

ABC: A WINTERTHUR BOOK FOR CHILDREN TEACHES ALPHABET THROUGH MUSEUM'S RENOWNED COLLECTION

Cultivate Arts Appreciation With Enchanting New Winterthur Children's Book

WINTERTHUR, DELAWARE—Amazing objects star in the new *ABC: A Winterthur Book for Children*, like the 1776 print showing a woman with hair that's 10 feet high. And teapots shaped like people!

"Come learn your letters along with me and discover Winterthur from A to Z!" the opening rhyme invites. However children navigate from A to Z, *ABC: A Winterthur Book for Children* helps them learn by showcasing compelling items from Winterthur Museum, Garden & Library's renowned collection of more than 90,000 objects.

"We could write 10 books like this," said author Lois Stoehr, Associate Curator of Education. "Winterthur has an amazingly rich collection and our library is a go-to resource for American decorative arts researchers from around the world."

The images and rhymes in the book combine to teach math (count the ovals), technology (see how a taxidermy bird looks under an X-ray) and, of course, history. As Stoehr writes: "Would you believe that boys once wore a dress until age four or more?"

The book is an outgrowth of the popular children's exhibition *K Is for Kids*, a 2007 show that Stoehr organized as part of her role overseeing programs connecting students and families to the past – and to each other – through objects. About half the objects from this 2007 exhibition appear in *ABC: A Winterthur Book for Children*. The other objects in the book were selected because they are colorful and eye-catching -- perfect for photos in a children's book.

Stoehr combined 11 years of experience working at Winterthur with advice from teachers while erecting the exhibition to create the rhymes and select the photos. She made sure to include short and long vowels and a lot of alliteration. Richly detailed pictures "can be mined to make up your own rhymes," she suggested.

Objects in the book range from a 1754 lion and leopard needlework to a 1931 spool zoo. Featured objects are primarily American, reflecting the collecting focus of Winterthur founder Henry Francis du Pont, but some objects come from England, Germany, and Denmark.

Stoehr sometimes wrote pairs of rhyming couplets after being inspired by the images, and sometimes she wrote the rhymes and looked for fun objects that fit. "It's kind of quirky," she said. "We worked hard to go for objects that weren't the standard for each letter."

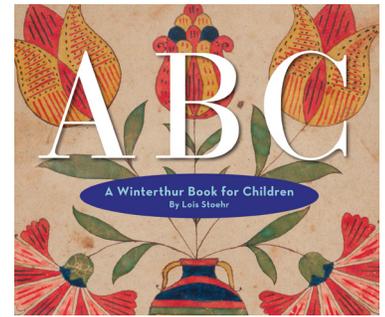
That's why there are insects for I, a patterned plate for P, and a reward of merit for R, the last one letting young readers know how much adults in the mid-1800s cared about their learning then.

Stoehr is sentimental about the king and queen with curly hair that stand for K, because they're William and Mary. She earned her Bachelor of Arts in history from the College of William & Mary, and she earned her Master of Arts from the Winterthur Program in Early American Culture.

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ABC: A Winterthur Book for Children is available at winterthurstore.com or at the Winterthur Museum Store and the Winterthur Bookstore. *Courtesy of Winterthur.*

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Winterthur—known worldwide for its preeminent collection of American decorative arts, naturalistic gardens, and research library for the study of American art and material culture—offers a variety of tours, exhibitions, programs, and activities throughout the year. General admission includes a tour of some of the most notable spaces in the 175-room house as well as access to the Winterthur Garden and Galleries, special exhibitions, a narrated tram tour (weather permitting), the Campbell Collection of Soup Tureens, and the Enchanted Woods children's garden. \$20 adults; \$18 for students and seniors; \$5 for ages 2–11.

Museum hours

10 am- 5 pm, Tuesday- Sunday.

Winterthur, located on Route 52, six miles northwest of Wilmington, Delaware, and five miles south of U.S. Route 1, is closed on Mondays (except during Yuletide), Thanksgiving, and Christmas Day.

Winterthur is committed to accessible programming for all. For information, including special services, call 800.448.3883, 302.888.4600, or TTY 302.888.4907, or visit winterthur.org.

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The book was the idea of Ellen M. Taviano, General Manager of Retail & Licensed Products. Librarian Jeanne Solensky and Susan Newton, Coordinator of Photo Services, were indispensable in finding the best images. It was edited by Onie Rollins, Director of Publications and Senior Editor, and designed by Suzanne Gaadt of Gaadtcreative.com.

ABC is \$18.95 and can be ordered online at <http://www.winterthurstore.com> and purchased onsite at the Winterthur Museum Store and the Winterthur Bookstore.

For information, please visit winterthur.org or call 800.448.3883.

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