



FAVORITE ALPHABETS
Children's Books selected from the Rare, General
and
Children's Literature Center's Collections
in the
Library of Congress

THE LIST

Alphabet Blocks

Like Russian stacking dolls, these old-fashioned alphabet blocks are hollow, containing two more sets of blocks inside.

ABC PYRAMID. Picture blocks. With 72 wooden blocks with chromolithograph images. No Place, printer or year. (ca. 1900).

GV1218.B6 P 87 1900

Rare Book Collection

An early Alphabet of Paper Dolls

Produced in France, this unusual, early nineteenth century alphabet features a set of 25 paper dolls mounted on wooden block stands. Each doll, displaying a letter of the alphabet, represents a different nationality or character.

ALPHABET GROTESQUE. Box with 25 paper dolls in color. Paris: Chez tous les Marchand de Nouveautes [1835?].

PC22153.A58 1835

Rare Book Collection

A classic mid-19th century German Picture Book

This classic Nürnberg alphabet book – the first and only edition – is a fine example of the artistic German picture book which began to emerge in the mid-nineteenth century.

Das originelle ABC. Allerliebste komisch figürlich dargestellt; mit Bilder-Szenen aus der Vergangenheit und Gegenwart durch sinnige poetische Erläuterungen ausgestattet.

[ABC, the original ABC. Illustrated charmingly with scenes from the past and present, explained by poetic verses].

With 72 hand-colored engravings on 24 plates. Nürnberg: Renner, G.N., 1835.

PZ 32.O75 1835

Rare Book Collection

Making a Picture Book

An assortment of book components - from drawings to dummy to finished book – illustrate by the making of a picture book.

ABC. A Walker Toy Book. Included in this small archive are: the original watercolor used for the cover, a complete dummy with a pencil sketch and 12 unfinished watercolor illustrations, and the finished book. Otley, England: Made by Renwick. (1930?)

PE1155. A244

Rare Book Collection

A Juxtaposition of Old and New

An early English nursery rhyme is illustrated by the renowned Swiss graphic artist Étienne Delessert in his trade-mark style of fantastic, entertaining and threatening creatures.

A was an Apple. An English Nursery Rhyme illustrated by Étienne Delessert.

Manko, Minnesota: Creative Editions, 2005.

PE 1155. D445

The Alphabet in Trompe-L'Œil

Painted to look like carved wood, Anno's letters present a three-dimensional, optically challenging appearance. Borders, embellished with plants and other hidden creatures, add to the alphabet parade. A noted work by one of Japan's finest artists.

ANNO, MITSUMASA. *Anno's Alphabet; an Adventure in Imagination*.

New York: Crowell, [1975]. ***Simply Magic***

An attached mirror formed into a tube changes the mysterious shapes into letters and pictures of an angle, a bear, a camel, and so on.

ANNO, MITSUMASA. *Anno's Magical ABC: An anamorphic Alphabet*.

New York: Philomel, 1981.

Simply Magic

An attached mirror formed into a tube changes the mysterious shapes into letters and pictures of an angle, a bear, a camel, and so on.

ANNO, MITSUMASA. *Anno's Magical ABC: An anamorphic Alphabet*.

New York: Philomel, 1981.

PZ7.A5875 An

Simply Magic

An attached mirror formed into a tube changes the mysterious shapes into letters and pictures of an angle, a bear, a camel, and so on.

ANNO, MITSUMASA. *Anno's Magical ABC: An anamorphic Alphabet*.

New York: Philomel, 1981.

A Belgian Alphabet borrows from the Cubists

This spirited, tri-lingual ABC book, in French, English, and German, features the adventures of a Dutch wooden doll and her toy companions that have been reduced to their basic geometric, cubist

forms. Blandin, a Belgian artist, organized the first exhibition of Cubist and Fauvist works in Belgium with his friend Guillaume Apollinaire, author of *The Cubist Painters* (1913).

BLANDIN, ANDRÉ. *ABCD*, edited by Charles Bulesn.
Bruxelles: Édition de L'Art Décoratif C. Dangottee, 1913.
Rare Book Collection
PZ23.B554

An Artistic Alphabet

This starkly illustrated picture book was created by the renowned sculptor and graphic artist Leonard Baskin whose work is held by the Metropolitan Museum of Art, MOMA, The Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, the Art Institute of Chicago, and the Library of Congress.

BASKIN, LEONARD.
Hosie's Alphabet. Pictures by Leonard Baskin. Words by Hosea Tobias [and] Lisa Baskin. New York: The Viking Press, 1972.
PZ 7 .B2923 Ho 3

Boldly conceived and brilliantly executed Pop-Up Art

This French import has been described as “Easily the most innovative alphabet book of the year—if not the decade... [and] ...beyond clever. From the lenticular cover that changes with the angle of your hands, all the way to the Z, *ABC—3D*.”

BATAILLE, MARION.
ABC—3D. New York: Roaring Brook Press, 2008.
PE1155. B3874

A popular and pleasing Pop-Up

A simple and straightforward, moveable alphabet by a master of the genre.

CROWTHER, ROBERT.
The Most Amazing Hide-and-Seek Alphabet Book. Sommerville, Massachusetts, 1999.
QL 49 .C756

The immortal Babar

After Jean De Brunhoff's premature death, his talented son Laurent learnt how to draw in his father's style and created more than forty more books about the immortal elephant Babar. Here, cozy and comforting scenes accompany the letters of the alphabet from “K is for Kitchen” to “O is for Orchestra” or to “P is for Playground.”

DE BRUNHOFF, LAURENT.
Babar's ABC. New York: Random House, 1983.
PE 1155 .B74 1983

An Abecedary for Typography Aficionados

First used in the late middle ages, the Bembo typeface saw a revival during the 20th century.

In this sophisticated alphabet book, the designer and art director Roberto de Vicq de Cumplich, makes his picture book debut with a stylish abecedary using only Bembo typeface letters and punctuations marks.

DE CUMPTICH, ROBERT DE VICQ

Bembo's Zoo: an Animal ABC Book. New York: Henry Holt, 2000.

PZ7.D49737

An Early Gourmet Book

A lovely and very rare ABC for young gourmets. Each letter, highlighting a particular food or dish and decorated with exquisite, hand-colored lithographs, is accompanied by a moralizing tale. Included are *beignets* (fritters), cherries, flan, milk, omelette, and meringues.

DURFENOY, ADELAIDE. ...d'après les dessins de Mm, Devilly et Deloi. *Abecedaire des petits Gourmands.*

Paris: Lefuel, Noel, &Dauty, [n.d. ca. 1820].

TX637. D76 1823

Rare Book Collection

An edible Alphabet

“Apple to Zucchini, come take a look. Start eating your way through this alphabet book.”

This is just one of Ehler’s many boldly-illustrated, child-pleasing picture books.

EHLERT, LOIS.

Eating the Alphabet. Fruits and Vegetables from A to Z. San Diego, New York, London: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1989.

PE 1155 .E35

Classic Elegance

“Hailed as an American triumph,” C.B Falls’ bold and poster-like illustrations of animals were, nevertheless, strongly influenced by William Nicholson, the English painter, engraver and children’s book illustrator whose own alphabet book was published in 1898.

FALLS, C. B.

ABC Book. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, Page: 1923.

PZ7.F19 Ab 1923

Rare Book Collection

An Expressionist's Alphabet

Conrad Felixmüller’s paintings were part of the 1937 Munich exhibition which the Nazi regime declared as “Entartete Kunst” (Degenerate art). Eventually, more than 140 of the artist’s works were removed from museums and galleries. Much of the rest of his work was destroyed during the 1944 bombing of Berlin. This starkly-illustrated picture book was made for Felixmüller’s own children.

FELIXMÜLLER, LONDA AND CONRAD.

ABC. Ein geschütteltes, geknütteltes Alphabet in Bildern und Versen. [A mixed-up alphabet in pictures and rhymes]. With woodcut on the title page and 15 hand-colored original woodcuts by Conrad Felixmüller. Dresden. Selbstverlag, 1925. Hand-colored and signed by C. Felixmüller. Number 12 of 100 copies.

PZ34.3.F434

Rare Book Collection

A 1930s Alphabet by a noted Minnesotan

After her first solo show at the New York Public Library in 1923, Wanda Gág exhibited at the Weye Gallery in New York (known for its promotion of emerging artists), the American Institute of Graphic Arts, the Museum of Modern Art and the New York World's Fair. Gág wrote and illustrated *Millions of Cats* (1928), considered an iconic picture book of its day. *The ABC Bunny* shows Gág's preferred graphic style.

GÁG, WANDA.

The ABC Bunny. Original lithographs by Wanda Gag. Hand Lettered by Howard Gág. New York: Coward McCann, 1933.

PZ7. G121 A

Children's Literature Center

The Designerly Alphabet

Created by Milton Glaser, one of America's most celebrated graphic designers, this alphabetic happening superbly mixes graphic images, typography and narrative.

GLASER, MILTON AND SHIRLEY GLASER.

The Alphazeds. New York: Hyperion Books for Children, 2003.

PZ7 .G48103 A1

An Alphabet of Photograms

Tana Hoban created a new photographic look with her black and white picture books, "photographed" – without a camera - by placing objects on photographic paper, then exposing them to light.

HOBAN, TANA

A,B,See!

New York: Greenwillow Books, 1982.

PE 1155 .H58

A Selection of Hornbooks

The hornbook dates back to the middle of the 15th century. The paddle-shaped device, which was covered with a piece of paper, protected by a thin layer of horn and secured to the wood with metal panels, displayed the alphabet, the numbers, and the Lord's Prayer. Hornbooks were made from wood, metal, leather, cardboard, and even gingerbread. However, most were plain, whittled or carved. The horn was obtained from the horns of cattle, sheep, or goats. The earliest sheets were written by hand on parchment or vellum.

Practical, economic, and nearly indestructible primers – whose ultimate purpose was to lead the child to spiritual salvation, hornbooks were attached to a child’s belt or could be worn around the neck. Hornbooks were peculiar to the English-speaking countries, and were used extensively in England and America from the early 16th to the late 18th century. Developments in papermaking, printing, and engraving resulted in the manufacture of the next type of reading device for the young: paper battledores, primers and real children’s books.

Included are:

A LATE 18TH CENTURY SILVER AND IVORY HORNBOOK.

Z1033. H8

Rare Book Collection

A DECORATIVE IVORY HORNBOOK

Z1033. H8 18 1800

Rare Book Collection

INTRIGUING HORNBOOK WITH ABACUS

Late 18th century, American “folkloric” hornbook with a two-line, 12-beaded abacus.

Z1033. H8

Rare Book Collection`

TUER, ANDREW WHITE. *History of the Horn Book*. London: Leadenhall Press, 1896.

Bound in the original vellum, the first edition of this two-volume definitive reference work on hornbooks contains a small collection of facsimiles hornbooks and battledores.

Z1033.H8T8 1896

Children’s Literature Center

An Alphabet and Counting Book. Two Books in One.

From “angry” to “zealous” this combination alphabet/counting book about emotions, dazzles through its wit and bold illustrations.

HUBBARD, WOODLEIGH.

C is for Curious. An ABC of Feeling. San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1990.

BF561.H82

Classic Elegance

Folk art-inspired color lithographs by the British stage designer, and prolific picture book maker, present each letter of the alphabet in fine detail, depicting fruits, insects, flowers and animals.

HUTTON, CLARK.

A Country ABC. New York: Oxford University Press, [n.d.]

PZ7 .H967 Co

A Distinctive Voice

In 1939, when she was twenty one, Dahlov Ipcar had her first solo show at the Museum of Modern Art in New York. Since then her work has been collected by the Metropolitan Museum and the Whitney Museum of American Art. Her distinctive style and artistic originality make her an American original.

IPCAR, DAHLOV ZORACH.

I love my Anteater with an A. New York: Borzoi Book, 1964.

PZ10.3.I65

Children's Literature Center

A Tri-lingual Alphabet

Energetic illustrations in vibrant colors mark this alphabet book of objects, animals, and activities - all of which begin with the same letter in English, Spanish, and French.

JOCELYN, MARTHE.

ABC x 3: English, Español, Français. Toronto: Tundra Books, 2005.

PB89 .J63

Children's Literature Center

An early Alphabet Collection

An astonishing-early alphabet assortment that features disparate objects: from a lovely spring onion to the craft of the paper maker.

KLEINES ABC – UND SYLLABIR-BUCH. [A MALL AND SYLLABIC ALPHABET BOOK].

MIT KUPFERN VON C.G. GEISLER. LEIPZIG: BEY SOMMER [1814]

PF3115. K5

RARE BOOK COLLECTION

SIMPLY SUPERB

A group of 55 hand-colored lithographs by the German painter and typographer Friedrich Kleukens (1878-1956) are featured in this scarce first edition of one of the most exquisite artist's alphabets of the twentieth century. In mint condition, this signed volume is # 34 of an edition of 100.

VOGEL - ABC. [ABC of Birds]. KLEUKENS (Friedrich Wilhelm).

ABC in 52 Bildern von F. W. Kleukens. Darmstadt: Ratio Presse.

Darmstadt. 1920.

PZ10.3.K67 Vo

Rare Book Collection

Fantastical ABC, inspired by surrealism

An Alphabet book illustrated by the noted post- WW II, Swedish designer Stig

Lindberg, who worked in the Gustavsberg Workshops during the dynamic period of Swedish industrial art.

LINDBERG, STIG. *ABC*.

Illustrated by Britt G. HALLQVIST.

Stockholm: Bokförlaget Natur och Kultur. [1951].

4.PZ. 833

A playful Alphabet Panorama

A polychrome paper scroll exposed through a window in the wood frame, shows playful children's scenes. The unusual alphabetical order, follows the first letters of the children's names.

LITTLE PETS ABC PANORAMA.

Illustrated by William Momberger. New York: McLoughlin Bros., c1870s.

PE1155. L577 1870.

Rare Book Collection

Moral Lessons adorned with Chapter Letters

Moral stories, interlaced with Biblical references, are arranged alphabetically:

“Boys are very apt to think that it is a proof of courage to square off.”

“Casting the rope over one's head and under feet, is a fine exercise for the body and limbs.”

Living Letters. Written by the American Sunday-School Union and revised by the Committee of Publication. Philadelphia: American Sunday-School Union, no. 146 Chestnut Street, c1841.

PE1155 . L58 1841.

Rare Book Collection

The Artful Alphabet

The art of Bruno Munari – the internationally acclaimed Italian artist, graphic designer, and children's book creator, has been exhibited in museums from Tokyo, to Paris, from Holland, to Brazil and the United States. Winner of the 1974 Hans Christian Andersen Medal, Munari's books have been translated into numerous languages.

MUNARI, BRUNO.

Bruno Munari's ABC.

San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2003.

Originally published in the United States in 1960 by The World Publishing Company.

PE 1155 .M2003

Children's Literature Center

Out of Africa

The decorative and fact-filled illustrations of *Ashanti* introduce twenty-six native peoples of Africa. They garnered the Dillons' their second Caldecott medal.

MUSGROVE, MARGARET.

Ashanti to Zulu. African Traditions. Pictures by Leo and Diane Dillon.

New York: The Dial Press, 1976.

GN 645 .M 87

Learning Chinese Characters can be Fun

An entertaining introduction to basic Chinese characters.

NIEMAN, CHRISTOPH.

The Pet Dragon. New York: Greenwillow Books, 2008.

PZ 7 .N56848 Pet 2008

An artful Syllabary

A lovely folio with decorative symbols of animals and Japanese “letters” created in stencil—and hand-dying technique. Okamura was a leading artist of Japanese folk art style, of which this is a superb example.

PZ7. N56848

Rare Book Collection

OKAMURA, KICHIEMON. *Okamura: Iroha emoji* [Figurative writing of the Japanese syllabary]. 44 illustrations in color, on hand-made kozo paper. Published in 30 copies. Signed by the artist.

Shōwa 40 (1965).

NK8667.05 .A6

Rare Book Collection

Pre-WWI Patriotism

Using the letters of the alphabet, this tall and handsome picture book explains, in color, that *A* is for *A*rtillery, *F* stands for the *F*lag to *W* is for *W*est Point.

OUR ARMY ABC. [New York: Raphael Tuck & Sons, Ltd. 1911].

UA25. O97 1911

Rare Book Collection

An exceedingly rare alphabet Game

Most likely created for a wealthy family, these 26 ivory alphabet discs are decorated with a letter carved and inked on one side and an image beginning with that letter delicately scrimshawed and hand-colored on the reverse. .

OXFORD INSTRUCTOR.

Complete series of 26 circular ivory discs, one for each letter of the alphabet housed in a little ivory drum. English, circa 1790s.

LB1029. T6 094 [1790]

Rare Book Collection

A 1940s Alphabet

Dramatic lithographs – reflecting the idealistic notions of this noted immigrant couple – depict American icons and ideas from the Liberty Bell to “Z for Zeal, an American trait.”

PETERSHAM, MAUD AND MISKA. *An American ABC*.
New York: The Macmillan Company, 1941.
E178 . 3 .P5

Bold and Inventive

A Hans Christian Andersen winner, the Czech artist Pacovská creates an imaginative, multi-dimensional excursion into color and design.

PACOVSKÁ, KVETA.
Alphabet. London: Tate Publishing, 2012.
Call #: in process.

Animals of the Alphabet

For each letter of the alphabet there appears a color illustration of an animal and an appropriate verse created by a classic Swiss designer.

PIATTI, CELESTINO.
Animal ABC. New York: Atheneum, 1966.
PZ8.3.P55825

Tongue-twisting through the Alphabet

Hand-colored illustrations accompany a set of quaint tongue twisters. Originally published by John Harris of London in 1813, this is the 2. American edition.

A sampling:

“Needy Noodle nipp’d his neighbor’s nutmeg” and “oliver Oglethorpe ogled an Owl and Ouster.”

PETER PIPHER’S PRACTICAL PRINCIPLES OF PLAIN AND PERFECT PRONUNCIATION.

Philadelphia: Willard Johnson, no. 141 South Street, 1836.

P.Z.8.3. P442

Rare Book Collection

Shaker Simplicity

Created by a noted and beloved husband-and-wife team, this whimsical “abecedarius” features the animals from alligator to zebra.

PROVENSEN, ALICE AND MARTIN.

A Peacable Kingdom. The Shaker ABECEDARIUS. New York: The Viking Press, 1978.

PZ 8 .3 .P2746 1978

A multi-sensory Approach to the Alphabet

This remarkable, multi-sensory alphabet will surely appeal to all children, not only those who are visually or hearing impaired.

ROFÉ, APRIL.

The SENSEational Alphabet. Written and illustrated by April Rofé.

Signal Mt. TN: Waldenhouse Publishers, 2006.

PE1449 R66

The Alphabet through Hieroglyphics

A boxed set of Egyptian hieroglyph stamps encourage young readers to compose complete sentences.

ROEHRIG, CATHARINE H.

Fun with Hieroglyphs. New York: Viking, 1990

PJ1097 .R64

Children's Literature Center

“Calligraphy, or, the Art of Drawing Letters

As bombs and missiles fall on Bagdad, Ali practices the difficult and beautiful letters of the Arabic script, including the words for “Harb” (war) and “Salām” (Peace).

RUMFORD, JAMES.

Silent Music. A Story of Bagdad. New York: Roaring Brook Press. A Neal Porter Book: 2008.

PZ 7 .R8878 Si

When Letters show Feelings

Children's faces, depicted by the letters of the alphabet, are carried through the story told in alliterative text.

SEEGER, LAURA VACCARO.

Walter was Worried. New Milford, Connecticut: Roaring Brook Press, a Neal Porter Book, 2005.

PZ7 .S4514 Wal

An Early Alphabet Game

A nonsensical alphabet game book for 16 players.

STENNETT, R. *Aldiborontiphoskypborniostikos: a Round for merry Parties, with Rules for playing the Game;* embellished with sixteen elegantly colored engravings.

New York: Published by S. King, 136 William-Street, 1825.

PZ6 .S825

Rare Book Collection

An Alphabet from Russia

Mixing folk art and modern design, this boldly-illustrated alphabet book by a noted Russian artist, features 28 toys. Exceedingly rare, this early 20th century Soviet picture book compliments the early holdings in LC's Grushnikov collection.

SUVOROV (A.A.) *Igrouchki v kartinkakh*. [Toys in Pictures]. Leningrad, 1926.
PG 2115.S88 1926
Rare Book Collection

An early Alphabet

In this little hand-stitched volume, quaint rhymes and hand colored illustrations present the adventures, virtues and vices of boys like Tom Easy, Frank Fretful and George Gossip.

TAKE YOUR CHOICE, OR, THE ABC REGIMENT ON PARADE. New York: Published by D. Felt, Stationer's Hall, no. 245 Pearl St. New York and D. Felt & Co. Stationer's Hall, 82 State St., Boston 1827.
PE1155.T35 1827
Rare Book Collection

An early Child's Primer

Town criers - from the almanac seller to the knife grinder - are depicted in lively illustrations in this "battledore," a folded booklet-primer, the successor to the horn book.

The Uncle's Present: a new Battledoor. Philadelphia: Published by Jacob Johnson, 147 Market Street [between 1810 and 1815].
PE1119.A1
Rare Book Collection

A 1940s Homage to Canines

An alphabetical parade of dogs from around the world.

TICE, CLARA.
ABC Dogs. New York: Abrams, 1995.
SF426.2 T52
Children's Literature Center

A Rhymed Alphabet in bold color from the House of McLoughlin

An assortment of nursery tales— one devoted to the alphabet – produced by the pioneering children's book publisher known for its full color illustrations.

[Valentine, Laura].
Aunt Louisa's golden Gift: comprising Doings of the Alphabet, Childhood Delight. Dame Crump and her Pig. Hush-a-bye-Baby. Original Designs by Howard and Herrick. Twenty four pages of Illustrations and printed in Colors and Gold.
New York: McLoughlin Bros., [1879].

PZ8 .V3252 Go 1879
Rare Book Collection

A Biedermeier Picture Book

This exceedingly rare portfolio is considered one of the most beautiful alphabet books from the Biedermeier period (ca. 1815-1848) – a time of heightened achievement in the arts, literature and music. Using the alphabet as his Leitmotif, the artist has created handsome, hand-colored scenes of bourgeois, military and peasant life.

Voltz, Joahnn Michael.

Bilderalphabet zur Erweckung des Scharfsinns [Pictorial alphabet to awaken children's minds ... With 24 hand colored lithographs.

Nürnberg: Renner, G. N. (1838).

PZ32. V65 1838 Folio.

Rare Book Collection

An Alphabet Classic

This iconic alphabetic picture show created by one of Great Britain's most celebrated picture book artists, was awarded the prestigious Kate Greenaway medal for outstanding illustration.

WILDSMITH, BRIAN.

ABC. New York: Franklin Watts, 1963.

PZ7 .W647 Aac 1963

Cover Image from: Leonard Everett Fisher. *The ABC Exhibit*. New York: Macmillan, 1991.