

The ESSAY

Choose your essay question carefully

Do I understand what my assignment question is asking?

What are the task words?

Describe, discuss, argue, investigate, etc?

What is my instinctive response to the question?



Mind map your pre-existing knowledge/
lecture notes – see how much you already
know and focus on areas you would like to
pursue.

Paul Wearing

RESEARCH, RESEARCH, RESEARCH!



Spend time at the
LIBRARY!

Harriet Lee Merrion

Find **books**, journals, magazines, websites, and articles.

Look on the Library Database for academic papers.

Bring out your inner Sherlock!

Look at the reference list of your sources – who have they quoted?

Look for information about the illustrators you discuss – have they been interviewed?

Organise your research!

STRUCTURE

There are 3 important parts to your essay:

1. Introduction (Say what you are going to say)
2. Main Body (Say it)
3. Conclusion (Say what you have said)

Essay Questions

Question 1:

Choose three picture books you consider to be postmodern. **Examine** what defines them as such.

INTRODUCTION:

- Brief introduction to post modern picture books (perhaps find a good quote to support).
- Children becoming more sophisticated.
- State which books I will be examining.



MAIN BODY of TEXT:

1. The Three Pigs
2. Voices in the Park
3. Who's Afraid of the Big Bad Book?

OR

Examine by feature (E.G. Playfulness, intertextuality, metafiction),
with relevant visual examples.

Postmodern Picture Book Theory:

Sipe and Pantaleo, Anstey, Colker etc.

Question 2:

Analyse the work of illustrators and, particularly, author illustrators who tackle difficult, sensitive and sometimes shocking themes.

INTRODUCTION:

- What picture books can do (quotation).
- Discuss difficult issues.
- Main focus - state what theme I will be analysing and which illustrator/s and picture books.



Depression:

The Red Tree

OR

Grief:

1. Grandpa
2. Heart in a Bottle



Picture Book Theory: Salisbury and Styles, Schwarcz etc.

Child development theory and psychology: Piaget, Tucker, Bowlby, Winnicott.

Relevant theory to your choice of issue.

Semiotics – sensitive visual analysis: Bang, Doonan, Arnheim etc.

Question 3:

“If ever one art movement consumed the entire illustration genre, it was Surrealism” (Heller and Chwast, 2008, p.70). **Discuss** with reference to contemporary illustration.

- Brief introduction to Surrealism with relevant historical facts.
- Discuss how this has influenced many contemporary illustrators (support this).
- Conceptual illustration: Visual metaphor/surrealism
- Main Focus – Picture book illustration **OR** Conceptual illustration?
- State which images/illustrators I will be discussing.



Anita Kunz

Roland Topor

Brad Holland

Harriet Lee Merrion

Matthew Richardson

Brett Rider

OR

Anthony Browne:

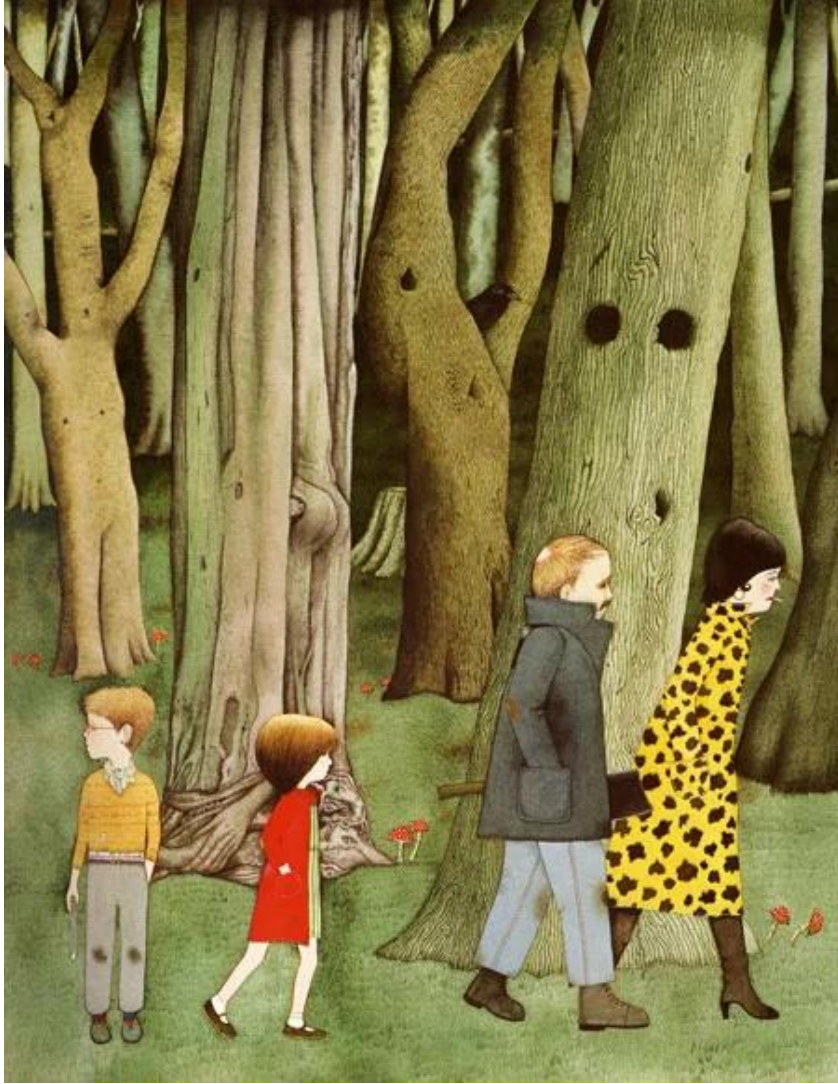
1. Gorilla
2. Voices in the Park
3. Willy the Dreamer



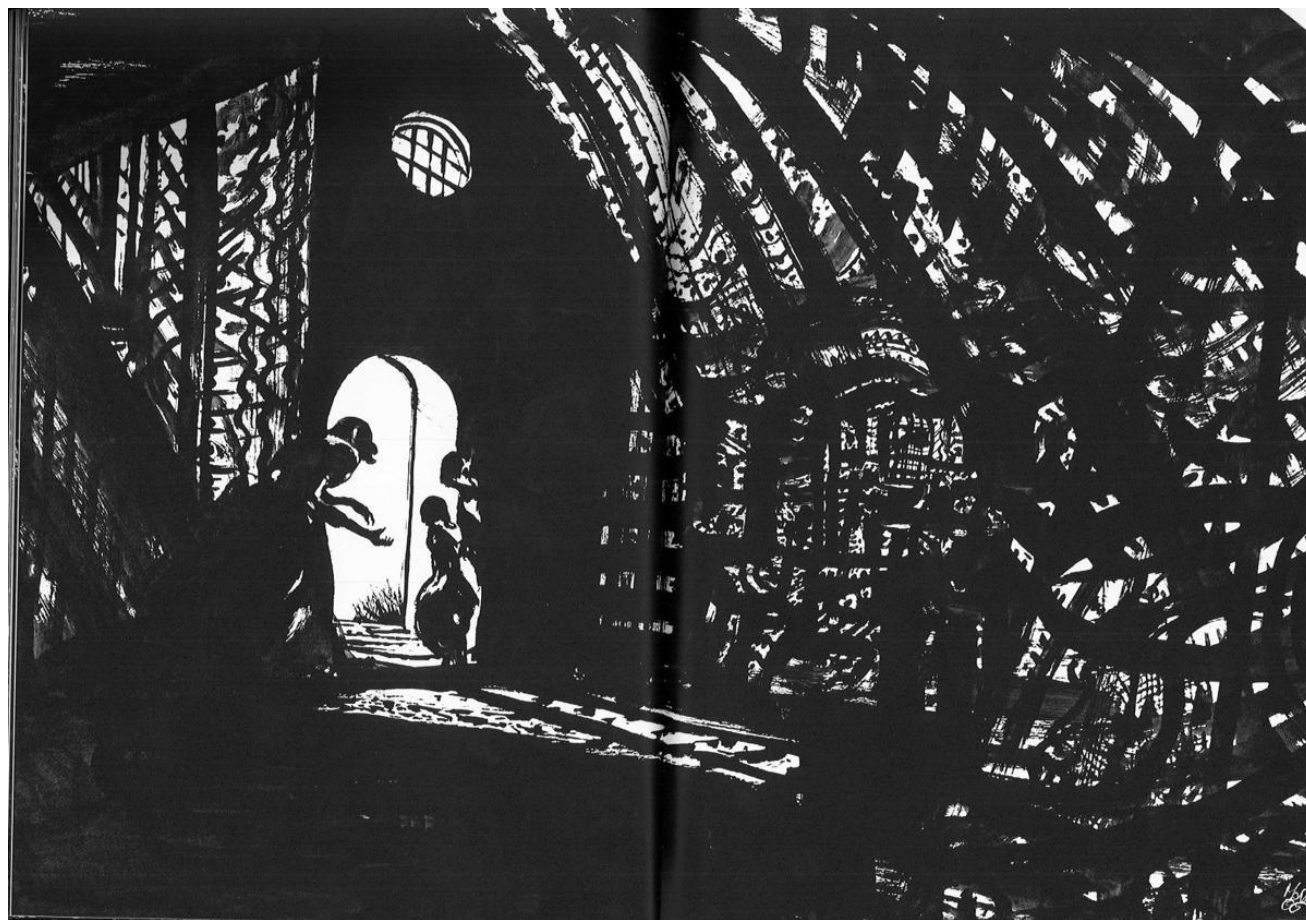
Question 4:

“Fairy tales embody worlds of naive morality that can still resonate with us if their underlying dramas are re-created and re-designed to counter as well as collide with our complex and social realities” (Zipes, 2012, p.136).

Focus on one fairy tale and **analyse** its re-interpretation by contemporary visual artists/illustrators that subvert our ‘normal’ understanding of them.



Choose the fairy tale.



Neil Gaiman and Lorenzo Mattotti

INTRODUCTION:

- Brief introduction to fairy tales and brief history (support this).
- Lead into how contemporary artists/illustrators are fracturing fairy tales.
- Emphasise the visual over the writing.
- Focus – which fairy tale I will analyse.
- Which work I will look at and the practitioners



I would analyse Joanna Concejo's *Le Petit Chaperon Rouge* in great depth.

Depending on which lens I may be looking through:

Psychoanalytical theory, Feminist theory etc: Bettelheim, Freud, Lacan, Orenstein etc.

Fairy tale Theory: Zipes, Tater, Warner etc.

Question 5: From this semester's lectures, choose a theme or selection of illustrators that relate to your practice or interests. Critically assess primary themes, key writers, and relevant practitioners.

Question 6: With an emphasis on Welsh language, Culture or Identity choose a theme or focus on creative practitioners relevant to your field of study and critically analyse your choices. This essay can be presented in Welsh or in English in discussion with your tutor.

SEMIOTICS: Pierce, Saussure, Barthes, Lévi-Strauss, Julia Kristeva etc.

METAPHOR: Hausman, Lakoff and Johnson, Forceville etc.

...and they all lived happily ever after.

The End