

The Role of Design in Picturebooks

Meaning, Image-Making, & Typography

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Abstract

This thesis investigates the role of design in producing unique experiences through the medium of contemporary picturebooks. The nature of the picturebook's format, in which text and image are combined, lends itself well to a design analysis. Furthermore, examining picturebooks through the lens of design adds a critical new perspective to current work in the field.

Award-winning picturebooks were selected for a visual analysis, focusing on the formal elements, design principles, and compositions of the books and their affect on the meaning of the text and the reader's experience of the visual narrative. Additionally, through a series of design experiments, the relationships between typography and imagery in picturebooks is explored. Through this research, this project investigates the designed form of the picturebook and the impact of design decisions on the overall visual narrative.

This research demonstrates how the careful consideration of design principles can inform and benefit the process of creating picturebooks, and could lead to more practitioners in the field adopting a design-oriented approach to picturebooks.

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Table of Contents

ii	Abstract
iii	Acknowledgements
iv	Table of Contents
v	List of Tables
vii	List of Figures
01	Introduction
02	Scope of Study
03	Current Research
09	Studying Design in Picturebooks
13	Visual Analysis
13	Method
17	selection of picturebooks
18	visual analysis
19	Summary of Findings
19	picturebooks by non-designers
23	picturebooks by designers
26	Use of Design Elements
30	Exploration of Visual Design Narrative
30	Storytelling Through Design: The Design of Myth & Legend
33	Visual Grammar as Framework for Intentional Design
35	exploration #1: compositional structure
37	exploration #2: shape and value
39	exploration #3: shape and colour
45	Investigating the Picturebook Form and Design
48	conventional picturebook narrative
51	typographic narrative
54	non-sequential narrative
57	digital/interactive visual narrative
60	Concluding Remarks
62	Bibliography
64	Appendix

List of Tables

Table 1. Checklist used for Visual Analysis.....	16
Table 2. Design Elements Used in Picturebooks by Non-Designers.....	19
Table 3. Design Elements Used in Picturebooks by Designers	23

List of Figures

- Figure 1. Compositional elements of design that affect visual narrative 14
- Figure 2. Visual elements of design that affect visual narrative 15
- Figure 3. Diagram of Most Frequently Used Design Elements in Picturebook Analysis 26
- Figure 4. The Star Thief, 2017. 16" x 16". Digital illustration. 31
- Figure 5. Underwater Myths, 2017. 16" x 16". Digital illustration..... 32
- Figure 6. Once And Future Queen, 2017. 16" x 16". Digital illustration..... 32
- Figure 7. Shape Explorations for Fox and Dog..... 35
- Figure 8. Direction and Movement..... 35
- Figure 9. Using shapes as a guide to illustrate characters. 36
- Figure 10. Initial typographic explorations 36
- Figure 11.1-11.6 Final composition explorations 37
- Figure 12. The Ugly Duckling, pages 1-2 38
- Figure 13. The Ugly Duckling, pages 3-4..... 38
- Figure 14. The Ugly Duckling, pages 5-6..... 38
- Figure 15. The Ugly Duckling, pages 7-8 38
- Figure 16. Semiotic Meanings of Colour 40
- Figure 17. Semiotic Meanings of Shape 40
- Figure 18.1-18.3 Exploring shape and colour in backgrounds and characters..... 41
- Figure 19.1-19.3 Exploring colour and shape in fox characters 41
- Figure 20.1-20.4 Shape and Colour Scenes..... 42
- Figure 21.1-21.4 Scene Exploration continued 44
- Figure 22. Concept sketches for character and costume designs 45
- Figure 23. The Star Thief I, 2018. 4" x 6". Graphite on paper. 46
- Figure 24. Star Thief II, 2018. Cut paper collage and digital processing 46
- Figure 25.1-25.9 Colour and Emotional Narrative Explorations 47
- Figure 26.1-26.3 Spreads from The Star Thief picturebook 48
- Figure 27.1-27.4 Spreads from The Star Thief picturebook 49
- Figure 28.1-28.6 Spreads from The Star Thief picturebook..... 50
- Figure 29. Black spread using negative space to convey the darkness of a starless sky 51

Figure 30.1-4 Selected spreads from typographic narrative.....	52
Figure 31.1-4 Using the inner fold as a design element	53
Figure 32. Plain text and typographic design	54
Figure 33. Non-sequential narrative with cards.....	55
Figure 34. Non-sequential narrative with cards.....	56
Figure 35. Mobile version of interactive narrative.....	57
Figure 36. Scale, position, and transparency used in digital narrative	58
Figure 37. Transparency, repetition, and position	58
Figure 38. Overlaid text in a section of the generated narrative.....	58
Figure 39. Close-up of overlaid text	58
Figure 40. Text repetition and overlay, arranged with image.	59

01 Introduction

A picturebook is text, illustrations, total design, and, foremost, an experience for a child.

As an art form it hinges on the interdependence of pictures and words, on the simultaneous display of two pages, and on the drama of the turning of the page.

On its own terms its possibilities are limitless. (Bader in Lewis, 2001, p. 1)

Reading a picturebook is to experience a visual narrative, one that has been carefully designed. This thesis investigates the impact of design decisions on the reader's process of producing meaning, and explores the visual language of stories to create a more intentional design process of making picturebooks.

This thesis approaches the picturebook as a design object for several reasons. Firstly, it is well situated within the realm of book design. Secondly, its main components are imagery and text, like graphic design's goal of linking imagery with typography. Thirdly, picturebooks often contain imagery based on visual graphics. Finally, they aim to communicate through ethos (considering the audience), pathos (emotional appeal), and logos (logic) to create a visual narrative.

This approach allows exploration of the typography, formal elements, design principles, and compositional qualities of the picturebook from a practice-based perspective. This is done using the theories of semiotics, visual grammar, gestalt, and multimodality, in both the visual analysis of picturebooks and visual design explorations.

Scope of Study

Using the spelling *picturebook* emphasizes the “inseparable unit” of pictures and text, defining the picture book as a format in which the story and pictures are of equal importance, forming a stronger artistic unit together than apart (Kümmerling-Meibauer, 2010; Sipe, 2001).

As their role has grown beyond literacy acquisition, picturebooks have become important forms of visual narratives (Salisbury & Styles, 2012). The Caldecott Medal’s criteria defines the audience as “persons of ages up to and including fourteen” (ALSC, 2008). The secondary audience are the adults who purchase and read these picturebooks with their children. Many picturebooks are created with this dual audience in mind, offering adults and children a shared reading experience in which each produces their own meaning (Nikolajeva & Scott, 2006).

Within picturebook research, the main perspectives are those of the education, art history, and literature fields. Educational viewpoints underline the importance of picturebooks in developing literacy skills and as pedagogical tools (Bateman, 2014; Sipe, 2001). Art historians view picturebooks as historical artefacts and tools to familiarize children with art (Bateman, 2014; Nodelman, 2017). Literature offers the concepts of narratology and literary interpretation in picturebooks (Bateman, 2014). These perspectives as a whole do not offer much to the study of picturebooks from a design standpoint. Thus, the scope of this research narrows to a few sources that discuss the interaction of text and image within picturebooks or visual narratives.

Current research

When looking at picturebooks, it becomes evident that the story is told in two distinct ways: the written text, and the sequential images. On the surface, it may seem that these are simply two ways to tell the same story, or even two separate stories themselves.

However, as discussed earlier, the most unique and distinctive quality of picturebooks is that the text and images come together to create a wholly new story that does not exist in either element alone. Thus, these researchers focus most on the interaction and relationship between text and image in picturebooks, which has been called “visual-verbal narrative,” “counterpoint,” “duet,” “synergy,” or “interanimation” (Lewis, 2001, p. 34-37; Nikolajeva & Scott, 2006, p. 24-27). The main approaches of study are through visual grammar, semiotics, and narratology.

Visual grammar and multimodality. In their work on visual grammar, Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) propose the idea of multimodality, or multiple truths, within narratives. Like Sipe’s argument of multiple, changing meanings being produced by the reader, multimodality in picturebooks refers to the different truths or modalities offered by the text and by the image. Similarly, in her work on visual literacy, Dondis deconstructs the underlying structures and meanings of visual compositions. Elements that contribute to the visual structure of the page include position, perspective angles (high, low, eye-level), framing (on a range of extreme closeup to extreme far shot), and direction (vertical, horizontal, diagonal, curved). For example, the verso page often deals with known details while the recto deals new information, enticing the reader to turn the page (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). Aspects of visual representation include shape,

colour, size, and texture. Dondis (1973) argues that certain semiotic meanings attached to these visual elements have become instinctual, inherent associations over years of learning to adapt to the world (Dondis, 1973). For example, sharp, triangular shapes are often viewed as dangerous, while vertical shapes mimic the stability of trees (Dondis 1973). Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) further add to this discussion on visual perception by stating that triangles signify dynamic forces, while squares signify orderliness or construction, and circles are organic, warm, and inspire protectiveness.

Looking at the multimodality of a picturebook, we can analyze the different techniques of creating meaning. In this way, visual grammar can be applied to the imagery and typography within picturebooks to understand the role of design in shaping their narratives.

Semiotics. Nikolajeva and Scott (2006) propose a semiotics-driven approach to picturebooks, arguing that the distinctiveness of a picturebook lies in its combination of two separate sets of signs: the iconic and the conventional.

Iconic signs, like pictures, are those in which the signifier and signified are directly related, and they function to describe or represent. Oftentimes they are nonlinear, without any instruction on how to read them. Conventional signs, like typography, on the other hand, are those that have no relationship to what is signified, and their function is to narrate, often linearly. The tension between these two contrasting functions is what leads to endless possibilities in their interaction within a picturebook. As a designer, these semiotic signs and their interactions create potential to create

meaning through typography and image-making and craft a unique experience through picturebooks.

Sipe (1998) takes this further by proposing a theory based on the semiotic concept of “transmediation,” and he argues that the different ways we experience the functions of these signs is important to understand the ways we relate image and text in picturebooks (p. 101). He continues, that as pictures are mostly nonlinear, we tend to dwell on them longer, and as text is mostly linear, we tend to keep reading and going ahead. This makes the experience of reading a picturebook inherently different from that of purely verbal text — this tension created by our inclination to simultaneously dwell and move ahead urges the reader to go backwards and forwards to relate illustrations and text across pages (Sipe, 1998). Based on Meek’s findings, Sipe further explains that this experience also urges the rereading of picturebooks to produce new meanings through newfound relationships between the pictures and text across the pages, in essence creating a set of stories or meanings. Sipe’s work is especially useful in understanding the balancing of these semiotic qualities of typography and imagery in the design of a picturebook.

These meanings are produced through the process of *transmediation*, or the way content is translated from one sign system to another (Sipe, 1998). Moving from the iconic sign system of imagery to the conventional sign system of text, and vice versa, new meanings are produced as the reader interprets one sign in the context of the other (Sipe, 1998). Lewis (2001) suggests that in looking from text to image and back while we read, “we carry with us semantic traces that colour or inflect what we read and what we

see” (p. 35). He terms this producing of meaning as interanimation, in the way that the words direct our attention to key parts of the picture, while the picture gives the words a specificity (Lewis, 2001).

Narrative modes. Bateman (2014) emphasizes the separate narrative modes at play in picturebooks. Text and images in picturebooks are often separated spatially, allowing them to be “two voices that dialogue with one another rather than supporting tighter ‘integration’” (p. 80). The relationship between these elements is created dynamically while reading, and Bateman (2014) uses Iser’s reader-response theory to explain the narrative modes in picturebooks. He argues that a text does not have a set meaning, but rather creates a structure for the reader to produce their own interpretation (Bateman, 2014; Nikolajeva & Scott, 2006). The text’s structure is characterised by gaps, which the reader actively fills with other text through the process of reading. In picturebooks, these gaps can be in the text or the visuals, and they may be filled textually or visually (Bateman, 2014). The relationship between words and images, then, relies on the kinds of gaps that are left, and the ways they can be filled. From the perspective of design, gaps in the text that are filled with images, or vice versa, are especially interesting.

Taxonomies. Nikolajeva and Scott (2006) discuss several taxonomies created to describe the text and image relationships in picturebooks, some of which focus on the function of illustrations, the type of interaction occurring between illustration and text, or categories of picturebooks. These schemes put their focus on the power relations between text and image, describing ways in which one element takes prominence over the other. Newer ways of looking at picturebooks rely on analyzing their structures

more holistically through the use of frameworks, rather than sorting them based on certain characteristics. The following frameworks instead focus on the extent of interaction in how “the words change the pictures and the pictures change the words” (Nodelman, 2017, p. 12). As Nikolajeva and Scott (2006) write, “the iconic-verbal communication that the picturebook conveys is different in degree rather than in essence” (p. 82).

Frameworks. Bateman (2014) proposes a framework that describes the ways narrative gaps are filled with information, based on the linguistic concept of expansion. Expansion, or information being added to other information, can occur through three ways: elaboration, enhancement, and extension. Elaboration provides extra details about what has already been presented in the text, while enhancement anchors the textual information. Extension is stronger than these two, rather than relying on the text, it provides new or alternative information. Both text and image offer their own entry points into the narrative, and Bateman refers to these as separate “tracks”. In picturebooks, these tracks are complete and equal, creating a dual narrative.

Lewis (2001) refers to Bateman’s concept of dual tracks as *double-orientation*, emphasizing that this duality exists at some level in all picturebooks. Instead of categorizing picturebooks, he analyzes the “ecology” of the picturebook to understand how pictures and words tell stories, proposing a framework based on the interpretation and meaning-making of the reader. His “ecology of the picturebook” consists of: interanimation (the text comes to life in the context/environment of the pictures), flexibility (the text/image dynamics change from page to page and book to book),

ecosystems (each book has its own ecosystem), and complexity (of the functions and relationships between text and image). Lewis' work contributes an important discussion on looking critically at the overall visual language and visual design of a picturebook, instead of separating it into text and image on individual spreads.

Nikolajeva and Scott (2006) propose a spectrum of classifications, ranging from a verbal narrative to a visual narrative. In the middle of this spectrum lie picturebooks, in which the verbal and visual narratives are: symmetrical (redundant narratives), complementary (text and pictures fill each other's gaps), expanding/enhancing (pictures support text, text depends on pictures), counterpointing (mutually dependent narratives), and sylleptic (independent narratives). They argue that the images in a picturebook are merely another form of narrative, and that "the degree of friction or harmony involved [between image and text] can simply be considered an extension of the narrative techniques involved in telling any story" (Nikolajeva & Scott, 2006, p. 82). In one of their studies, they use the classic tale of *Thumbelina*, and analyze the ways that different illustrators and designers have approached the story in a picturebook format, and the ways that the visuals influence the narrative quality of the book. They identify several elements which affect the story, and among the visual elements are dynamic vs. static imagery, borders, perspective angles, and scale. Using these various visual tools and techniques, each illustrator created a significantly different version of the same exact text, showcasing the "wide variety of pictorial possibilities the text allows...they certainly amplify different aspects of the text, which considerably affects our perception of the story and our reaction to it." (Nikolajeva & Scott, 2006, p. 66)

Such research is important in understanding current critical work on picturebooks. These works focus on the relationships between image and text within the picturebook. Some, like Bateman (2014), concentrate on the ways a reader produces meaning in the moment of interaction between text and image. Lewis (2001) analyzes the ways images and text work together to create meaning. Others, like Nikolajeva and Scott (2006), look at the narrative qualities carried by images within picturebooks.

Studying design in picturebooks

Arguably, what current picturebook research lacks is critical studies of picturebooks from a design perspective. While these works address the relationship between text and image, they rarely go beyond the discussion of illustrative style. In analyzing picturebooks, Lewis (2001) and Nikolajeva and Scott (2006) certainly touch on some aspects of image making but don't go any further than a cursory mention of design elements. In fact, Nikolajeva and Scott (2006) write that such discussion "lies beyond the scope of our interest, being part of book design" (p. 241). Current picturebook research goes into much detail about the power of images to transform the text of a picturebook, but there is a lack of discussion on *how* the images work to create these narratives. Similarly, there is a shortage of work on how typography and book design work to affect meaning in contemporary picturebooks.

Studies that worked on design aspects present in picturebooks include Bateman's analysis method as well as Sipe's work on semiotics in picturebooks. In his analysis of the classic picturebook *Where The Wild Things Are* by Maurice Sendak, Bateman (2014)

found that the most important elements in a picturebook are those that can be acquired by visually inspecting the composition of a spread, instead of analyzing the hierarchy of meaning attached to the text or images. Once he identified these key elements, he then analysed each one on its own. For text, he studied the typography and grammar, and for images, he examined the composition and design elements.

In his paper, *Picturebooks as Aesthetic Objects*, Sipe (2001) examines picturebooks through the lens of visual literacy. He uses his earlier work on semiotics to guide his analysis, based on the fact that “each part of the picturebook functions as a sign and has the potential to contribute meaning to the book” (2001, p. 24). He uses three sections to organize these parts: physical characteristics, traditional elements of design, and characteristics unique to the picturebook. Among the physical characteristics identified by Sipe (2001) are the size and shape, the cover, endpapers, paper choice and binding. Sipe (2001) discusses traditional elements of design (such as colour, line, shape) as an aspect of illustrative style, and not the book design as a whole. He mentions these are used to communicate meaning in a nonverbal and visual manner (Sipe, 2001, p. 28). Sipe argues that choices of colour are often based on their emotional effects and meanings, while value conveys symbolic meanings, and that line is the “most powerful expressive tool,” suggesting serenity, anxiety, stasis, or energy through its roughness or smoothness (p. 28). Similar to Dondis (1973) and Kress and van Leeuwen (2006), he argues that shapes, and their placement on within the illustration, are inherently meaningful. Sipe also considers point of view and distance, both of which can create empathy or detachment for the reader, as well as the medium used in the image-making process, which can create a balanced or contrasting visual narrative to the textual one.

Looking at design characteristics unique to picturebooks, Sipe (2001) identifies framing, arrangement, narrative sequence, and page turns as design decisions which have a significant role in creating the overall narrative. Illustrations may be framed with white space, creating an objective detachment, thin or thick lines, or illustrated borders, creating a parallel story. These create the sense of looking into the world, while full bleed pages show the world from within, drawing the reader into the story as a participant rather than a spectator (Sipe, 2001, p.33). Illustrations that break out of their frames play with the juxtaposition of these meanings (Sipe, 2001). Images can be arranged opposite text, cover the whole spread, or be presented as a montage (depicting action, motion, or time), or vignettes. The narrative sequence is created through elements similar to film or animation, such as emotional pacing, storyboards, camera angles and distance, and recurring motifs or objects (Sipe, 2001). Finally, page turns “have a complex semiotic significance because they have been carefully planned” (Sipe, 2001, p. 38). Some of the meaningful ways page turns are used in picturebooks are to signal changes in perspective or emotion, create suspense or drama, or represent gaps in the narrative that the reader must bridge (Sipe, 2001, p. 38).

Sipe’s work offers a starting point to looking at picturebooks as meaningful, designed, experiences. However, because he approaches picturebooks from the perspective of education, he focuses on the images as a tool of visual literacy, separating them from the text, and analyzes the design elements only within the illustrations. In fact, his essay barely references the text of the narrative. From a design perspective, this contradicts the very nature of a picturebook, which effortlessly unites text and imagery into a single, powerful narrative. As a designer, it is necessary to view the text not only as a function

of language, but as visual material that is presented to the reader, in the form of typography. Not only does its arrangement against the images matter, but so do its own visual qualities, such as typeface, size, spacing, colour, and alignment. Similarly, the picturebook consists of visual elements that are not confined to only traditional illustrations. Thus, these studies provide a good starting point for further research to identify the key areas in which design, typography, and image-making play a role in shaping the narrative of a picturebook.

02 Visual Analysis

Contemporary picturebooks have a wide variety of narratives, visual styles and designs. The tools of image-making, and the kinds of typography differ greatly, and picturebooks employ a diverse range of visual tools and techniques within their design. How do these design elements work to create meaning, and what role do they play in shaping the visual narratives? Much of the previous work done in the field of picturebook studies involves an analysis of certain picturebooks. Building on this method, I conducted a *visual* analysis of award-winning picturebooks, to identify key areas in which design plays a role in shaping the narrative of a picturebook. My selection was two-fold — firstly, I analyzed picturebooks in general, to understand what kinds of design techniques are employed in the typical picturebook. None of these books were created by designers or author-illustrators with design training. This contrasted with the second set of books I analyzed, which were created by graphic designers. By having a sample of mainstream picturebooks, and a sample of graphic designers' books, I was able to compare and contrast their use of design elements and the ways that design shaped their visual narratives in different ways.

Method

To identify the key areas in which design plays a role in shaping the narrative of a picturebook, I conducted a visual analysis of selected award winning picturebooks. Inspired by Sue Walker's (2012) work on historic children's book design, in which she

utilized a checklist to identify design and typographic elements of each book, I created a checklist for use in my analysis that focused on design elements and principles that play a role in shaping meaning in visual narratives. This checklist relies mainly on the semiotic elements as described in *A Primer of Visual Literacy* (Dondis, 1973) and *Reading Images: The Grammar of Visual Design* (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). I identified design elements and principles relevant to picturebooks, and their semiotic meanings, that are detailed in these works, and noted they could be sorted into two main categories: compositional elements (visual structure) and visual elements (representational style), as seen in Figures 1 and 2.

For my analysis, the main categories I included in the checklist were: story plot and structure, format, visual style, layout and visual structure, sequential narratives, and design notes (see Table 1). In this way, I was able to gather both visual information



Figure 1. Compositional elements of design that affect visual narrative



Figure 2. Visual elements of design that affect visual narrative

regarding each picturebook as well as the overall story and narrative. This enabled me to connect the design of the book to the story or narrative of the book, and it led to insights about design’s role in creating affective meaning in the visual narratives of the picturebooks.

Looking at the format, which includes the size of the book, and type of pages was important as this is one of the first and most important design decisions and point of experience for the reader. Visual style, which includes the overall colour palette, type of endpapers, use of borders, medium, typefaces, and typographic elements used. These elements make up the visual language of the book and makes its narrative experience unique. Visual structure, or layouts, includes the main compositional strategy, visual relationship between text and image, elements used to create a focal point, the

BASIC INFORMATION			DESIGN NOTES
title _____	use of borders	treatment of text block	throughout the book, design elements... <input type="checkbox"/> stay mostly the same <input type="checkbox"/> change in some ways <input type="checkbox"/> are mostly changed
author _____	<input type="checkbox"/> around images <input type="checkbox"/> no borders <input type="checkbox"/> around text <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> around page	<input type="checkbox"/> no boundary / faded <input type="checkbox"/> boxed with border <input type="checkbox"/> overlaid on image <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> boxed / squared	
illustrator _____	primary mediums used	ARRANGEMENT OF IMAGES _____	DESCRIBE _____
publisher _____ year _____	<input type="checkbox"/> collage <input type="checkbox"/> graphite <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> paint <input type="checkbox"/> coloured pencil <input type="checkbox"/> ink <input type="checkbox"/> digital / vector	treatment of image <input type="checkbox"/> squared / boxed <input type="checkbox"/> close cropped <input type="checkbox"/> bled off <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> no boundary / faded	
STORY PLOT & STRUCTURE	typographic elements	image cropping and angles used	UNIQUE USE OF DESIGN ELEMENTS _____
<input type="checkbox"/> traditional / linear <input type="checkbox"/> cumulative / repetitive <input type="checkbox"/> traditional / reversal <input type="checkbox"/> parallel <input type="checkbox"/> circular <input type="checkbox"/> slice of life <input type="checkbox"/> mirror <input type="checkbox"/> thematic / collection	<input type="checkbox"/> headings <input type="checkbox"/> type as image <input type="checkbox"/> drop caps <input type="checkbox"/> page numbers <input type="checkbox"/> subheadings <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> captions <input type="checkbox"/> pull quotes	<input type="checkbox"/> close shot <input type="checkbox"/> high angle <input type="checkbox"/> from front <input type="checkbox"/> medium shot <input type="checkbox"/> eye-level <input type="checkbox"/> from side <input type="checkbox"/> long shot <input type="checkbox"/> low angle <input type="checkbox"/> from back	
PLOT SUMMARY _____	main typeface	SEQUENTIAL NARRATIVE	
THEME / MESSAGE _____	<input type="checkbox"/> serif <input type="checkbox"/> handdrawn <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> sans serif <input type="checkbox"/> script	<input type="checkbox"/> sequential images on single spread(s) <input type="checkbox"/> sequential images across several spreads	
FORMAT	PAGE LAYOUTS & VISUAL STRUCTURE	total timeline of story	OTHER DETAILS ON DESIGN _____
width _____ in height _____ in	main composition strategy	<input type="checkbox"/> hours <input type="checkbox"/> months <input type="checkbox"/> days <input type="checkbox"/> years <input type="checkbox"/> weeks <input type="checkbox"/> _____	
total pages _____ illustrated pages _____	elements used to create focal point	amount of (story) time between pages	
full bleed pages <input type="checkbox"/> all <input type="checkbox"/> most <input type="checkbox"/> some <input type="checkbox"/> none	<input type="checkbox"/> colour <input type="checkbox"/> line <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> scale <input type="checkbox"/> alignment <input type="checkbox"/> shape <input type="checkbox"/> negative space	<input type="checkbox"/> seconds <input type="checkbox"/> weeks <input type="checkbox"/> moments <input type="checkbox"/> months <input type="checkbox"/> hours <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> days	
VISUAL STYLE	visual relationship of text and image	elements used on recto side for a "page turn"	
colour palette	<input type="checkbox"/> typography based <input type="checkbox"/> complementary <input type="checkbox"/> image based	<input type="checkbox"/> focal point <input type="checkbox"/> character <input type="checkbox"/> negative space <input type="checkbox"/> eyeline <input type="checkbox"/> movement <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> foreshadowing <input type="checkbox"/> other _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> limited colour <input type="checkbox"/> muted / subtle <input type="checkbox"/> full colour <input type="checkbox"/> vibrant / saturated <input type="checkbox"/> red <input type="checkbox"/> teal <input type="checkbox"/> white <input type="checkbox"/> orange <input type="checkbox"/> blue <input type="checkbox"/> brown <input type="checkbox"/> yellow <input type="checkbox"/> purple <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> green <input type="checkbox"/> grey <input type="checkbox"/> _____	ARRANGEMENT OF TEXT		
endpapers	position of text in relation to images		
<input type="checkbox"/> solid colour <input type="checkbox"/> illust. pattern <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> simple pattern <input type="checkbox"/> illust. scene	<input type="checkbox"/> above image(s) <input type="checkbox"/> surrounded by image(s) <input type="checkbox"/> below image(s) <input type="checkbox"/> no relationship to image(s) <input type="checkbox"/> right of image(s) <input type="checkbox"/> text only on recto <input type="checkbox"/> left of image(s) <input type="checkbox"/> text only on verso <input type="checkbox"/> between image(s) <input type="checkbox"/> integrated across spread		

Table 1. Checklist used for Visual Analysis

arrangement of text (position and treatment of the text block), and arrangement of images (treatment and cropping/angle of image). These make up the underlying structure of the visual narrative and the way that the text and images come together to create a unified narrative. I also looked at sequential narrative qualities, like the amount of story time between pages and elements used to create a “page turn,” and finally, I included a section for additional design notes, specifically on whether these elements stay the same or change throughout the story.

Selection of picturebooks. The visual analysis was done on two types of award-winning picturebooks, those created by non-designers, and those created by designers, in order to understand the difference between the two in their use of design elements and the role of design in the picturebooks’ narrative. The first set of picturebooks was selected from the last ten winners of the Kate Greenaway Award. This award was chosen as visual and design elements are very clearly a part of the judging criteria. Additionally, this award includes international books (unlike the popular Caldecott Medal, which excludes non-US books). The selected books for visual analysis were:

- *Town is by the Sea* (Sydney Smith & Joanne Schwartz, 2017)
- *There is a Tribe of Kids* (Lane Smith, 2016)
- *The Sleeper and the Spindle* (Neil Gaiman & Chris Riddell, 2015)
- *Shackleton’s Journey* (William Grill, 2015)
- *This is Not My Hat* (Jon Klassen, 2014)
- *Black Dog* (Levi Pinfold, 2013)
- *A Monster Calls* (Patrick Ness and Jim Kay, 2012)

- *FaRATHER* (Grahame Baker-Smith, 2010)
- *Harry and Hopper* (Margaret Wild & Freya Blackwood, 2009)
- *Harris Finds His Feet* (Catherine Rayner, 2008)
- *Little Mouse's Big Book of Fears* (Emily Gravett, 2008).

These books have been created by those who call themselves authors, illustrators, author-illustrators, or picturebook makers. To further analyze the role of design in picturebooks, I also analyzed four award-winning picturebooks created by those who identify as designers or graphic designers. These books were:

- *Henri's Walk to Paris* (Saul Bass, 1962)
- *Shh! We Have a Plan* (Chris Haughton, 2014)
- *Hector and Hummingbird* (Nicholas John Frith, 2015)
- *I Saw A Peacock with a Fiery Tail* (Ram Singh Urveti & Jonathan Yamakami, 2012).

I was interested to see which design elements are inherent in all picturebooks, and if design played a different role in the books by those with design training. This helped to further clarify design's important role in creating and conveying the story through the visual narrative form of picturebooks.

Visual analysis. The visual analysis was done by closely analyzing the overall visual language of each book, rather than focusing on a single defining page spread. This enabled a holistic view of the way design worked and intertwined with the text and images to tell the story, and the unique design techniques that were employed in each book's narrative. An important element of picturebooks is their sequential quality, and














the way that each spread must entice the reader to turn the page. This approach to the analysis allowed me to also study these sequential qualities, and the way they were designed.

Summary of Findings

Picturebooks by Non-Designers

In picturebooks by non-designers, the most used elements were full bleed spreads, variation of perspective angles throughout the book, many uses of sequential imagery, focal points created through a contrast of scale, and multiple images/panels on a single spread (see Table 2). Additionally, 70% of them used a structured, repetitive layout, and over half of them used a full colour range and saturated colour. Less common, but still

Table 2. Design Elements Used in Picturebooks by Non-Designers

DESIGN ELEMENT	PERCENTAGE	TOWN IS BY THE SEA	THERE IS A TRIBE OF KIDS	THE SLEEPER & THE SPINDLE	SHACKLETON'S JOURNEY	THIS IS NOT MY HAT	BLACK DOG	FARTHER	HARRY & HOPPER	HARRIS FINDS HIS FEET	LITTLE MOUSE'S BOOK
FULL BLEED		○	○	○	○	●	○	●	○	●	●
PERSPECTIVE VARIATION		○	○	●	●		●	●	●	●	○
SEQUENTIAL IMAGERY		○	●		●	●	●	○	●		●
MULTIPLE IMAGES / PANELS		●	●	●	●		●	●	●		●
CONTRAST IN SCALE		●	●	●	●	●	●			●	●
STRUCTURED / REPETITIVE LAYOUT		○	○	●	●	●	●	●			
FULL COLOUR		●	●				●	●	●	●	
SATURATED COLOUR		○	●		●		●		○	●	
BORDERS			●	●			●	●	○		●
LIMITED COLOUR				●	●	●	○				●
NEGATIVE SPACE		●			●	●			●	●	
TYPE WITH IMAGE			●	●	●					●	●
CONTRAST IN SHAPE			○			●				○	

LEGEND ● all pages ○ some pages

significantly present, was the use of borders on every page, the use of negative space, and contrast in shape. The books that used the elements of limited colour, or typography alongside the imagery, did so consistently on every page. In contrast, full bleed spreads were most often used as a tool for pacing, as they were mixed in with pages with margins (although four books did use full bleed on every page). Interestingly, while not every book used multiple images or panels on the same page spread, the books that did, featured this technique on almost every spread.

Some interesting observations from the analysis for each book follow (see appendix for full notes and checklists):

TOWN IS BY THE SEA Loose, inky rendering, coupled with wide margins and lots of breathing room between simple, squared images conveys a quiet, moody tone. The classic typography conveys a simple innocence. Alternating between the dark, black spreads of the coal mines and the light, airy spreads of the seascapes supports the parallel narrative.

THERE IS A TRIBE OF KIDS Every page is divided into a number of panels and the story plays out through these, like a silent comic. Very sparse text, which acts like a heading for each page. The animals on the next spread always make a small appearance on the bottom right of the preceding page, enticing the reader to turn the page, which reveals the next scene in full. The layouts are a nice mix of full bleed, multiple, and gridded images.

THE SLEEPER AND THE SPINDLE Relies on several layouts that alternate throughout for variation in pacing. Motifs are repeated throughout. Framing and cropping is different on the more climactic pages. Use of high contrast, as illustrations are black ink on white ground with gold ink accents.

SHACKLETON'S JOURNEY Colours, shapes, and visual style as well as layouts stay consistent throughout the book. There are alternating full bleed/full spread images and smaller or gridded image pages for pacing. Using limited colours and very simple shapes, this picturebook combines infographics with illustration in a unique way.

THIS IS NOT MY HAT With a strict and consistent visual style and composition, the sequential nature of the story is the main interest. The images all have the same camera shot and angle, and move forward and backward past the “viewfinder.” The visuals are somewhat stiff and static but through the use of other elements, create a sense of movement. Often only the expression (or eyes) changes between spreads. This book relies a lot on contrast in its visual design: contrast between the type and image, contrast between the figure and ground, contrast in scale.

BLACK DOG Consistent layouts and typography. The majority of the pages have an image-and-type layout on the left, with a very tight grid, and a full page image on the right. At the climax of the story in the middle, this rigid layout morphs into a full spread image with sparse text, with the visual design following the emotional arc of the textual narrative. The sepia toned, small images bordering the text showcase the same story from a different point of view. Many of them are sequential and show the movement and

actions of the character before or after the larger, full colour image. This book accomplishes “page-turns” by putting the focal point on the right page, and reinforcing this by having all the characters’ gaze pointed towards the right or bottom right as well.

A MONSTER CALLS Although this book was selected for this picturebook award, it does not fall within this paper’s definition of a picturebook. This illustrated chapter book is certainly enhanced by the illustrations, but does not rely on visuals or imagery to tell its story. Thus, it has been excluded from this analysis.

FARTHER Because of the circular text narrative, the design elements are also repeated. Colour, shape, arrangement have only a little variation. Almost every spread has a character gazing to the right, encouraging a page-turn. Mostly, lines are used in the background to support the focal point.

HARRY AND HOPPER The illustrations use line in a sketchy way that implies motion and energy. Near the end, the colour palette becomes dominated by black (with bold text in white), signifying Harry's mourning. The spreads are also full bleed and immersive. Interesting use of sequential images, with multiple scenes in one image/spread.




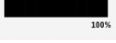

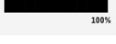



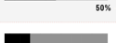



HARRIS FINDS HIS FEET Some spreads use type as image to support the movement of the story (jumping, running). The far shots showcase the landscape in an abstract way. The loose quality of rendering gives an expressive and emotional feeling. Overall a calming and introspective mood. Long shots are mixed with medium shots, letting us see both Harris and his view of the world.

LITTLE MOUSE’S BIG BOOK OF FEARS Extensive use of trompe l'oeil, collage, and cut-outs/foldouts. The book is intended to look like a workbook that the mouse character is filling out as the reader reads along.

Picturebooks by Designers.

In picturebooks by designers, there were other design elements that were used more frequently (see Table 3). Each book that was analyzed used limited colour palettes throughout, and contrast in scale as a compositional technique on almost every page. Negative space, sequential imagery, and full bleed were also relied upon more so than in the books by non-designers. Typography arranged with the imagery was another important quality that was found on every page. Some of these books also utilized

Table 3. Design Elements Used in Picturebooks by Designers

DESIGN ELEMENT	PERCENTAGE	SH! WE HAVE A PLAN	HECTOR AND HUMMINGBIRD	I SAW A PEACOCK WITH A FIERY TAIL	HENRI'S WALK TO PARIS
LIMITED COLOUR		●	●	●	●
CONTRAST IN SCALE		●	●	●	●
NEGATIVE SPACE		●	○	●	●
SEQUENTIAL IMAGERY		●	●	○	●
FULL BLEED		○	●	●	●
TYPE WITH IMAGE		●	●	●	●
MULTIPLE IMAGES / PANELS		●	●		○
SATURATED COLOUR		●	●		●
CONTRAST IN SHAPE		●	○		●
PERSPECTIVE VARIATION			○		○
BORDERS		○			
STRUCTURED / REPETITIVE LAYOUT		○			
FULL COLOUR					
		LEGEND ● all pages ○ some pages			

multiple images/panels per spread, a saturated colour palette, and contrast in shape. Perspective angles, borders, and structured/repetitive layout were very sparingly used, mostly to draw attention to certain moments in the narrative, and less so as part of the visual language of the book. Surprisingly, none of these books used a full colour range.

This indicated that while picturebooks by non-designers use a wide range of design techniques, most likely found within the illustrations, books by designers instead integrate the typography and imagery into an inseparable element, and rely on a more intentional use of design elements and principles to convey the visual narrative.

HENRI'S WALK TO PARIS This picturebook, created by well-known graphic designer Saul Bass, is a minimalist yet vibrant narrative. Relying on shapes and colours to create simple yet striking compositions, Bass also utilizes typography as image. This book demonstrates the basic design principles of repetition, harmony, balance, and contrast. Without ever showing the character's face, the illustrations evoke emotion through their bold and abstracted visual style, as well as the very well thought out sequential or "continuous" narrative moments. The typography is set in Helvetica, mirroring the simple and minimalist visual language of the book, but it is also used playfully, as type as image or in unique arrangements.

I SAW A PEACOCK WITH A FIERY TAIL A retelling of a classic poem, this book is as simple as it is intricate. Using only black and white, the high contrast and clean cutout shapes are juxtaposed against detailed ink drawings. The spreads are full bleed and alternate between black ground and white. This is not a traditional narrative, and instead relies on the cutouts to tell two parallel stories through the same poem. Like

Henri's Walk to Paris, the book's visual language is simple and clear, and allows the underlying structural or compositional elements to stand out. The typography floats in and around the imagery, designed for some words to be seen through the die cuts on each page while others remain hidden until the page is turned.

SHH! WE HAVE A PLAN Several design elements are used in creating this book's visual language and narrative: colour, shape, and contrast being the most distinctive. The abstracted shapes of the characters allow the reader to focus on the movement and action of the story. Because they are created through collage, the shapes are simple and exclude any unnecessary details which could hinder the reader. Contrast between pages and spreads is also an important quality of this book — by juxtaposing close cropped images on white pages with full bleed pages, Chris Haughton signifies the types of scenes and actions occurring with the characters (the white pages are used for “quiet” scenes, while the full bleed ones are reserved for “action” scenes). Finally, this book features a unique use of colour. With an extremely limited colour palette, the majority of the book is in deep blues and purples. As Haughton wrote on his blog, he used only cyan, magenta, and black inks for the book, with the exception of the bird, which is the only element to use the yellow ink (Haughton, 2014). Additionally, he created the typography in a collage style, and by integrating the type into the visual style of the book, it becomes a part of the imagery of the book itself.

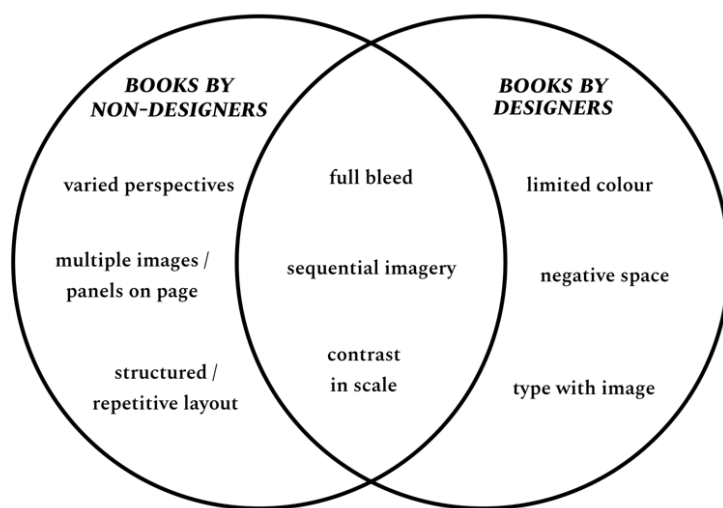
HECTOR AND HUMMINGBIRD The design of this book is influenced by vintage production processes, in particular the screenprinting technique. The brushy and looser style, along with the limited inks and sometimes off-register printing create a unique

visual language that is well suited to the leafy jungle illustrations of this narrative. As with the other books by designers, this one also features a more abstracted, shape based style and a limited yet vibrant colour palette. The colours change as the mood of the story changes (whiter pages in the beginning; fuller, greener, pages in the middle; dark, black pages at the climax; white and pink in the end), linking the visual elements into the emotional narrative. The typography is a mix of classic sans-serif for the main narration and a more playful serif typeface that appears in angular speech bubbles for the characters' dialogue.

Use of Design Elements

Comparing the two sets of books, it is clear that different design techniques are used more often in their visual language. In Figure 3, I organized the key observations into a Venn diagram of the most used design elements in these two different kinds of books.

Varied perspective angles (close up, far shot, birds-eye view, etc.), along with multiple



images and panels on the spread (either integrated together, or more often, in a grid) were favourite compositional elements for non-designers. They allow the reader to become immersed in the story. In

Figure 3. Diagram of Most Frequently Used Design Elements in Picturebook Analysis

experiencing the images, readers negotiate power relations through the use of perspective angles (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). With multiple images, they are offered a way to connect them to the meaning of the text in different ways (Sipe, 2001). Finally, the text and image are often arranged within a structured or repetitive layout. The text and image may intermingle, but they still seem to exist apart, visually.

In contrast, designers favoured limited colour palettes and negative space in their compositions. Their books integrated typography and image to the point that typography became image itself. By focusing on bold colours and a more abstracted representation, these books appeal to the emotional meanings of the visual narrative, drawing the reader into the affective qualities of the story (Dondis, 1973). By creating and arranging the typography by hand, without the aid of a formal gridded structure, the text also conveys the narrative in the same instinctive, emotional manner.

The middle of the diagram showcases some of the design qualities inherent to all picturebooks, whether they are intentionally designed or not. Full bleed pages take advantage of the medium's format, and draw the reader in (in contrast to bordered or margined pages, which create a distance from the reader (Sipe, 2001)). The picturebook is a sequential narrative form, and thus it makes sense that along with the sequential pages, some spreads will have smaller moments depicted sequentially as well. This technique is found in both sets of books and serves as a way to "indicate action, motion, or the sequence of time" (Sipe, 2001, p. 35).

In general, these picturebooks worked more directly with the compositional structure of the page to support their visual narratives. Unlike the more mainstream picturebooks,

which use a broader range of design elements, designers allow the structure to remain more visible, and rely on a more minimal visual language throughout the book. They also use the form of the picturebook to guide their design decisions, for example, *I Saw A Peacock* uses die cuts to create a dual narrative, while *Henri's Walk To Paris* uses the edge of the page as a way to create a walking motion.

By applying the visual grammar of Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) and Dondis (1973) to picturebooks, my analysis focused on the overall visual language of each picturebook, unlike Sipe (2001) whose work was concerned with aesthetic properties of the illustrations within picturebooks. Furthermore, by examining the typography as an important visual element itself, I was able to uncover the ways that typography interacted with the imagery. This takes the concept of the interaction of text and image, and their meanings, a step further by bringing it into the visual realm, and furthers the concepts of double orientation, counterpoint, transmediation, or interanimation, that are proposed by Bateman (2014), Nikolajeva and Scott (2006), Sipe (1998) and Lewis (2001). Additionally, by expanding the scope of visual analysis to the entire book's design, instead of focusing on the traditional elements of design found within the illustrations, I found that perspective, angles, and distance are a major aspect that influences the narrative. These elements are also important in defining a visual language for a book, along with colour palettes, typography styles, and medium used. Sipe (2001) explains the various meanings attached to different framing techniques, yet I found that recent picturebooks are generally full bleed, there were no instances of circular images or vignettes as Sipe (2001) discussed. *Black Dog* does have "vignettes" but they are a design element used on each page to tell a parallel story. This use aligned

more with Sipe's (2001) description of an illustrated border. In this way, it uses a "classic" picturebook element in a new way, subverting the expected meanings. *Town is By The Sea* uses wide margins for some of its pages, but by cropping the images into close-ups from the perspective of the main character, and arranging them in grids, the reader experiences a contemplative look into the thoughts of the boy, rather than objective distancing as Sipe (2001) writes. *Shh! We Have A Plan* and *I Saw A Peacock With A Fiery Tail* both use limited colour, and instead rely on value, shape, and contrast to narrate emotional shifts, which builds another dimension to Sipe's (2001) explanation of colour use. *Hector and Hummingbird* uses a limited palette as well, but there are subtle colour changes that occur with emotional shifts. Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) work on colour was clearly echoed throughout the picturebooks. *Harry and Hopper's* use of less saturated colour for the dreamlike scenes in the narrative, along with *I Saw A Peacock's* use of black and white, aligns with Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) view that monochromatic palettes signify the ethereal. Negative space is an element that is not discussed in many of these studies, but it was a crucial element in the books by designers, which employ a more minimal approach to their visual imagery. In order to convey a more emotionally charged narrative, these books use abstracted shapes and bold colours, as Dondis (1973) mentions. This means that they rely more on their composition to establish focal points, instead of decorative elements such as the picturebooks by non-designers. With a visual language that is based on limited colours, design elements such as shapes, and/or lines, negative space, along with scale, are used to create and support contrast and interest within the compositions.

03 Exploration of Visual Design Narrative

My visual explorations developed from the ideas of multimodality, transmediation, and visual grammar, as well as my analysis of contemporary picturebooks and the way they employ design elements within their visual language, in the form of imagery and typography, to influence meaning and shape their visual narrative. In particular, I was interested to explore ways I could further investigate the visual grammar of picturebooks, and their multimodal narratives. In my analysis I found there were many design elements used in all the picturebooks, while there were some that were only used by designers. In my visual exploration, I examined the ways design influences a story and creates meaning that text alone cannot convey. By investigating my own process of creating a picturebook, as a designer, informed by these theories, I hoped to discover how the design of image-making, typography, and meaning come together to form a cohesive visual narrative.

Storytelling Through Design: The Design of Myth & Legend

Myths and legends, at one time, were thought to explain natural phenomena. In this series of explorations, I explored the idea of designing a modern myth or fairytale, and what kinds of stories would occur if we tried to explain natural phenomena through narrative today. I was also interested in retelling classic myths and folklore through a modern lens. This project was also a way to conceptualize stories that would be well suited to a visual narrative.

My first approach was to create a new myth, inspired by light pollution in cities hiding many of the stars and constellations (see figure 4). In the vein of urban legends which emerge through a city's mysteries and secrets, I created a character that explains the "disappearance" of the stars in our city skies. The accompanying text for this piece, called *The Star Thief*, was: "Every night he plucks a star from the sky and pins it to his cloak, shining with stardust. Now his eyes are on the moon, the brightest one in the night sky!"



Figure 4. *The Star Thief*, 2017. 16" x 16". Digital illustration.

I chose a centred composition to keep a close focus on the character, who holds a bright star in his hand, and guides the viewer through his gaze, towards the moon. The form of the moon reflects the star in his hand, and the form of the billowing cloak reflects that of the night sky. The cloak and the night sky become indistinguishable, as the star thief's cloak has more stars than the sky. As I created

this piece, the story that came to mind centred on this idea of the cloak becoming the night sky itself. I imagined a myth that personified the night sky, and somehow explained the ways that the stars appeared and disappeared in different constellations throughout the year.



Figure 5. *Underwater Myths*, 2017. 16" x 16". Digital illustration.

My next exploration was to flip this approach and instead demystify or deconstruct a myth. I illustrated a mermaid in a pseudo-scientific manner, in that she is covered in scales the same way a fish is, to survive underwater (figure 5). The idea was to explore what mermaids would actually look like if they did exist, expressed through a modern interpretation.

The final piece looks at classic legends through a feminist perspective, challenging the traditional patriarchal perspective by transforming the heroes into female characters. I was interested in exploring what these classics would look like with female characters in place of the ones we know so well. In this typical Arthurian scene, of King Arthur taking the sword, Excalibur, from stone, I have transformed it into a Queen instead (figure 6). As the legend's story goes, anyone who can pull the sword from the stone will have the right to rule England. King Arthur is often referred to as the "Once and Future King," and so I have titled this piece, *Once and Future Queen*.



Figure 6. *Once And Future Queen*, 2017. 16" x 16". Digital illustration.

In this exploration, I experimented with three new storytelling approaches in the genre of myths and folklore. With *The Star Thief*, I invented a new myth, demystified an existing myth with *Underwater Myths*, and subverted a patriarchal myth in *Once and Future Queen*. Every narrative is based on an archetypal myth, and by experimenting with these narratives, I explored storytelling possibilities in a visual manner. It was important to me that my ideation process began in a visual way, as I wanted to assess the visual qualities that could be used to further develop the concept into a visual narrative. Being mindful of the fact that picturebooks are often our first experiences of the outside world, I believe this approach in crafting a narrative encouraged me to challenge existing expectations, and instead inspire and nurture a more critical approach to fairytales and myths.

Visual Grammar as Framework for Intentional Design

The theories of visual grammar can be used as a framework to create picturebooks with intentional design. Relying on the semiotic qualities of different design decisions to affect the overall narrative, I created a simple visual interpretation of the phrase, “the quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog,” often used by typeface designers as a sample specimen for fonts. I focused on exploring four design elements: form, colour, movement, and typography. See figures 2 and 3 for a more comprehensive list of design elements/principles and their semiotic meanings (based on the findings of Dondis (1973) and Kress and van Leeuwen (2006)).

FORM The three basic forms are the triangle, circle, and square, and each of these have certain semiotic meanings that transcend most cultures (Dondis, 1973; Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). A triangle signifies action, conflict, or tension, while circles project warmth, protection, and endlessness, and the square signifies honesty, stability, and straightness (Dondis, 1973; Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006).

DIRECTION Echoing the semiotic qualities of the simple shapes from which they emerge, there are three main directions. Diagonal lines are unstable, threatening, or upsetting; curved directions signify encompassment, repetition, and warmth; horizontal and vertical lines portray balance, stability, and groundedness (Dondis, 1973, p. 44-47).

COLOUR Red, yellow, and blue are the building blocks of colour and Dondis (1973) explains the ways they transform each other's meanings. Yellow signifies light and warmth, red is emotional and active, while blue is passive and soft (Dondis, 1973, p. 44-47). When blue is mixed with red (to create purple), it subdues the emotional intensity of the red (Dondis, 1973). When yellow and red are mixed (to create orange), they activate each other to the point of enhancing their meanings (Dondis, 1973). Finally, when blue mixes with yellow, it mellows its light and warmth with its own softness. Dondis (1973) also describes the emotional qualities of saturation — unsaturated colours are neutral, subtle, and restful and as they become more and more saturated, they become simple, uncomplicated, expressive, and carry more intense emotional meanings (Dondis, 1973).

Exploration #1: Compositional Structure

For my first exploration of visual structure and visual hierarchy, I focused on the characters only. The fox in this story is quick, agile, and active. He is expressive and emotional, and contrasts the dog, who is lazy and passive. The dog is a stable and immobile character. I based the fox on a triangle shape, which represents action and tension/conflict (figures 7-9). Highly saturated colour represents the fox's bold emotions and the reddish hue creates an active focal point. For the dog, I used a rectangle for stability and balance but added a curved shape that gives some warmth. The dog's unsaturated tone represents a restful, neutral character, and the blue hue shows his passive nature while also contrasting with the fox's warm colours. Composing the scene, I explored horizontal movements for the dog, emphasizing stability and groundedness, and diagonal movements for the fox, emphasizing instability and upsetting qualities, as the fox's jump could upset the dog (figure 8). Finally, with the addition of the text, I explored different ways of writing the story and designing the typography to become an active part of the narrative (figure 10).

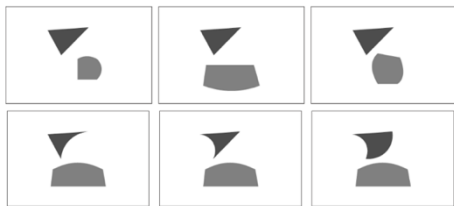


Figure 7. Shape Explorations for Fox and Dog

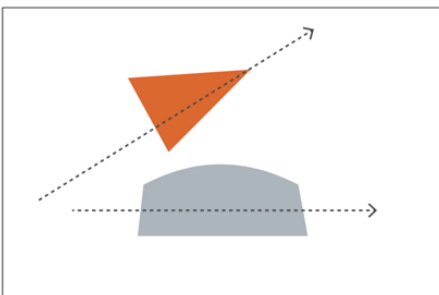


Figure 8. Direction and Movement

I used these compositions as a guide to add detail to the final design (figure 11). In this process, I was able to intentionally create an underlying visual structure before focusing on the details of the characters and the scene.

This enabled me to explore ways to create meaning through the visual grammar of the image, using the semiotic meanings of design elements in the studies by Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) and Dondis (1973),



Figure 9. Using shapes as a guide to illustrate characters.

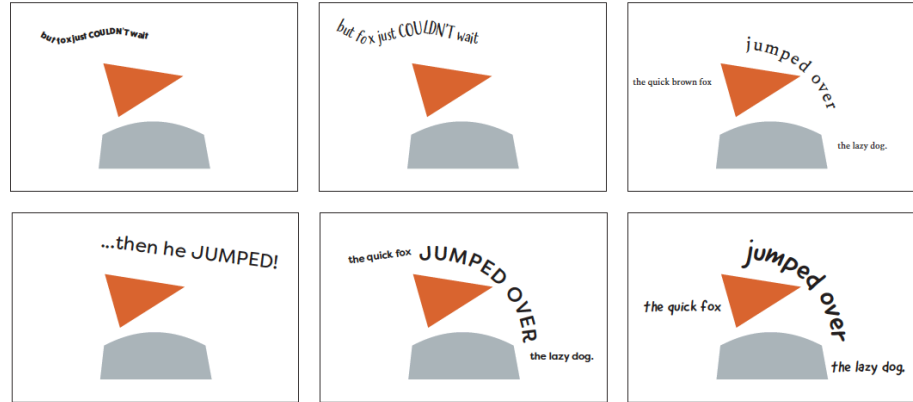


Figure 10. Initial typographic explorations

focusing on shape, colour, direction, and arrangement on the page. In this exploration, the surface detail is secondary information, layered onto the primary information that makes up the compositional structure. In particular, I found that changes in shape and colour affected the narrative most strongly. Direction and arrangement were also important, but because the text very clearly describes the motion of the fox, there was less room to experiment. Typographic arrangements and typeface selection directly influenced the emotion and amount of energy; for example, figure 11.5 is a more serene atmosphere in comparison to figure 11.6, which portrays a frenetic energy. The addition of a simple circle, suggesting the sun, altered the compositions completely, by balancing the visual weight of the fox and anchoring the composition. As Dondis (1973) explains, any object that is positioned in the top, right, or top-right of the page becomes more visually heavy (or salient, as she refers to it) than the same object placed on the bottom or left of the page (for left-to-right readers). This informed my decision to keep the size small and let its position lend it enough weight to balance the larger shapes of the fox and dog, or in the case of figure 11.6, the stacked typography.



Figure 11.1-11.6 Final composition explorations

Exploration #2: Shape and Value Leading from my observations on exploration #1, I wanted to further investigate the role of shapes in influencing meaning in narratives. In another exploration of visual grammar applied to compositions and narrative, I focused on shape and value. I restricted myself to using only basic geometric shapes, and to work in greyscale. I chose the simple narrative of “The Ugly Duckling,” as it combines both friendly characters along with many negative ones. I thought these extremes would be interesting to explore visually. The first spread uses contrast and repetition to set apart the ugly duckling from his siblings. For the duckling, I chose a white circle, to evoke a sense of protection for the character (figure 12). The mother duck and the rest of the ducklings are also circular, but with a more jagged edge, to signify tension and conflict. The “ugly duckling” stands apart in his family, both visually and in the text of the story. The second spread uses dark, sharp, acute angles, which represent anger and negative emotions, around the round, soft shape of the main character, representing the other farm animals bullying him (figure 13). Circles and

softness, as well as light colours, are known to portray positive feelings. In both of these spreads, he is positioned on the right page, encouraging the reader to turn the page. In the next spread, he ventures out on his own, but the other creatures he meets do not look like him or accept him either (figure 14). These animals aren't necessarily mean, so I used squarish shapes, which are neutral and portray stability. The last scene (figure 15), in which he finally finds other swans and is accepted into their flock, has a less dramatic contrast, with the swans as round, white shapes to show their similarity as well as their positive nature. The background is made of squared shapes to signify a stable, balanced environment in the garden.

In these spreads, the narrative is created through the design elements/principles of repetition, alignment, and contrast (of shape, scale, and colour). These elements shape the emotional themes in this story, of fear and isolation. Shape and colour are used to

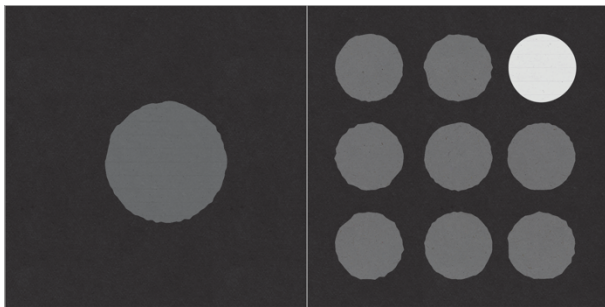


Figure 12. *The Ugly Duckling*, pages 1-

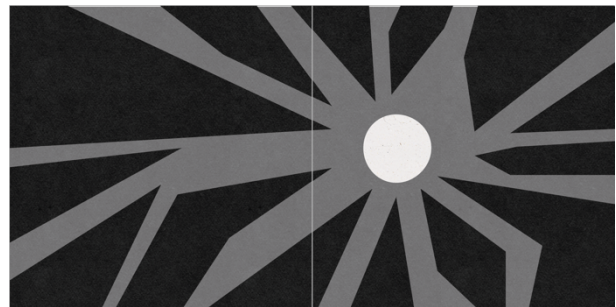


Figure 13. *The Ugly Duckling*, pages 3-4

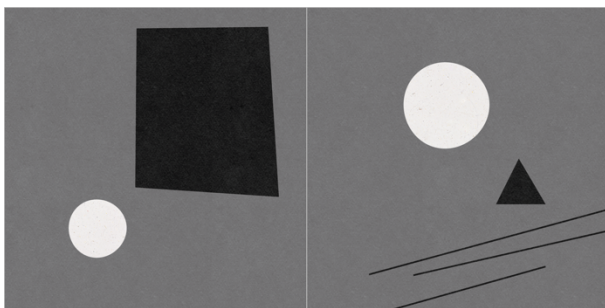


Figure 14. *The Ugly Duckling*, pages 5-6

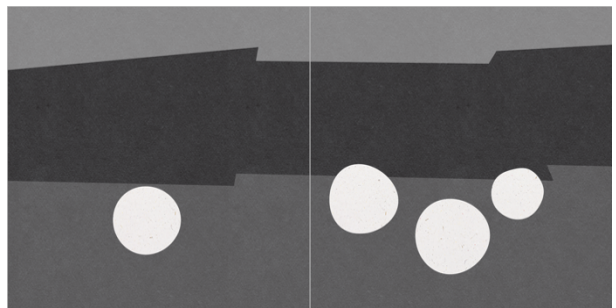


Figure 15. *The Ugly Duckling*, pages 7-8

differentiate characters and signify their role in the story as protagonist or antagonists. Repetition used with contrast creates a sense of isolation, focusing on the duckling character. In the second spread (figure 13), repetition is used to create fear and amplify the isolation he feels, as well as to evoke feelings of protectiveness towards the duckling in the reader. Contrast in shape, colour, and size is used to convey his differentness and loneliness (figure 14). Alignment of these elements in the composition reinforce this narrative. The white circle is placed in areas of high salience/visual weight (identified by Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) and Dondis (1973)), drawing the eye to the main character even if there are other elements that may be more visually striking in the composition. Finally, the resolution of the narrative occurs when these elements are used in the opposite way — repetition of circular shape, white colour, and similar size, signify a sense of belonging for the character in the final spread (figure 15).

Exploration #3: Shape and Colour Further investigating the semiotic meanings of shape and colour, I was inspired by the Bauhaus movement and its use of basic shapes and colours. In my research I came upon many overlapping meanings associated with the three basic shapes (circle, triangle, and square), and the three basic colours (red, yellow, and blue). These observations are mostly based on the findings of Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) and Dondis (1973). A closer look at these design elements can be seen in the mindmaps I created for this exploration (figures 16-17).

To analyze these qualities, I created three charts, each one exploring a separate narrative element: background (figure 18.1), protagonist (figure 18.2), and antagonist (figure 18.3).

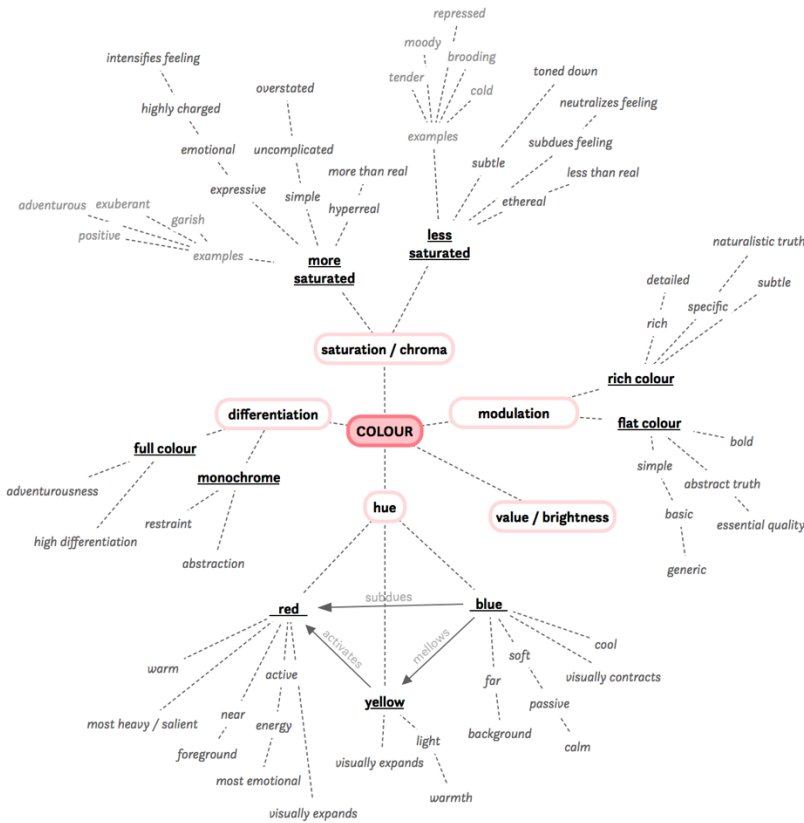


Figure 16. Semiotic Meanings of Colour

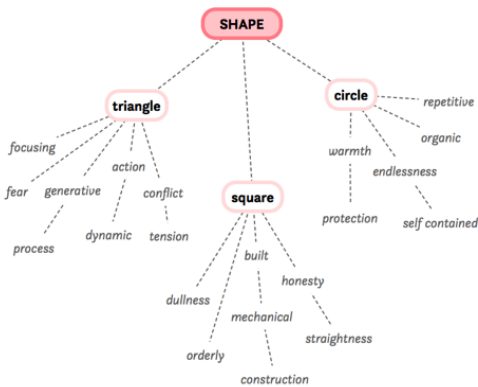


Figure 17. Semiotic Meanings of Shape

The process of creating a chart of these visual qualities revealed the many decisions involved in designing a character, setting, and layout. It also clarified the differences created by colour and shape in the character’s design. The effect of colour can be seen more closely when the characters are grouped by shape (figures 19.1-19.3). My observations echoed many of the semiotic meanings listed in figures 16 and 17. I found that of the three colours, red was the most intense and could be scary, while blue seemed the safest, and yellow brought a more neutral energy. Shape-wise, I found the triangle foxes to be quite scary, while the triangle bird was significantly less scary, and could even be seen as a sleek, active figure. The square characters seemed strong and stable, while the round ones looked very appealing and friendly.

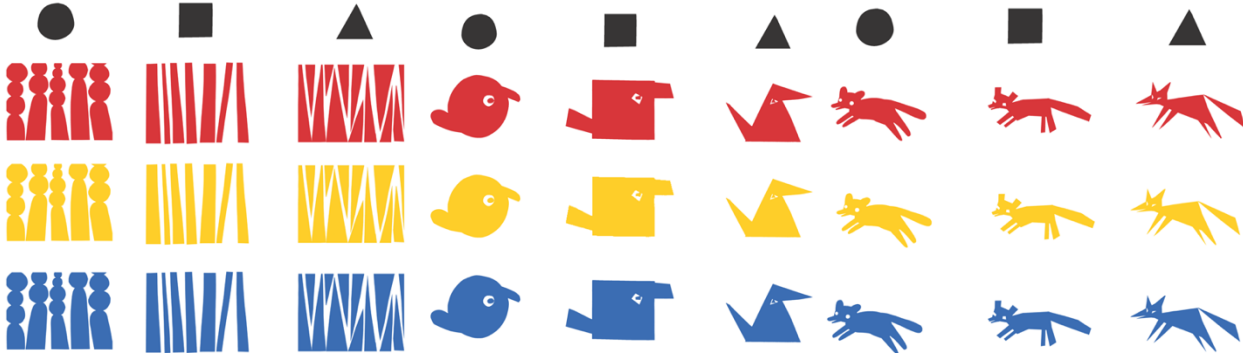


Figure 18.1-18.3 Exploring shape and colour in backgrounds and characters



Figure 19.1-19.3 Exploring colour and shape in fox characters

Moving forward from shape and colour, the next step in my process was to start developing the story through compositions, and analyzing the way my design decisions altered the narrative. Picking at random from the chart (figure 18), I combined the

characters and setting. In the first iteration, the bird character confronts a dangerous fox against a calm and unsuspecting background (figure 20.1). The narrative of the second one (figure 20.2) is changed slightly — now the bird seems vulnerable and afraid, hiding in a dangerous landscape where bigger creatures roam. The third arrangement reverses this narrative (figure 20.3). Against a bright and energetic atmosphere, the blue and rounded fox becomes the friendly and playful character, while the sharper shapes and red colour changes the bird into a clever, sly character. The last one of this set (figure 20.4) mirrors the first (figure 20.1) in its colours, but presents an alternate reading. The squared fox is no longer angry, and the angular bird is not so innocent or vulnerable. Against the blue trees, they seem to be partners rather than adversaries.

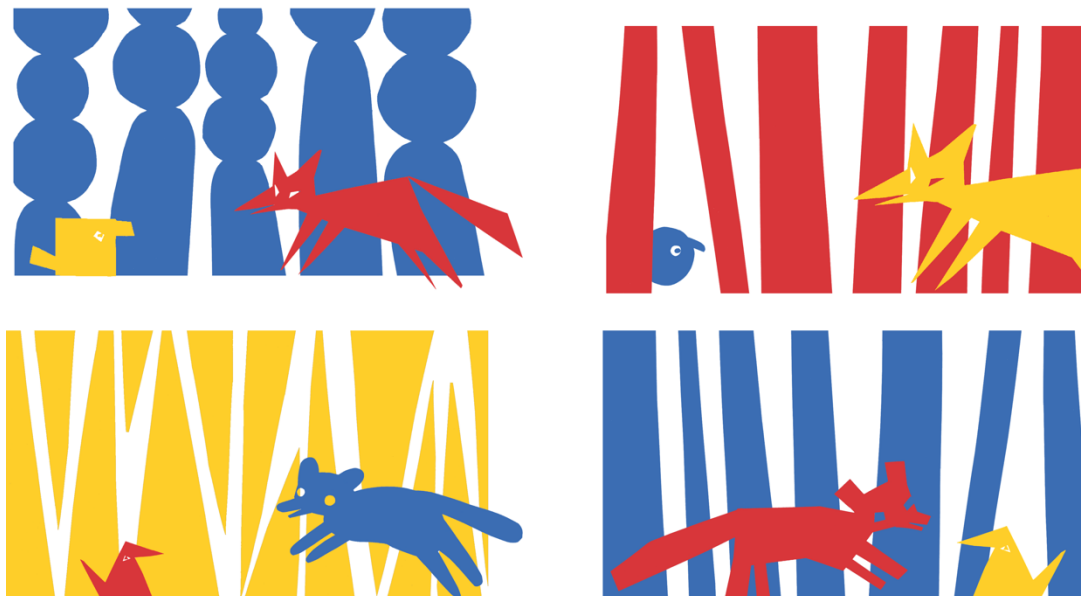


Figure 20.1-20.4 Shape and Colour Scenes

Arrangement and position is also a factor in the changing narratives of these compositions. With the bird on the left, any figure that causes friction in our reading from left to right, becomes an obstacle for the bird to overcome, especially in the

sequential nature of page turns. Along with colour and shape, the last composition's reversal of narrative can also be contributed to the reversal of the character's positions (figure 20.4). With the fox on the left, it becomes the character moving forward in the story, and the bird becomes the obstacle to overcome. Another reading of this image can be that the bird is the antagonist, stopping the fox from its goals. The interpretation mentioned earlier could also be a valid reading, as the bird's scale and yellow colour can be seen as less visually stressful than the fox's larger, red form. The cropping in figure 20.2 distinguishes it from the other explorations, and brings the element of perspective and distance into the composition. With the fox out of frame, he is brought into the foreground, and the cropping of the bird behind the tree takes it into the background. This creates the sense of anticipated movement, and adds to the feeling of fear and anxiety of the hidden bird.

Furthering these explorations, I investigated the different narratives that occurred through the change of just a single design element. Changing shape can transform a negatively charged character into a positive one. It can also create more clarity within a character's design, by creating contrast with other characters and removing ambiguity as to the main character (figures 21.1 and 21.3). Scale can become an important factor as well, to establish the perspective and from whose point of view the story is being told to the reader (figures 21.2 and 21.4). Within these compositions, the colour yellow has the most contrast to the background and becomes the focal point. The red becomes the secondary character. Here we see that design principles relating to visual hierarchy are important to establish the character's viewpoint in the narrative, and how the reader interprets the story.

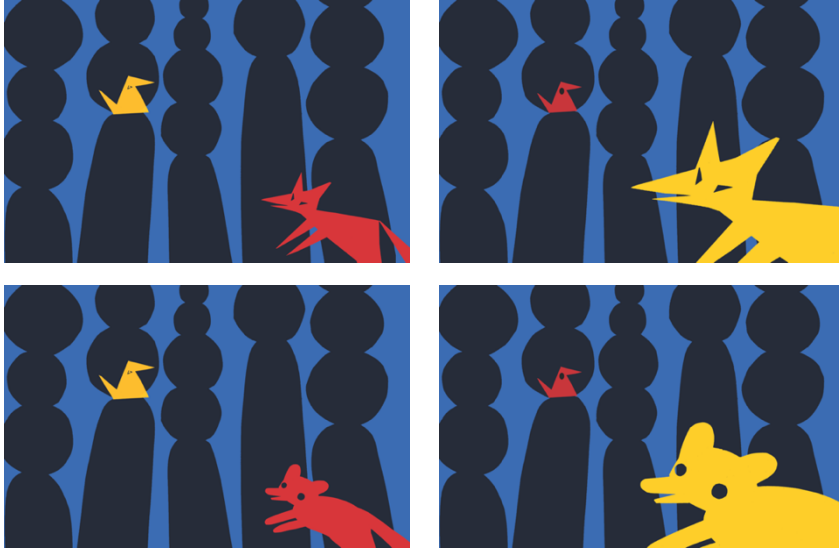


Figure 21.1-21.4 Scene Exploration continued

Through these explorations, I studied the underlying compositional structure in visual narratives, and the affective quality of shape, colour, and arrangement. The first step in creating a visual narrative for a picturebook is to understand the functions of each character and setting, and to then choose shapes and colours to meaningfully reflect their narrative roles (as I did in exploration #1). The second step is to establish a visual language with which to work with in the book, paying special attention to the way pages will work sequentially and any emotions that will need to be conveyed in the narrative's plot (as I did in exploration #2). This helps to create meaningful focal relying on principles of visual hierarchy, such as contrast and repetition. Finally, combining the previously designed characters and settings, rough visual structure, and the visual language of the book brings these design elements together on the page (as I did in exploration #3). Playing with arrangement and position, mindful of the ways these can affect the way the compositions are read, can connect the reader with a character's point of view, and create a dynamic visual narrative.

Investigating the Picturebook Form Through Design

My final work to explore visual narratives was to investigate the form of the picturebook itself. This project's aim was to create a single written text, and create different designs, each influencing the visual narrative in a different way. The story I wrote is inspired by one of my first projects, *The Star Thief* (figure 5). It is about a boy who dreams of having a star of his own, and when his wish comes true, one by one he collects all the stars in the sky. He climbs higher and higher to collect the moon, and when he does it becomes so dark that he can't find his way home. He realizes he must return the stars and the moon to their rightful place in the night sky, and ending with the boy appreciating their beauty from afar. The full text of the story, as well as additional concept art, can be found in the appendix.

In my initial exploration, I referenced the visual language of two of the books I had analyzed, *I Saw A Peacock With A Fiery Tail* and *Shh! We Have A Plan*.

Investigating these two different methods and techniques for creating visual narratives helped me identify the

elements which would work well in my own style for the *Star Thief* story. The detailed pencil illustration is very expressive, with its imperfect, sketchy style. The collage illustration on the other hand, is very bold and emotional, with a more immersive quality in its saturated colours and clean, simple shapes.



Figure 22. Concept sketches for character and costume designs



Figure 23. *The Star Thief I*, 2018. 4" x 6". Graphite on paper.



Figure 24. *Star Thief II*, 2018. Cut paper collage and digital

I further explored the collage illustration through colour. Using the “gradient map” adjustment in Photoshop, I altered the colour palette to analyze the changes in mood and emotions evoked by the image. Overall, I found that neutral tones created more subtle feelings, while red created a climactic mood, blues and purples felt serene, while greens and yellows gave an interestingly strange energy. Figure 25.1, for example, gives a natural, realistic feeling, due to its neutral tones. When I imagine a story for Figure 25.3, it feels like a dangerous obstacle in the hero’s journey, with associations to lava and volcanoes. Figure 25.2 on the other hand, gives a serene mood with its calming purples and blues, but the bright fuchsia pink gives this composition an energizing jolt.



Figure 25.1 – 25.9 Colour and Emotional Narrative Explorations

Conventional picturebook narrative

My first exploration was in the format of a traditional picturebook, within which I played with perspective angles, negative space, sequential imagery, and arrangement to design an engaging visual narrative. The story is about the night sky, and so the negative space is empty, black space for most of the spreads (all spreads from the book can be viewed in the appendix). I used full bleed throughout, and in addition to the perspective angles, this draws the reader into the story, as an immersive experience of the narrative. There are several design elements I used in these spreads which also played with the format of the traditional picturebook.

For example, the inside fold of the spine was incorporated into the illustrations as a visual element itself in several spreads. I used it as a visual divider that echoes physical barriers, such as the window between the night sky and the boy's room (Figure 26.1), and the edge of the cloak's fabric covering the boy (Figure 26.2). The inside spine was also used as a way to denote the passing of time or space (Figure 26.2). With the addition of an extreme closeup shot of the boy's hands holding the star, the book folds open to echo the reader's own hands, holding the book (Figure 26.3).

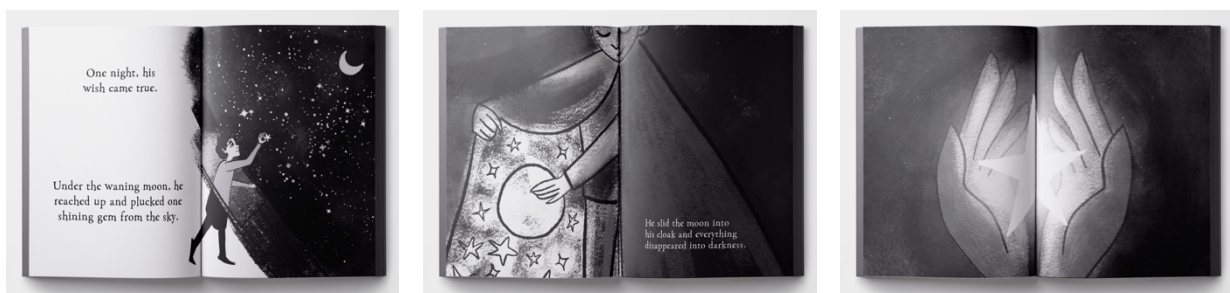


Figure 26.1-3 Spreads from *The Star Thief* picturebook

Sequential, or continuous, moments were a tool I used to show the boy's movement throughout the city (Figure 27.1-4). This technique was essential to the pacing of the

narrative, and added a dynamic energy. It also portrayed his journey, and supported the textual narrative of the boy returning to the same buildings every night (Figure 27.1). The design principle of repetition establishes this part of the narrative. In later spreads (Figure 27.3-4), the sequential imagery stretches significant, but short, moments into a climactic turn in the narrative, allowing the reader to experience the introspective emotions of the character.



Figure 27.1-27.4 Spreads from *The Star Thief* picturebook

I explored perspective angles and their influence on the visual narrative. I was interested in investigating how they could amplify key moments in the story's plot. Perspective angles which position the reader in the place of the character, bring the

reader into the narrative more directly and have them experience the story's world (figure 28.3). Similarly, perspective angles which are more dynamic, in which the characters are moving towards the reader, seek to break the page's boundaries, and again draw the reader into a more immersive experience of the narrative (Figure 28.1, Figure 27.1). These angles amplify the tense moments of the narrative and visually fill in what the text is missing in describing emotion. Less dramatic angles can serve as a contrast to these ones, helping to design an interrelated pacing for the narrative. I found that simple, side-views helped to give breathing room for the more subtle points of the narrative (figures 26.1, 28.2-3). Far shots and extra far shots of the character helped to create more restful mood and establish the setting of the narrative (figures 28.4-6).



Figure 28.1 - 6 Spreads from The Star Thief picturebook

Finally, negative space was important not only for the arrangement of typography, but also to design the narrative's pacing. In particular, Figure 277.3 and figure 29 shows the importance of a completely blank page in creating the darkness of a completely empty



Figure 29. Black spread using negative space to convey the darkness of a starless sky

sky. Playing with negative space also created a sense of distance (Figure 28.5). Negative space was crucial in conveying the boy's journey from admiring the stars, to taking them all, and then returning them to the sky.

When he has taken so many stars, his cloak becomes

brighter and fuller than the sky. This reversal is echoed

in the visual narrative (Figure 28.4). As this exploration focused on ways to push the design elements within the constraints of a traditional picturebook form, I stayed away from experimental typography. Instead, I arranged it in interesting ways around the images, using it to punctuate the imagery, while integrating it into the illustrations to create a united, cohesive, visual narrative (such as in Figure 28.3).

Typographic narrative The picturebook's form relies on both image and text — in this project, I explored using the text as image itself, through expressive typography. The visual language of this book relies on scale, shape, and position. It is designed in black and white so that the affective qualities of the typography are more easily discernable. The main design techniques I used were contrast and balance.

Focusing on typography, I introduced the typographic elements of chapter/section headings as a tool to create pacing (Figure 30.1). These section headings serve as visual pauses in the action of the story, and delineate the separate parts of the plot which would otherwise be signaled through colour or perspective. I also used simple geometric shapes derived from the letters of the typography (Figure 30.2). A simple sans-serif



Figure 30.1-4 Selected spreads from typographic narrative

typeface allowed me to play with scale and proportion, as well as reverse type and different weights, while still keeping the words legible and cohesive (Figure 30.2-3). The abstracted shapes also contributed to more emotional, bolder layers of meaning.

The spine was once again used as a way to create meaning through an interaction between physical form and visual design, by acting as a visual divider or as a metaphor for a physical one (Figure 31.1-4). Scale is used to contrast dynamic, action scenes with quieter, introspective ones (Figure 30.1 in contrast to figure 30.4 or Figure 31.1). Shaping the typography into forms resembling the objects or movements of the character adds to

the visual aspect of the narrative (Figure 30.3-4, Figure 31.2). Position is also used as a metaphor for the imagery evoked in the text, and to create contrast in the composition and support the emotional arc of the narrative (Figure 31.2, 31.4). Finally, I designed the arrangement of these elements relying on the principles of visual grammar (which includes visual perception and gestalt theory). Full spreads can be seen in the appendix.



Figure 31.1-4 Using the inner fold as a design element

Non-sequential narrative Picturebooks are sequential due to the bound form of the book. The uniqueness of a picturebook, however, does not lie in its form, but rather in the designed interactions between imagery and typography. Its true form is that of a visual narrative. In this exploration, I investigated the sequential elements of a picturebook, and the affect of binding on the overall narrative. Does a picturebook have to be a book?

The essential quality of a picturebook is the arrangement of text and image. In designing the previous projects, my process was to take short phrases of text to arrange them and visualize them typographically. In creating a non-sequential narrative, I focused on this process, and cut up the text and images into smaller fragments. By using smaller chunks, the reader/player replicates the designer's process in putting together the narrative in their own ways. I also continued to investigate the influence of typography on the text's meaning, by including cards with a simple, serif typeface as well as cards using the typographic narrative's designs (Figure 32).



Figure 32. plain text and typographic design

This narrative can be “read” or experienced in two distinct ways, each of which appeal to a different creative process. Firstly, it can be looked at as a puzzle, with the reader/player fitting together different cards to create a cohesive narrative. In this process, the reader/player is invited to intentionally arrange and position the image and text elements, and think deeply about the influence of their design decisions on the whole story. Their decisions are related to the position and sequence/pacing of the cards, the amount of image elements in relation to text elements, using plain text or more experimental typography, the overall balance of image and text, and what kinds of contrast to use to advance the narrative. The second approach explores moments of serendipity and the role of chance in the design process, as well as illuminating the

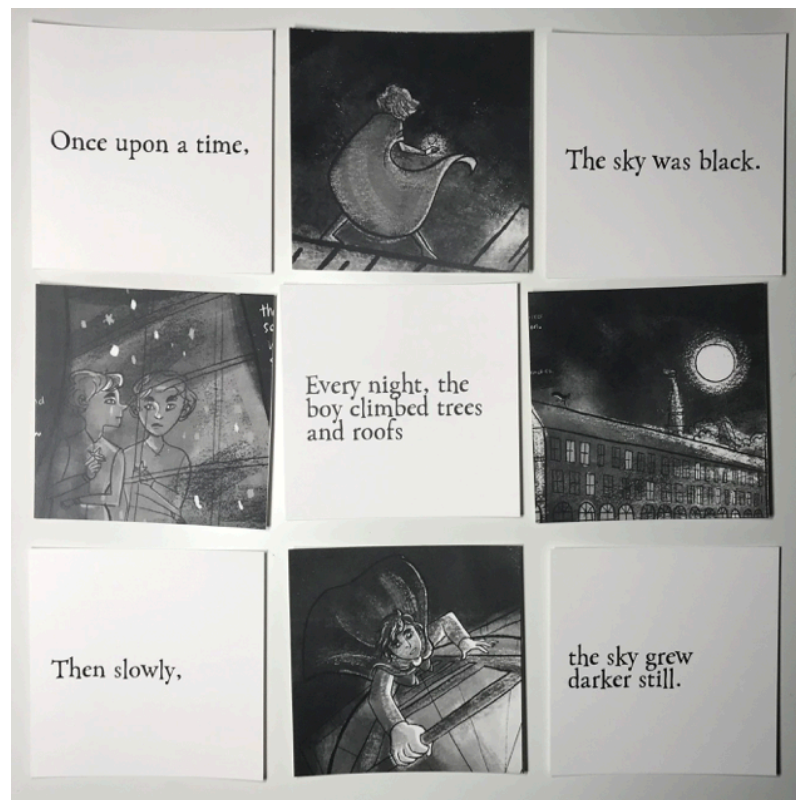


Figure 33. Non-sequential narrative with cards

influence design decisions can have, even if they are not made intentionally. The reader/player shuffles the deck or all three decks of cards together, and lays them out in whichever sequence occurs, reading the story as they go along. Once they feel the narrative has reached a conclusion, the reader/player can go back and reread the story, analyzing the unexpected combinations and their affect on the narrative.

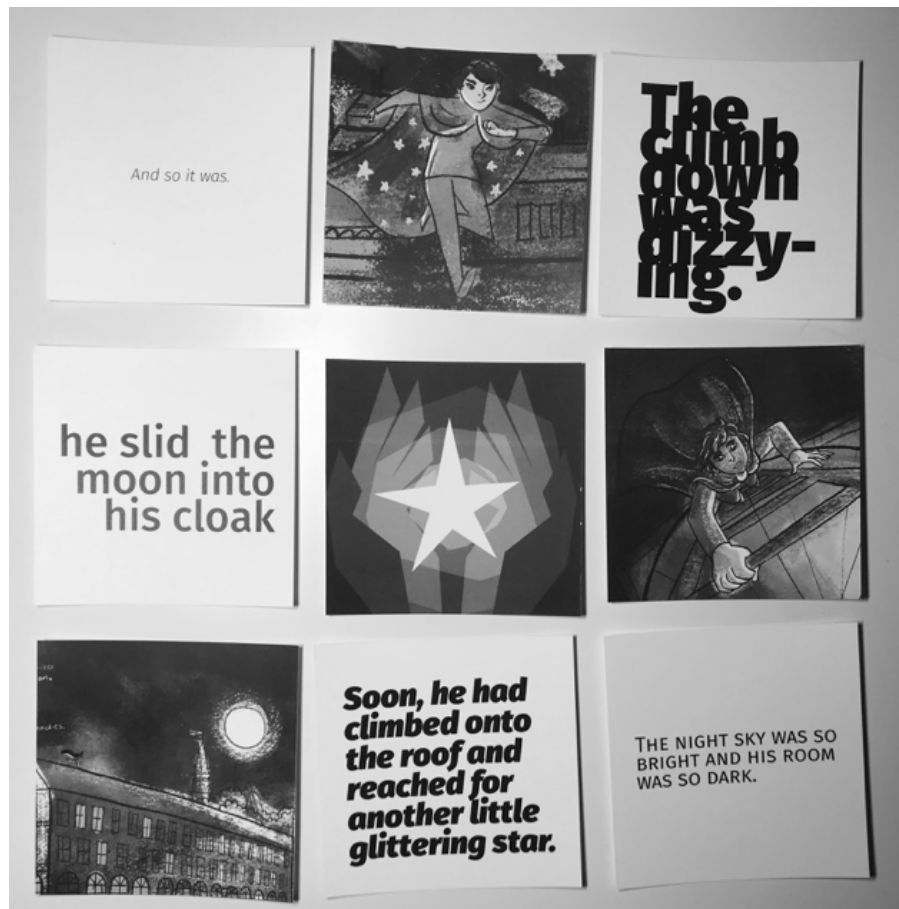


Figure 34. Non-sequential narrative with cards

Digital/Interactive Visual Narrative Investigating digital forms of picturebooks, I was interested in going beyond the simple e-book and explored a more interactive approach to designing a visual narrative. Interactions that are native to the digital format are infinite scrolling and hover animations. Hovering and clicking are some types of interaction that resemble or mirror the anticipation of page turns in a picturebook. Taking inspiration from the idea of generative design and further developing the non-sequential narrative, my digital narrative exploration plays with the reader's interactions and their production of meaning. The game starts with a simple "Once upon a time," signaling to the reader that it is the beginning of a story. With each click, the player advances the infinitely scrolling narrative, which is generated randomly, shuffling through text and imagery.

The digital narrative explores several design elements and principles, mainly scale, position, and repetition. Its generative, code-driven nature offers a way to study the ways these elements affect the narrative in different ways. Text and images may repeat

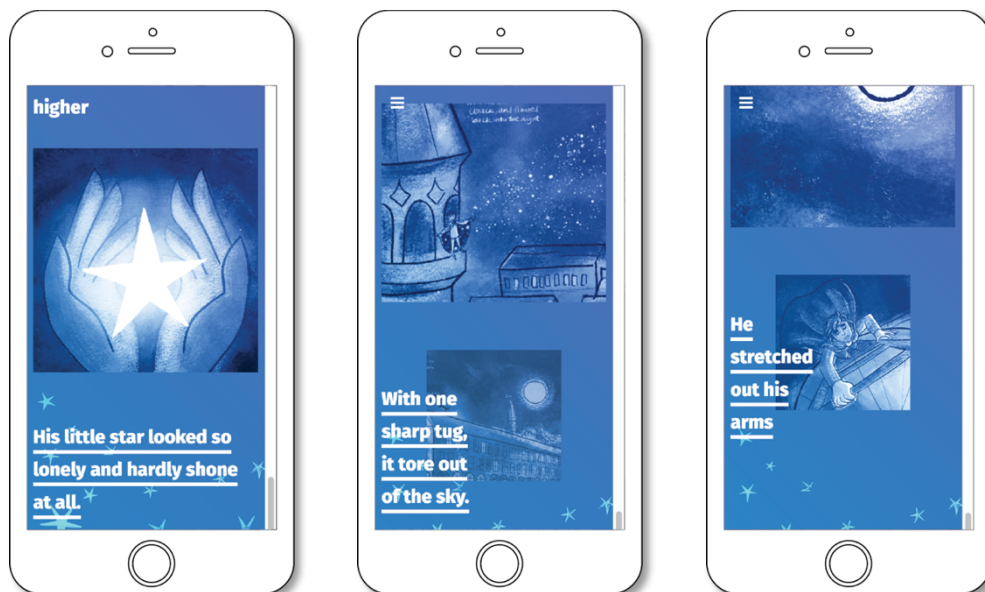


Figure 35. Mobile version of interactive narrative

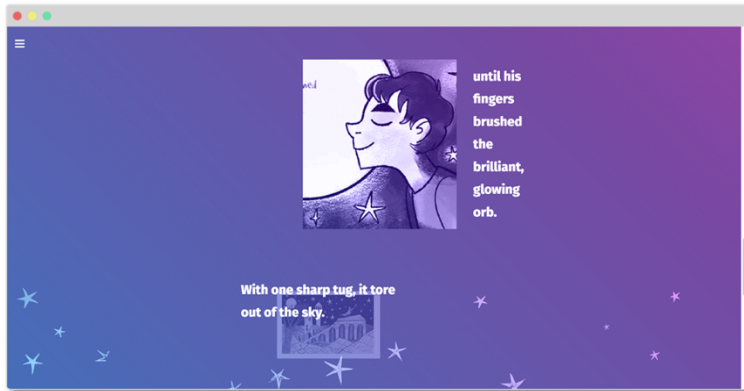


Figure 36. Scale, position, and transparency used in digital narrative

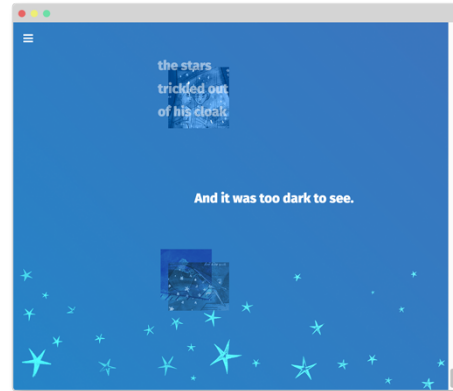


Figure 37. Transparency, repetition, and position

throughout, and this coupled with the infinite scrolling, gives the narrative a poetic nature. The repetition is well suited to the plot of the narrative as well, paralleling the character's repetition of actions throughout the bulk of the story. Scale and position play an important part in the arrangement of the narrative elements, with text alongside or overlaid onto the images. These new pairings create new narratives, through parallel meanings, or contradictory ones (figure 36). The repetition of images, sometimes overlaid onto each other, creates interesting visual moments (figure 37). These can also be read as sequential movements of the character, or as a new image that combines elements of both. The repetition of text creates new meanings as well, by combining phrases in new ways (figure 38). The text decreases in opacity when hovered over, adding another layer to the narrative (figure 39). Some of this text becomes illegible and

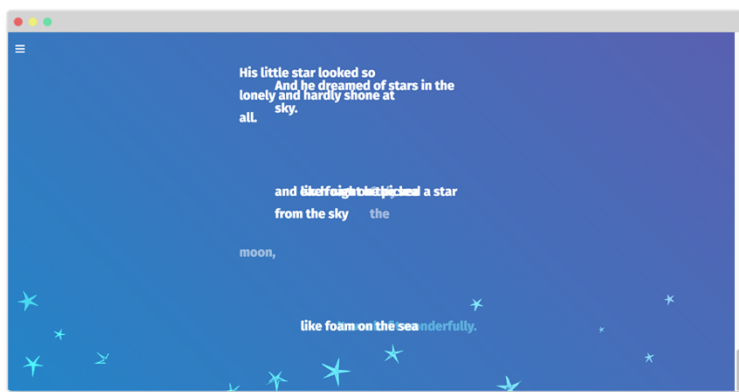


Figure 38. Overlaid text in a section of the generated narrative

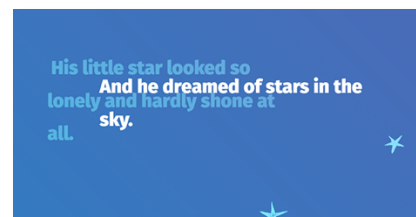


Figure 39. Close-up of overlaid text

adds to the meaning by obscuring some words and emphasizing others (figure 38). Negative space also creates unexpected focal points, such as the word “moon” in figure 38. There can also be moments where the exact same text or image is repeated and arranged around each other, visually becoming a texture, and this repetition creates an interesting layer of meaning. Paired with imagery, it creates a new take on the story (figure 36).

This recombining of visual narrative elements creates interesting compositions in the ways that the text and image interact with each other. Another layer of meaning is added through the colourful background. While playing the narrative game, the colour changes in slight increments, but plays a crucial role when the reader scrolls back to the top and experiences the narrative from the beginning. The colour changes are more dramatic and influence the tone and mood of the narrative. This project shows the powerful influence of design on the way we understand the story through visual narratives, using just simple changes in scale, position, and transparency.

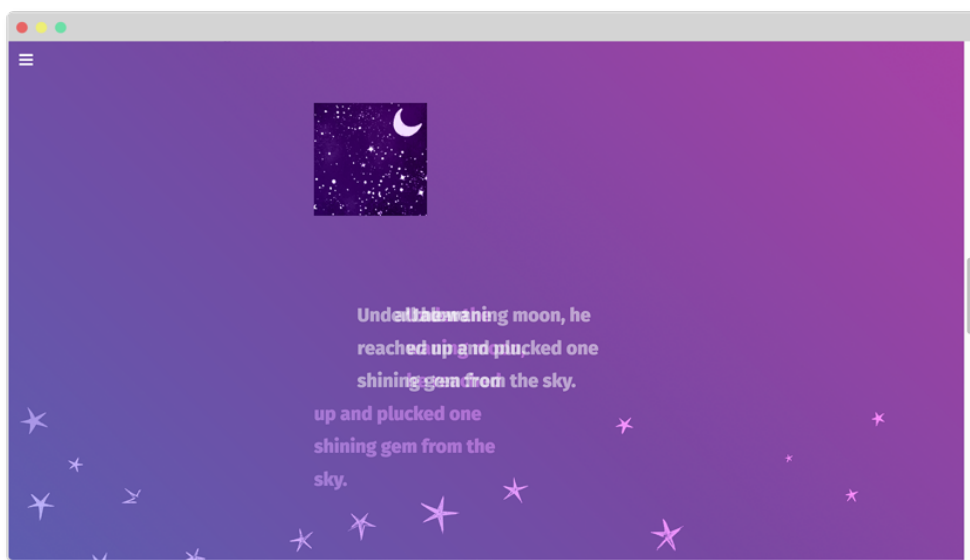


Figure 40. Text repetition and overlay, arranged with image.

Concluding Remarks

My research into the role of design in picturebooks, focusing on meaning, image-making, and typography, revealed the complexity of the seemingly simple picturebook. The contrast and tension between visual elements creates striking design compositions, and similarly, the contrast and tension between typography and visuals creates potential for unique and moving stories told through visual narrative. Furthermore, the concept of visual grammar allows us to deconstruct the intricate dance of meanings layered within the text-and-image story of a picturebook, and delving into the design decisions involved in creating a visual narrative uncovers key elements of the design process in relation to picturebooks.

This work asserts a design-oriented approach to the process of producing picturebooks, which leads to crafting unique visual narrative experiences. Through the process of creating visual narratives in many different forms, I discovered that design decisions can affect the story in several different ways: by affecting the emotional qualities of the visual narrative, by altering the way the plot is understood through the use of compositional elements and arrangement, or by playing with the physical qualities of the book to heighten the picturebook's experience. These design decisions not only affect the narrative, but in fact, create a new, unique narrative that relies on the visual language designed by the picturebook maker.

This research also adds a new perspective to the field of picturebook studies, not only through the visual explorations, but also by being the first to analyze picturebooks from a design perspective, establishing the importance of the visual language of a picturebook and focusing on the vital role of design in shaping the meaning of the narrative, through typography, compositional elements, and visual elements. In understanding the design structure of the picturebook, the understanding of picturebooks is deepened.

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Appendix

Checklist and Visual Analysis Data

Raw data collected through the checklists, for each picturebook analyzed in the visual analysis.

1. <i>Town Is By The Sea</i>	64
2. <i>There Is A Tribe Of Kids</i>	65
3. <i>The Sleeper And The Spindle</i>	66
4. <i>Shackleton's Journey</i>	67
5. <i>This Is Not My Hat</i>	68
6. <i>Black Dog</i>	69
7. <i>FaRThER</i>	70
8. <i>Harry & Hopper</i>	71
9. <i>Harris Finds His Feet</i>	72
10. <i>Little Mouse's Big Book Of Fears</i>	73

BASIC INFORMATIONtitle Town is By the Seaauthor Joanne Schwartzillustrator Sydney Smithpublisher Groundwood Books year 2017
(Canada)**STORY PLOT & STRUCTURE** traditional / linear cumulative / repetitive traditional / reversal parallel circular slice of life mirror thematic / collection**PLOT SUMMARY**

Boy's day in seaside town & his dad's day in the mines

THEME / MESSAGE

glimpse into the life of a mining family

FORMATwidth 11.25 in height 8.5 intotal pages 56 illustrated pages 52**full bleed pages** all most some none**VISUAL STYLE****colour palette** limited colour muted / subtle full colour vibrant / saturated red teal white orange blue brown yellow purple black green grey cream**endpapers** solid colour illust. pattern (black) simple pattern illust. scene**use of borders** around images no borders around text _____ around page**primary mediums used** collage graphite _____ paint coloured pencil ink digital / vector**typographic elements** headings type as image drop caps page numbers subheadings _____ captions pull quotes**main typeface** serif handdrawn _____ sans serif script**PAGE LAYOUTS & VISUAL STRUCTURE****main composition strategy** contrast counterpoint movement**elements used to create focal point** colour line value/brightness scale alignment shape negative space**visual relationship of text and image** typography based complementary image based**ARRANGEMENT OF TEXT****position of text in relation to images** above image(s) surrounded by image(s) below image(s) no relationship to image(s) right of image(s) text only on recto left of image(s) text only on verso between image(s) integrated across spread**treatment of text block** no boundary / faded boxed with border overlaid on image _____ boxed / squared**ARRANGEMENT OF IMAGES****treatment of image** squared / boxed close cropped bled off _____ no boundary / faded**image cropping and angles used** close shot high angle from front medium shot eye-level from side long shot low angle from back**SEQUENTIAL NARRATIVE** sequential images on single spread(s) sequential images across several spreads**total timeline of story** hours months days years weeks 1 day**amount of (story) time between pages** seconds weeks moments months hours _____ days**elements used on recto side for a "page turn"** focal point character negative space eyeline movement foreshadowing other lines, characters in motion heading out of frame on right side. new objects/buildings cropped on the right side, shown in full on the next spread.**DESIGN NOTES**

throughout the book, design elements...

 stay mostly the same change in some ways are mostly changed**DESCRIBE****UNIQUE USE OF DESIGN ELEMENTS**

- loose, inky = quiet, moody tone

- use of black throughout = signifies coal, mines

- lots of breathing room, simple cropping

- classic typography - visually like a child's honesty/innocence

- alternating between full bleed (/full spread) and smaller, or gridded, images.

- also alternates between light and dark images

OTHER DETAILS ON DESIGN

- landscape format to show the seascapes

- black endpapers - coal mine

- energy in the lines and scribbled textures

BASIC INFORMATION

title There is A Tribe of Kids _____
author Lane Smith _____
illustrator Lane Smith _____
publisher Roaring Brook Press _____ **year** 2016 _____

STORY PLOT & STRUCTURE

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> traditional / linear | <input type="checkbox"/> cumulative / repetitive |
| <input type="checkbox"/> traditional / reversal | <input type="checkbox"/> parallel |
| <input type="checkbox"/> circular | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> slice of life |
| <input type="checkbox"/> mirror | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> thematic / collection |

PLOT SUMMARY

a child explores the world of nature and encounters various groups of animals

THEME / MESSAGE

everyone has a place of belonging

FORMAT

width 11.25 in **height** 8.75 in
total pages 44 **illustrated pages** 40

full bleed pages

- all most some none

VISUAL STYLE

colour palette

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> limited colour | <input type="checkbox"/> muted / subtle | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> full colour | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> vibrant / saturated | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> red | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> teal | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> white |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> orange | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> blue | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> brown |
| <input type="checkbox"/> yellow | <input type="checkbox"/> purple | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> green | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> grey | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |

endpapers

- | | | |
|--|--|--------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> solid colour | <input type="checkbox"/> illust. pattern | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> simple pattern | <input type="checkbox"/> illust. scene | |

use of borders

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> around images | <input type="checkbox"/> no borders |
| <input type="checkbox"/> around text | <input type="checkbox"/> faded corners |
| <input type="checkbox"/> around page | |

primary mediums used

- | | | |
|---|---|--------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> collage | <input type="checkbox"/> graphite | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> paint | <input type="checkbox"/> coloured pencil | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ink | <input type="checkbox"/> digital / vector | |

typographic elements

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> headings | <input type="checkbox"/> type as image | <input type="checkbox"/> drop caps |
| <input type="checkbox"/> page numbers | <input type="checkbox"/> subheadings | <input type="checkbox"/> small caps |
| <input type="checkbox"/> captions | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> pull quotes | |

main typeface

- | | | |
|---|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> serif | <input type="checkbox"/> handdrawn | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> sans serif | <input type="checkbox"/> script | |

PAGE LAYOUTS & VISUAL STRUCTURE

main composition strategy

- contrast counterpoint movement

elements used to create focal point

- | | | |
|--|--|--------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> colour | <input type="checkbox"/> line | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> scale | <input type="checkbox"/> alignment | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> shape | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> negative space | |

visual relationship of text and image

- typography based complementary
 image based

ARRANGEMENT OF TEXT

position of text in relation to images

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> above image(s) | <input type="checkbox"/> surrounded by image(s) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> below image(s) | <input type="checkbox"/> no relationship to image(s) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> right of image(s) | <input type="checkbox"/> text only on recto |
| <input type="checkbox"/> left of image(s) | <input type="checkbox"/> text only on verso |
| <input type="checkbox"/> between image(s) | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> integrated across spread | |

treatment of text block

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> no boundary / faded | <input type="checkbox"/> boxed with border |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> overlaid on image | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> boxed / squared | |

ARRANGEMENT OF IMAGES

treatment of image

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> squared / boxed | <input type="checkbox"/> close cropped |
| <input type="checkbox"/> bled off | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no boundary / faded | |

image cropping and angles used

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> close shot | <input type="checkbox"/> high angle | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> from front |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> medium shot | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> eye-level | <input type="checkbox"/> from side |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> long shot | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> low angle | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> from back |

SEQUENTIAL NARRATIVE

- sequential images on single spread(s)
 sequential images across several spreads

total timeline of story

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> hours | <input type="checkbox"/> months |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> days | <input type="checkbox"/> years |
| <input type="checkbox"/> weeks | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |

amount of (story) time between pages

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> seconds | <input type="checkbox"/> weeks |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> moments | <input type="checkbox"/> months |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> hours | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> days | |

elements used on recto side for a "page turn"

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> focal point | <input type="checkbox"/> character |
| <input type="checkbox"/> negative space | <input type="checkbox"/> eyeline |
| <input type="checkbox"/> movement | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> foreshadowing |
- other the animals on the next spread always make a small appearance on the bottom right of the preceding page. If not, the animals are cropped off the page (legs, tail, only) to make you turn to see the whole character. Also the text is usually on the right.

DESIGN NOTES

throughout the book, design elements...

- stay mostly the same
 change in some ways
 are mostly changed

DESCRIBE

colour changes, and animals come and go. But the child always stays the same colour/shape. The layouts rotate between a few different variations on the same grid.

UNIQUE USE OF DESIGN ELEMENTS

every page is divided up into a number of panels/sections and the story plays out through these, like a silent comic. Very sparse text, which acts like a heading for each page. The layouts are a nice mix of full bleed, multiple, and gridded images.

OTHER DETAILS ON DESIGN

There is a diverse range of colours but they all seem to be in the same family, and the textures/faded borders keep the bright colours consistent.

BASIC INFORMATION

title The Sleeper and The Spindle
author Neil Gaiman
illustrator Chris Riddell
publisher HarperCollins (USA)/ Bloomsbury (UK) **year** 2014

STORY PLOT & STRUCTURE

- traditional / linear cumulative / repetitive
 traditional / reversal parallel
 circular slice of life
 mirror thematic / collection

PLOT SUMMARY

snow white/a queen saves Sleeping Beauty from the witch who fell asleep to take the princess's power (retelling of Sleeping Beauty)

THEME / MESSAGE

empowering girls to 'resue' themselves and be courageous/honourable

FORMAT

width 7.25 in **height** 10.25 in
total pages 70 **illustrated pages** 70
full bleed pages
 all most some none

VISUAL STYLE

colour palette

- limited colour muted / subtle
 full colour vibrant / saturated
 red teal white
 orange blue brown
 yellow purple black
 green grey gold

endpapers

- solid colour illust. pattern (map)
 simple pattern illust. scene

use of borders

- around images no borders
 around text _____
 around page

primary mediums used

- collage graphite _____
 paint coloured pencil
 ink digital / vector

typographic elements

- headings type as image drop caps
 page numbers subheadings _____
 captions pull quotes

main typeface

- serif handdrawn _____
 sans serif script

PAGE LAYOUTS & VISUAL STRUCTURE

main composition strategy

- contrast counterpoint movement

elements used to create focal point

- colour line _____
 scale alignment
 shape negative space

visual relationship of text and image

- typography based complementary
 image based

ARRANGEMENT OF TEXT

position of text in relation to images

- above image(s) surrounded by image(s)
 below image(s) no relationship to image(s)
 right of image(s) text only on recto
 left of image(s) text only on verso
 between image(s)
 integrated across spread

treatment of text block

- no boundary / faded boxed with border
 overlaid on image _____
 boxed / squared

ARRANGEMENT OF IMAGES

treatment of image

- squared / boxed close cropped
 bled off bordered
 no boundary / faded

image cropping and angles used

- close shot high angle from front
 medium shot eye-level from side
 long shot low angle from back

SEQUENTIAL NARRATIVE

- sequential images on single spread(s)
 sequential images across several spreads

total timeline of story

- hours months
 days years
 weeks _____

amount of (story) time between pages

- seconds weeks
 moments months
 hours _____
 days

elements used on recto side for a "page turn"

- focal point character
 negative space eyeline
 movement foreshadowing
 other pull quotes that foreshadow/suggest about story

DESIGN NOTES

throughout the book, design elements...

- stay mostly the same
 change in some ways
 are mostly changed

DESCRIBE

relies on several layouts that alternate throughout for variation in pacing. Motifs are repeated throughout. Framing and cropping is different on the more climactic pages

UNIQUE USE OF DESIGN ELEMENTS

- longer text, mix of chapter book & picturebook
- gold accents
- vellum cover/dust jacket
- relies on high contrast as it is only black ink on white ground, and gold ink as accents.

OTHER DETAILS ON DESIGN

BASIC INFORMATION

title Shackleton's Journey _____
author William Grill _____
illustrator William Grill _____
publisher Flying Eye Books (Nobrow) year 2014 _____

STORY PLOT & STRUCTURE

traditional / linear cumulative / repetitive
 traditional / reversal parallel
 circular slice of life
 mirror thematic / collection

PLOT SUMMARY _____
Retcounting of Ernest Shackleton's journey to Antarctica.

THEME / MESSAGE _____
courage, endurance, survival, exploration

FORMAT

width 10 in **height** 12.25 in
total pages 76 **illustrated pages** _____
full bleed pages
 all most some none

VISUAL STYLE

colour palette
 limited colour muted / subtle
 full colour vibrant / saturated
 red teal white
 orange blue brown
 yellow purple indigo
 green grey _____
endpapers
 solid colour illust. pattern _____
 simple pattern illust. scene

use of borders

around images no borders
 around text _____
 around page

primary mediums used

collage graphite _____
 paint coloured pencil
 ink digital / vector

typographic elements

headings type as image drop caps
 page numbers subheadings icons, bolded text, table of contents, glossary
 captions pull quotes

main typeface

serif handdrawn _____
 sans serif script

PAGE LAYOUTS & VISUAL STRUCTURE

main composition strategy

contrast counterpoint movement

elements used to create focal point

colour line value contrast
 scale alignment
 shape negative space

visual relationship of text and image

typography based complementary
 image based

ARRANGEMENT OF TEXT

position of text in relation to images

above image(s) surrounded by image(s)
 below image(s) no relationship to image(s)
 right of image(s) text only on recto
 left of image(s) text only on verso
 between image(s)
 integrated across spread

treatment of text block

no boundary / faded boxed with border
 overlaid on image _____
 boxed / squared

ARRANGEMENT OF IMAGES

treatment of image

squared / boxed close cropped
 bled off _____
 no boundary / faded

image cropping and angles used

close shot high angle from front
 medium shot eye-level from side
 long shot low angle from back

ex. long shot, bird's eye

SEQUENTIAL NARRATIVE

sequential images on single spread(s)
 sequential images across several spreads

total timeline of story

hours months
 days years
 weeks _____

amount of (story) time between pages

seconds weeks
 moments months
 hours _____
 days

elements used on recto side for a "page turn"

focal point character
 negative space eyeline
 movement foreshadowing
 other _____

DESIGN NOTES

throughout the book, design elements...

stay mostly the same
 change in some ways
 are mostly changed

DESCRIBE

colours, shapes, and visual style as well as layouts stay consistent throughout the book. There are alternating full bleed/full spread images and smaller or gridded image pages for pacing.

UNIQUE USE OF DESIGN ELEMENTS

Using limited colours and very simple shapes, William Grill combines infographics with illustration to make this picturebook unique.

OTHER DETAILS ON DESIGN

BASIC INFORMATION

title This Is Not My Hat _____
author Jon Klassen _____
illustrator Jon Klassen _____
publisher Candlewick Press _____ **year** 2012 _____

STORY PLOT & STRUCTURE

- traditional / linear cumulative / repetitive
 traditional / reversal parallel
 circular slice of life
 mirror thematic / collection

PLOT SUMMARY

A fish steals a hat, the owner gives chase

THEME / MESSAGE

All of your actions have consequences.

FORMAT

width 11 _____ in **height** 8 _____ in
total pages 36 **illustrated pages** 34
full bleed pages
 all most some none

VISUAL STYLE

colour palette

- limited colour muted / subtle
 full colour vibrant / saturated
 red teal white
 orange blue brown
 yellow purple black
 green grey _____

endpapers

- solid colour illust. pattern _____
 simple pattern illust. scene

use of borders

- around images no borders
 around text _____
 around page

primary mediums used

- collage graphite _____
 paint coloured pencil
 ink digital / vector

typographic elements

- headings type as image drop caps
 page numbers subheadings _____
 captions pull quotes

main typeface

- serif handdrawn _____
 sans serif script

PAGE LAYOUTS & VISUAL STRUCTURE

main composition strategy

- contrast counterpoint movement

elements used to create focal point

- colour line _____
 scale alignment
 shape negative space

visual relationship of text and image

- typography based complementary
 image based

ARRANGEMENT OF TEXT

position of text in relation to images

- above image(s) surrounded by image(s)
 below image(s) no relationship to image(s)
 right of image(s) text only on recto
 left of image(s) text only on verso
 between image(s)
 integrated across spread

treatment of text block

- no boundary / faded boxed with border
 overlaid on image _____
 boxed / squared

ARRANGEMENT OF IMAGES

treatment of image

- squared / boxed close cropped
 bled off _____
 no boundary / faded

image cropping and angles used

- close shot high angle from front
 medium shot eye-level from side
 long shot low angle from back

SEQUENTIAL NARRATIVE

- sequential images on single spread(s)
 sequential images across several spreads

total timeline of story

- hours months
 days years
 weeks _____

amount of (story) time between pages

- seconds weeks
 moments months
 hours _____
 days

elements used on recto side for a "page turn"

- focal point character
 negative space eyeline
 movement foreshadowing
 other _____

DESIGN NOTES

throughout the book, design elements...

- stay mostly the same
 change in some ways
 are mostly changed

DESCRIBE

Everything has the same visual style and even similar compositions. But the sequential nature of the story keeps it interesting.

UNIQUE USE OF DESIGN ELEMENTS

The images all have the same camera shot and angle, and move forward and backward past the "viewfinder". The visuals are somewhat stiff/static but through the use of other elements, create a sense of movement. Often only the expression (or eyes) changes between spreads.

OTHER DETAILS ON DESIGN

The text acts like a narration/dialogue and gives life to the images.

BASIC INFORMATION

title Black Dog
author Levi Pinfold
illustrator Levi Pinfold
publisher Templar Books (Candlewick Press) year 2011

STORY PLOT & STRUCTURE

- traditional / linear
 traditional / reversal
 circular
 mirror
- cumulative / repetitive
 parallel
 slice of life
 thematic / collection

PLOT SUMMARY

A family is scared of a big black dog. The youngest child manages to shrink the dog and bring it back inside.

THEME / MESSAGE

Even the smallest can be brave enough to confront and overcome their fears

FORMAT

width 8.75 in **height** 11.5 in
total pages 30 **illustrated pages** 30

full bleed pages

- all most some none

VISUAL STYLE

colour palette

- limited colour
 full colour
- muted / subtle
 vibrant / saturated
- red
 orange
 yellow
 green
- teal
 blue
 purple
 grey
- white
 brown
 sepia
 black

endpapers

- solid colour
 simple pattern
- illust. pattern
 illust. scene

use of borders

- around images
 around text
 around page
- no borders

primary mediums used

- collage
 paint
 ink
- graphite
 coloured pencil
 digital / vector

typographic elements

- headings
 page numbers
 captions
- type as image
 subheadings
 pull quotes
- drop caps
 body text

main typeface

- serif
 sans serif
- handdrawn
 script

PAGE LAYOUTS & VISUAL STRUCTURE

main composition strategy

- contrast
 counterpoint
 movement

elements used to create focal point

- colour
 scale
 shape
- line
 alignment
 negative space
- implied line (eyeline, etc)

visual relationship of text and image

- typography based
 image based
- complementary

ARRANGEMENT OF TEXT

position of text in relation to images

- above image(s)
 below image(s)
 right of image(s)
 left of image(s)
 between image(s)
 integrated across spread
- surrounded by image(s)
 no relationship to image(s)
 text only on recto
 text only on verso

treatment of text block

- no boundary / faded
 overlaid on image
 boxed / squared
- boxed with border
 top/bottom borders

ARRANGEMENT OF IMAGES

treatment of image

- squared / boxed
 bled off
 no boundary / faded
- close cropped

image cropping and angles used

- close shot
 medium shot
 long shot
- high angle
 eye-level
 low angle
- from front
 from side
 from back

SEQUENTIAL NARRATIVE

- sequential images on single spread(s)
 sequential images across several spreads

total timeline of story

- hours
 days
 weeks
- months
 years

amount of (story) time between pages

- seconds
 moments
 hours
 days
- weeks
 months

elements used on recto side for a "page turn"

- focal point
 negative space
 movement
 other
- character
 eyeline
 foreshadowing

DESIGN NOTES

throughout the book, design elements...

- stay mostly the same
 change in some ways
 are mostly changed

DESCRIBE

the layouts stay exactly the same. There are two main layouts: text on verso/image on recto, and image on top/text on bottom. The number of and arrangements of the sepia/boxed images with the text changes slightly but overall the same.

UNIQUE USE OF DESIGN ELEMENTS

- very consistent grid layout
- smaller images with text tell the story from a second POV (smaller actions + closeups)
- text and image combined with out any overlaying
- overall muted/subtle palette makes the rich black (of dog) and bright yellow (of Small's coat) stand out.

OTHER DETAILS ON DESIGN

- the closed static layout of the beginning and end make the middle portion, with large images that have parts extending out of the frame, stand out as poetic, important part of the story. (Also has two point perspective and the objects seem to reach out through the page, making it immersive)

BASIC INFORMATION

title FARTHER
author Grahame Baker-Smith
illustrator same
publisher Templar Books (Candlewick Press) year 2010

STORY PLOT & STRUCTURE

traditional / linear cumulative / repetitive
 traditional / reversal parallel
 circular slice of life
 mirror thematic / collection

PLOT SUMMARY

the dream of flying passes from father to son

THEME / MESSAGE _____

FORMAT

width 10 in height 11.5 in
total pages 36 illustrated pages _____
full bleed pages
 all most some none

VISUAL STYLE

colour palette

limited colour muted / subtle
 full colour vibrant / saturated
 red teal white
 orange blue brown
 yellow purple _____
 green grey _____

endpapers

solid colour illust. pattern _____
 simple pattern illust. scene

use of borders

around images no borders
 around text _____
 around page

primary mediums used

collage graphite _____
 paint coloured pencil
 ink digital / vector

typographic elements

headings type as image drop caps
 page numbers subheadings _____
 captions pull quotes

main typeface

serif handdrawn uppercase
 sans serif script

PAGE LAYOUTS & VISUAL STRUCTURE

main composition strategy

contrast counterpoint movement

elements used to create focal point

colour line _____
 scale alignment
 shape negative space

visual relationship of text and image

typography based complementary
 image based

ARRANGEMENT OF TEXT

position of text in relation to images

above image(s) surrounded by image(s)
 below image(s) no relationship to image(s)
 right of image(s) text only on recto
 left of image(s) text only on verso
 between image(s)
 integrated across spread

treatment of text block

no boundary / faded boxed with border
 overlaid on image _____
 boxed / squared

ARRANGEMENT OF IMAGES

treatment of image

squared / boxed close cropped
 bled off in grids
 no boundary / faded

image cropping and angles used

close shot high angle from front
 medium shot eye-level from side
 long shot low angle from back

SEQUENTIAL NARRATIVE

sequential images on single spread(s)
 sequential images across several spreads

total timeline of story

hours months
 days years
 weeks decades

amount of (story) time between pages

seconds weeks
 moments months
 hours years
 days

elements used on recto side for a "page turn"

focal point character
 negative space eyeline
 movement foreshadowing
 other actual and implied lines

DESIGN NOTES

throughout the book, design elements...

stay mostly the same
 change in some ways
 are mostly changed

DESCRIBE

Because of the circular text narrative, the design elements are also repeated. Colour, shape, arrangement have only a little variation.

UNIQUE USE OF DESIGN ELEMENTS

Almost every spread has a character gazing to the right, encouraging a page-turn. Mostly, lines are used in the background to support the focal point.

OTHER DETAILS ON DESIGN

digital collage work seems static, but the composition's lines show movement, creating an interesting contrast. Typography leaves a lot to be desired: not very readable and could be arranged better. A lot of the spreads seem like they could have been pushed further to create more emotional impact.

BASIC INFORMATION

title Harry & Hopper
 author Margaret Wild
 illustrator Freya Blackwood
 publisher Fiewel & Friends (MacMillan) year 2009

STORY PLOT & STRUCTURE

traditional / linear cumulative / repetitive
 traditional / reversal parallel
 circular slice of life
 mirror thematic / collection

PLOT SUMMARY

A boy copes with the loss of his pet dog, Hopper

THEME / MESSAGE

Loss, grieving.

FORMAT

width 10 in height 9.75 in
 total pages 32 illustrated pages 32

full bleed pages

all most some none

VISUAL STYLE**colour palette**

limited colour muted / subtle
 full colour vibrant / saturated
 red teal white
 orange blue brown
 yellow purple black
 green grey cream

endpapers

solid colour illust. pattern
 simple pattern illust. scene

use of borders

around images no borders
 around text
 around page

primary mediums used

collage graphite
 paint coloured pencil
 ink digital / vector

typographic elements

headings type as image drop caps
 page numbers subheadings body text
 captions pull quotes

main typeface

serif handdrawn
 sans serif script

PAGE LAYOUTS & VISUAL STRUCTURE**main composition strategy**

contrast counterpoint movement

elements used to create focal point

colour line implied line
 scale alignment
 shape negative space

visual relationship of text and image

typography based complementary
 image based

ARRANGEMENT OF TEXT**position of text in relation to images**

above image(s) surrounded by image(s)
 below image(s) no relationship to image(s)
 right of image(s) text only on recto
 left of image(s) text only on verso
 between image(s)
 integrated across spread

treatment of text block

no boundary / faded boxed with border
 overlaid on image
 boxed / squared

ARRANGEMENT OF IMAGES**treatment of image**

squared / boxed close cropped
 bled off
 no boundary / faded

image cropping and angles used

close shot high angle from front
 medium shot eye-level from side
 long shot low angle from back

SEQUENTIAL NARRATIVE

sequential images on single spread(s)
 sequential images across several spreads

total timeline of story

hours months
 days years
 weeks

amount of (story) time between pages

seconds weeks
 moments months
 hours 1 day
 days

elements used on recto side for a "page turn"

focal point character
 negative space eyeline
 movement foreshadowing

other text (usually on the recto side)

DESIGN NOTES**throughout the book, design elements...**

stay mostly the same
 change in some ways
 are mostly changed

DESCRIBE

near the end, the colour palette becomes dominated by black (with bold text in reverse), signifying Harry's mourning. The spreads are also full bleed and immersive. In the beginning, there is also the use of unique angles (from above, panoramic).

UNIQUE USE OF DESIGN ELEMENTS

The illustrations use line in a sketchy way that implies motion and energy.

OTHER DETAILS ON DESIGN

The endpapers are not part of the signature of the book, they are pasted on to the first and last pages to add four extra pages.

BASIC INFORMATION

title Harris Finds His Feet
author Catherine Rayner
illustrator Catherine Rayner
publisher Little Tiger Press **year** 2008

STORY PLOT & STRUCTURE

traditional / linear cumulative / repetitive
 traditional / reversal parallel
 circular slice of life
 mirror thematic / collection

PLOT SUMMARY

Harris the hare explores the landscape around him and learns from his grandfather.

THEME / MESSAGE

the world is yours to explore

FORMAT

width 10.5 in **height** 10.5 in
total pages 28 **illustrated pages** 26

full bleed pages

all most some none

VISUAL STYLE

colour palette

limited colour muted / subtle
 full colour vibrant / saturated
 red teal white
 orange blue brown
 yellow purple
 green grey

endpapers

solid colour illust. pattern
 simple pattern illust. scene

use of borders

around images no borders
 around text
 around page

primary mediums used

collage graphite
 paint coloured pencil
 ink digital / vector

typographic elements

headings type as image drop caps
 page numbers subheadings body text
 captions pull quotes

main typeface

serif handdrawn
 sans serif script

PAGE LAYOUTS & VISUAL STRUCTURE

main composition strategy

contrast counterpoint movement

elements used to create focal point

colour line
 scale alignment
 shape negative space

visual relationship of text and image

typography based complementary
 image based

ARRANGEMENT OF TEXT

position of text in relation to images

above image(s) surrounded by image(s)
 below image(s) no relationship to image(s)
 right of image(s) text only on recto
 left of image(s) text only on verso
 between image(s)
 integrated across spread

treatment of text block

no boundary / faded boxed with border
 overlaid on image
 boxed / squared

ARRANGEMENT OF IMAGES

treatment of image

squared / boxed close cropped
 bled off
 no boundary / faded

image cropping and angles used

close shot high angle from front
 medium shot eye-level from side
 long shot low angle from back

SEQUENTIAL NARRATIVE

sequential images on single spread(s)
 sequential images across several spreads

total timeline of story

hours months
 days years
 weeks

amount of (story) time between pages

seconds weeks
 moments months
 hours
 days

elements used on recto side for a "page turn"

focal point character
 negative space eyeline
 movement foreshadowing
 other

DESIGN NOTES

throughout the book, design elements...

stay mostly the same
 change in some ways
 are mostly changed

DESCRIBE

the overall colour palette is the same, except for the page with the wolf, which is purple. The character's shape, size, colour, and placement is largely the same, with some variations that are repeated throughout.

UNIQUE USE OF DESIGN ELEMENTS

Some spreads use type as image to support the movement of the story (jumping, running). The far shots showcase the landscape in an abstract way. The loose quality of rendering gives an expressive and emotional feeling. Overall a calming and introspective mood.

OTHER DETAILS ON DESIGN

Typography and images complement each other very well. They don't intrude but are integrated with each other. Long shots are mixed with medium shots, letting us see both Harris and his view of the world.

BASIC INFORMATION

title Little Mouse's Big Book of Fears _____
author Emily Gravett _____
illustrator Emily Gravett _____
publisher Simon & Schuster _____ **year** 2007 _____

STORY PLOT & STRUCTURE

traditional / linear cumulative / repetitive
 traditional / reversal parallel
 circular slice of life
 mirror thematic / collection

PLOT SUMMARY

A mouse lists the things he's afraid of

THEME / MESSAGE

everyone is afraid of something

FORMAT

width 10 _____ in **height** 11.75 _____ in
total pages 28 _____ **illustrated pages** 28 _____

full bleed pages

all most some none

VISUAL STYLE**colour palette**

limited colour muted / subtle
 full colour vibrant / saturated
 red teal white
 orange blue brown
 yellow purple beige
 green grey black

endpapers

solid colour illust. pattern _____
 simple pattern illust. scene

use of borders

around images no borders
 around text _____
 around page

primary mediums used

collage graphite trompe l'oeil
 paint coloured pencil
 ink digital / vector

typographic elements

headings type as image drop caps
 page numbers subheadings _____
 captions pull quotes

main typeface

serif handdrawn _____
 sans serif script

PAGE LAYOUTS & VISUAL STRUCTURE**main composition strategy**

contrast counterpoint movement

elements used to create focal point

colour line _____
 scale alignment
 shape negative space

visual relationship of text and image

typography based complementary
 image based

ARRANGEMENT OF TEXT**position of text in relation to images**

above image(s) surrounded by image(s)
 below image(s) no relationship to image(s)
 right of image(s) text only on recto
 left of image(s) text only on verso
 between image(s)
 integrated across spread

treatment of text block

no boundary / faded boxed with border
 overlaid on image _____
 boxed / squared

ARRANGEMENT OF IMAGES**treatment of image**

squared / boxed close cropped
 bled off _____
 no boundary / faded

image cropping and angles used

close shot high angle from front
 medium shot eye-level from side
 long shot low angle from back

SEQUENTIAL NARRATIVE

sequential images on single spread(s)
 sequential images across several spreads

total timeline of story

hours months
 days years
 weeks _____

amount of (story) time between pages

seconds weeks
 moments months
 hours _____
 days

elements used on recto side for a "page turn"

focal point character
 negative space eyeline
 movement foreshadowing
 other line, "torn" / "folded" corners

DESIGN NOTES

throughout the book, design elements...

stay mostly the same
 change in some ways
 are mostly changed

DESCRIBE

the layout, typography, and visual style stay the same.
 Only the imagery of the collages changes depending on the type of phobia being defined.

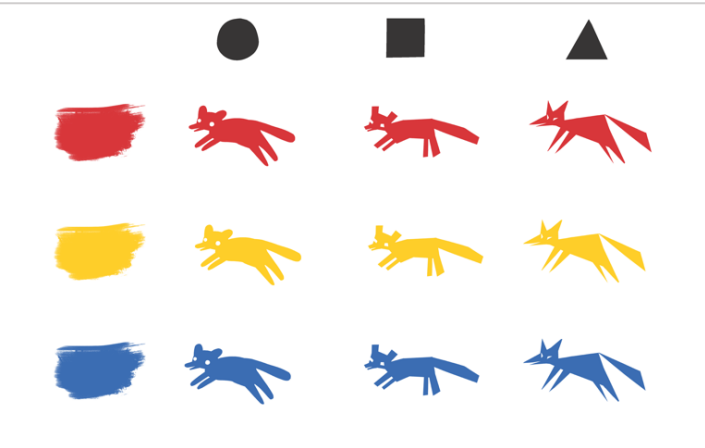
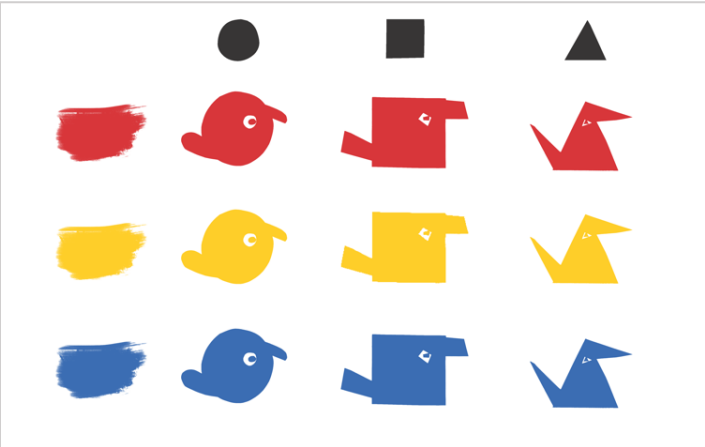
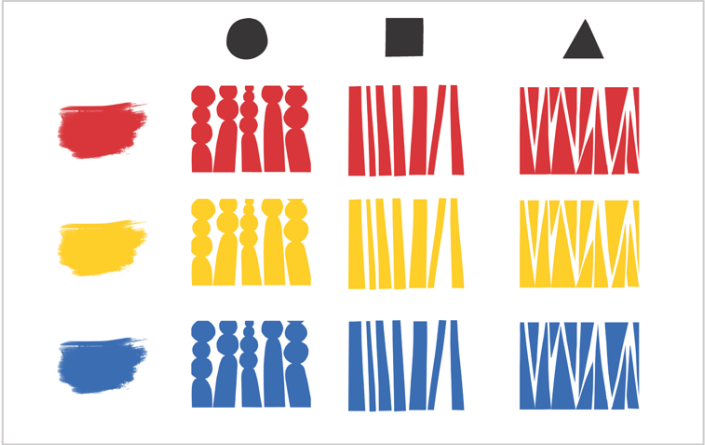
UNIQUE USE OF DESIGN ELEMENTS

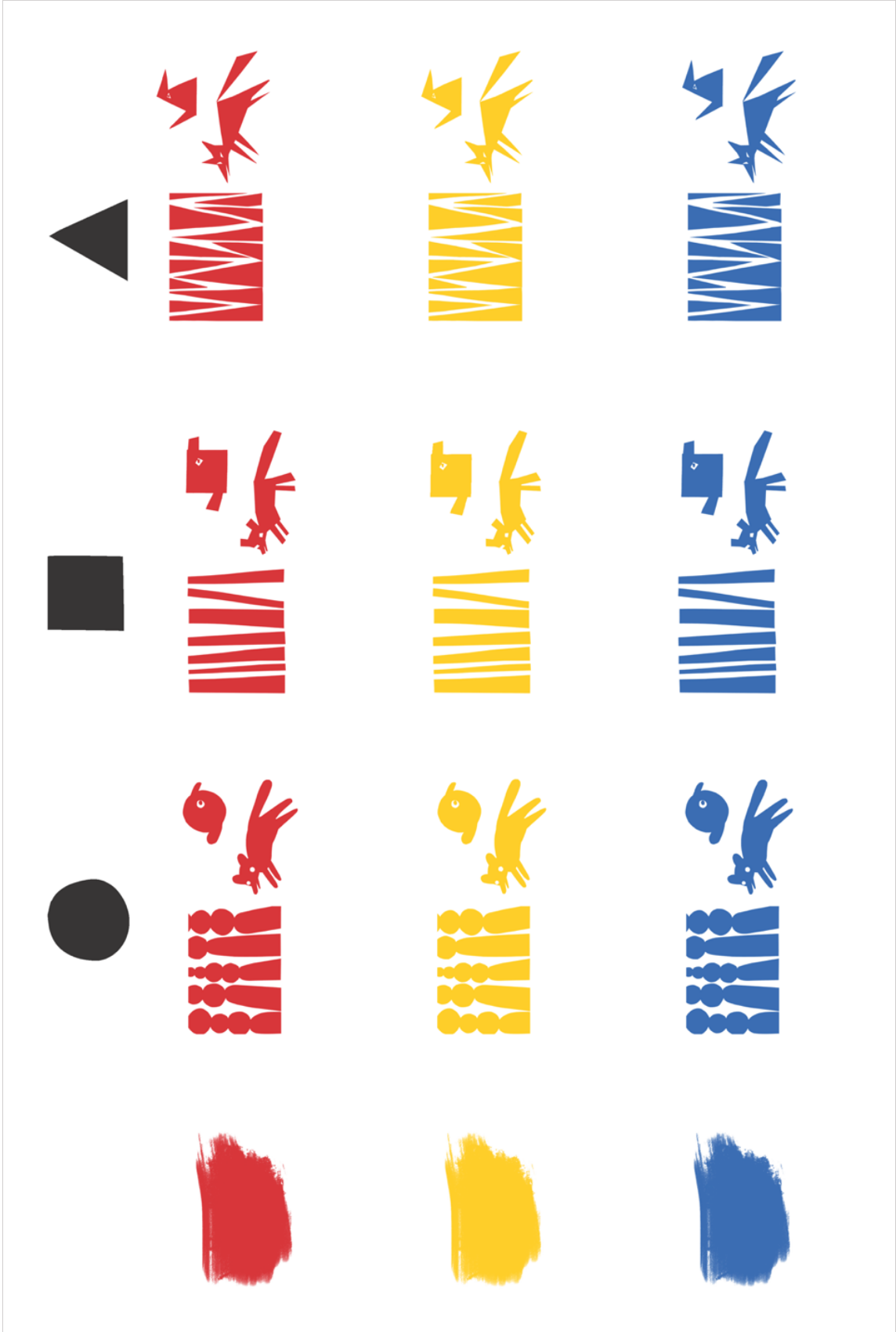
extensive use of trompe l'oeil, collage, and cutouts/foldouts. The book is intended to look like a workbook that the mouse character is filling out as the reader reads along.

OTHER DETAILS ON DESIGN

Colour, Shape, & Meaning

Investigating the affective qualities of shape and colour in the context of narrative elements such as characters and setting.





“The Star Thief” — Design & the Picturebook Form

1. The Star Thief — Text	78
2. <i>The Star Thief</i> — Concept Art	79
3. <i>The Star Thief</i> — Conventional Picturebook Narrative	83
4. <i>The Star Thief</i> — Typographic Narrative	87
5. <i>The Star Thief</i> — Non-Sequential Narrative	90
6. <i>The Star Thief</i> — Digital Visual Narrative	96

The Star Thief — Text

PART I: THE WISH

Once upon a time there was a boy who dreamed of the stars. He wished he could have one of his own. One night, his wish came true. Under the waning moon, he reached up and plucked one shining gem from the sky. He kept it close and took every care of it, but soon he found himself gazing out of his window again. The night sky was so bright and his room was so dark. His little star looked so lonely and hardly shone at all.

PART II: THE STARS

Soon, he had climbed onto the roof and reached for another little glittering star. And so it was. Every night, the boy climbed trees and roofs, and each night he picked a star from the sky, pinning it into his cloak. His cloak grew heavy and the sky grew darker still. Soon, he had reached for the very last star. The sky was black. Only the moon, full and round, hung high in the dark, dark, sky, all alone.

PART III: THE MOON

He had the perfect spot for it. It would fit wonderfully. He leapt from roof to roof, climbing over shingles (and sheets) and bricks (and branches). He climbed higher and higher, until his fingers brushed the brilliant, glowing orb. He stretched out his arms...and tugged it right out of the sky. With one sharp tug, it tore out of the sky.

PART IV: THE NIGHT SKY

He was stuck now, hanging onto the longest ladder balanced on the tallest tower. The climb down would be. He stumbled and tripped and fell. It was pitch black. And it was too dark to see. He knew what he had to do. Gently, he took the moon in his hands...and set it free. Then slowly, the stars trickled out of his cloak like foam on the sea, and floated back into the night.

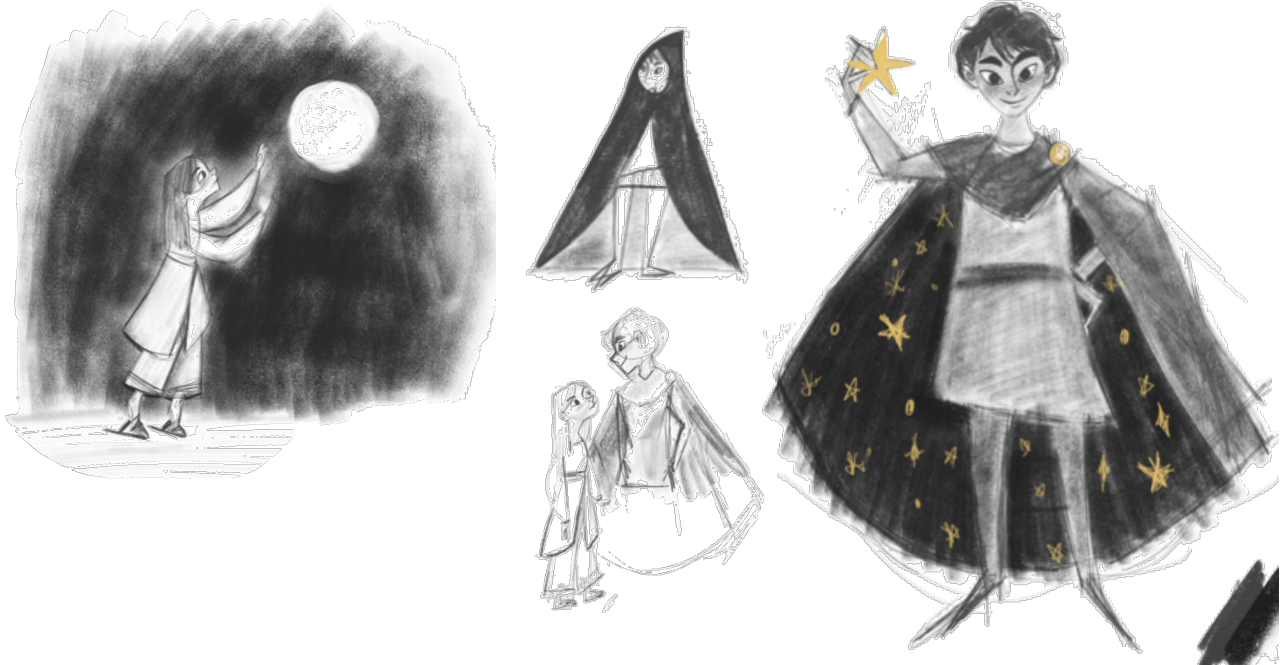
The Star Thief — Concept Art

Process work and initial designs created to ideate and create the star thief story and explore the visual language of the picturebook.

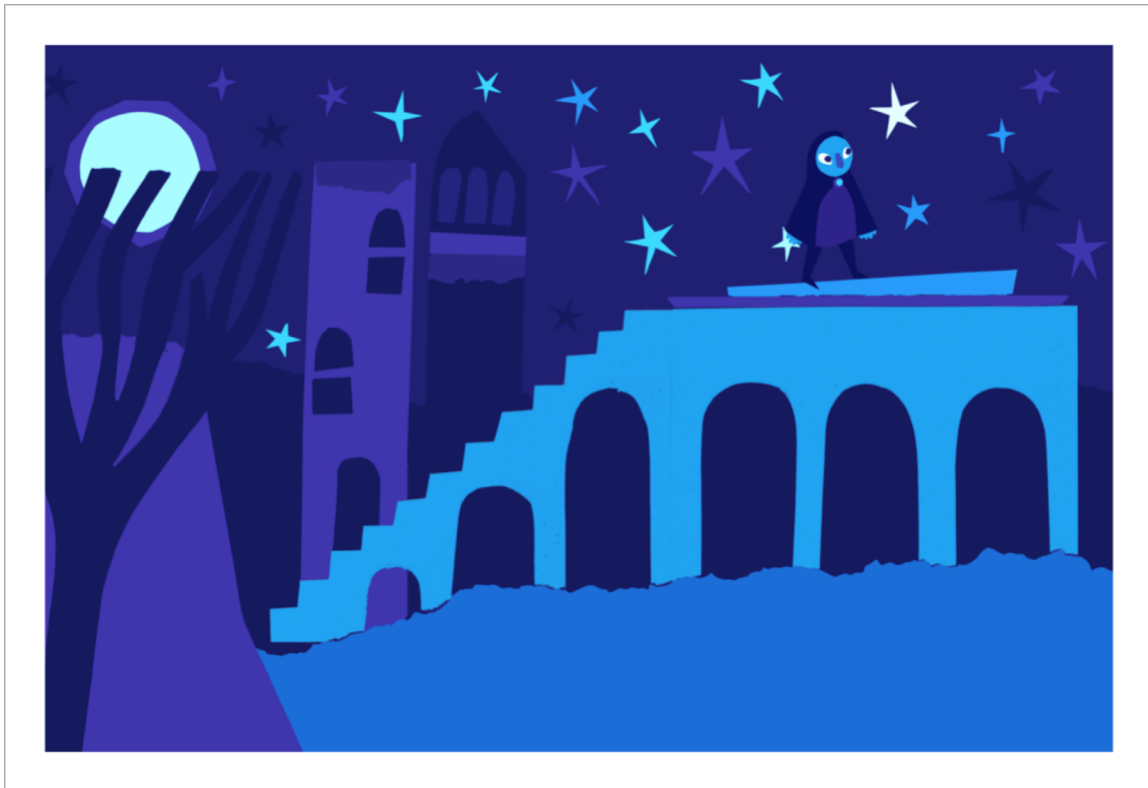
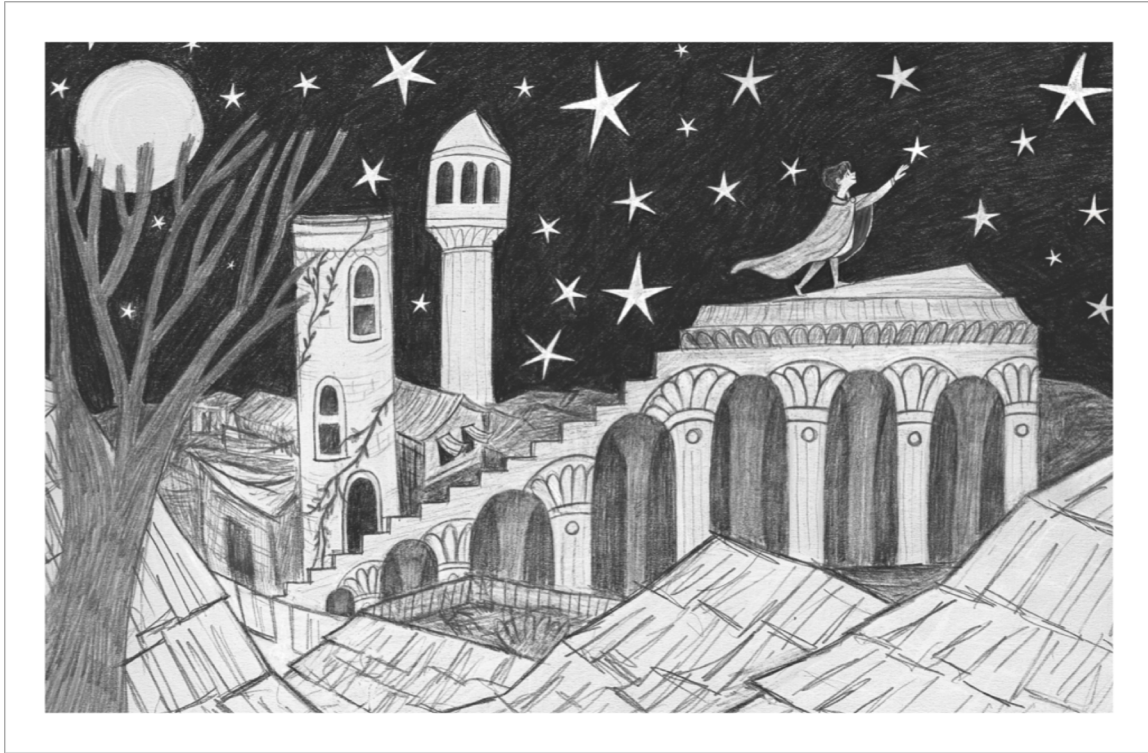
The story was inspired by this work in my first exploration:



Concept sketches for character and costume designs:



Visual/Style explorations (graphite on paper & cut paper collage + digital processing)



Collage scans without digital processing.

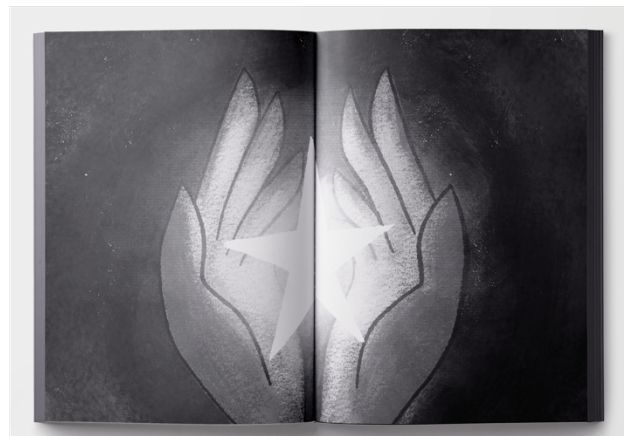
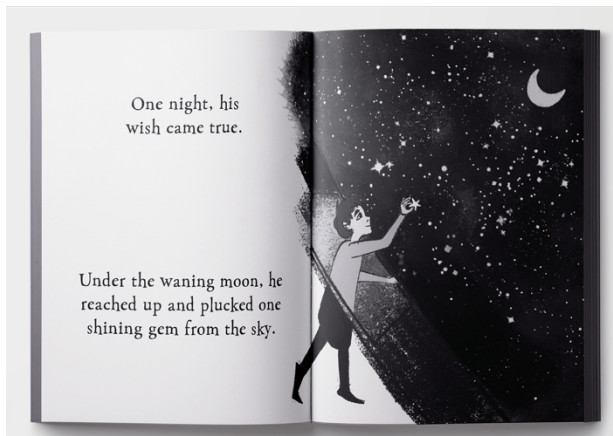
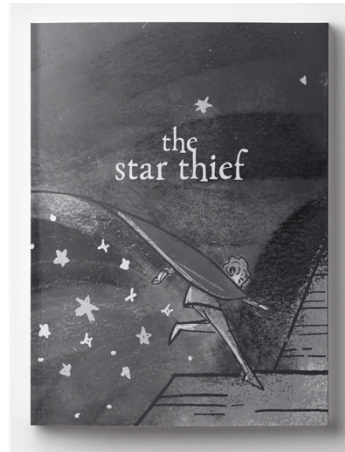


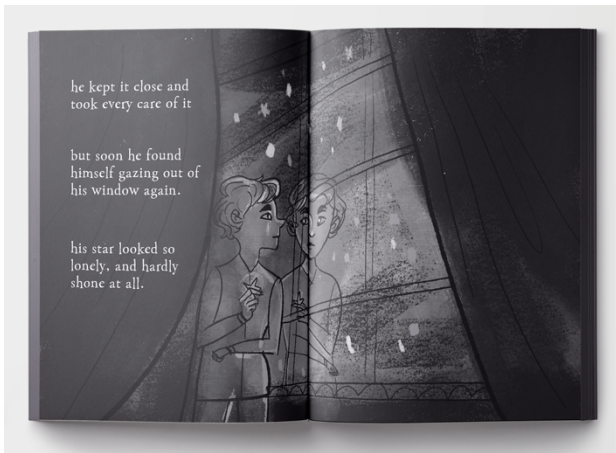
Colour and Emotional
Narrative Explorations

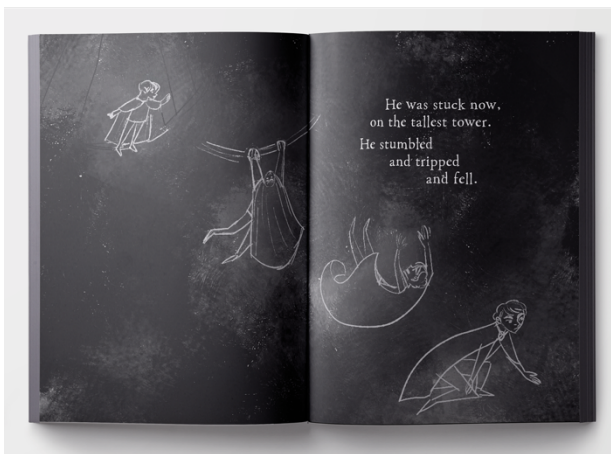
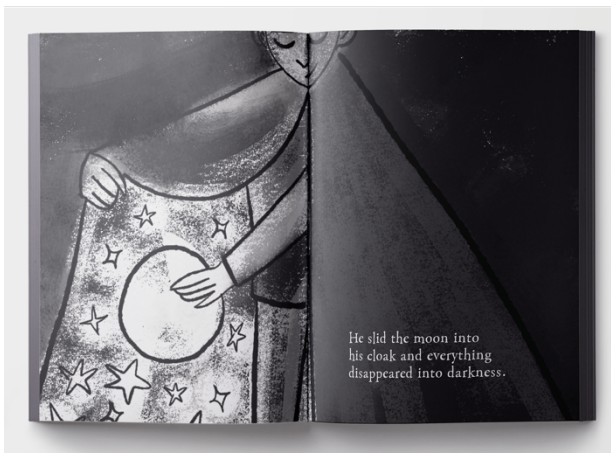
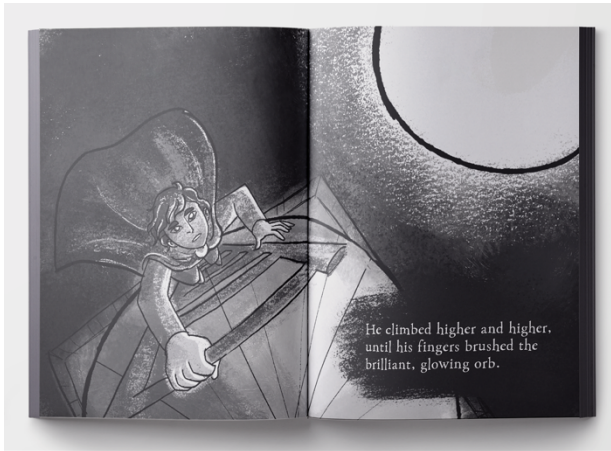


The Star Thief — Conventional Picturebook Narrative

Designing a unified and cohesive visual narrative, using design tools and techniques, focusing on compositional structure and working with visual grammar as a framework.









The Star Thief — Typographic Narrative

Designing the visual narrative with only black/white and simple typographic techniques.

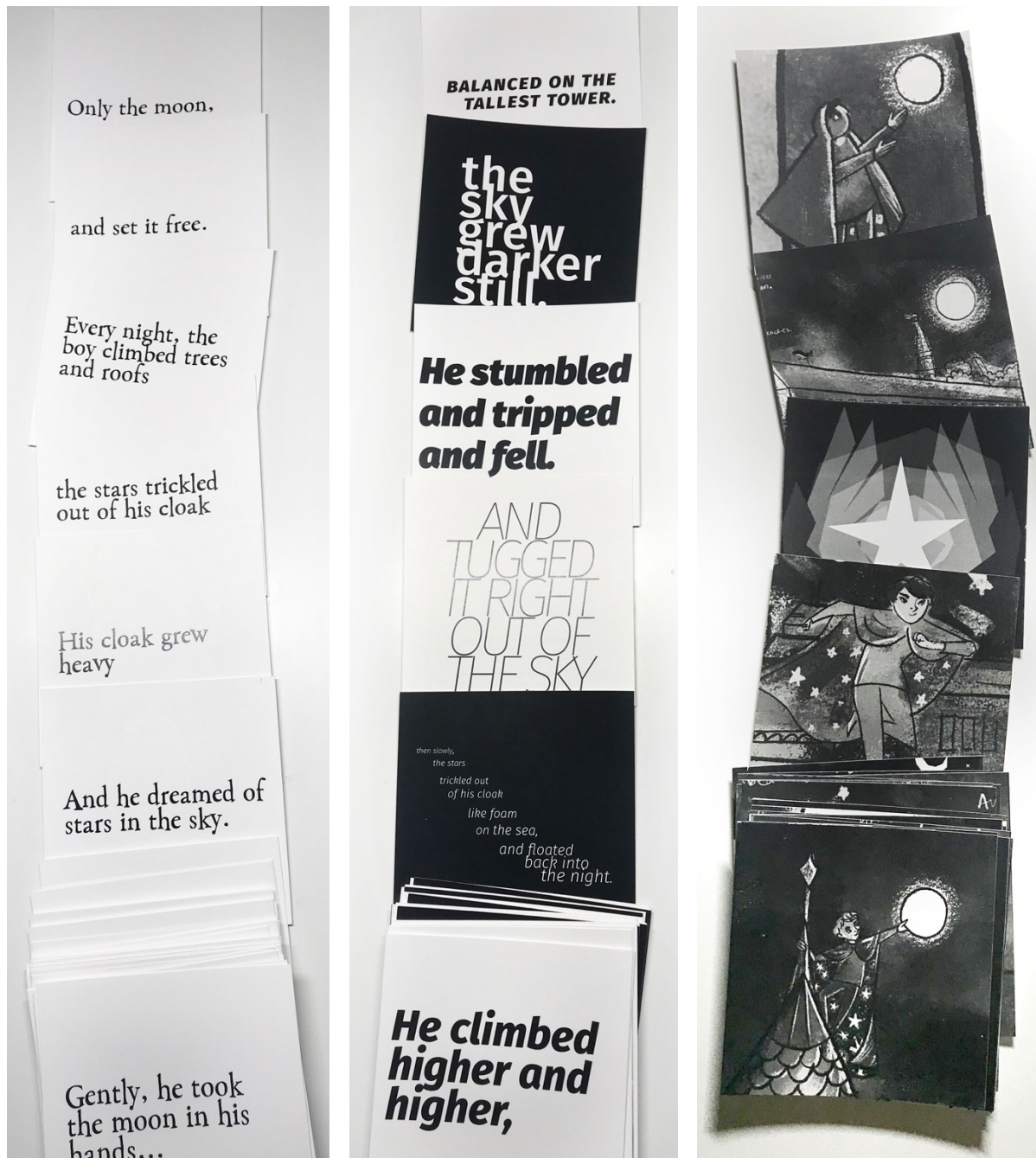






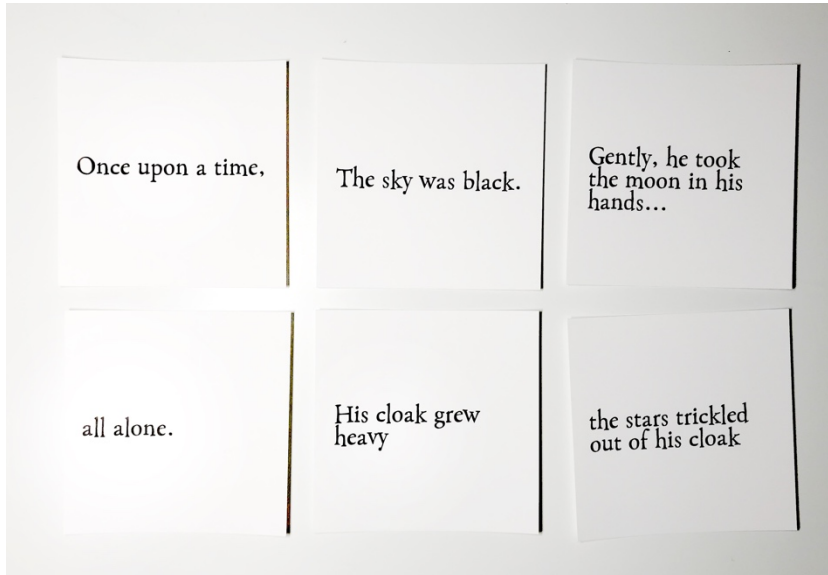
The Star Thief — Non-Sequential Narrative

This narrative is created by either choosing or shuffling the cards into a new sequence. There are three sets of cards, imagery, text, and type as image. Some sample narratives can be seen below, created by combining the text and imagery, or all three sets.



NARRATIVES CREATED THROUGH TEXT ONLY

The textual narrative is deconstructed into short phrases, and recombining these create new sentences and a new narrative.



"Once upon a time, the sky was black. Gently, he took the moon in his hands...all alone. His cloak grew heavy, the stars trickled out of his cloak."



"It was pitch black. Then slowly, the sky grew darker still. Every night, the boy climbed trees and roofs, hanging onto the longest ladder balanced on the tallest tower. All alone."

NARRATIVES CREATED THROUGH TYPE AS IMAGE

(introducing design elements such as contrast, scale, value/colour, which create focal points in the compositions and start to influence the narrative)



“Soon, he had reached for the very last star. And each night he kept it close and took every care of it, balanced on the tallest tower. It was pitch black. And it was too dark to see until his fingers brushed the brilliant, glowing orb.”



“And each night the sky grew darker still. He stumbled and tripped and fell. Hanging onto the longest ladder, he knew what he had to do. His cloak grew heavy.”

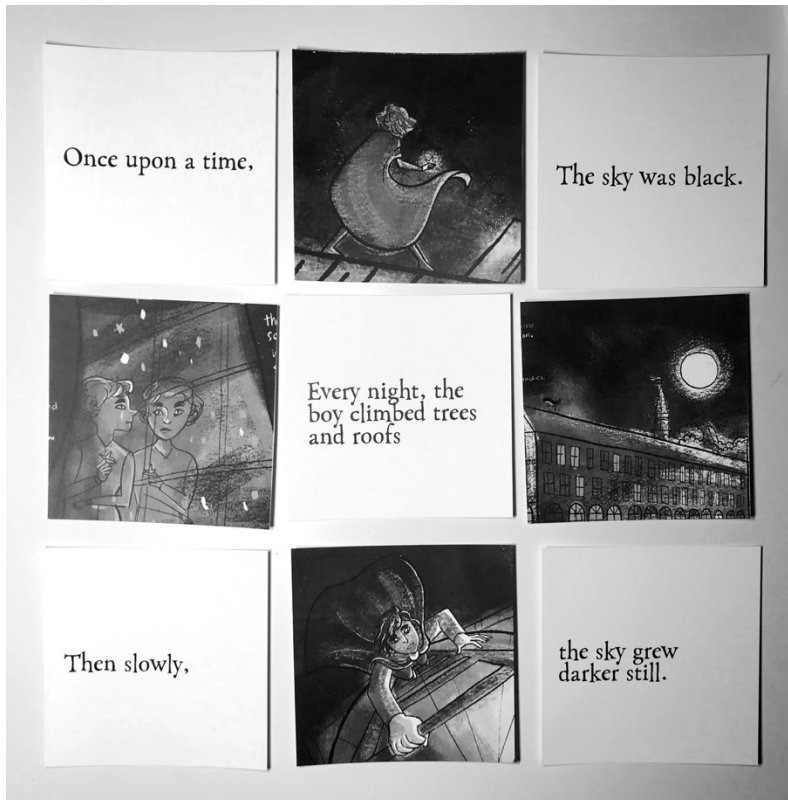
NARRATIVES CREATED THROUGH IMAGES ONLY

Recombining images in new ways, flipping and rotating them to create different meanings through arrangement and position. (e.g. the top right card in images below).



NARRATIVES CREATED THROUGH COMBINING TEXT/TYPOGRAPHY AND IMAGE

The picturebook's narrative is deconstructed and put back together in new sequences, with the reader creating new meanings and narratives either deliberately (by choosing the cards like a puzzle) or unintentionally (by shuffling the cards).



And so it was.



**The
climb
down
was
dizzy-
ing.**

he slid the
moon into
his cloak



**Soon, he had
climbed onto
the roof and
reached for
another little
glittering star.**

THE NIGHT SKY WAS SO
BRIGHT AND HIS ROOM
WAS SO DARK.

***The Star Thief* — Digital Visual Narrative**

Selected desktop and mobile screenshots below, the game can be played [here](#). The user clicks the underlined text or image to reveal more, creating an infinite narrative that arranges and overlays the images and words over a coloured background in different ways. The user can scroll to the top to read the whole story that has been generated by their interactions with the game/narrative. The design of the narrative relies on a randomizing action in the code, which recombines 70 different elements in new ways. This is enough material to have new and different stories for each playthrough, but due to the small size several text or image elements may repeat throughout the story, creating a new layer of meaning and interaction with the narrative.

