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. Allerliebst komisch figuerlich dargestellt; mit Bilder-Szenen aus der Vergangenheit und Gegenwart durch sinnige poetische Erlaeuterungen ausgestattet.
[ABC, the original ABC. Illustrated charmingly with scenes from the past and present, explained by poetic verses].
PZ 32.O75 1835
Rare Book Collection

Making a Picture Book
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
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.
Mankato, Minnesota: Creative Editions, 2005.
PE 1155. D445

The Alphabet in Trompe-L’Oeil
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.
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.
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.

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).


**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.**

**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.**

**A popular and pleasing Pop-Up**
A simple and straightforward, moveable alphabet by a master of the genre.

**CROWTHER, ROBERT.**

**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.**

**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 Cumptich, makes his picture book debut with a stylish abecedary using only Bembo typeface letters and punctuations marks.

DE CUMPTICH, ROBERT DE VICQ
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 Ehlert’s many boldly-illustrated, child-pleasing picture books.

EHLERT, LOIS.
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.
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.
PZ34.3.F434
Rare Book Collection

A 1930s Alphabet by a noted Minnesotan
After her first solo show the 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.
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.
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!
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

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.

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.
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.**

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.**

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).**

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.


*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.  

*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.  
GN 645 .M 87

**Learning Chinese Characters can be Fun**  
An entertaining introduction to basic Chinese characters.

NIEMAN, CHRISTOPH.  

**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-WW I Patriotism**  
Using the letters of the alphabet, this tall and handsome picture book explains, in color, that *A* is for Artillery, *F* stands for the Flag to *W* is for West 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.*
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.
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.
PZ8.3.P55825

**Tongue-twisting through the Alphabet**
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.
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.  
PE1449 R66

*The Alphabet through Hieroglyphics*  
A boxed set of Egyptian hieroglyph stamps encourage young readers to compose complete sentences.

ROEHRIG, CATHARINE H.  
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.  
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.  
PZ7 .S4514 Wal

*An Early Alphabet Game*  
A nonsensical alphabet game book for 16 players.

STENNETT, R. Aldiborontiphoskyphorniostikos: 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 Battledo. 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. 
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].
New York: McLoughlin Bros., [1879].
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.


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.
