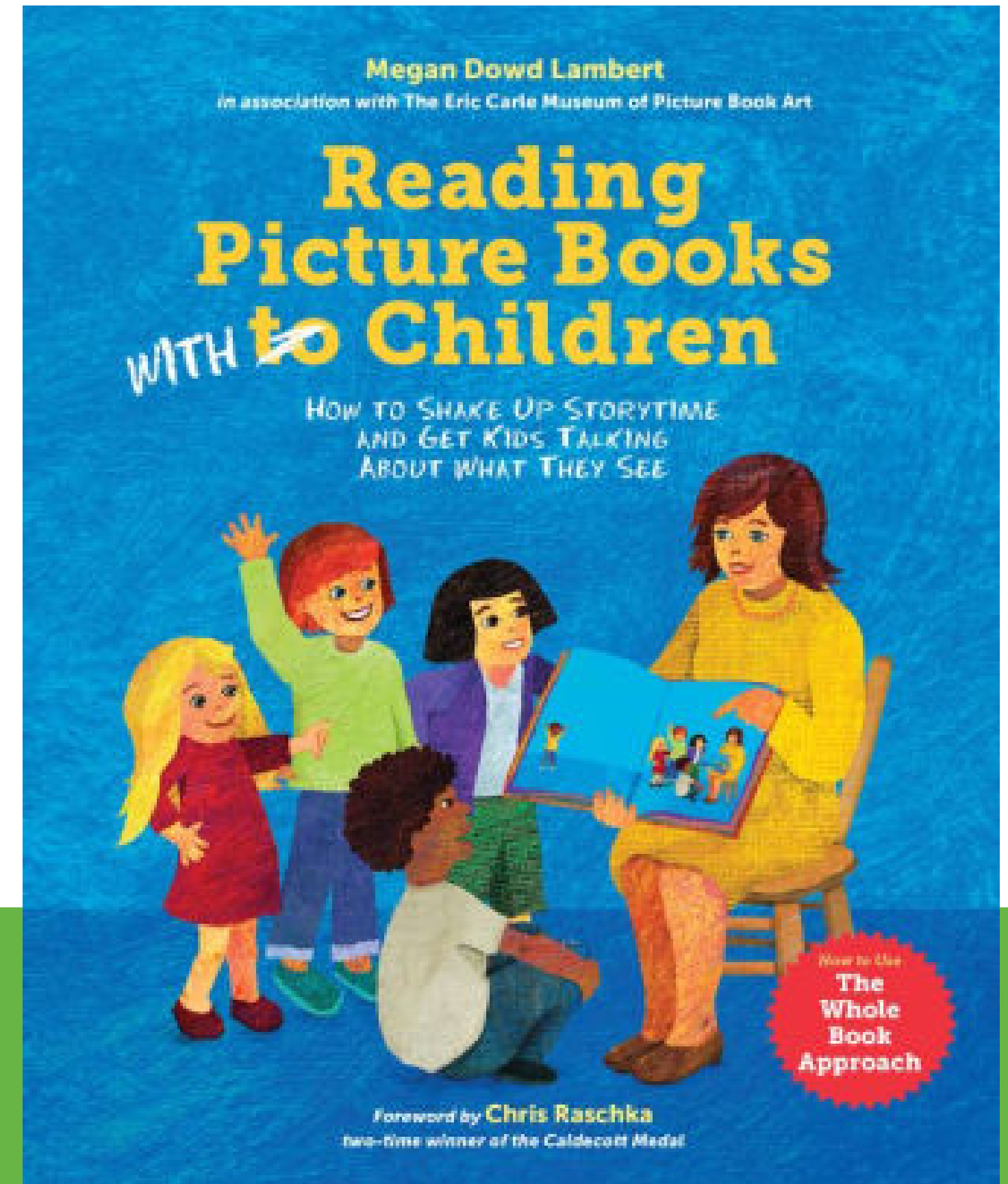


Megan Dowd Lambert and The Whole Book Approach



How to shake up
storytime and get kids
talking about what
they see

Gretchen Hohmeyer
Ellen Sulzycki
Group Presentation
Fall 2021
EDUC 792M





Agenda and Objectives



Agenda

- Place the Whole Book Approach in context, and relate to theories
- Identify Megan Dowd Lambert's contribution to the field of visual literacy
- Critiques and field perception
- Lead participants in a group activity

Objectives

- Participants will leave with an understanding of the Whole Book Approach and be able to put it into practice
- Participants will acquire discourse surrounding picturebooks, visual thinking strategies, and storytelling practices

The Whole Book Approach

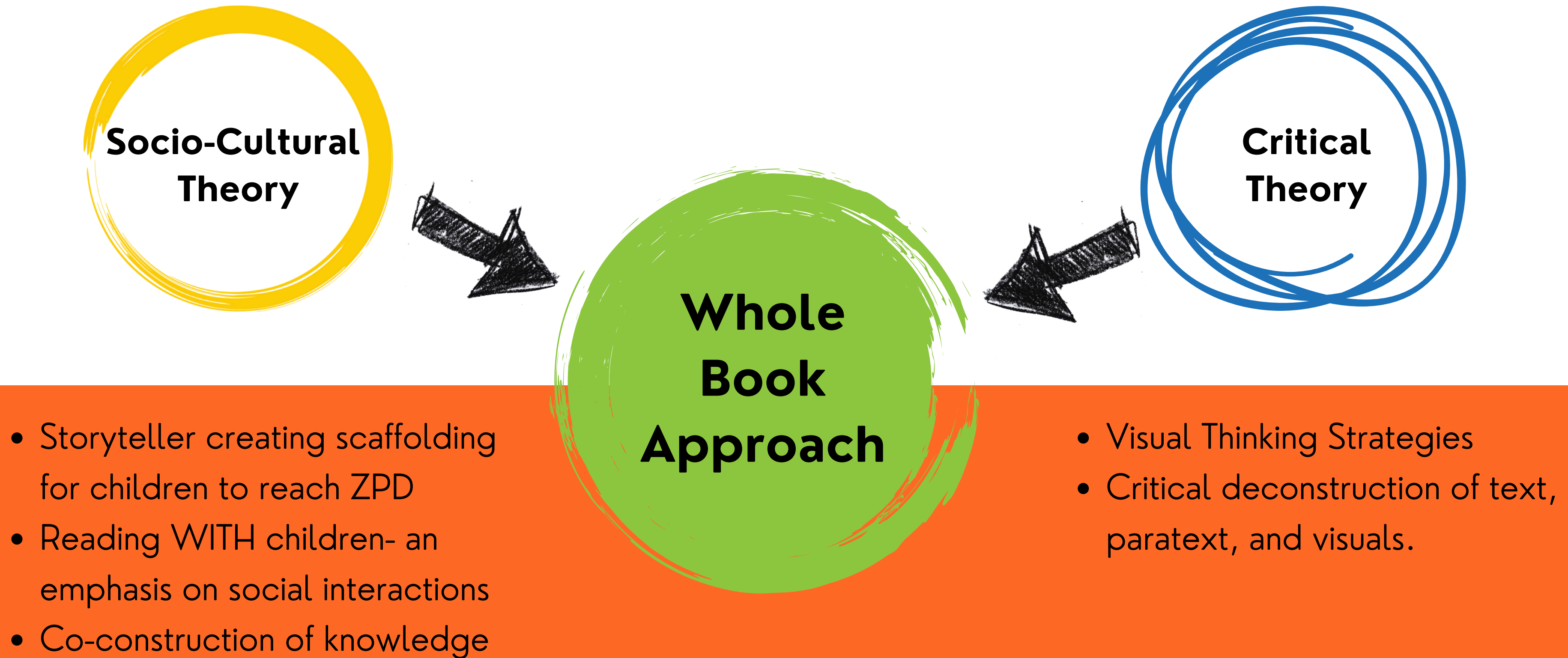
WBA is an interactive storytime model centered on the picture book as a visual form. This intentional, inquiry-based approach to reading aloud puts art and design (and children's responses to them) at the center of the storytime experience.

Children evaluate the picture book as an art form with the goal of using this critical engagement as a platform for interactive reading experiences.

By encouraging discussion about the art, design and production elements of a picture book during the reading, WBA storytimes emerge as facilitated discussions rather than storytelling or performance.



Theoretical Lens



"I think of the Whole Book Approach as a means of reading with children, as opposed to reading to them, as it invites children to make meaning of text, art, and design—the whole book!"

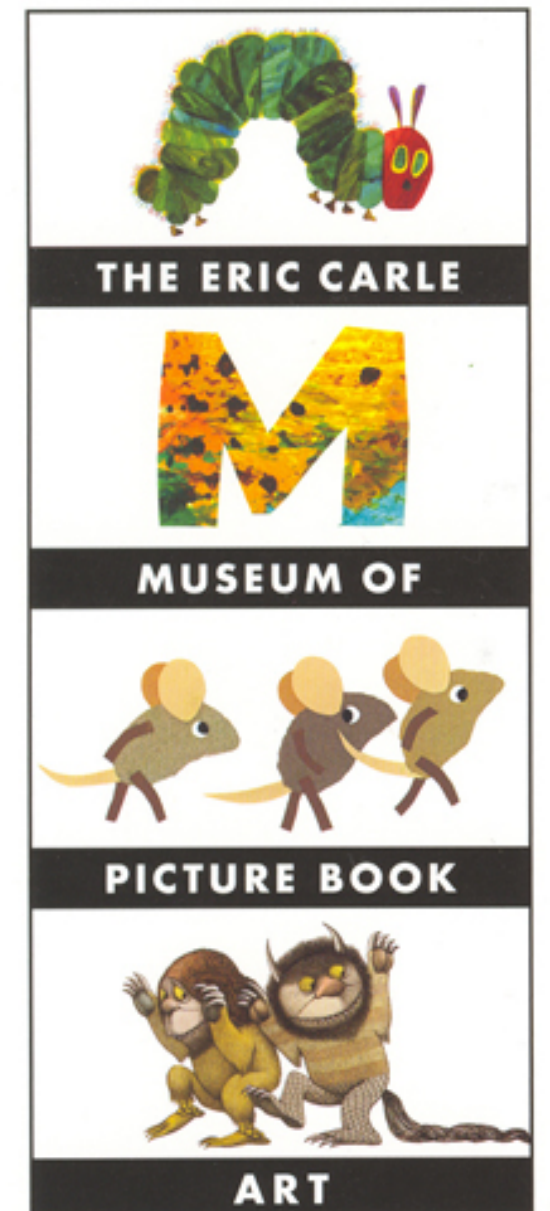


Megan Dowd Lambert

Lambert developed this method during her graduate studies in children's literature at Simmons University and while working in the Education Department of the Eric Carle Museum of Picture Book Art.

THE WHOLE BOOK APPROACH

Discover the difference between reading *to* children and reading *with* children. The Whole Book Approach was developed by former Carle educator Megan Dowd Lambert, author of [Reading Picture Books With Children](#). Her work helps adults create an active, discussion-based reading experience for children that builds observation and critical-thinking skills.



So Where's the Research?

Do we need it to claim this approach as viable?



No empirical research has taken up this method, and Lambert did not take any data herself in a way we would consider viable.



This approach has been vetted by the Eric Carle Picture Book Museum and they train educators from all over the country.

Critiques and Reception

Lambert's Whole Book Approach challenges librarians to think differently about how they share a picture book in a group setting. It asks adult readers to value the opinions of young listeners and to engage them to become active participants as they try to make meaning of all they see and hear during a shared reading.



Traditionalists' concerns that the integrity of the story might be compromised by many interruptions are unfounded; Lambert rightly stresses that reading both the words and the art are equally important and provides ample evidence of children's increased engagement with the books being shared.



the Whole Book Approach is really more child-centered than book-centered, focusing on the ways children interact with books and emphasizing their experiences of what they see and hear during a storytime rather than analyzing the text or pictures.



Engaging with the Whole Book Approach

- **Visual Thinking Strategies**
- **Critical Deconstruction**
- **Analysis of Paratext**



Visual Thinking Strategies

Abigail Housen and Philip Yenawine

"...just as children must develop print awareness and other skills to be able to decode text and achieve fluency in their reading of words, learning to read pictures is a skill that develops over time and exposure" (p. 71)



Question 1

What do you think is happening in this picture?



Question 2

What do you see that makes you say that?



Question 3

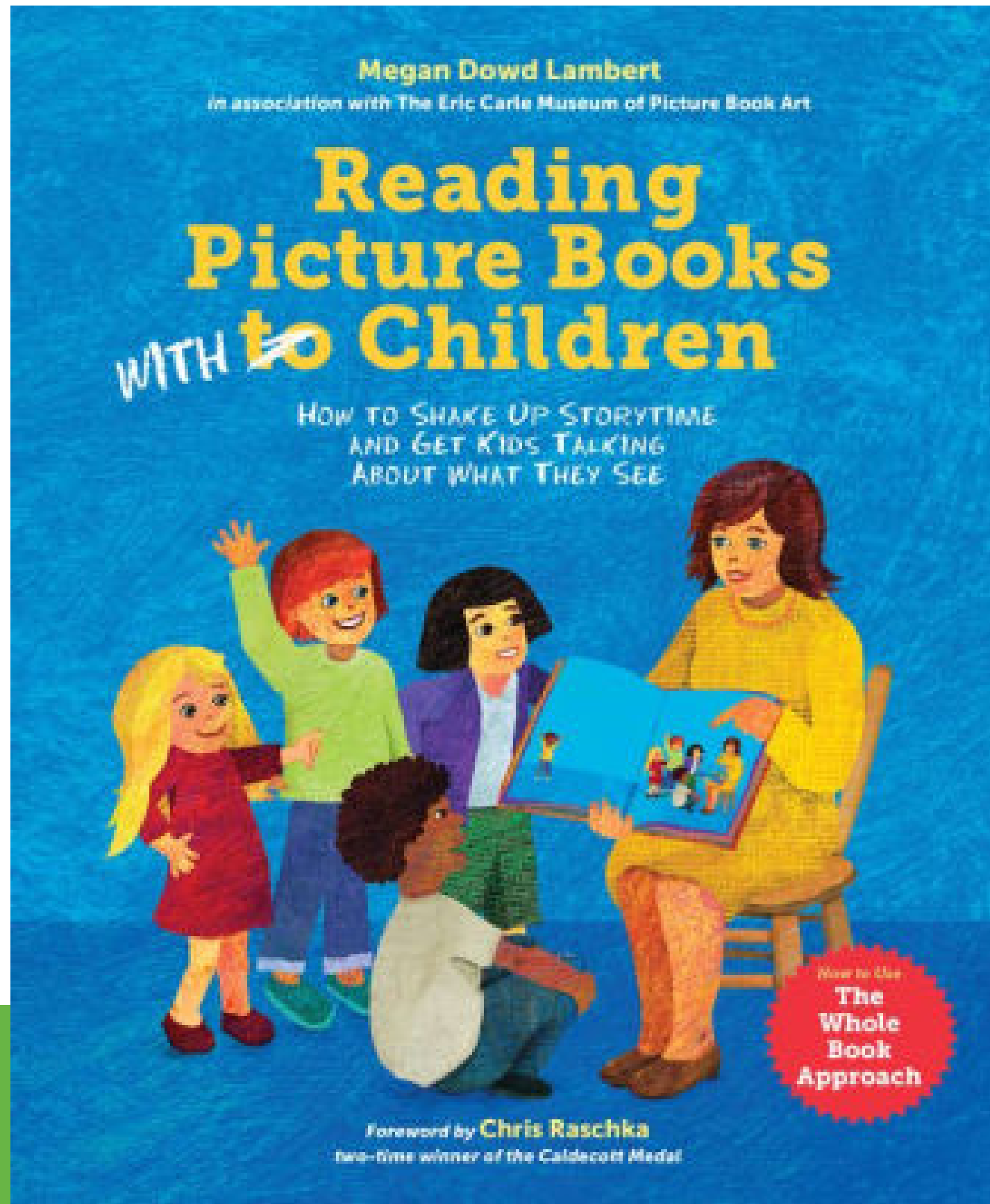
What else can we find?

Critical Deconstruction of the Text

"...inviting children to share what they think and observe about paratexts and page layout provokes deeper awareness of art and design during storytime. This, in turn, prompts consideration of how the visual and material elements of the picture book interact with and inform the reading of the verbal text" (p. 66).

Possible Questions

- Whose story is this? Who is the reader?
- When and where was the book written? By Whom?
- Who is named? And who isn't?
- Who gets punished? Who gets praised?
- Who speaks? Who is silenced?
- Who acts? Who is acted upon?
- Who looks? Who is observed?



THE WHOLE BOOK APPROACH

Naming the Parts of the Picture Book

Paratexts—

"the material of a book beyond the art and text of the main text, or book proper."

TRIM SIZE AND LAYOUT

Picture books can have many different trim sizes and a landscape or portrait layout, often correlating to something about the book.

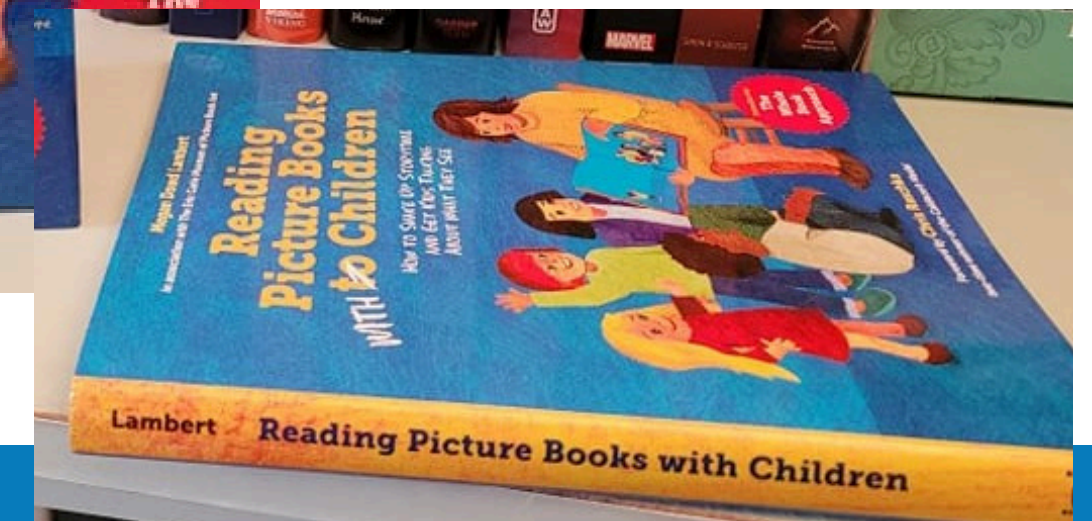
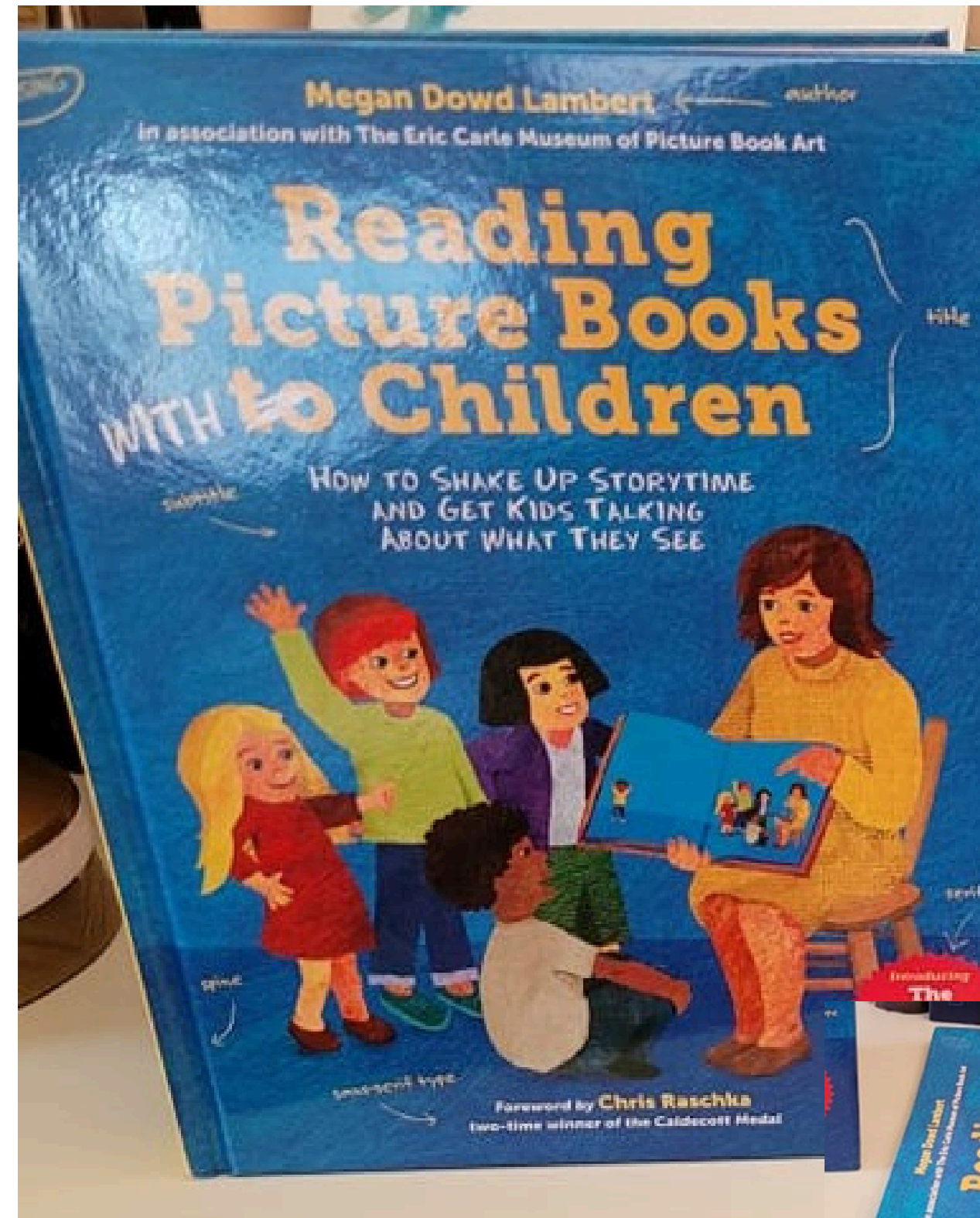
For example, in this picture, "A Parade for George Washington" (2020) is a short, horizontal layout to help showcase the parade's movement within the pages.



JACKETS AND COVERS

Some picture books only have a hard cover. Some have slip covers that come off and reveal special information about the story inside.

Lambert's book has a slip cover that comes off to reveal elements of the book labeled, much like you would do in a WBA storytime.



ENDPAPERS

These are the bits of paper at the front and back of the book, glued to the cover. Sometimes they contain predictive information.

For example, these endpapers look just like a rainbow, however, the rainbow is in the order the colored animals will appear during "Brown Bear, Brown Bear" (1970).



FRONT MATTER

Front matter includes the title page and any information at the front of the book before the story starts.

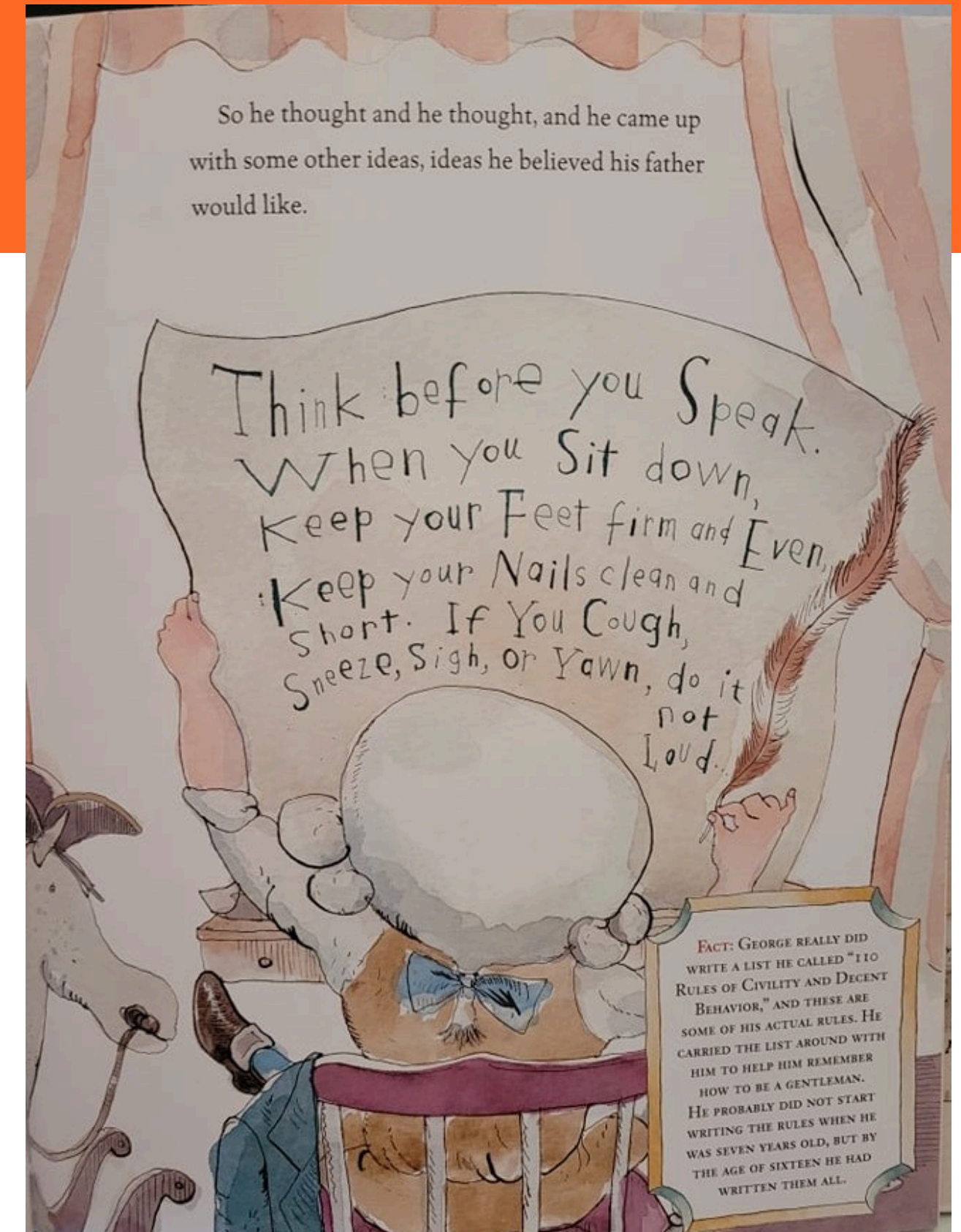
Sometimes front matter is actually **WHERE** the story starts, so you don't want to skip it!



TYPOGRAPHY

Font choice can signal many things, such as emotion or tone in the story.

In this page from "George Washington's Birthday" (2012), different font choices tell you which text is part of the narrative, which text is being written by George, and which is factual information.



PAGE DESIGN AND GUTTERS

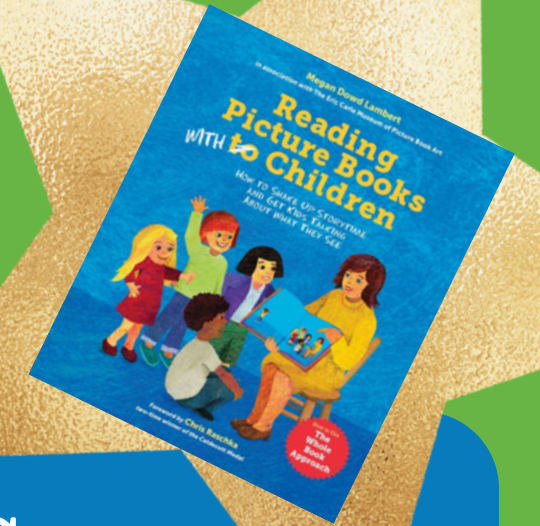
This is much more complicated than this, but here are some basics: the top is a double spread image that goes over the gutter (the middle of the book).



The bottom image is two single spread images, clearly separated by the gutter, one which is framed and the other is not.



The Goal of a WBA Storytime



“Far from undermining the enjoyment of a picture book and rendering storytime ‘a more solemn affair,’ I’ve found that interactive, shared reading transactions focused on art and design enhance the pleasure of storytime because they position the picture book as a meeting space for child and adult. By slowing down the reading to accommodate and encourage discussion about paratexts, design and production elements, and illustration, the Whole Book Approach swings wide the gates to the picture book as a playground for the mind, affirming that the child’s voice is crucial to the success of a dynamic and, yes, playful storytime experience” (p. 94).

Thank you!

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Resources

Lambert, M. D., & Raschka, C. (2015). Reading picture books with children: how to shake up storytime and get kids talking about what they see. Charlesbridge.

Picture Books Resources:

Adler, D. A. (2020). A parade for George Washington (J. O'Brien, Illus.). Holiday House.

Martin Jr, B. (1970). Brown bear, brown bear, what do you see? (E. Carle, Illus.) Henry Holt and Company.

McNamara, M. (2012). George Washington's birthday: A mostly true tale (B. Blitt, Illus.). Schwartz & Wade Books.

Mora, O. (2019). Saturday. Little, Brown and Company.

Shepard, R. A. (2021). Runaway: The daring escape of Ona Judge (K. Mallett, Illus.). Farrar Straus Giroux Books for Young Readers.