



A FEW METAFICTION PICTURE BOOKS

In metafictional picture books, the author and illustrator play with the normal expectations of picture book elements. Devices used in metafiction include stories within stories, narrator and characters speaking to each other and the reader, narrator and characters taking over the story, and unexpected changes in layout.

The Monster at the End of this Book, by Jon Stone, illustrated by Mike Smolin

The Sesame Street character Grover has a heated dialogue with the reader. Grover doesn't want the reader to keep turning the pages because there is a monster at the end of the book.

Harold and the Purple Crayon, by Crockett Johnson

Harold, with his purple crayon, draws the setting and plot of the book, and ends up solving the resulting problem.

The Day the Crayons Quit, by Drew Daywalt, illustrated by Oliver Jeffers

The crayons write humorous complaining letters to the main character. For example, the Peach crayon is annoyed that someone peeled off his wrapping, so he feels NAKED.

The Pencil, by Allan Ahlberg and Bruce Ingman

The lonely pencil draws characters and a paintbrush to keep him company. After trouble ensues, he draws an eraser. Uh-oh. Guess what the eraser does!

Interrupting Chicken, by David Ezra Stein

Chicken keeps interrupting the bedtime stories. Quite humorous.

Chester, by ~~Melanie Watt~~ Chester (and other Chester books)

Suffice it to say that Chester the cat crosses out the author's name on the cover and puts his own name in its place.

Redwoods, by Jason Chin

On the subway, a boy picks up a nonfiction book about redwood forests. He then enters the setting in the book. Fascinating facts and enjoyable story. One story line fiction, and one nonfiction.

Z is for Moose and *Circle, Square, Moose*, by Kelly Bingham and Paul Zelinsky

Moose wants to be the center of attention and breaks into the scenes. What a character!

The Three Little Pigs, written and illustrated by David Wiesner

The pigs break out of the traditional fairy tale, start folding up the pages of the book, and eventually run into characters from other tales and genres.

No Bears, by Meg McKinlay, illustrated by Leila Rudge

On the simplest level the main character, Ella, writes a book within the actual book. Many metafictional devices.

There are Cats in this Book, written and illustrated by Viviane Schwarz

Both the cat characters and the narrator speak to the reader. The narrator introduces both the book and the cats, and later closes the book in a lovely way.

A Book, written and illustrated by Mordicai Gerstein

The main character runs into characters from different genres, as she searches for her own story. During her encounters, the reader learns about the elements of different genres.

No Monkeys, No Chocolate, by Melissa Stewart and Allen Young, illustrated by Nicole Wong

Two little worms make humorous comments about each page of the book, as the narrator recounts where chocolate comes from. One of the narratives is fiction, and the other is nonfiction.

Chloe and the Lion, by Mac Barnett and illustrated by Adam Rex

The author, illustrator, and main character interact and talk to each other. This book operates on so many levels that there are three instances of "The End."

The Book with No Pictures, by B.J. Novak

The adult reading the book has to read whatever the book says, including silly words. Children take delight in the book taking charge of the adult reader.

Help! We Need a Title!, written and illustrated by Hervé Tullet

The characters in the illustrations realize that there are people watching them. "I think they want a story." Eventually they realize that they aren't very good at telling a story, and they call in the author. Hervé Tullet appears in the book and speaks with the characters.

My Lucky Day, written and illustrated by Keiko Kasza

The traditional folk tale relationship between the villain fox and helpless pig is turned topsy-turvy.

Goodreads' Picture Book Club will be discussing "meta fiction in August, 2015.

<http://www.goodreads.com/topic/show/15014204-august-2015-meta-fiction-vote-for-books-here>

Here Goodreads' Listopia list of metafiction picture books:

https://www.goodreads.com/list/show/82505.Picture_Books_That_Break_the_Fourth_Wall