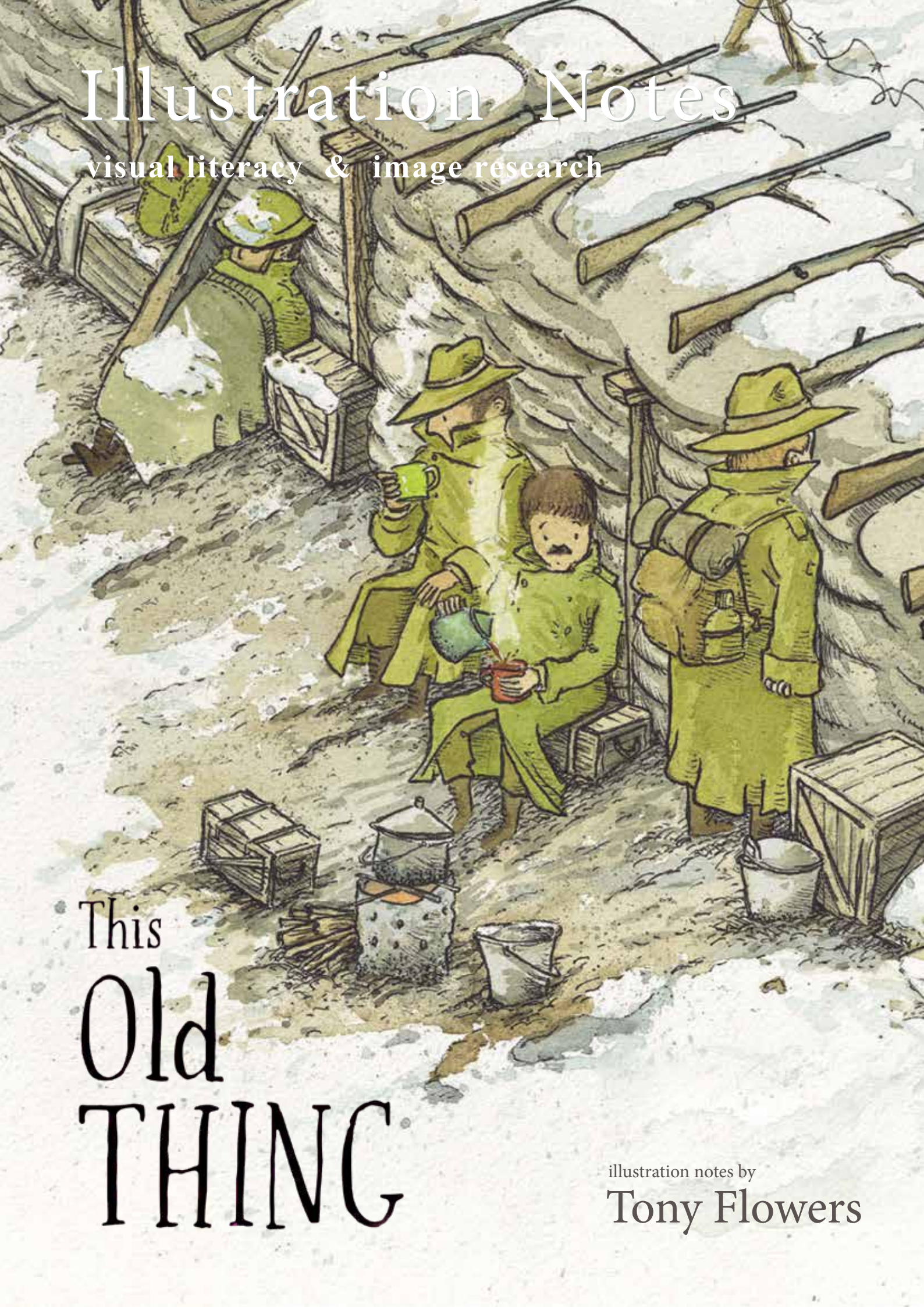


Illustration Notes

visual literacy & image research

This Old THING

illustration notes by
Tony Flowers



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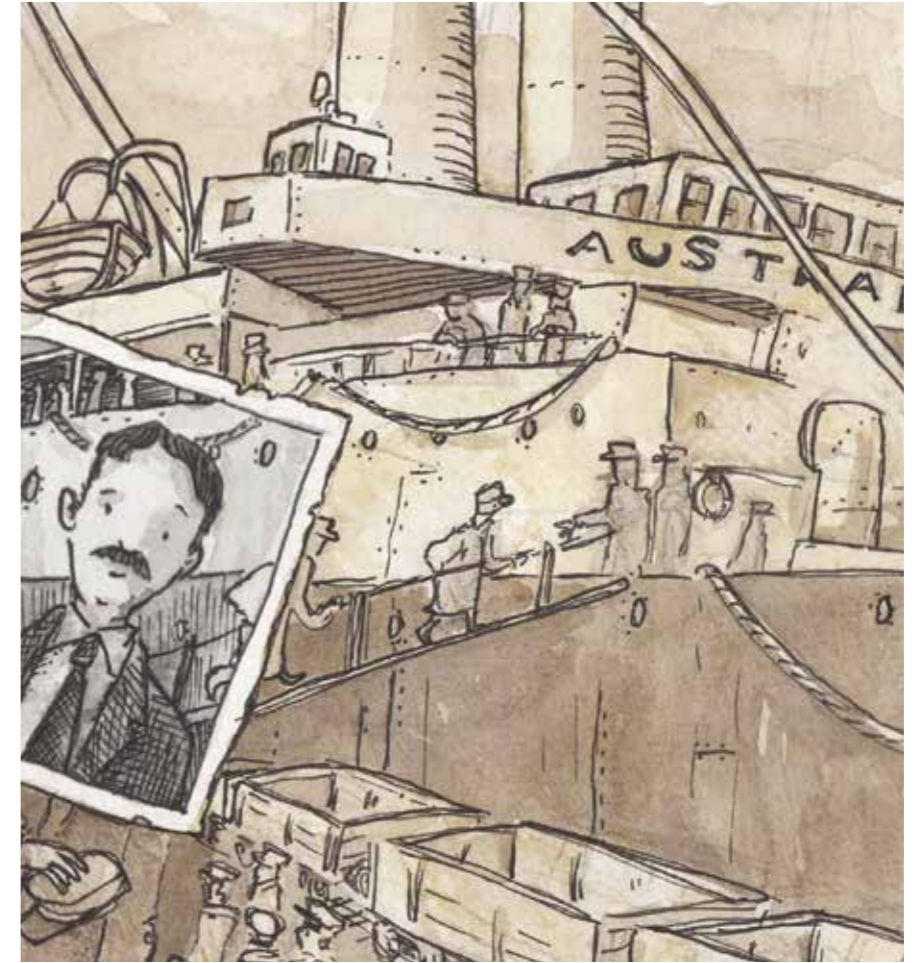
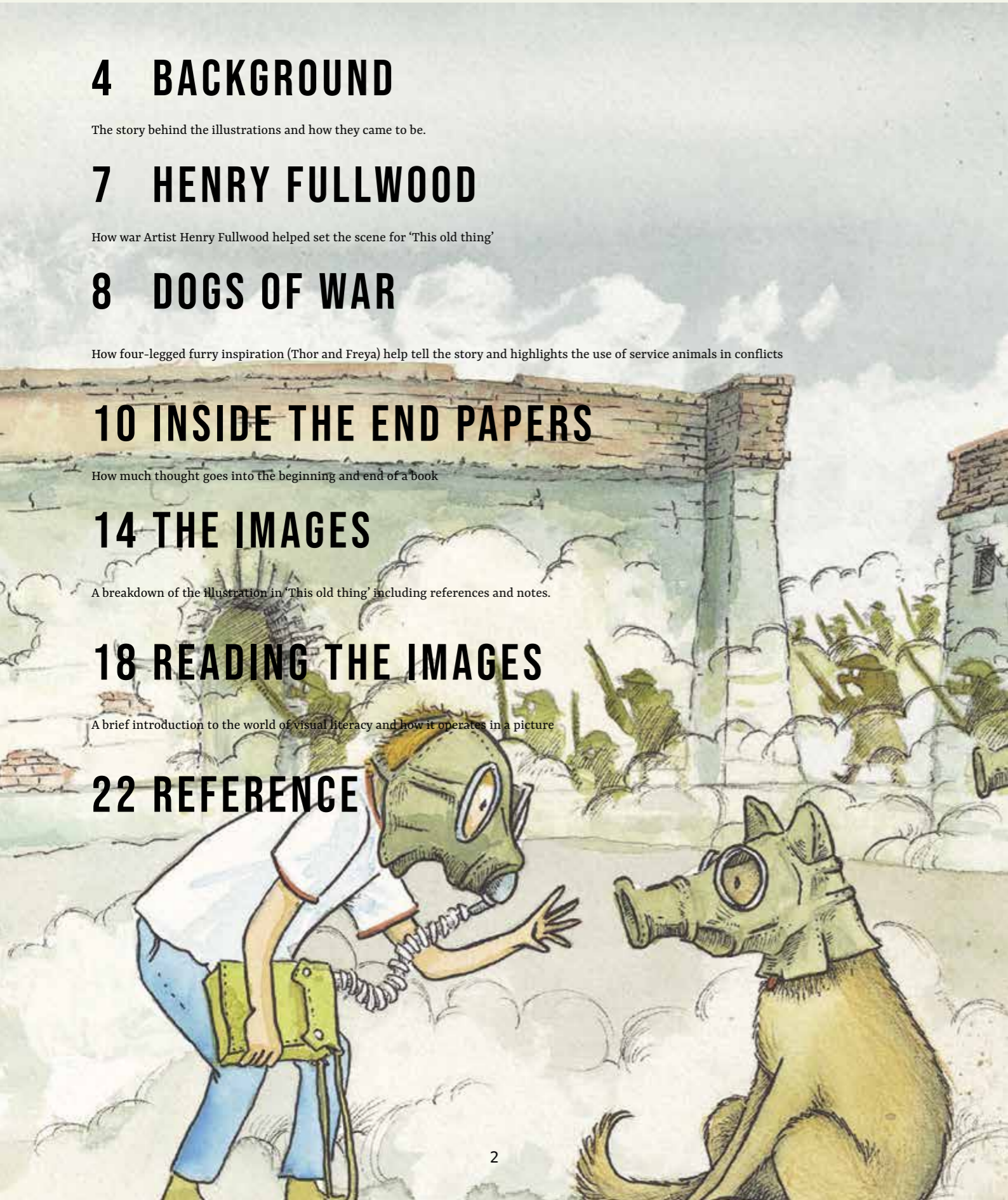
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Draft illustration
June 2019

Illustration Notes:

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This Old Thing

First Published by Scholastic Australia in 2022

Text © Cassandra Webb 2022

Illustrations copyright © Tony Flowers 2022

Design by Nicolette Treanor

Typeset in Macaron and Calder

Printed in China by RR Donnelley

ISBN 978-1-74383-400-8

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BACKGROUND

Book Dedication:

For Charles Flowers, a grandfather that I never knew, and like so many others who fought in the war to end all wars. And to Henry Fullwood, who went to war with a brush instead of a gun.

as one layered image, and only at the very end is this separated. The final image shows the past slowly dissolving or fading.

In the narrative I found a very personal connection in the story of this Old Thing. My Grandfather Charles and his brother fought in The Battle of the Somme in 1916. Charles was injured and returned to Australia. He lost his brother Frank on the battlefield.

To create the images for this book I wanted to let to reader feel what the world looked like to my Grandfather in Europe during world war 1. To achieve this, I researched the online archives of the Australian War Memorial and the works of war artist Frank Fullwood. In 1916 Australian government introduced the 'Australian Official War Art Scheme'. This scheme commissioned Australian artists like Frank Fullwood to join military forces in war times to capture the experience from an Australian

perspective. Fullwood's paintings were the inspiration for many of my background images. These paintings were so pivotal in the direction that I took with my illustrations that as a tribute, the main soldier character is loosely based on Fullwood; the character in the story reaches the rank of Sargent and become a medic just as Fullwood himself had done. I added a service dog to my images to help link the child in the present with the main character's story. When we think of times of war, we often forget the large number of animals that have served and supported troops in battle, from pigeons, dogs and horses to the modern-day use of sniffer rats to clear abandoned mind fields.

The illustration notes for 'This old thing' that accompanied the manuscript:

Visual inspiration: the left page is the present day character and on the right is the great grandfather as his life is unfolding in black and white. The story begins with a 50/50 present/past split of the spread. Present on the left and past on the right, but as the child discovers the objects the present begins to take over and the past begins to be forgotten until the child finds the photo. From that point on, as each page is turned, the child's respect for the past returns until on the final spread the past and present visually share 50/50 of the spread once again.

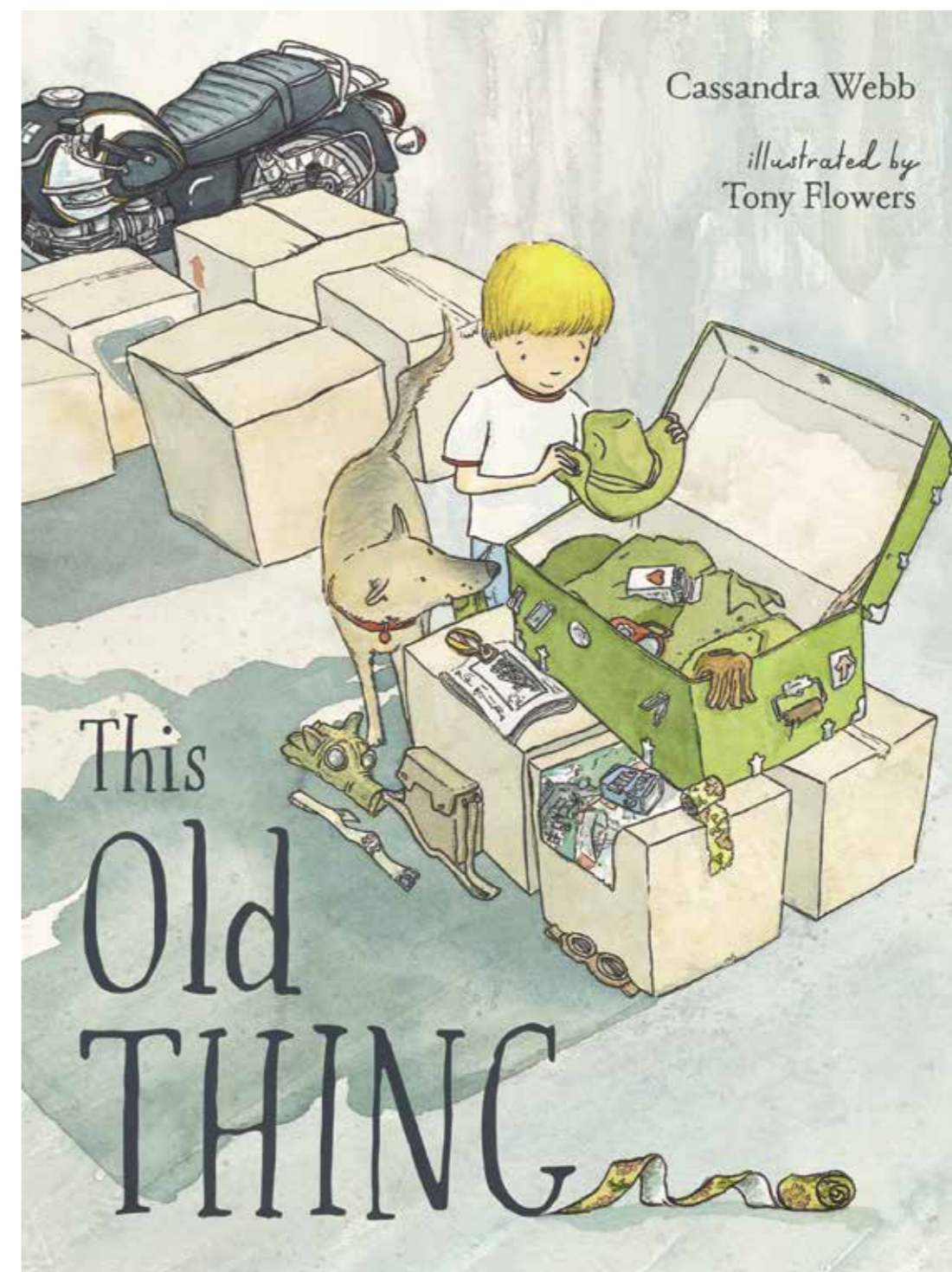
j o t t i n g

I find as an illustrator, when you are presented with a simple typed narrative to consider, you first have to find a way into a manuscript. Text in a picture book is often sparse and has many ways to be interpreted.

Often a manuscript is accompanied by some illustration notes. These can give some interesting insights into what the author and publisher might be visually thinking. As a general rule, I ignore all author notes until I have read through a manuscript a couple of times and started down some ideas.

As it turned out, the note form the author helped form the visual narrative theme for images of past and present operating on the page together. I choose to have a more immersive slide from the separated time realities until they were integrated

The artwork of war artist Henry Fullwood was the inspiration for many of the background images throughout





HENRY FULLWOOD

[1863 - 1930]

“Albert Henry Fullwood’s major contribution as an official war artist was to record aspects of the First World War which others may not have noticed or have taken for granted.”

His works have a narrative element that captures the mood and atmosphere of a scene.”

‘This old thing’. As a tribute, the main soldier character is loosely based on Fullwood; check out the matching moustaches.

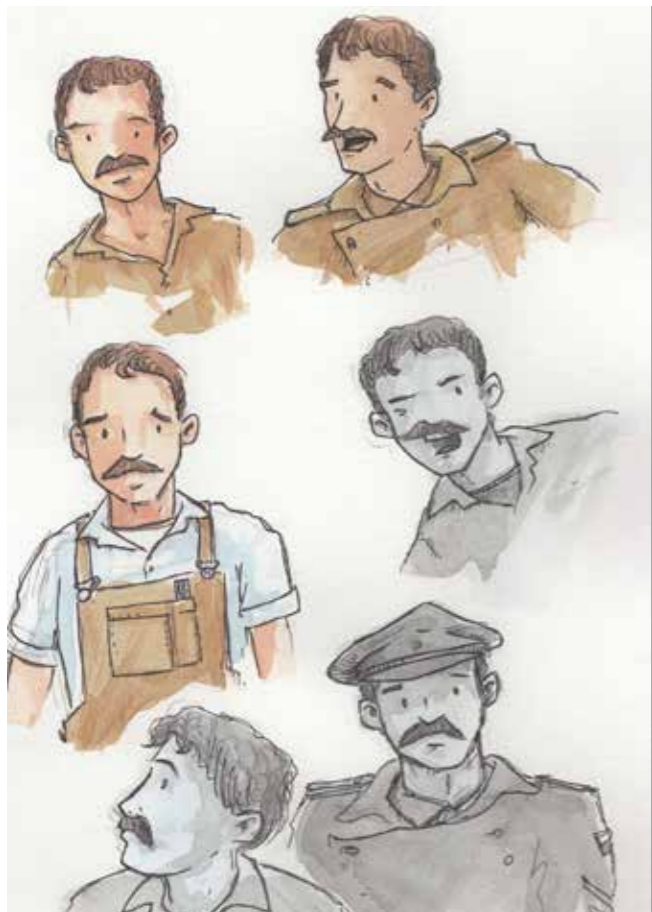
Fullwood first enlisted in 1915 and served as a sergeant in the Royal Army Medical Corps; he was discharged as medically unfit in 1917.

Returning to service in 1918 as an honorary Lieutenant in the Australian Imperial Forces.

He travelled through France and Belgium with the 5th division and painted scenes from the landscapes and lives of the soldier’s serving on the Western Front.

The Australian War Memorial holds collections of Fullwood’s paintings from this time that are accessible through online collections.

-AWM



Top: page image
Far right:
character sketch
Right: Portrait
of Henry Fullwood
(London 1917?)



DOGS OF WAR

“Up to 20,000 dogs were trained for front-line duties during World War One”

- BBC (2013)

In times of war, we often forget the large number of animals that have served and supported troops in battle, from pigeons, dogs and horses to the modern-day use of sniffer rats used to clear abandoned minefields.

As I always like to add a dog or two into my books, I thought it would be good to use my own dogs (pictured right) Thor, a German Shepherd) and Freya a Belgian Shepherd into ‘This old thing’. In the story Freya is pictured as the boy’s companion as he looks through the be old trunk. When we see images of the past Thor joins the main character in a support role towards the end of the book.



Top: page image
Right: Thor and Freya running on Sandy Bay beach (Tasmania)

INSIDE THE END PAPERS



Right: Etiam egestas, dui vel facilisis consequat, massa nibh ultrices nisl, sed sollicitudin diam odio non ante

The endpapers in a book are a structural element that attached the book's internal pages to the book's cover.

“But being functional doesn’t prevent the endpaper from also being a thing of narrative beauty.” *Margrete Lamond-*

Or even of beauty for its own sake, regardless of narrative.” (Lamond, 2018). These additional opportunities to layer visual information in a picture book are often overlooked. Not so in ‘This old thing’. Rather than just a decorative motif that is in keeping with the illustration style of the book, I like to approach endpapers as the start of the narrative, even if just providing context or support information. Megan Daley often says, “the story starts with the endpapers” (Daley, 2020). I have used the endpapers in previous books to set the scene for a story (Small Town 2020 or Advance Australia Fair 2022). In this book, the endpapers provide contextual images that set the period for the book.

The objects shown in the endpapers of this old thing

“the story starts with the endpapers”

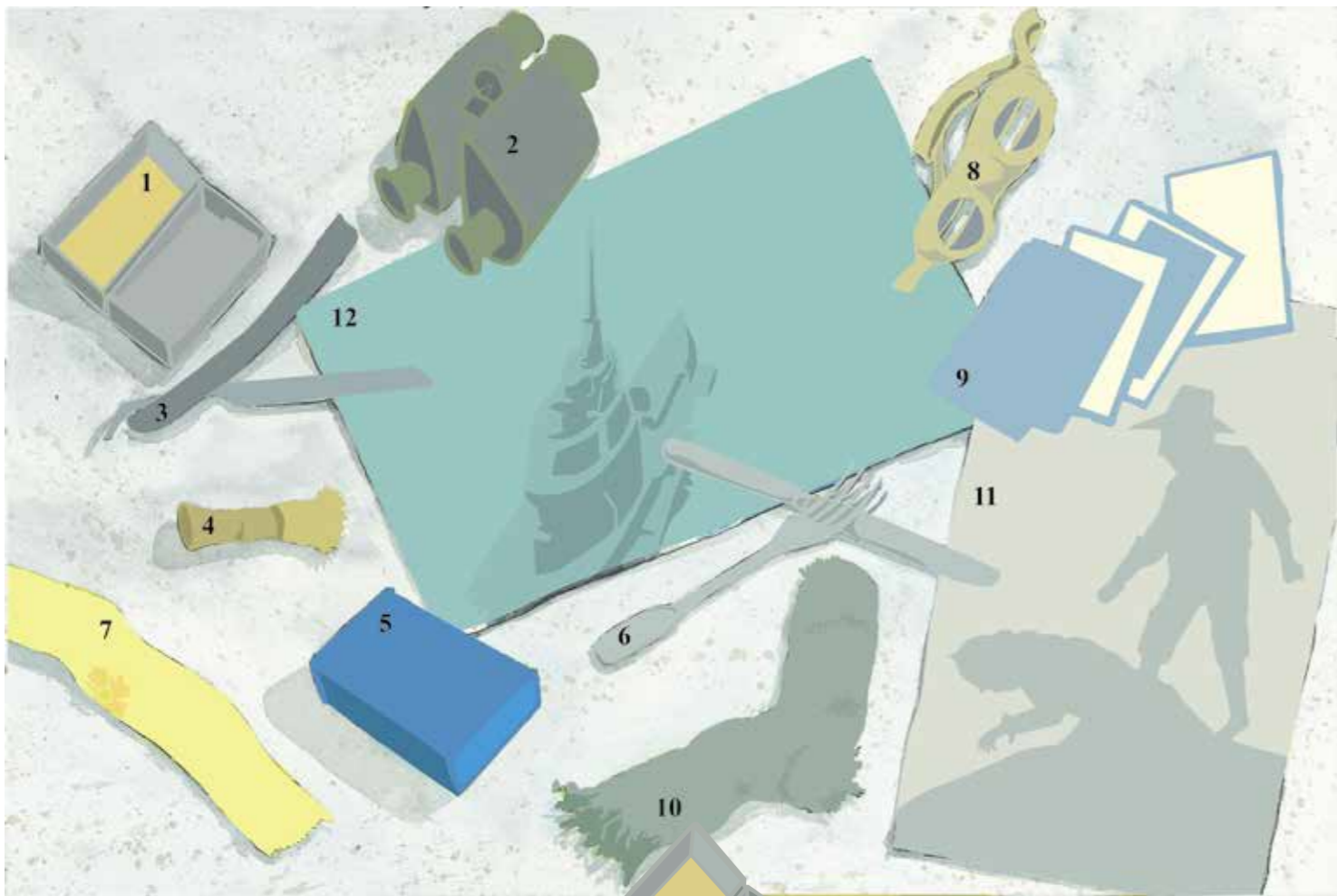
Megan Daley (2020)

are a mixture of objects featured in the story and additional objects found through my research. These items are period correct for world war 1, except for the poster ‘Attack on all front’. The ‘Attack on all front’ poster is a Canadian propaganda poster by illustrator Hubert Rogers that depicts a soldier with a machine gun, an industrial worker with a rivet gun, and a woman with a farming hoe (Rogers, 1943). I have included this image as it provides an excellent opportunity to discuss the role of propaganda in times of war. And the fact that propaganda is used on all sides of a conflict. Chronologically it is still within the context of what might be found in a collection in modern times about the war. Items are often mixed up, misinterpreted or misclassified. It also works on the level of a family collection. Growing up, I heard stories of my grandfather’s role in the first world war from my father. Much like the story, we did indeed have an old suitcase that some of his things had been kept in. Over the years, my father had added to this small collection of items with other war-related things that he had found interesting related to war. As a result, we had books and information that covered the development of technology, aircraft and ships from world war 1 to the Korean war.

The items I choose to focus on are from a mix of different nationalities, general military items and personal belongings.

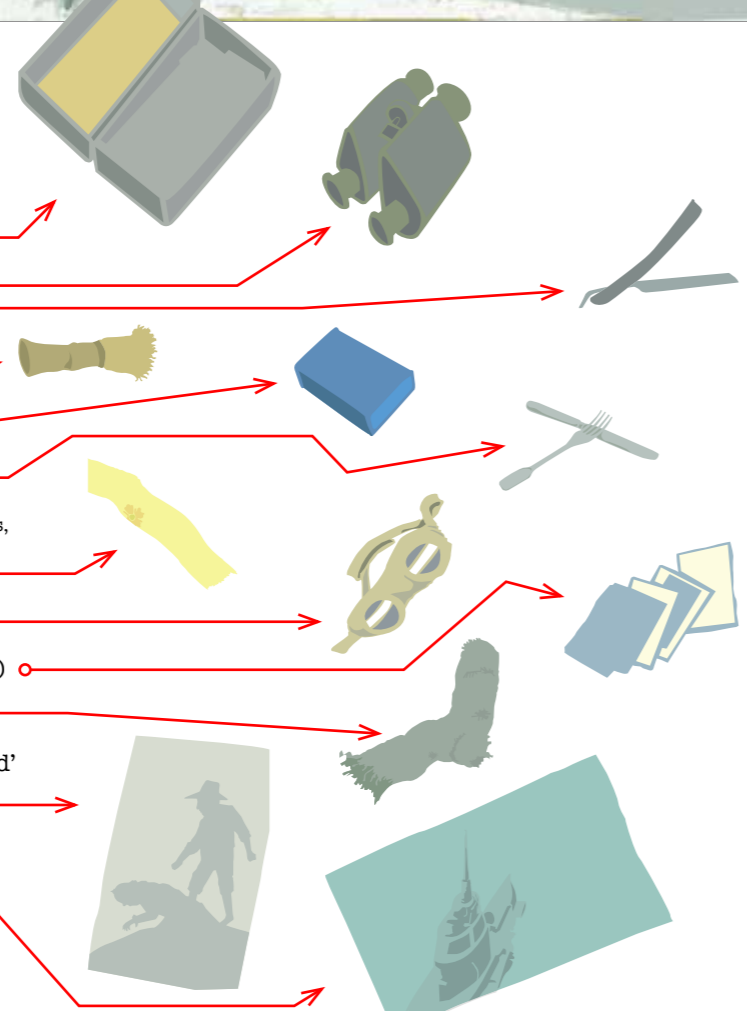


Right: Etiam egestas, dui vel facilisis consequat, massa nibh ultrices nisl, sed sollicitudin diam odio non ante

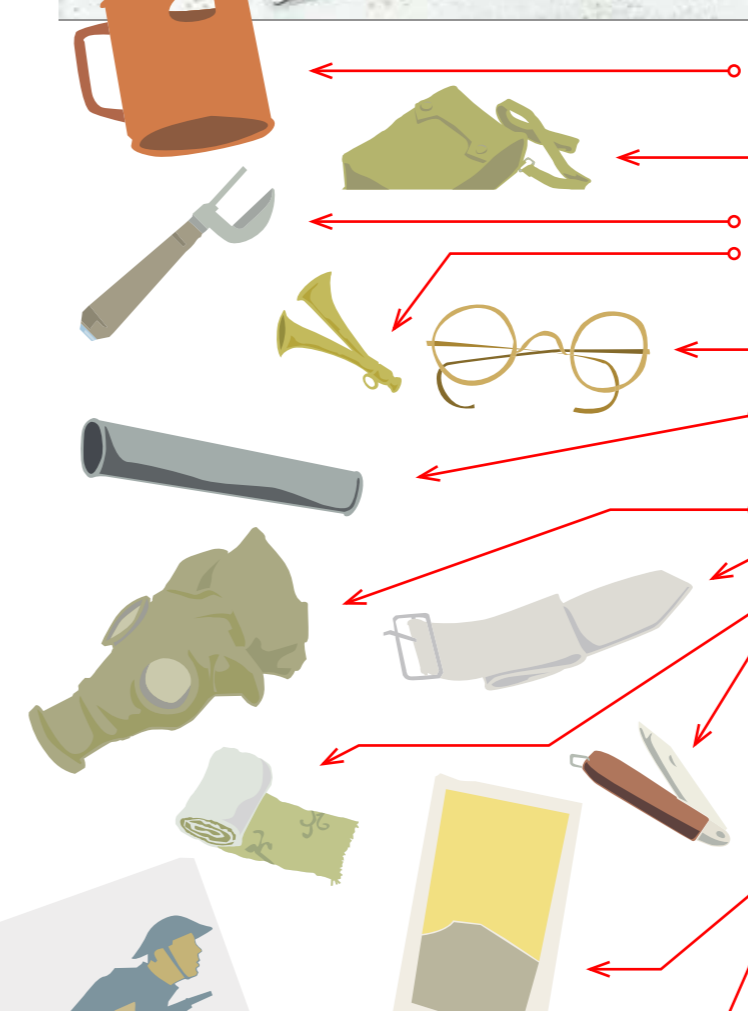


LIST OF ITEMS

1. shave kit and brush (Adams, 2014, p. 54)
2. field glasses - German (AWM, 1911)
3. cut throat razor
4. shaving brush
5. tin of bully beef
6. knife and fork (Adams, 2014, p. 15)
7. recycled bandages - curtain material (Adams, 2014, p. 30)
8. field Goggles
9. playing cards (referenced from illustration)
10. Sock
11. War poster 'don't let up, Keep on saving food' (1918)
12. War poster 'Invest in the victory liberty loan' (Shafer, 1917 (?))



12



1. mug (referenced from illustration)
2. as mask bag (referenced from illustration (Adams, 2014, p. 14))
3. can opener
4. gas alarm whistle(Adams, 2014, p. 44)
5. glasses - belonging to Charles Bean AWM REL39646(Siers & Walker, 2015, p. 4)
6. artist brush kit - belonging to Harold Power (Siers & Walker, 2015, p. 46)
7. dog gas mask (referenced from illustration (Unk, 1916))
8. 'SB' - stretcher bearers band (Siers & Walker, 2015, p. 23)
9. recycled bandages - curtain material (Adams, 2014, p. 30)
10. pocket knife
11. glass syringe
12. Compass (Adams, 2014, p. 24)
13. soap bar and tin
14. bottle
15. war poster 'Even a dog enlists, why don't you?'
16. war poster 'Attack on all front' (Rogers, 1943).

13

THE IMAGES

Cover Art:	Front Cover , boy looking at items	A range of items that appear in the book are being looked at by the main character. See endpaper details for references Motorcycle in the background is my much loved Triumph Bonneville (2009 – t100). This bike reappears in the 11th spread (train page). It also appeared in my version of “Advance Australia Fair”
	Back Cover , Church	Church landscape and soldier receiving medical help from a nurse
Inside Art:	Text Title page	Reference/description Dog with curtain bandage Recycled Bandages – curtain material (Adams, 2014, p. 30)
	Main Title page	Trunk image - no reference

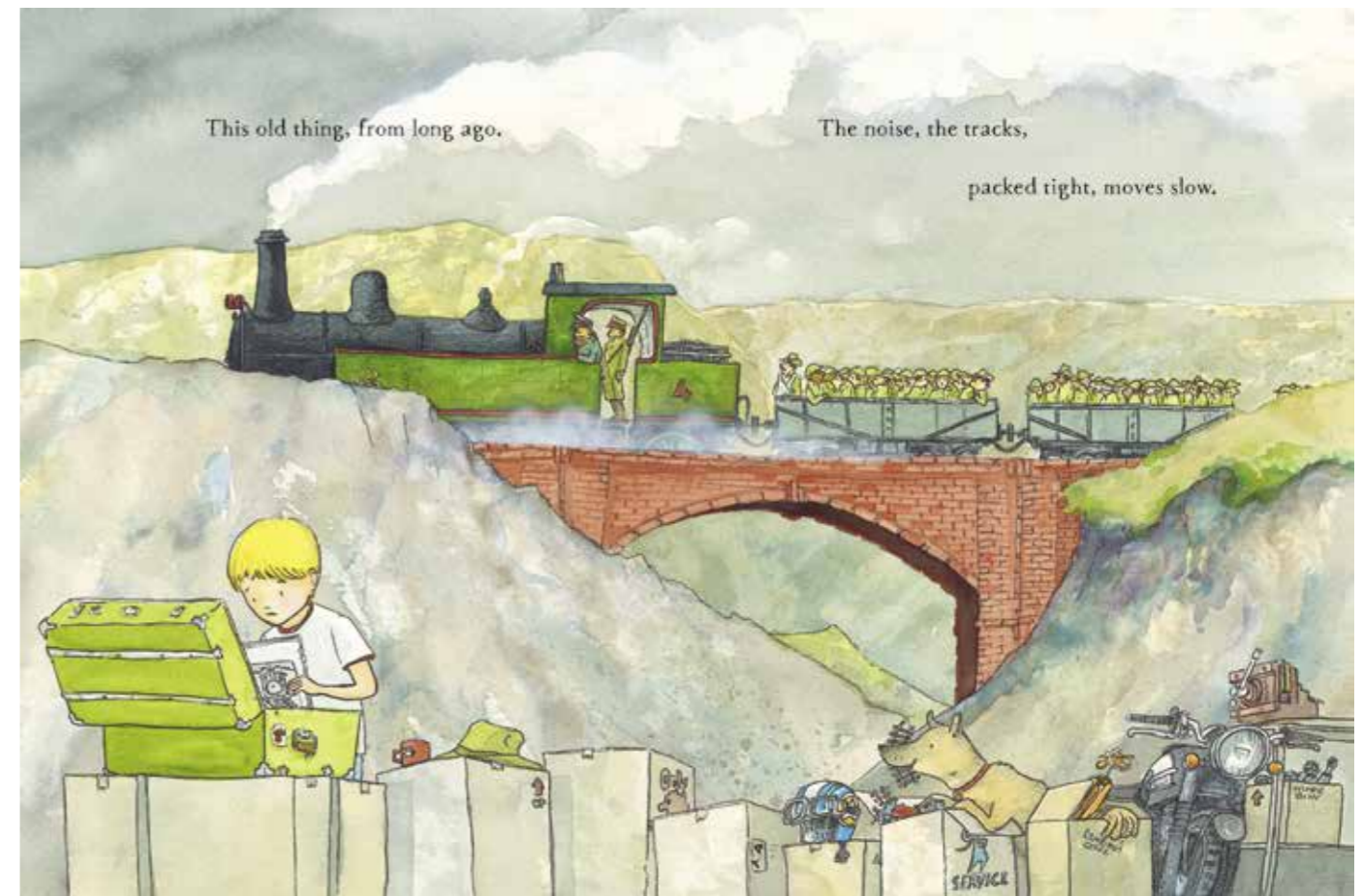


Opening page	text: ANZAC day is fast... text: WAR is fast approaching..	Boy reading note & dog - no reference G'Dad reading paper 'WAR' - no reference
2nd spread	text: This old thing... text: ...to keep, some to let go.	Boy and dog (Freya) walking - no reference G'Dad walk away - no reference Personal addition: among the boxes there is a piano accordion and guitar case. These are instruments that I have and play badly. The Piano accordion appears again in an upcoming title “Grandma’s First Tattoo”
3rd spread	text: This old thing.. text: What was to follow..	Boy looking at newspaper - no reference G'Dad in kitchen reading newspaper - no reference
4th spread	text: This old thing.. text: So many men..	Top down image of trunk (see endpaper notes for references) Medical examination, ‘Joining up, the test’ (Adams, 2014, p. 14), Poster based on WW1 recruitment poster ‘Don’t stand there looking at this, Go a nd Help!’ (Unk, 1915)
5th Spread	text: This old thing.. text: Worn in the rain...	boy with hat and dog - no reference G'Dad leading horse - no reference
6th Spread	text: This old thing.. text: On marched the men..	looking down on trunk (see endpaper notes for references) G'Dad & soldier resting - Soliders (Nevinson, 1916) Background - 5th Division resting at Coisy (Fullwood, 1918c)
7th Spread	text: This old thing.. text:...shared with Joe	boy with mug and dog with sock - no reference G'Dad in trench with mug... ‘Always in action’ (Adams, 2014, p. 21) The image of the trench was based on a photo of an active WW1 trench with guns set up along the top of sandbags

Right: Detail from the 7th Spread.

PAGE IMAGES CONTINUED

8th Spread	text: This old thing.. text: duck and crawl..	boy with cards - no reference G'Day in the trenches playing with cards - 'Bridge Street at Ham-sur-Haire' (Fullwood, 1918b)
9th Spread	text: This old thing.. text: Not very interesting..	Boy with Photo (as show on last page) G'Dad and a dog & artillery unit - background image: artillery and horses (Power, 1919)
10th Spread	text: This old thing.. text: Us and them...	Boy reading news paper - no reference Tank 'Tank Warfare' (Adams, 2014, pp. 52 - 53) 'Mk.1 Tank' (Airfix, 1967), 'battle of Menin Road - (1917) this is the inspiration for the planes in the sky (Siers & Walker, 2015, p. 47)
10th Spread	text: This old thing.. text: This old thing...A silent...	Gasmasks - no reference 15th Bridgade' (Fullwood, 1918a), 'German dog gasmask' (Unk, 1916)
11th Spread	text: This old thing text: ..the tracks..	Boy reading train info - no reference Train - A painting by Horace Moore -Jones (1916) (Pictured left)
12th Spread	text: This old thing text: Brought with it...	Boy looking at discharge papers - no reference Ship and soldiers - Ship based on painting of the H.H.S. River Clyde (Dixon, 1915)
13th Spread	text: This is my great... Text: he is what I want to show.	Blank page - text only Boy with picture from 9th spread. Image of G'Dad and dog - fading
Final page	Author and Illustrator note page	Artist brush kit - Harold Power (Siers & Walker, 2015, p. 46)



Above: 11th Spread.

READING IN PICTURES



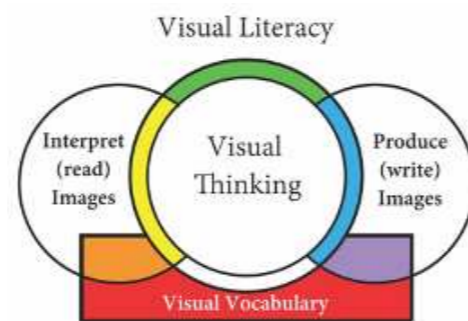
Right: Etiam egestas, dui vel facilisis consequat, massa nibh ultrices nisl, sed sollicitudin diam odio non ante

Visual literacy has been a topic of great discussion in educational circles for some years now. At its core Visual Literacy is simply,

“the ability to interpret (read) and produce (write) images”

— Connors - 2011

When we break down what that that might look like in action. We can think about visual literacy as a process that uses visual thinking strategies and a visual vocabulary to decode visual information (read) or encode visual information with a message (produce or write in images).



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When we are trying to build a student's visual literacy skills we should be concentrating these parts of this equation. Through exploring process that encourage students to use visual thinking skills, i.e. discussing visual structures (Symbolic processes), design thinking process and visual play through drawing.

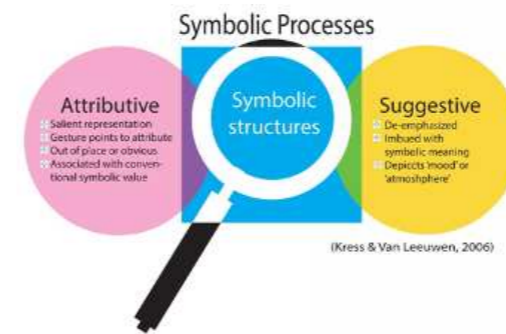
Much like an increased verbal vocabulary will increase in a student's ability to communicate in words, time spend building a visual vocabulary will increase a student's ability to both understand images and express themselves in images.

The concept of a visual vocabulary may seem foreign

to some people, in is really just a visual bank of visual knowledge that is used as a reference source for decoding and encoding visual information. Academically we would normally discuss semiotic principles, (Lefèvre, 2014; Noble & Bestley, 2005 ,p92) or visual semiotic. (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2006; Unsworth, 2015).

How does this work in practice?

As a tool kit for starting a conversation on understanding visual elements of an image, we can examine the images 'Symbolic Processes'. 'Symbolic Processes' describes the use various attributive and suggestive symbolic values within the image. The arrangement of these symbols by the author of images enables a reader to decode the image predicable manner. (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2006)

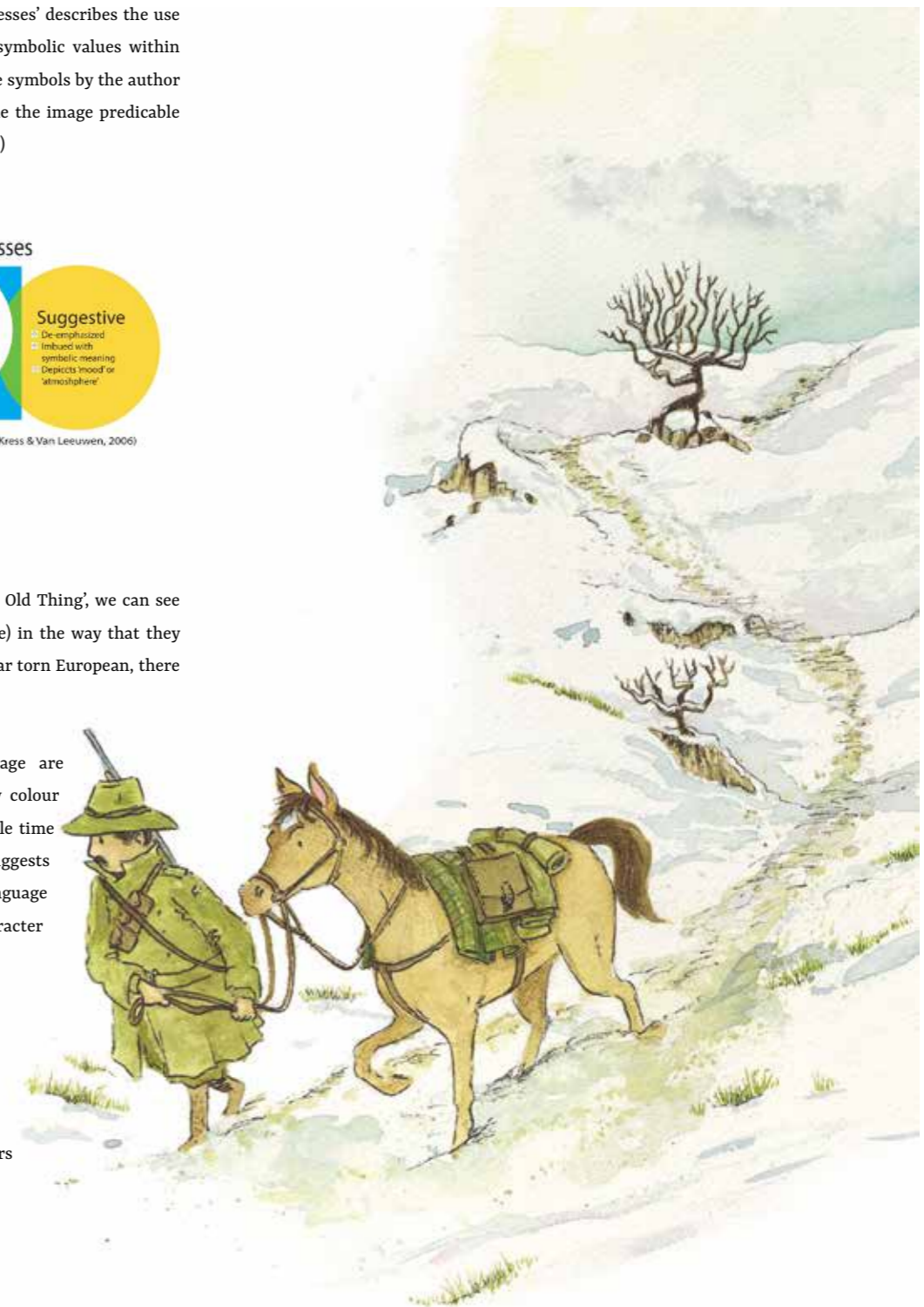


(Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2006)

When looking at this image in 'This Old Thing', we can see some elements are overt (attributive) in the way that they are telling the story, ie; It is set in war torn European, there is effects of war in the background.

While some elements in the image are Suggestive about the story, i.e. sky colour indicates both weather and a possible time of day, the colour of the grass suggests the climate, the characters body language (relaxed) indicates how the character might be feeling...etc.

Attributive indicators of the characters movement



and intent.

Ask yourself:

Who the person is: Solider uniform.

What he is doing: Horse pack for journey.

Loose reins, horse relaxed and following lead.

Suggestive indicators of weather, temperature, season

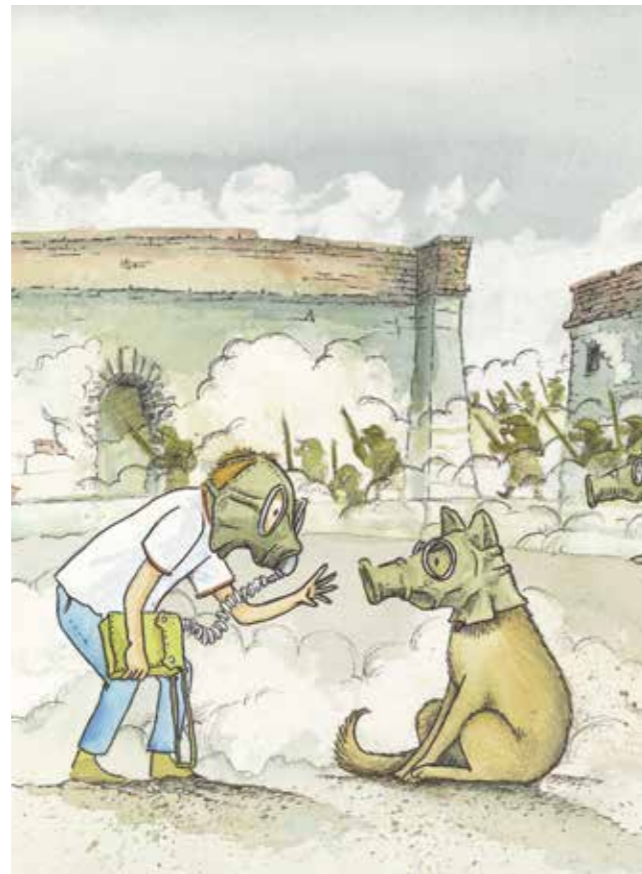
No leaves on tree. Snow on the ground is thick as the horse

sinks into the ground. Heavy snow builds up on high points.

fundamental building blocks of art, design and visual languages. A visual language allows us to communicate ideas with images (Connors, 2011). In the formal design education these are known as the 'elements' and 'principles' of design (Fichner-Rathus, 2008).

The elements of design include:

Point, line, plane, shape, form, colour, value, tone, texture and space.



These elements are building blocks to visual communication, just as letters, symbols and words are used in a written language.

The principles of design are the strategies that are employed to arrange the elements of design for creative expression.

The principles of design include:

Unity, variety, emphasis, focal point, balance, rhythm, scale and proportion (Fichner-Rathus, 2008)

These principles are a form of visual grammar or syntax. Giving structure and order to allow the visual elements to be read in an order that is intended to build meaning.

CURRICULUM LINKS: ACAVAM112 Years 3 and 4

“Present artworks and describe how they have used visual conventions to represent their ideas.”

If you look for the elaboration that the curriculum offers on 'Visual Conventions', it clearly says it is a “combination of components and approaches, such as combinations of elements, design principles, composition and style”.

Unfortunately, there is no further explanation.

So what are these 'elements, design principles, composition and style'? These are the

form) or specific geometric shapes, such as triangles, circles, and squares. We see simple geometric shapes used through a wide variety of design practices. A classic example is pattern design for fabric or paper, these can be created by the simple combination of basic shapes.

Texture: In design terms, texture is a two-dimensional representation of three-dimensionality surface (Sanoff, 1991, Wallschlaeger and Busic-Snyder, 1992). When we think of textures, we use words like soft, rough, smooth, dull...etc. We have a strong tactile association in the words we use to describe texture as it is a concept that is experienced not only visually but through touch.

Space: For designers 'space' is an area defined by visual elements that can be either two or three dimensional (Wallschlaeger and Busic-Snyder, 1992). Space will mean a variety of things dependant on the context. An architect can talk about walking into a space or a response to a space, an object designer might refer to the amount of space an object occupies in three-dimensional space and graphic designer might talk about space as it relates to a screen, a page or image.

Just as important (if not more so) as the positive space in an image. That is the parts of an image or a design that has information in it, is the idea of negative space.

Negative space can also refer to the space between lines and the space between letters. Appropriate space is required between letters so that we can see that they are linked to the other letters in a word and that the words are separated from each other. Too little space and words becoming unreadable.

Point: Also referred to as dot, is the simplest form of mark making (Cohen and Anderson, 2012, Fichner-Rathus, 2008). It is a versatile and powerful design tool. A single dot in an otherwise blank space (negative space) creates a focal point.

Line: The basic concept of a line refers to the mark made between two points (Fichner-Rathus, 2008). In its simplest form, this is the mark left behind as we move a pencil across a piece of paper. Illustrators can take a simple line and control all of the physical dimensions of a line: length, width, and profile to add meaning to a line (Anstey and Bull, 2000). The line is the most versatile tool in the designer's tool kit. It is also one of the most accessible. You can draw with a stick in sand to communicate an idea or commit pen to paper. One of the most valuable skills to foster as a creative practitioner is drawing.

Plane & Shape: Academically a plane refers to a two-dimensional representation of length and width (Wallschlaeger and Busic-Snyder, 1992). If that isn't a sterile enough description for you, you can consider all 'quadrilateral' (4 sided) shapes as a plane (Wallschlaeger and Busic-Snyder, 1992). Being two dimensional shapes, plane exist on a single axis. The classic representation of a three-dimensional form is a combination of width (x) x depth (y) x height (z). When visualizing how a plane would appear on a single axis, the axis xz would make plane b, zy would make plane c, and xy would make plane a.

Shape: Shapes are defined areas with in a clear boundaries that separate them from the other elements in the image (Fichner-Rathus, 2008). In Art and Design studies we associate the concepts of plane, volume, mass, weight and form.

While the general public would think of 'shape' as either the outline silhouette of a form (or part of a

PRINCIPLES

Colour: The use of colour in a design should always be more than just an arbitrary decision. Colour can be used as a symbolic language and communicates ideas and feelings (Holtzshue, 2006). However as designer we must always be aware that any sybolic associations to colour are not a globally standadised set or rules, rather they require “audience of shared cultural experience” (Hornung, 2004).

Cultural experience are not the only thing that impact on how we view colour. Designers also need to be aware that people can be effected by varying degrees of colour blindness. 1 in twelve men and 1 in two hundres women have some kind of visual defi-ciency (Wagner, 2013).

Form: Form refers to the three-dimensional repre-sentation of an object or a space. To create a sense of form you have to be able to give volume and depth to an image. By controlling line, planes, shapes, colour, light and tone a three-dimensional form emerges from shapes.

Value: We can use the terms Value and Tone, inter-changeably. What designers and artist are talking

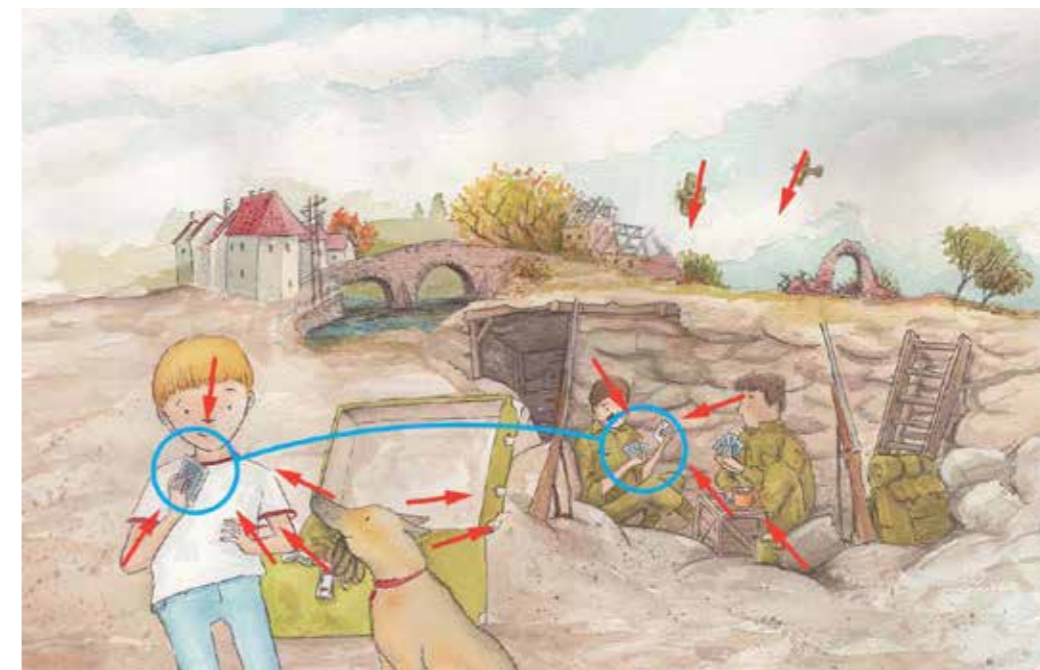
about when they comment on value or tone is the relative light or darkness of a colour (Coles, 2018, Fichner-Rathus, 2008). Traditional media like paint achieves value through mixing a colour with black or white. White added to a colour will create ‘high value colour’, black will darken the colour and cre-ate a ‘low value colour’ (Fichner-Rathus, 2008).

Balance: Balance refers to the way elements such as colour, value, texture, line, shape and form come together within a design (Anstey and Bull, 2000). Balance brings “equilibrium of visual forc-es in the composition of the image” (Kyoungnam and MyounJae, 2017). While some visual elements can be dominate or having more visual weight, the placement of other elements within an image can counterbalance their effect. Visual weight is not a simple matter of applying a set criterion, rather it is the relationship that is formed between a num-ber of factors, size, shape, focus, tone, colour, con-tract and placement within the visual field (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 2006).

Contrast: Contrast involves the use of colour and value to create focus within a design (Fich-ner-Rathus, 2008).

Elements and Principles in action:

Directional lines: Not all lines are overt marks on the page, some are implied or use a combination of overt and implied lines. Directional line are implied lines that guide a viewers’ eyes to specific part of an image or design that in illustrator want them to focus on (Fichner-Rathus, 2008). When used in combination with other emphasis tools such as colour and negative space it becomes almost impossible for a reader not to focus on these intended areas first.



In this illustration I wanted to create a link between the objects that a boy finds in present day to their use by his great grandfather in the war. It was important to create a focus on both sets of cards in the image. To create this link, apart from the obvious implied lines of characters gaze and gestures there are a number of other elements that were placed to create lines that direct the viewers gaze to the re-quired focal points. These are less obvious, yet they still help reenforce the required direction of the viewer’s gaze. Elements such as the biplane wings, the line at the bottom of the gloves, the wooden crate, the dog’s collar & ear and even the spout of the kettle all point to these focal areas. Even the link between the objects is given direction by the placement of the lines in the lid of the open case.



Another principle that we can look at in action is 'harmony'.

This is a compositional tool, the concept of harmony and unity are intertwined, unit looks for the structure and stability in a design, an image or an object as a whole. Unity builds a consistency between the elements of the image/object that result in a harmony between both similar and unrelated elements in the design (Fichner-Rathus, 2008, Wallschlaeger and Busic-Snyder, 1992).

In the illustrations of This Old Thing, the consistency in the image is a result of the colour pallet and material used to achieve this pallet, and the linework and drawing style. These build a consistent image with harmony, while allowing for focal points, and contrast in the image.



Look at the above image, stop and really focus now can you identify the elements of design being used in it. These are the building blocks of point, line, plane, shape, form, colour, value, tone, texture and space (positive and negative).

Now take a moment to consider the principles of design that are on display here. You should be able to see unity, emphasis, focal point, balance, scale and proportion in use.



Compositional technique

This story is told in two separate time frames simultaneously, the boy in the present, in the foreground and his great grandfather in the first world war in the background while history unfolds around him. The use of Henry Fullwood's paintings as a background reference helped to drive many of the compositional decisions for the spreads, due to this, there is a strong classical structure applied creating a Foreground, midground and background elements in many images.

REFERENCES

Medium

The illustrations for 'This Old Thing' were created using traditional illustration medium. All of the images use a combination of watercolour paint with coloured pencil and ink linework. Equally as important to the finished images was the selection of 100% cotton 300gsm cold pressed water colour paper.

Painters were by Artist Spectrum and Windson & Newton

Pencil were Faber-Castell Polychromos

Ink was from Staedtler pigment liners series

Paper was by Archers

Technique

The images for 'This Old Thing' were created using a range of traditional illustration media. The steps to create the illustration started with a rough sketch, once happy with the design the sketch is transfer on to the watercolour paper by tracing the sketch outline in ink liner using a lightbox. Water colour washes are layered as the main colour pallet for the illustrations. The next step is to add highlights and details in coloured pencil. This is then finished off with the final ink liner details. An air brush was used to create the steam that comes from the train crossing the bridge at the end of the book.



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