

Picturebooks and Visual Literacy in Kindergarten to Grade 2 Classrooms

by

Georgette Elizabeth Dawn Walker

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University of Victoria

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Abstract

The purpose of the project was to examine how picturebooks can enhance the visual literacy competencies of Kindergarten to Grade 2 students. In Chapter 1, I outline the connections to both current and draft British Columbia English Language Arts curriculum documents, and provide background regarding how I came to the topic of visual literacy. The theories, conceptual frameworks and research described in Chapter 2 provide the context for the PowerPoint™ professional development workshop, “Picturebooks and Visual Literacy in K-2 Classrooms,” which is contained in Appendix A. In Chapter 3 I discuss how the theoretical and conceptual frameworks of Rosenblatt’s transactional theory of reading, Vygotsky’s sociocultural theory, dialogic talk and multimodality informed both the design and content of the presentation. I also identify connections between the workshop and the literature reviewed in Chapter 2. The workshop is focused on how primary teachers can adapt their classroom practice to incorporate the teaching of visual literacy through the use of quality picturebooks and interactive read-alouds. Workshop participants will be introduced to the topics of visual literacy, multimodality, critical literacy, picturebooks, elements of visual art and design, social semiotics, D/d discourse, sociocultural theory, dialogic classrooms, interactive read-alouds, and transactional theory.

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Dedication

This project is dedicated to my Nana, who taught in a one-room schoolhouse. It is true what they say: “A teacher affects eternity; she can never tell where her influence stops” – Henry Adams.

And to my boys – never stop learning. This project is all for you: I love you to the moon and back.

Chapter 1

Introduction

My Journey With Visual Literacy

Since a very young age, I have always felt a certain affinity for both art and picturebooks. However, it was not until I began my teaching career that these two interests combined into a side-hobby for which I was extremely enthusiastic. I became a bookstore frequenter, a blog follower of ‘kid lit’ and an avid collector of new and exciting picturebooks to share with my primary students. When I began my graduate studies, I knew picturebooks would be a central focus of my topic.

During the past years when I shared picturebooks with my students, I expected quiet, ‘listening’ behaviours, raised hands, and any questions or discussion to occur at the completion of the reading. Other discussion points were limited to those of my choosing, with very specific instructions being given to the students at these pre-organized stopping points. Furthermore, although I enjoyed art and had an appreciation of quality illustrations, the usual focus of any discussion that did occur, tended to be on the textual elements of the picturebooks that were read-aloud.

However, through my graduate coursework (and in particular the course on Oracy) and readings for my Master of Education, I have completely changed my read-aloud practice. My current practice is to utilize an interactive read-aloud model (Barrantine, 1996), where students do not raise their hands, and students contribute ideas, questions or comments throughout the reading of a picturebook. As a class, we have set out ‘talk guidelines,’ or student-led criteria that guide the children’s practice during read-alouds, which have been explicitly taught, modelled and practiced. I have made the teaching of semiotic resources (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996;

Walsh, 2006) a priority not just for a particular unit, but as an overall theme for the year, and take more care in selecting the books that I choose to read-aloud to the class.

The Importance of Visual Literacy

The notion of ‘literacy’ as a singular, linear entity has been questioned and redefined in education (Jewitt, 2008). The New London Group (1996) coined the term multiliteracies in order to reflect the diverse, collaborative and multiple modes of literacies now occurring globally. No longer is literacy deemed to be “a behaviour connected solely to the written and spoken word” (Piro, 2002, p. 127). Increasingly, texts have become more complex, both in their use of nonlinguistic, image-based forms of representation and in the use of technology (Jewitt, 2008). Visual literacy is defined as “a group of skills which enable an individual to understand and use visuals for intentionally communicating with others” (Ausburn & Ausburn, 1978, p. 21 as cited in Avgerinou, 2009, p. 29). Teachers have the responsibility to educate their students that the power of the image carries the same importance as that of words (Meek, 1988). Williams (2007) recommends providing students with more experiences with visual literacies at school, as the development of visual competencies increases both meaning-making capabilities and critical thinking capacity. Educators must assist in alleviating the “disconnect between the texts students encounter in school and the texts they encounter in their lives out of school” (Serafini, 2012, p. 30), to provide students with the tools they require to be successful navigators of visual and multimodal texts.

The interactive read-aloud represents a dialogic approach that affords teachers with opportunities to teach visual literacy competencies and the semiotic resources of visual art and design through the use of picturebooks. Like others, throughout this paper I refer to picturebooks as a compound word in order to highlight the “unity or cohesiveness of visual

images, design elements and written language that is part of all true picturebooks” (Serafini, 2014, p. 72). Serafini (2014) suggests that ‘true’ picturebooks, in contrast to ‘illustrated books,’ have visual images, in addition to the written text, that are necessary for the book to be fully understood and comprehended. The visuals constitute part of the narrative, through a synergistic contribution to the picturebook as whole, with each mode providing additional information that the other lacks (Nodelman, 1988; Sipe, 1998).

The teaching of visual literacy competencies (Kress, 2004) is grounded in Rosenblatt’s transactional theory (1978) and Vygotsky’s sociocultural theory (1978) and within the conceptual frameworks of multimodality (Jewitt, 2008, 2009; Serafini, 2014), social semiotics (Kress, 2010; Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006), and critical literacy (Avgerinou, 2009; Luke & Woods, 2009; McLaughlin & DeVogd, 2004). In Chapter 2 I share research findings about picturebooks, children’s responses to the artwork in picturebooks, interactive read-alouds and interthinking, and meaningful discussion. The research findings indicate the importance of teachers drawing attention to and explicitly teaching students how to make meaning from both images and text when reading picturebooks (Martens, Martens, Doyle, Loomis. & Aghalarovl, 2012; Martinez & Harmon, 2012; Pantaleo, 2015; Serafini, 2014). Researchers have reported that when students engage in collaborative talk during interactive read-alouds, interthinking and the co-construction of meaning can occur in an active and authentic way (Carger, 2004; Martens et al., 2012; Pantaleo, 2015; Styles & Arizpe, 2001).

Connections to Curriculum Documents

Prescribed Learning Outcomes related to visual literacy can be found in the English Language Arts curriculum document under the Reading and Viewing organizer, where it is stated that Grade 1 students are expected to “view and demonstrate understanding that visual texts are

sources of information” (British Columbia Ministry of Education, 2006, p. 52). Grade 2 students are similarly required to “view and demonstrate comprehension of visual texts (e.g., signs, illustrations, diagrams)” (British Columbia Ministry of Education, 2006, p. 56). The lack of Prescribed Learning Outcomes related to visual literacy appears to support the view that written and language-based literacies are emphasized within curricula (Apkon, 2013; Avgerinou, 2009; Jewitt, 2008). Furthermore, the visual texts suggested in the curriculum document allude to semiotic signs, illustrations and diagrams, and these highlighted aspects not only lack specificity, but also blend elements of visual art and design with non-fiction text features. According to the Suggested Achievement Indicators, students should be able to “identify main ideas or key information from visual text” (British Columbia Ministry of Education, 2006, p. 91), which implies an efferent stance (Rosenblatt, 1986) towards visual texts. The only other reference to visual literacy is found within the Writing and Representing organizer, where Grade 1 students are required to “use strategies during writing and representing to express thoughts in written and visual form (e.g., looking at picture books and student writing samples as models)” (British Columbia Ministry of Education, 2006, p. 54).

Like the 2006 Language Arts document, the new Curriculum Drafts (British Columbia Ministry of Education, 2013) also communicate the notion that literacy includes multiple types of texts; however, very little guidance or detail is given regarding how to teach students how to make meaning of visual texts. This complete lack of specifics is disturbing and unacceptable, as no direction or starting point is provided for teachers, especially those who are unfamiliar with visual literacy, including the semiotic resources of elements of art and design. Visual competencies are referenced loosely under the Arts Education curricular competencies for Grade 1 in terms of social semiotics, where students are asked to “interpret symbols and how they

express meaning through the arts” (British Columbia Ministry of Education, Paragraph 3, 2013). As this Curriculum Document is currently in the draft stage of the process, it is hoped that visual literacy competencies will be addressed in areas other than Arts Education.

The Primary Program, while 15 years old, contains much information which continues to be a useful frame of reference for teachers of young children, and outlines five areas of development: Aesthetic and Artistic, Emotional and Social, Intellectual, Physical Development and Well-being, and Social Responsibility (British Columbia Ministry of Education, 2000). The Learning Descriptors for Aesthetic and Artistic Development provide some helpful and practical guidelines for teachers to frame picturebook responses aesthetically, and in addition, support the development of visual literacy skills. According to the document, teachers are to provide a variety of experiences that enable the child to:

- develop enthusiasm and appreciation for the arts
- participate in the arts
- show appropriate performance skills and audience etiquette
- be aware of various art forms, and various purposes for artworks
- give reasons for preferences in artworks and literature
- communicate through the arts
- apply artistic elements and principles to create original artworks or specific effects
- create patterns and images for self-expression and to represent his or her world
- use a variety of materials, tools, equipment, and processes to create artworks
- respond to the arts in imaginative ways
- recognize the elements and principles of the art form in a specific work
- identify the expressive elements in a work of art

- respond to artworks in personal ways (Primary Program, 2000, p. 62)

It is interesting that a document, such as the Primary Program (2000) which is considered by some to be out of date, contains more specific and useful guidelines for teachers in terms of visual literacy and aesthetic education than the new draft Curriculum documents.

Project Overview

In chapter 1 I have outlined how I came to my focus, the significance of visual literacy and connections to the curriculum. In Chapter 2 I summarize the theoretical foundations and conceptual frameworks of visual literacy and picturebooks, and present a review of selected relevant literature. Topics covered in the literature review include classroom community and dialogism, multimodality, social semiotics, semiotic resources, visual literacy, critical literacy, picturebooks, responding to artwork in picturebooks, interactive read-alouds and interthinking, and meaningful discussion. In Chapter 3 I describe the Professional Development workshop that I created, connect the PowerPoint™ slides from the workshop to the literature reviewed in chapter 2, reflect upon what I have learned while developing my project, and identify implications for future research.

The Appendix contains the PowerPoint™ presentation I created, titled “Picturebooks and Visual Literacy in K-2 Classrooms.” The intent of the workshop is to provide teachers with background information about visual literacy. As well as discussing the importance of teaching visual literacy skills and their relevance for primary students, I offer practical suggestions on how to incorporate visual literacy into daily practice. The presentation emphasizes the importance of dialogic talk and the creation of classroom community. The design of the workshop is consistent with its purpose as the hands-on, concrete activities incorporate a pedagogic model of multimodality (New London Group, 1996) and incorporate elements of dialogic teaching.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

In this chapter I review relevant theories, conceptual frameworks and research related to how primary teachers can use picturebooks to enhance visual literacies in Kindergarten to Grade 2 students. I discuss Louise Rosenblatt's (1978) transactional theory of reading and the foundational concepts of Lev Vygotsky's sociocultural theory (1978), including the role of talk in the formation of culture, and the zone of proximal development. Dialogism and the role of Gee's (1989) classroom 'D/d' discourse in the formation of classroom community are also discussed. The conceptual frameworks of multimodality and semiotics, visual literacy and critical literacy provide a context for the literature review. Picturebooks are defined, and the relationship between the artwork and text in these multimodal texts is explored, along with student response to picturebook artwork. Finally, oral response and discussion, through the utilization of interactive picturebook read-alouds that teach elements of visual art and design are featured as ways to promote interthinking and increase comprehension for young students.

Theoretical and Conceptual Foundations

Louise Rosenblatt.

The transactional theory of Louise Rosenblatt (1978) describes the relationship between reader and text as an active, reciprocal process, wherein "the reader of any text must actively draw upon past experience and call forth the 'meaning' from the coded symbols" (p. 22). A 'triadic' relationship between sign, object and interpretant provides a different experience for each reader as he/she transacts with a particular text during a particular moment in time (Rosenblatt, 1986). Each reading event is distinctive because "each reader brings a unique reservoir of public and private significances, the residue of past experiences with language and

text in life situations” to the reading transaction (Rosenblatt, 1986, p. 123). Rosenblatt (1986) proposed that ‘meaning’ was finally organized and arrived at during this complex, back and forth, changeable transaction between reader and text. What the reader chooses to focus on and engage with, the allocation of her/his ‘selective attention’ affects the transaction, for “what is pushed into the background or repressed, depends on where, (and) on what aspects of the triadic symbolization, the attention is focused” (Rosenblatt, 1986, p. 123). As each reading ‘event’ falls on a continuum, and contains “both public (analytic, abstracting, lexical) and private (experiential, affective, associational) components” (Rosenblatt, 1995, p. 351), the reader’s stance is determined proportionally to the selective attention given to each aspect (Rosenblatt, 1995).

A predominantly efferent stance is centered on what information is to be preserved and remembered following the reading event (Rosenblatt, 1986). It draws primarily from a public aspect of sense as the

reader disengages his attention as much as possible from the personal and qualitative elements in his response to the verbal symbols: he concentrates on what the symbols designate, what they may be contributing to the end result that he seeks – the information, the concepts, the guides to action, that will be left with him when the reading is over.

(Rosenblatt, 1978, p. 27)

In contrast, a predominantly aesthetic stance to reading focuses on the private aspects of sense (Rosenblatt, 1995), as the reader’s attention is fixated on the tangible experience they are living through *during* the event (Rosenblatt, 1978). This focus “permits the whole range of responses generated by the text to enter into the center of awareness” (Rosenblatt, 1978, p. 28). The “inner tensions, sensations, feelings and associations accompanying images and ideas may

colour imagined scenes, actions and characters,” and these emotions and thoughts affect the lived-through work, or ‘evocation,’ which evolves through the reading transaction (Rosenblatt, 1986, p. 124). Readers must “turn their attention towards the experiences that the text signals, inwards towards their own transaction between themselves and the text, in order for a literary work or art, or ‘poem’ to occur” (Rosenblatt, 1978, p. 28).

Rosenblatt (1986) suggests that educators need to provide opportunities for students to “savor, (and) deepen, the lived-through experience, to recapture and reflect on it, to organize their sense of it” (p. 126). This focus on the aesthetic will increase students’ experiences with texts, which will in turn affect their “capacity to evoke and to criticize” (Rosenblatt, 1986, p. 126). Rosenblatt warns that too often teachers of literature and the arts tend to concentrate on efferent concerns, “to focus on presenting a ‘correct,’ traditional interpretation, and on knowledge about technical devices or biographical or historical background” (Karolides, 1999, p. 165). This emphasis communicates to students that skills are the most important element to demonstrate mastery of, which in turn, decreases the value of the text as a source of knowledge or experience (Karolides, 1999). Reading must be taught and perceived to be an authentic meaning-making process (Karolides, 1999), for the individual aesthetic transaction “no matter how limited or immature, can provide the basis for growth” (Rosenblatt, 1986, p. 127).

Rosenblatt (1986) believed that response occurs during the reading event and also following it, as the reader reacts to and interprets the text, which can in turn influence the reader’s choices and opinions as she/he continues to read. While the signs on the page may be the same, the transaction represents the reader’s interpretation in relation to those signs. In this respect, each reading event and interpretation is unique, and represents an individual transaction between the reader and the text, as “no one else can read a text aesthetically for us; no one else

can experience the aesthetic evocation for us” (Rosenblatt, 1986, p. 125). Rosenblatt does caution that while “readers could make various defensible interpretations of their evocations ... that some interpretations are more valid than others” (Pantaleo, 2013b, p. 126). Therefore, it is important that educators provide students with an aesthetic education, so that students can become aware of “sensuous, cognitive, and affective elements that can enter into the process of selective awareness and synthesis” (Rosenblatt, 1986, p. 127).

Lev Vygotsky.

Rosenblatt (1982) emphasizes discussion as a means to provide insight into what students have made of the text and to “foster expressions of response that keep the experiential, qualitative elements in mind” (p. 276). Talk is a natural mode through which to nurture an aesthetic education and within primary classrooms teacher read-aloud is a commonly utilized strategy to cultivate discussion and increase comprehension. Vygotsky’s sociocultural theory provides the foundation when discussing the relationship between talk and learning. Smagorinsky (2007) describes the important connection between thinking and speech as “the primary tool in the construction of culture” (p. 64). Vygotsky describes learning as a social process, where people learn different ways of thinking through interacting with others (Smagorinsky, 2013). This active process is unique for each individual, as cognition is situated culturally and historically as “culturally learned ways of knowing – those that people learn through their interactions with those who surround them – provide a major source of difference in how people learn how to think” (Smagorinsky, 2013, p. 197). According to Smagorinsky (2007), the thinking process goes both ways: not only does people’s thinking influence their world, but consequently their involvement within their world likewise shapes their thinking.

Within multicultural diverse classrooms this concept has important implications, as schools tend to “remain dedicated to the values of the White middle class” (Smagorinsky, 2013, p. 197).

Vygotsky maintained that speech could be utilized as a tool to generate and explore ideas (Smagorinsky, 2013). Barnes (2008) defines exploratory talk as speech which is cautious and imperfect in nature, allowing the speaker to experiment and make connections between ideas without the usual pressures of formal language. This type of talk contrasts sharply with presentational talk, which is marked by its official or formal nature, and both content and manner of speaking are adjusted according to one’s audience, resulting in less talk (Barnes, 2008). For Vygotsky, “through the act of moving inchoate thinking into a public, articulated form, the thinking itself may undergo change” (Smagorinsky, 2013, p. 194). While a speaker utilizing exploratory talk may experiment playfully with language to develop new ideas (Smagorinsky, 2007), the primary use of a formal discourse at school can exclude or stigmatize students of different socio-economic, cultural or ethnic backgrounds (Smagorinsky, 2013). Vygotsky perceived emotions to be tied inseparably to thinking, and described the long-term feelings of dysphoria, which can develop if early school experiences limit cognitive experiences negatively (Smagorinsky, 2013).

Another significant Vygotskian (1987) concept is the Zone of Proximal Development. Vygotsky (1987) describes the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) as a form of scaffolding, for “what the child is able to do in collaboration today he will be able to do independently tomorrow” (p. 211 as cited in Smagorinsky, 2013, p. 199). The ZPD is based on the premise that a skilled adult or knowledgeable peer can assist in guiding students’ learning towards a new level of competency (Smagorinsky, 2013). This scaffolding cannot occur in isolation; activating

students' background knowledge is an integral part of this process in order for students to make sense of their thinking (Smagorinsky, 2013).

With respect to my project, the theories discussed above underline the importance of teachers modelling an aesthetic stance towards reading and discussion, so that students can experience a positive personal experience with picturebooks. In addition, the theories underscore how rich discussions can scaffold student learning, facilitate the co-construction of knowledge, and provide a medium for all voices to be heard.

Classroom community and dialogism.

Vygotskian sociocultural theory emphasizes the importance of teachers facilitating the construction of an inclusive classroom community that enables equitable discourse. A discourse is defined by Gee (1989) as linked “stretches of language that make sense” (p. 6). Thus, a classroom discourse is the way that students and teachers talk in a classroom. In contrast, ‘Discourses’ are “ways of being in the world; they are forms of life which integrate words, acts, values, beliefs, attitudes and social identities as well as gestures, glances, body positions and clothes” (Gee, 1989, p. 7). Therefore, one’s primary ‘Discourse’ of “saying (writing) – doing – being – valuing – [and] believing” operates within the ‘Discourse’ of school (Gee, 1989, p. 6). All students who enter a classroom bring an “identity kit” based on their specific sociocultural background, making the school and the classrooms within it their secondary Discourse (Gee, 1989, p. 8). This distinction is significant, as teachers need to recognize that each student brings a different set of values, beliefs and skills to the classroom, making the teacher’s role to respect, nurture and ensure success for all, a challenging one.

Providing a space or time for talk in the classroom may appear simplistic at first glance; however, the power relationships related to talk in the classroom reveal a much more complex

dynamic between teacher and students. As “talk is a medium for teaching and learning” (Myhill, 2006, p. 21), it is a central part of any classroom environment; however, whose voice is primarily heard? Certainly, it is too often the teacher who is in charge of the discourse, with students chiming in at controlled times (Myhill, 2006, p. 36). As Cazden (2001) purports, in many classrooms, teachers have the sole right to speak at anytime, anywhere, to anyone and in any tone or volume. So while it may appear easy to imagine a classroom where discourse is shared and valued between students and teacher alike, it may be more difficult to actually accomplish this relationship. Research has shown that many teachers feel a need to be ‘in charge’ of discourse in the classroom for several reasons, including obligations to fulfill curriculum objectives (Myhill, 2006). Wood (1988) argues that utilizing closed questioning discourse patterns has been demonstrated to “generate relatively silent children” (as cited in Myhill, 2006). Conversely, open questioning techniques tend to provide increased opportunities for longer and more varied responses; however, teacher talk appears to default back towards factual, closed question and answer patterns, or IRE’s (Initiation, Response, Evaluation) (Myhill, 2006). Rojas-Drummond and Mercer (2003) suggest that it is not that teachers’ questions are utilized too often, but that they are utilized for purposes that are not always educationally valuable. Clearly, teachers need to put great thought into what type of questioning they value, and how best to provoke a meaningful discourse in their classrooms.

In order to create an open, welcoming classroom community that encourages talk, educators need to work to create a classroom community based on the principles of dialogic teaching set out by Alexander (2008). Alexander believes that within a dialogic classroom, teachers and students work together purposefully, in a reciprocal relationship, with students freely communicating their ideas in a setting that is accepting and non-intimidating. As

mentioned previously, exploratory talk provides a valuable “means of working on understanding, but learners are unlikely to embark on it unless they feel relatively at ease, free from the danger of being aggressively contradicted or made fun of” (Barnes, 2008, p. 5). Exploratory talk enables students to experiment and explore new ideas, rearrange information and change their thinking while talking together (Barnes, 2008). Knowledge is built cumulatively, as “teachers and children build on their own and each other’s ideas and chain them into coherent lines of thinking and enquiry” (Alexander, 2008, p. 105). In order to achieve a dialogic classroom, educators need to work together with their students to set the basic foundations for effective talk (Alexander, 2008; Barnes, 2008). In fact, many teachers assume that students know how to talk productively, when in fact it is a collaborative process that they must be taught in order to be successful (Simpson, Mercer & Majors, 2010). Alexander suggests that educators need to nurture an environment of respectful listening and collective talk, and make a shift towards questioning strategies that are more focused and open-ended to allow the construction of knowledge to occur. Furthermore, Barnes (2008) cautions that while both presentational talk and exploratory talk are important components of learning, teachers need to be cognizant of the distinctions between them and use them appropriately.

According to Boyd and Galda (2011), teachers can further facilitate meaningful discussion and elaboration and place students in a position of knowledgeable authority by practicing ‘uptake,’ which occurs when a teacher “selectively directs and supports student meaning making” (p. 13). Simply utilizing IRE questioning strategies has been shown to limit student talk and learning, however, when teachers decide to forgo the evaluator step, and instead follow-up with another question, an opportunity for authentic student discussion can occur (Boyd & Galda, 2011). Boyd and Galda (2011) believe this ‘third move’ is crucial, as it either promotes

and scaffolds student discussion or limits and entirely shuts down student exchanges. They also outline the importance of contingent questioning, which is unformulated (arising spontaneously out of discussion), and relies upon student contributions to bring about further exploratory discussion.

In order to enable genuine talk to occur in their classrooms, “teachers must actively construct a classroom learning culture that welcomes ideas and either ignores or responds to mistakes calmly” (Boyd & Galda, 2011, p. 19). Furthermore, teachers need to recognize and honour the multiple voices represented by the students in their care.

Multimodality.

The social nature of learning as a communicational act is a foundational assumption of multimodality (Jewitt, 2009). Multimodal approaches recognize “the full range of communicational forms” or modes that people use to represent meaning (Jewitt, 2009, p. 14). A mode can be defined as a “socially shaped and culturally given resource for making meaning” (Kress, 2014, p. 60). Specifically, “image, writing, layout, music, gesture, speech, moving image, soundtrack are examples of modes used in representation and communication” (Kress, 2014, p. 60).

Jewitt outlines four underlying assumptions of multimodal approaches. Firstly Jewitt (2009) suggests that “language is part of a multimodal ensemble” (p. 14), however, meaning can be made through many communicative modes. In fact, multimodality subjugates written language as but one of many possible modes available to transmit meaning (Jewitt, 2009). When multiple modes, or “systems of visual and verbal entities created within or across various cultures to represent and express meanings” (Serafini, 2014, p. 12) are utilized within a text, a multimodal ensemble is created. The picturebook is but one example of a multimodal ensemble,

wherein each mode plays an important part within the whole (Jewitt, 2008). As no one mode stands in isolation within the meaning-making process, “multimodal understandings of literacy require the investigation of the full multimodal ensemble used in any communicative event” (Jewitt, 2008, p. 247). The second assumption of multimodality is that “each mode in a multimodal ensemble is understood as realizing different communicative work” (Jewitt, 2009, p. 15). The third assumption is that “people orchestrate meaning through their selection and configuration of modes” (Jewitt, 2009, p. 15). Lastly, the fourth assumption of multimodal research is that “multimodality is built on the assumption that the meanings of signs fashioned from multimodal semiotic resources are, like speech, social” (Jewitt, 2009, p. 15).

Multimodal texts.

As multimodal ensembles, picturebooks are a form of multimodal text that must be read and interpreted as an aesthetic whole, with each mode communicating different information to the reader/viewer. Serafini (2014) states that four aspects of multimodality, materiality, modal fixing and aptness, affordances and limitations, and design play “an essential role in understanding how multimodal ensembles are constructed and organized, how various representational systems are used, and how these images and texts work in particular social contexts” (p. 48). Materiality refers to the fact that each mode is formed with different materials, resulting in meaning being realized in different ways; this variation is dependent on what meaning potentials the designer wants to communicate (Serafini, 2014). Modal fixing refers to the particular meanings, which “are selected by the rhetor to be represented in the various modes and resources available” (Serafini, 2014, p. 50). Serafini suggests that modes are fixed and situated within a certain moment and place in time, are represented within a certain system, and are dependent on the affordances and limitations of the selected modes and materials. When

author-illustrators design picturebooks and make choices among various modes, the “illustrations, design elements, or written language, are based on the aptness of that particular mode” (Serafini, 2014, p. 50). Certain concepts and information can be presented better one way over another, but the author-illustrator makes the decision of “selecting the most apt forms and materials from which to fix the intended meaning potentials” (Serafini, 2014, p. 50). Within a multimodal ensemble, each mode affords different possibilities, or affordances, which signify the “potential for expressing and representing particular aspects of our world and experiences” (Serafini, 2014, p. 51). Likewise, limitations refer to the constraints of a mode. Design “involves arranging various representational systems to fix meanings in the most apt forms possible” (Serafini, 2014, p. 52), and it also involves the transformation of available designs into new ones, or ‘redesigning the design’ (Cope & Kalantzis, 2013).

In order to study multimodal texts, it is helpful to look at Kress and van Leeuwen’s (1996) interpretation of Halliday’s (1978) theoretical notion of the three metafunctions, which are described as the ideational, the interpersonal and the textual. The ideational metafunction refers to the “choices or different ways in which objects, and their relations to other objects, and to processes can be represented” (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996, p. 42) by semiotic modes. The interpersonal metafunction signifies the relationship between the producer of a sign and the intended recipient, as it “has to be able to represent a particular social relation between the producer, the viewer, and the object represented” (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996, p. 42). In terms of the textual metafunction, Kress and van Leeuwen (1996) hold that modes also need to have “the capacity to form texts, complexes of signs that cohere both internally with each other and externally within the context in and for which they were produced” (p. 43). These three

metafunctions can assist educators to understand how different features of multimodal ensembles work to provide meaning potentials, and assist students to better interpret them (Serafini, 2014).

Social semiotics.

According to Kress (2010), the combination of multimodality and social semiotics bring many benefits “in understanding apt forms of communication through better understandings of design” (p. 16). The study of semiotics was founded by Saussure and Peirce, and refers to “the study not only of what we refer to as ‘signs’ in everyday speech, but of anything which ‘stands for’ something else” (Chandler, 2002, p. 2). While Saussure put forth a two part model of ‘signifier’ and ‘signified’, Peirce stressed a three part model: “1. The representamen: the form which the sign takes (not necessarily material). 2. An interpretant: not an interpreter but rather the sense made of the sign. 3. An object: to which the sign refers” (Chandler, 2002, p. 32).

Social-semiotic theory is focused on making meaning, in all of its forms, which arises out of social interactions within a specific social environment (Kress, 2010). Kress (2010) maintains that the social is “the source, the origin and the generator of meaning” (p. 54) and that social semiotics differs from other strands of semiotics in that it focuses on sign-making rather than sign use. The “application of social semiotics theory in the field of multimodality emphasizes the social and cultural nature of the semiotic resources and affordances of various modes” (Pantaleo, 2014b, p. 39)

In terms of picturebooks,

a social semiotic analysis of image, for example, would focus on a sign-maker’s choice and deployment of the semiotic resources and affordances of this mode, explore how the latter shape particular meanings in the text, and situate the making, interpretation and analysis of the text in a particular social context. (Pantaleo, 2014b, p. 39)

For example, the work of Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006) outlines the semiotic resources of visual design; these visual codes, or ‘visual grammar’ assist in interpreting the potential meanings of elements of art and design such as line, framing, and colour (Walsh, 2006). Students need to learn to understand the intention of the designer, which is particularly important as “images have other effects that are different from words, particularly at affective, aesthetic and imaginative levels” (Walsh, 2006, p. 29).

It is helpful to examine the literature related to the principles of art and design in order to illustrate their potential as semiotic resources. For the purposes of this project, I focus on colour, line, typography, layout and shape.

Semiotic resources.

Colour.

Colour is created by wavelengths of light reflecting off a surface, with variations in hue referring to the colour continuum from blue to red (Prince, 2008; Sherin, 2011). Saturation is defined as the intensity of pure colour, without the addition of black or white (Sherin, 2011). According to Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) the saturation scale “allows many different more precise and strongly value-laden meanings” (p. 233).

In terms of colour as a semiotic resource, colours are directly tied to human emotion, and the meaning associated with colours varies from culture to culture and even between people from the same culture, as they will perceive it differently and associate different emotional responses with the specific colours (Day, 2013; Serafini, 2014). Warm colours such as reds, yellows and oranges can signify fiery emotions such as anger, joy, passion, power and heat (Kidd, 2013; Serafini, 2014), whereas cool tones such as blues, greens, purples and grays can signify a much frostier, cold, calm and detached meaning (Day, 2013; Kidd, 2013; Serafini, 2014). Colours can

be used to draw attention, frame visual elements, make connections to time periods or cultural settings, or give a more realistic feel to an image (Serafini, 2014). Teachers need to teach students to look beyond their preference for certain colours and consider the cultural significance and meanings that are associated with colour, as well as to consider how they affect the meaning-making process (Serafini, 2014). For example, while black is associated with death and mourning in most western cultures, the people of some Asian countries instead associate white with grief (Sipe, 2011).

Line.

Line is a basic unit of visual art and may be defined as “the shortest distance between two dots” (Serafini, 2014, p. 56) or “the path of a moving point” (Prince, 2008, p. 82). Line can convey movement or action, emotions, or texture in images (Day, 2013; Martens, Martens, Doyle, Loomis & Aghalarov, 2012; Pantaleo, 2013a). Weight, direction, size, position and colour of line can emphasize or imply different meanings in an image (Serafini, 2014). The weight of lines may vary from broad, thick, heavy or bold, to thin, light or faint (Day, 2013; Sipe, 2011), and the size of lines may range from small to large, depending on what the artist wishes to draw attention to (Serafini, 2014). Generally, the larger the element, the greater the importance or significance associated with it, as “larger objects have more power and tend to overshadow smaller objects” (Serafini, 2014, p. 58). Cross-hatching refers to fine lines which intersect each other in a criss-cross fashion, and may be used to darken areas of an image, creating a feeling of tension or energy (Sipe, 2011). Repeated lines can form patterns, which may portray meaning or a theme depending on whether the pattern is continued or broken (Serafini, 2014). Furthermore, the quality or style of line, whether jagged or scribbled, pointed and sharp or wavy and smooth, “can establish a tone or feeling” (O’Neil, 2011, p. 215), and

different brush-strokes or media hold different meaning potentials (Day, 2013; Short, Lynch-Brown & Tomlinson, 2014).

Positionality and directionality of lines also hold semiotic meaning (Serafini, 2014). Vertical lines represent stability and sturdiness, and are frequently utilized to separate visual elements in an image (Kidd, 2013; Serafini, 2014). According to Kress and van Leeuwen (2006), vertical lines can separate images into two distinct sections, “literally and figuratively drawing a line” (p. 176) between images. Bang (2000) suggests that vertical lines are more exciting and active as “they rebel against the earth’s gravity” (p. 44). In contrast, horizontal lines are related to feelings of serenity and calmness, and are used to bring elements together in an image (Bang, 2000; Serafini, 2014; Short et al., 2014). Diagonal lines suggest movement or tension by leading the eye across the image, creating a more energetic response (Bang, 2000; Serafini, 2014; Short et al., 2014), while curved lines are more comfortable on the eyes, and suggest a relaxed mood reminiscent of nature (Cox, 2011). Finally, leading line refers to visual paths such as roads, railway tracks or fence lines that draw the viewer through the scene and towards the subject (Excell, 2014).

Typography.

Typography is defined as “the art and process of [selecting] and arranging type on a page” (Graham, 2002 as cited in Pantaleo, 2014a, p. 144). The term typeface refers to the “consistent design, or distinct visual form, of a type family ... a cohesive system of related shapes created by a type designer” (Cullen, 2012, p. 55) such as Helvetica, Century Gothic and Rockwell. The term font is used to describe the typeface, in that it can be bold, italic or light (Cullen, 2012; Kidd, 2013), with variations in font size being utilized in order to increase or decrease volume or attention to text (Serafini, 2014). The weight of a font can vary from thin to bold, with bolder

fonts attracting more attention and alluding to power and strength, and finer fonts suggesting meekness and submissiveness (Serafini, 2014; van Leeuwen, 2006). The style of a font can portray a formal style, mimic child-like printing or handwriting or reflect a more casual mood (Serafini, 2014). Historical qualities of fonts also play a role, as readers assume certain qualities with certain typefaces as a result of their classical or modern style (Samara, 2014). Furthermore, varying the fonts on a page can send additional messages to the reader (Samara, 2014), while changing the colour of the font can be employed to bring attention to parts of the text or to suggest certain emotions (Serafini, 2014). Designers also utilize italics and caps to stress or emphasize certain words or sections of text. Italics serve to set the text apart from the main body or to suggest movement or energy (Kidd, 2013; Serafini, 2014) and capitals are frequently used for titles, although they also signify an increase in volume, or yelling (Kidd, 2013; Pantaleo, 2013a).

Elements of typography in contemporary picturebooks have become a central part of the story, rather than simply functioning as an element to relay the written message (Serafini, 2014; Short et al., 2014). Indeed, van Leeuwen (2006) asserts that recent technological developments have allowed typography to evolve, where it is no longer seem to be an “abstract art, but as a means of communication in its own right” (p. 142). Samara (2014) concurs that typography is also visual, in that text is transformed into “an expression of what it means” (p. 162) and can be regarded as image. Typography is “multimodal, integrated with other semiotic means of expression such as colour, texture, three-dimensionality and movement” (van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 144).

Within a multimodal ensemble, typography can enhance potential meanings, as the same text may denote varying meanings depending on the typeface that is utilized (Kidd, 2013;

Serafini, 2014). The choice of typeface and its arrangement adds to the overall cohesion of the multimodal ensemble (Serafini, 2014; Short et al., 2014; Sipe, 2008) and should match both the audience and the mood or style being created (Cullen, 2012; Kidd, 2013; Short et al., 2014).

Pantaleo (2014a) notes that a number of author/illustrators acknowledge their purposeful use of typography to communicate semiotic meaning in picturebooks. When interpreting multimodal ensembles, teachers need to ensure that students can recognize “not only what is written, but how it is presented” (Serafini, 2014, p. 60).

Layout.

Layout refers to how and where images and text are placed and sequenced on a page. When an illustration spreads across both pages of an opening, it is referred to as a double-page spread. This layout can produce an effect of movement as the eye is drawn across both pages, as well as nurture a sense of openness and splendor (Short et al., 2014) as the reader is invited to participate (Sipe, 2011). Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) maintain that when looking at a double-page spread, the images found on the verso (left) represent the ‘Given,’ or status quo, and images found on the recto (right) represent the ‘New’ or suggested change or movement, as they are closer to a page break.

A page break occurs when a page is turned, moving from one opening to another; these ‘gaps’ in the narrative must be carefully planned out (Sipe, 2008, 2011). Discussing the events that could have transpired between openings is an excellent way to foster higher-level thinking and inferencing skills with children (Sipe & Brightman, 2009). Sipe and Brightman (2009) maintain that these skills are essential for students to learn, as they develop students’ abilities to follow complex narratives that are non-linear.

Within the layout of a page, frames can serve to create a more formal, orderly mood, or to create detachment or distance between the reader and the events occurring in the illustration (Pantaleo, 2008b; Short et al., 2014). The reader is able to see only the portions of the world that the designer has chosen to include, which defines his/her view of the world (Serafini, 2014). Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) hold that stronger framing equates with separation and individuality, while the absence of framing places an emphasis on continuity and the group as a whole. Connectedness in illustrations “can be emphasized by vectors, by depicted elements or by abstract graphic elements, leading the eye from one element to another (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 204). When images extend beyond the confines of the frame, a frame break occurs, which can be utilized to provide visual interest, imply size, or to suggest escape or movement (Sipe, 2011).

In terms of layout, the placement and positioning of images on a page also hold meaning (Bang, 2000; Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). The upper half of an illustration is a place of lightness, happiness and freedom and can even invoke feelings of spirituality; however, the bottom half of an illustration can feel more grounded, constrained, weightier or unhappy (Bang, 2000). Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) refer to this placement as the ‘Ideal’ (at the top of the page) and the ‘Real’ (at the bottom of the page). The center of the illustration is of dominant importance, as it is where the eye is drawn naturally as the ‘center of attention’ (Bang, 2000).

Shape.

Shapes are “spaces that are designated by straight, angular, or rounded lines” (Serafini, 2014, p. 57) and can assist in setting a mood and delivering a message (Short et al., 2014). They can be geometric or irregular (Prince, 2008; Short et al.), clearly defined or fluid (Short et al., 2014), and open or closed (Serafini, 2014). Closed shapes create the impression of a gate, in that

certain elements are enclosed and other elements are left on the exterior (Serafini, 2014). In general, people feel more comfortable looking at curved shapes with rounded edges, as they are associated with maternal embraces, a sense of protection, nature and security (Bang, 2000). For example, circle shapes produce a meaning potential of comforting reassurance, safety and endlessness (Kidd, 2013; Martens et al., 2012). Conversely, pointed edges bring to mind weapons, cutting tools or things that cause harm, and therefore are associated with feelings of fear and insecurity (Bang, 2000; Martens et al., 2012). Triangle shapes produce a meaning potential of tension and discord, while square shapes offer conformity and solidity (Serafini, 2014). The size of a shape in a picture is related to its importance and strength, with larger shapes being perceived as stronger, and smaller shapes as more vulnerable and weak (Bang, 2000; Short et al., 2014). Shapes that lean towards the central character convey a sense that progress is being blocked, whereas shapes leaning away from the protagonist imply that they are being lead or propelled forward (Bang, 2000). Space isolates a shape, and leaves it alone and vulnerable, with the movement of an image being determined equally by the shapes as by the spaces between them (Bang, 2000).

Even amongst the above examples that demonstrate the semiotic meaning of several principles of visual art and design, it is evident that these elements are interconnected and work together symbiotically as an aesthetic whole. Research indicates that, “corresponding semiotic means of expression no longer occupy distinct territories, but are interconnected in many different ways” (van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 144). Students must learn to analyze and read texts multimodally, rather than focusing simply on the written language (van Leeuwen, 2006). As an example of a multimodal ensemble, picturebooks provide an accessible format of literature for young learners to gain flexibility, knowledge and insight into reading images.

Visual literacy.

The role of visual literacies, and that of the image, takes a key position within the discussion of multimodality and multiliteracies, and is founded in the semiotic notion that signs (images and symbols) can be read (Apkon, 2013; Kress, 2004). In fact, images can communicate information quickly and efficiently, with unmistakable clarity of meaning (Kress, 2004) and must “no longer be subservient to the printed text, as they are a system of meaning in their own right” (Serafini, 2012, p. 30). How the image is interpreted by the reader and the meaning is implied by the designer are socially and culturally constructed (Kress, 2004; Piro, 2002; Styles & Arizpe, 2001). Visual literacy can be defined as “a group of largely acquired abilities, i.e., the abilities to understand (read), and to use (write) images, as well as to think and learn in terms of images” (Avgerinou, 2003 as cited in Avgerinou, 2009, p. 29). Avgerinou (2009) also identifies 11 visual competencies, including knowledge of visual vocabulary, knowledge of visual conventions, visual thinking, visualization, verbo-visual reasoning, critical viewing, visual discrimination, visual reconstruction, sensitivity to visual association, reconstructing meaning and constructing meaning (p. 30).

Researchers and scholars have noted that within our schools, visual literacies do not receive the same attention and importance as print and language-based literacies (Apkon, 2013; Avgerinou, 2009; Jewitt, 2008). The proponents of multimodality emphasize how this situation needs to change in order to adequately prepare students for the digital age, as texts found outside of school grow more complex in nature (Avgerinou, 2009; Jewitt, 2008; Serafini, 2012; Sipe, 2008b). Webpages, blogs, wikis, video games and apps that many students encounter on a daily basis are examples of image-dominated multimodal texts which are screen-based and afford the reader multiple access points and navigable directions (Hassett & Curwood, 2009; Kress, 2004;

Serafini, 2012). Readers are no longer obliged to follow the linear reading path which dominated traditional print text formats (Kress, 2004). In order to navigate through multimodal texts, the reader is required to take a more active role, making each transaction unique (Serafini, 2012). Readers must understand certain elements of visual design (e.g. line, colour, framing) as well as other structures associated with multimodal formats (typography and graphic elements) (Serafini, 2012) in order to better understand and comprehend what they are reading (Avgerinou, 2009).

Within primary classrooms, the picturebook represents an accessible and economically feasible entry point into the innovative world of visual literacies. Picturebooks, and especially contemporary picturebooks, present numerous opportunities for young readers to develop skills in visual literacy, as “there is much to be read from a picture, much to be inferred and understood implicitly as well as what is obviously depicted” (O’Neil, 2011, p. 222). Pantaleo (2004) suggests that picturebooks containing metafictional devices can assist in the development of visual literacy skills, and makes a connection between skills required to navigate picturebooks containing these devices and those necessary to be proficient in web literacy. Ultimately, students must realize that the art *is* the text they need to attend to (in addition to the written text), and does not simply exist to accompany the written account as demonstrated in traditional formats (Martens et al., 2012). Reading both the text *and* the visual elements in a ‘synergistic’ manner can provide a deeper understanding of the text as a whole (Martens et al., 2012; Piro, 2002, Sipe, 2008b, Styles & Arizpe, 2001).

As discussed later in this chapter, young children are indeed most capable of developing the ability to read picturebooks multimodally (Martens et al., 2012; Piro, 2002; Prior, Wilson & Martinez, 2012; Styles & Arizpe, 2001). In fact, primary students have demonstrated a high

degree of responsiveness to an expanded view of literacy (Williams, 2007), with visual navigation of picturebooks often being their first reading experience (Piro, 2002).

In addition, students need to realize that “artists, like authors, make conscious, deliberate decisions about the use of line, colour, shape and so on” (Martens et al., 2012, p. 291) in order to gain a complete understanding of the text as an aesthetic whole. This information provides students with other meaning-making avenues to have at their disposal when navigating texts (Martens et al., 2012) and nurtures flexibility between modes. Teachers therefore need to explicitly teach their students how to navigate and ‘read’ the images (Apkon, 2013; Avgerinou, 2009; Jewitt, 2008; O’Neil, 2011; Pantaleo, 2015; Serafini, 2012; Sipe, 2008b; Styles & Arizpe, 2001; Williams, 2007), which is not an instinctive response, and must in fact be learned (Avgerinou, 2009; Pantaleo, 2015; Prior et al., 2012; Sipe, 2008b). Educators themselves need to become more proficient readers of the wide range of innovative elements of visual art found in multimodal texts in order to encourage and foster meaningful conversations among their students (Serafini, 2012). In addition to developing a knowledge base in visual art, teachers need to thoughtfully “curate” which picturebooks best convey these elements (Prior et al., 2012), which may prove challenging as many teachers feel woefully unprepared to assume this role (Sipe, 2008b).

Critical literacy.

Critical literacy models can apply to the development of visual literacy skills in the classroom as they hold the “explicit aim of developing useful, powerful mastery of texts to transform lived social relations and material conditions” (Luke & Woods, 2009, p. 9). These models are based on “social and cultural analysis and on how print and digital texts and discourses work” (Luke & Woods, 2009, p. 9). Within schools, where critical literacy principles

have been applied towards curricular areas, texts can provide a representation of the author-illustrator's perspective, as he/she selects the topic and chooses how to present the ideas contained within (Luke & Woods, 2009; McLaughlin & DeVogd, 2004). Critical literacy focuses on ensuring that readers become critically aware, and move beyond the literal level of the text (Luke & Woods, 2009; McLaughlin & DeVogd, 2004).

As the concept of 'literacy' is being redefined to reflect the influx of new literacies, educators need to expose students to a range of texts and facilitate discussions and analysis regarding their content, production and usage (Luke & Woods, 2009). McLaughlin and DeVogd (2004) maintain that the goal of critical literacy is to educate students to "become open-minded, active, strategic readers who are capable of viewing text from a critical perspective" (p. 56) and understand that information presented in texts is done so for a particular reason and purpose. Reading with a critical perspective involves students viewing texts "from a critical stance as naturally as they view it from aesthetic and efferent stances" (McLaughlin & DeVogd, 2004, p. 56). Teaching students to think from a critical stance can provide students with the tools and skills to question the perspective being presented in texts they encounter, and reflect upon "whose voice might be missing, discounted, or silenced" (McLaughlin & DeVogd, 2004, p. 54).

According to Avgerinou (2009), a 'multitude of literacies' is necessary to navigate the challenges of 21st century life, with visual literacy figuring prominently as one of the most critical. In terms of visual literacy, students must be explicitly taught to understand, interpret and question aspects of visual art and design, as "all aspects of visual composition have a cultural bias, meaning that they seem to offer meaning potentials only when associated with a specific socio-cultural context" (Serafini, 2014, p. 55). Students need to be made aware of the semiotic

meanings of colour, framing, and positionality, for example, in order to understand visual elements from a critical stance. Through questioning, and discussion of alternate perspectives and viewpoints, students can problem-solve together, and gain an appreciation or realization of how both the creation and reading of picturebooks are set within a particular sociocultural context. In fact, educators would be remiss not to teach this understanding to students. As Chandler (2002) states,

There is no escape from signs. Those who cannot understand them and the systems of which they are a part are in the greatest danger of being manipulated by those who can. In short, semiotics cannot be left to the semioticians. (p. 219)

As students apply what they have learned, critical literacy skills can provide students with the necessary resources to represent information in alternate ways within the process of redesign (Luke & Woods, 2009).

Picturebooks

Defining the picturebook.

Teaching students to read picturebooks multimodally, from a critical perspective requires a thorough understanding of picturebooks and the elements of visual art and design. As a format, picturebooks can be board books and participation books, concept books, alphabet books, counting books, poetry and song books, wordless books, predictable or pattern books, beginning to read books, informational books, and storybooks, which may or may not be postmodern in nature (Galda, Cullinan & Sipe, 2010). This literature review focuses on the picturebook as storybook.

Picturebooks, as a multimodal ensemble, tell “stories in a visual language that is rich and multileveled” (Serafini, 2014, p. 71). They present a unique combination of visual images and

written text (two sign systems) and many researchers have attempted to define these texts.

Bader's (1976) seminal definition includes both commercial and sociocultural aspects:

A picturebook is text, illustrations, total design; an item of manufacture and a commercial product; a social, cultural, historical document; and, foremost, an experience for a child.

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

(p. 1)

Bader's concept of interdependence was taken up by Nodelman (1988), who suggested that readers use pictures and text almost simultaneously to inform or "correct our understanding of the other" (p. 219). In other words, the pictures and words both limit and complete each other, each possessing qualities and meaning that the other does not. Nodelman (1988) uses the term 'irony' to describe this contradictory relationship, where "each speaks about matters on which the other is silent" (p. 221). Kiefer (1995) also refers to this interdependence, arguing that "the picturebook is a unique art object, a combination of image and idea that allows the reader to come away with more than the sum of the parts" (p. 6), while Sipe (2008) prefers the definition of Marantz (1977), who further expanded the notion of interdependence to every part of the book, including the peritext, typography and overall design.

Sipe (1998) utilizes the semiotic theory of transmediation to illustrate how 'synergy' may be used to describe the equal relationship that exists between text and image. Sipe (1998) contends that text and image work together to provide a complete whole, wherein the "total effect depends not only on the union of the text and illustrations but also on the perceived interactions or transactions between these two parts" (p. 99). In contrast, Nikolajeva and Scott (2000) argue that the relationship between words and pictures is far too complex and varied to be

summarized with a single word. Instead, they suggest five categories to classify and describe the dynamics of interaction between words and image: symmetrical (words and images tell the same story), enhancing (words and images expand on one another), complementary (words and images both contribute to the narrative in different ways), counterpointing (words and images tell different stories), and contradictory (words and images contradict one another) (Nikolajeva & Scott, 2000, p. 225). Clearly, written text, images and design all play a critical role in creating a cohesive and aesthetic whole. This ‘ecology’ of the picturebook implies that “all these relationships are not merely present independently, but are related to each other in complex ways, in the same way a biosystem consists of a complicated set of relationships” (Lewis, 2001 as cited in Sipe, 2011, p. 242). Therefore it is important for educators to focus on the picturebook as an aesthetic whole, for “to attend to the written text in isolation from the visual images and design features is shortsighted and prevents students from appreciating the wonders of the picturebook form” (Serafini, 2014, p. 74).

Often, children have their first experience with high-quality art through the sharing of picturebooks (Sipe, 2011). Although picturebooks are (and will continue to be) valued by educators as indispensable resources in the teaching of literacy, Sipe (2011) points out their value as an aesthetic object. Within this context, picturebooks as art forms reflect “current cultures, identities, and ideologies, while at the same time challenging them, pushing their assumptions and proposing a deep ‘seeing’ and intellectual engagement that leads to new ways of conceiving of ourselves and the world” (Sipe, 2011, p. 246). As such, scholars have noted a “pictorial turn” (Mitchell, 1994 as cited in Sipe, 2011, p. 246) that reflects the growing role of the image, both in technology, advertising and marketing, and a “decrease in the verbocentric quality of western society” (Sipe, 2011, p. 246). Picturebooks contribute to this societal shift, as

evidenced by the increased publication and complexity of wordless and postmodern picturebooks (Martinez & Harmon, 2012; Sipe, 2011).

Martinez and Harmon (2012) investigated the relationship between pictures and text to determine how they worked together to develop literary elements such as plot, character, setting and mood in their content analysis of 30 picturebooks. The researchers created two lists of picturebooks, randomly selected from a list of 100 expert-recommended picturebooks (Galda, Cullinan & Sipe, 2009; Kiefer, 2009; Henry & Simpson, 2001; Martinez, Roser & Harmon, 2009; Miller, 1998; Temple, Martinez & Yokota, 2011) for both younger (preschool to age eight) and older (aged ten through to middle school) readers. These picturebooks were then analyzed, with the researchers examining the word count, lexile scores and vocabulary of each. The picturebooks were analyzed through picture walks, page-by-page analysis and global categorizations, followed by a second phase where the illustrations were carefully examined. The picturebook categories that were created described the picture-text relationship and included picture only, primarily pictures, interdependent, parallel, and primarily or only through text.

Findings revealed that in picturebooks for primary-aged students, visual images performed a significant role in developing the elements of plot, character and mood, and were either revealed solely through the illustrations, through the interplay of text and illustrations or by paralleling textual information (Martinez & Harmon, 2012). This finding contrasted slightly with the picturebooks for older students, where visual images were found to “play a dominant role primarily in setting, mood, and character relationships” (Martinez & Harmon, 2012, p. 337). This study highlights that “regardless of the age of readers, reading picturebooks is not the same as reading narratives that are developed only through text” (Martinez & Harmon, 2012, p. 337). Clearly the demands placed on readers by picturebooks, while they may vary slightly, require

students to attend to and understand illustrations in order to construct meaning. Martinez and Harmon (2012) suggest that educators need to support student learning of picturebooks by scaffolding instruction, explicitly teaching literary elements, and building a textual knowledge base that includes “an explicit understanding of how authors and illustrators can craft text using both visual and verbal tools” (p. 338). Their research underscores the complex nature of the relationship between images and texts in picturebooks, a relationship that merits consideration, as it “can impact a reader’s construction of meaning while processing and integrating pictorial information and textual information” (Martinez & Harmon, 2012, p. 338).

Responding to artwork in picturebooks.

How children make meaning when reading and navigating the dual sign systems of picturebooks has long been a focus for researchers and theorists. Evans (2009) suggests that responses to books all rest on a foundation of talk, and can include “written responses, drawings and illustrated responses, role play, dramatic enactments and Readers’ Theatre, and non-verbal responses including gestures, eye movements and touch” (p. 5). Therefore, responses to literature need to center on activities that stimulate active student participation. A response to literature may be defined as

mental, emotional, intellectual, sensory, physical. It encompasses the cognitive, affective, perceptual and psychomotor activities that the reader...performs as he reads or after he has read. Yet most teachers know that, in the classroom, a student’s response will be like an iceberg: only a small part will become apparent to the teacher or even to the student himself. (Purves & Rippere, 1968, p. xiii as cited in Pantaleo, 2008a, p. 21)

As the “processes of reading and comprehension are not directly accessible, researchers have relied on the oral, written and artistic responses to texts that are generated during and after

the reading experience to understand how readers respond to, and comprehend, texts” (Serafini, 2005, p. 47). Many different response typologies exist, making it difficult to compare results across studies (Martinez & Roser, 2003 as cited in Sipe, 2008a).

In response to the criticism noted by Martinez and Roser, Sipe (2008a) applied his own typologies across a variety of qualitative studies, focusing on primary students (Kindergarten to Grade 2) from diverse socio-economic and cultural backgrounds. In all five studies, Sipe’s focus was on student oral response to school-based read-alouds, which took place in large, urban centres in the Midwestern and Eastern United States. Students were encouraged to respond before, during and after the read-aloud event, and the teachers involved in the research were all experienced and knowledgeable about picturebooks. Sipe utilized transcripts of read-aloud events and field notes as data, which were then analyzed using qualitative content analysis techniques. Essentially Sipe examined each ‘conversational turn,’ or what was spoken by one speaker before another replied, to determine the nature of the discourse. Results were then compiled by sorting responses into core categories to arrive at the elements of young children’s literary understanding during the read-alouds. Sipe categorized student responses into the following five categories: analytical, intertextual, personal, transparent and performative.

Results indicated that the analytical response category was the largest, accounting for 73% of all coded data, and included all responses “dealing with the text as an opportunity to construct narrative meaning” (Sipe, 2008a, p. 85). As this category was so large, it was further divided into sub-categories: making narrative meaning, the book as cultural product, the language of text, analysis of illustrations (or visuals) and relationships between fiction and reality. Intertextual responses accounted for 10% of all coded responses, and involved discussions relating the text to other cultural works, such as works of art and other books. Personal responses focused on

students making connections between the text and their own lives, and comprised 10% of the coded data. Transparent responses made up only 2% of the coded data, and consisted of responses where the students “entered the narrative world of the story and had become one with it” (Sipe, 2008a, p. 86). Lastly, performative responses involved students utilizing the text as a springboard for their own imaginative interpretations; it accounted for approximately 5% of student responses. As a whole, these five categories are important as they provide a description of “what constituted literary understanding for children as suggested by their verbal responses” (Sipe, 2008a, p. 87). If verbal (oral) responses are an indicator of literary understanding, teachers need to nurture classroom environments that foster talk, especially during read-alouds of picturebooks. In her book about responding to literature, editor Janet Evans (2009) states that “it isn’t enough to just read a book, one must talk about it as well” (p. 3).

A seminal qualitative study of students’ responses to a picturebook with a complex visual text was conducted by Styles and Arizpe (2001). Following a pilot study, interviews were conducted with 24 students, aged 4-11 (chosen from a larger group), from two schools of contrasting socio-economic demographic in the United Kingdom. After group discussions about the picturebook *Zoo* (1992), by Anthony Browne, child participants were invited to draw an illustration in response to the text, as utilizing children’s artwork is often a way to access information that may not be easily articulated orally. Interview and group discussion transcripts were coded, and student artistic responses were analyzed.

Despite differences in socio-economic factors, the researchers found that student responses were remarkably similar to one another (Styles & Arizpe, 2001). Where there were marked differences, Styles and Arizpe (2001) attributed these differences to be a result of “teachers’/researchers’ input or to cultural factors rather than intrinsic differences between the

ability of the children to analyse visual texts” (p. 266). The child participants demonstrated an understanding of visual grammar such as framing, positionality, colour symbolism, emotion, ethics, and visual metaphors, which reaffirmed for Styles and Arizpe (2001) that “making meaning from pictures is a cognitive act” (p. 277). A main finding of the study revealed that “children who were not experienced readers of print could make deep and insightful interpretations of visual texts” (Styles & Arizpe, 2001, p. 266). Styles and Arizpe (2001) characterized the environment conducive to student learning as one which allows students time to look closely, think and respond, and which emphasizes “talk and image rather than written text and writing” (p. 280). Text choice and the use of informal, open-ended discussion and questioning strategies were also important factors for teachers to take away from the research by Styles and Arizpe.

A year-long action-research study by Martens et al. (2012) explored how children’s appreciation of art and written language could be developed through the reading of picturebooks and through the creation of their own work. The researchers and teachers worked as a team, and met weekly to plan out and discuss instructional strategies, utilizing materials from a basal reading program for reading instruction. Picturebooks that highlighted the artists’ utilization of the elements of art and design supplemented the program in order to form the basis for a series of lessons that supported and enhanced the reading objectives outlined in the curriculum. The Grade 1 students were provided with 50 minutes of art instruction per week, during which time discussion took place on how meaning could be constructed through the artist’s techniques and the use of the principles of art and design. Sketchbooks were purchased for the students, who were invited to experiment with art techniques following read-alouds, class discussions and lessons focused on the elements of art and design.

The findings of Martens et al. (2012) indicated that the child participants were able to think and read multimodally, and they moved flexibly between modes to construct meaning. A solid understanding of art can broaden students' learning, as "an equally valid mode of communication, in addition to written language, provides children with additional pathways through which to construct meaning" (Martens et al., 2012, p. 291). According to the researchers, knowledge of the principles of art and design enabled the students to experience a deeper and more complex understanding of what they were reading, and to realize that as readers, "they needed to read the art meanings along with the written text to fully understand a story" (Martens et al., 2011, p. 291). This study supports the idea that art is a "valid language that needs to be valued and taught" (Martens et al., 2012, p. 291).

The elements of visual art and design were also examined by Pantaleo (2015), in terms of how students' comprehension and interpretation of picturebooks would be affected through the development of primary students' understanding of art. This classroom-based study took place over a period of nine weeks, and focused on the students' responses to picturebooks that had been read and discussed with the children. The Grade 2 and 3 student participants attended an ethnically and culturally diverse elementary school in Western British Columbia, with families from predominantly low to middle class backgrounds. The teacher characterized the students as academically 'low' across all subject areas, with difficulties in focusing, and completing work with independence. Pantaleo worked alongside the teacher for 85-90 minutes per day, delivering instruction on peritextual features, elements of art and design (i.e., colour, point of view, typography, framing, line, perspective) and narrative structures (Pantaleo, 2015, p. 8). Teacher-directed, partner work and whole-class discussions were utilized as instructional structures, following which the students wrote personal responses to the picturebooks. The research

culminated with the students writing and illustrating their own story. Multiple forms of data were collected during the study. In her article, Pantaleo (2015) described how quantitative and qualitative analysis of the students' written work was completed in order to study the "nature of the students' responses "to two of the foci picturebooks" (p. 13) in terms of the elements of art and design. Finally, content analysis and categorization of each element was undertaken.

Findings indicated that "the children's inferences, ideas and opinions about the meaning potential of colour, typography, line, point of view and framing in the two picturebooks reveal their semiotic work as active perceivers and thinkers" (Pantaleo, 2015, p. 21). Children used the appropriate metalanguage when describing the mode of image, and interpreted the elements of art and design as important conveyors of information about plot, characters and mood (Pantaleo, 2015). Furthermore the students noted how the elements of art and design could communicate symbolically, and how artists utilized intentionality in their design of images within a specific social context (Pantaleo, 2015).

The visual arts also figured prominently in Carger's (2004) study, which focused on how "the visual arts could support and enhance language and literacy learning for young bilingual/bicultural students" (p. 284). Her research examined how art can be used to communicate authentically while responding to picturebook illustrations with a group of Grade 2 and 3 students during literature circles. During a four month period, Carger worked with 20 students from diverse ethnic backgrounds (primarily of Mexican-American heritage) at their urban Chicago school. The aesthetic responses encouraged by Carger contrasted sharply with the phonics-based drill and repetition program of direct instruction (DI) that was being utilized at the school. Bilingual English/Spanish picturebooks of a multicultural nature were selected for the literature circles twice a week, and small groups of students (6-7 children) were invited to

respond through the use of oral discussions, journals and mixed-media art response activities. The work of famous artists, art terms and techniques were taught and introduced to the children over the course of the study. Data included transcripts of group discussions (which were audio recorded) and samples of student work. The discussions were transcribed and categorized, according to the nature of the comment.

Results indicated that 43% (or more) of all spontaneous comments were related to the art of the picturebooks, with Carger (2004) noting the students' use of art terms, descriptive similes and artistic critique in their discussion comments. Details were eagerly noted by students, through close, careful reading, especially those of a cultural context; the discussion and connection to culturally relevant picturebooks allowed students to "tap into funds of knowledge, the various skills and expertise found within a family" (Moll, Amanti, Neff & Gonzalez, 1992 as cited in Carger, 2004, p. 290). Active meaning-making occurred as students co-constructed their responses through authentic, art-inspired conversations. Carger suggested that teachers should incorporate art activities that use a variety of media into literacy programs, as a successful way to engage and motivate students. Furthermore, Carger's (2004) research revealed that "encouraging discussions about illustrations in books can engender genuine conversation for English Language Learners and develop critical literacy skills" (p. 281). In addition, the picturebooks helped connect home and school experiences, and assisted the bilingual/bicultural students to "name their worlds and to grasp their unique personal backgrounds" (Carger, 2004, p. 291). As the students' knowledge about art and metalanguage increased, so did the complexity and depth of their responses (Carger, 2004). This finding is consistent with Nodelman's (1988) opinion that "all visual images, even the most apparently representational ones, do imply a

viewer, do require a knowledge of learned competencies and cultural assumptions before they can be rightly understood” (p. 17).

The studies reviewed above clearly demonstrate the importance of explicitly teaching students about the principles of art and design through the use of picturebooks (Carger, 2004; Martens et al., 2012; Pantaleo, 2015; Styles & Arizpe, 2001). Furthermore, primary students are capable of both comprehending and navigating multimodal texts with increased flexibility when images in picturebooks are approached with the same degree of importance afforded to textual information (Carger, 2004; Martens et al., 2012; Pantaleo, 2015; Styles & Arizpe, 2001).

Interactive Read-Alouds and Interthinking

In order to facilitate understanding of visual art and design elements and for students to develop an aesthetic appreciation for reading, teachers often utilize a read-aloud format. Reading aloud picturebooks is widely recognized as a valuable learning activity to engage, motivate and scaffold young children’s learning and is regularly incorporated into most primary classrooms. The traditional read-aloud model is based upon children assuming a passive role during the read-aloud, with limited opportunities to engage in dialogue until the conclusion of the book when teacher-initiated discussions occur (Barrentine, 1996). This format contrasts sharply with interactive read-alouds, during which students actively “interact verbally with the text, peers and the teacher” (Barrentine, 1996, p. 36). Interactive read-alouds utilize a more dialogic approach where students are encouraged “to interact verbally with the text, peers and the teacher during book reading” (Barrentine, 1996, p. 36). This interactive format of read-alouds is consistent with Cambourne’s ‘Conditions of Learning’ (2000/2001) as it is based upon engaging students to take an active role in communicating and constructing knowledge through multiple demonstrations and approximations where students are responsible for their own learning and the

learning of others. When teachers conduct interactive read-alouds, they empower each member taking part to have a voice, allowing multiple viewpoints to emerge. In essence, “children do not learn from demonstrations by passively absorbing information. To learn, children must become engaged with the demonstration” (Barrentine, 1996, p. 38).

A year-long ethnographic study conducted by Worthy, Chamberlain, Peterson, Sharp and Shih (2012) explored how an expert teacher, Mae Graham, nurtured dialogue through interactive read-alouds. Worthy et al. (2012) advocated and addressed the concern that “read-aloud and dialogue be a priority in an era of high-stakes testing and narrowed curriculum” (p. 308).

Detailed information about the 19 Grade 2 students’ diverse sociocultural backgrounds, the school and surrounding neighbourhood, provided an emic perspective. Researchers spent extensive time in Mae’s classroom to observe and analyze her daily read-aloud sessions and the ensuing discussions. Rigorous data collection techniques were utilized to ascertain a holistic view: field notes, observations, transcribed video-recordings, memoing, teacher self-reflection and semi-structured interviews. Open coding, constant comparative analysis and researcher discussion continued over two phases of analysis to categorize the data (Worthy et al., 2012).

Findings indicated that language was used “intentionally to develop an atmosphere of community and respectful listening ... as well as to encourage students to make personal and intertextual connections and develop ideas they brought up in discussions” (Worthy et al., 2012, p. 313). The teacher acted as a facilitator and co-learner, while at the same time providing the necessary space and time for students to respond spontaneously to the read-alouds. Open-ended dialogue was encouraged by the teacher in order “to provide spaces for students to meaningfully use language; develop and share ideas, opinions and feelings; and learn to listen actively as they develop an appreciation for multiple perspectives” (Worthy et al., 2012, p. 320).

Maloch and Duncan (2010) also recognized the importance of creating a “low-risk environment where students were willing to contribute to class discussions” (p. 27). Their five month long qualitative study focused on the nature of student interaction patterns and their corresponding relationship to literacy learning in a Grade 2 classroom at Chavez Elementary. Melissa Wilson, a teacher in her second year of teaching, and 15 ethnically diverse students (nine boys and six girls) were the participants in the study. The school’s population was primarily made up of working class and lower socioeconomic status families. The researchers studied student initiations that took part during interactive read-aloud sessions. Data collection included weekly classroom observations that were conducted and recorded, interviews with participants, and the collection of artifacts such as lesson plans, assessments and student work samples. A constant-comparative data analysis method was utilized to analyze the data, which were categorized into themes and then subjected to discourse analysis.

The findings indicated that the manner in which the teacher responded to students’ initiations “encouraged students to contribute and openly respond to the text and illustrations while, at the same time, scaffolding their co-construction of meaning” (Maloch & Duncan, 2010, p. 27). Explicit prompting and continual encouragement provided the students with opportunities to actively engage with the picturebooks and with each other. A final recurrent theme identified by Maloch and Duncan (2010) was the teacher participant’s fostering of “an active stance towards reading in which students were encouraged to ‘stop and think’ about the texts they were reading” (p. 27). In order to achieve this increased level of student participation, the researchers noted how the teacher responded to students with a variety of strategies, including “re-voicing, naming, restating, and sometimes clarifying as well as the extension of the contributions of peers” (Maloch & Duncan, 2010, p. 28).

Both of these case studies highlight the important role of the teacher in setting the tone for an open, nurturing classroom environment that allows students to take-risks and engage in the meaningful co-construction of knowledge (Maloch & Duncan, 2010; Worthy et al., 2012). Pantaleo (2008a) also highlights the importance of talk that is co-constructed, utilizing Mercer's term of 'interthinking' to illustrate "how talk allows us to think collectively, to engage with others' ideas through oral language" (p. 101). Pantaleo's (2008a) large qualitative study spanned a two year period, and focused on two classes of Canadian Grade 1 students' oral responses to picturebooks; the first class looked at a variety of picturebook genres and the second class looked at contemporary books containing metafictional devices. Both groups of student participants took part in small-group and whole class interactive read-alouds, individual written response activities and student interviews, which comprised the data for the study (in addition to field notes, transcripts, recordings and photocopied samples of student work). Rigorous data analysis both generated and utilized categorization schemes and coding of conversational turns.

Pantaleo's (2008a) study revealed multiple instances where she and the student participants "thought through ideas together and built on one another's thoughts, suggestions, and comments" (p. 102). Furthermore, Pantaleo (2008a) maintained that this type of exploratory talk is a central aspect of interthinking. As dialogue was used for "scaffolding interpretations, extending understandings, exploring significances, and constructing storylines" (Pantaleo, 2008a, p. 102), Pantaleo noted that students' knowledge about literature and how to discuss literature was constantly evolving as a collective. As students tried out and experimented with new ideas and concepts, the children developed an understanding of themselves and their world. It is important to note that the choice of literature chosen for the read-aloud can influence the amount of student participation (Styles & Arizpe, 2001; Pantaleo, 2008a). The literature chosen for the read-alouds

in Pantaleo's (2008a) study "required a high degree of reader participation in the creation of meaning" (p. 103). This research has implications for educators, as they need to adopt teaching practices that provide students with time to freely discuss and contextualize their knowledge.

The interactive read-aloud could not function 'interactively' within a monologic classroom structure. As discussed earlier, dialogic teaching provides the foundational principles for inquiry-based learning from multiple voices, and authentic teacher questioning that allows students to build on one another's talk (Alexander, 2008). By creating a classroom community of learners and co-constructing knowledge as a group to support one another in a purposeful manner, interactive read-alouds are an integral part of a dialogic classroom. By moving away from 'teaching talk' and towards more 'learning talk' (such as exploratory talk), the classroom discourse shifts to become more informal, and accommodating of multiple viewpoints. This shift towards a more inclusionary model is consistent with Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, for "while knowledge is personally constructed, the constructed knowledge is socially mediated as a result of cultural experiences and interactions with others in that culture" (McRobbie & Tobin, 1997, p. 194).

Meaningful discussion.

While interactive read-alouds provide a medium for student discussion, what type of discussion best supports and fosters student learning? The purpose of a qualitative action-research study by McIntyre, Kyle and Moore (2006) was to explain how one primary teacher guided and fostered small group discussion of an instructional nature amongst her students. The participant teacher, named Gayle, was an experienced educator with an excellent reputation and a Master's degree in education. Her multiage (Grades 1 and 2) class consisted of students from mainly poor and working class families, and reflected the ethnic diversity of the local rural and

suburban population. This study was part of a larger, four year grounded theory research project which examined how Gayle scaffolded learning for her students at the beginning of a lesson in ways that later promoted discussion. Data were collected through observations over a four day period. Observations were video-taped and then transcribed numerous times, noting symbols to signify certain gestures and actions. Gayle was the only participant wearing a microphone, which meant only student voices in close proximity to her were recorded. The Center for Research on Education, Diversity & Excellence, or CREDE (as cited in McIntyre et al., 2006, p. 43) indicators of teaching dialogue were utilized, and conversational turns, cues, content, procedures and responses were coded into categories.

Findings by McIntyre et al. (2006) suggested that Gayle's talk oscillated between traditional and dialogic discourse. On occasion she needed to explain or model in order to guide students towards complicated textual understandings; at times this 'frontal' talk assisted in cultivating dialogue. The researchers upheld the notion that a positive classroom environment based on choice, mutual respect and encouragement is central to the success of dialogic talk that constructs new understandings (McIntyre et al., 2006). The teacher's role became that of facilitator, utilizing cues and making content easier to understand for students (McIntyre et al., 2006). This study is significant as it concentrated on primary students from predominantly poor and working class backgrounds and it focused on how teacher talk may be structured in order to nurture their understanding. Meaningful talk must be explicitly taught, as "dialogic episodes do not just happen naturally in classrooms but must be choreographed in a sense" (McIntyre et al., 2006, p. 59).

Almasi and Garas-York (2009) present a critical review of the research on discussion techniques that promote comprehension. Traditional discussion approaches (passive, literal

evaluative, characterized by initiation-response-evaluation [IRE] questioning) are contrasted with dialogic perspectives (active, social, collaborative co-construction of knowledge requiring critical thinking). Almasi and Garas-York discuss how microgenetic scaffolding results in discussions that are manifested by close teacher attention and support, in order to assist students in understanding content. There is a high level of adult involvement during the use of open-ended questioning and often students are assigned roles to guide their participation. Ontogenetic scaffolding is marked by little teacher involvement during the discussion, with the goal being to develop students' comprehension abilities longitudinally (Almasi & Garas-York, 2009). Instead, teachers provide support and guidance prior to and following the discussions, allowing students to problem solve and participate fully without direct intervention during the event (Almasi & Garas-York, 2009).

Almasi and Garas-York (2009) identified several findings that emerged as a result of their review of the literature and specifically their comparison of studies based on microgenetic scaffolding to those based on ontogenetic scaffolding. A “student-centered, dialogic approach to discussion that moves beyond traditional, I.R.E. participant formats lead to significant growth in comprehension” (Almasi & Garas-York, 2009, p. 489). Furthermore, Almasi and Garas-York recommended that teachers utilize a mix of scaffolding types in order to promote both the acquisition of content knowledge and to teach students to interact with others in a respectful, meaningful manner. The authors also noted that teacher support should be temporary, as responsibility gradually shifts to the student, and warned against defaulting to one scaffolding type permanently.

Conclusion

In conclusion, a review of the literature on picturebooks and the nature of children's responses to picturebooks have numerous implications and suggestions for educators. Firstly, talk and discussion provide the foundation for the meaning making-process, as talk assists students and teachers to co-construct knowledge together (Carger, 2004; Evans, 2009; Pantaleo, 2008a, 2015; Sipe, 2008a). It then follows that it is necessary to create a classroom environment that facilitates an open, risk-free discourse (Maloch & Duncan, 2010; Pantaleo, 2008a; Worthy et al., 2012), where interthinking can occur through the use of exploratory talk and interactive read-alouds (Maloch & Duncan, 2010; Pantaleo, 2008a; Worthy et al., 2012). By providing students a metalanguage through explicit teaching, teachers can afford a common context from which understanding may be developed (Carger, 2004; Martens et al., 2012; Pantaleo, 2015). Not only do teachers need to become critical readers of picturebooks, they need to become knowledgeable about the principles of art and design and the complex interaction of image and text in picturebooks, which provide ample opportunities for active meaning-making (Carger, 2004; Martens et al., 2012; Pantaleo, 2015; Styles & Arizpe, 2001). Furthermore, it is important that teachers attend to both image and text during instructional practice and read-alouds (Martens et al., 2012; Martinez & Harmon, 2012; Pantaleo, 2015; Serafini, 2014) in order to help prepare and provide students with the skills necessary to navigate our increasingly image-dominated society (Pantaleo, 2008a). Students also require ample time and opportunity to closely read, question and re-read a variety of multimodal texts (Carger, 2004; Pantaleo, 2008a; Styles & Arizpe, 2001). Readers who struggle and students of culturally diverse backgrounds can benefit from a focus on picturebook art, but all students can benefit from this process as it serves as a motivating factor to engage and connect students (Carger, 2004; Styles & Arizpe, 2001).

In Chapter 3 I outline my professional development workshop presentation (found in Appendix A), and connect the ideas found within to the literature. In addition, I look for gaps in the research and suggest areas for future research.

Chapter 3

Reflections

As a way to assist others in adapting their classroom pedagogy as I have around the topic of visual literacy, I created the PowerPoint™ workshop “Picturebooks and Visual Literacy in K-2 Classrooms,” which is intended to be utilized for Professional Development purposes. As mentioned previously, the goal of this workshop is to provide teachers with an understanding about visual literacy, and to emphasize the need to teach students the metalanguage of picturebooks and the elements of art and design. The workshop is intended to be approximately three hours in length and would be offered as a half day-long workshop or two after-school sessions.

In this chapter the PowerPoint™ workshop slides are grouped into sections which are organized by topic. Following each grouping I describe how the workshop’s content and activities reflect the research and theory discussed in Chapter 2 on visual literacy, multimodality, critical literacy, picturebooks, principles of art and design, social semiotics, classroom community and talk, and interactive read-alouds.

PowerPoint™ Design

The format of the workshop is interactive and the content is intended to reflect a focus on visual literacy. The use of images was emphasized, with both visuals and text working together to create a synergistic whole. Colour is used to signal the inclusion of activities for participants; the dark background which is reminiscent of a chalkboard was chosen intentionally to create an overall cohesion with the typography throughout the PowerPoint™ and to reflect the educational theme of the workshop. Framing of titles was utilized to create a uniform aesthetic as well as to ensure consistency and a certain degree of presentational formality.

Introduction and Visual Literacy: Slides 1 - 11

Picturebooks and Visual Literacy in K-2 Classrooms



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Visual Literacy

"A group of largely acquired abilities, i.e., the abilities to understand (read), and to use (write) images, as well as to think and learn in terms of images" (Avgerinou, 2003 as cited in Avgerinou, 2009, p. 29).



Georgette Walker 2012

11 Visual Competencies



- > knowledge of visual vocabulary
 - > knowledge of visual conventions
 - > visual thinking
 - > visualization
 - > verbo-visual reasoning
 - > critical viewing
 - > visual discrimination
 - > visual reconstruction
 - > sensitivity to visual association
 - > reconstructing meaning
 - > constructing meaning
- (Avgerinou, 2009, p. 30)

Georgette Walker 2012

"There is much to be read from a picture, much to be inferred and understood implicitly as well as what is obviously depicted" (O'Neil, 2011, p. 222).



Georgette Walker 2012

Why are visual literacy competencies important?

We need to adequately prepare students for the digital age, as texts encountered outside of school grow more complex in nature.

(Avgerinou, 2009; Jewitt, 2008; Serafini, 2012; Sipe, 2008b)



Georgette Walker 2012

What does the research say about visual literacy?

- How images are interpreted by the reader and the meaning implied by the designer are socially and culturally constructed (Kress, 2004; Piro, 2002; Styles & Arizpe, 2001).
- Readers must understand certain elements of visual design (e.g., line, colour, framing) as well as other structures associated with multimodal formats (typography and graphic elements) (Serafini, 2012) in order to better understand and comprehend what they are reading (Avgerinou, 2009).

Georgette Walker 2012

Activity 1:

How do you teach visual literacy in your classroom?



Georgette Walker 2012



Students must realize that the art is the text they need to attend to (in addition to the written text), and it does not simply exist to accompany the written account as demonstrated in traditional formats (Martens, Martens, Doyle, Loomis & Aghalarov, 2012).

Georgette Walker 2012

Activity 2

Look through the current Language Arts PLO's and the Language Arts Draft Curricular Competencies in your group to identify visual literacy skills or outcomes.

What do you notice?



Georgette Walker 2012

2006 Grade 1 Language Arts Curriculum

- B4 view and demonstrate understanding that visual texts are sources of information
- C5 use strategies during writing and representing to express thoughts in written and visual form (e.g., looking at picture books and student writing samples as models)

Georgette Walker 2012

New Grade 1 Language Arts Curricular Competencies

- Develop and use critical thinking skills to make meaning from multiple types of text
 - Recognize that authors write to communicate ideas, thoughts, feelings, and information for specific audiences and purposes
 - Express thoughts, feelings, opinions, and ideas through oral, written, and visual presentations and contribute as a member of a classroom community
- <https://curriculum.gov.bc.ca/curriculum/englishlanguage-arts/1>

Georgette Walker 2012






This section of the workshop introduces and defines visual literacy in terms of what it is and why it is an important focus within the classroom. Following connections to research, participants are asked to reflect on their own practice, and engage in exploratory talk with another colleague. Participants are then given the opportunity to examine both the new *English Language Arts Curriculum Draft* (British Columbia Ministry of Education, 2013) and the current *English Language Arts Integrated Resource Package* (British Columbia Ministry of Education, 2006) to search for outcomes pertaining to visual literacy. The intent of this activity is to prompt a discussion on the need for teachers to allot more time to the inclusion of visual literacy into

their pedagogy. As was discussed in Chapter 2, researchers have pointed out how visual literacy has been subjugated to textual and language-based literacies within our schools and within current educational curricula (Apkon, 2013; Avgerinou, 2009; Jewitt, 2008; Serafini, 2012). Although this emphasis on text and language based literacies appears to be starting to change somewhat, there continues to be a divide which needs to be acknowledged by educators. In order for teachers, who within the workshop are acting as students, to become visually literate, they require direct instruction in order to understand “how to analyze the ways images make meanings, [and] they need to gain knowledge of the visual meaning-making systems deployed in images” (Unsworth et al., 2005, p. 10 as cited in Pantaleo, 2015, p. 24). It is important for teachers to realize that while their students are “being constantly bombarded by images, [this] does not necessarily lead to a conscious recognition of this phenomenon” (Avgerinou, 2009, p. 28). Furthermore, Avgerinou (2009) stresses that in order to prepare students for the “hegemony of the image” (p. 32), the need for rigorous training in visual literacy is critical.

The ‘Turn and Talk’ activity utilizes exploratory talk and functions as an ice-breaker activity at the beginning of the workshop, which allows teachers to get to know other participants. Exploratory talk “provides an important means of working on understanding” (Barnes, 2008, p. 5) and allows workshop participants to discuss and put forth ideas in a non-intimidating forum. As visual literacy may be a new topic for some teachers, Barnes (2008) suggests that the use of exploratory talk promotes understanding, as it “will contribute more to the interrelating of old ways of thinking and new possibilities” (p. 5). Furthermore, small-group discussion increases the likelihood that a larger proportion of teachers will be actively participating in ‘thinking aloud’ (Barnes, 2008). During this period of the workshop, I will

circulate and provide facilitation to groups that should require it, as “the ability to think aloud and share thoughts with others is not universal” (Barnes, 2008, p. 6), and requires guidance.

Multimodality and Critical Literacy: Slides 12 – 17



<p>Multimodality</p> <p>Multimodal approaches recognize “the full range of communicational forms” or modes that people use to represent meaning (Jewitt, 2009, p. 14).</p>  <p><small>Georgina Heuser 2022</small></p>	<p>What is a mode?</p> <p>A mode can be defined as a “socially shaped and culturally given resource for making meaning. Image, writing, layout, music, gesture, speech, moving image, soundtrack are examples of modes used in representation and communication” (Kress, 2014, p. 60).</p>  <p><small>Georgina Heuser 2022</small></p>	<p>Multimodal Ensembles</p> <p>Picturebooks are a form of multimodal text that must be read and interpreted as an aesthetic whole, with each mode (i.e., written and image) communicating different information to the reader/viewer.</p>  <p><small>Georgina Heuser 2022</small></p>
<p>Critical Literacy</p> <p>Critical literacy focuses on ensuring that readers become critically aware, and move beyond the literal level of the text (Luke & Woods, 2009; McLaughlin & DeVoogd, 2004).</p>  <p><small>Georgina Heuser 2022</small></p>	<p>Goals of Critical Literacy</p> <p>To educate students to “become open-minded, active, strategic readers who are capable of viewing text from a critical perspective” (McLaughlin and DeVoogd, 2004, p. 56) and who understand that information presented in texts is done so for a particular reason and purpose.</p>  <p><small>Georgina Heuser 2022</small></p>	<p>Why is Critical Literacy necessary?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teach students to question texts they are reading for bias, perspective, missing voices, etc. • Students need to be made aware of the semiotic meaning of visual art and design elements. • Navigate commercial media  <p><small>Georgina Heuser 2022</small></p>

As this selection of slides does not contain an activity for participants and is focused on the transmission of information that is foundational to the workshop, I recognize that I will be engaging in monologic talk. This type of whole-class teaching has been criticized for its propensity to limit classroom discourse as a result of teacher’s reliance on the Initiation – Response – Evaluation (IRE) pattern of talk (Lyle, 2008). It is my intention, as facilitator of the workshop, to “extend the purpose of [the participants’] talk to go beyond providing information and assessing recall of that information, and develop the role of teacher talk as dialogue” (Boyd & Galda, 2011, p. 10). By engaging in the practice of uptake, and re-forming the ‘third turn’ as a follow-up that could serve to foster and scaffold further dialogue within the workshop, I hope that a shared authority can emerge amongst all participants, including myself as the facilitator (Boyd & Galda, 2011).

In fact, in terms of pedagogic models of multimodality, Jewitt (2008) suggests the theoretical framework generated by the New London Group (1996) in which learners begin with

‘situated practice’ based on their experiences, similar to how the workshop began (with participants reflecting on their own practice). This step is followed by ‘overt instruction,’ where “students are taught metalanguages for design, that is, the systematic and explicit teaching of an analytical vocabulary for understanding the design processes and decisions entailed in systems and structures of meaning” (Jewitt, 2008, p. 249). The inclusion of direct teaching throughout the workshop accomplishes this goal. Thirdly, Jewitt (2008) suggests that ‘critical framing,’ where students work at “explicitly connecting meaning to their social contexts and purposes to interpret and interrogate the social and cultural context of designs” (p. 249) should follow. The inclusion of slides that address critical literacy reinforces the idea that students need to be taught to examine multimodal texts from a variety of perspectives, and to recognize and acknowledge that the designer has presented information in a certain way for a particular purpose (McLaughlin & DeVogd, 2004). It is hoped that the outcome of the workshop would be the final step, where ‘transformed practice’ occurs, as participants create their own meanings within their own classrooms (Jewitt, 2008). While this model was designed with the intention of making “multimodal design of texts explicit to children” (Jewitt, 2008, p. 249), it also could be applied when introducing a workshop, a multimodal ensemble itself.


Picturebooks: Slides 18 – 29

Picturebooks	Defining a Picturebook	Choosing a Quality Picturebook
 <p>"Picturebooks are the entry ramp to the highway of literacy" -Brian Lies, Illustrator (mrschureads.blogspot.ca)</p>	<p>A picturebook is text, illustrations, total design; an item of manufacture and a commercial product; a social, cultural, historical document; and, foremost, an experience for a child. As an art form it hinges on the interdependence of pictures and words, written text, on the simultaneous display of two facing pages, and on the drama of the turning of the page. (Bader, 1976, p. 1)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contains quality illustrations (and written text) • Nurtures discussion • Prompts multiple readings • Requires a high degree of student participation in order to create meaning 

Types of Picturebooks

- Board books
- Participation books
- Concept books
- Alphabet books
- Counting books
- Poetry and song books
- Wordless books
- Predictable or pattern books
- Beginning to read books
- Informational books
- Storybooks

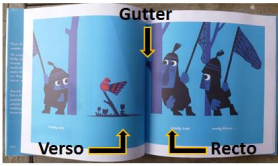
Note: some items in this list can overlap, like a storybook that is a board book.
(Galda, Cullinan & Sipe, 2010)



Relationship of Artwork and Text

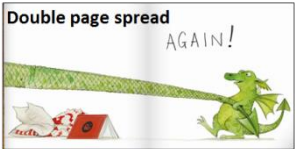
- Interdependent
- Readers navigate written text and images almost simultaneously
- Text and image both limit and complete each other
- Picturebooks are a unique art object
- Need to be interpreted as an aesthetic whole (Nodelman, 1988)

Picturebook Metalanguage



Picturebook Metalanguage Continued


Double page spread



Picturebook Metalanguage

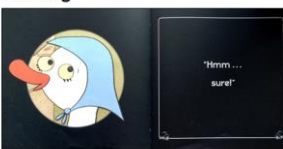
Peritextual features:

- Endpapers
- Cover
- Title page
- Dedication
- Dust jacket



Picturebook Metalanguage Continued

Framing



ELEMENTS OF ART

SPACE

FORM

SHAPE

LINE

TEXTURE

COLOR

Principles of Design

balance

emphasis

pattern

unity


contrast

repetition

proportion

Activity 3

What differences do you note between the two photos? How are colour, shape, size and layout used to communicate meaning?











(Bang, 2000)

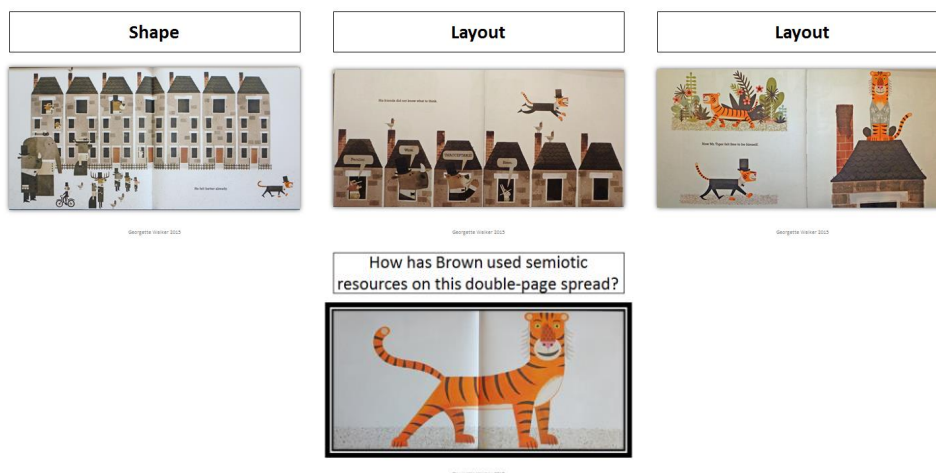
In this section of the PowerPoint™ presentation, picturebooks are defined and the relationship of art and text is explored through the use of labelled visuals. The picturebook images I selected were intentionally chosen as examples of works which have been shown to spark discussion amongst students within my own practice. As Martinez and Harmon (2012) suggest, teachers need to understand that “reading picturebooks is not the same as reading narratives that are developed only through text” (p. 337). The metalanguage of picturebooks is a focus, and elements of art and principles of design are introduced, as teacher talk “will influence students’ exploration of, learning about and attitudes towards visual images” (Pantaleo, 2015, p. 25). In order for teachers to effectively plan and deliver lessons that focus on the elements of visual art and design, they may require further instruction in this area to increase their knowledge and understanding (Martinez & Harmon, 2012; Pantaleo, 2015). The intent of the workshop is to provide participants with a deeper level of understanding in their own aesthetic appreciation of

picturebooks, resulting in a strengthening of their students independent reading of picturebooks (Martinez & Harmon, 2012).

The culminating activity in this section involves participants working in small groups and utilizing the metalanguage in context with an image comparison activity from Molly Bang's book, *Picture This: How Pictures Work* (2000). This resource was chosen as I believe it is an effective example to keep the emphasis "on talk and image rather than written text and writing" (Styles & Arizpe, 2001, p. 280). Bang (2000) wrote this book in order to assist educators in making sense of images in picturebooks, and it "provides beginning insights into the thinking and decisions artists make in creating illustrations" (Martens et al., 2012, p. 292). In fact, Styles and Arizpe (2001) recommend that teachers utilize texts that are "intellectually, affectively and visually interesting and that motivate engagement and scaffold learning" (p. 280), which I believe it does in an effective manner.

Social Semiotics: Slides 30 – 42

<p style="text-align: center;">Social Semiotics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social Semiotic theory focuses on making meaning and interpreting signs which arise out of social interactions within a specific social environment (Kress, 2010)  <p style="text-align: right; font-size: small;">Georgette Walker 2022</p>	 <p>Semiotic Resources The work of Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) outlines the semiotic resources of visual design; these visual codes, or 'visual grammar' assist in interpreting the potential meanings of elements of art and design such as line, framing, and colour.</p> <p style="text-align: right; font-size: small;">Georgette Walker 2022</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Activity 4</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Examples of Semiotic Resources in "Mr. Tiger Goes Wild" by Peter Brown.</p> <p style="text-align: right; font-size: small;">Georgette Walker 2022</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Colour</p>  <p style="text-align: right; font-size: small;">Georgette Walker 2022</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Colour</p>  <p style="text-align: right; font-size: small;">Georgette Walker 2022</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Line</p>  <p style="text-align: right; font-size: small;">Georgette Walker 2022</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Line</p>  <p style="text-align: right; font-size: small;">Georgette Walker 2022</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Typography</p>  <p style="text-align: right; font-size: small;">Georgette Walker 2022</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Shape</p>  <p style="text-align: right; font-size: small;">Georgette Walker 2022</p>




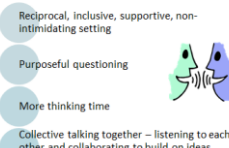






The section on social semiotics includes a definition of this theory, followed by a hands-on exploration of a selection of artwork from *Mr. Tiger Goes Wild* (2013) by Peter Brown. Written permission from the publisher was secured to reproduce and include these images. I intend to have multiple copies of the book for participants to utilize in small groups during this portion of the workshop. Following the small group work, I have included opportunities for participants to share out interactively as a whole group, with the examples from the slides used to further discussion about the semiotic resources of colour, line, typography, shape and layout.

According to Pantaleo (2015), teachers need to design lessons based on picturebooks “that demonstrate the value and importance of looking carefully at images, and of considering the significance of various affordances of this semiotic resource” (p. 25). By affording participants with the time to think and explore Brown’s picturebook, ideally the literature will become significant for them as they “experience and live through the stories in a more specific and connected way” (Carger, 2004, p. 292). This strategy connects with Rosenblatt’s (1978) transactional theory, whereby a reader’s attention should be fully directed on the ‘lived-through experience’ which develops through each transaction with a specific text.


The slides from a contemporary picturebook provide teachers with some practical, hands-on experience navigating and interpreting the ‘grammar’ of visual art and design in a scaffolded setting. By guiding participants collaboratively through their ZPD, it is hoped they will achieve a new level of increased competency that may be transferred to their students (Smagorinsky, 2013). It is important to discuss the ‘grammar’ of visual art and design, as Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) purport that “when a semiotic mode plays a dominant role in public communication, its use will inevitably be constrained by rules” (p. 2). As these ‘rules’ of visual communication become less and less the domain of specialists, and more and more essential in the domains of public communication, those who are unaware of the grammar of visual art and design will be left at a disadvantage (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006).

Classroom Community and Talk: Slides 43 – 54

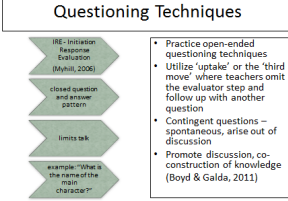
<p>Classroom Community and Talk</p>  <p><small>Georgina Ivester 2013</small></p>	<p>Importance of Classroom Community and Talk</p>  <p>Cognitive growth is “more likely when one is required to explain, elaborate, or defend one’s position to others as well as to oneself; striving for an explanation, often makes a learner integrate and elaborate knowledge in new ways” (Vygotsky, 1978)</p> <p><small>Georgina Ivester 2013</small></p>	<p>Lev Vygotsky</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sociocultural theory (1978) • Connection between thinking and speech • Learning as a social process based on interactions with others • Cognition situated culturally and historically • Two way process of influence: Thinking ↔ World • Scaffolding through the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) <p><small>(Smagorinsky, 2013)</small></p> <p><small>Georgina Ivester 2013</small></p>
<p>Monologic Classroom <small>(Alexander, 2008)</small></p>  <p><small>Georgina Ivester 2013</small></p>	<p>Dialogic Classroom <small>(Alexander, 2008)</small></p>  <p><small>Georgina Ivester 2013</small></p>	<p>discourse</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘discourse’ – linked “stretches of language that make sense” (Gee, 1989, p. 6) • The manner in which students and teachers talk together in a classroom • Needs to be equitable  <p><small>Georgina Ivester 2013</small></p>
<p>Discourse</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘Primary Discourse’ – one’s way of “saying (writing) – doing – being – valuing – [and] believing” • Students bring their own ‘identity kit’ based on their sociocultural background • School is a ‘Secondary Discourse’ in terms of expected norms of interaction (Gee, 1989)  <p><small>Georgina Ivester 2013</small></p>	<p>Exploratory Talk</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speech is cautious and imperfect • “Thinking out loud” • Allows speaker to experiment and make connections between ideas  <p><small>Georgina Ivester 2013</small></p>	<p>Presentational Talk</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Official or formal in nature • Focused on presentation of content • Manner of speaking adjusted according to audience • Results in less talk because the teacher is solely in control of the discourse (Barnes, 2008) • If used exclusively at school, can result in students feeling excluded or stigmatized (Smagorinsky, 2007, 2013)  <p><small>Georgina Ivester 2013</small></p>

Activity 5

How can teachers help create a supportive classroom community that encourages talk?



Questioning Techniques



- Practice open-ended questioning techniques
- Utilize 'uptake' or the 'third move' where teachers omit the evaluator step and follow up with another question
- Contingent questions – spontaneous, arise out of discussion
- Promote discussion, co-construction of knowledge (Boyd & Galda, 2011)

Activity 6






- Partner 1 – Generate a closed question
- Partner 2 – Practice uptake and generate a follow-up question.
- Switch roles and try again.

Britton (1993) wrote, “talk is the sea upon which all else floats” (as cited in Boyd & Galda, 2011, p. 1). These slides introduce Vygotsky’s sociocultural theory and provide foundational information about the different types of talk that occur within a classroom. Teachers need to understand that how they set up their classroom directly affects the types of talk and learning that transpire. According to Vygotsky, speech is a conduit through which people can express their thinking (Smagorinsky, 2007). They, in turn, assist to construct a society through which “their speech both constructs a reality and brings it to order so that others may move easily within it” (Smagorinsky, 2007, p. 64). As speech serves as a means of representing a world (Smagorinsky, 2007), parallels may be drawn to how teachers set up a hierarchy of discourse within their classrooms. Smagorinsky (2007) refers to these ‘speech genres’ as “a particular packaging of conventions for communicating among distinct groups of people” (p. 64). When classrooms are based on a monologic model of discourse, with teachers as the all-knowing authority and reliant upon IRE question patterns and formal presentational talk, the “speech genre governing school discussions – actually works against students’ willingness to engage with literature” (Smagorinsky, 2007, p. 65).

Therefore, the activities in this section aim to promote the construction of a dialogic classroom, where multiple voices can contribute to the discourse. Reznitskaya (2012) explains, within a dialogic classroom “power relations are flexible, and authority over the content and form of discourse is shared” (p. 447). Teachers need support and time to construct their own adaptations to their practice that will work for themselves and their students, for “there is a well-

established and long line of research which suggests that the establishment of dialogic approaches to classroom discourse will not be easy” (Lyle, 2008, p. 236). Lyle (2008) further notes that many teachers revert back to how they were taught. When participants take turns utilizing ‘uptake’ to promote further discussion, they are actively putting theory into practice in an effort to build new schema. According to Boyd and Galda (2011), “this third move is in fact crucial, as it can either build coherence and scaffold student elaboration or shut down exchanges” (p. 15).

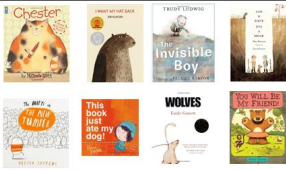




Interactive Read-alouds and Response: Slides 55 – 65

<p>Interactive Read-Alouds</p> 	<p>Activity 7</p> <p>As you watch these 2 video clips, take notes on what you observe each teacher doing. What do you note as characteristics of each read-aloud format?</p> <p>Traditional Read-Aloud</p> <p>Interactive Read-Aloud</p>	<p>Traditional Read-aloud</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Passive • One reading • Students hold questions and comments until the story is finished • Teacher-initiated discussion • Monologic approach 
<p>Interactive Read-Aloud</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active • Repeated readings • Students able to respond and interject ideas and questions through • Teacher as facilitator • Dialogic approach <p>(Barrantine, 1996)</p> 	<p>Why choose interactive read-alouds?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assists in developing an atmosphere of community and respectful discourse and nurtures critical thinking (Worthy et al., 2012) • Promotes active, meaningful engagement with picturebooks and one another (Maloch & Duncan, 2010) • Affords students with opportunities to engage in exploratory talk and interthinking, where students and the teacher collectively co-construct meaning (Pantaleo, 2008) 	<p>Louise Rosenblatt</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transactional Theory (1976) • Reading text an active, reciprocal process • Each reading event unique, as each reader brings different perspective/background • Suggested that teachers needed to focus more on promoting an aesthetic stance to reading: the lived-through event as experienced and responded to by the reader 
<p>Responding to Picturebooks</p> 	<p>Responding to Picturebooks</p>  <p>“Most teachers know that, in the classroom, a student’s response will be like an iceberg: only a small part will become apparent to the teacher or even to the student himself” (Purves & Ripperer, 1968, p. xiii, as cited in Pantaleo, 2008a, p. 21).</p>	<p>Responding to Artwork in Picturebooks: Research Findings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oral responses are an indicator of literary understanding (Sipe, 2008) • Children who are not experienced readers of text are able to make interpretations of visual text (Styles & Arizpe, 2001) • Students of a young age are able to utilize a metalanguage and demonstrate an understanding of symbolism related to the use of elements of art and design (Pantaleo, 2015)
<p>Responding to Artwork in Picturebooks: Research Findings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporating art into literacy programs engages and motivates (Carger, 2004) • Discussions about picturebook illustrations assisted ELL learners, helped develop critical literacy skills and increased complexity and depth of student responses (Carger, 2004) 	<p>Responding to Artwork in Picturebooks: Research Findings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young children are able to think and read multimodally and move flexibly between modes (Martens et al., 2012) • Knowledge of the elements of visual art and principles of design enabled students to develop a deeper understanding of texts they read (Martens et al., 2012) 	

As the workshop proceeds, the focus turns to practical applications that teachers can utilize directly within their teaching. Interactive read-alouds have changed the way that my students

and I interact with picturebooks and are an entry point into dialogic teaching. Maloch and Duncan (2010) suggest that “planning read-alouds that are more interactive than directive may offer opportunities for children to engage in joint meaning-making with the active support and guidance of the teacher” (p. 29). They provide an opportunity for children to authentically respond to picturebooks and discuss elements of visual art and design, while being scaffolded by the teacher and their peers (Maloch & Duncan, 2010). As students transact with the text, the teacher, and one another, meaning is co-constructed (Rosenblatt, 1986). The contrasting videos and information presented in the slideshow comparing traditional read-alouds with interactive read-alouds afford teachers with ideas and options that they may begin to introduce into their practice right away.

How to Learn More and Reflection: Slides 66 - 71

<p>Some of My Favourite Picturebooks</p>  <p><small>Georgina Walker 2012</small></p>	<p>Learn more about Picturebooks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Horn Book Magazine: http://www.hbook.com/horn-book-magazine-2/ Book stores: Munro Books has 2 teacher nights a year. Contact Kirsten Larmon at kirsten@munrobooks.com to get added to the email list for invites. Professional development Browse and read! Blogs: http://blogs.slj.com/afuse8production/# <p><small>Georgina Walker 2012</small></p>	<p>Social Media Sources</p> <p>Twitter:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow authors, illustrators and publishers directly Search under #Kidlit and #picturebooks To get you started, some teachers to follow: @CarrieGelson @MrschuReads @childrensbookil  <p><small>Georgina Walker 2012</small></p>
<p>Social Media Sources</p> <p>Pinterest:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow authors, illustrators, graphic designers, librarians, other teachers Find lists of books organized by subject, genre or award winning books, etc. Keep track of favourite books and ones you want to check out. Search: "2014 best picturebooks"  <p><small>Georgina Walker 2012</small></p>	<p>Professional Resources</p>  <p><small>Georgina Walker 2012</small></p>	<p>Closing Activity: Reflect</p> <p>Identify two ideas you learned that you can take back to your classroom, and one concept that you would like to learn more about.</p>  <p><small>Georgina Walker 2012</small></p>

As this section concludes the workshop, these slides provide teachers with some resources to further develop professionally should they so choose. The concluding slide offers participants the opportunity to reflect on the workshop and record in writing what they have learned and what they would like to learn more about in the future. In a sense, this type of ‘writing to learn’

allows participants to “use writing as a tool to discover what they have to say” (Smagorinsky, 2007, p. 65).

Reflections

During the creation of the PowerPoint™, I struggled with the large volume of content and topic areas that needed to be addressed. It was difficult to balance the delivery of theory and research information, to provide participants with adequate foundational knowledge, with activities that would afford discussion and facilitate active learning. In terms of the research, I discovered that while a selection of Canadian studies existed which focused on visual literacy with students in Grades 3-5, a gap appeared to exist in the early primary years (K-2), with only a handful of Canadian-based research articles written on the topic for this age grouping. Further Canadian research on the topic of teaching visual literacy utilizing picturebooks with young students would be useful, as it would more adequately reflect the cultural diversity evident in our classrooms.

Creating this PowerPoint™ Professional Development workshop was a rewarding experience, as it served to draw many aspects of my learning together in culmination of my Master of Education program. As a result of the literature I was exposed to and the great deal of self-reflection I engaged in, I believe that my teaching pedagogy has shifted dramatically over the course of my graduate studies. Primarily, where I once relied upon a traditional read-aloud style, I now include interactive read-alouds in my daily practice, allotting more time in my schedule to teach visual literacy and to discuss and enjoy the aesthetic qualities of picturebooks. Students no longer raise their hands to speak during this time, and we have created ‘talk rules’ together that guide turn-taking and whole-group discussion. I continue to work towards creating a dialogic classroom.

I decided to create a workshop in order to provide information and support to my primary teaching colleagues who expressed an interest in learning more about visual literacy and picturebooks, and who wish to further develop their pedagogy in that area. As teachers in British Columbia over the next few years begin to navigate major foundational and curricular changes to the educational system, I believe there will be a need for Professional Development that addresses multiliteracies. As my school district has a very active Primary Teachers' Association, it is my intent to facilitate this workshop at a mini-conference in the upcoming 2015-2016 school year. Utilizing the research as a guide, and supported by my family, colleagues, professors, and in particular my supervisor, I believe I have produced an engaging learning resource that I am proud of as I continue to work on further developing my own practice.

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Appendix A

Picturebooks and Visual Literacy in K-2 Classrooms



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Visual Literacy

“A group of largely acquired abilities, i.e., the abilities to understand (read), and to use (write) images, as well as to think and learn in terms of images” (Avgerinou, 2003 as cited in Avgerinou, 2009, p. 29).



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11 Visual Competencies



- knowledge of visual vocabulary
 - knowledge of visual conventions
 - visual thinking
 - visualization
 - verbo-visual reasoning
 - critical viewing
 - visual discrimination
 - visual reconstruction
 - sensitivity to visual association
 - reconstructing meaning
 - constructing meaning
- (Avgerinou, 2009, p. 30)

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“There is much to be read from a picture, much to be inferred and understood implicitly as well as what is obviously depicted”

(O’Neil, 2011, p. 222).



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Why are visual literacy competencies important?

We need to adequately prepare students for the digital age, as texts encountered outside of school grow more complex in nature.

(Avgerinou, 2009; Jewitt, 2008; Serafini, 2012; Sipe, 2008b)



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What does the research say about visual literacy?

- How images are interpreted by the reader and the meaning implied by the designer are socially and culturally constructed (Kress, 2004; Piro, 2002; Styles & Arizpe, 2001).
- Readers must understand certain elements of visual design (e.g., line, colour, framing) as well as other structures associated with multimodal formats (typography and graphic elements) (Serafini, 2012) in order to better understand and comprehend what they are reading (Avgerinou, 2009).

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Activity 1:

How do you
teach visual
literacy in your
classroom?



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Students must realize that the art *is* the text they need to attend to (in addition to the written text), and it does not simply exist to accompany the written account as demonstrated in traditional formats (Martens, Martens, Doyle, Loomis & Aghalarov, 2012).

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Activity 2

In your group, look through the current Language Arts PLO's and the Language Arts Draft Curricular Competencies and identify visual literacy skills or outcomes.



What do you notice?

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2006 Grade 1 Language Arts Curriculum

- B4 view and demonstrate understanding that visual texts are sources of information
- C5 use strategies during writing and representing to express thoughts in written and visual form (e.g., looking at picture books and student writing samples as models)

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New Grade 1 Language Arts Curricular Competencies

- Develop and use critical thinking skills to make meaning from multiple types of text
- Recognize that authors write to communicate ideas, thoughts, feelings, and information for specific audiences and purposes
- Express thoughts, feelings, opinions, and ideas through oral, written, and visual presentations and contribute as a member of a classroom community

<https://curriculum.gov.bc.ca/curriculum/englishlanguage-arts/1>

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Multimodality

Multimodal approaches recognize “the full range of communicational forms” or modes that people use to represent meaning (Jewitt, 2009, p. 14).



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What is a mode?

A mode can be defined as a “socially shaped and culturally given resource for making meaning. Image, writing, layout, music, gesture, speech, moving image, soundtrack are examples of modes used in representation and communication” (Kress, 2014, p. 60).



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Multimodal Ensembles

Picturebooks are a form of multimodal text that must be read and interpreted as an aesthetic whole, with each mode (i.e., written and image) communicating different information to the reader/viewer.



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Critical Literacy

Critical literacy focuses on ensuring that readers become critically aware, and move beyond the literal level of the text (Luke & Woods, 2009; McLaughlin & DeVoogd, 2004).



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Goals of Critical Literacy

To educate students to “become open-minded, active, strategic readers who are capable of viewing text from a critical perspective” (McLaughlin & DeVoogd, 2004, p. 56) and who understand that information presented in texts is done so for a particular reason and purpose.



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Why is Critical Literacy necessary?



- Teach students to question texts they are reading for bias, perspective, missing voices, etc.
- Students need to be made aware of the semiotic meaning of visual art and design elements (including commercial media)

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Picturebooks



“Picturebooks are the entry ramp to the highway of literacy”

-Brian Lies, Illustrator
(mrschureads.blogspot.ca)

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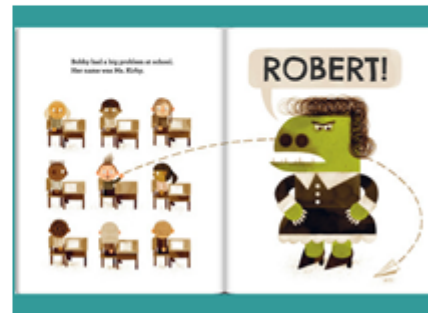
Defining a Picturebook

A picturebook is text, illustrations, total design; an item of manufacture and a commercial product; a social, cultural, historical document; and, foremost, an experience for a child. As an art form it hinges on the interdependence of pictures and words, written text, on the simultaneous display of two facing pages, and on the drama of the turning of the page. (Bader, 1976, p. 1)

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Choosing a Quality Picturebook

- Contains quality illustrations (and written text)
- Nurtures discussion
- Prompts multiple readings
- Requires a high degree of student participation in order to create meaning



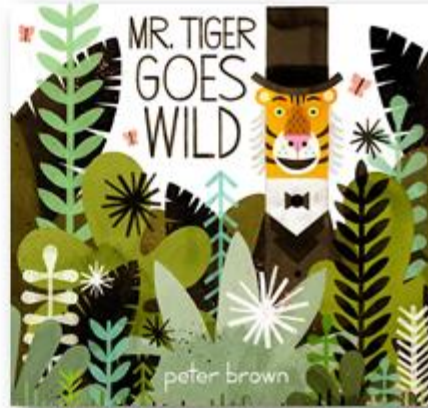
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Types of Picturebooks

- Board books
- Participation books
- Concept books
- Alphabet books
- Counting books
- Poetry and song books
- Wordless books
- Predictable or pattern books
- Beginning to read books
- Informational books
- Storybooks

Note: some items in this list can overlap, like a storybook that is a board book

(Galda, Cullinan & Sipe, 2010)



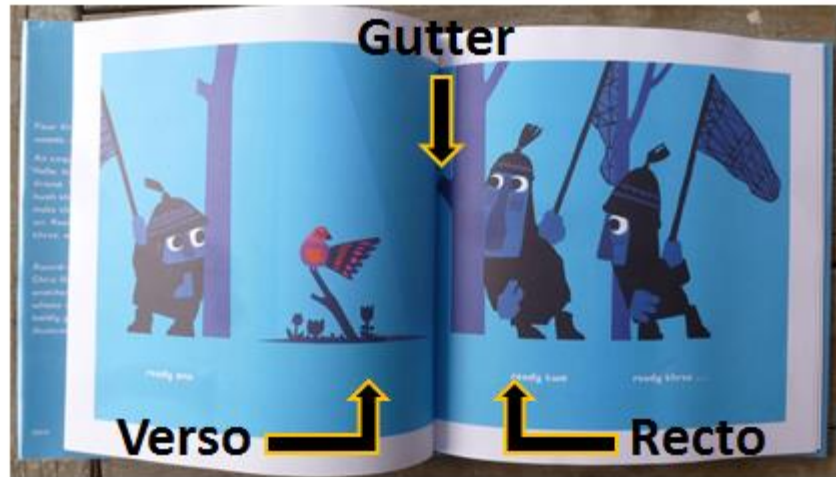
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Relationship of Artwork and Text

- Interdependent
- Readers navigate written text and images almost simultaneously
- Text and image both limit and complete each other
- Picturebooks are a unique art object
- Need to be interpreted as an aesthetic whole
(Nodelman, 1988)

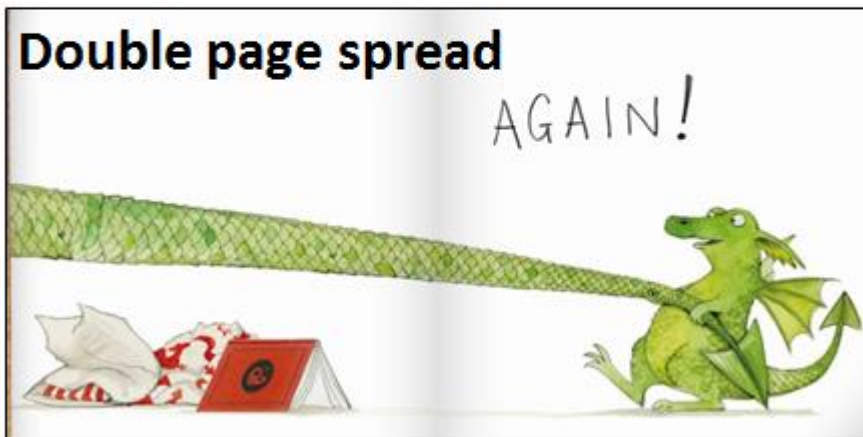
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Picturebook Metalanguage



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Picturebook Metalanguage Continued



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Picturebook Metalanguage

Peritextual features:

- Endpapers
- Cover
- Title page
- Dedication
- Dust jacket



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Picturebook Metalanguage Continued


Framing



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ELEMENTS OF ART

The elements of art are the building blocks used by artists to create a work of art.





SPACE

Space is the area between and around objects. The space around objects is often called negative space; negative space has shape. Space can also refer to the feeling of depth. Real space is three dimensional; in visual art, when we create the feeling or illusion of depth, we call it space.

FORM

Forms are three-dimensional shapes expressing length, width, and depth. Balls, cylinders, boxes, and pyramids are forms.





COLOR


Color is light reflected off of objects. Color has three main characteristics: hue (the main property of color, what differentiates colors), value (how light or dark it is), and intensity (how bright or dull it is).

- White is pure light, black is the absence of light.
- Primary colors are the only true colors (red, blue, and yellow). All other colors are mixes of primary colors.
- Secondary colors are two primary colors mixed together (green, orange, violet).
- Complementary colors are located directly across from each on the color wheel. Complementary pairs contrast because they share no common colors. For example, red and green are complements, because green is made of blue and yellow. When complementary colors are mixed together, they neutralize each other to make brown.

**Value can also be categorized as an element of art.*


SHAPE

Shape is a closed line. Shapes can be geometric, like squares and circles; or organic, like free-form or natural shapes. Shapes are flat and can express length and width.




LINE

A line is a mark with greater length than width. Lines can be horizontal, vertical, or diagonal; straight or curved; thick or thin.



TEXTURE

Texture is the surface quality that can be seen and felt. Textures do not always feel the way they look; for example, a drawing of a porcupine may look prickly, but if you touch the drawing the paper is still smooth.



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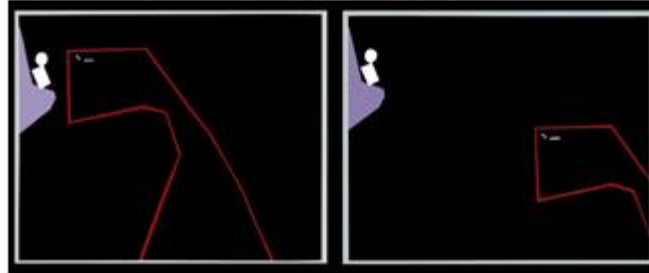
Principles of Design

 balance	 emphasis	 movement
 pattern	 repetition	 proportion
 rhythm	 contrast	 unity

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Activity 3

What differences do you note between the two photos? How are colour, shape, size and layout used to communicate meaning?



(Bang, 2000)

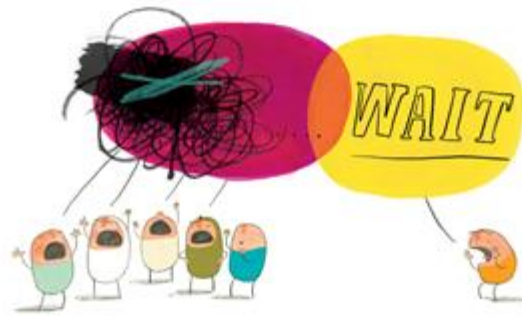
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Social Semiotics

- Social Semiotic theory focuses on making meaning and interpreting signs which arise out of social interactions within a specific social environment (Kress, 2010)



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Semiotic Resources

The work of Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006) outlines the semiotic resources of visual design; these visual codes, or 'visual grammar' assist in interpreting the potential meanings of elements of art and design such as line, framing, and colour.

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Activity 4

Examples of Semiotic Resources
in "*Mr. Tiger Goes Wild*" by
Peter Brown.

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Colour



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Colour



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Line



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Line



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Typography



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Shape



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Shape



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Layout



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Layout



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How has Brown used semiotic resources on this double page spread?



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Classroom Community and Talk



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Importance of Classroom Community and Talk




Cognitive growth is “more likely when one is required to explain, elaborate, or defend one’s position to others as well as to oneself; striving for an explanation, often makes a learner integrate and elaborate knowledge in new ways”

(Vygotsky, 1978)

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Lev Vygotsky

- Sociocultural theory (1978)
- Connection between thinking and speech
- Learning as a social process based on interactions with others
- Cognition situated culturally and historically
- Two way process of influence:



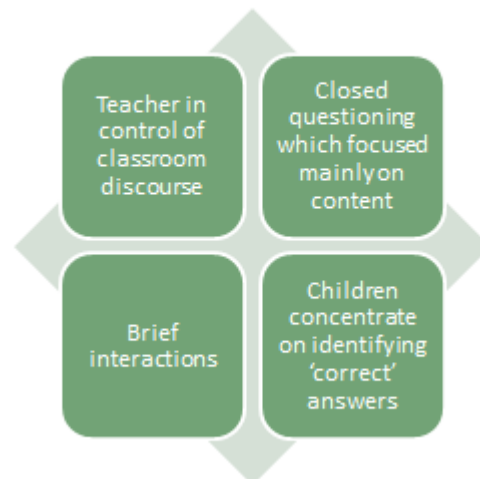
Thinking ↔ World
- Scaffolding through the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)

(Smagorinsky, 2013)

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Monologic Classroom

(Alexander, 2008)



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Dialogic Classroom

(Alexander, 2008)

Reciprocal, inclusive, supportive, non-intimidating setting

Purposeful questioning

More thinking time

Collective talking together – listening to each other and collaborating to build on ideas together



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discourse

- 'discourse' – linked "stretches of language that make sense" (Gee, 1989, p. 6)
- The manner in which students and teachers talk together in a classroom
- Needs to be equitable



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Discourse

- 'Primary Discourse' – one's way of "saying (writing) – doing – being – valuing – [and] believing" (p. 6)
- Students bring their own 'identity kit' based on their sociocultural background
- School is a 'Secondary Discourse' in terms of expected norms of interaction

(Gee, 1989)



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Exploratory Talk

- Speech is cautious and imperfect
- "Thinking out loud"
- Allows speaker to experiment and make connections between ideas



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Presentation Talk

- Official or formal in nature
- Focused on presentation of content
- Manner of speaking adjusted according to audience
- Results in less talk because the teacher is solely in control of the discourse (Barnes, 2008)
- If used exclusively at school, can result in students feeling excluded or stigmatized (Smagorinsky, 2007, 2013)



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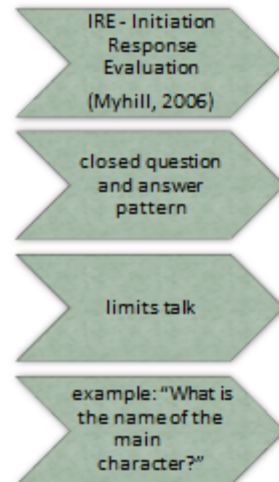
Activity 5

How can teachers help create a supportive classroom community that encourages talk?



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Questioning Techniques



- Practice open-ended questioning techniques
- Utilize 'uptake' or the 'third move' where teachers omit the evaluator step and follow up with another question
- Contingent questions – spontaneous, arise out of discussion
- Promote discussion, co-construction of knowledge (Boyd & Galda, 2011)

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Activity 6

- Partner 1 – Generate a closed question
- Partner 2 – Practice uptake and generate a follow-up question.
- Switch roles and try again.

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Interactive Read-Alouds



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Activity 7

As you watch these 2 video clips, take notes on what you observe each teacher doing. What do you note as characteristics of each read-aloud format?

Traditional Read-Aloud

Interactive Read-Aloud

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Traditional Read-aloud

- Passive
- One reading
- Students hold questions and comments until the story is finished
- Teacher-initiated discussion
- Monologic approach



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Interactive Read-Aloud

- Active
- Repeated readings
- Students able to respond and interject ideas and questions through
- Teacher as facilitator
- Dialogic approach



(Barrantine, 1996)

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Why choose interactive read-alouds?

- Assists in developing an atmosphere of community and respectful discourse and nurtures critical thinking (Worthy et al., 2012)
- Promotes active, meaningful engagement with picturebooks and one another (Maloch & Duncan, 2010)
- Affords students with opportunities to engage in exploratory talk and interthinking, where students and the teacher collectively co-construct meaning (Pantaleo, 2008)

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Louise Rosenblatt

- Transactional Theory (1978)
- Reading text an active, reciprocal process
- Each reading event unique, as each reader brings different perspective/background
- Suggested that teachers needed to focus more on promoting an aesthetic stance to reading: the lived-through event as experienced and responded to by the reader



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Responding to Picturebooks



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Responding to Picturebooks



“Most teachers know that, in the classroom, a student’s response will be like an iceberg: only a small part will become apparent to the teacher or even to the student himself” (Purves & Rippere, 1968, p. xiii, as cited in Pantaleo, 2008, p. 21).

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Responding to Artwork in Picturebooks: Research Findings

- Oral responses are an indicator of literary understanding (Sipe, 2008a)
- Children who are not experienced readers of text are able to make interpretations of visual text (Styles & Arizpe, 2001)
- Students of a young age are able to utilize a metalanguage and demonstrate an understanding of symbolism related to the use of elements of art and design (Pantaleo, 2015)

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Responding to Artwork in Picturebooks: Research Findings

- Incorporating art into literacy programs engages and motivates (Carger, 2004)
- Discussions about picturebook illustrations assisted ELL learners, helped develop critical literacy skills and increased complexity and depth of student responses (Carger, 2004)



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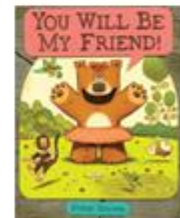
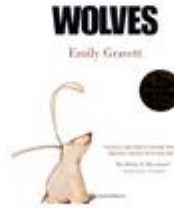
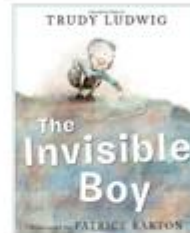
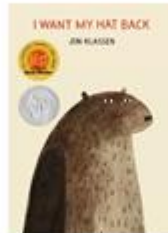
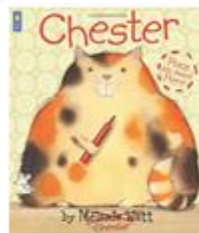
Responding to Artwork in Picturebooks: Research Findings

- Young children are able to think and read multimodally and move flexibly between modes (Martens et al., 2012)
- Knowledge of the elements of visual art and principles of design enabled students to develop a deeper understanding of texts they read (Martens et al., 2012)



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Some of My Favourite Picturebooks



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Learn more about Picturebooks

- **Horn Book Magazine:**

<http://www.hbook.com/horn-book-magazine-2/>

- **Book stores:**

Munro Books has 2 teacher nights a year. Contact Kirsten Larmon at kirsten@munrobooks.com to get added to the email list for invites.

- **Professional development**

- **Browse and read!**

- **Blogs:** http://blogs.slj.com/afuse8production/#_

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Social Media Sources

Twitter:

- Follow authors, illustrators and publishers directly
- Search under #kidlit and #picturebooks
- To get you started, some teachers to follow:
@CarrieGelson
@MrSchuReads
@childrensbookil



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Social Media Sources

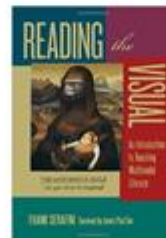
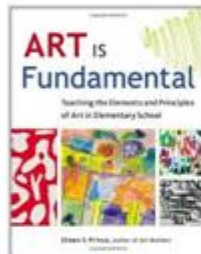
Pinterest:

- Follow authors, illustrators, graphic designers, librarians, other teachers
- Find lists of books organized by subject, genre or award winning books, etc.
- Keep track of favourite books and ones you want to check out.
- Search: “2014 best picturebooks”



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Professional Resources



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Closing Activity: Reflect

Identify two ideas you learned that you can take back to your classroom, and one concept that you would like to learn more about.



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Appendix B



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June 8, 2015

Georgette Walker
1122 Goldstream Ave.
Victoria, BC
V9B 2Y8 Canada

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