

# Thresholds of change in the transition from children's to young adult literature

Arlandis, S. & Reyes-Torres, A. (2018). Thresholds of change in children's literature: the symbol of the mirror. *Journal of New Approaches in Educational Research*, 7(2), 125-130. doi: 10.7821/naer.2018.7.275

## Introduction

**Thresholds of change in children's and young adult literature** ➤ through them, protagonists face the real world and the imaginary one, making a moral and comparative reading between both worlds.

Thresholds of change emerge at a formative stage of the child, between the age of six and eight, when their level of literacy, reading habits and literary competence (learning to think critically, to enjoy books and to acknowledge their value) allow them to individualize and construct their own interpretations.

An integral transformation takes place during these thresholds in the child-reader who seeks –as a mirror– to recognize himself/herself in the reading of others who, like him/her, have begun an introductory journey towards the construction of their own identity, also with the risks that this transformation entails: not being able to exactly discern the border crossing, i.e. the threshold.

## Theoretical framework

Características de la literatura infantil y juvenil:

- Divertidas
- Cautivadoras
- Creíbles
- Moralmente válidas
- Claridad expositiva
- Acompañamiento de ilustraciones

Aim of children's and young adult literature: accompanying and reflecting the transformation of the young reader

Mainly combining wonder and adventure as a transformation model ➤ fantastic adventure (symbol of the mirror)

Confrontation between the Primary World (ordinary) and the Secondary World (fantastic)

Mirror (object-subject-threshold) ➤ In a fantastic context, characters can watch themselves and perceive the mysteries about their own existence

## Discussion

The symbol of the mirror has been differently represented in:

- The Little Vampire
- Snow White
- The Odyssey
- Alice in Wonderland
- The Neverending Story
- Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone

**The crossing of thresholds of transformation** brings along an educational and formative awareness which leads us to some experiences (adventures) from which we will return more prepared.



## Conclusions

The symbol of the mirror has varied depending on the formative stages that it crosses and on children's cognitive development: from being a mere decorative object that shows reality as the discovery of the self to its active participation when it comes to organizing and transforming that reality, and ultimately questioning it.