

## Postmodern Picture Books as Multimodal Texts: Changing Trends in Children's Literature

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### Abstract:

Literature for children has undergone significant changes over the past years. It has generated new attitudes towards childhood and changing practices around literature. The concept of literature for entertainment along with instruction, as proposed by Peter Hunt, has changed the traditional mode of reading methods and gave new dimensions in reading and experiencing children's books. Nowadays, children's books are available in various forms like printed books, audio/video recordings, animated movies, Disney cartoons etc. New developments in computational field and digital media have opened wider ways of exploring children's stories. This has also led to the notion of cross-reading. Most of the stories for children are re-told or re-visited adapting to different socio-cultural, linguistic domains. This adaptation is both a product and process as seen by Hutcheon (2012). The chief characteristics of postmodern picture books include usually a non-linear plot structure, using pictures or texts to position the reader and focalizing ideas through the point of view of a character, construction of meaning by the reader, intertextual references and above all, the varied design layout and styles of illustration as envisioned by Anstey (2002). All these developments appease the tastes of the modern child as well as the adult reader. This paper is an attempt to explore the evolving styles in contemporary children's books where it is thought of more in terms of multimodal texts, with self-referential elements adding to it the notion of metafiction.

*Keywords:* children's literature, multimodality, picture books, postmodern, media

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