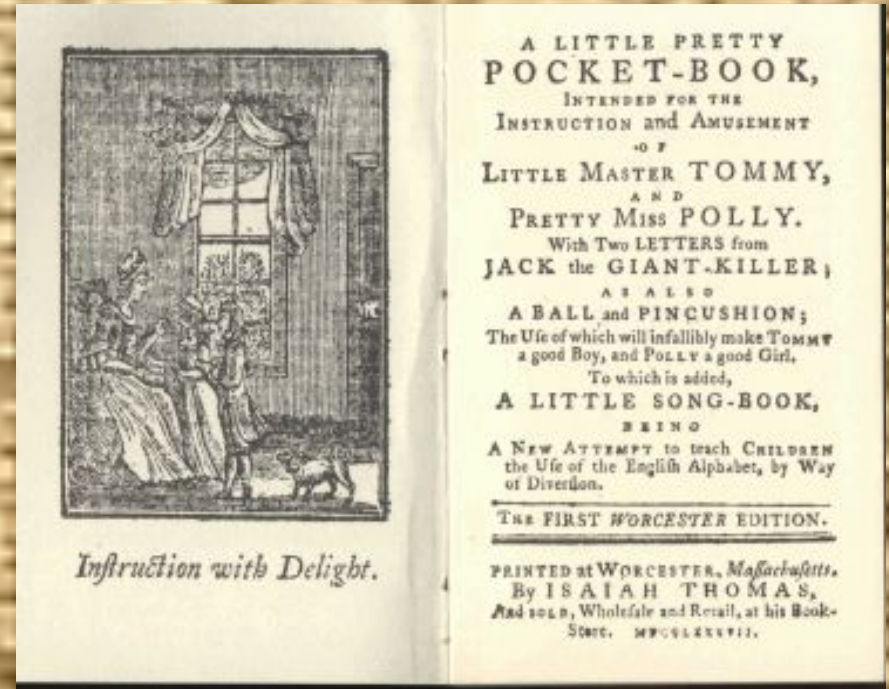
The best-known international award is the Hans Christian Andersen Award. Another important international award is the Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award.



Beloved Characters of Children's Literature



Until a few hundred years ago, few books were written for children at all. The first literature especially for children was published in Europe in the 1600s.





Most of this early writing was not meant to entertain children. Its purpose was to teach children lessons.







1700s



Many of the books read by children during the 1700s were books written for adults. These were adventurous stories with interesting characters. For example, Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1719) tells the story of a man who is shipwrecked on a deserted island. Another such book was Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* (1726). It is about the adventures of a traveler in strange lands.



John Newbery in London, England, published the first edition of the well-known Mother Goose rhymes in the 1760s. A version of Newbery's book was first published in the United States in about 1785. Since then, generations of children have learned the traditional rhymes, such as *Little Miss Muffett*.







**1800s**

**By the 1800s children's books were becoming an important kind of literature. Authors began making their stories more interesting and imaginative.**





**Many children's books from the 1800s were collections of fairy tales and folktales. These stories of magical creatures, animals that talk, and imaginary places have always fascinated children.**





**Some children's books from the 1800s are still very popular today. Many children still enjoy Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, which was published in England in 1865.**







**Two German brothers, Wilhelm and Jakob Grimm, published a collection of old German fairy tales in 1812. The collection is commonly called *Grimm's Fairy Tales*. It features stories about such characters as Snow White and Cinderella.**





**In the late 1800s Sazanami Iwaya of Japan wrote *Japanese Fairy Tales*, a collection of old stories. In 1896 K. Langloh Parker retold the folktales of the Aborigines (the native people of Australia) in *Australian Legendary Tales*. A collection of Latin American folktales appeared at about the same time in Brazil. It was called *Contos da Carochinha*.**



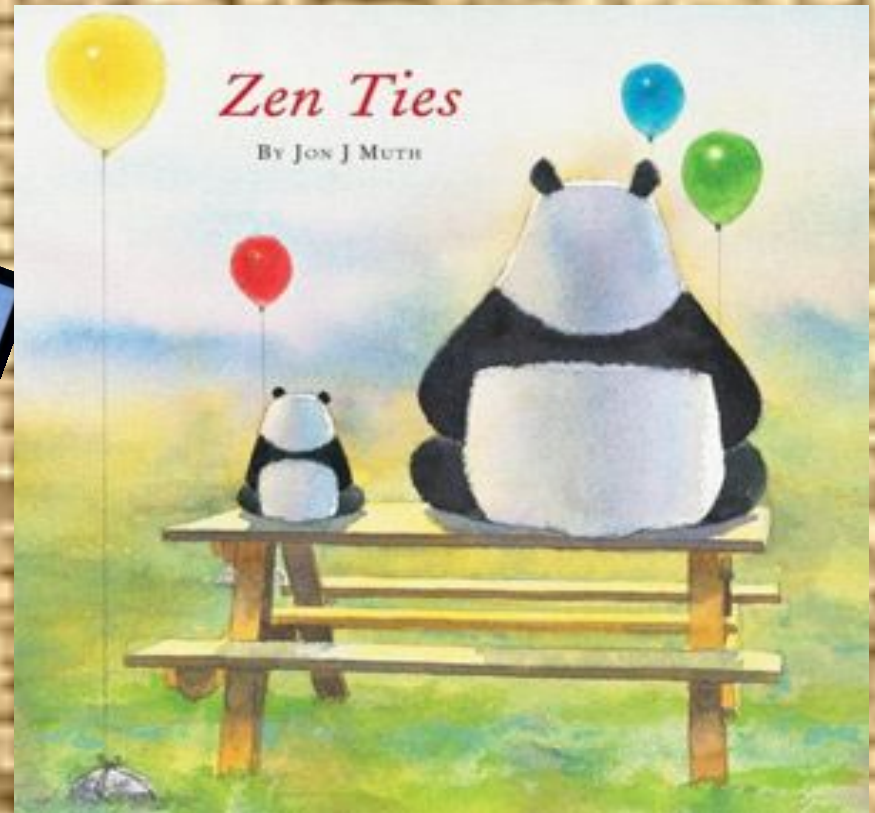
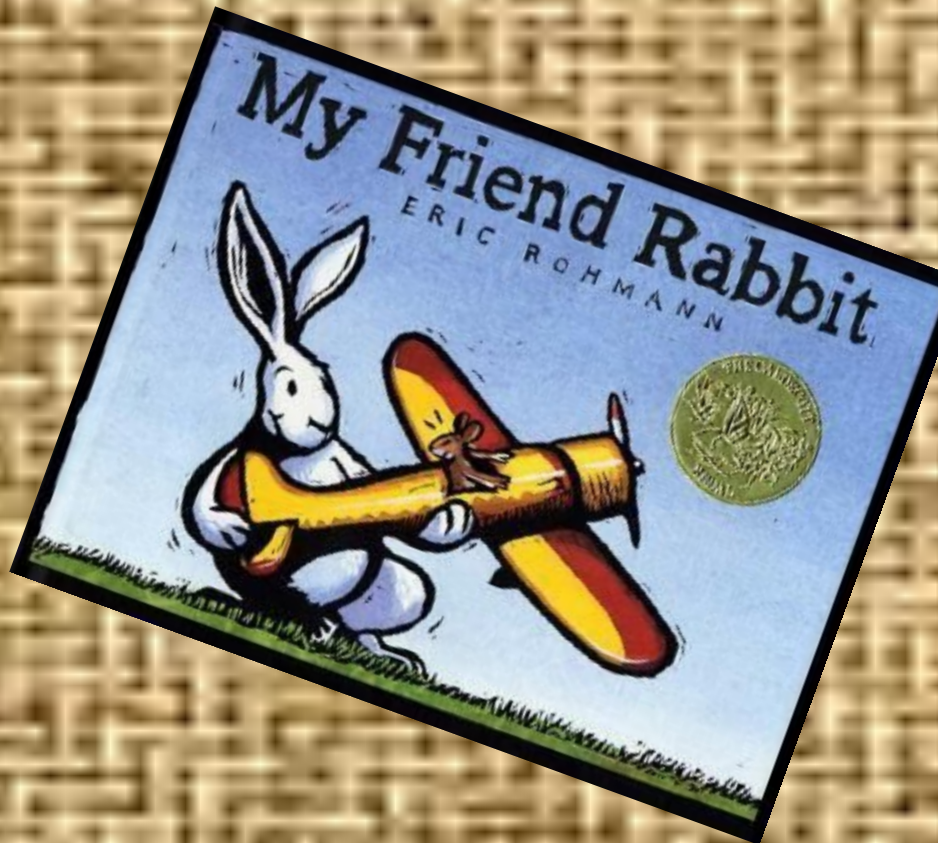
## 1900s and Today

The 1900s saw an explosion in the number of children's books being published.





People in many countries continued to collect and publish folktales so that the stories could be shared with children in other parts of the world.

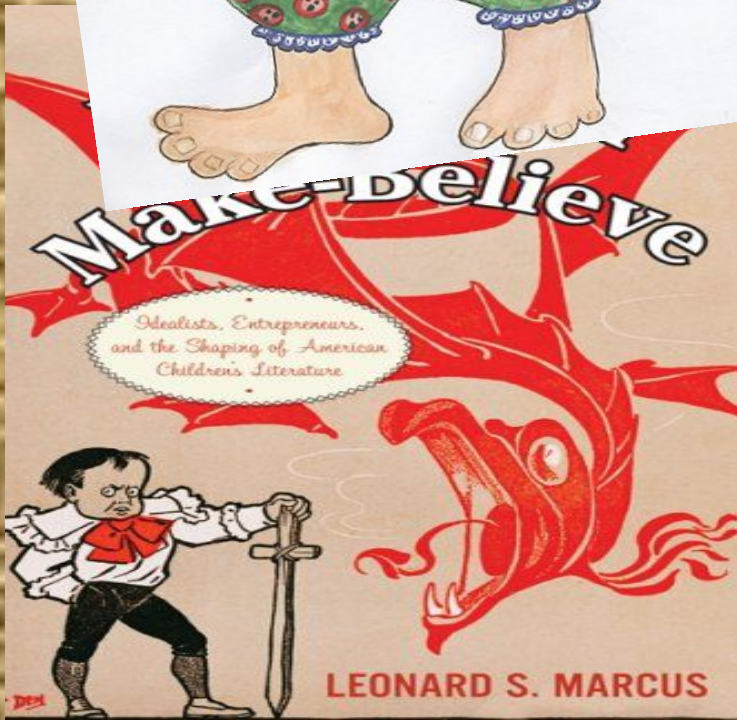




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In Great Britain and the United States much children's literature of this time focused on interesting characters in fantastic worlds.





***The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* (1900) by L. Frank Baum, *Winnie-the-Pooh* (1926) by A.A. Milne, and *Charlotte's Web* (1952) by E.B. White are good examples.**





The playful poetry, funny characters, and fanciful drawings of the many books by Dr. Seuss also fit in this category. He published *The Cat in the Hat* in 1957.





Other children's literature of the 1900s showed realistic characters facing the difficulties of growing up. Lucy Maud Montgomery's *Anne of Green Gables* (1908), Katherine Paterson's *Bridge to Terabithia* (1977), and the novels of Judy Blume are examples.





**J.K. Rowling's popular Harry Potter books of the late 1990s and early 2000s have a magical setting. However, they also realistically show the emotions of young people.**

