

Definition of Children's Literature

Children's literature is generally defined as the body of written works (and oftentimes accompanying illustrations) produced primarily for children or young readers (typically from early childhood through adolescence), and which addresses their interests, experiences, developmental level, and imaginative capacities.

More precisely, according to the Encyclopaedia Britannica:

Children's literature ... the body of written works and accompanying illustrations produced in order to entertain or instruct young people."

Definition of children literature

It is also noted that children's literature constitutes a distinct literary category:

“Children's literature is literature **written primarily for a juvenile audience**, defined as ages **0 to 18** ... includes **fiction, nonfiction, drama, and poetry.**”

Scholars also emphasize that any definition must recognize the variable nature of “childhood” (developmental, cultural, historical) and that children's literature is not simply “adult literature with **simpler vocabulary**” but has its own **unique concerns and aesthetic criteria.**



Types

- ▶ **Picture books** (for very young children) combining simple narrative + illustrations + imaginative idioms.
- ▶ **Middle-grade fiction** that deals with friendship, identity, adventure, calibrated language and themes.

Key Characteristics of Children's Literature

- ▶ **1. Audience-focus and developmental appropriateness:**
 - ▶ The target audience is children (and young adolescents). Their cognitive, emotional and moral development influences vocabulary, structure, theme, character.
 - ▶ Language, narrative complexity, and themes are often calibrated to match children's comprehension and interests. For example: "The structure is simple and clear; ... the language is simple, lively, and colloquial."
 - ▶ There is an age-graded dimension: picture books for young children, chapter books for intermediate, middle-grade for older children, young-adult for adolescents.

Key Characteristics of Children's Literature

2. Children as protagonists or focal viewpoint

- ▶ Many children's books feature children or childlike figures as the central characters, and often the perspective is from a child's point of view.
- ▶ The world is presented in a way accessible to children, often reflecting their social, domestic, school, friendship, exploration experiences.



▶ 3. Language and style – accessibility, clarity, imaginative elements

- ▶ The language tends to be **simpler** and more **direct** than adult literature, though not simplistic or patronizing.
- ▶ Narratives often include **fantasy, imagination, play, whimsy, and wonder**. For example: "It tends toward fantasy and accepts fanciful ideas without major concern of reality."
- ▶ Frequent use of **repetition, rhyme, rhythm, pictures/illustrations** aids memory and engagement.

Key Characteristics of Children's Literature

▶ 4. Themes and moral/educational dimension

▶ Children's literature often addresses themes relevant to children's lives: friendship, family, courage, identity, change, social values.

▶ It often carries an element of instruction or moral purpose (though not necessarily didactic in a heavy-handed way) – for example, virtues, problem-solving, resilience.

▶ But it also entertains: balancing educational purpose with enjoyment is considered ideal.



▶ 5. Structure, plot, and resolution

- ▶ Many children's texts have a clear narrative arc, simpler plotlines, but with enough conflict or challenge to engage the young reader.
- ▶ Endings often tend toward hope, resolution, positive outcome (particularly in younger-child literature) though more complex works may challenge this.

6. What is the prerequisite of doing research in the field of "Translation Studies"?

As far as in this field theory and practice are inseparable, it is essential that before doing research, we have practical experience of translation. In other words, we should do translation, before we do research.

7. Who has offered some solutions to overcome the gap between translation profession (practice) and translation research (theory)?

Basil Hatim (1947) by suggesting some action research models (2001).