



## Children's Literature (Edinburgh Critical Guides to Literature)

*By Matthew Grenby*

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**Children's Literature (Edinburgh Critical Guides to Literature)** By Matthew Grenby

This book outlines what is different about writing for children followed by a succinct account of the often neglected history of children's literature. It goes on to examine a number of genres - fairy tales and fables, moral tales and books of instruction, fantasy and adventure stories, domestic and school stories, and poetry. These accounts are inclusive and wide-ranging, focusing primarily on the multiplicity of British and American texts published between the mid-eighteenth century and today and the religious, political, ideological and pedagogical contexts which influenced them. The possible futures of the study of children's literature are discussed, especially the wide variety of scholarly methodologies which are increasingly being used in the analysis of children's literature.

### Key features

- \*First concise and affordable introductory guide to children's literature.
- \*Extensive coverage of children's literature, across genres, continents and from the beginnings of the form to Harry Potter and Philip Pullman.
- \*Examines key theoretical questions including definition, dual audience, canonicity, the relationship between text and image, 'childist criticism' and 'cross-reading'.
- \* Links close reading of texts with the historical and cultural context of their production and reception.
- \*Extensive bibliography, with a particular emphasis on internet resources through which rare and out-of-print primary texts may be accessed.

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[Grenby] has devised a cunning circuit of discussion which aims to shed light on his subject through seven genres: fables, poetry, moral and instructive tales, the school story, the family story, fantasy, and the adventure story... Above all this though is the wisdom of Dr Grenby's Conclusion where he strikes a grand blow at the all-to-frequent belittlement of children's literature among the world in general. Children's Book History Society A confident kaleidoscope of a book... Grenby is a world-class scholar of earlier children's literature--and it shows in the array of less familiar material on view--but that does not stop him taking on the moderns... We can only hope that copies of it will lodge in libraries everywhere to provide a sourcebook for students. -- Peter Hunt, Cardiff University Modern Language Review [Grenby] has devised a cunning circuit of discussion which aims to shed light on his subject through seven genres: fables, poetry, moral and instructive tales, the school story, the family story, fantasy, and the adventure story... Above all this though is the wisdom of Dr Grenby's Conclusion where he strikes a grand blow at the all-to-frequent belittlement of children's literature among the world in general. A confident kaleidoscope of a book... Grenby is a world-class scholar of earlier children's literature--and it shows in the array of less familiar material on view--but that does not stop him taking on the moderns... We can only hope that copies of it will lodge in libraries everywhere to provide a sourcebook for students.

### **About the Author**

Matthew Grenby is Reader in Children's Literature in the School of English Literature, Language and Linguistics at the University of Newcastle upon Tyne. He is the author of *The Anti-Jacobin Novel: British Conservatism and the French Revolution* (CUP, 2001) and editor, with Julia Briggs and Denis Butts, of *A History of Popular Children's Literature* (Ashgate Press, 2004).

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