

Picture Book Dummy Critique Checklist

Artist:

Story Title:

Date:

Storytelling & Pacing:

Do the illustrations add to the story or simply depict what's already stated?

Do the illustrations complete the text, depicting what happens between, just before, or just after?

How do the illustrations inform, compliment, or add to the text?

Does the placement of page breaks create pacing and tension?

Do the illustration compositions vary with appropriate use of spots, vignettes, boxed, and full-bleed illustrations?

Is there a balance between wide/distant and close/intimate focus?

Does the point of view change or is it always at eye level?

Do visual storytelling rhythms and dynamics comfortably flow through the book?

How are visual elements such as...

- Complementary Characters
- Side-Stories
- Use of page orientation
- Other Theatrical Techniques

... used to enhance the story (if applicable)?

Characters:

Are characters depicted consistently, and are they easily recognizable throughout?

Do the characters reflect sensitivity to diverse cultures and peoples (if applicable)?

Do the characters' clothing, hair styles, and props reflect their identities?

Do the characters' appearances reflect the time period in which the story is set?

Settings:

Do the illustration backgrounds add to the story and character development?

Are unnecessary image backgrounds distracting from the storytelling?

Do the settings and props reflect the time period and place in which the story is set?

Are the settings populated with elements realistic to the world of the story?

Are there elements that reflect the characters' personalities and interests?

Do prominent props randomly appear in or disappear from character's hands?

Do the illustrations reflect the time of day?

Do the illustrations use weather to help tell the story?

Individual Image Composition:

Do any individual illustrations stand out as breaking the rhythm and dynamic flow?

Do the illustrations contribute to moving the story forward?

Do the illustrations move the viewer's attention toward the next page?

Do the illustrations show active characters and objects in motion rather than posed?

Are visual focal points in the right places? If not, how can they be improved?

Do any details stand out as inconsistent between pages (e.g., patterns on clothing, wearing glasses, weather, time of day...)?

Do the illustrations show a dynamic range of contrast and value?

Do any crops or angles look awkward?

Visual Space:

Do the illustrations incorporate well with the text placement?

Does the use of space feel balanced?

Is there a good balance of positive and negative space?

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Technical:

Is anything important (faces in the center, hands, or anything with detail) trapped in the gutter or too close to the edges?

Is text placed at least an inch away from the gutter?

Is the dummy at an Industry-standard page count (multiples of eight)?

How many story pages are there?

Are your pages numbered?

What is the spread count (around 14 spreads for a 32-page book)?

Has the artist left room for, or illustrated a title page and front matter?

Is the dummy at Industry-standard trim size or ratio (usually 8x10 or 10x8)?

General Thoughts:

What I really liked:

What might need work:

Suggested Mentor Books (optional):

Additional Notes: