

Analyzing Engaging Imagery of Hina Baek's Picture Books

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Children's picture books are exceptionally unique and essential in the whole illustration art, as they are created for children, mainly with pictures and a small amount of text explanation. Picture language is more intuitive than text symbols, more in line with the characteristics of children's thinking, and can stimulate children's interest in reading. Hina Baek is a famous picture book writer in Korea. Her unique picture book visual style is represented through hand-crafted miniature figures, carefully designed lighting, and photography. This study utilizes how to create engaging imagery from the book *How to Be a Children's Book Illustrator* to analyze Baek's picture books. From this preliminary study, the research proposes revising the analysis method to further investigate the characteristics of children's picture books from the background elements and picture elements.

Keywords: children's picture book, engaging imagery, illustration, Hina Baek

Introduction

Children's picture books concentrate on the children's emotional needs and behavioral cognition. Children learn from picture books by understanding the relevant truth through the emotional development of the characters in picture books. Therefore, the picture book's primary visual is an illustration, and that illustration style is an essential impact on telling the story of the book. Hence, the uniqueness of Baek's picture books lies in the precise sense of materials, appearance, and shape, which makes her picture books have the primary function of children's picture books.

Methodology

For the 0-8 years old, children's book illustrations of all stages of the creation of guidance involve factors that create a deep and fascinating story, from planning to the realization of the detailed introduction for children's illustrated book creation and analysis of a better guide. This study utilizes the methods introduced in the book *How to Be a Children's Book Illustrator* to analyze Baek's books. Engaging children to focus on picture books requires understanding the audience and engagement imagery.

Audience (Hammond & Dobbins, 2018, pp. 10-15)

Age is an essential factor to consider, and knowing the audience for the story is the only way to create exciting images for the target group. In each age group, there are many readers from different backgrounds,

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upbringings, and races, and these factors must be considered. Most of Paik Hina's picture books reflect Korean life and culture, and the characterizations and scene designs are a part of traditional Korean culture. The tone of a children's picture book is a significant factor that helps the reader feel the characters' emotions, understand the story better, and get immersed in the book so that a harmonious tone does not seem out of place. Readers need to understand the content of the illustration, and accurately conveying the emotions and behaviors of the characters and scenes will help readers better understand the story.

Engagement (Hammond & Dobbins, 2018, pp. 30-33)

Illustration is a significant factor when creating children's picture books, especially for young readers, and the images need to remain consistently appealing. These include character appeal, color, look again, education and interaction, and relatability.

Character appear: The character's attractiveness comes from the character's design and expression and how age-appropriate it is for the reader (Hammond & Dobbins, 2018, p. 30).

Use of color: The proper use of color plays an incredible role in increasing user stickiness, and the style and color of the illustrations help the reader understand the story. That is why keeping the color palette consistent throughout the book is imperative. Choose a color palette that is rich and reflects the book's tone. Using contrasting, complementary, warm, cool colors, and other color arrangements makes the picture bright and harmonious (Hammond & Dobbins, 2018, p. 31).





Look again: Children's picture books are not read once; readers of all sizes will multiple them, so the illustrations must have layers and depth of detail. This allows children to discover details on multi-read that they did not notice before. These details keep kids interested in reading multiple times and encourage parents to take the time to browse through the book together to discover the details together (Hammond & Dobbins, 2018, p. 32).

Education and interaction: Education is a significant factor in children's picture books. Teaching children essential values and lessons conveyed in the story is crucial to the author to express with the illustrations (Hammond & Dobbins, 2018, pp. 32-33).

Relatability: Relevance is a core element that encourages user interaction and is intended to allow readers to see themselves in stories and tasks, so illustrations need recognizable and familiar elements that readers can engage with. Including elements familiar to the reader in the image encourages the reader to connect to themselves in the story narrative (Hammond & Dobbins, 2018, p. 33).

Table 1

Engagement Analysis of Baek's Picture Books

Engagement categories	Hina Baek's picture books (four most popular books)			
	<i>Bathhouse Fairy</i> (2012)	<i>Moon Icecream</i> (2015)	<i>Cloud Bread</i> (2019)	<i>Weird Mom</i> (2022)
Character appear				

				
	The main character, Grandma Fairy, is impressive with her exaggerated styling and vivid look, and the flabby, obese body of the character in the picture challenges the public's aesthetics.	The main character is an animal, and the building manager's grandmother wears a long dress and glasses, creating a warm and enthusiastic image.	The story takes place in a cozy home between a cat, a mom, and a child. So the main character is set in a cozy and close to life.	The main character is set to be a fairy in traditional Korean culture, so the costumes and makeup are very Korean.
Use of color	Blue, warm, flesh	Yellow, orange, black, dark blue	Orange, yellow, brown, and black	Brown, red, white
	The story scene takes place in a bathhouse, so the color choices were made to liven up the picture with bright color accents in addition to blue.	Because the story is set at night, more contrasting colors are used. The characters are depicted in warmer colors.	The story's setting is at home, so the colors were chosen to be warm and highlight the cozy atmosphere.	The colors are also set around the story's theme, with warm colors dominating the screen and set lights to create a warm atmosphere.
Look again	Fairy grandmothers' fat and flabby bodies instead give children a proper understanding of the body that gave birth to human beings.	Meticulous attention to detail in the setting and clothing of the characters draws the reader back for more.	The story has many family details set aside to lead the reader to a second viewing.	The sets in the scenes have a lot of traditional Korean home decorations, allowing one to observe more details while reading the story.
Education and interaction	Age differences between Grandma Fairy and Chi, who eventually become friends. The story teaches children the power of sincerity and friendliness.	The story is about the building manager's grandmother, who makes ice cream from the melting moon on a summer night and shares it with everyone.	Whimsical stories inspire children to think and inspire the imagination, while the stories create a wonderful family atmosphere that warms children's hearts.	Grandma Fairy does her best to take care of the children even though she is not good at cooking so that the children can learn the importance of responsibility.
Relatability	The unique aesthetic in the matter nevertheless allows the reader to reflect on and look directly at the female body.	Elements such as hot summer days and ice cream can make readers empathize.	Whimsical clouds are an everyday element allowing one to conjure imagery of other life elements.	The difficulty of juggling a busy work schedule and family is enough to spark reader empathy, large and small.

Conclusions

To attract young readers aged 3-6, Baek created stories with unique aesthetic characters, which reflect Korea's daily life, history, and culture, and each story is of educational significance to children. The picture illustration uses unique and rich creative skills, breaks through the public aesthetic of the main character's image design, and often uses warm and strongly contrasted colors, the details of the illustration can also let readers recall reading warm, and touching daily stories trigger readers' empathy, captured the hearts of readers. From this preliminary study, the researcher studies to revise the analysis method using secondary factors on each category of the engagement to further investigations on the characteristics of children's picture books.

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