Abstract

Pop-up books are a special category of children’s books, which contain different types of paper constructions. The books can be defined in the following way: "Mechanical books should look like ordinary books. Their success is to be measured by the ingenuity with which their bookish format conceals unbookish characteristics.”

The constructions in mechanical books can roughly be divided into three categories:
1. Flat constructions that are activated by pulling a flap
2. Three dimensional constructions that either partially or fully spread out as the book pages are being turned over
3. Sounds and optical illusions which besides paper are made of wood, different types of plastic/rubber, metal and electronic chips depending on when they are produced

The most common problems with pop-up books (if they have survived children’s hands and handling) are mechanical damages. The consequences of mechanical damages are that the constructions either do not work properly or do not work at all. The reader will therefore not get the full experience of the idea of the book.

I will also divide the mechanical damages into three categories:
1. Damages caused by an excessively rough handling
2. Damages caused by normal wear and tear
3. Damages caused by construction errors

On two posters I will summarise the history of pop-up books and show examples of the three different types of construction and examples of restoration of different constructions.

How to bind and restore pop-up books differ from ordinary books as there have to be room for all the pop-up parts and as there are often hidden mechanical devises. However, that is a chapter by itself which I will not be dealing with here.
