

The First Ever Children's Picture Book

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In the mid 17th-century, John Comenius published "The World of Things Obvious to the Senses drawn in Pictures" (*Orbis Sensualium Pictus*), considered by the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* to have been the first children's picture book.

Before you read the complete article, look at this vocabulary and find it in the text:

- approach:** a method, a style, a way of doing something
breakthrough: a sudden new development
to quack: the sound made by a duck
to squeak: the sound made by a mouse
bearded: having a beard (hair on the face and chin)
temperance: control of your own behaviour and habits
fortitude: courage over a long period
fencing: the sport of fighting with swords
allegiance: loyalty
loosely: more or less, approximately
sole: only, singular

Originally published in 1658 in Latin and German, the *Orbis* is immediately familiar as an ancestor of today's children's literature. It contains 150 pictures showing everyday activities like brewing beer, tending gardens, and slaughtering animals. This visual **approach** was a **breakthrough** in children's education.

The *Orbis* was so popular it even became the most used textbook in Europe for elementary education at one point, and was translated into many different languages. Its Czech author became highly regarded throughout Europe and worked in several schools across the continent. His portrait was painted by Rembrandt, and according to an 1887 edition of the *Orbis*, Comenius was even "once solicited to become President of Harvard College."

The first chapter of the *Orbis* teaches children how to imitate animal noises, providing a list of onomatopoeic words to practise. After learning how to **quack** and how to **squeak**, chapter 2 is all about theological metaphysics. Even though

the *Orbis* seeks to show children the world visually, its illustration of god is very different from the **bearded** representations we might be used to. Instead, it's a complex geometric diagram, with no face at all.

After about forty chapters on theology, elements, plants, and animals, Comenius finally introduces the human species, the anatomy of the human body and, of course, the soul, for which he defines three categories: the "vegetative" soul of plants, the "sensitive" soul of animals, and the "rational" soul of a human. He also includes chapters on music, philosophy, astronomy, and a number of virtues like **temperance** and **fortitude**, and even goes on to discuss tennis, dice games, and **fencing**.

After all the fun and games, Comenius concludes the *Orbis* with an extensive discussion of theology and religion, and his **allegiances** become rather clear. Devoting one page of text to "Gentilism," another to Judaism, and half a page on "Mahometism," he spends over two full pages on Christianity. He calls god "the Creator" of all things, his creations being "The World," "Heaven," the four elements, all plants, and all animals, which are explained throughout his book. In fact, the *Orbis* might be said to **loosely** mimic the order of creation found at the beginning of Genesis.

So perhaps this publication was devised with the **sole** intention of providing an attractive way to teach children about metaphysics and biblical basics. Either way, I'm excited to say that the whole document is available in the [public domain](#).

Written by ECP coach *Alison Keable*

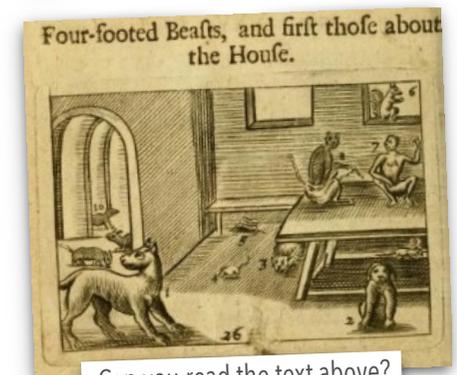
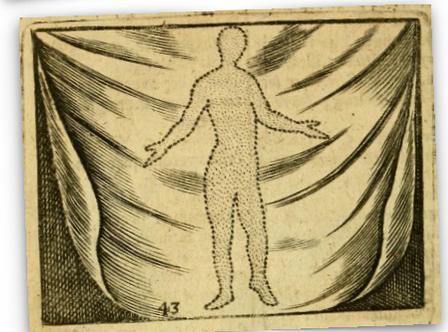
Let's chat about that!

Write your opinions in an email and send them to your ECP coach!

- Had you heard of this author before?
- Do you think he was only interested in teaching the bible?
- What can children learn from picture books?
- Do you remember any picture books from your childhood?
- What are your thoughts about religious education in schools?



Illustrations of "God" and "The Soul"



Can you read the text above?

Social Events In English

Real-Life English in Vitoria-Gasteiz



iLook, iThink, iSpeak

Real Language to Express Yourself Better

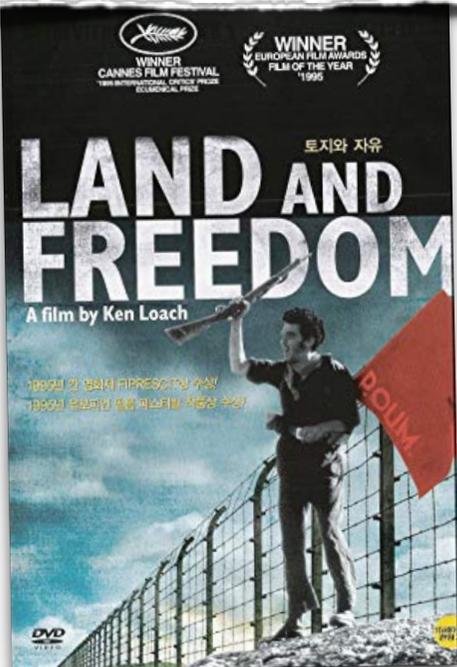
Friday 31st May

CINEMA NIGHTS!

Come and socialise in English!

This month's movie is a visceral, emotional and intellectual experience. Ken Loach's vivid, revivifying tale of the Spanish Civil War is among the finest films of the 1990s.

Date: Fri 31st May **Time:** 19:30 to 21:30
Place: ECP Hub (C/San Ignacio de Loyola 15)



Saturday 1st June

LIVE!English presents:

COFFEE SATURDAYS!



Don't miss our **LAST Coffee Saturdays** before the summer: **this Saturday 1st June!**

Time: 11:00 to 12:30
Place: Panadería Bertiz, C/Francia

O P A R D E W F A I R N E S S
B E T S A J T I L P E O F M L
F R I E N D S H I P S O R W T
N S A L C A T R E S P E C T U
R E B F C E W R T S O U W M I
Q V M D C I T I Z E N S H I P
L E K I U Y L V E A S L A E T
T R U S T W O R T H I N E S S
E A W C R Y B E M N B L O E R
B N Y I V G R L K E I H A D J
U C J P A B Y E B G L O U W A
Y E O L B H I C A R I N G P F
M G N I L G M E A H T R T L O
W H F N H O N E S T Y G O U I
A U W E Q J U C O U R A G E T

Good Character

WORD SEARCH

The grid contains 11 values and personality traits that we try to teach children. All the words are vertical or horizontal.

First, try to find 8 of them using the definitions below.

1. commitment and good behaviour as a member of a your local community:
c i _ _ _ _ _ p
2. thinking about other people's well-being:
c _ _ _ _ g
3. the ability to control your own behaviour:
s _ _ _ - d _ _ _ _ _ _ _
4. treating all situations in a way that promotes equality: f _ _ r _ _ _ _

5. being brave: c _ _ _ _ g e
6. doing something persistently despite difficulties:
p _ _ _ _ v _ _ _ _ c e
7. building emotional connections with others: f _ _ _ _ d _ _ _ _
8. being able to keep keep a secret:
t r _ _ _ w _ _ _ _ _ _ _ s s

Now, you need to find 3 more!

What other values would you teach a child? They begin with R, H and R. Find them in the grid!

