

**Figure 4.4** Checklist for evaluating picture books

## EVALUATING PICTURE BOOKS

### 1. Characterisation

Do we care about the characters?  
Are the characters multidimensional?

### 2. Plot

Is there a conflict?  
What is the conflict?  
    Person against self  
    Self against other  
    Self against society  
    Self against nature  
Is there a satisfactory ending?  
What is the pattern of action?  
    Predictable repetitive plot  
    Common plot  
    Quest  
    Episodic

### 3. Setting

What place is the story set in?  
Is the setting effective?  
What time is the book set in—present, past or future?  
Are the behaviour, clothing, beliefs and values consistent with the setting?

### 4. Themes

What is the theme?  
    Good versus evil  
    Be true to yourself  
    Growing up requires risks

### 5. Point of view

Who is telling the story?  
    First person  
    Third person  
    Omniscient narrator

### 6. Style

How is the mood created by the words selected, the rhythm and the rhyme?

### 7. Illustrations

Do the text and illustrations work together? (e.g. *Where the Wild Things Are* (Maurice Sendak))  
Is there an imaginative quality to the art? (e.g. *Voices in the Park* (Anthony Browne))  
Do the illustrations reflect, extend and enrich the text? (e.g. *Shrek!* (William Steig))  
Do the pages flow from one to the next and draw the reader's eye along? (e.g. *We're Going on a Bear Hunt* (Michael Rosen))