

Elements of Picture Book Art and Design

Design

Size and shape of book: Are they appropriate for content?

Jacket and cover: Are they the same? If different, how do the differences help? Do they give meaningful clues to the content of the book?

Endpapers: Plain or illustrated? Different one from another?

Front matter/back matter: Does the story start before the title page? How does the title page anticipate the story to come? Is there information after the story is over?

Paper: matte finish or shiny; white or colored; quality

Font/typography: Is it appropriate for the story? How about size? Is the type varied? If so, to what effect?

Page design: Borders? Single page spreads? Double page spreads? Full bleeds? Spot art? Variations in page layout, or all the same?

Gutters: Incorporated into pictures, or is something lost?

Art

Style: Is it realistic, folk art, impressionistic, cartoon etc.? Is the style appropriate for the story?

Medium: watercolor, acrylics, pastels, collage, pen and ink, woodcuts? Often difficult to determine, especially because of digital renderings.

Line: How is line used? is it straight or curved; thick or thin? Is there movement across the page?

Color: palette, tone, intensity, value

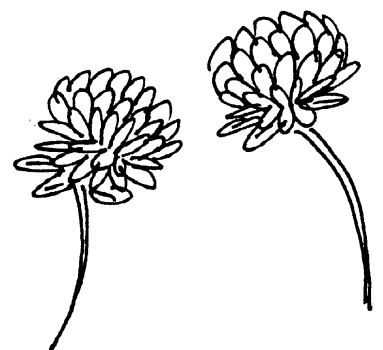
Perspective: From what vantage point do we see the objects?

Composition: white space; perspective, movement, unity, symmetry

Relationship to text: clear/consistent? Does it extend the text? Is the representation accurate?

Flow: continuity from page to page. And, very important: does it make you want to turn the page?

Reference: *Reading Picture Books with Children* by Megan Dowd Lambert. Charlesbridge, 2015.



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