

## **Some reasons I love picture books:**

**Picture books empower kids.** Characters face adversity, solve problems—even create their own worlds, like Harold with his purple crayon. Picture books put children in charge. Kids can linger over details, turning the pages when they're ready, bringing them to life.

**Picture books are snuggly.** Whether it's the lilting, lyrical language of a great bedtime book, or a rousing interpretation of a funny, interactive one, picture books prompt soothing sounds, closeness, and laughter. Reading their carefully-arranged words forces us to slow down and be in the moment.

**Picture books are safe places.** We all know what it's like to make mischief and get punished like Max in *Where the Wild Things Are*. Or to want to eat someone who takes something we care about, like the bear in Jon Klassen's *I Want My Hat Back*. Picture books address feelings through characters and stories, providing a safe context for kids to explore emotions.

**Picture books are art.** They're like little collections of limited edition prints, and they're often a child's first exposure to art. Kids love to talk about their favorite illustrators and what they like about their styles.

**Picture books are playful and thought-provoking.** Creative language, engaging stories, and clever interplay of image and text give kids a lot to think about. Some picture books make observations and ask questions. Others challenge kids to look at the world in a new way. Sometimes the text and image are contradictory, or the reader knows something the character doesn't.

**Picture books are portals.** When I pick up a picture book from my childhood, I'm a kid again. I time travel back with Ferdinand, the Quangle Wangle, George & Martha, Cricter, Pierre (who didn't care), or Peter Pan. And just like Peter Pan, I can return to Neverland. All I have to do is open one up.

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