Japanese Children's Books 2018

ABOUT JBBY AND THIS CATALOG

The Japanese Board on Books for Young People (JBBY) was founded in 1974 as the Japanese Section of the International Board on Books for Young People (IBBY).

JBBY is dedicated to enhancing international understanding, and to providing information on children’s books to people around the world. We promote IBBY’s mission in a broad range of ways. Our international network allows us to take advantage of the prolific information generated by IBBY and to encourage mutual understanding. Our mission is to create a peaceful future for children through books.

JBBY hosts international book exhibitions in Japan that provide information about global titles to Japanese readers. In addition, we provide information on Japanese children’s books to people around the world. We nominate titles for international recognition, as a means to deepen global understanding towards Japan.

In this catalog, we describe recent Japanese books recommended by a JBBY book selection team in several categories: picture books, chapter books and novels, and nonfiction. In addition we introduce Japanese winners of and nominees for the Hans Christian Andersen Awards, and the selected books for the IBBY Honour List since 1990.

We list these books by category and in order of target age, including cover images and synopses along with bibliographic information. We hope you will enjoy reading about these books. For further information, please contact us: info@jbby.org

Yumiko SAKUMA, JBBY President
Recent Picture Books

**Kumasan (Bear)**


A small red elephant walks along singing. Mar-shalling his trunk like the adult elephants, he eats grass, drinks water, and splashes mud on his dry skin. Soon other herbivores such as the giraffe and gazelle join in (tyrannos and other predators are shown off), and soon many friends stomp the earth and call out in a grand parade. The creator of this book has earned international acclaim for his involvement with watercolors and ink drawings, but here he offers a hymn to a strongly loved, fervently desired life by rough artwork. Rhyming, coarse, vivid, and excited energy will pass right into toddlers. (Hiromatsu)

**Curry Rice**


For small children going out alone is an adven-ture. A baby penguin goes out slowly onto an ice-covered path, where he catches the warm illustrations. The fun of cooking and a love for curry rice overflow from this book. You will want to enjoy curry rice right away. (Shirata)

**Where Is Dad Now?**


A little girl’s father has promised to read her a book at bedtime but phones to say he will be late. The girl wonders where he might be now. First, she imagines him finishing his work, then getting onto the train, walking through the shopping arcade and along the river. There, she pictures him run-ning into a koppa or water sprite who chases him. Her father opens his umbrella and floats away, landing on a slide in the park. Then he runs home. The girl’s daydreams are derivatively rendered through the dynamic composition and warm touch of the illustrations. (Doi)

**Yoru no oto** (Night Sounds)


A drama about the brief time it takes a boy to walk along the bank of a pond to his grandfather’s house one summer’s night. Nothing in particular happens, but there is abundant life: insects chirp at his feet; the whistle of a train is heard in the distance as the frog jumps in, ripples on the water spread like a galaxy. The inspiration for this work was the shock the author felt aged nine upon reading Matsuo Basho’s famous haiku, “The old pond/A frog jumps in/The sound of water.” The muted blue tone of the pictures has been pain-takingly created by hand using calculated color separation. The pages breathe life stimulating all five senses. (Hiromatsu)

**Kemono no nioi ga shitekita zo** (Beasts Smelling)


The author mirocomachiko won a Plaque at the Biennial of Illustrations Bratislava (BIB) in 2017 for this book. On animal trails thick with weeds and flowers and hidden by trees and bushes, the dark of night has come. Boulders roll, the trail groans, strange creatures move, their eyes flashing. Boulders roll, the trail groans, strange birds take flight, and the trees and grasses quail. The dynamic composition and the repetition of the phrase “It’s starting to smell like beasts,” and the dense scenes, conjure up the scents of unknown creatures. This is a powerful picture book filled with the life force of wild things. (Nogami)

**Pa o po no uta** (Po-o-po’s Song)


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**Yoko-ichiba** (Fish Market)


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**Kiiro mizu no nioi** (Beasts Smelling)


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**Uo-ichiba** (Fish Market)


A little girl’s father has promised to read her a book at bedtime but phones to say he will be late. The girl wonders where he might be now. First, she imagines him finishing his work, then getting onto the train, walking through the shopping arcade and along the river. There, she pictures him run-ning into a koppa or water sprite who chases him. Her father opens his umbrella and floats away, landing on a slide in the park. Then he runs home. The girl’s daydreams are derivatively rendered through the dynamic composition and warm touch of the illustrations. (Doi)

**Oto ippuru no oto** (Night Sounds)


A drama about the brief time it takes a boy to walk along the bank of a pond to his grandfather’s house one summer’s night. Nothing in particular happens, but there is abundant life: insects chirp at his feet; the whistle of a train is heard in the distance as the frog jumps in, ripples on the water spread like a galaxy. The inspiration for this work was the shock the author felt aged nine upon reading Matsuo Basho’s famous haiku, “The old pond/A frog jumps in/The sound of water.” The muted blue tone of the pictures has been pain-takingly created by hand using calculated color separation. The pages breathe life stimulating all five senses. (Hiromatsu)

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This picture book follows the escapades of a man who encounters one catastrophe after another but is rescued by a little girl. He sets off to mail a letter only to stop on a bus that is lying on the stairs and goes sailing down the steps. At that moment, a little girl appears and gives him another ice cream cone. The repeated catastrophes are depicted with a humorous, cartoon-like touch.

One day, a mysterious letter is delivered to a taro called Satomi, informing her, “Actually, you’re a kiwi.” To begin with she thinks it is just a joke, but then she starts getting worried. She asks other people and checks herself in the mirror, and goes to meet a sweet-smelling kiwi who merely laughs at her. Finally, in order to check the color of her irides, she tries to peel off her own skin, but... hurts! Seeing the togoi image, she gets into tears. At that moment, a little girl appears and her ice cream falls off the cone. Finally, he bursts into tears. At that moment, a little girl appears and gives him another ice cream cone. The repeated catastrophes are depicted with a humorous, cartoon-like touch.

Nenzo and his younger sister Kifu are home alone on a rainy day. As they gaze out the window, they slip into a fantasy world. One by one strange things come into view: a frog with a butterfly leaf umbrella, a horse of tapples, sluins spinning around and round, huge trees and vegetables. Dancing joyfully, Nenzo and Kifu awake boats from blades of bamboo grass to help little animals get through the rain. When their mother comes home, they return to reality. The playful wording and strong illustrations capture the children’s delight in the strange world they encounter.

This humorous picture book is based on a traditional form of Japanese storytelling, and the illustrations are strongly reminiscent of the woodblock prints of the famous ukiyo-e artist, Tsusho Sharaku. It is a large-scale nonsense tale, a seeming parody on Hemingway’s The Old Man and the Sea. The servants of a lord who loves fishing borrow a mysterious fishing rod from a master fisherman’s tool shed. The lord, who only goes after the big fish, catches a huge tuna but is pulled into the sea. What follows is a hilarious account of the lord’s rescue by the fishing rod, which houses the soul of a young woman, and the reader cannot help but laugh when it is revealed that it was all a dream.

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The water’s surface. This book helps one feel the scene and a child appears. A small bird sings, and the river flows. If the reader looks closely, a boat with a squirrel comes, and a monster serpent, a frog, and a dragon appear. The landscape along the river is presented as a merging of animals with vegetables or fruits. The physical characteristics, names, appearances, and characteristics that represent a merging of animals with vegetables or fruits from Planet Earth. The rice, banana, and cabbage are green when young but turn yellow as they mature. Black markings emerge on both sides. The rice has a strong and sweet smell, the banana is fragrant, and the cabbage has a mild flavor. The rice, banana, and cabbage are fresh and nutritious. This book introduces children to facts in a fictional encyclopedia that seems very real. This picture book introduces children to facts in a fictional encyclopedia that seems very real. This picture book introduces children to facts in a fictional encyclopedia that seems very real. This picture book introduces children to facts in a fictional encyclopedia that seems very real. This picture book introduces children to facts in a fictional encyclopedia that seems very real. This picture book introduces children to facts in a fictional encyclopedia that seems very real. This picture book introduces children to facts in a fictional encyclopedia that seems very real.
When Kengo enters middle school, he joins the History and Geography Club because it involves the least work and the least hierarchy. If you just join, you get credit on your school record—certainly better than staying home after school. But he refuses saying she doesn’t understand how he feels. However, knowing that Kobo prepared the script for him and that his sister was also bulled because of his stamina; Yuta takes part in a speech contest and talks about himself. (Doi)

The summer of his first year in high school, Sui is injured when an elderly man on a bicycle tips over on him. With his leg broken, Sui relies on a crutch. A middle school classmate of his is Suzuki, who is the elderly man’s great-granddaughter; falls in love with Sui, believing that he saved his man’s life. But Sui has a crush on Natsumi, who is in turn preoccupied with the odd behavior of his friend, Mitri, who dates popular boy Ichihara. Multiple teen issues intertwine as love, friendship, and child need to know about first aid treatment. Don’t panic! This book contains everything a parent and child need to know about first aid treatment for minor injuries. Written by a famous pediatrician, it was first published almost 30 years ago and has been revised. The lines and colors are more vivid and the text also has a new font and design. The new edition retains the humorous touch of the original but all of the illustrations have been redrawn in lines and colors more vivid and stronger, and the text also has a new font and design. (Nogami)

A realistic coming-of-age story about a 15-year-old boy, Yuto. One day his grandfather, who showing signs of dementia, is run over as he cycles over a pedestrian crossing, and is taken to hospital where he remains in a state of semi-consciousness. At the same time, he continues to care for his grandfather’s garden. The way his grandfather taught him. In the process, he learns to see things from various points of view. (Sakuma)
Katsushibi ga dekuri no made (How Katsushibi was Made)


This non-fiction picture book describes the journey of migratory birds from around the world. An astounding number of birds travel long distances every year in search of food and a safe place to lay their eggs and raise their young. What routes do they travel? What kind of nests do they build and where? What dangers do they face on their journey? How do they find their way? The author, who is an expert on birds answers such questions as these in words and illustrations that children can easily grasp. (Sakamak)

Sakana no tamago (Fish Eggs: Desperate Survival Strategies)


This is a picture book by a photographer on the theme of fish. The author uses photos of dried foods found in many parts of the world to explain the changes that occur when foods are dried and the meaning and purpose of drying food. Drying removes the liquid from vegetables, fruits, fish, meat and milk products, preserving them so that they don’t go rotten, and the author uses photo and text in ingenious ways to excite the reader’s curiosity and make this process easier to understand. The short appendix introduces examples of dried foods used in traditional Japanese cuisine and methods for drying vegetables and other foods that can be done at home. (Sakamak)

Fuku no hitotsu ga hataraka kureru (What Are Clothes Made Of? A Tale of Fibres)


This book draws our attention to the materials of the clothes we wear in daily life. Warm sweaters are made of sheep’s wool, shiny dresses are from thread spun from silk, durable shirts are from the fruit of the cotton plant. People all over the world from past to present, have used animal and vegetable fiber to make clothes. The visual presentation and easy-to-follow text make it fun to learn about the various kinds of natural fibers as well as how synthetic fibers were invented and the meaning of clothes tags. The illustrator used to work for an apparel company and the colorful pictures demonstrate her love for clothes. (Hiromatu)

Migratory Birds


This book introduces various facts, such as that a new month record for being the world’s hardest food. The is an expert on birds answers such questions as these in words and illustrations that children can easily grasp. (Sakamak)

Mr. Frog’s Big Discovery!


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This is a book about Ai-chan, a girl with Down's Syndrome. It is the third book in a series of Ai-chan, and follows Ai-chan as she attends a mainstream Grade 6 class, from the first day through to graduation. Ai-chan worked hard and was very positive throughout. Now, however, she has fallen behind in her classmates in both academic and physical strength, and there are more days when she can’t cope. “Ai-chan doesn’t try,” some students complain. The book is the story of 36 students and a teacher who all shine in different ways, like the colors of the rainbow.

Ai-chan: Grade 6, Class 1 is Rainbow Colored


In easily understood language supported by humorous illustrations, this book teaches us about money and economics. What is the purpose of money? What is economics? The author, Noriko Hama, is a famous economist. She explains that the truth of economic activity should be about creating spaces in which people can come together and that generate happiness. Unfortunately, economic activity is being pursued in the pursuit of profit. She teaches how to discern such “false” economics and live a life that is not controlled by money and that will bring us happiness.


The Meaning of Life, The Signs of Life

The author recounts her personal experience from childhood to April 2016, when at age 26 she married another woman. Born in 1987, she began having crushes on other girls at age 13, and felt guilty about being attracted to members of the same sex. When she was 18, she joined a Peace Boat voyage around the world, and after attending a lecture about sexual minorities accepted that she was gay. Eventually, she came out to her family and introduced them to her partner, a Peace Boat staff member. The author talks about their life after getting married, and also about other acquaintances from sexual minorities. (Sakuma)

The War as激戦地を歩く

Eye-witness accounts from China in the Second Sino-Japanese War


My Life with Dogs


The author recounts her personal experience from childhood to April 2016, when at age 26 she married another woman. Born in 1987, she began having crushes on other girls at age 13, and felt guilty about being attracted to members of the same sex. When she was 18, she joined a Peace Boat voyage around the world, and after attending a lecture about sexual minorities accepted that she was gay. Eventually, she came out to her family and introduced them to her partner, a Peace Boat staff member. The author talks about their life after getting married, and also about other acquaintances from sexual minorities. (Sakuma)
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SUBJECT INDEX

Numbers are book numbers, not page numbers. See book number near each cover image.
Hans Christian Andersen Award
Winners and Nominees Since 2000

Winners

**Akaba, Suekichi** 1910-1990
WINNER OF THE 1984 HCA ILLUSTRATOR AWARD

Born in Tokyo, Suekichi Akaba emigrated to Manchuria at the age of 21. He worked in industry and began to paint while still there. He was awarded special recognition three times at the Manchurian National Art Exhibition. After returning to Japan at the age of 36, Akaba mastered painting techniques on his own; he published his first picture book in 1961. His influences include traditional Japanese painting and Felix Hoffmann.

**Anno, Mitsumasa** 1926-
WINNER OF THE 1984 HCA ILLUSTRATOR AWARD

Born in Tsuwano, a village located in a valley surrounded by mountains, Mitsumasa Anno developed a strong desire to experience places beyond these mountains while growing up. This is reflected in his books. He taught art in elementary school for ten years; his first two picture books reflect his love of playing with visual perception, and his drawings, often compared to Escher, not only abound with visual trickery and illusions but also display a playful sense of humour.

**Mado, Michio** 1909-2014
WINNER OF THE 1994 HCA AUTHOR AWARD

Michio Mado was born in Tokuyama. When he was a small child, his family left for Taiwan, leaving him behind with his grandfather. He began to write poetry at the age of 19. In 1934, two of his poems were recognized by Kitahara Hakusho, the most respected poet of the time. This marked the beginning of Mado’s career as a creator of nursery rhymes, songs and poems for children. The Animalia, co-published in the USA and Japan as a bilingual book, was translated by Empress Michiko of Japan.

**Uehashi, Nahoko** 1962-
WINNER OF THE 2014 HCA AUTHOR AWARD

Born in Tokyo in 1962, Nahoko Uehashi researched indigenous people in Australia for her PhD in cultural anthropology. She currently teaches ethnology at university. Her literary debut came in 1989, when her first book won an award that brought her into the spotlight. In 1996, she began to write her historical fantasy series Moribito (Guardian), which became a huge hit and received several literature awards in and outside of Japan, including the IBBY Honour List and the Batchelder Award in the USA.

Nominees: Author

**Kadono, Eiko** 1935-
WINNER OF THE 2018 HCA AUTHOR AWARD

Born in Tokyo in 1935, Eiko Kadono moved to Brazil for two years when she was 25, and based on her experiences there she wrote her first work. Since then she has written many books for children of several generations. Her chapter book Majo no takkyubin (Kiki’s Delivery Service), written in 1984, won a number of prizes and was included on the IBBY Honour List. This story was adapted into a wildly popular animated film by Hayao Miyazaki. Kadono has been decorated by the Emperor of Japan for her significant contributions to children’s literature.

**Ishii, Momoko** 1907-2008
2002, AUTHOR NOMINEE

Born in Saitama in 1907, Momoko Ishii’s first book Non-chan kuma ni noru (Non-chan Rides on a Cloud) was published in 1947. She has written 19 children’s books and translated 120, including Winnie the Pooh by A. A. Milne in 1940 and Horton Hears a Who by Dr. Seuss in 1955. Her books have been translated into German, Danish, Russian, English, Urdu, and Hindi. Her immense contributions to children’s literature in Japan have been recognized nationally.

**Kanzawa, Toshiko** 1928-
2004, 2006, AUTHOR NOMINEE

Born in Fukuoka in southern Japan, Toshiko Kanzawa later moved to northern Japan and spent much of her childhood in Sakhalin, now a part of Russia. She began writing to support herself after giving birth to two children. Her first book, Chibikko Kamu no boken (A Little Country No One Knows), was published in 1961. As in many of her books, this mythical adventure story reflects Kanzawa’s yearning for the nature of northern Japan. She has been awarded many other prizes.

**Sato, Satoru** 1928-2017
2004 AUTHOR NOMINEE

Born in 1928, Satoru Sato is a pioneer in Japanese fantasy literature for children. In his first book, Phantosm Agaro, a little god (A Little Country No One Knows), he borrowed the idea of Koraikururu (little people, the descendants of little gods) from legends of the Ainu people, aboriginal people who live in the northern regions of Japan. Sato’s emphasis on “reasoned imagination” and “logical composition” have made his fantasy world real for young readers. His works have been translated into English, French, German, and Spanish.

These authors and illustrators, among the finest creators of Japanese children’s literature, were all nominated for the Hans Christian Andersen Award. Four were named winners.
Shuntaro Tanikawa was born in 1931 in Tokyo. After graduating from high school, he published his first collection of works, "Aki no koyomizukuri no koe (Two Billion Light-Years of Solitude). Soon after that, he began to write theatre scripts and song lyrics. In 1965, his first picture book was published, followed by numerous picture books and juvenile literature works. Tanikawa has been vigorously active in many areas, ranging from translation to poetry readings around the world.

Masamoto Nasu was born in 1942 in Hiroshima. Nasu became a victim of the atomic bomb when he was only three. After working for a company in Tokyo, he returned to Hiroshima to help run his father's calligraphy school, where he met many children. In 1967, he joined a Hiroshima juvenile literature study group and began to write stories for children. In 1970, his first long story "Kabutenn Jizo no rakana (The Treasure of Headless Jizo) received honorable mention from a major publisher. He since has been awarded many prizes.

Shinta Cho was born in Tokyo, he began his career as a designer and cartoonist at the Tokyo Daily Press after graduating from high school. His first book was published in 1949, and he has illustrated over 400 titles since. The secret to Cho's popularity with children lies in his flexible style and sense of humour. He has received a number of prizes including the IBBY Honours List twice.

Akiko Hayashi was born in Tokyo in 1945. After graduating from the Faculty of Fine Arts at Yokohama National University, she began to write theatre scripts and song lyrics. In 1965, his first picture book was published. Although Katayama then stopped writing for a while, he resumed his artistic activity, inspired by his eldest son's birth, in 1979. Since then, he has published creative works embodying his dynamic, vivid, and unique style.

Seizo Tashima was born in Osaka, Seizo Tashima spent his childhood in Kochi Prefecture. He has been active at the front lines of picture book development since the 1960s, receiving the Golden Apple Award at the 2nd Biennial of Illustration Bratislava (IBB) in 1969. He continues to produce powerful, passionate, and ceaselessly innovative works. He has published more than 150 picture books of great variety; some funny and fun, others serious stories of war, as well as folk tales and books for babies. Running through all of his works, we can sense a consistent spirit.

Nominees: Illustrator

CHO, SHINTA
1927-2005

Born in Tokyo, Shinta Cho began his career as a designer and cartoonist at the Tokyo Daily Press after graduating from high school. His first book was published in 1949, and he has illustrated over 400 titles since. The secret to Cho’s popularity with children lies in his flexible style and sense of humour. He has received a number of prizes including the IBBY Honour List twice.

OTHA, DAIHACHI
1918-2016

Born in Nagasaki, Daihachi Ohta spent his early childhood in Vladivostok. He began to illustrate picture books when he was still a student at Tokyo’s Tama Imperial Art School. His first book was published in 1949, and since then, his illustrations have embellished approximately 150 picture books and 250 children’s novels. His style varies by genre, which ranges from traditional Japanese tales to modern European stories. His works have been translated into many languages.

KAKO, SATOSHI
1926-2012

Born in Fukui in 1926, Satoshi Kako graduated from the University of Tokyo and first worked in a laboratory at a chemical company. His first children’s book was published in 1959 and since then, he has published more than 800 works, ranging from educational picture books on science and astronomy to nursery tales. After his experience as a soldier during the war, he resolved to devote the rest of his life to helping children grow healthy, both physically and mentally.

KATAYAMA, KEN
1940-2014, 2016 ILLUSTRATOR NOMINEE

Ken Katayama was born in Tokyo in 1940. After he graduated from the Department of Commercial Design at Musashino Art University, he began to work at an advertising company but soon resigned. In 1966, he published his first picture book. Although Katayama then stopped writing for a while, he resumed his artistic activity, inspired by his eldest son’s birth, in 1979. Since then, he has published creative works embodying his dynamic, vivid, and unique style.

TASHIMA, SEIZO
1940-2018 ILLUSTRATOR NOMINEE

Born in Osaka, Seizo Tashima spent his childhood in Kochi Prefecture. He has been active at the front lines of picture book development since the 1960s, receiving the Golden Apple Award at the 2nd Biennial of Illustration Bratislava (IBB) in 1969. He continues to produce powerful, passionate, and ceaselessly innovative works. He has published more than 150 picture books of great variety; some funny and fun, others serious stories of war, as well as folk tales and books for babies. Running through all of his works, we can sense a consistent spirit.

Hayashi, Akiko 1945-2008, 2009 ILLUSTRATOR NOMINEE

Born in Tokyo in 1945, Akiko Hayashi graduated from the Faculty of Fine Arts at Yokohama National University. Her first book was published in 1977. She is one of Japan's leading picture book writer-illustrators and has received numerous awards in Japan and abroad. These include the Ezra Jack Keats Award (USA) for "Kore no no yuusen (Little Sister Goes to Hospital) and the 13 Junies Grand Prix (France) for "Hajimete no Aryanuga (I'm Going Camping)."

Fukuinkan Shoten

Don don don don (Dewared—Stamp, Stomp, Stomp) Bunkin Shuppan

Daisen no panyo san (Mr. Crow's Bakery) Kaisoksha

Boku no koe ga kikoemasuka (Can You Hear My Voice?) Doshinsya

★ 2018 IBBY Very Best Book

Keski-Shokkan

Imoto no nyuin (Can You Hear My Voice?) Doshinsya

Dai-chan to umi (Dai-chan and the Sea) Fukuinkan Shoten

Karasu no panya san (Mr. Crow's Bakery) Kaisoksha

Kaiseisha

Don don don don (Dewared—Stamp, Stomp, Stomp) Bunkin Shuppan

Don don don don (Dewared—Stamp, Stomp, Stomp) Bunkin Shuppan

Kesenkyo Shoten

Kakuyam‧Kun

Don don don don (Dewared—Stamp, Stomp, Stomp) Bunkin Shuppan

Fukuinkan Shoten

Doko ni kaeru klawatenoko (Can You Hear My Voice?) Doshinsya

★ 2018 IBBY Very Best Book
Growth in Japanese Children’s Book Publishing Since World War II

Yumiko SAKUMA, JBBY President
Translated by Avery Fischer Udagawa

This essay was first presented as part of a session at the Asian Festival of Children’s Content (AFCC) 2016, and was modified for Painting Landscapes: Children’s Literature About and Beyond Asia (AFCC Publications, 2017).

Post-war Publishing in Japan

Graph A (p. 28) is based on data published in Japan’s Publication Yearbook (Shuppan nenkan) and by the Statistics Bureau, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications. It shows us how the number of publications in Japan increased from 1954 to 2016. The vertical axis shows the number of new publications, and the horizontal axis shows the publication year. Each colored line shows a category of publications, such as the yellow line for social science, the brown line for literature (for adults), and the red line for children’s books.

As you can see, in 1954 the most-published category in Japan was children’s books. It seems the Japanese tried to focus on education and children’s publications during the immediate postwar years of recovery.

At the war’s end, Japan lacked not only adequate food but also culture, so children’s books and magazines printed on cheap paper sold briskly; children’s magazines were high in number. Later on, publishers began to put out series of picture books and famous chil-

When I spoke at the Asian Festival of Children’s Content (AFCC) 2016 in Singapore, I was delighted to meet many people there who love children’s books. I presented about the background and current state of Japanese Children’s Publishing and discussed some challenges and directions for the future.

Since my presentation in Singapore, I have updated the portion of my talk about growth in Japanese children’s book publishing since World War II. Here I would like to convey my findings and, using concrete numbers, outline the size and shape of Japanese children’s publishing.

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Post-war Children’s Publishing in Japan

Once society stabilized, parents became able to consider education and sources of information for their children, and they bought books for them; school classrooms and libraries also became a source of demand, so that the number of titles published for children outpaced titles for adults.

Post-war Children’s Publishing in Japan

Graph B (p. 28) also shows publishing in Japan from 1954 to 2016, but only for books related to children. The red line indicates children’s books, and the green line indicates study guides (reference). As you can see, the number of new children’s titles increased to about 5,000 recently. It is important to note that sales of books have not increased in this same way. The graph does not show it, but while the number of new publications has increased, the number of books in each first printing has decreased. This is because, first of all, the number of children in Japan has decreased. Second, books have to compete against games and other media such as TV and comics.

New Children’s Titles Published in 2016

Table A (p. 29) shows that in 2016, Japanese publishers released 4,871 new children’s titles, of which 1,231 were picture books, 1,072 were chapter books and novels, and 2,568 were nonfiction and information books.

Table A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number of Titles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Literature</td>
<td>2,303</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Picture Books</td>
<td>1,231</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Books &amp; Novels</td>
<td>1,072</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonfiction &amp; Others</td>
<td>2,568</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philosophy &amp; Religion</td>
<td>152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History &amp; Geography</td>
<td>235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Science</td>
<td>263</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural Science</td>
<td>492</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering &amp; Technology</td>
<td>218</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industry</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts &amp; Sports</td>
<td>839</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language</td>
<td>202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>4,871</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Original Works vs. Translations in 2016

Since I am a translator, I wanted to compare the number of Japanese original works with the number of translated works published in Japan in 2016. As you can see in Table B (p. 30), the translated works accounted for 15.3% of all children’s titles published in Japan.

To put all of this in context, Japan now publishes about 80,000 new titles per year (78,113 in 2016), including books for adults. Children’s books account for about 6 percent of that.
be that Japanese publishers dislike the co-production system increasingly required by American and British publishers. If a Japanese publisher accepts this co-production system, the cost of the first printing may be reduced, but it is difficult to reprint at times convenient for the Japanese publisher.

To explain further about co-production, there are generally two ways to publish a Japanese edition of a picture book originally published overseas:


2. The original publisher sells the Japanese publisher the translation rights but not the data files, and the original publisher prints and binds the Japanese version using the Japanese publisher’s files, and the original publisher prints and binds the Japanese edition when the Japanese publisher wishes. Alternatively, the Japanese publisher may succeed in getting more copies printed, but the cost may be high. These difficulties inhibit further printings even when a book becomes listed as recommended or required reading for Japanese students, so this setup is highly disadvantageous for Japan.

**Original Works vs. Translations: Mutual Influence**

I feel that in Japan's children’s publishing nowadays, translated works and original works influence each other significantly. One of the leading figures of children’s literature in post-war Japan was Momoko Ishii, who was a translator as well as a writer. In addition, several “World Children's Literature” book series were published in Japan in the 1950s and 1960s. In the 1980s and 1990s, however, there seemed to be a divide between those who were involved in publishing original works, and those who were involved in translated works. So I started a monthly book discussion group where writers, translators, librarians, bunko (or private library) organizers, editors and researchers come and talk about children’s books. In this group we always read Japanese original works and translated works about the same theme for comparison. We have learned plenty from one another this way; for example, we translators learn a lot from works originally written in Japanese, especially regarding literary styles.

On the other hand, many of the successful Japanese writers today were brought up on translated masterpieces in their childhood, so the influence of translations is clear in original works, as well. For example, Nahoko Uehashi, writer of epic fantasies and winner of the 2014 Hans Christian Andersen Award, has said she loved to read Rosemary Sutcliff, Arthur Ransome, J. R. R. Tolkien and Jules Verne in translation in her childhood. Also, Noriko Ogihara, writer of fantasy novels set in ancient Japan, published Gurifin to ocha (Tea With Griffin) in 2012; this collection of her essays on animals includes imaginary animals in foreign fantasies and myths. Sho Kutsuki, whose parents were exposed to the atomic bomb radiation in Hiroshima, has read much foreign literature and written stories with a world-wide view. Finally, Jun Nasuda, who writes award-winning YA novels, lives both in Berlin and Tokyo, and he translates German children's books into Japanese as well.

**Table B**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Total Titles Published</th>
<th>Japanese Originals</th>
<th>Translated Works</th>
<th>Translated Books as Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Picture Books</td>
<td>1,231</td>
<td>958</td>
<td>273</td>
<td>22.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Books &amp; Novels</td>
<td>1,072</td>
<td>835</td>
<td>237</td>
<td>22.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonfiction &amp; Others</td>
<td>2,568</td>
<td>2,332</td>
<td>236</td>
<td>9.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>4,871</td>
<td>4,125</td>
<td>746</td>
<td>15.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>