



Ezra Jack Keats Bookmaking Competition

A Teacher and Student Handbook

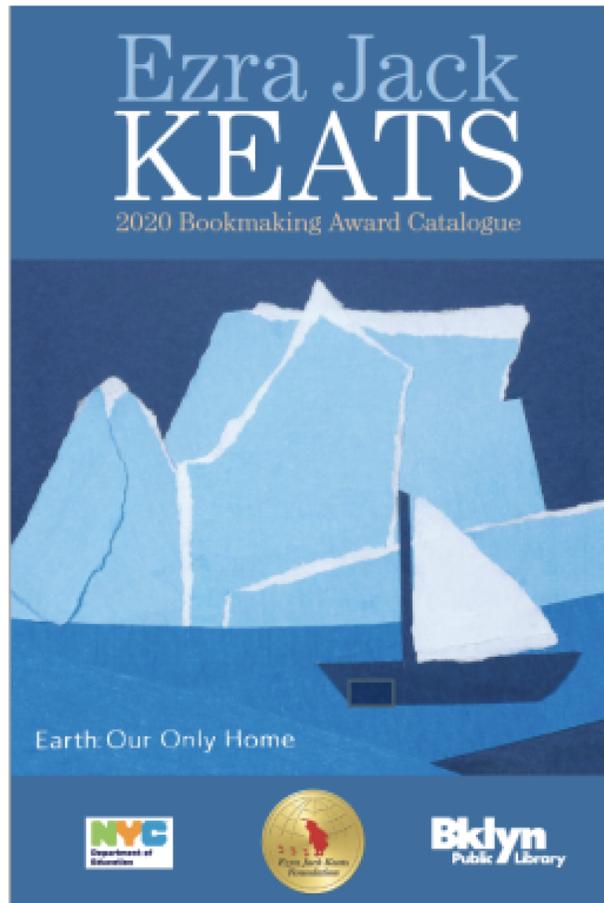


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This resource was created by the Office of Arts and Special Projects
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The Power of the Picture Book: A Letter to Colleagues

Dear Educators,

Exemplary picture books are powerful teaching tools. With their images and words, they enchant, instruct, surprise, amaze and move us in incredible, unforgettable ways. Successful picture books become models for quality artwork and excellent writing.

By creating their own picture books, students experience first-hand how books are made and how authors and illustrators think.

They learn to:

- consider their choice of words and phrases
- consider their audience in terms of message and clarity
- make artistic decisions

The Ezra Jack Keats Bookmaking Competition provides opportunities for students to:

- engage in research
- analyze text and image
- explore authors' and illustrators' styles
- tap into their creativity
- develop rigor and perseverance
- develop independent voices and opinions

Making a book is actually quite simple and no matter what subject you teach you already have the basic skills and, probably, the materials in your classroom to lead your class in a bookmaking activity right now. The information in this booklet and in the brand new EJK Bookmaking Tutorials on [Writing](#) and [Illustrating](#) (link coming soon), and on the EJK Foundation website, provide valuable guidance as your students create books they will be proud of, and remember for the rest of their lives. This resource contains information to support the work you will do with your students. We wish you and your students an exciting journey through the rewarding process of creating picture books.

Most sincerely,



Karen Rosner
Director of Visual Arts

Decide Together What Makes a Good Picture Book

A picture book study can begin with students discussing their favorite picture books. To help each student feel invested in the process, the following steps are suggested.

Have your students:

- Share a favorite picture book from home or from the class/school library.
- Meet in small groups and take turns explaining why they each like their book.
- Make a list of the important points made by each member of the group.
- Work together using their notes to create a group list of what they believe makes a good picture book.
- Meet back with the whole class and compare their list with those of the other groups.
- Working as a class and guided by the teacher, create a master list, incorporating all ideas.

Analyzing the Text of a Picture Book

To prepare to create their own picture books students should become familiar with different genres. Using the questions below, students working individually or in groups can examine a variety of picture books from the viewpoint of a writer and consider how the author might answer each question. During this process students will become aware of the components of successful picture book text.

- Is the book fiction or nonfiction, biography, history, fantasy, poetry or science?
- What structure was used to best tell the story?
 - Snap-shot (comparable to a photo album with each page a stand-alone)
 - Linear (a journey from one place to another)
 - Circular (the characters may change but the action ends where it began)
- What is the problem being solved? (a character's problem, or what information is being presented and how?)
- What is the beginning, middle and end of the story?
- Is the location an important part of the story?
- Is there a narrator and how does the narrator fit into the story?
- Is the voice of the narrator in the first or third person?
- Is the story told through dialogue?
- Are there too many key characters in the story to remember?
- Why are the characters people, animals, or objects?
- Does the story take place in the past, present or future?
- Is the season, month, week, day or time part of the story?
- Is there too much text on each page for a children's picture book?
- Does the text repeat information provided by the illustrations?
- Does every page need text?

Analyzing the Illustrations in a Picture Book

Picture book illustration can be explored in much the same way as the text, using the questions below as a guide. Students working individually or in groups, can examine a variety of picture books and discuss how an illustrator might answer each question. These exercises will inspire the students to think creatively about what they want from their own illustrations, and text.

- Does the physical shape/size of the book relate to the subject matter?
- What media did the illustrator use and how does it serve the story?
- How does the cover art relate to the story being told and invite the reader in?
- Is foreground, middle ground, background depicted on each page?In how much detail? From which perspective are images seen? Why?
- Are the images realistic, stylized, or abstract? Why?
- Are the images of characters and objects portrayed consistently so they can always be recognized?
- How do the illustrations move the story forward
- How are images placed in relation to the text?
- Is the text designed as part of the illustrations?
- How is “white space” used?
- What is the mood established by the pictures and how?
- How are color, line, shape and texture used to enhance the content of the story?
- Are light and shadow important parts of the images?
- Would you have illustrated the story differently?

Children’s Book Illustrators



Top Row: Chris Rashka, Oge More, Bryan Collier, Matt James, Jessica Love, Daisy Hirst, Shadra Strckland, Jessixa Bagley
Bottom Row: Aaron Meshon, Bianca Diaz, Christopher Robinson, Sophie Blackall, Pat Cummings, Doug Salati, Jenny Sue Kostecki Shaw, Mike Curato, Christopher Myers

EJK Bookmaking Tutorials: Writing & Illustration

The EJK Foundation has created, along with award winning author/illustrator Katie Yamasaki, **six tutorials that will guide you through the entire process of inspiring your students to find, write, edit and polish their story and create, refine and combine the illustrations that will result in the creation of an original picture book.**

There are three tutorials dedicated to the writing and three to the illustration process. Each tutorial is separated into bite sized segments that will allow you to watch what you need, as many times as necessary, with your students, or before you present your lesson.

Visit the [EJK Bookmaking Tutorial Webpage](#) to find the topics listed below.

Writing Tutorials

- #1. Finding Your Story
- #2. Beginning, Middle and End
- #3. Pacing, Pagination and Polishing

Illustration Tutorials

- #1. Materials, Media and Method
- #2. Storyboards, Thumbnails and Sketch Pads: Planning the Visual Story
- #3. Components and Construction



Katie Yamasaki from her EJK Bookmaking Tutorial in front of her mural

TIPS FROM THE SELECTION COMMITTEE

Along with what already has been noted in the memo, here are some of the qualities the Selection Committee focuses on when considering each book submitted for the EJK Bookmaking Competition. **We hope you find the following information helpful...and of course, share it with your students!**

TEXT/STORY:

- Concise and condensed text, no more than 1,000 words.
- A story or narrative with a beginning, a middle and end.
- Engaging storytelling
- Correct spelling and grammar
- Legible text
- Book title and name of author on the cover of the book and on the title page

ILLUSTRATIONS:

- Support and advance the story
- Cohesive design throughout (including text, front and back covers)
- Effective use of color
- Creative use of materials
- A cover (front and back) illustration that offers a clue to the book's story.
- Use of text as illustration, or as part of illustration.

OVERALL CONSIDERATION OF THE BOOK:

- Integrated images and text to convey the story
- Attention paid to every page
- Use of blank pages only when called for in the story
- All text and artwork must be the original work of the student(s).
- Bound creatively and securely
- No smaller than 6" x 9" and no larger than 15" x 18"



2020 EJK Bookmaking Competition

City Winners (LtoR)

The Telephone, Andre Kulikov (Grade 8)

The Comforts of Home, Nadine Baidan (Grade 11)

Children in World War II, Patrick Szewczyk (Grade 4)

Additional Resources

Things to Know

- [This is More than a Competition](#)
- [Bookmaking: A Glossary of Terms](#)

Book Binding Methods

- [How to Make a Concertina Book](#)
- [How to Make a Pop up Book](#)
- [How to Make a Spiral Bound Book](#)

[Ezra Jack Keats Foundation](#)

- [EJK Bookmaking Competition Page](#)
- [Tools for Teachers & Librarians](#)
- [EJK Award Book Discussion Guides](#)

Websites for Diverse Picture Books

- [Ezra Jack Keats Award Winners and Honorees](#)
- [We Need Diverse Books](#)
- [The Brown Bookshelf](#)
- [Asian/Pacific American Award for Literature](#)