

# Wordless picture books

[Literature](#), [Books](#)



Flotsam By David Wiesner A bright, science-minded boy goes to the beach equipped to collect and examine flotsam — anything floating that has been washed ashore. Bottles, lost toys, small objects of every description are among his usual finds. But there's no way he could have prepared for one particular discovery: a barnacle-encrusted underwater camera, with its own secrets to share... and to keep

The Three Pigs By David Wiesner Once upon a time three pigs built three houses, out of straw, sticks, and bricks.

Along came a wolf, who huffed and puffed... So, you think you know the rest? Think again. With David Wiesner at the helm, it's never safe to assume too much. When the wolf approaches the first house, for example, and blows it in, he somehow manages to blow the pig right out of the story frame. The text continues on schedule--"... and ate the pig up"--but the perplexed expression on the wolf's face as he looks in vain for his ham dinner is priceless. One by one, the pigs exit the fairy tale's border and set off on an adventure of their own.

Folding a page of their own story into a paper airplane, the pigs fly off to visit other storybooks, rescuing about-to-be-slain dragons and luring the cat and the fiddle out of their nursery rhyme.

A Ball for Daisy Chris Rashka 3 and up Daisy is a dog with a ball, and life could not be better. There are games of chase, cuddle times on the couch, and walks in the park; however, tragedy strikes when Daisy's ball bursts (literally). Daisy is pretty depressed, until she receives a present from an unexpected friend. The good: This is a delightful story. Daisy is the quintessential dog who loves to play, play, play.

Chris Raschka (author/illustrator of the 2006 Caldecott winner, "Hello, Goodbye Window") tells a story of a dog who loves a ball, and does so

entirely through pictures...aka: no words. Sometimes these types of books make me nervous because they can be difficult to 'read' aloud to kids; however, Raschka's watercolor illustrations are playful, fun, and make telling the story a piece of cake. In fact, this is a story that can be told collaboratively. Let the kids tell you what Daisy is doing in a picture and how Daisy feels in another. The flow of the story does get a little confusing when the format of the illustrations switch from page to page.

For example, sometimes there is a picture for each page and sometimes the picture goes across both pages. I had to re-read a few pages the first time because I got a little confused on the order of the pictures, but this is a small issue, and you should not be deterred from checking this book out from your local library. This is a story worth reading and telling. *The Lion and the Mouse* By Jerry Pinkney In award-winning artist Jerry Pinkney's wordless adaptation of one of Aesop's most beloved fables, an unlikely pair learn that no act of kindness is ever wasted.

After a ferocious lion spares a cowering mouse that he'd planned to eat, the mouse later comes to his rescue, freeing him from a poacher's trap. With vivid depictions of the landscape of the African Serengeti and expressively-drawn characters, Pinkney makes this a truly special retelling, and his stunning pictures speak volumes. This is a visual retelling of the classic Aesop fable: A lion, awakened by a mouse climbing over him, catches the tiny animal in his mighty paw. The mouse appeals for mercy and the lion relents. Soon after, the lion is captured in a poachers' net.

The mouse hears his anguished roars and comes to his aid, gnawing the ropes until the great creature is freed. *The Red Book* By Barbara Lehman

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Kindergarten-Grade 6—This perfectly eloquent wordless book tells the complex story of a reader who gets lost, literally, in a little book that has the magic to move her to another place. On her winter-gray walk to school, a young girl spies a book's red cover sticking out of a snowdrift and picks it up. During class, she opens her treasure and finds a series of square illustrations showing a map, then an island, then a beach, and finally a boy.

He finds a red book buried in the sand, picks it up, opens it, and sees a sequence of city scenes that eventually zoom in on the girl. As the youngsters view one another through the pages of their respective volumes, they are at first surprised and then break into smiles. After school, the girl buys bunches of helium balloons and floats off into the sky, accidentally dropping her book along the way. It lands on the street below and through its pages readers see the girl reach her destination and greet her new friend, and it isn't long before another child picks up that magical red book.

Done in watercolor, gouache, and ink, the simple, streamlined pictures are rife with invitations to peek inside, to investigate further, and—like a hall of mirrors—reflect, refract, repeat, and reveal. Lehman's story captures the magical possibility that exists every time readers open a book—if they allow it: they can leave the "real world" behind and, like the heroine, be transported by the helium of their imaginations. *Pancakes for Breakfast* By Tomie DePaola Set in the country, "Pancakes for Breakfast" is a story of a lady who wakes up one cold winter morning and decides to make warm pancakes.

While originally published in 1978, it remains a delightful, timeless lesson on how pancakes are really made. There's not a frozen package or mix box in <https://assignbuster.com/wordless-picture-books/>

sight. Even though there is no story text, DePaola's signature illustrations leave little doubt about how to whip up a batch of pancakes from scratch. This format provides lots of material for discussion and questions by formative young cooks about the origin of ingredients used to make food. It can also be used as an example of supporting local, sustainable food supplies, which was hip even in the seventies.

A pancake recipe is included, but feel free to encourage your young chef to add their own flair, just like the pros. Think outside the box, or book, and add complementary ingredients, such as bananas, berries, apples, or peaches that would add to the flavor, color and nutrition. Stir imaginations by substituting low fat buttermilk or tossing in a handful of cornmeal, flax meal, crunchy wheat germ, or whole grain flour. Try dipping each bite in low fat maple yogurt instead of syrup. You get the picture. *Baby! Baby!* by Vicky Ceelen

With these striking and adorable photographs, Vicky Ceelen cleverly captures the similarities between human and animal babies. From a sleeping baby alongside a snoozing kitten to a teetering toddler and a wobbly duckling, Ceelen's comparisons are striking. Bright photos paired with simple text make this board book perfect for human babies everywhere. The photographs are well done and just a pleasure to look at. I'm not sure if the concept would be ever-obvious to babies and toddlers. But even if they don't "get it" get it, they should enjoy looking at the pictures.