



By Linda Sattgast

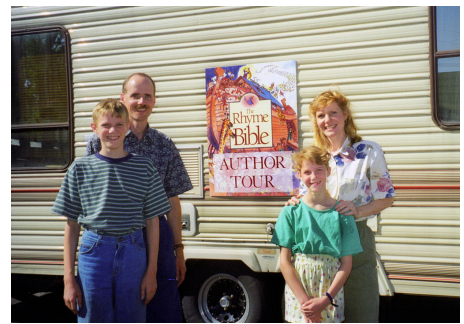
## Picture Perfect Gift Books—Introduction

### Lesson 01: My Story—Picture Book Author

Hello! I'm Linda Sattgast, the instructor for this class, **Picture Perfect Gift Books**. I thought I'd start by telling you why I'm qualified to teach this class.

First of all, I've always loved books and reading. Somehow I knew, at a fairly young age, that I would write a book someday, but it wasn't until I got married and had kids that I discovered what kind of books I wanted to write—and that was picture books.

I got the idea for my first book after my son Caleb was born. I went to the store looking for a particular kind of book. (This was way back before Amazon.) I was looking for a Bible story book in a picture book format, but all I could find was a very uninteresting book with too many words per page and old fashioned paintings for the illustrations.



That's when I thought, "I should write one myself."

It took me a few years. By then we had our second child, but I finally did it after a soul searching session with myself on Mother's Day. I tend to get philosophical with myself on Mother's Day for some reason.

I realized that I hadn't sent out a book proposal because I was afraid of rejection. What if no publisher liked my idea? What if they all said, "NO!" What would I do then? It was the only idea I had, and if they said no, then I was done with my dream of writing.

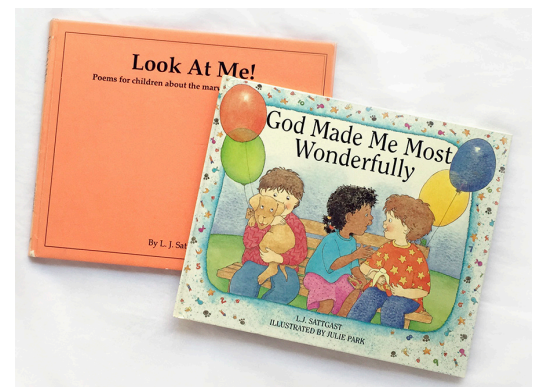
Once I realized why I was stuck, I decided to just go for it. This is when I did my first rudimentary mock up. Actually, my husband Charlie made the mockup. I would write the books, and he would make the mockups.

We sent the proposal and book mockup to 11 publishers. I got quite a few "No Thank you" letters back, but I got 3 who said they were interested, and one of the three, Harvest House, published the book, called *My Very First Bible*.

I used mockups for other book proposals as well, including a set of little books that were published by Multnomah Press. Often, my mock up was amazingly similar to the size of the final book, so it did influence the publisher.

In the mock up, I used a few photos, but not on every page. It was just to give a visual idea of what the art could be about.

I went on to publish over 25 children's picture books, two of which won awards.



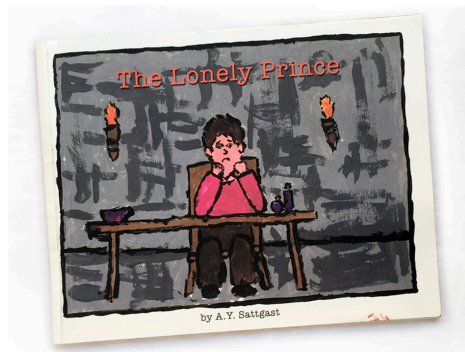
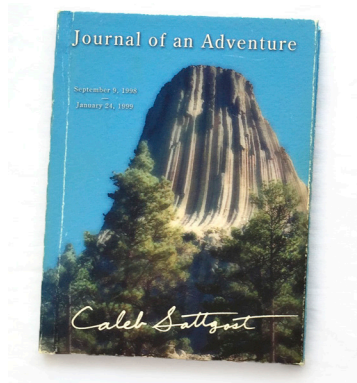
## Homeschool

When I began to homeschool, another reason emerged for homemade books: to make personalized readers for teaching Caleb to read. That way I could use ideas that would interest him. It was also a great way to display his art. Unfortunately, I've lost some of those early books.

When our kids were ages 10 and 13, we took six months to travel around the United States on a book signing tour. At the same time, we homeschooled our kids and visited historic sites along the way.

One assignment was for the kids to keep a journal. Caleb was old enough to write a journal that still makes us chuckle to this day. He was so melodramatic!

Later, when we got home, he turned his journal into a book and asked for help making a cover. It's such a gem of a book! We still have it, and I'm so glad he did it!



When our daughter Allison was in public high school, she had an assignment to write a children's picture book. She made her own art and we helped her put it into a book format. Needless to say, her teacher was quite impressed!

As a bonus, my husband Charlie will teach you how to make a handmade book, like we used to do so many years ago. You might like to do this with your kids or grandkids or, if you're a teacher, for a school project. It's really a fun learning experience!

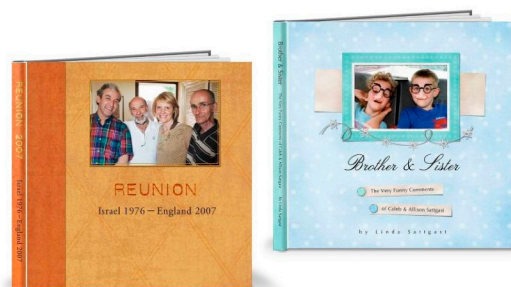
## Gift Books

When digital arrived, it was like a whole new world opening up. Wow! So much more is possible with digital, even if you aren't a whiz at using Photoshop or Photoshop Elements! In fact, if you're a novice at using editing software, I have training in this class about an alternate way to create a fabulous gift book!

In reality, though, a memorable gift book is more than just the ability to create a physical book. I want you to have a bushel basket full of great ideas that you can use right away—ideas that will jump start your own creative ideas. And I want you to have the right mindset so you can pull it off successfully—and quickly. Often the simplest and easiest format can make the most memorable book, so one of my goals is to get you to simplify, simplify, simplify!

You can do this. You can create a gift book that will delight someone you love. So let's get started.

I'm really looking forward to this journey together!



## Lesson 02: The Power of Books

Books have a powerful influence on us.

On my author tour around the USA I met some wonderful kids who loved my Rhyme Bible story book.

- A boy I met took my book to bed with him every night.
- One girl had memorized her favorite story in the book.
- A mother wrote to tell me that her boy, who was in the 5th grade and still couldn't read, picked up my Rhyme Bible Storybook and finally began to read.

In our family, we read out loud a lot!

One of my favorite pictures is of my dad and my daughter reading—and her book is upside down.

In our family, our favorite books were so loved that they began to fall apart.

What do you think happens when someone, a child, a teen, or an adult, has someone make a book about them? It's powerful. It says that you cared so much about them, you loved them so much, that you took the time to make a book about them.

Even if they don't say much—and teens don't say a lot—you can see it in their eyes—they feel affirmed. They feel loved.

I made a very simple gift book for a friend and gave it to her for her birthday. We've been friends for a long time. This is a picture of the two of us in 1975. When she unwrapped her present she said, "I LOVE it! I don't just like it, I LOVE it!" I'll tell you more about this book in another lesson.

When we gave Granny a book honoring her on Mother's Day, she said, "This is my best present ever!"



That is the power of a gift book. Think of it. You're about to make someone's day.

### Lesson 03: What Is A Gift Book?

In this lesson I'm going to clarify how a gift book differs from other kinds of very nice books you might want to make sometime, but that won't be the focus of this class:

#### Photo Books

For example, we won't be talking about Photo Books. This is a collection of photos, usually on a single topic. It could be photos in a certain time frame, say Summer photos, or the year in photos, or about a trip. Or it could be about a favorite photo hobby of yours, e.g. flowers, or birds or landscape photos.

These can be gorgeous books and could very well make a lovely gift for someone, but they don't qualify for the definition of a gift book that I'm using for this class.

It is possible, though, to use some of these photos in a gift book, and I'll be giving you some ideas on how to do that.

#### Scrapbooks

##### Reunion Book by Linda Sattgast

**Credits:** Papers and elements by Linda Sattgast

Grunge Frames from Rose Elegance by Michelle Shefveland

Fonts: Adobe Garamond Pro Regular & Plastique Normal

This class is not about creating a scrapbook. The best way I can demonstrate the difference between a scrapbook and a gift book is to show you a book I created about meeting some friends in England that I hadn't seen for about 30 years.

Before the trip, I had a great idea: I would create a gift book about the time and place where my friends and I had met many years ago, which was on a kibbutz in Israel. I would then print four copies of the book, one for each friend and one for me. I figured, rightly so, that they would make great hostess gifts.

But, I didn't get it done before I left. So I ended up doing a hybrid kind of book after I returned home. The first half was in the style of a gift book, which had been my original plan.



I used pictures from the past and turned them all into black and white, even though the original photos were in color, and I used this very simple page design: Full bleed photo on one side, and a smaller photo on the other side, with some text and a very light title.

Then the second half of the book was about our reunion in England. Do you see the difference in style? The first half of the book is a gift book. The second half of the book is a scrapbook.

Scrapbookers like to add colored papers and elements, and often put a lot of focus on the page design, so that's what I did here. This half turned into more of a memory scrapbook than a gift book. I could have used many of these same photos, even in color and continued with the same style and focus and ended up with a very cool gift book, but instead I used two styles in one book, which is OK, but in retrospect, I wouldn't do it that way now.

When I showed this book to a friend who is more interested in photography than scrapbooking, she was totally drawn to the first half of the book, and I think you'll find that true with a lot of people who aren't scrapbookers. They'll love your gift books, but they may not be that attracted to your scrapbooks.

Now, I'm NOT saying you shouldn't use any scrapbook paper or elements. Here's a page from a gift book by Susie Roberts that has paper and a small number of elements. Some of the elements are blended into the background, so they're not really obvious. There's a key, though, to making a book like this work as a gift book, which I'll explain more in a later video. But even without an explanation you can tell these two pages aren't typical scrapbook pages.

## Art Books

These are books where the pages are highly artistic. Some are quite complex, usually with lots of blending.

Others are a bit simpler, but still involve an artsy sort of blended look. If you have the time and skill, you can make a beautiful book using an artistic style, but it's harder to make them into the kind of gift book I'm talking about in this class, because it's not about the recipient—it's about the artist. The books may be beautiful. You may want to put one on your coffee table to demo your art, but it's a little harder to make them into a gift book where the focus is on someone else. AND they take a lot more time and effort to create. In this class I'm going to focus on fast and easy book design.

## Heritage Books

This class also isn't about a full blown heritage book where you recount someone's history in depth and usually with a lot of pages. I made a book like that about my mother, so I like those kinds of books, but again, it's not a gift book in the sense I'm using in this class.

So what is a gift book? Or at least, what is the definition we'll be using in this class?

I'm glad you asked! Here's my definition of a gift book for the purposes of this class.

A gift book is a short, simple book that makes the recipient feel loved and affirmed.



Notice that:

- A gift book focuses on the recipient.
- It makes the recipient feel loved and affirmed.
- It's a short book.
- It's usually a smallish book.
- The design is simple and repetitive.
- The photos and words are more important than the design.
- It's fast and easy to create.

Whew! I think I hear a collective sigh of relief. You mean a gift book doesn't have to be complicated or artsy? No, it doesn't! In fact, it'll be better if it isn't.

In the next section, we'll look at the anatomy of a gift book. It's really quite simple. You're going to like it!