



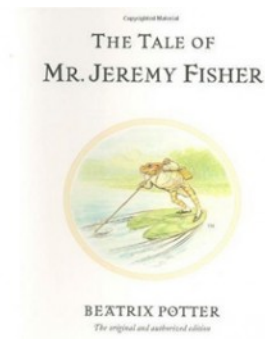
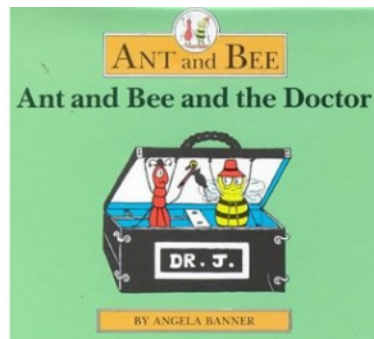
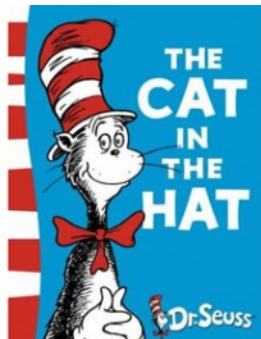
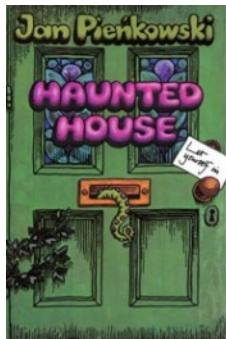
## ALISON JAY'S TOP TEN BOOKS

February 24, 2011



When my daughter was born Courtney bought my son a present (she's so good like that!). It was a book illustrated by English artist, Alison Jay ([I Took the Moon for a Walk](#)). It was my first introduction to Alison's work and (just as Courtney told me I would) I fell in love with her illustrations. They have a sort of old-fashioned charm about them, which is partly because they often have a cracked varnish look to them (she works in a quick drying oil paint which sometimes gives this effect). I also love how she often 'hides' details in the pictures so each time you read the book, you feel like you are finding new things. My children particularly love that. (Also check out her [Alphabet](#) and [Counting](#)

books - beautiful details on every page!) We're thrilled that she took some time out to give us her top ten children's books...



### 1. *The Children's Wonder Book*

This book belonged to my dad or even my granny - it is a huge book stuffed with classic fairy tales, poems, adventures stories, and amazing illustrations by many different illustrators of the past. I loved this book - it has some very atmospheric and almost menacing illustrations. The illustrators include, Edmond Dulac, John Tenniel and Arthur Rackham. Also in the book are the limericks and illustrations by Edward Lear which I love, and a poem about a poor boy who died because he wouldn't eat his soup. (Take note)

### 2. *The Tale of Mr. Jeremy Fisher*

- *Beatrix Potter*

I loved the Beatrix Potter illustrations as a child and still do. I especially love seeing inside the animals' houses and shops. I have chosen Jeremy Fisher as my favorite as I grew up with frogs - my dad had a very soft spot for them and got furious with the cat for chasing them. Again, I really like seeing inside Mr Fisher's house with the snails- I must have been a nosey child, now a nosey adult.

### 3. *Dwinding Party*

- *Edward Gorey*

This is a pop-up book, now out of print, I found a copy at a boot sale. It is wonderfully dark but funny! The illustrations are fantastic, and I also love Edward Gorey's Gashlycrumb Tinies - I think children love creepy, scary things (I know I did).

4.

### ***The Cat in the Hat***

**- Dr Seuss**

I loved this book as a child and also ?The Cat in the Hat Comes Back?. I was always a bit worried about the mess the cats made and felt really sorry for the goldfish.

### **5. *The Hidden House***

**- Martin Waddell & Angela Barrett**

I adore this book - it is quite sad but has a happy ending, and the illustrations are beautiful with tiny details. I like to put details into my pictures and sometimes little stories or events within the main story- it is amazing how children spot everything.

### **6. *The Great Dog Bottom Swap***

**- Peter Bently & Mei Matsuoka**

This book is mad but hilarious! The illustrations are perfect for the text- I love quirky things and this is high on the quirky-o-meter.

### **7. *Maths Curse***

**- Lane Smith Jon Scieszka**

I think Lane Smith is such a fantastic illustrator; his imaginative compositions are incredible. I love all Lane Smiths books but as I had such a problem with maths as a child I have chosen this one. The Stinky Cheese man is wonderful too.

### **8. *James and the Giant Peach***

**- Roald Dahl**

My Brother was given the second edition for Christmas one year and my Mum read it to us over a few days. I love the cover illustration by Michael Simeons - it shows Aunt Spiker and Aunt Sponge's house high in a hill.

### **9. *Haunted House***

**- Jan Peinkowski**

My mum was a school teacher and she used to lend our books to take to school for her class, often they never came back or were damaged. Luckily, my copy of this book survived! I think this book again appeals to my sense of humor. I really like pop-up books as they give another dimension - I am hoping to illustrate one quite soon.

### **10. *Ant and Bee and the Doctor***

**- Angela Banner**

I really like the simple drawings of these books and that the scale is so weird - I think Bee was almost as big as the Doctor. I like painting insects as characters when the opportunity arises and strangely, weird scale.

***(Photo of Alison, aged 5)***

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