

The Children's Book Academy
Presents

**The Little Big Book
of Illustration
Techniques and Terminology**



By Dr. Mira Reisberg
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Hullo, I'm Dr. Mira Reisberg, passionate creative, former kid lit professor, award-winning and best-selling children's book creator with over 600,000 books sold, former children's literary agent, mentor to many now successful authors and illustrators, independent editor and art director, and the Director of the Children's Book Academy. As you can see, over the past 28 years, I've worn just about every hat in the industry and now I'm excited to be combining a lot of that hard-earned knowledge into this little big book of children's book illustration techniques and terminology.

I've created it as an A-Z alphabetarian book of terms that may or may not exist in the dictionary but that definitely do exist in the world of children's book illustrating. All the images in this book are either my own, my former assistant Leda Chung's, or are from public domain sources.

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You can also find out more about me at www.mirareisberg.com
Happy reading!! ☺



Table of Contents

ABSTRACTION	6
AESTHETICS	6
AGENT, ARTIST REP, EDITOR, AND ART DIRECTOR	7
BACK MATTER.....	9
BINDING.....	56
COLLAGE.....	13
~COLOR~	13
• COLOR SCHEME	13
• COOL COLORS	13
• GREYSCALE	14
• HUE	14
• NEUTRAL COLORS	15
• SHADE	15
• TONE.....	15
• VALUE	16
• WARM COLORS	16
CONTRACTS	16
CONTRAST	17
DUMMY	18
EMPHASIS.....	20
ENDSHEETS.....	21
FORM	21
FRONT MATTER.....	21
GRAPHIC NOVELS	24
GUTTER.....	29
ILLUSTRATOR'S NOTE.....	29
LANDSCAPE	29
LAYOUT	30



LINE	31
LINE ART	32
MARGINS	32
MOVEMENT	52
MEDIUM	ERROR! BOOKMARK NOT DEFINED.
NICHE	53
PERSPECTIVE	53
PORTFOLIO	54
POSTCARDS	55
PROMOTION	56
REALISM	62
RHYTHM AND PATTERN	62
SHADOWS	63
SHAPE	64
SKETCH	65
SPACE	65
STYLIZED	66
TEXTURE	66
THUMBNAILS	67
TRACKING SHEET	68
TYPOGRAPHY	68
VALUE	70
VARIETY	70
VIOLATING THE GRID	71
VISUAL PACING	72



WEBSITES.....	73
WORKSHEETS AND TEMPLATES	74
BALANCE (& UNITY) WORKSHEET	74
CHARACTER MAP TEMPLATE.....	75
COLOR WORKSHEET	76
CONTRAST WORKSHEET	77
EMPHASIS WORKSHEET	78
FORM WORKSHEET	79
LINE WORKSHEET	80
MOVEMENT WORKSHEET	82
PERSPECTIVE WORKSHEET.....	83
PATTERN AND RHYTHM WORKSHEET	84
SHAPE WORKSHEET	85
SPACE WORKSHEET	86
TEXTURE WORKSHEET	87
THUMBNAIL TEMPLATE	88
VALUE WORKSHEET	89
VARIETY WORKSHEET	90



Abstraction

Abstraction is the opposite of realism although it something originates with realism. These days you'll find illustrators combine abstract elements like backgrounds with stylized characters for a hip contemporary look.



Aesthetics

Aesthetics describes the sense or feeling we get from looking at art. The word can also be used to describe whether something is aesthetically pleasing or not, which is often based on things like cultural attitudes towards color and form and the cultural zeitgeist (spirit of the times) towards different art forms. For example, borders were really big in the 90's but not so much now. The color white in Anglo-European culture is associated with brides and purity but in Chinese culture white is associated with death.



Agent, Artist Rep, Editor, Art Director, Graphic Designer

An agent or artist's representative helps the illustrator secure work and negotiate contracts and payments. The main



An art director is someone who's in charge of the visual style, whether it be in books, magazines, newspapers, movies, or television.

difference is that agents will usually work with both writers and illustrators, while artist reps pretty much work exclusively with illustrators.

Reps also take

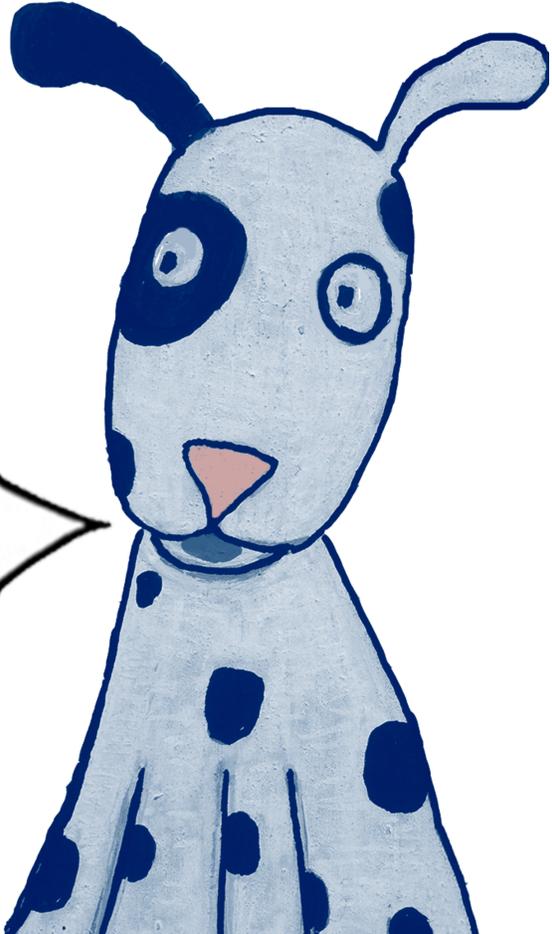
their clients' art into many more marketing areas, such as fabric patterns, calendars, wallpaper, advertising etc. The editor works with the writer but may also select the illustrator and work directly with them as well, although this is usually the art director's job.

With children's books, the art director works with the illustrator to help them make the images stronger, funnier, more consistent, with plenty of room for the story, and much more.



The editor works with the text although sometimes they also select and work with the illustrator as well. Usually the editor will call on the art director to bring in a bunch of sample illustrators that they think might be good for the project and then the editor has the final say.

The graphic designer often also acts as the art director depending on the size of the publishing house. They'll select the font and figure out the text placement and work with marketing and the editor or art director to create the cover. They also make sure that the book is properly set up for the printer and much more. A graphic designer can really make or break your book.



Always treat
your Agent, Artist Rep,
Editor, Art Director,
and/or Graphic Designer
with the greatest respect.
Chances are they are over-
worked, underpaid, and
just doing their
best for you!



Audience

Your audience is who you are making your art for or hope to make your art for. In this case it's children, librarians, teachers, parents, and maybe even a film director or art director who decides to base their film aesthetics (or look) on your art as happened with the art from Carmen Lomas Garza's Family Pictures and the movie Selena where some of the shots are identical to picture in the book or where a film or TV series is made out of your book! Wahoo!

Back Matter

With a 32-page picture book it is usually on page 32 or on some books, especially nonfiction, there might be on or more spreads at the end with additional explanatory text and images. Back matter can include an appendix, a glossary, supporting nonfiction information, the CIP information, dedication, and author/illustrator biographies.

Back matter refers to any nonstory elements at the end of the book.

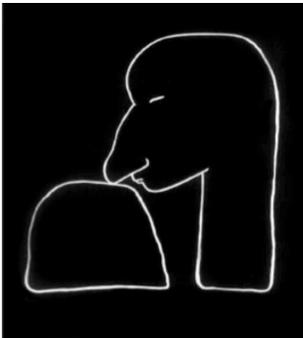


Balance

The term balance refers to how different elements, such as lines, textures, colors, shapes, etc. are arranged. There are 3 types of balance –asymmetrical (uneven) symmetrical (evenly); and radial that is evenly balance on all sides, like a mandala. Balance can be made up of three main factors. Proximity is when the cluttering of elements are close together, even sometimes overlapping. Unity is when all the elements in your artwork look as though they belong together. Repetition is also a great way to balance a piece of art. You can repeat shapes, lines, textures, edges, values, colors, etc.

(See Balance Worksheet at the end).

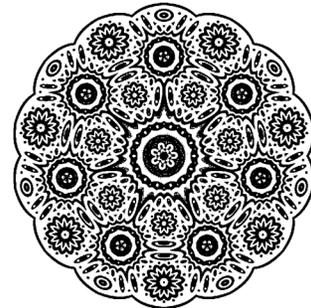
Asymmetrical



Symmetrical



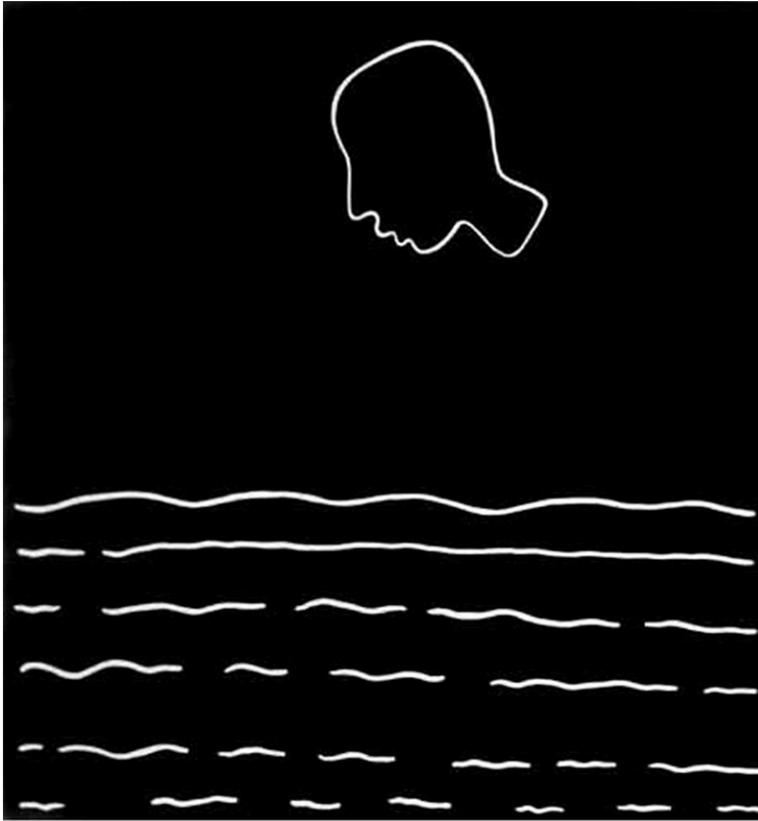
Radial



Binding (See Printing)



Black and White



I love black and white art, especially if it has just one or two accent colors like Ian Falconer does with *Olivia Saves the Circus*. Here are some materials and techniques for working in Black and White: charcoal, ink, greyscale, watercolor, gouache, or acrylic pencil, pen and ink.

All of these materials are great for doing black and white artwork! You need to decide if you're going for a really bold graphic look like the awesome fold-out book *Pandora*, a still graphic but softer like *Olivia Saves the World*, a printmaker look like *Time Warp Trio*, or a cartoon black and white look like many graphic novels have, or a softer greyscale look like Sophie Blackall does in the *Ivy and Bean* chapter book series.

Generally, the more graphic you want your images to be, the more you want to punch up your darks (blacks) and lights (whites). If you are using pencil, I encourage you to not use a

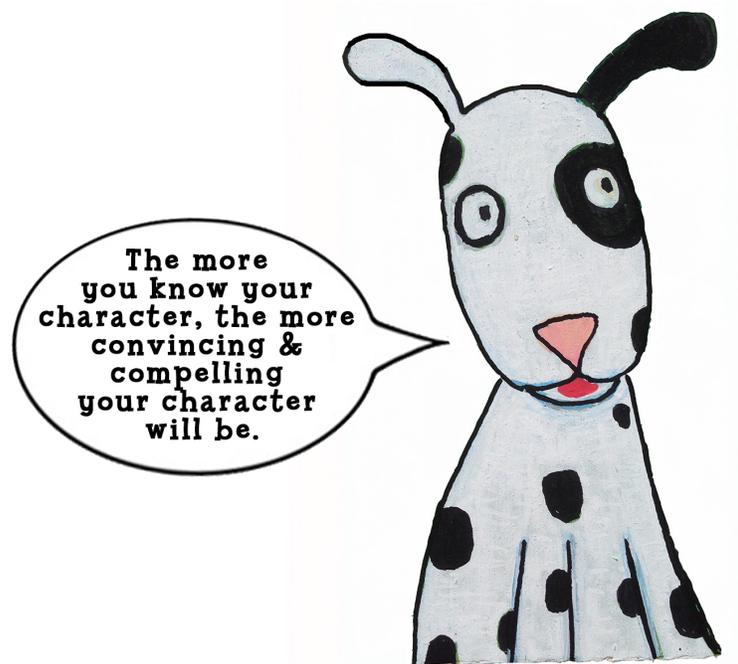


regular lead pencil, but to use a Prismacolor black pencil instead as it will be richer, darker, and more intense looking.

Bleed (See Printing)

Character

How you create characters is critical. To help develop your characters see the **Character Map Template** we have in the back of this book.



CIP – Cataloging in Publication (See Printing)



Collage (See Materials and Techniques)

Color

• *Color Scheme*

This refers to a specific combination of colors that an illustrator might choose, also sometimes referred to as a palette.

These days you might have a muted color scheme (where you've added a commentary color or some black or brown to damp down the

brightness of the color) or it might be a pop color palette such as Lucy Cousins uses her *Maisy* board books with either primary or complimentary colors. Having a limited color palette can create a sophisticated and cohesive look. There are many different color schemes such as those on my Pinterest board.

<https://www.pinterest.com/mirareisberg/color-schemes/> (Also see our Color Worksheet at the end of this book.)



• *Cool Colors*

Some of these colors include: **Blue**, **Green**, and **Violet** (if it has more blue than red). When you have all cool colors together or all warm colors together it's called an analogous palette.



• *Greyscale*

This is when your illustrations are blended using black and white to make different shades of grey.



• *Hue*

Hue refers to how we classify or categorize a color, otherwise known as the pure spectrum colors or “color names”, i.e. yellow, green, blue, red, etc. For example, phthalo blue might be referred to as phthalo blue/green hue versus phthalo blue/red hue meaning the first one has more green while the latter has more red.



• **Neutral Colors**

Neutral colors are **black**, **tan**, **gold**, **brown**, **grey**, and **white**. The point of neutral colors is to either provide focus on what's important, like main character(s), which have brighter colors or to provide a more serious, subtle, or somber mood.



• **Shades**

Shades are the opposites of tints (where you add white to make it lighter). Shades are the dark values of color usually created by mixing black into a color.

• **Tint**

These are the light values of a color. Tints are created by mixing a color with different amounts of white, making it lighter and more opaque.

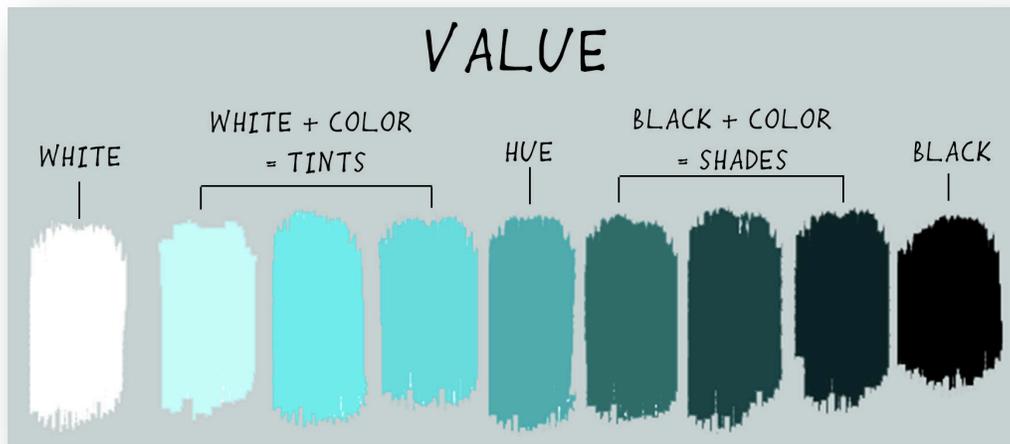
• **Tone**

A tone is achieved when a both black and white are added to a color, or more simply, grey.



• *Value*

Value is created by mixing shades, tints, and tones. Value is used to create volume.



• *Warm Colors*

These colors include: **Red**, **Yellow**, and **Orange**.

When working with colors, think about the emotional resonance you want that spread to have, and then choose your colors accordingly.

Contracts

A contract is a complicated document that is usually written in favor of whoever writes it. It spells out who does what and what the expectations are including whether it's a royalty agreement with or without an advance on royalties. For illustrators, they have an advance paid $\frac{1}{2}$ on signing and rest on completion or



sometimes on thirds, which is then paid back from royalties before the royalties start coming in.

If it's not a royalty agreement then it's usually a WFH or Work For Hire, where you get paid a flat fee. This is usually common with Educational and Self Publishing work. Negotiating contracts is challenging, which is where a good agent is really helpful. If you don't have an agent the Writers Guild has a good service that can be very helpful:

<http://www.wga.org/agency/agencylist.aspx>

Contrast

Contrast adds interest, excitement, and drama through variety. It makes this possible by showing opposites or differences. **(See our Contrast Worksheet at the end of this book.)**



Critique Groups

One of the most powerful things that you can do as an illustrator is to join a critique group. It's REALLY hard to see your work objectively or break through blockages. That's why we set up critique groups in all our interactive courses. But you can also join illustration critique groups through SCBWI (the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators) which we'll be talking about later.

Digital Illustration (See Materials and Techniques)

Drawing

As an illustrator, it's essential to draw every day. I encourage you to get ear buds or a headset so you can talk while you draw! There are lots of great drawing books.

- *Drawing is Magic: Discovering Yourself in a Sketchbook*, by John Hendrix
- *Illustration School: Let's Draw Cute Animals*, Sachiko Umoto
- *Illustration School: Let's Draw Happy People*, Sachiko Umoto
- *How to Draw What You See*, Rudy De Reyna
- *Drawing on the Right Side of the Brain*, Betty Edwards



- *Foundations in Comic Book Art: SCAD Creative Essentials (Fundamentals and Techniques for Sequential Artists)*, John Paul Lowe
- *How to Draw Cool Stuff: A Drawing Guide for Teachers and Students*, Catherine V. Holmes
- *20 Ways to Draw a Cat and 44 Other Awesome Animals: A Sketchbook for Artists, Designers, and Doodlers*, Julia Kuo
- *Paint Lab: 52 Exercises Inspired by Artists, Materials, Times, Place, and Method*, Deborah Forman
- *Fundamentals of Drawing*, Barrington Barber
- *What It Is (The Formless Thing Which Gives Things Form)*, Lynda Barry
- *Making Comics: Story Telling Secrets of Comics, Manga, and Graphic Novels*, Scott McCloud
- *Freehand: Sketching Tips and Tricks Drawn From Art*, Helen Birch
- *Drawing: For the Artistically Undiscovered*, Quentin Blake

Dummy



This is not supposed to be a final draft, but simply a good idea of your entire book.

Your dummy is what you submit to an editor if you are illustrating your own story and what you

create and send after you've been hired to illustrate a book. It's a black and white mock-up of your book with 2 color samples either included separately or inserted in the dummy. Some people say that it can be pretty rough while others want it to be



as finished as you can make it in black and white while still showing that you are open to the inevitable changes. It depends on the art director or editor as well as your level of experience and reputation.

Whichever way you go, you want at least 3 or 4 finished-looking spreads so that the editor or art director knows what you're proposing. Include as much of the book as possible including the cover, 1/2 title, title...etc. and even endsheets if you are doing them, to show you know what you're doing. We have a sweet course on creating Dummies right here:

www.childrensbookacademy.com/Creating-Dummies.html

(Watch for the Layouts section, which shows what the pages in your dummy will include and also see out Dummy Info Graphic at the end of this book.)

Emphasis

Emphasis calls attention to important areas of a design by creating a focal area or center of interest. This can be done through color, contrast, or diagonals pointing at something. **(See our Emphasis Worksheet at the end of this book.)**



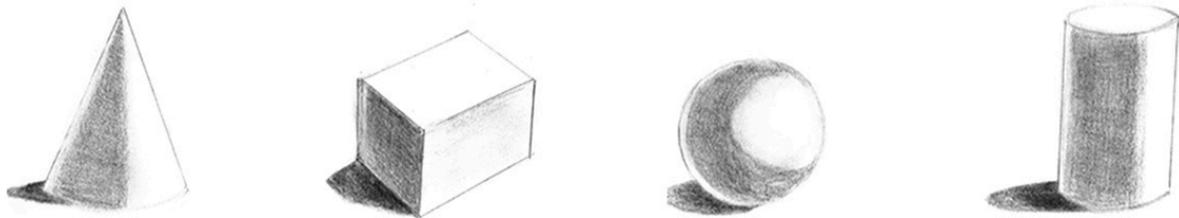
Endsheets (See Printing)

Figure/Ground

Figure/Ground references whether the figure stands out from the background and surroundings. Good figure/ground is when you have good contrast through color (warm colors go forward, cool colors recede), clarity and fuzziness (closer objects are clearer), and even shape. With a really busy composition where everything is a similar intensity in some way or another it can be hard to know where to focus and what's important (the figure/character).

Form

Form describes a shape that has become 3-dimensional (3D). Forms are not flat like shapes. Instead they possess depth, which shows the thickness of the object. **(See Form Worksheet in the back of the book.)**



Front Matter

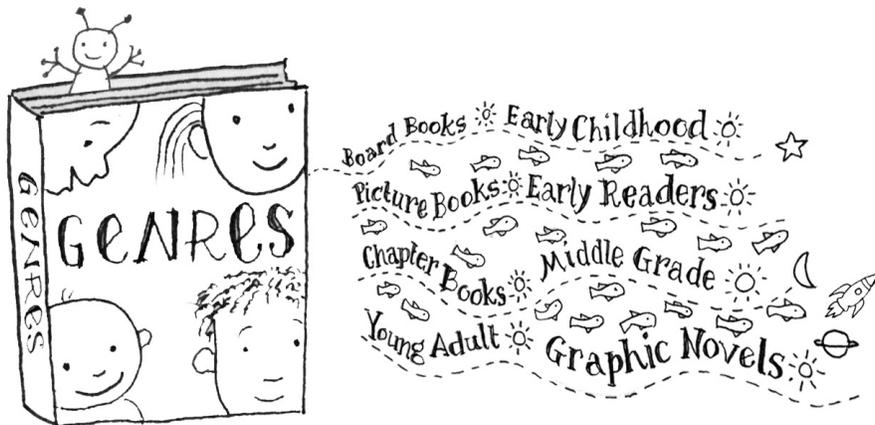
If a 32-page picture book can be paced at 14 double spreads, then you have room for front matter, which includes a 1/2 title (page #1) and a 2-page double spread full title (page #2 and #3).



The full title might have dedication, CIP, acknowledgements, and sometimes material and font information. Front matter can be an elegant way to ease the reader into the story.

Genres

There are several genres or ages for children's books that are ideal for illustrators.



• **Board Books**

Board Books are babies' first books. They are generally 6-10 pages long and made from either sturdy cardboard, non toxic plasticized materials like Tyvek, or sometimes cloth. This is because they have to be sturdy or flexible enough for babies to chew on them, drop them, and commit all sorts of other loving book abuse.

Because babies' eyes are just beginning to comprehend shapes, board books are invariably very simple, graphic, and with minimal text. Lucy Cousin's *Maisy* board books are a great example in bold, mostly primary colors with black outlines –



making it very easy to distinguish the shapes. *One Fish, Two Fish, Three, Four, Five Fish* (Dr. Seuss Nursery Collection) by Theodor Geisel (Dr. Seuss) is another excellent example of a board book.

• **Novelty Books**

Novelty books are books that kids interact with. They might include cut outs for children to put their fingers in to complete the picture, or fur or metallic foil attached that relate to the story, or sounds or smells that also relate to the story and provide some additional pizzazz. *Pat the Bunny* by Dorothy Kunhardt is a delightful novelty book where young children love touching the faux bunny fur, sandpaper for dad's scratchy beard, and assorted other textures and exploratory delights. The pull out tabs and pop-up format of books such as Robert Crowther's *Most Amazing Hide-and-Seek Alphabet Book*, or the different levels of board and holes for fingers to explore in Eric Carle's *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* make for an interactive, educational, and engaging story-time reading.

• **Early Childhood Books**

Early Childhood Books are picture books for younger readers (3-6) and usually have simple themes and imagery on sturdier paper. Books such as *Goodnight Moon* by Margaret Wise Brown, the *Thomas the Tank Engine* series originated by Rev. W. Awdry and later authored and illustrated by others after Awdry died, the majority of the books illustrated and/or authored by Ashley Wolff such as the delightful *Ms. Bindergarten* series for pre-



school and kindergarten children, *Baby Rattlesnake* by Lynn Moroney and illustrated by yours truly (a fun Native American teaching tale about throwing tantrums to get something you're not ready for), and Maya Gonzalez's *My Colors, My World* (a beautiful bilingual story about Maya's relationship to the desert), all fit this description with 600 words or less, simple accessible language, and simple or bold images. These books often feature repetition as young children are learning basic language skills.

• **Picture Books**

Traditional picture books are generally 24 or 32 pages long; sometimes they are 40 or 48 pages, or longer, but this is rare because of the additional expense and generally reserved for big volume-selling authors and/or artists. If you are a new author, I advise you to stick to the traditional 32-page (or 24 page) format to show that you know what you are doing. This type of picture book is usually for readers ages 4-8, although some picture books are also appropriate for middle school and high school students.

These days picture books are skewing younger with places like Disney/Hyperion maxing out at around age 6 but there's still a range with other publishers up to 7 or sometimes 8 or older, especially for nonfiction. Picture books for older readers include books such as, *I See the Rhythm* by Toyomi Igus, illustrated by Michelle Woods (a book about African American music and history told through poetry and exceptional art); *Honoring Our*



Ancestors edited by Harriet Rohmer and illustrated by 14 artists, including myself (an anthology of 14 diverse artists' stories and art about their ancestral histories); Tony Kushner's *Brundibar* illustrated by Maurice Sendak (an adaptation of a play performed in the Terezin Nazi concentration camp), and the brilliant *Voices in the Park* by Anthony Browne, which can be read at different levels, which is a book about class and gender as told from the points of view of each person that interacts in a specific situation in an English park. The "people" are anthropomorphized gorillas, which somehow makes them more human, and the art includes lots of insider art-world references. These books tend to operate on multiple levels so that they can be used with a wider age group. To find out more about picture books for older readers visit the following URL on the Cooperative Children's Book Center's website:

<http://ccbc.education.wisc.edu/books/detailListBooks.asp?idBookLists=259>

Wordless or nearly wordless picture books, while being a harder sell tend to win awards and deservedly so with books like Marla Frazee's *The Farmer and the Clown* and Aaron Becker's *Journey*.

• ***Early Readers***

Early readers use very limited language and super simple stories or plots to teach children how to read. Generally they are 500-



1500 words long and have color covers and color or black and white interiors and geared towards 5-8 year olds. Mo Willems has a wonderful series of Early Readers with really charming fun minimal illustrations.

• ***Chapter Books***

Chapter books are really exciting because it's when children really start reading on their own. Generally, they are for kids ages 6-9 and between 1,500-9,000 words, although they can be longer or shorter. Because chapter books tend to be on the skinny size and usually feature high interest (mysteries or humor) content along with lots of images, they are often created in a series, which is great for both writers and illustrators. Some of my favorite chapter books include the *Ivy and Bean* series, *Diary of a Wimpy Kid*, and *Kung Pow Chicken* books. Most chapter books have color covers and black and white interiors but publishers, like Scholastic's chapter book imprint Branches, also have color interiors. (See Black and White techniques in the Materials and Techniques section)

• ***Middle Grade Novels***

Middle Grade Novels are the next age level up for 8-12 year olds at 20-60,000 words. They tend to deal with deeper, darker, or more edgy stuff, fantasy, or great humor. Illustrated middle grades like the *Big Nate* books, Brian Selznik's *Wonderstruck* and Eugene Yelchin's *Breaking Stalin's Nose* are great examples of



these, all with color covers and black and white interior illustrations. Illustrated middle grades are really hot right now.

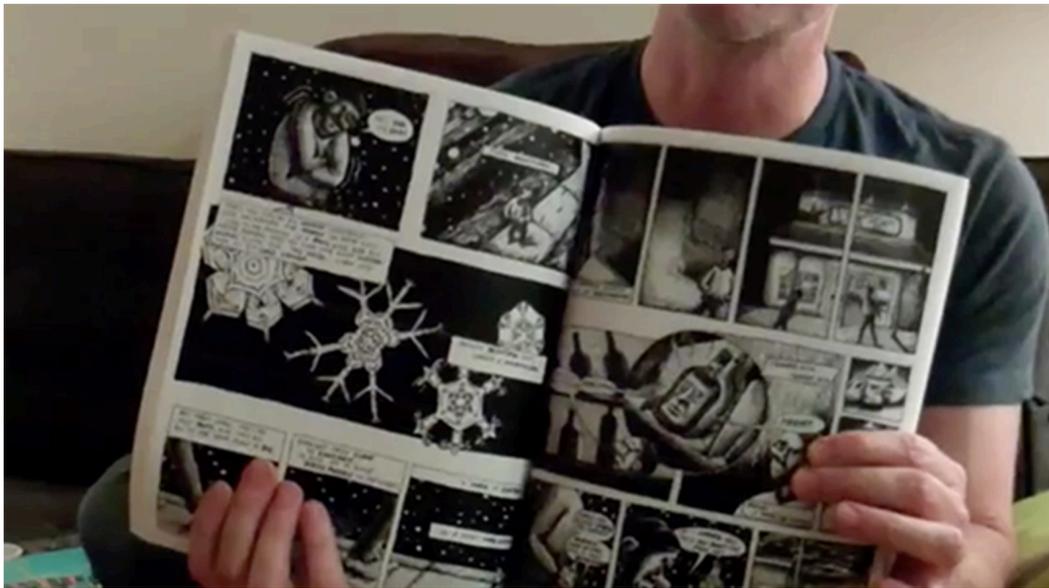
• *Young Adult*

Most young adult books (apart from Graphic Novels) are not illustrated. However art directors and editors are always looking for illustrators who can do Middle Grade and YA covers. It can be a nice way to get a foot in the door. For this reason, I really encourage students to create some covers for their portfolios. It can be really fun to take an existing portfolio piece and see how you can transform it into a cover (don't forget to add your own name as the author) or do a re-imagining of a well-known middle grade or YA book.

• *Graphic Novels*

Graphic novels are hot in way that they never have been before. Especially for chapter books, middle grade, and YA. They are similar to a comic book style, but different in that they are longer and more complex as befits the age group the graphic novel is intended for. Graphic novels are usually black and white with color covers although some are full color.





From an interview with Hugh D'Andrade)

The main thing to know about graphic novels is that they are image-driven with a limited amount of text to tell the story. Graphic novels feature strong line art, pattern and texture although they sometimes feature tonal greyscale or color. One of the distinguishing elements of a graphic novel is the way the pictorial plane (AKA page) is broken up into a series of shapes that contain the art, and that the art sometimes breaks out of.

(See Violating the Grid and also Black and White techniques in the Materials and Techniques section.)



Gutter



I like to say, "in life as in publishing—stay away from the gutter"!

The gutter is the very inside margins of a book where the 2 facing pages join and where the center binding happens. You need to leave at least $\frac{1}{2}$ an inch on either side of the gutter for art where nothing important like a face or hands or the tip of a tail might fall

because it will either get lost or distorted. If you can, leave at least 1" from the gutter for text. **(Also see Margins)**

Illustrator's Note

This is a note that the author writes to note that something that clarifies the story visually needs to be shown. It usually looks like this: **[Illustrator Note: Show Jimmy jumping over the fence.]**

Landscape

A landscape image is wider than it is tall. The opposite of a landscape image is "portrait", which is

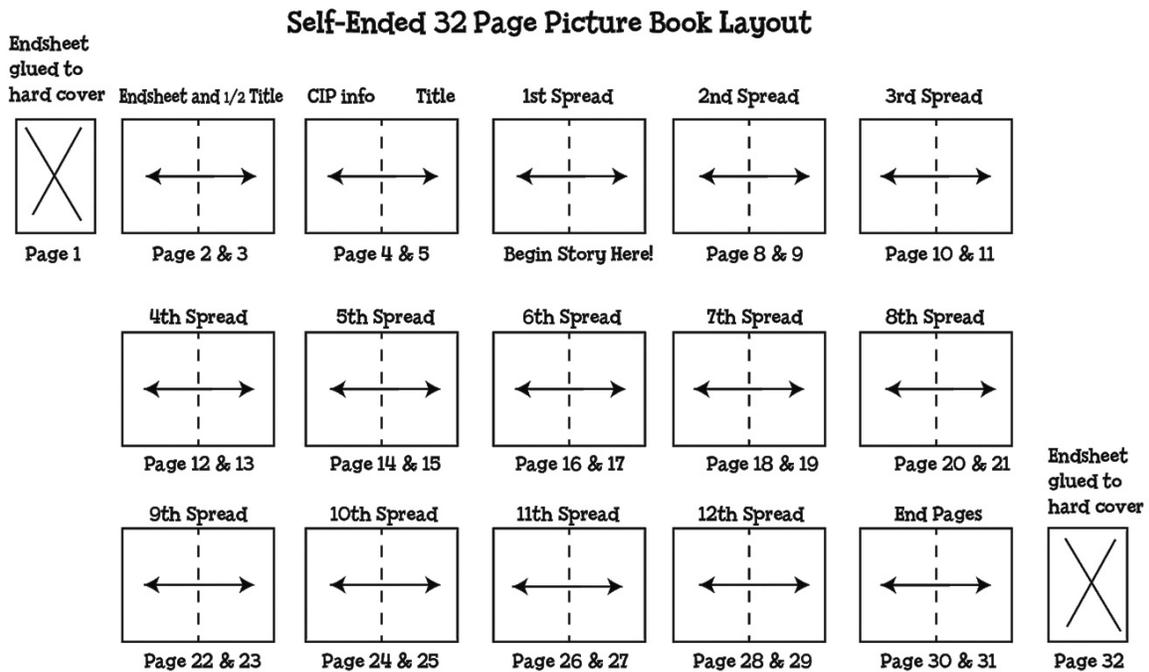


vertical. Landscape can also refer to a rural setting or you can have an urban landscape showing the environment or setting.



Layout

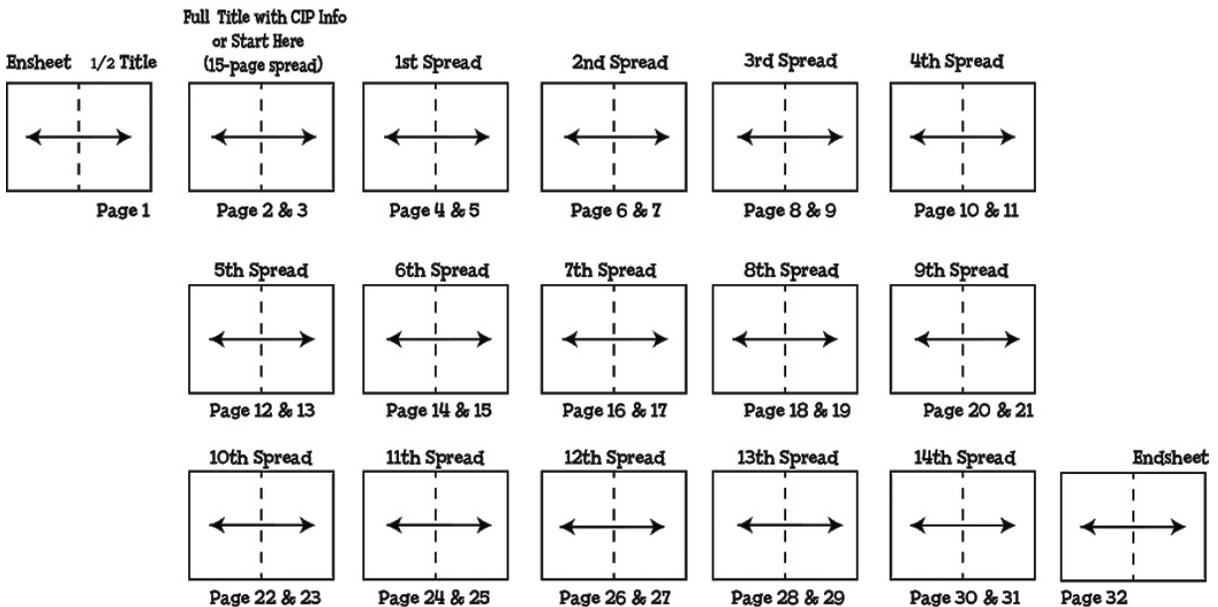
A standard picture book layout usually consists of 32 pages, which depending on if you are using self-ended pages that have printed endsheets or colored paper endsheets gives you 12 or 14 spreads (or 24 or 27 pages of text and art)



With **Self-Ended Pages** you have 24 pages (or 12 spreads) to use for your actual story.



Colored Ends 32-Page Picture Book Layout



With **Color Ends Pages**, which have plain colored endsheets, you could have either 30 pages (15 spreads) or 28 pages (or 14 spreads) to use for your actual story depending on whether you start your story on pages 4 & 5, or if you use those pages for an elegant full-title.

Line

A line is what defines the edge of a form. There are several different types of lines: horizontal, vertical, diagonal, curves, and angular. If you use line to outline, having a quirky line quality that shows the human hand with thicks and thins is much more appealing than the perfect mechanical line unless that's the intent. **(See our Line Worksheet at the back.)**



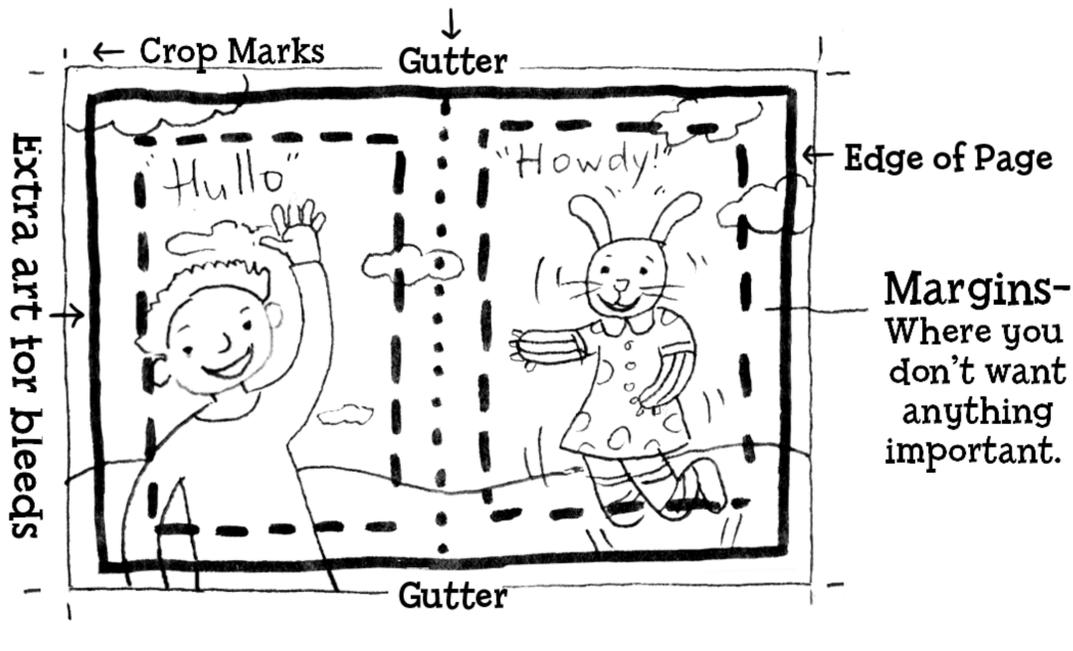
Line Art

Line Art refers to art that has no grey tones in it. Most of the black and white art in this book was made with line art.



Margins

Margins are the areas where you **don't** want to put text or important things like faces, hands, feet, etc. You should have invisible $\frac{3}{4}$ " to 1" margins around the edges of the pages for you to make it easier for the printer when they trim the book and to make it more elegant. The same goes for margins from the gutter with $\frac{3}{4}$ " to 1" and $\frac{1}{2}$ " for important images.



Materials and Techniques

Illustrators use **MANY** different kinds of materials. Here are some of the more common ones and a few lesser-known ones.

• *Acrylics*

Acrylics are a water-based paint that dries waterproof. You can get a ton of effects with them by mixing them with different mediums. You can layer them in thin transparent glazes to get translucent oil paint or transparent watercolor effects using acrylic glazing medium or matte, gloss or gel medium. They come in different weights e.g., fluid acrylics, which are very high pigment liquid paints that are great to use for layering or watercolor effects. Regular body and heavy body acrylics are great for opacity, especially if you make the colors tints by adding white. They are also great for creating physical texture, especially if you use gel medium or gesso.



• *Acrylic Markers*

In more recent years, smart manufacturers have come up with acrylic markers, which are a joy to use. My personal favorites are Uni Posca, Derwent Graphik, and Molotow acrylic pens or markers. They are usually matte finish and I like to use them over Folk Art, matte acrylic paint or regular acrylics. In my honest opinion, if you can afford them, **Golden Paints** are the highest quality paints, mediums, and ground around. They are wonderful for nay kind of drawing, line art, and for making patterns or drawing in textures. You need to shake them well before use and then sometimes press down on the point/nib to release the paint. While I mostly use them for patterns, they can also be used for blending.

• *Acrylic Grounds*

Acrylic grounds are materials used to prepare a painting or pastel surface. They can provide wonderful effects like Golden's Absorbent Ground that when painted on a substrate or surface (paper or wood) it gives watercolor effects, except that once dried, the color is permanent and can also be painted over if desired. Here's a link to learn much more about acrylic grounds, <http://www.goldenpaints.com/>



• *Brushes*



The kind of brush you use affects how your painting looks.

A coarse bristle brush will give a more coarse textured effect that can be really cool and contemporary looking. A soft brush will give much smoother brush stroke and is ideal for watercolor effects. A

soft pointy brush is great for outlining or getting into smaller areas. Sable brushes used to be the best soft brushes available, but are no longer available in the US because they come from an endangered animal.

• *Charcoal*

There are basically two types of charcoal—**vine** and **compressed charcoal**. **Vine** is great for sketching because it's so easy to erase. Because of this, it's usually a dark grey rather than dark black. **Compressed charcoal** on the other hand is really black and really, really hard to erase. It's fabulous for smudging and using softly or with more pressure to create tonal effects. To create greyscale tonal effects, use a tortillion (or blending stump). Tony DiTerlizzi's award winning *Spider and the Fly* uses white charcoal on black paper. It's quite wonderful!



• Collage



A collage is an art piece made from different kinds of paper assembled together. Illustrators like Eric Carle (*The Very Hungry Caterpillar*) and Leo Lionni (*Frederick*) are famous for their collages, making their own patterned and textured papers, cutting them up and reassembling them to create their own characters and backgrounds and settings. While the possibilities are endless on what you can use when making a collage piece, there are three main ways to create them: cut paper collage, photomontage, and texture collage.

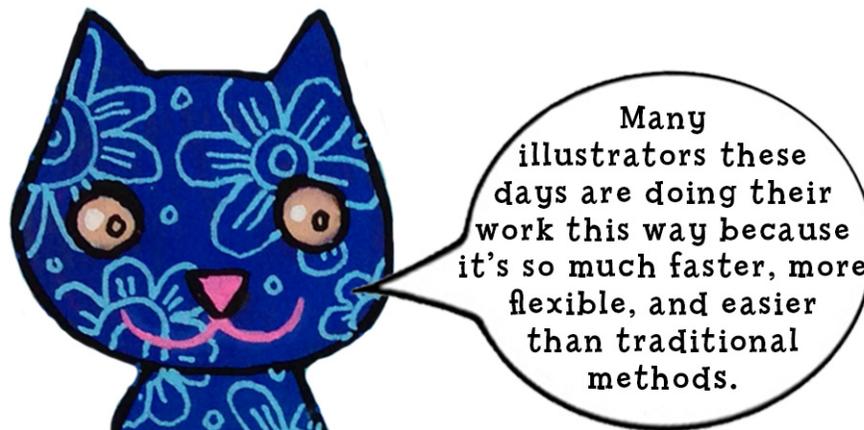
Cut paper collages are just that, cut pieces of paper that are shaped into one piece of artwork. The photomontage technique is when photographic images are combined to create art. Texture collage is when textures such as fabric, string, wire, sticks, etc. are incorporated in your art. These days many illustrators like Lauren Child combine all of these types of collage plus traditional painting techniques like watercolor or acrylics to make what is known as mixed media art, either by hand or on the computer. This can also include handmade stamps (fun and easy to do), rubbings from things, layers of tissue paper, oil pastels, you name it! (See Stamps)



• *Digital Illustration*

The key to great digital illustration is to not have it look too digital unless that is the specific intent. A lot of board books like Jannie Ho's work looks like they were created in Adobe Illustrator, which is fine because board books need bold and easy to distinguish shapes, many of which are also outlined.

There are 3 main programs that illustrators use: **Adobe Illustrator**, **Adobe Photoshop**, and **Corel Painter**. As mentioned earlier, **Adobe Illustrator** is great for bold graphics, hard edge shapes, patterns, and other things. One of the things that's great about Illustrator is that it's a Vector program, which means it uses a system that allows you to enlarge your Adobe Illustrator image as much as you like without any image loss. It's also easy to change the thickness of your line work in seconds or trace images into vectors that you can then manipulate. If you're interested, we have a great Adobe Illustrator course right here www.childrensbookacademy.com/Illustrating-with-Adobe-Illustrator.html.



Adobe Photoshop is kind of the gold standard of illustration programs. These days, the vast majority of illustrators use Photoshop in some capacity or another. But when using Photoshop, it's important to not have it look too digital or Photoshopped. To avoid having a Photoshopy look, hand draw any line work and then you can bring it into Photoshop. This will make your line work more interesting and less digital. Then add color in Photoshop using layers and or bring in wonderful textures and patterns that you've either created yourself or that you're sure are copyright and royalty free. Also be really mindful of the fuzzy business. It's easy to move an arm up, down, over, make it bigger, or smaller, tilt the head, lower the eyes, or undo it all without affecting what else is going on in the image. It's amazing. We have an awesome Photoshop course right here www.childrensbookacademy.com/Fun-with-Photoshop-for-Kids-Book-Creatives.html

The third program **Corel Painter** is fantastic for creating art



Corel[®]
painter 11[™]

that's virtually indistinguishable from traditional techniques like oil paints, pastels, acrylics, scratchboard—you name it. I played around with it years ago and wish that I had stuck



with it past the initial learning curve. At some point we'll have a course in it when we find the right teacher. To purchase Corel Painter go here

<http://www.painterartist.com/us/product/paint-program/>

And while Photoshop and Illustrator can be purchased in earlier versions, currently and forthcoming versions all use Adobe's Creative Cloud subscription where you pay approximately \$20 per month here, <http://www.adobe.com/creativecloud.html>

• ***Erasers***

Erasers come in all shapes and sizes and are really a personal preference thing. Electric erasers are awesome if you do a lot of drawing. Kneaded or kneadable erasers are great for molding into pointy shapes for small areas or for just pressing into charcoal or soft pencil areas to create subtractive or tonal effects such as highlights. Personally, I also like pink pearl and white erasers.

• ***Gesso***

Gesso is a chalky ground used to prepare wood, canvas, or paper surfaces for paint although matte medium works just as well in my experience. Gesso is primarily used in white, although it does come in different colors. If you're painting on heavy paper or wood with acrylics that have gotten thick in an area that you want to paint over, you can lightly sand it down and prime with gesso to repaint it.



• *Gouache*

Gouache is a water-based paint that is an opaque watercolor with a creamy finish. It can be watered down to a watercolor consistency with a slightly more saturated finish. Many of



However,
if you use
gouache thickly
it can crack,
so be
careful!

Ashley Wolff's wonderful books, like *Baby Bear Sees Blue*, were created this way. Alternatively it can be used at a thicker consistency for a more creamy opaque look (especially when mixed with white).

• *Graphite*

Most pencils are made with graphite, which is made from carbon. In pencil form it varies from soft B's, which get blacker and smudgier as the numbers increase from 2B to 12B. Hard graphite pencils get lighter and harder beginning with 2H and are much easier to erase because of the lightness. However, they are much more brittle and easier to break as the H number increases. Graphite also comes in woodless pencils, sticks, and powder.



• *Ink*

Personally, I prefer watercolors or thinned acrylics for transparent effects as you can get more subtle effects with them—but others might disagree. However, I love black inks for

Inks are intense transparent colors, but tend to fade fast so keep them away from the light.



hand lettering, outlining, or doing black line drawings. I prefer intense waterproof black ink like Speedball's Super Black Ink.

• *Light Boxes*

Many illustrators use a light box to trace and transfer their final sketches onto paper for their final color illustration. I've heard good things about Huion Light Pads.

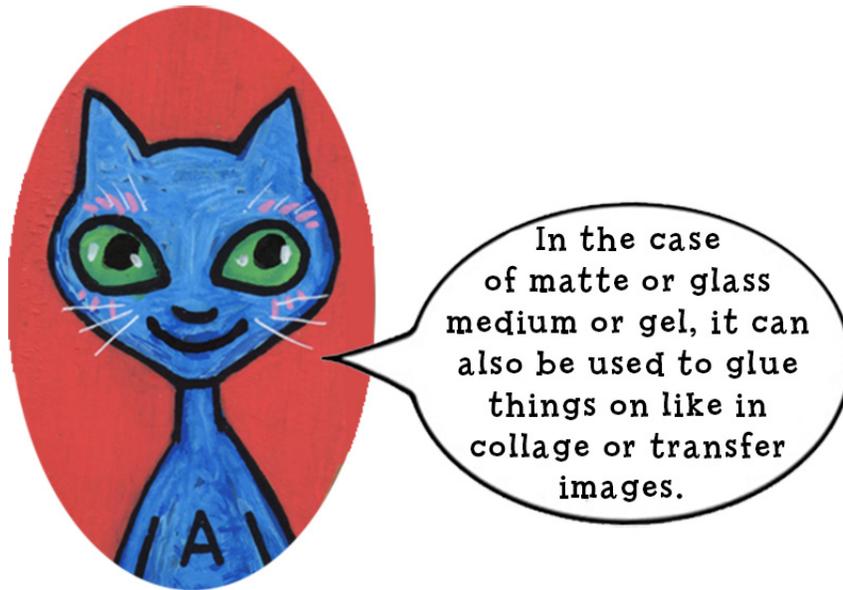
• *Markers*

Apart from acrylic markers, I'm not a huge fan of markers. The colors are fugitive (meaning that they fade and disappear), they are stinky, you tend to see the edges of the markers in larger areas, and it's harder to get subtler colors, but that's just my personal bias.



• *Medium*

A medium refers to the materials that are used in your art, i.e. oil paints, acrylics, charcoal, watercolor, colored pencils etc. Medium can also refer to an additive to either acrylic or oil paints that does things like make the paint dry faster or slower, be more transparent, flow differently, etc.



• *Oil Paints*

Oil paints can be magical and dreamy or super realist or all sorts of things, but they are rarely used for children's book illustration because they take so long to dry and are very unforgiving for making the inevitable changes. However there are tons of other resources online for learning about oil paints, especially on YouTube.



• Paper



My favorite brands are River BFK, Arches, & Fabriano.

There are many, many kinds of paper. So I'm mostly going to focus on hot press, cold press and favorite papers. Hot press is smooth and well suited for black ink line work or smooth acrylic or gouache painting. With watercolor,

you generally want something with a little "tooth" or texture to absorb the water. Somewhere between hot press and cold press is "cover" like "Arches Cover", which makes a lovely compromise. Paper weights vary from 90lb up to 400lb. 90lb will go through a Xerox copier and most printers, but can't handle much abuse. You can try colored pencil or not too watery gouache but it probably can't handle the weight of acrylics and will curl or buckle. If you want to use a lighter weight paper to use on a light table or light pad, 140lb is a good compromise. The heavier the paper the more abuse and reworking it can take, but the harder it is to see through. If you use a lighter paper with watercolor, you'll need to stretch it. (Just Google Stretching watercolor paper for directions.) Also really heavy paper, which gets stiffer as it gets heavier, can be hard to wrap around the laser scanner that's used to reproduce the art for printing.



• *Pastels & Crayons*

There are 3 kinds of pastels: **oil-based pastels**, **chalk pastels**, and **water-based pastels or crayons**.

Oil-Based Pastels

Oil-Based Pastels are really creamy and great for blending. You can get beautiful effects with oil pastels like Keith Baker in his books like *Hide and Snake*. Keith illustrates with intense pastel colors on black paper. I'm pretty sure they're oil pastels but they could be chalk pastels. Use the tortillon or blending stump to do fine work by just putting some of the pastel on the pointy tip. The major down side of oil pastels is that they take a while to dry and are not very forgiving, but you sure can get beautiful effects with them. These tend to be more expensive, with the insanely creamy Sennelier pastels being super expensive. Rembrandt oil pastels also come highly recommended. It can also be fun to use oil pastels on top of acrylic or oil paintings.



Chalk Pastels

Chalk Pastels can also give dreamy effects but are much more toxic than oil pastels because of the fine dust that gets inhaled when using them. This is especially the case with soft chalk pastels that are lovely to blend and layer. Sennelier and Rembrandt both make soft chalk pastels.

Harder chalk pastels are better for doing outlines, drawing, and doing detail work. They can be sharpened with a craft knife or Exacto Knife to get a point or applied broadly using the side. Van Gogh and Prismacolor Nu Pastel Color Sticks are both Hard Pastels. One of the problems with chalk pastels is that they are very fragile and smudge easily. For this reason, they are often “fixed” with fixative, but the fixative often shifts the colors and can be very toxic. Chalk pastels are great for sketching on acrylics as you can wipe them off with a little water or coat them carefully with matte medium if you want to make the lines permanent—but this can be tricky. They are especially good for detail work with regular chalk pastels as you can sharpen them. I love Stabilo Carbothello Pastel Pencils and use them all the time—mostly for non-permanent drawing on top of acrylics.

Pan Pastels

Pan Pastels are basically soft chalk pastels in individual pans, but with more color and less dust than the chalk pastel sticks. You can get different kinds of soft and hard sponges and knives to work with them.



• Pens

There are so many kinds of pens these days it's nearly impossible to keep track. So I'm just going to share about more common ones. These are nib pens for dipping into ink, which are commonly used for hand lettering, calligraphy, and quirky or historical looking drawings. Speedball makes inexpensive nib pens that are fun to use.



Rapidograph Pens

Rapidograph pens are used to be the go-to pen for consistent smooth line work. They come in a practical range of nib sticks and are re-fillable, which is environmentally good. Unfortunately they have a tendency to have clogging nibs that can usually be fixed with a good washing.

Micron Pens

Micron Pens are similar to Rapidographs except they are not refillable and have softer nibs.



Calligraphy Pens

Calligraphy pens are chisel or wedge shaped to have those great calligraphic thicks and thins. Pitt Pens, which is a competitor of Micron Pens, makes calligraphy pens as well. (See Speedball Calligraphy)

• *Pencils*

We already learned a bit about regular “lead” type pencils in the graphite section but colored pencil warrant their own section.



Colored Pencils

Colored pencils are less commonly used because they are so labor intensive. The main manufacturers of wax-based colored pencils are Derwent Colorsoft, and Prismacolor pencils. They both come in a wide range of colors and are fairly soft which makes them good for blending. I recommend to either watercolor underneath and then lay the pencil on top or to layer the colors on top of each other to build up to a wonderful, dense luminous, watercolor pencils. Sharpening colored pencils can be



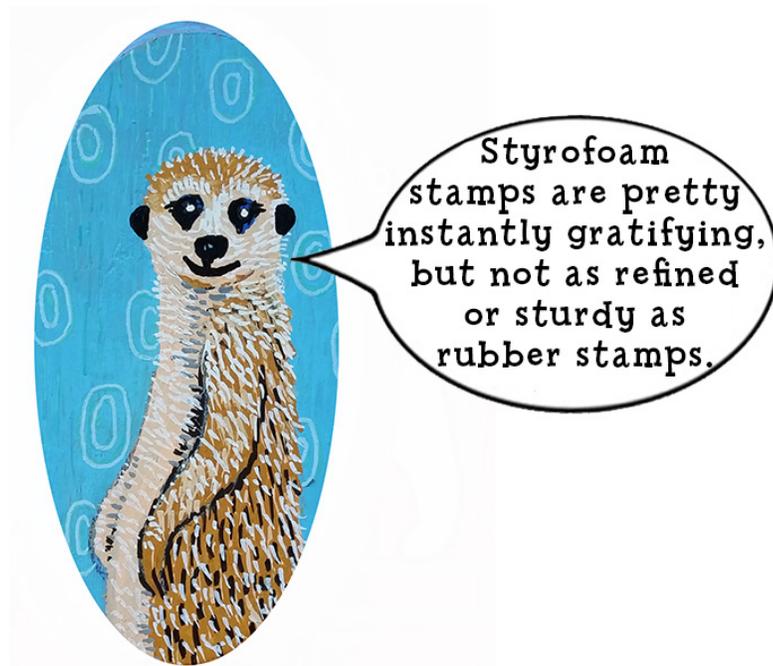
a pain, but Prismacolor has a Prismacolor Scholar Colored Pencil Sharpener that works well. You can also get watercolor pencils, which as you can imagine are soluble in water. These are especially good for doing finer bits of watercolors and the moistening with a damp small brush or just experimenting with. Dry watercolor pencils can be erased but once they've been wet, they're on there for good.

• **Stamps**

Making stamps is also a form of printmaking but for some reason usually isn't included in that category.

Stamp making is incredibly fun and really easy, especially

if you use Styrofoam. Yes—Styrofoam, like Styrofoam plates or better yet getting clean Styrofoam meat trays from your local butchers. Unlike traditional stamp making, which is another reductive process where you carve away the rubber parts that you don't want to print, you just draw your design into the Styrofoam and then cut out your shape, leaving a border around it. Then just rub it over an ink pad or paint acrylic paint on top



and then print. If you use acrylics make sure to wash it off afterwards so you can reuse your stamp easily. However, you can make some great, fast stamps this way.

If you got the carving into rubber route, which is also fun and satisfying you just need to buy rubber stamp material and carving tools from the art supply store. The trick with carving rubber is to use good rubber, e.g. Speedball's Speedy Carve and good carving tools like Speedball's #1 and #5 blades. Make sure your image is in reverse on the surface so that it reverses correctly when printed. You can simply pencil your image strongly, place face-down onto rubber and then rub it onto the rubber with your fingernail or hard eraser. Use the #1 blade for the edges and smaller areas and the #5 for larger areas. It's best to carve away from yourself with gentle strokes and when doing downward angles carve away from the edges. Also move the rubber rather than the blade when doing carves—having a piece of paper under your rubber will help with this.

If you like, use a craft knife to gently parallel skim the unwanted areas for a smoother finish. You can then use a strong glue like epoxy or superglue to glue onto a wooden block for better stamping pressure. The awesome thing about making stamps is that you can reuse them over and over, both for your own art and for embellishing the envelopes of submission to editors, art directors, and agents. Cool!



• *Transferring Art*

There are two main ways of transferring your art into paper if you're not working digitally. One involves **Tracing Paper** where you use a soft pencil underneath your tracing paper and cover the lines well, then flip over to the front and go over your drawing lines with a harder pencil or pen to release the graphite underneath onto your painting or final drawing surface. The other way is to use **Saral Transfer Paper**, which is a carbon paper that you put chalky side down under your drawing and then go over the front of your drawing with a hard pencil or pen to release the graphite underneath.



If you use Saral Transfer Paper, mask off as much of your final paper underneath as possible as the Saral is VERY smudgy. However, you can pick most of it up with a kneadable eraser—but it can be tedious.

Acrylic Transfer

Earlier I wrote about using matte medium to transfer images for collage. Here's the method that I use. For starters, your image needs to be either a Xerox or laser printer image so that it doesn't smear. You can use either color line art that you then



color with layers of paint mixed with medium or regular acrylics.

So here's one technique: Apply 3 or 4 coats of acrylic matte medium to the front allowing each coat to dry between application. These coats create a film on the front enabling you to remove the paper on the back by gently moistening the paper and then gently rubbing it off with your fingertips. After a bit you'll be left with your image on a thin film of acrylic medium. Simply use more matte medium from the back to adhere (glue) it wherever you want it.

• *Watercolor*



Many illustrators use watercolors because of the luminous effects that can be achieved. People that have trained in oils often switch to watercolors because there is a similar use of layering different colors in different areas to get beautiful effects. The advantages of watercolors include the many beautiful effects that can be achieved through layering colors, flooding color, lifting color, doing washes and so much more. Most watercolor artists either use a pen, pencil, or brush outline, or paint light next to dark or dark next to light to have a good



figure/ground relationship. Light next to dark or dark next to light is called “chiaroscuro.” Renaissance painter Caravaggio was the innovator and master of this technique.

Using good watercolor brushes and good paper is essential in creating quality watercolor images. (See both the Brushes and Papers sections in this book for more about that, but generally you want soft flat and pointy natural bristle brushes if possible and heavier paper to handle all the water. Most folks use cold press paper for this reason, although those that use less water, will use less tooth (texture in the paper).

Movement

Movement is the illusion of action. It’s something that art directors look for in illustrator’s work as it makes the images

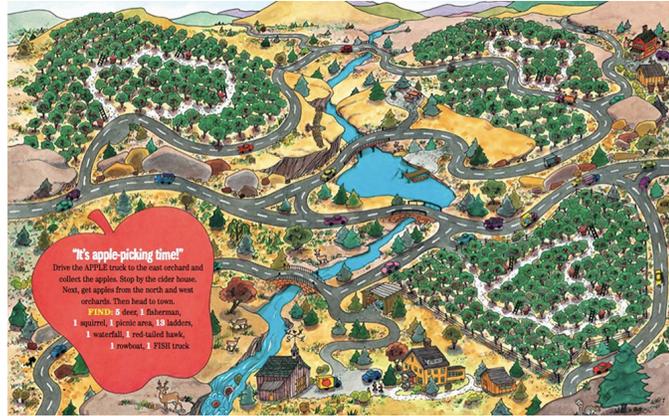


more lively. Artists create the illusion of movement by using diagonals, undulating and radiating lines, and generally destabilizing the image. (See **Movement Worksheet at the end of this book.**)



Niche

This term is a specific market that you, as an illustrator, target with a particular topic, theme, or subject. It could be novelty books with Mazes like Roxie Munro does (pictured right) or metaphor-laden lyrical non-fiction books like those written by Dianna Aston and illustrated by Sylvia Long.



Perspective

Perspective is how we create the illusion of depth. There are 3 types of linear perspective: 1-point, 2-point, and 3-point. There is also atmospheric perspective which makes the background appear as if it's receding by making it higher with smaller objects, fuzzier and with cooler colors. Objects in front are larger, sharper, crisper, more detailed and usually in warmer colors. **(See the end of this book for a worksheet and more on the different types of perspective.)**



Portfolio

Your portfolio is what showcases your work. Physical portfolios should have removable pages for maximum flexibility and if you have sleeves, make sure that they are glossy rather than matte to show your work in its best light. Matte sleeves are pitted, which really dulls your work. Some people are making or buying sleeveless portfolios where their work is printed on heavy paper or glued onto heavy paper. These can get banged up badly but they can also look very beautiful.



When you are putting together your portfolio, consider how you're going to make yours stand out from others. How can you make yours different? In terms of organization, put like with like (e.g. line work with line work, book cover art and design together etc.) so that it shows that you are an organized thinker. Only include your very best work. Stick with what you're really good at. Most Art Directors and Editors only want to see one or two styles so they know what they're getting while others want to see a range of styles.

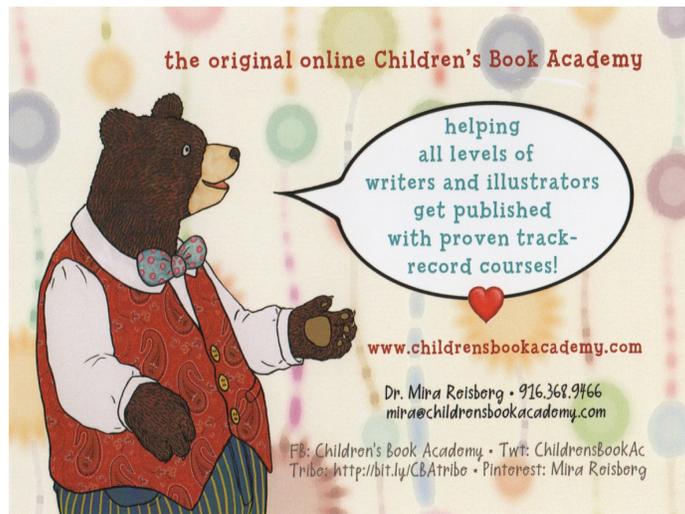


Make sure you show visual stories where things are happening rather than still single portraits of animals or people that don't show your ability to illustrate children's books. Make sure you have relational images (characters interacting) emotional images showing feeling, images with movement, different angles and points of view, humor (if that's your thing), animals, people, families, or black and white work if you're interested in doing chapter books and/or middle grade, and of course don't forget to include your name and website somewhere. Think about all the things that kids love and include images of those things that you enjoy illustrating. Your website is your online portfolio and is essential for an illustrator. (See Websites)

Postcards

While this is a CBA promotional postcard, for an illustrator's postcard you want to have a single hero's image (which the bear is here) or an image that shows your chops

with relationships, interactivity between characters, emotion, movement, or a scene with animals and/or children doing things. You want to show that you can do more than a portrait or stationary image of a character and can tell a story with pictures. You also want to include your name and your website somewhere on the front so that if that editor or art director



loves your work and posts it on their wall they can instantly see who you are and how to reach you.

Printing

Children's books are printed using CMYK 4 color processing. That means the colors are all made with just Cyan, Magenta, Yellow, and K stands for Black. They are printed on large paper which when folded makes eight pages. This is why typical picture books are 24, 32, or 40 pages long. Books are bound in different ways.

• *Binding*

Binding refers to how the book is held together. There are 3 main kinds of binding.

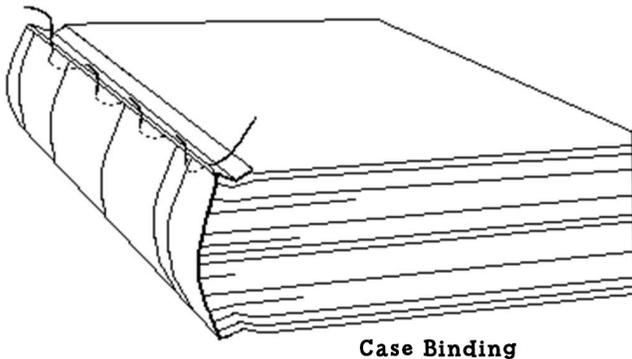
Saddle Stitch

Saddle stitch is typically used for magazines or calendars as a wire staple holds it together. The saddle stitch also allows the book to lie flat when opened which is convenient. A drawback to a saddle stitch is that it only works for projects at least 8 pages long, but not more than 80.

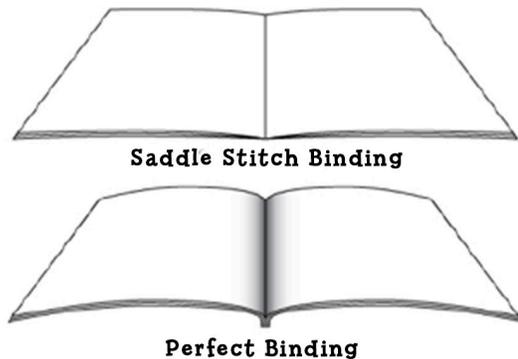
Perfect Binding



Perfect binding is a binding that when the documents are folded in the center they are clamped together and placed in a machine that slices the folded part straight and then glues to a backing. Books and thick magazines use this kind of binding, which works well with a wide variety of thickness in pages.



Case Binding



Saddle Stitch Binding

Perfect Binding

Case Binding

Case binding is most often used in books over 60 pages long. It's folded and sewn together by a machine, then glued to a backing and placed in a casing-in machine to make the hard cover.

• *Bleed*



The illustrator creates extra art that extends outside of the “normal” border of the book’s page so that it gives the printer leeway when trimming the page so that it doesn’t leave a small unwanted white



paper edge. Bleeds are usually 1/8 ” of an inch of extra art beyond the pages edge. Some bleeds are four sided while others might be just on one or two sides and looks like this with crop marks for trim size that your art extends into for bleeds.

CIP (Cataloging in Publication)

CIP, or Congress In Publication, data is a record prepared by the Library of Congress for a book that has not yet been



published. Then when it is published, the publisher includes the CIP data on the copyright page in order to be categorized, so that it’s easy for bookstores and libraries to find you.



• *Endsheets*



These are the colored pages at the beginning and end of hardbound books that help hold the book binding together.

End sheets are the colored or printed sheets at the beginning and end of hardbound books that help keep the binding together. These days, end sheets are often printed to help ease the reader into the story or to extend the story if it doesn't fit into 32 pages. End sheets can add a lot to a book

with a map or characters in different poses.

• *Hard Cover and Paper Back Books*

Books are usually printed hard cover first and then after enough copies have sold, it will be reprinted as a paperback book. If the publisher thinks your book is going to be a good seller, they might splurge for another pass through the printing press with either a special gloss laminate or glitter, or even an embossing, which makes the lettering or an image section stand out by being physically raised.



• ***Book Jacket***

Most hardcover books have a book jacket. It can have art that wraps around from front to back or have separate art for front and back covers.

• ***Proofs***

Part of the printing process involves “proofs” where the printer will do a super small special print run to send to the publishers. If you can, ask in your contract that you be able to see the proofs before final printing. The point of the proofs is to catch any egregious errors and make sure the color match is as good as possible. Making changes at this point is extremely expensive but if they’re important, the publisher will eat the cost of this.

Printmaking

Printmakers are a special breed with lots of patience for the long haul to get those wonderful effects that linoleum or woodblock cutting or silkscreen or etching can give. Many of Ashley Wolff’s early books were created with linoleum cuts. The BIG downside with printmaking is that it’s hard to make changes once it’s done. However, if you’re not a purist, you can redo sections and reassemble them in Photoshop. Quickie note: With printmaking, make sure your original art is in reverse because it will create a mirror image.



Linoleum and woodblock involve carving away at what you don't want printed. The charm of both these techniques is that invariably tiny pieces remain in the carved out sections that also print, which gives it that distinctive look. **Silkscreen** gives brushless area of color, which before computers, was difficult to replicate. Because of the ease and flexibility of programs like Adobe Illustrator or Photoshop, very few illustrators use silkscreen these days. **Etching** is a beautiful technique that gives awesome effects, especially aqua tints that create wonderful atmospheric results. Unfortunately it requires an elaborate set up to do and once again is difficult to make changes once the etching plate is made. To find out more about printing—simply Google “Printmaking”.

Promotion

These days, although not always, building an author or illustrator's platform with a social media following is pretty much a given for getting published so that you can help market and sell your books. Whether you are traditionally, independently, or self-published you need to reach out to others to both help sell your books and spread the word about books.

You can do this in various ways such as Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, Instagram, Tumblr, and LinkedIn where you create helpful materials and share them. Check out our course **right here**: <http://www.childrensbookacademy.com/Fun-With-Social-Media.html>, where you can learn and explore the different platforms to see which ones suit you best so that you can focus on the one or two that suit you best. (Also see Websites where we talk about blogs.)

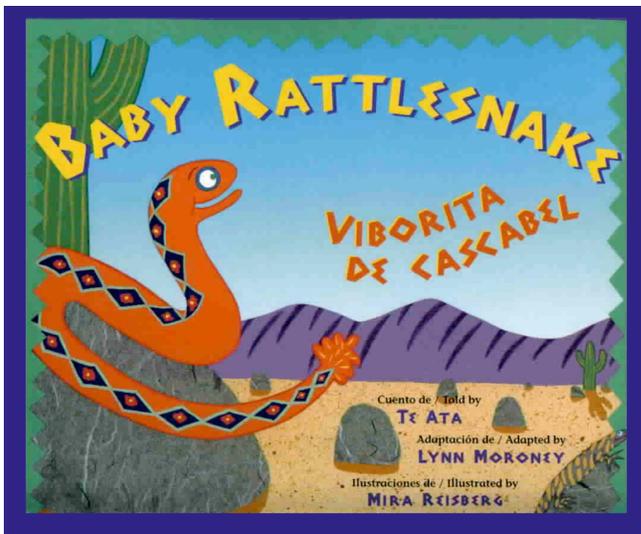


Realism

Realism is when the artist strives to realistically portray their ideas or what they are painting, drawing, or sculpting. Photorealism is when the image is so realistic that it looks like a photo. Very few children's book illustrators use photorealism although a few do to great effect.



Rhythm and Pattern



A pattern occurs when elements, which have something in common are repeated to create what we call, rhythm. Rhythm can either be regular: planned, precise, consistent, and measurable, or irregular: random, non-uniform,

unintentional, and asymmetrical. **(See the Rhythm and Pattern Worksheet at the end.)**



SCBWI

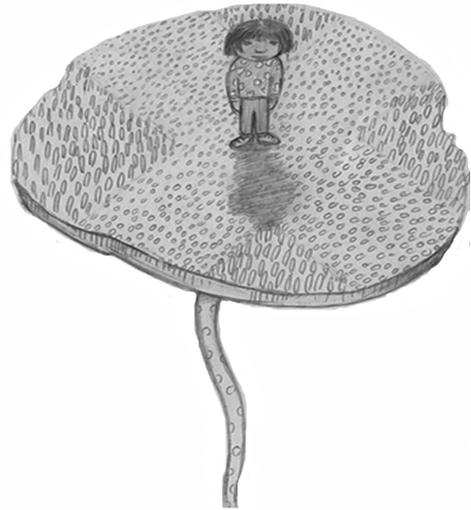


If you're serious about making and publishing children's books, you need to join the Society of Children's Book

Writers and Illustrators at <http://www.scbwi.org/>. They provide TONS of benefits for their members, conferences where you can meet, learn from, and connect with editors, art directors, and agents, and have the opportunity to join regional critique groups and so much more. They also have a wonderful book called *The Book* that you can download for free or have shipped to you for a minimal charge. This book included all sorts of useful information including a massive list of different kinds of publishers and agents.

Shadows

Shadows give volume to a form and create 3 dimensions to an object. They also ground a figure or object so that it doesn't appear to be floating in space. The best way to create shadows is to pay attention to where the light source is coming from and then create a darker value opposite either on the figure or object or on the ground underneath.



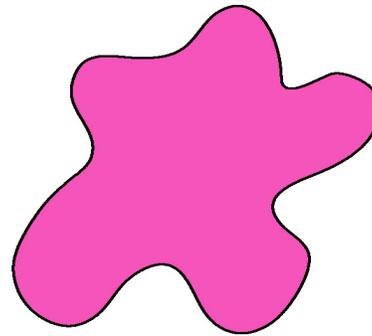
Shape

There are two basic types of shapes: geometric and organic. Geometric shapes come from the world of math. Circles, squares, rectangles, triangles, polyhedrons, etc. are all geometric shapes. Organic shapes are from nature, which also could be geometric shapes. Organic shapes are rounded, flowing, look more like human made shapes.



Geometric

Organic



Shapes are created when a line becomes connected and encloses space. It is the outline or outward appearance of something and usually lacks dimension or value. **(See our Shape Worksheet at the end of this book.)**



Sketch



A sketch is a fast, often relatively rough outline or drawing of your illustration. It's a way of jotting down visual ideas or quick representations. Thumbnails are often referred to as thumbnail sketches because they are quick representations of your visual ideas and composition.

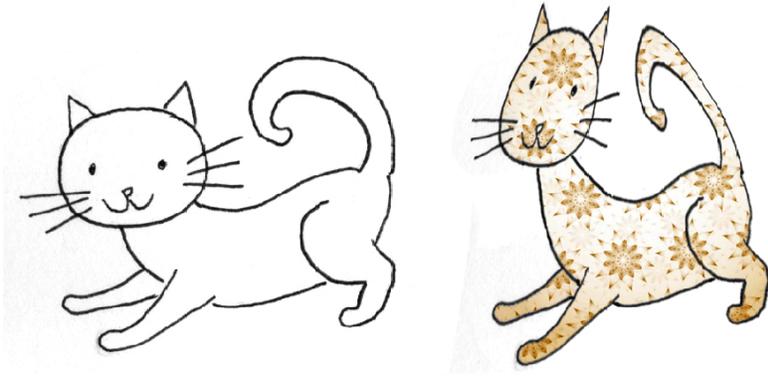
Brush and black ink rough sketch (lots of fun to do).

Space

Space is the illusion of depth. It can be created by overlapping, shading, placement on paper, value change, and perspective. Space is divided into 3 parts– The background: the upper 1/3, the middle ground area: the middle 1/3 of the picture plane, and the foreground area: the lower 1/3 of the picture plane. Space can also be shallow or deep–shallow is when objects are close to the viewer and deep space is when objects can be close but others are far away. **(See more on the Space Worksheet in the back of this book).**



Stylized



Pattern from http://www.freepik.com/free-vector/gold-floral-wallpaper_820188.htm

From cave times to the present, artists have often stylized their work so that the realistic basis is definitely

there but it's rendered in either a simplified way like Bob Staake does in his work or complexified like Picasso and the Cubists did with their work.

Texture

Like pattern, texture can add a tremendous amount to an illustration, especially if it's subtle. Think about hair or fur texture or old paper or abstract background textures. These textures plus canvas or cold press watercolor paper or crackle texture can be wonderful if layered on top in Photoshop at low opacity like 30% in Photoshop in the layers palette. **(See back of book for Texture Worksheet)**

Saran Wrap



Corrugated Cardboard



Tar Gel and Poured Paint



Thumbnails

Thumbnails are small sketches that are quick visual ideas for how you want to compose each image in your book and create the pacing and flow. Think quick sketchy concepts that are so fun and easy that you do a bunch for each spread to get the best composition. One of the great things about thumbnails is that you get a sense of the story in its entirety and can do fun things like have the horizon line flow and continue from page to page or see where you need different angles or where you might need close-ups versus mid distance versus far away images. It can be helpful to think in terms of a movie storyboard with different director's shots. **(Please see the back of the book for some Thumbnail Templates.)**



(Where Fireflies Dance, published by Lee and Low)



Tracking Sheet

When you submit postcard samples or dummies you want to have a tracking sheet so you know when to follow up with new postcards and when you know that 3 months have passed and it's time to move on from that publisher with your dummy and send it to another 3 or 4 editors. [Click here to download your tracking sheet.](#)

Typography

Typography is the overarching term used to describe how the text is shown. It refers to the fonts or type styles used, which can also be hand lettered in fun ways (**See our hand lettering and calligraphy course here:** <http://www.childrensbookacademy.com/Hand-Lettering-and-Calligraphy.html>) or it can include a **calligraphic** font, which is either hand or computer created to give an elegant script look.



Because children are learning to read and recognize letterforms, it's good to avoid anything too frilly or "decorative" unless it's just for the title or sound effects.



• *Fonts*

There are **serif fonts** that have little feet on them, and thicks and thins, which make them

abc

serif

(Garamond Bold)

abc

san serif

(Calibri Bold)

more legible in print (although it can make them less legible on the web), and **sans serif** fonts that don't have the little feet.

Avoid italic if you can unless it's really wonderful, and see if you can find a little quirkiness in the font, such as serif fonts Billy Serif, or Mrs. Eaves, or sans serif fonts like Meta and Calibri.

Good sources for fonts include Emigre.com, DaFont.com and HouseIndustries.com

• *Spacing*

Some terms to know include: **Leading**, (pronounced ledding) which is the amount of space you need between lines. Allow as much as you can without it looking too far apart. And **kerning**, which is the space between letters, which unfortunately can sometimes be crammed in some places and too far apart in others. This is often not the case in quality fonts (aka not free fonts). **Ascenders** are the parts of the letters that stick up, like, h, b, f etc. **Descenders** are the parts that stick down like p, q, and y. The **X height** is the height of the parts between, which unfortunately are not standardized so that 18 points in one font



Violating the Grid

Violating the grid is a wonderful term for when art extends out past the border of something ON the page. A great example of this is in David Weisner's *The Three Little Pigs*, where the pigs and all sorts of folk and fairy tale creatures jump out of and behind the panels creating visual excitement and story havoc. Here's a wee example from one of the art pages in my 2003

dissertation on kid's books. The telescope and part of the color wheel extend into the frame making for a more interesting composition. If I was doing this now, I'd have the telescope extend even further and with more perspective to pump up the drama.



Chapter Three: Pedagogical Perspectives and Theoretical Lenses





Visual Pacing

Visual Pacing is how you lead the viewer through the book, perhaps slowing parts down by having wordless spreads or speeding

it up with multiple action panels. Books like Dav Pilkey's *When Cats Dream* play with the pacing by having everything that happens when cats are awake be monochromatic and then full color when they are dreaming. One of the greatest books on visual pacing is Maurice Sendak's *Where the Wild Things are*, where he paces the book starting with small images with large white borders so that as Max gets more and more into his adventure the interior image gets larger and larger until it takes over the whole page and culminates in what happens with the Wild Things. Then as he decides to go home it gets smaller and smaller again ending with just a line of enigmatic text on page 32. Brian Selznik has a great interview where he talks about this here:

<http://www.theatlantic.com/entertainment/archive/2015/09/innovating-the-illustration-brian-selznick-where-the-wild-things-are-the-marvels/405391/>



Another great example of visual pacing is Jeanette Winter's *The Watcher: Jane Goodall's Life with the Chimps*, where she uses a similar technique as she goes from her contained life in England to the wilds of Africa. It's quite lovely!

Websites

One of the most important things that an illustrator has to do and have is to create a professional looking website with at least 20-30 images. A publisher is investing a lot of money not just in paying you but in all the other aspects of book publishing and sales as well. We have a small affiliate link for Weebly, a wonderful and easy website building program online, where you get a small discount and we get a credit as well right here, <http://www.weebly.com/link/GDqXI3>

So what does a good website look like?

Here are the essential elements – home page, about me/bio, portfolio, contact information, and an optional blog.

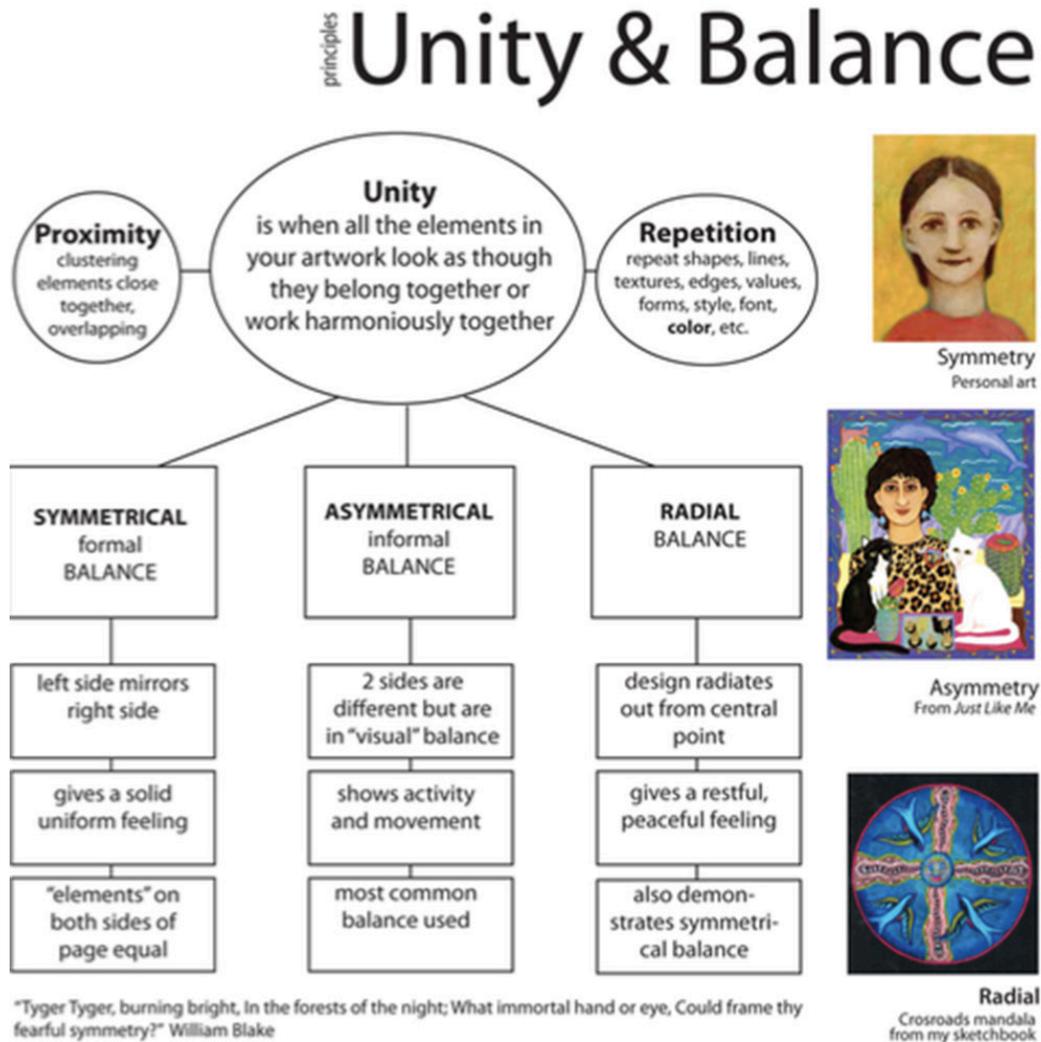
A Home page is what draws your viewer in. It can be an “About Me” page or it can be a portfolio of your work. Your “About Me” page is where you have your photo, your education, and what makes you interesting or quirky. Your optional blog section is great to have as well because you're able to gain a following and also get to connect with people in the same field. Most of the time it helps add legitimize your expertise and expand your online presence and platform. (See Portfolio for more information)



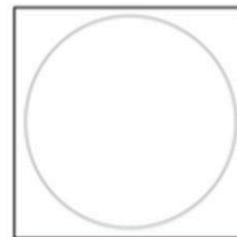
Worksheets and Templates

(If you are accessing this as a PDF, click images to download)

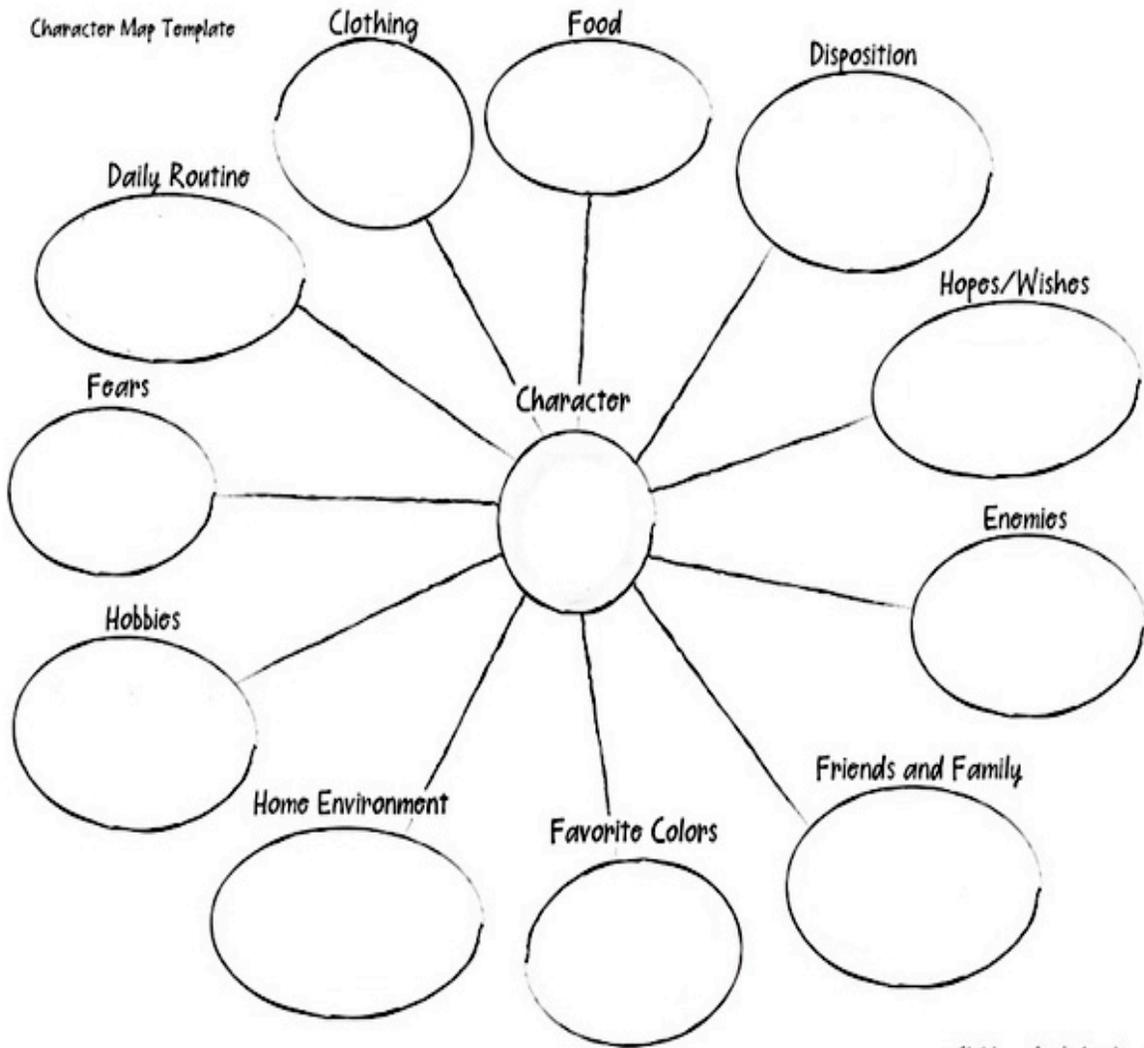
• Balance (& Unity) Worksheet



Create your own examples of each type of symmetry



•Character Map Template



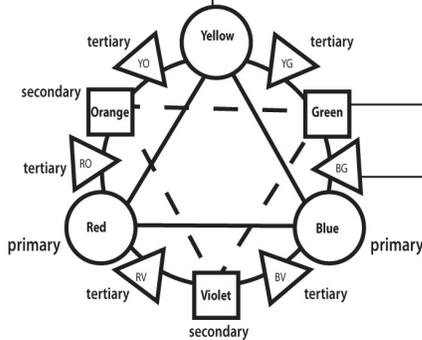
© Childrens Book Academy



•Color Worksheet

elements Color

Primary colors – red, blue and yellow. All other colors are made from these colors

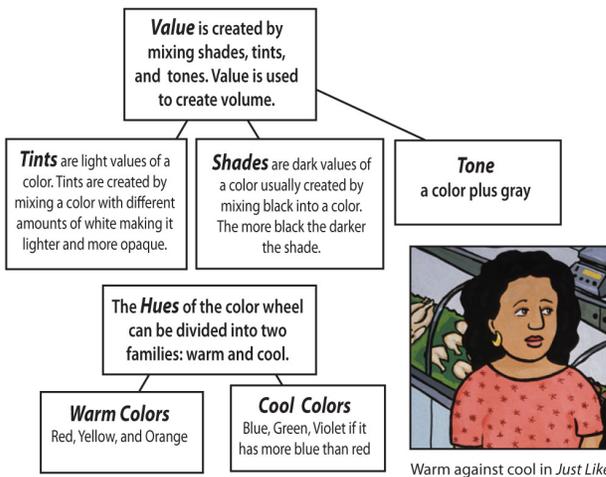


Secondary colors mix 2 primary colors together to make orange, green, violet

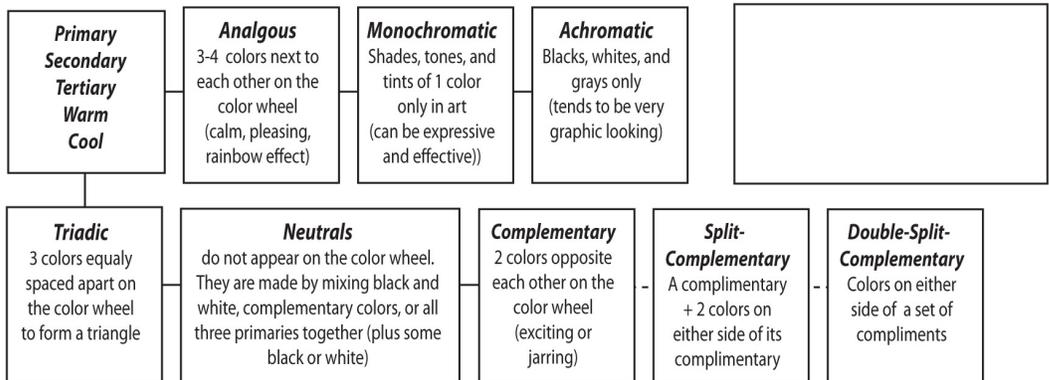
Tertiary color mixes a primary plus a secondary color = yellow-orange, orange-red, blue-violet, red-violet, blue-green (teal), yellow-green

COLOR adds interest and reality to artwork. The use of a 12-step color wheel helps us understand color more effectively. When light is reflected through a prism, colors can be seen. There colors are Red, Orange, Yellow, Blue, Indigo, and Violet. An easy way to remember this is by the anagram **ROY G BIV**.

Create 1 either a personal symbol or a scene with 3 different color schemes
Label each scheme



Color Schemes



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•Contrast Worksheet

principles Contrast



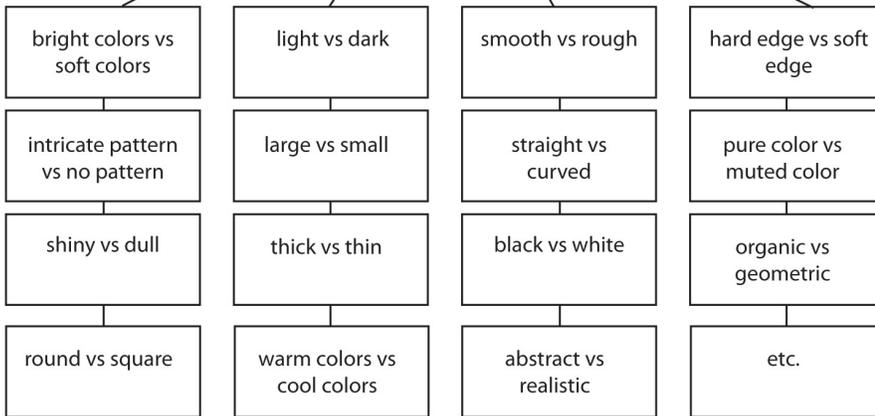
Name the contrasts in this detail from *Baby Rattlesnake*

Contrast adds interest, excitement, and drama through **variety**



And in this detail from *Just Like Home*

It makes this possible by showing **opposites** or **differences**



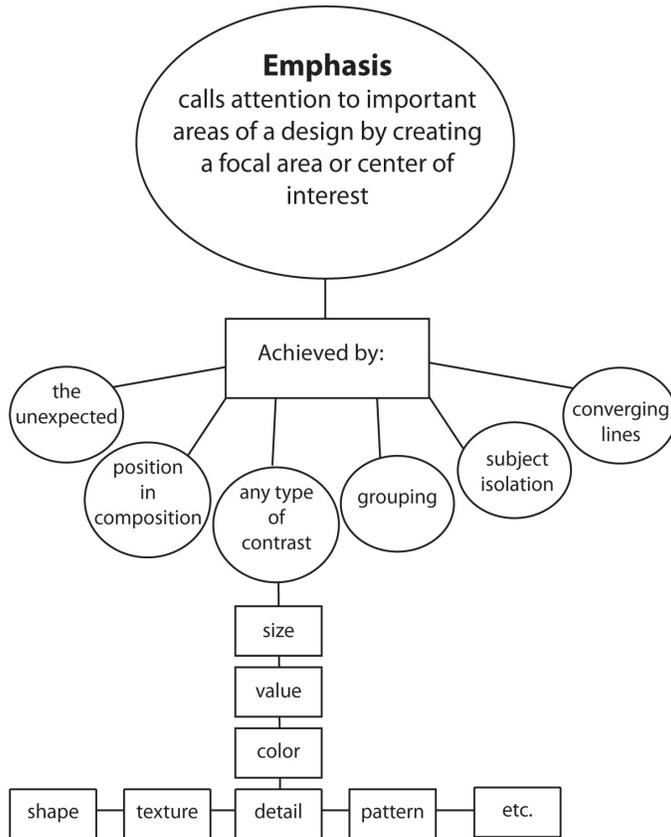
Create three examples showing contrast

Text adapted from a variety of sources. Art and design © Mira Reisberg www.childrensbookacademy.com



•Emphasis Worksheet

principles Emphasis



Mom and dad's heart shape emphasizes *Baby Rattlesnake* in the center.

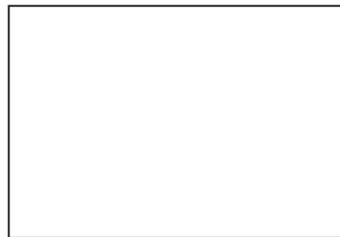
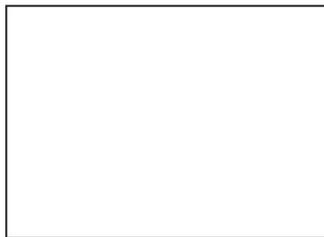
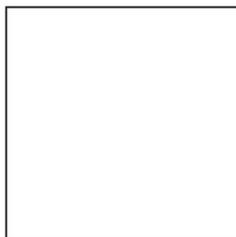


Emphasis is created by the convergence of all the animals in the border looking in. From *Uncle Nacho's Hat*



Here the 2 women emphasize each other with diagonals from the speech bubble and the arm reaching behind in *Leaving for America*.

Create three examples showing emphasis.



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•Dummy Infograph

The Easy Peasy Children's Book Academy way to

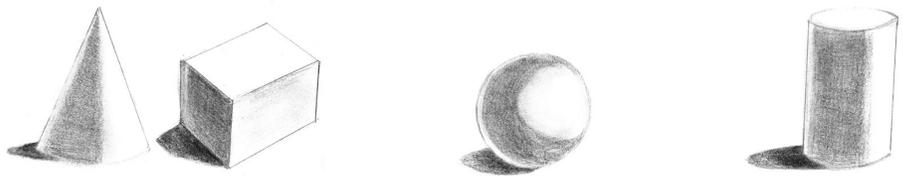
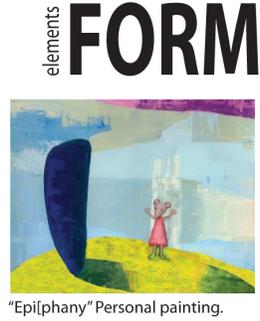
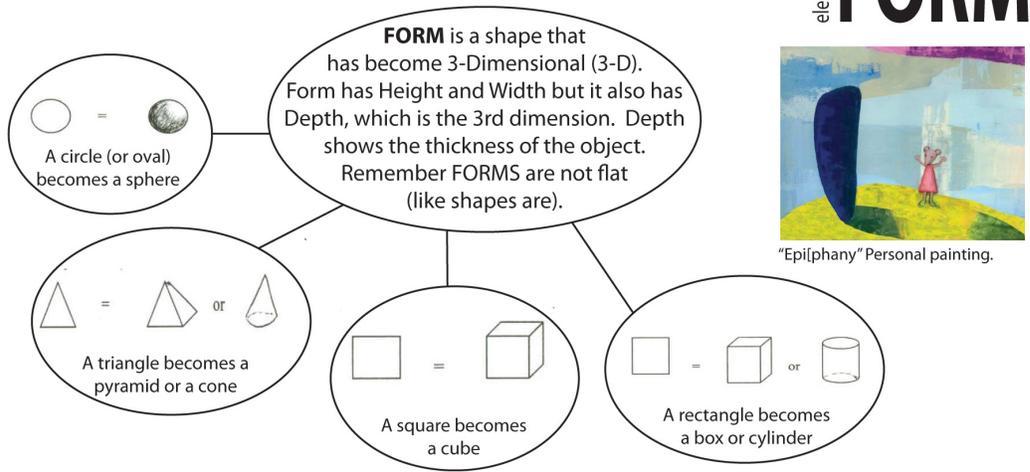
Make a Picture Book Dummy

- 1** Start with your story!
- 2** Break the story into 14 or 15 sections/spreads
{Sometimes just adding the # of lines & dividing by 14 can do wonders, give or take a line.}
- 3** Make your loose thumbnails for composition and pacing!
{Leave room for text.}
- 4** Make your character sketches
{Create a backstory for each main character to know their body language & personal style!}
- 5** Refine your thumbnails & enlarge to 1/2 size
{Use tracing paper or a light table.}
- 6** Refine & enlarge to full size!
- 7** Refine if needed & choose 2 for color samples.
- 8** Transfer onto art paper or scan & color digitally without looking too digital.
- 9** Assemble dummy, send with color samples, cover letter &.....
- 10** Celebrate!

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Form Worksheet



Value gives form greater realism as in these stippled examples. The lightest area indicates where the light is coming from (light source), the darkest area is the opposite side underneath the object.

Draw any 3 different shapes to show dimension using the arrow as a guide to where your light source is. Do one in pencil, one with line, cross-hatching, or hatching, and the last with stippling. (See value and cross-hatching handouts for additional help). Don't forget the reflected light opposite the highlight near the object's edge

Straight on (cone, cylinder, or sphere) Close to top right

Lower left

pencil (soft shading)

line, hatching or cross-hatching

stippling

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•Line Worksheet

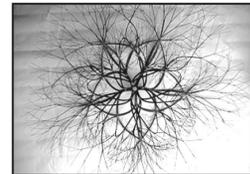
Your name:

Artists have always used line in expressive ways. Hatching and crosshatching use line exclusively.

#1 In each area below, draw a different type of expressive line. Look around you for ideas. Name each line.

principles **LINE**



From top - Darren Houser, Ruth Asawa
<http://www.ruthasawa.com/>
 Geisert - *The Etcher's Studio*, Posada

#2 Basic lines project different emotions. Connect the line type to the emotion you think that line would describe.

- | | |
|------------------|-----------------------------|
| horizontal lines | movement, action |
| vertical lines | peaceful, calm, rest |
| diagonal lines | stable, strength, stability |
| curved lines | excitement |
| angular lines | grace, buoyancy |

Adapted by Mira Reisberg from Karen Popovich and Carol Hadamick worksheets



•Movement Worksheet

principles Movement

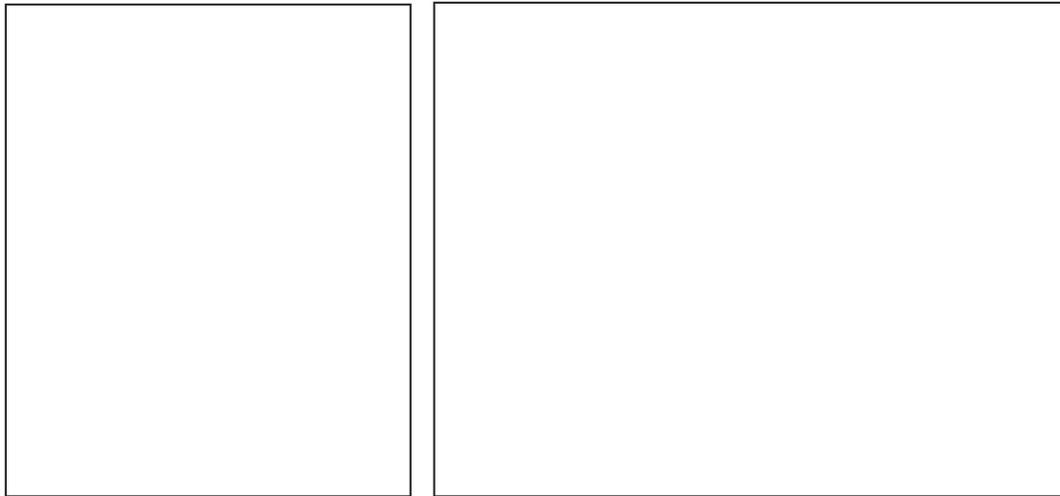
Movement
is achieved by arranging the art elements in a way that guides the eye through the composition

Artists also create the illusion of movement by using diagonals, undulating lines, and generally destabilizing the image

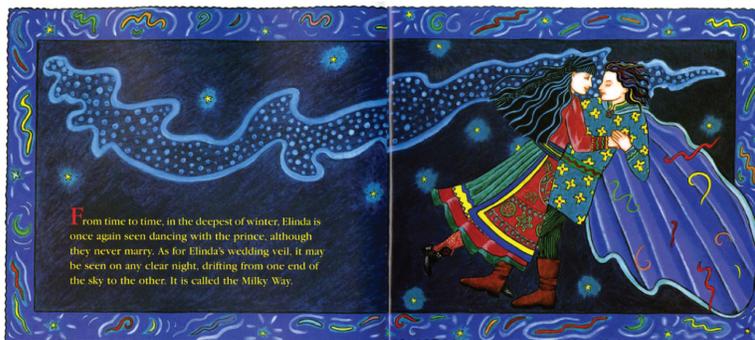


Diagonals and undulating lines in *Baby Rattlesnake*

Create 2 compositions showing movement



Note the way the undulating lines of the Milky Way shawl guide us to the diagonally oriented figures in *Elinda Who Danced in the Sky*

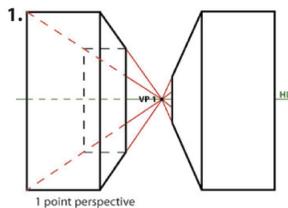


•Perspective Worksheet

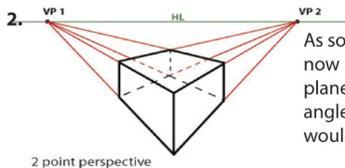
Perspective

Adapted from <http://artdraw.blogspot.com/2007/10/perspective-artists-view.html>
(now defunct)

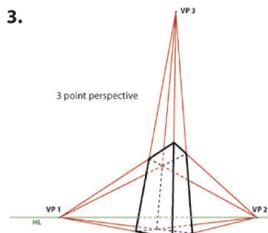
It is through linear perspective that we find the proper placement for objects in our scenes and to determine how much objects will gradually appear to get smaller as they recede into the distance. It's with perspective that we create the illusion of 3 dimensional space on the 2 dimensional confines of our paper. There are 3 basic types of perspective, 1 point, 2 point, and 3 point perspectives.



In **one point perspective**, there is one central vanishing point. The lines of our scene run parallel to our line of vision (an imaginary line from our eye to whatever we are viewing) and meet at a point on the horizon line. For our demonstration, the vanishing point in this image is placed near the center of our scene. For one point perspective it can be located elsewhere but the effect may not be as dramatic.



As soon as we angle the box in our scene, we enter into **two point perspective**. We now have two vanishing points and our box is no longer squared with our picture plane. The image on left is called bird's eye because it is looking from above. If the angled lines were coming from above rather than below the horizon line then it would be a worm's eye perspective and we would not see the top of the roof.



With **3 point perspective** we move even more dramatically to a higher or lower view point. A worm's eye view from below or a bird's eye view from above. This image is a worm's eye view of what could be a skyscraper. Notice the third vanishing point above the box. Another observation; notice the horizon line? It is low in the scene. If we were to move, say to the top of a building/box and look down, the horizon line would shift to a higher location (not pictured).

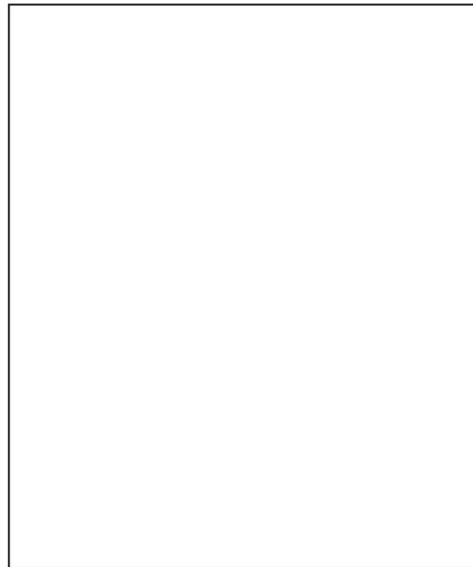
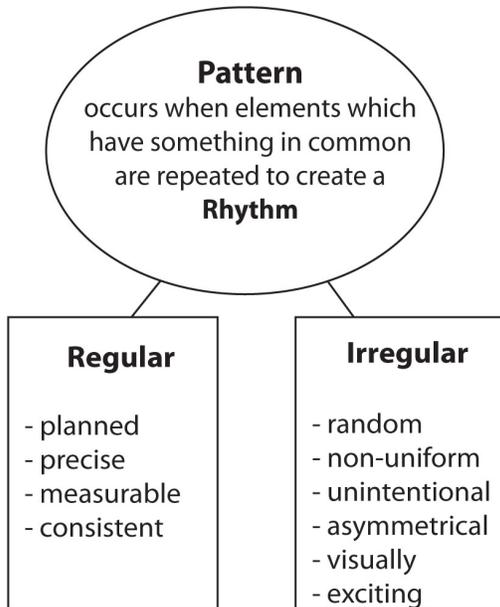
Using either 1pt, 2pt or 3pt perspective design a community building for downtown Sacramento. Start by deciding where you want your horizon line, add your vanishing points and make sure your lines end at these points. Add any embellishments to show the character of the building.



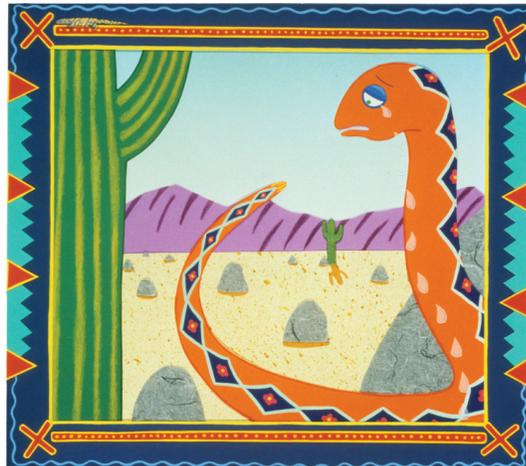
•Pattern and Rhythm Worksheet

principles Rhythm & Pattern

Create a small piece of art below with at least 3 patterns that create rhythm. Describe what they are.



Lots of decorative pattern creating rhythms in *Elinda Who Danced in the Sky*



And in *Baby Rattlesnake*

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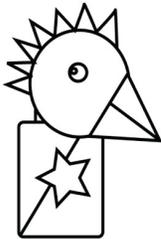
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•Shape Worksheet

elements SHAPE

Geometric

shapes come from the world of math. Circles, squares, rectangles, triangles, polyhedrons etc. are all geometric shapes.



Hideous last minute geometric wbird drawing done in Illustrator for this example. Guess that means most of my drawings are organic shapes.

Organic

shapes come from the world of nature (which also includes geometric shapes). Organic shapes tend to be rounded, flowing, and look more human made.



"inner monologue" from my sketchbook has mostly rounded organic shapes..

There are two basic types of SHAPES - geometric or organic.

Shape is created when a line become connected and encloses space. It is the outline or outward appearance of something and usually lacks dimension or **value**.

In contrast to 3-dimensional (3D) **forms**, shapes are 2-dimensional (2-D) which means there are 2 ways they can be measured - height and width. Shapes are very flat.

Positive

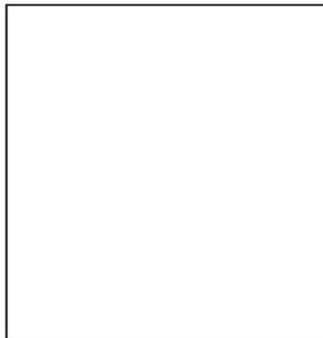


Negative



Positive and negative shapes are equally important. Try paying attention to what isn't the object as well as what is.

Draw a geometric shape morphing into a complex organic shape using both positive and negative shapes

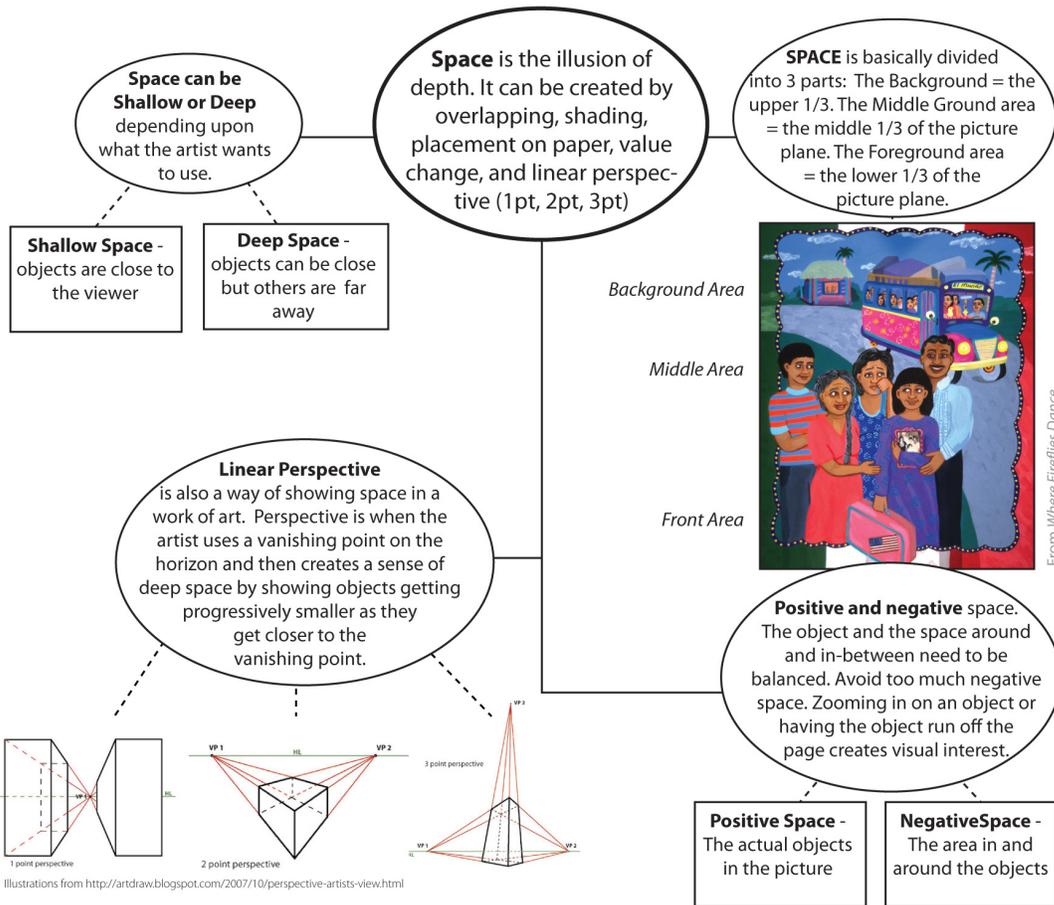


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•Space Worksheet

elements SPACE

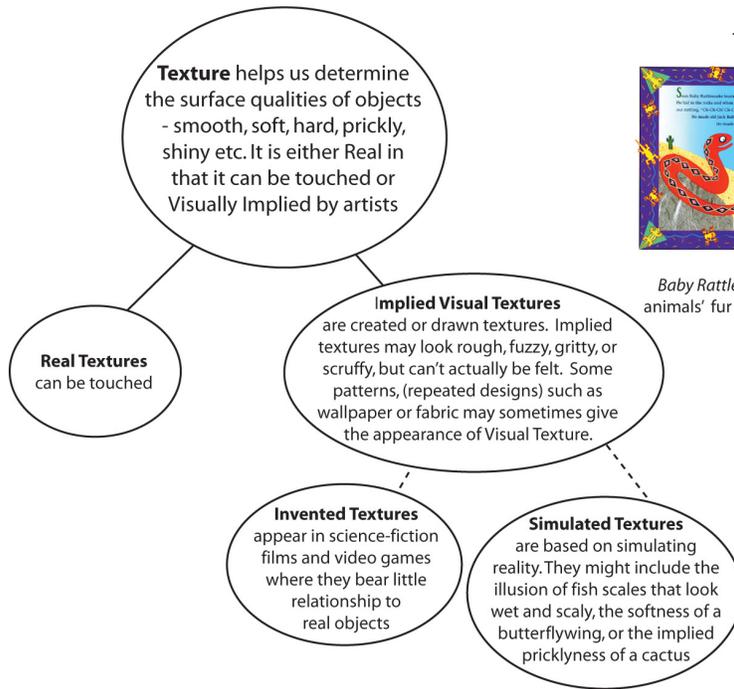


Text adapted from a variety of sources. Art and Design © Mira Reisberg www.childrensbookacademy.com

Create three compositions with foreground, middleground, and background, one with geometric shapes, one with organic shapes, and one with obvious positive/negative shapes



•Texture Worksheet



elements TEXTURE



Sand, rock, and cactus prickles (in border) of *Baby Rattlesnake*. I could have had more textures in the animals' fur etc. but I wanted flat graphic shapes of color.



A variety of textures from *Uncle Nacho's Hat*



Close-up of desert sand and rock from *Baby Rattlesnake*

Invent a texture and name it

Using stippling, draw a texture and name it

Simulate a real texture and name it

Using pencil draw a texture and name it

Describe some different textures

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•Thumbnail Template

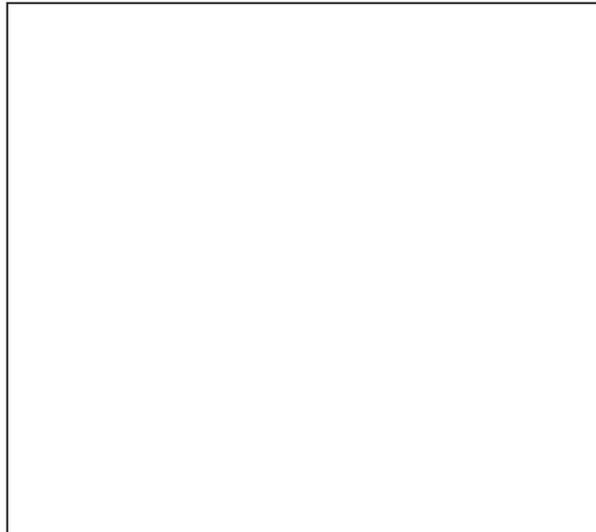


•Variety Worksheet

Variety
utilizes
diversity and change to
create visual interest in a
work of art

Dis-similar
colors, objects,
sizes, and
shapes, can
create
variety and
interest in a
composition

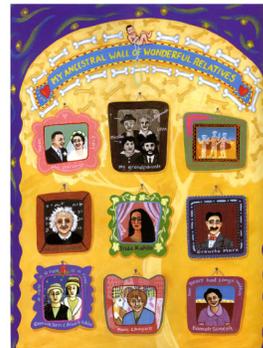
Create two compositions showing variety.



Text adapted from a variety of sources. Art and Design © Mira Reisberg www.childrensbookacademy.com

principles Variety

While this picture from *Where Fireflies Dance* shows variety in sizes, shapes, and colors, the best example is the variety in the spiky border which is more interesting because it is irregular.



This painting from *Honoring Our Ancestors* shows a variety of different shaped frame borders

