Victorian & Edwardian Children’s Fiction
ENGL 479

Anatomy of a Book

This project entails investigating a book, including its materiality and the contexts in which it was created, produced, and used over time. You do not need to make an argument about the book but instead document your research and observations. The following handout will guide you through this process.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Authorship</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **QUESTIONS** | Who wrote the book?  
Who illustrated the book?  
Who edited the book?  
Was there anyone else involved in producing the book’s contents?  
How is this book situated in a creator’s life and body of work?  
What is the relationship between the author and others involved in creating the content of the book, such as the illustrator or editor? |

| **WHAT YOU CAN LEARN** | Insight into an author’s life and, when relevant, relationship with an illustrator or editor, illuminates the creative process and provides a richer understanding of how a book came to be. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Book Content</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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</table>
| **QUESTIONS** | Consider the book’s content. What observations can you offer about the type of readings it offers to children? How might it compare to other similar books? Does it participate in a popular trend or fashion or is it an exception?  
• What kind of content does this book offer: Poetry? Fiction? Nursery rhymes? School exercises or readings?  
• Is it part of a series?  
• Can you compare its contents to other comparable texts in our collection or online?  
• Is it excerpted from an original, such as the Bible or Gulliver’s Travels? If so, on what principle? |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QUESTIONS</th>
<th>Exploring the content of a book will suggest how a book was meant to be used (for instruction? For fun? Read by a child or read to a child?) and situates the book within the broader landscape of children’s literature from this historical period.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WHAT YOU CAN LEARN</td>
<td>These features will give you an indication of the cost, intended audience, how the book was originally marketed, as well as insight into the tastes/sensibilities of a particular time period.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Structure, Binding, and Design

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QUESTIONS</th>
<th>How big is the book? How is it put together? Can you read the text? Are there illustrations? Where are they (any on the endpapers)? Take note of the following aspects:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>size, weight</td>
<td>binding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>colour</td>
<td>paper: colour, weight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>decorations</td>
<td>illustrations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>layout, typeface</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| WHAT YOU CAN LEARN | These features will give you an indication of the cost, intended audience, and how the book was originally marketed. |

### Other Bibliographic Features

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QUESTIONS</th>
<th>Does the book have any of the following features?:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>introduction</td>
<td>blurbs from other authors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maps</td>
<td>timelines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>glossaries</td>
<td>advertising</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| WHAT YOU CAN LEARN | Like the book’s structure, these features will give you an indication of the cost, intended audience, and how the book was originally marketed. |
marketed. Introductions or blurbs from other authors can indicate intellectual circles as well as marketing.

### Production and Distribution

**QUESTIONS**
What can you find out about the:
- publisher/printer
- date of publication
- edition, number of editions, size of print run
- price point, sales, distribution, advertising

**WHAT YOU CAN LEARN**
The production and distribution of a work indicates the commercial context and the real and intended audience of a publication.

### Ownership, Custodial History, and Readership

**QUESTIONS**
What signs of ownership or use are there? How many owners can you trace?
Does the book have any of the following signs of ownership and/or readership:
- bookplate
- inscription(s)
- annotations/marginalia
- a library plate
- pages cut or intact
- other, such as pressed flowers or squashed insects

**WHAT YOU CAN LEARN**
Signs of ownership and readership give insight into who was reading a book and how those readers were responding to or using a book over time. Understanding the experience of readers also provides insight into how a book was received by its original audience.

### Finding a Book

**In Special Collections:**
To locate a book within Special Collections you can search the following catalogue: [http://webapp.library.uvic.ca/scbrowse/index.php?submit=New+Search](http://webapp.library.uvic.ca/scbrowse/index.php?submit=New+Search). Use one of the call numbers from below as a keyword search and limit the dates to 1800 to 1910. For assistance with finding a book in Special Collections contact Heather Dean ([hdean@uvic.ca](mailto:hdean@uvic.ca)).
In the Main Stacks:
To browse the Main Stacks go to the second floor of the McPherson Library. The majority of children’s literature books are on the second floor of the library in the PZ call number range. For a floor plan of the second floor (that shows where the PZs are located) see here: http://www.uvic.ca/library/use/floormaps/Second%20Floor--Nov2013.pdf.

Here is a breakdown of the PZ call number range into more specific categories:

- **PZ5**: Collections of children’s literature
- **PZ6**: Early children’s literature to 1870
- **PZ7**: Children’s literature 1870-present
- **PZ7.5**: Bible stories for children
- **PZ8**: Fairy tales
- **PZ8.1**: Folklore, legends, romance
- **PZ8.2**: Fables
- **PZ8.3**: Nursery rhymes, poetry
- **PN1009**: General works on juvenile literature, including bibliographies, overviews etc.
- **Z1037**: Children’s books including lists, catalogs etc.
- **PS490**: American Juvenile literature, includes criticism, bibliographies etc.
- **PR990**: English Juvenile literature, includes criticism, bibliographies etc.

Research Resources

**Book History**

Location: Basement Compact Shelving.
Call Number: Z473 H36 v. 3

Location: Basement Compact Shelving.
Call Number: Z473 H36 v. 4

Location: Basement Compact Shelving
Call Number: Z1003.5 G7P75; 2012

Location: McPherson Library
Call Number: Z1003.5 G7P73
Illustrations
Location: Special Collections
Call Number: NC977 B827 2005

Location: McPherson Library
Call Number: NE628 D95

Location: Special Collections Oversize 12.
Call Number: NC978 R39 1976

Location: McPherson Library
Call Number: NC978 S855 2005

Location: McPherson Library
Call Number: NC978 D36

Publishing History
The British Book Trade Index: [http://www.bbti.bham.ac.uk/](http://www.bbti.bham.ac.uk/)

The Scottish Book Trade Index: [http://www.nls.uk/catalogues/scottish-book-trade-index](http://www.nls.uk/catalogues/scottish-book-trade-index) (NOTE: this resource only goes up to 1850).

Location: McPherson Library
Call Number: PN155 C5

Location: Basement Compact Shelving
Call Number: Z329 C66 2005

Location: Basement Compact Shelving
Call Number: Z325 P85 2005
Location: Basement Compact Shelving
Call Number: Z325 H85

Location: Basement Compact Shelving
Call Number: Z325 G43 1995

Location: Basement Compact Shelving
Call Number: Z325 S577

Location: Basement Compact Shelving
Call Number: Z325 W425

**Biography**
Biographical material can give insight into the creative process and publishing history. Look for a biography and/or autobiography about the author, illustrator, and/or publisher. For details on researching biographical information see the Biography and Autobiography Subject Guide: [http://libguides.uvic.ca/Biographies](http://libguides.uvic.ca/Biographies).

**Biography Databases:**
To find biographical databases go to the following: Library Homepage>>Search and Find>>Databases>>Other Options>>Databases by Subject>>Select Biography from the dropdown list.