

**Investigating Picturebook Apps**  
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**Digital Picturebook Characteristics**

Picturebook content in digital form

Downloaded from publisher website or iTunes / Google Play

Viewed on Screen – e-readers (Kindle), tablet (iPad), computer, or smartphone

May be a *digitized rendering* of a print-based picturebook or original to digital

Picturebook software application or *app*

**Varying Levels of Interactivity:** Types of Digital Picturebooks

Basic E-Picturebooks

Electronic Graphic Novels

Print – Digital Hybrid Texts

Cyber Texts

Transmedial Narratives

Augmented Reality

Book-Game Hybrids

**Features of Picturebook Apps**

***Tableaux Features***

features within a single screen shot

***Transitional Features***

features for navigating among screens

***Enhanced Features***

interactive features that add to story elements

**Tableaux Features**

Peritextual Features

Voice Over / Sounds Choices

Text and Image

Hidden Narrative Elements

**Transitional features**

Navigational Pages

Navigational Icons

Navigational Assistance

Book-Like Transitions

## **Enhanced features**

Picturebooks With Hyperlinks

Video Enhancements

Gaming Modules

Gaming Elements

Video Production

## **Augmented Reality Defined**

Combines real world and virtual environments

Interactive in real time

Blends digital technologies and analogue text / images

Requires a visual “trigger”

Now works with hand-held devices

Initially Envisioned as “Digital Pop-Up” Books

## **Features of Augmented Reality Picturebooks**

Vision-based Tracking Technology

On-the-fly Reconstruction (localization)

Embodied Interactions

Enhancement of Narrative & Informational Content

## **An Emerging Typology of Augmented Reality Picturebooks**

- **Narrative Augmentation** – take elements from picturebook and add animation to characters, objects, or the setting. (**Morris Lessmore**)
- **Visual Augmentation** – adding visual (3D) elements, virtual objects, or characters graphics that are not included in picturebook storyworld. (**Horrible Hauntings**)
- **Informational Augmentation** – information is provided that was not part of the original story or informational picturebook, video clips, text, and images. (**Bugs 3D, iSolar System**)
- **Environmental Augmentation** – adding graphic elements from the book to the environment. (**iDinosaur**)
- **Game-Based Augmentation** – adds gaming modules to the narrative aspects of the picturebook. (**The Numberlys**)

## **Criteria for Selecting Book Apps**

What features have been removed or included?

Is the app easy to navigate?

Are the illustrations of high quality?

Are sound effects / music appropriate?

Are the features distracting for young readers?

Is the app more of a game or a book?

Are reference materials easily accessed?

What have reviewers said about the app?

## **Online Reviews of Book Apps**

Commonsensemedia.com

Appadvice.com

Kidsbookapp.com

iTunes store / Google Play

Amazon.com

Kirkusreviews.com

Digital-storytime.com

Hbook.com (the Horn Book)

## **Possibilities**

More portable

Less expensive than hardcover picturebooks

Can be initially engaging

Ready access to epitextual materials (website, dictionaries)

Supports reading through “read-to-me” features

Multimodal features (sound effect, music, video clips)

Allows other options for readers

Instant recommendations

## **Challenges**

Extra materials may be distracting for readers

Is it a game or a narrative?

What is lost in the translation from print-based to digital platforms?

Loss of physical features of codex

What is meant by “interactive” may vary greatly

But the biggest challenge is...

### **Favorite Picturebook Apps.... So Far**

The Fantastic Flying Books of Morris Lessmore – William Joyce

The Numberlys– William Joyce

Billy's Booger – William Joyce

Bullseye / Gizmo – Moonbot Studios

Spot - Weisner

Marcel the Shell – Jennie Slate

Various Dr. Seuss Books – Oceanhouse Media

Animalia – Graeme Base

Mr. Sandman (Fear of the Dark)- hocusbookus

Dandelion – Protein Innovative Apps

Midnight Feast – Slap Happy Larry

Horrible Hauntings – Goose Bottom Books

Book Of Holes – Chocolate Factory Publishing

Dinosaurs - Kiwi Storybooks

Sherlock Holmes Interactive Adventures – Haab

Rita the Lizard – Rita Blasco Grau

Meet Millie – Megapops

The Monster at the End of the Book – Sesame Street

Don't Let the Pigeon Run This App! – Mo Willems

The Heart and the Bottle – Oliver Jeffers

The Moon – Windy Press

The Land of Me – Vimeo

Dragon Brush – Spike Press

Rules of Summer – Shaun Tan

Wrong Book – Wheelbarrow Press

Bobo Explores Light – Game Collage

Oliver Dreams – Ian Falconer

Monsters Get Sick – BusyBee Studios

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