

Getting Started

Faber-Castell 'Design your own Shortlist Book Cover Competition'

Why are Book Covers Important?

People really do judge a book by its cover!

For most books, the cover is its introduction that greets the world and provides a hint of the story/ adventure that lay inside. Initially, both large and small publishers alike are dependent on the cover for book interest.

You need a well designed book cover because books compete with each other on shelves in book stores. An attractive cover may assist in getting premium display space in a bookstore. Readers, book retailers and literature reviewers glance at a book for only a few seconds before they make a choice. Authors need to make sure that it is their book they're choosing because they want their stories to be read by as many people as possible.

Design Challenge

We challenge you to create a book cover worthy of the words on the pages of your favourite 2008 CBCA Book of the Year Awards Short List books.

The Design Process... some suggestions!

Read the Book and make notes about what stood out for you in the story- characters, place, time etc. noting your emotional reactions. While you are reading visualise in your mind pictures of what the story looks like, let your mind wander and move away from the story. Let yourself think in pictures!

Visualise your own world that you can go back and visit as you read more of the story. Practice filling any gaps with your own imagination- paint a world in your mind.

Free Yourself from the everyday - trust your imagination, let yourself go along for the ride. Don't hold yourself back!

Open a Page, close your eyes and imagine you are in the story, feeling what the characters are experiencing- maybe its the wind in your hair... or what happens if you walk over the hill - what do you see??? Add to your mind picture - add movement (moving clouds, extra characters, other images). You can do this as a class or on your own - it's better than TV! Try it!

View the Book covers of the Shortlist online. Visit your school or public library (a great place to spend some time browsing) or your favourite book shop, and think about what messages the illustrators are trying to send you about the story inside. What design elements work to pull you toward the book?

Study design tutorials and illustration advice on how to design artwork for book covers and book illustrations.

Experiment with different drawing techniques, colour and ideas just for fun! Don't throw anything away even if you think it is AWFUL!! Later on it could be useful. Remember that ideas evolve over time. Create your own artwork that expresses something from your mind that you visualised and felt when you were reading the book. Think how to convey the message of the story to others. Have fun.

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Design Research

Suggested websites from around the world

Article on the importance of good book design

<http://www.theage.com.au/news/books/every-picture-tells-a-/2006/05/18/1147545456012.html>

Australian Book Design Awards website

http://publishers.asn.au/awards.cfm?doc_id=24

Design basics for book covers

http://desktoppub.about.com/od/bookcovers/Book_Covers_and_Jackets.htm

A great American site with book cover design reviews

<http://www.aiga.org/content.cfm/5050-recent>

A Book Cover review blog (teacher supervision required)

<http://nytimesbooks.blogspot.com>