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This study examined trends in the characteristics of fantasy present in wordless picture books published between 1991 and 2010. The texts were selected because they had strong elements of story, making them useful for instruction, recreational reading and the creation of unique stories. A content analysis of fantasy elements in the texts showed that, overall, the use of fantasy elements increased over time. Individual elements of fantasy showed more variation over time, but the majority were used more frequently in recent years. Literature on the use of wordless picture books and trends in the fantasy publishing market illuminated the content analysis.

#### Headings:

Picture books

Content analysis

Fantasy

Science fiction

BEYOND WORDS: A CONTENT ANALYSIS OF FANTASY CHARACTERISTICS  
IN WORDLESS PICTURE BOOKS WITH STRONG STORY ELEMENTS

by  
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Approved by

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## **Introduction**

The classic definition of a wordless picture book is a book in which “the illustration carries the meaning” (Richey & Puckett, 1992, p. ix). Wordless picture books contain few to no words, depending on the illustrations to advance plot and create the details of setting and characterization. These books can be used in a variety of instructional situations to provide learning opportunities for children. In a survey of preschool and elementary classrooms, Raines and Isbell found that a significant barrier to the use of wordless books in classrooms was that “many teachers were relatively unfamiliar with the genre...few teachers had considered the many ways in which wordless picture books could support young children’s growth in literacy...[and] many teachers reported that their public and school libraries were not well stocked with wordless books” (as cited in Jalongo, Dragich, Conrad, & Zhang, 2002, p. 170). This study presents ways in which wordless picture books have been successfully used for storytelling and promoting literacy skills. It also provides an annotated bibliography of wordless picture books that were chosen for the study because they display the necessary elements of a story: a strong plot with conflict and resolution, a clear setting, and consistent characters. By establishing these criteria for story elements, wordless concept books such as alphabet, number, and environmental print books were eliminated. While these concept books are useful in many situations, this study focuses on texts that can be used for storytelling. The literature and research presented on the fantastical elements of wordless picture books and their use for education and storytelling will encourage

parents, educators, and librarians to make use of the wordless picture book format in the future.

Fantastical elements, such as toys or inanimate objects coming to life, personified animals, magic, people or creatures smaller or larger than normal, supernatural figures or situations, time travel, and imaginary worlds (Cianciolo, 1990, p. 24-25; Mitchell, 2003, p. 302; Krapp, 2005) figure heavily in many wordless picture books. The texts examined for this study, published in the last two decades (from 1991 to 2010), were analyzed for the presence or absence of typical characteristics of fantasy in order to discover what fantasy-related trends might exist in the recent publication of wordless picture books. Literature on recent market trends in fantasy and in wordless books was considered when examining and explaining this data.

## **Literature Review**

Wordless books are picture books that contain few to no words; the illustrations serve to advance the plot and convey the story. They often contain elements of fantasy; this meshes perfectly with the imaginative nature of the format of wordless books, which prompts co-creation between the reader and the author-illustrator. Wordless books can be used in a variety of situations to “enhance creativity, vocabulary, and language development for readers of all ages, at all stages of cognitive development, and in all content areas” (Cassady, 1998, p. 428). They are excellent tools for storytelling and writing, even among older students in middle or high school (Cassady, 1998, p. 428). Wordless books possess significant potential for instruction and enjoyable recreational reading.

### *Wordless books and storytelling*

Wordless books are suitable for readers or nonreaders of all ages because they allow each individual to bring his or her own interpretation to the story; each book’s story “can be told by many different children in many different ways” (Nodelman, 1988, p. 186-187). Crawford and Hade (2000) emphasize that “...the reading of wordless picture books is an open-ended process in which viewers read stories by bringing their background experiences and personal histories to bear on the visual images they encounter within the text” (p. 68). Similarly, Whalen (1994) claimed that “wordless books are safe and secure: they provide an environment in which a child is free to explore

and create, uninhibited by the fear of ‘being wrong.’ Since there are no words to stumble over, the joy of creativity can be unleashed and celebrated” (n.p.). Nodelman (1988) noted that “children tend to express their enjoyment of wordless books by telling, in words, the stories the pictures suggest to them; they themselves turn purely visual experiences into verbal ones, a practice that surely must aid in the development of literacy” (p. 186). While many wordless books can teach the skills of storytelling and understanding narrative progression, others are quite complex and can be used with more advanced readers who may still be struggling with printed text, but who already “have a sense of what is logical and possible in a story” (Graham, 1998, p. 32).

This idea of the sense of story is a crucial element of early and emerging literacy that is addressed through instruction with wordless books. Nelson, Aksu-Koc, & Johnson observed that “As they invent narratives, children develop their sense of story, demonstrate an understanding of sequence, practice oral or written storytelling skills, and expand their cognitive abilities” (as cited in Jalongo et al., 2002, p. 168). Applebee (1980) describes the sense of story as it relates to storytelling: “Children’s knowledge of the conventions of storytelling develops rapidly and finds expression at many different levels. These include syntax, word choice, and text structure, as well as such things as appropriate character types, settings, and events” (p. 137). Similarly, van Kraayenoord and Paris’s assessment activity using a wordless picture book “assesses children’s awareness that books tell stories, that there are narrative conventions, and that stories have particular elements (e.g., characters, settings, endings).” (p. 47). These various elements combine to create a child’s sense of story, and wordless books, with their strong



emphasis on sequencing, provide a visual and oral outlet for children to practice the basic elements of stories.

*Wordless books as tools for struggling readers or non-readers*

The lack of text for readers to stumble over makes wordless books a non-threatening medium that is perfect for supporting struggling readers, including second-language learners (Hebert, 2008) and language-disabled children or youth (d'Angelo, 1984), as well as reluctant writers (Frye, 2009, and Williams, 1994), since the pictures provide a framework for creating one's own story. D'Angelo notes that the use of wordless books in teaching language-disabled children and youth allows for building vocabulary, producing phrases and sentences, developing sequence and prediction skills, and creating positive attitudes toward reading (1984).

Wordless books can act as an excellent transition into reading texts with words. The findings of Crawford and Hade (2000) "indicate [that] children rely on many of the same strategies for reading wordless, visual texts, as they do when reading texts that offer a combination of print and visual texts: They rely on cues, engage in self-talk, and make informed hypotheses..." (p. 78). Additionally, the detailed sequencing of illustrations in wordless books "aids children in developing pre-reading skills: sequential thinking, the development of a sense of story, observation, visual discrimination, inferential thinking, and predicting conclusions" (Applebee (1978) as cited in Lindauer, 1988, p. 137). Read and Smith (1982) also comment on the value of the "...comprehension skills practiced through wordless picture books," saying that they "may help bridge the transition to print when formal reading instruction begins" (p. 930). Reading wordless books can also help

children learn concepts about print, which include the conventions of using a physical book, such as holding it with the correct side up, “[turning] pages in sequence one at a time” (Clay, 2000, p. 4) and understanding “the front-to-back, left-to-right page progression in reading” (Lynch-Brown & Tomlinson, 2005, p. 81). Jalongo et al (2002), explain this by noting “wordless books are particularly useful in teaching children how a book works because most children recognize, interpret, and express themselves through pictures long before they master print” (p. 168).

Wordless books are equally valuable for English as a Second Language (ESL) readers for these reasons and because their lack of print makes them understandable in any language. Thus, the learner can “read” the book in his or her native tongue as a foundation for creativity (Cassady, 1998, p.429). For an ESL student who knows how to write in his first language, writing a story to accompany a wordless book allows him “to draw from his personal experiences and write the story at his own level of ability using his personal vocabulary” (Salminen, 1998, p.3). Salminen (1998) suggests using wordless picture books with ESL students in activities such as writing a story from a wordless book as a group and individually, recording audio of students’ written stories, sequencing photocopied pictures from the story, and matching teacher-created sentences to the pictures.

### *Wordless books and oral language skills*

While wordless books are valued for many aspects of early literacy, they are particularly useful for developing oral language skills. Moore found that “...research has consistently demonstrated that the simple activity of looking at and talking about books

enhances the acquisition of new vocabulary” (as cited in Lindauer, 1988, p. 137); vocabulary is a significant element of oral language skill. Beck, McKeown, and Kucan (2002) also emphasize the importance of vocabulary: “It is clear that a large and rich vocabulary is the hallmark of an educated individual. Indeed, a large vocabulary repertoire facilitates becoming an educated person to the extent that vocabulary knowledge is strongly related to reading proficiency in particular and school achievement in general” (p. 1). They also note that “early learning takes place through oral context” (p. 3), the way in which wordless books are shared. Morrow (1990), in his study of assessment through storybooks, noted that “as [children] participate more frequently in read-aloud events, their responses increase in number and complexity” (p. 114). Since wordless books, when shared, are read and discussed orally, frequent sharing of wordless texts will help children increase their oral language skills. Morrow (1990) also commented that “illustrations definitely motivated responses and helped the children to construct meaning about the text” (p. 118). If illustrations motivated responses in a standard storybook, it can be concluded that the illustrations in a wordless text would do the same. In a separate assessment study, van Kraayenoord and Paris (1996) found that an assessment activity using a wordless book to determine a child’s ability “to construct meaning independent of decoding skills” (p. 41) could fairly strongly predict their ability on several standard reading tests two years later.

### *Wordless books in practice*

In practice, wordless books require some modeling from a parent, guardian, or teacher in order for children to feel comfortable narrating a story. When Graham (1998)

worked with children reading wordless books, she found that an invitation to tell a story from the book resulted in a description in present tense of the figures and events on each page. However, when she suggested that the children begin their story with “Once upon a time,” she found that they told a much more connected story and used the past tense.

Graham (1998) concluded that “If we give their intended readers the optimum conditions in which to study the books and in which to fashion a verbal telling, wordless books can confirm children as competent interpreters and as fluent and creative language users” (p. 43). For use in writing, Henry (2003) described a lesson plan in which students created story lines based on a wordless picture book with a partner and then as a small group. The entire class discussed the similarities and differences among each group’s version of the story. Finally, students selected a final wordless book to create an independent story. In a similar writing activity, Reese (1996) used wordless picture books with her second grade class to teach the skills of writing stories. Using the wordless books as a starting point, the students wrote, revised, and read their created texts first as a whole class, then with partners, and finally individually. They also had the opportunity to share their stories with younger students, whom they asked for feedback to help improve their writing. Students learned to write stories in complete sentences, to summarize, use linking words, vary sentence structure, use punctuation, and to personalize the texts by identifying characters and settings. Williams (1994) suggests that wordless books can also be used in library programming as a group read-aloud, “with individuals interpreting single illustrations or story lines” (p. 39). Whether in groups or individually, in schools, libraries, or at home, wordless books provide valuable writing and storytelling skills for readers and non-readers of all skill levels.

### *Wordless books and visual literacy*

Visual literacy is a much-discussed concept in today's society filled with visual stimuli from the Internet, television, movies, video games and smartphones. There are many elements of visual literacy, but "the reading of images is one aspect of visual literacy that is needed in an increasingly globalised, technological age" (Walsh, 2003, p. 123). Much earlier, Strader (1978) claimed that "visual literacy involves the ability to sort out visual stimuli and make sense of them, often aided and abetted by the other senses" (p. 45). She also noted that "visual literacy was the first form of literacy, and it is a vital part of the ability to read. Recognition of shapes, sizes and colors is acknowledged to be indispensable in the development of reading ability; this is based in visual literacy" (p. 46). Similarly, Evans (1998) noted that "the concept of visual literacy is now accepted as a way of trying to derive meaning from different types of texts" (p. xiv). These discussions of reading images and linking visual literacy to reading ability indicate that picture books would be an excellent means of developing visual literacy in young children. Indeed, Stewig (1992) claimed that "children who have many opportunities to describe, compare, interpret, and value illustrations in picture books learn to interact with visual information" (as cited in Stoodt-Hill & Amspaugh-Corson, 2001, p.127). In a more technical vein, Camp and Tompkins (1990) define visual literacy as "the ability to comprehend and evaluate illustrations and the visual elements of media and artistic style the artist uses" (as cited in Stoodt-Hill & Amspaugh-Corson, 2001, p.127), while Stoodt-Hill and Amspaugh (2001) themselves clarify that "illustrations convey meaning to readers and viewers because they are the artist's rendering of plot, theme, setting, mood,

and character” (p. 127). While these authors were discussing traditional picture books, the linking of visual literacy to picture books applies equally well to wordless picture books, which “engage the imaginations of children in a completely visual manner” (Fichtelberg & Volz, 2010, p. 368). Fichtelberg and Volz (2010) also noted that telling a story from only the pictures lets children imagine what is spurring on the action in the pictures, an activity that will help to develop visual literacy even before the children can read text (p. 368). Wordless books can be used to develop visual literacy, and Nodelman (1988) emphasizes that wordless books also reinforce existing visual literacy skills because they require “close attention and a wide knowledge of the visual conventions that must be attended to before visual images can imply stories” (p. 186-187). Whether it is through discussing the elements of art or the elements of fiction, wordless books, with their emphasis on art conveying story, provide an excellent means to both teach and reinforce visual literacy skills.

### *Criticisms and development of wordless books*

While wordless books have become more respected as a format, especially since the Caldecott Medal was awarded to David Wiesner’s *Tuesday* (1991), they are still often perceived as less valuable than books with text “by parents who, however mistakenly, regard them as contributing little to their young children’s literacy or literary growth” (Graham, 1988, p. 26). Along the same lines, Nodelman (1988) rather drastically observed that “the mere existence of such books disturbs some adults, who fear that these books will encourage illiteracy—that, like television, they encourage a visual orientation at the expense of a verbal one” (p. 185). However, he goes on to point out that the

comparison to television is flawed because television is a verbal as well as a visual medium (p. 185). Similarly, wordless books prompt the creation of either internal or vocalized verbal narrative to connect and explain the events in the pictures being viewed. Perhaps it is this requirement of creation that is intimidating to some parents and young readers, and causes the dismissal of wordless books. Graham (1998) noted that “far from being ‘too easy’, a comment frequently heard in relation to wordless books, they were very challenging” (p. 31) for the children she asked to read wordless books aloud to her. It does require great mental work to create the words and story along with the author/illustrator. Another element that may have been a barrier to wordless books gaining widespread respect is the artistic style that was formerly prevalent in these texts:

Since the actions of wordless picture books must be clear in line and focus in order for us to understand them, the pictures tend to be in a cartoon style that exaggerates not only actions for the sake of clarity but also appearances for the sake of humor. (Nodelman, 1988, p.188)

This cartoon style, evident in many older wordless texts, may also have posed a barrier for parents who considered cartoons and comics to be a lower form of literature than other children’s texts. While there are still wordless books that use humorous subjects and a cartoon style of artwork, many of the more recent wordless books are quite sophisticated, both in artwork and subject matter. Cassady (1998) noted, ten years after Nodelman’s text was published, “some of the most beautiful and intricate books have been published in the last 10 years. All are just recently beginning to achieve the recognition they are due” (p. 428). The trend Cassady noticed seems to be continuing, with *Flotsam* (2006) and *The Lion and the Mouse* (2010) receiving Caldecott Medals, and *Time Flies* (1994) and *The Red Book* (2004) receiving Caldecott Honor awards. The negative impression of wordless books can be combated by the excellent quality of recent

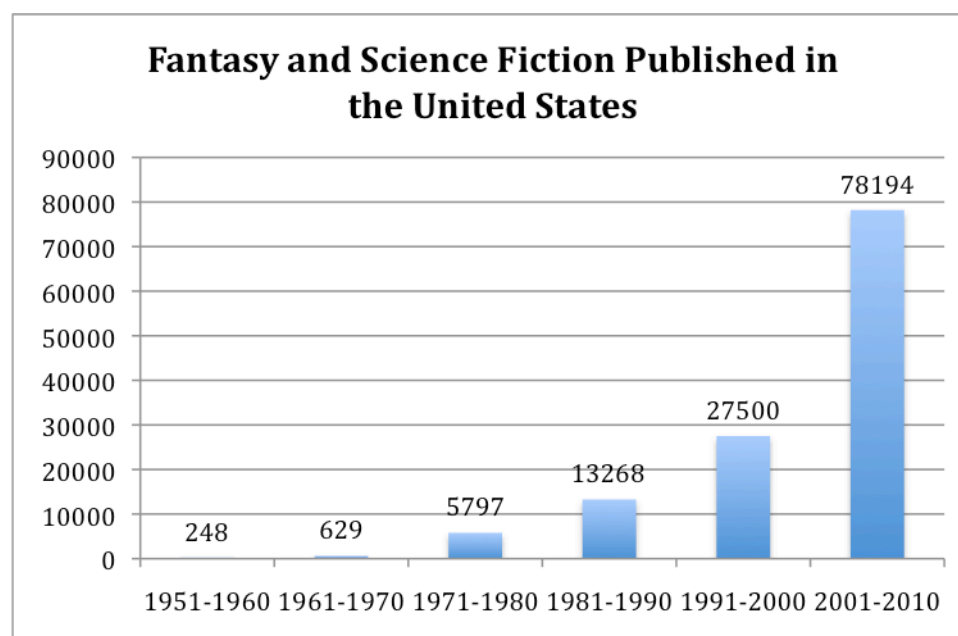
texts, as well as by the use of wordless texts in library programming, school instruction, and for recreational reading.

### *Fantasy*

Many recently published wordless books contain elements of fantasy. But what exactly is fantasy? Lynch-Brown & Tomlinson (2005) give a broad definition: “Modern fantasy refers to the body of literature in which the events, the settings, or the characters are outside the realm of possibility” (p. 116). This can include such elements of fantasy as toys or inanimate objects coming to life, personified animals, magic, people or creatures smaller or larger than normal, supernatural figures or situations, time travel, and high fantasy, which typically involves a fully realized imaginary world, a quest for some lofty goal or reward, and a struggle between good and evil (Cianciolo, 1990, p. 24-25; Mitchell, 2003, p. 302; Krapp, 2005). These recognizable elements make fantasy very easy to approach, and this familiarity has allowed fantasy to remain a fairly stable genre in the marketplace of literature (Killheffer, 1997, p. 34-35). However, fantasy is not just a predictable genre with a defined lineup of trick ponies: “Fantasy, along with science fiction, is a literature of *possibilities*. It opens the door to the realm of ‘What If,’ challenging readers to see beyond the concrete universe and to envision other ways of living and alternative mindsets” (Pierce, 1993, p. 50). Much of modern fantasy involves injecting fantastical elements into real-world situations; this “contemporary variety derives its energy from the unexpected, strange, and different” (Killheffer, 1997, p. 35). Fantasy allows readers to exercise their imaginations and to escape from everyday life for a while.



The market for fantasy and science fiction has remained strong since it was established as a genre in the 1950s; “the Ballantine editions of Tolkien’s *Lord of the Rings* trilogy helped spur the boom of speculative fiction in the 1960s” and the 1970s continued the trend with fantasy published worldwide (Owen, 1987, p. 32). Into the 1980s, the number of titles continued to expand significantly (Owen, 1987, p. 35), and the 1990s saw the beginning of the Harry Potter phenomenon, which raised the profile of fantasy internationally. The following chart illustrates this astronomical rise in fantasy and science fiction publishing since the 1950s.



These figures were determined by using the Bowker’s Books in Print Professional database, which “contains records for millions of in-print, out-of-print and forthcoming book, e-book, audio, and video titles” (UNC, 2009). The search was performed for each year range using a Boolean search for “fantasy” OR “science fiction” within all subject headings, and the publication location was restricted to the United States. The resulting figures do include some nonfiction titles such as essays about science fiction or fantasy,

but these statistics clearly provide an indication of the recently huge popularity of the genres when combined with the fiction titles they discuss. Lodge (2004) interviewed booksellers regarding the popularity of the fantasy genre for children and teens, reporting that one buyer for Barnes & Noble noted:

Fantasy ‘is absolutely the strongest genre in both middle grade and teen literature’ for B&N. He foresees ‘fantasy sales continuing to grow in the next few years, as we’re still on the upward slope of the curve...what’s starting to happen is the broadening of the genre into areas of urban and historical fantasies, and science fiction, which is a healthy diversification.’ (p. 35)

With this broadening of the genre, Corbett (2006) commented that while retailers are becoming rather overwhelmed with the volume of fantasy titles pouring in, “the kids who are buying them still can’t seem to get their fill” (p. 58). Perhaps in part because of the popularity of the Harry Potter series of both books and movies, “movie theaters and video games reflect a similar preference for fantastical settings and stories” (Bond, 2006, p. 29). Bond quoted Edward Kastenmeier, a senior editor at Pantheon, to explain this preference: “‘Our culture is exploring the literary margins more than in the past. Exposure to fantastic elements and technology in our daily lives has made people more accepting of them in literature’” (p. 30). For whatever reasons, the market for fantasy is stronger now than it has ever been; the genre is hugely popular among teens and adults as well as children. It seems only natural that the hugely imaginative genre of fantasy would be widely present in the co-creative format of wordless picture books for young children.

### *The importance of imagination*

The wordless book format and the fantasy genre share a crucial component—imagination. Indeed, in Fichtelberg and Volz’s (2010) excellent bibliography of

recommended picture books by genre, wordless picture books are categorized under the general heading of “Imagination.” In Caroff and Moje’s interview with wordless book author and illustrator David Wiesner (as cited in Cassady, 1998), he claimed that “the endless possibilities for creative interpretations” (p. 428) are one of the most important features of wordless books. Similarly, Salminen (1998) noted that “wordless books actively engage the reader’s thought and imagination” (p. 3), making them an ideal starting point for writing activities, among other uses for instruction and entertainment. Mitchell (2003) observed that wordless books, “while allowing readers to be part of fantastical experiences...nudge readers to create words for the story,” and that nearly all wordless books “ask us to use our imagination and stretch our thinking beyond current boundaries” (p. 79).

Authors also link the fantasy genre to the imagination, noting that “fantasy stimulates the imagination and should be an important part of children’s lives so that they continue to dream and imagine (Stoodt-Hill & Amspaugh-Corson, 2001, p. 169). One of Cianciolo’s (1990) criteria for excellent fantasy picture books was that they be “typified by good storytelling and lively imagination, two important qualities that must be evident in a tale of fantasy or whimsy if it is to stimulate the reader to engage in imaginative and creative thinking to any significant extent” (p. 24). Clearly both wordless books and the fantasy genre stimulate the imagination, but why is it that “a great many educators view the development of imaginative thinking as a major goal of the educative process” (Cianciolo, 1990, p. 23)?

Cianciolo (1990) claims that the imagination promoted by reading “fanciful fiction” is essential to help children gain perspective on the real world, cope with the

events in their lives positively, and escape from the pressure and boredom of their everyday lives. She also emphasizes that imagination is “a crucial ingredient of all creative endeavors which, in turn, are necessary for the continued progress of civilization” (p. 23). Mitchell (2003) expands upon this theme:

Imagination isn't a luxury but a necessity. ... Imagination helps us meet new challenges and devise workable solutions to problems in our society. ... By freeing the imagination, fantasy can help children face reality with more creativity and spontaneity of thought. (p. 307)

The imaginative thinking sparked by wordless books and fantasy is not simply an enjoyable benefit of reading such materials, but an essential skill that enhances all areas of one's life.

## **Methodology**

### *Selecting texts*

To determine which texts would be analyzed, an initial field of possible texts was found using the NoveList Plus database, “an online readers’ advisory tool that helps readers find new fiction and non-fiction titles based on books they’ve already read or topics in which they are interested” (UNC, 2008). It also provides book reviews from a variety of trusted reviewing sources. The subject heading of “Stories without words” was searched, and limited to publication years of 1991-2011, thus creating a listing of wordless books published since the Richey and Puckett (1992) bibliography of wordless and nearly wordless picture books was released. Within the publication year limits, the results of keyword searches for “nearly wordless” and “almost wordless” were also checked to make sure that no worthy almost wordless texts were excluded.

Summaries and reviews of this group of texts on NoveList were examined in order to create a select group of texts to be examined for characteristics of fantasy. Texts intended for an adult audience and texts classified as graphic novels were excluded from consideration. The requirements for inclusion in the study were that the book displayed strong elements of story. Deriving from the elements of literature as described by Cassady (1998, p. 431), Isbell et al. (2004, p. 159), Stoodt-Hill and Amspaugh-Corson (2001, p. 27-35), Mitchell (2003, p. 33-34) and Lynch-Brown and Tomlinson (2005, p. 120-123), the required elements were clear plots with conflict or problem and resolution or solution, consistent characters, and identifiable setting. As Cassady (1998) notes in her

description of the uses for wordless books in middle-grade classrooms, “the plots of wordless books can be mapped, the characters examined and compared, and the settings analyzed for their significance to the plot or action” (p. 429). Some beautiful wordless books possessed all characteristics except conflict/problem and resolution/solution; despite their merits, these were excluded. Lynch-Brown and Tomlinson (2005) note in their discussion of plot:

Often, adults believe that a story for children needs only to present familiar, everyday activities—the daily routines of life. Perhaps 2- and 3-year-olds will enjoy hearing narratives such as this, but by age 4, children want to find more excitement in books. A good plot produces conflict to build the excitement and suspense that are needed to keep the reader involved. (25)

The types of conflict described are person-against-self, person-against-nature, person-against-person, and person-against-society (Lynch-Brown & Tomlinson, 2005, p. 25). All of these types of conflict were considered when selecting texts, in order to create a collection of the most compelling wordless books for children.

These identifiable elements of plot with conflict and resolution, consistent characters, and identifiable settings were the requirements for consideration in this study. This removed concept books that have no clear story, such as alphabet, number, color, and environmental print books. While these types of books can be valuable, this study focused on those that could be used to provide inspiration for storytelling. Texts that proved, upon examination, to depend upon words to develop or explain the story, or to lack one or more elements of story, were eliminated during analysis. The books were obtained from the UNC Chapel Hill library system, the Chapel Hill Public Library, the Carrboro Branch Library, and the Durham County Library system. Any book not

available from these libraries was requested through the UNC Chapel Hill InterLibrary Loan system.

### *Analysis*

The goal of this paper was to discover trends in fantasy elements in wordless picture books with strong story elements over the past twenty years. Content analysis was chosen as the best research method, since “content analysis is the study of recorded human communications. Among the forms suitable for study are books...[and] paintings” (Babbie, 2010, p. 333), which are the essential components of a wordless picture book. Content analysis can be used to measure both the manifest or “visible, surface content” and the “latent content of the communication: its underlying meaning” (Babbie, 2010, p. 338). Analysis of the elements of fantasy involved both manifest and latent content analysis, since some elements, such as “people, animals, or things smaller or larger than normal” were quite easy to identify by sight and would be considered manifest content. However, elements such as “alternate version of reality” proved to be latent content, requiring judgment to determine what constituted “normal” reality and whether a book displayed an alternate version of that reality. Because latent content analysis can be somewhat subjective, depending on the opinions of the person performing the coding, it was important to create very clear definitions of each element of fantasy. The rubric for the characteristics of fantasy was created by combining the elements of fantasy described in Krapp (2005), Cianciolo (1990, p. 24-25), Mitchell (2003, p. 302), and Lynch-Brown and Tomlinson (2005, p. 120-123). As the wordless picture books were procured, each one was read and coded for the presence or absence of typical characteristics of fantasy.

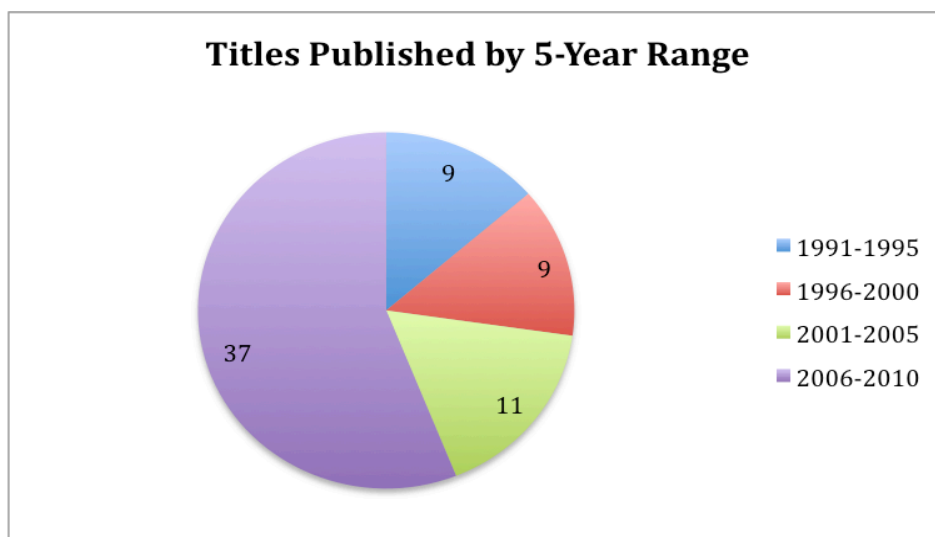
The raw results of this content analysis are displayed in Appendix B, and the elements present in each book are also noted in that text's entry in the annotated bibliography (Appendix A).



## Results

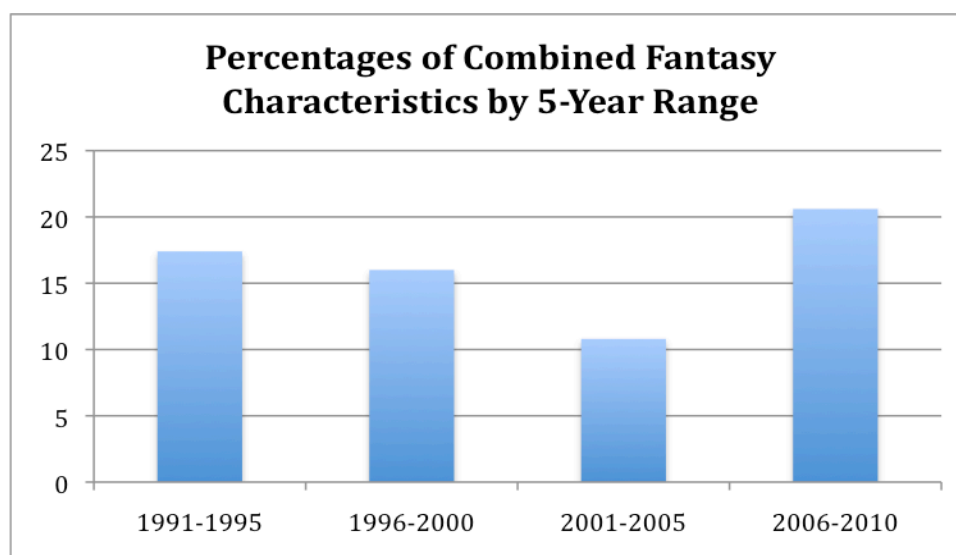
The raw data showing presence or absence of fantasy characteristics (displayed in Appendix B) was analyzed by calculating percentages of characteristics present compared to the number of possible characteristics. Essentially, the number of characteristics observed was divided by the number of characteristics possible if every text displayed every element of fantasy. Because each five-year range contained different numbers of books, it was necessary to use percentages to create comparable figures for each year range. It should be noted that because the three earliest year ranges contain significantly smaller numbers of titles, the percentages are more easily affected by the presence of a single characteristic.

### *Overall Results*

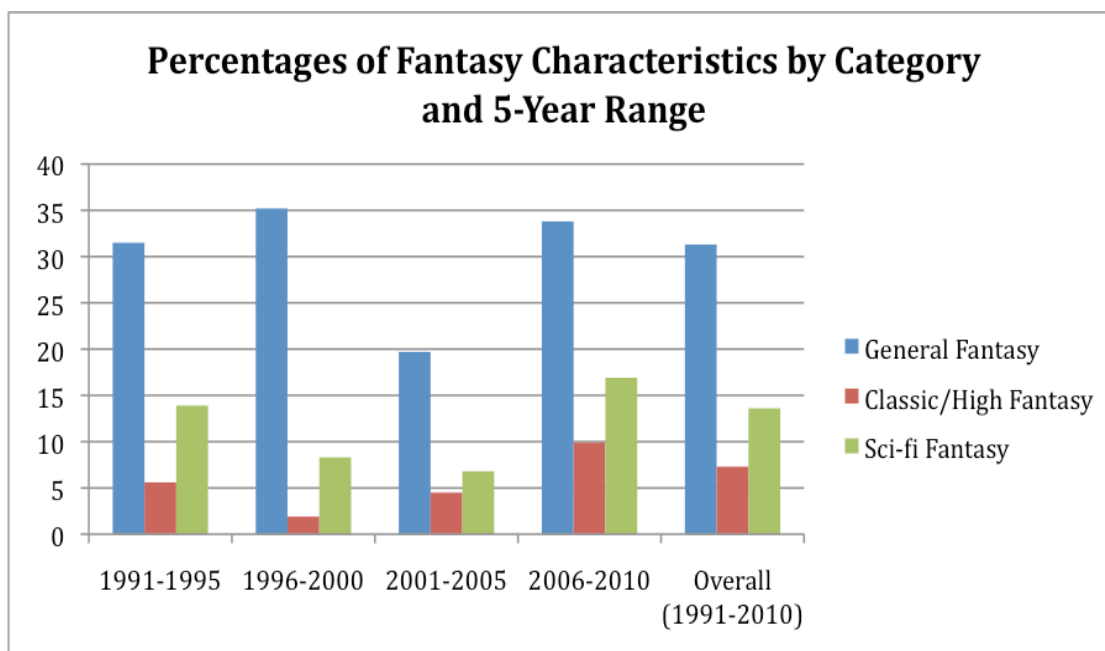


The chart on the previous page shows the numbers of titles published within each five-year range: 1991-1995, 1996-2000, 2001-2005, and 2006-2010. It is necessary to note that the publication dates used in this study were obtained from the edition of the text in hand. A few texts were the first American editions, and the original publication date would have placed them in a different year range. This effectively means that the year distributions represent the availability of these texts to librarians, educators, parents and children within the United States, rather than internationally. The most recent five years saw a sizable surge in publication of wordless books with strong story elements; over half of the 66 titles studied were from this year range. This may be in part due to the high-profile successes of wordless books just before and at the beginning of this period: *The Red Book* (Lehman, 2004) received a Caldecott Honor Medal, while *Flotsam* (Wiesner, 2006) received the Caldecott Medal. However, earlier texts had also received these honors—*Tuesday* (Wiesner, 1991) won a Caldecott Medal, and *Time Flies* (Rohmann, 1994) won the Caldecott Honor Medal—without producing a noticeable effect on the quantity of wordless books published that contained strong story elements. It is possible that the publishing world simply needed an extra boost from two wordless Caldecott awards in close succession to spur an increase in publishing of wordless books with strong story elements. It may also be a tribute to the increasing understanding of visual literacy as an essential skill for today's youth. Also, since wordless books are comparable to graphic novels for younger readers, the recent swell of approval of using graphic novels to increase visual and conventional literacy may be trickling down into wordless book publishing.

The following graph displays the percentages of all fantasy characteristics broken down by year range.

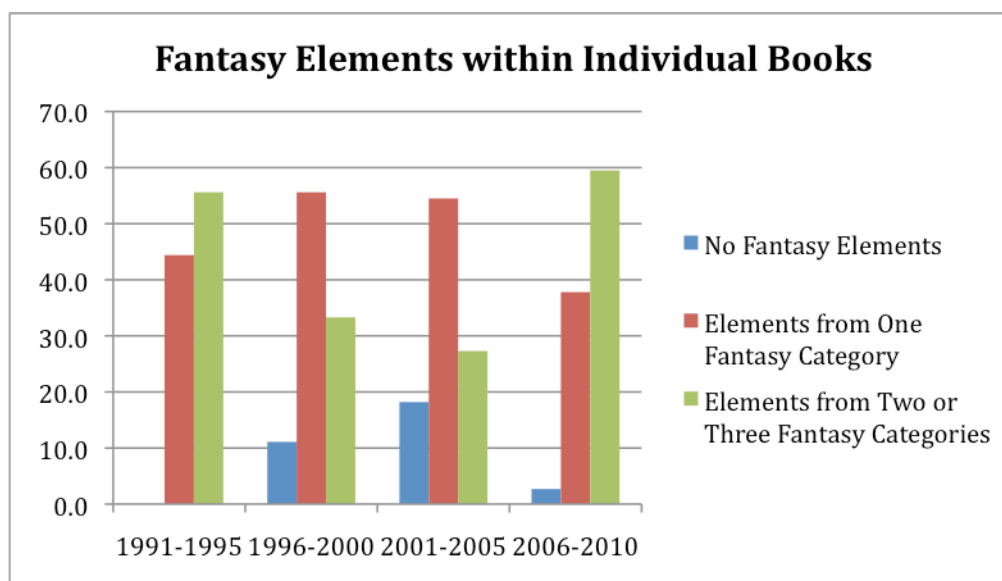


Each of the four year ranges studied contained a significant amount of fantasy characteristics. After starting off strong with 17.4% of possible characteristics displayed in 1991-1995 and 16% in 1996-2000, there was a drop to only 10.8% in 2001-2005, followed by a resurgence of fantasy elements in 2006-2010, with 20.6% of possible characteristics present. However, a further breakdown of these figures into the broad categories of fantasy (General Fantasy, Classic/High Fantasy, and Sci-fi Fantasy) in the chart below shows that General Fantasy is consistently the strongest category, with Sci-fi Fantasy following. The low numbers of Classic/High Fantasy features shown in the following graph contribute to the lower averages displayed in the chart above.



General Fantasy stayed consistently in the 30-35 percent range, except during 2001-2005, when it fell to 19.7%. Classic/High Fantasy characteristics were never as prevalent as the others, though the 2006-2010 texts, with 9.9% of characteristics present, did display roughly double the previously highest percentages from earlier years. Sci-fi Fantasy started off strong in the 1991-1995 period, but fell off steadily until 2006-2010, when it just slightly surpassed the 1991-1995 percentage. Overall, it is noticeable from the graph above that for every category except General Fantasy, the final year range displays the highest percentage of occurrences of the characteristics. Even the 31.3% of General Fantasy characteristics in 2006-2010 comes quite close to matching the 35.2% of 1996-2000. Essentially, whatever fluctuations the figures had in the first three year ranges, the publications in the most recent years display a significant increase in fantasy characteristics.

The characteristics displayed within each individual book were also compared by determining how many of the three categories of fantasy elements were represented within the books in each year range.

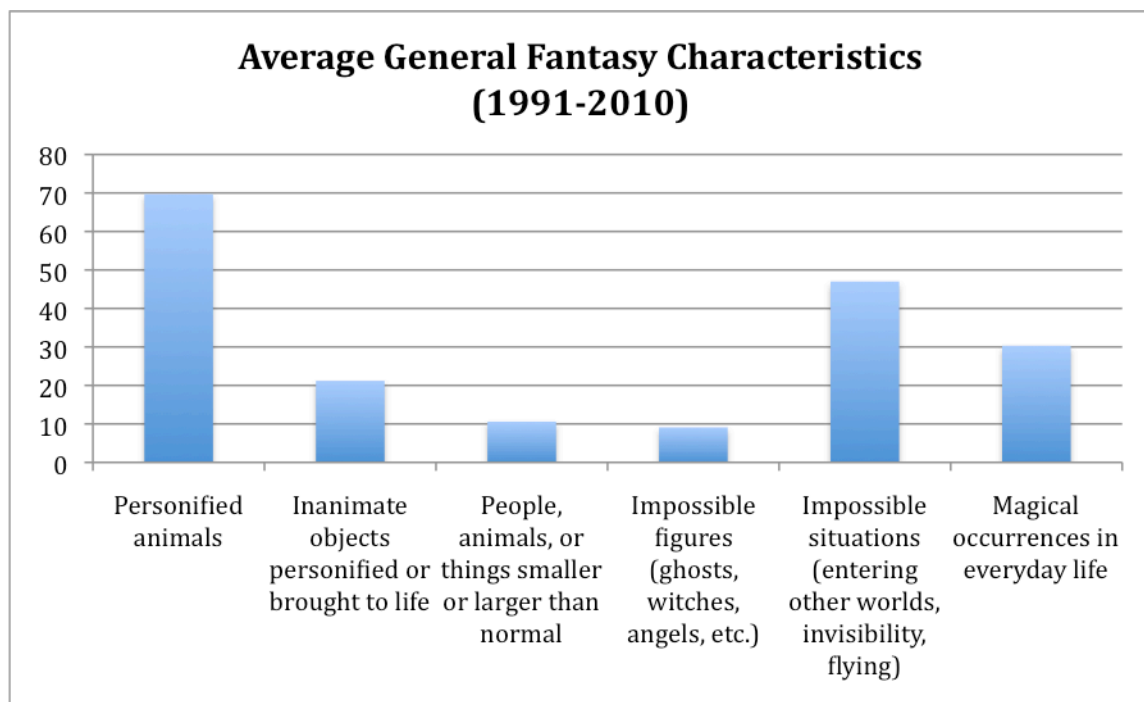


Only a very small percentage of books in each year range displayed no fantasy elements whatsoever, indicating that fantasy elements are a significant tool for creating wordless picture books with strong stories. The percentage of books that displayed elements from multiple fantasy categories started out high in 1991-1995, with 55.6% of books using elements from two or three fantasy categories, then decreased to 33.3% in 1996-2000 and 27.3% in 2001-2005 before surging up to 59.5% in 2006-2010. Clearly, authors of wordless picture books featuring strong story elements are increasingly combining elements from multiple fantasy sub-genres to advance their stories.

Each of the categories of fantasy will be broken down in a similar manner, with graphs for the overall frequency of the separate elements of fantasy, as well as graphs by year range for some of the individual elements. The tables of percentages used to generate all of these graphs can be found in Appendix C.

### *General Fantasy*

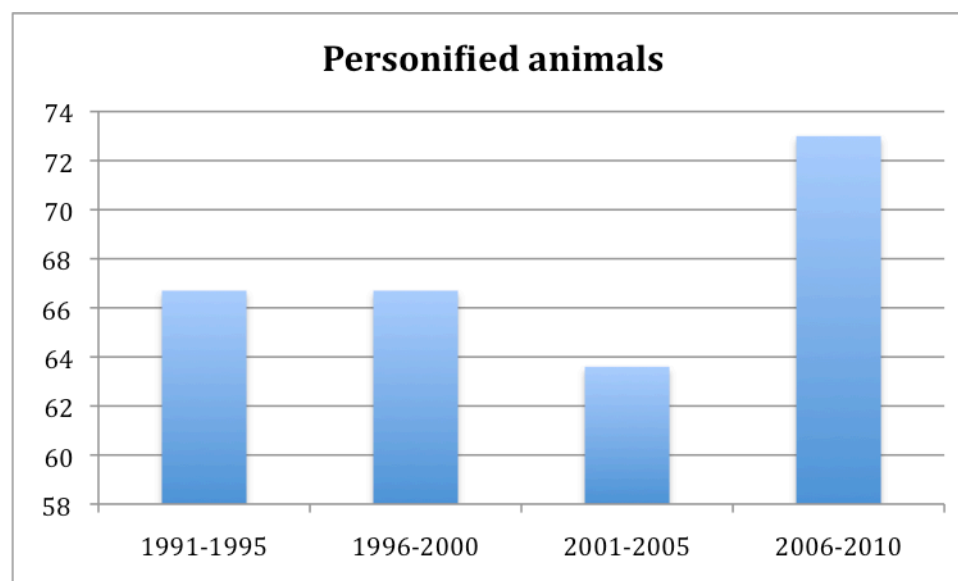
In the following graph, the average percentages of each characteristic of general fantasy are shown.



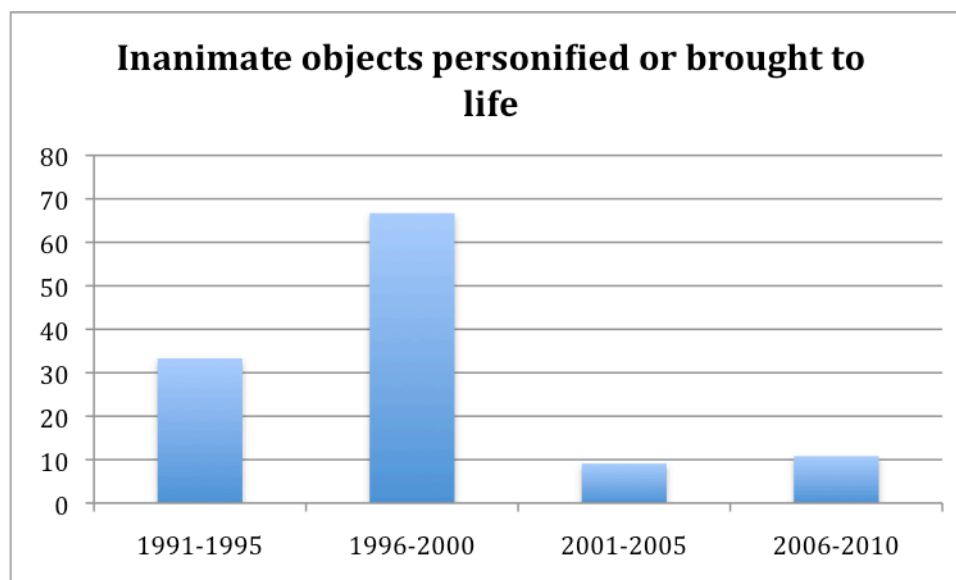
The most noticeable feature is that personified animals are the most frequently occurring characteristic, at 69.7%, followed by impossible situations at 47% and magical occurrences in everyday life at 30.3%. The prevalence of personified animals is not surprising, as personified animals are frequently featured in children's literature, frequently as the main characters of the text. Clearly wordless books do not depart from that trend. The following characteristics of impossible situations and magical occurrences in everyday life share the aspect of the fantastic somehow becoming part of the everyday world. The importance of imagination in children's texts (Cianciolo, 1990) is reflected here, since it is easy for a child to imagine him or herself within the everyday world that then becomes fantastical or magical. The lower percentages of occurrences of inanimate

objects personified or brought to life; people, animals, or things smaller or larger than normal (size fantasy); and impossible figures (ghosts, witches, angels, etc.) may be due to a desire to create more sophisticated stories, without using the rather stock features of inanimate objects brought to life, impossible figures, and changed size. For example, the figure of a ghost has become simply a symbol of what is supposed to be scary, and is not necessarily scary to children at all. It is quite possible that the creators of wordless picture books have recognized the challenge of creating an excellent book in this format, and desire to use new, creative means of conveying story and emotion.

The following section will examine the charts showing the year-range breakdown of several of the individual characteristics of General Fantasy.



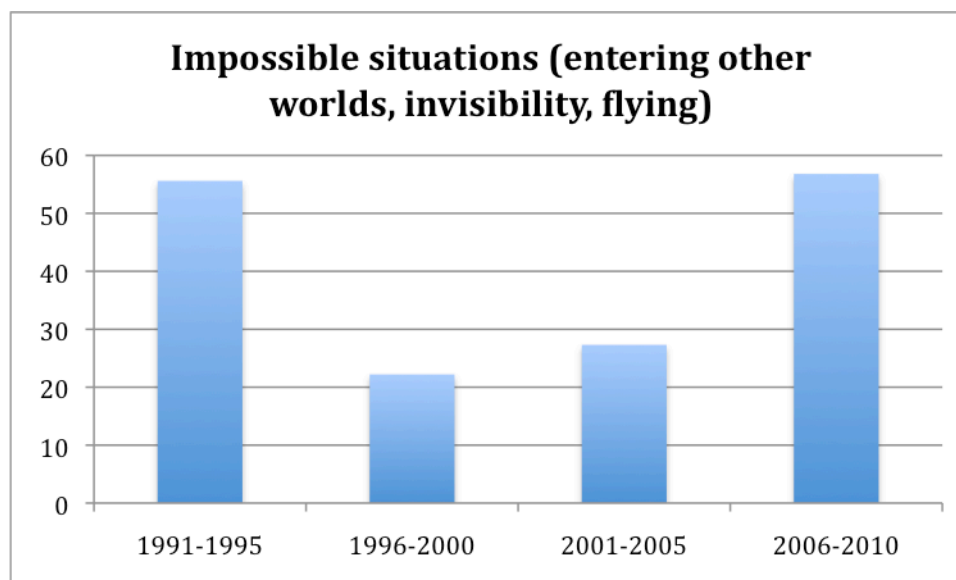
Clearly, the use of personified animals has remained strong, beginning in the high 60 percent range and dipping only slightly to 63.6% in 2001-2005 before rocketing up to 73% in 2006-2010. As mentioned in the discussion of the average General Fantasy features, personified animals are a fairly consistent feature of picture books, and wordless picture books are no exception.



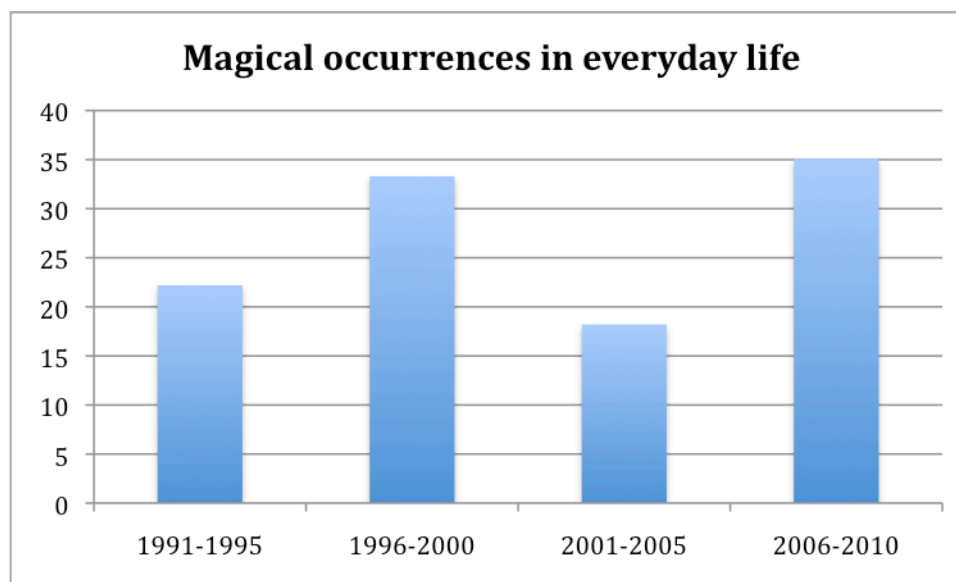
The feature of “inanimate objects personified or brought to life,” though an insignificant feature overall, did have its popularity in the early years of this study, rising to 66.7% in 1996-2000 before falling to only 9.1% in 2001-2005.

The characteristic of size fantasy, in which people, animals, or things are smaller or larger than normal, was never very popular; only two of the year ranges even displayed this characteristic at all. One book displayed it in 1991-1995, for a percentage of 11.1, and then it disappeared altogether until 2006-2010, when 6 out of 37 titles (16.2%) featured it. Similarly, the feature of “impossible figures” only appeared in two year ranges; with 22.2% of books showing the characteristic in 1996-2000, and 10.8% in 2006-2010.





As mentioned above, impossible situations have played a fairly large part in the characteristics of wordless books, but the texts from the first and last periods of this study displayed the most occurrences of this characteristic, with 55.6% in 1991-1995 and 56.8% in 2006-2010.

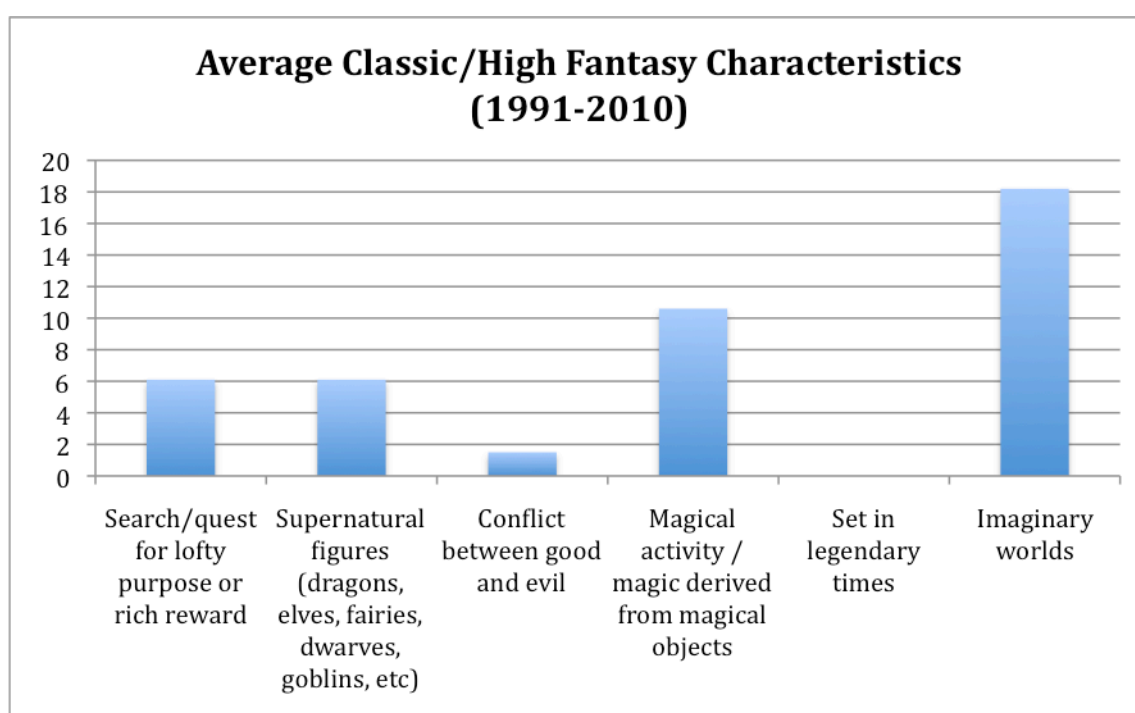


The characteristic of magical occurrences in everyday life showed the highest levels in 1996-2000 and in 2006-2010, though the 33.3% and 35.1% figures are still

relatively small compared to the high percentages of personified animals and impossible situations.

The most noticeable trend from percentages for the individual characteristics of General Fantasy is that for four out of six characteristics, the percentage of characteristics displayed in the texts is highest in 2006-2010.

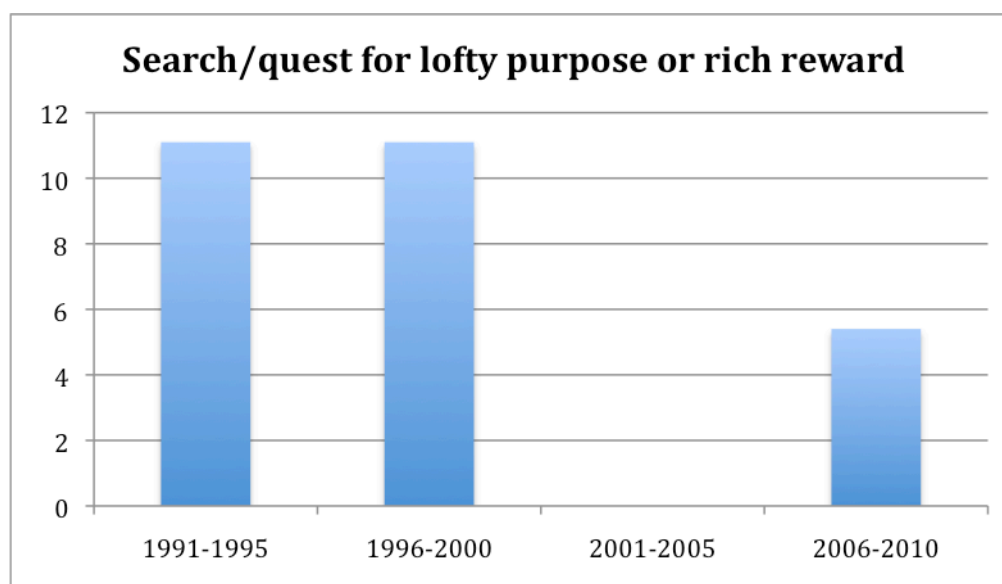
### *Classic/High Fantasy*



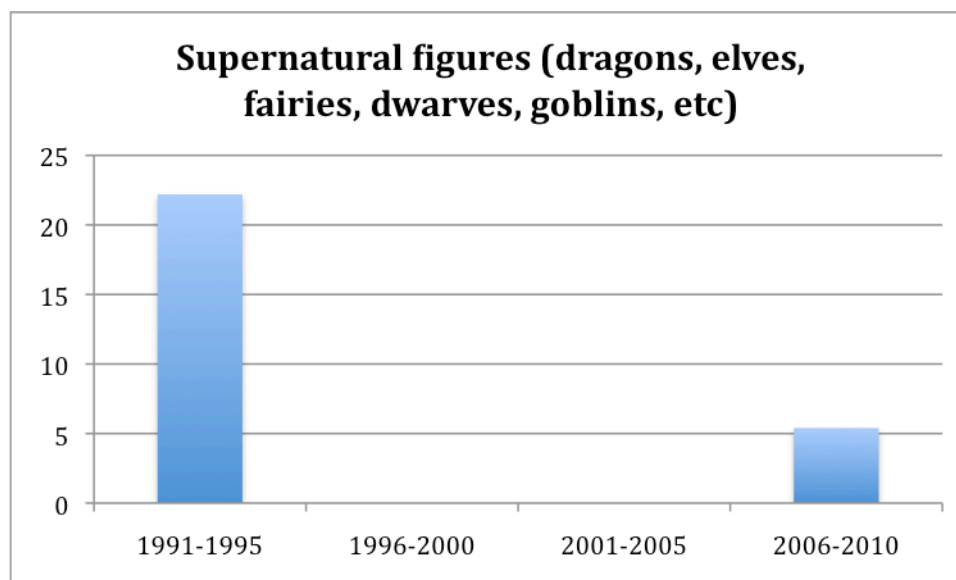
As displayed by the above graph of the average of the Classic/High Fantasy characteristics over the time period studied, none of the six characteristics of Classic/High Fantasy occurred very frequently. There were no texts that featured a setting in legendary times; it may be that these types of settings are more readily conveyed through text than images. The most prevalent characteristic was that of imaginary worlds, which was present in 18.2% of the texts overall. While there are some characteristics of

Classic/High Fantasy displayed in these texts, none seem to be a true work of high fantasy. This genre frequently depends on the creation of an entire world, with its own creatures, geography, and history, so the complexity that would be required to create a wordless text entirely in this facet of the fantasy genre may simply not be feasible.

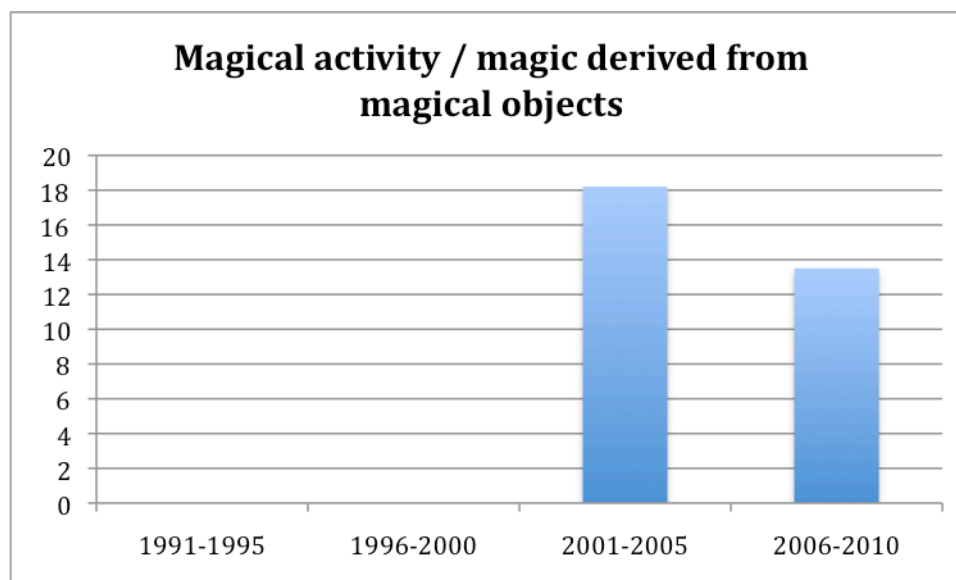
The only Classic/High Fantasy feature that appeared in more than two year ranges was that of a search or quest for lofty purpose or rich reward.



It should be noted that the 11.1% shown in 1991-1995 and 1996-2000 only represents the characteristic's presence in one title per year range, while the 5.4% from 2006-2010 represents only two titles out of the 37 published in that year. With only four titles displaying this characteristic, it is not a very popular element of fantasy to include in wordless picture books with strong story elements. Some texts that included an element of searching for something were not included because there was not a sense of the quest aspect, involving the lofty purpose or reward. This element of questing for a great purpose may simply be difficult to convey in wordless books.



Supernatural figures were also only a sporadic element in the selection of texts studied. The greatest percentage was in 1991-1995, with two out of nine texts showing the characteristic for 22.2 percent of texts in that year range. Two more texts in 2006-2010 yielded a percentage of 5.4 for that period. Similar to the lack of use of impossible figures such as ghosts, witches, and angels, the use of supernatural figures such as dragons, elves, fairies, dwarves, and goblins was not popular in wordless picture books with strong story elements. While these figures are perennial fixtures in high fantasy literature for older children, wordless picture book creators are taking different routes to express fantasy in their texts.



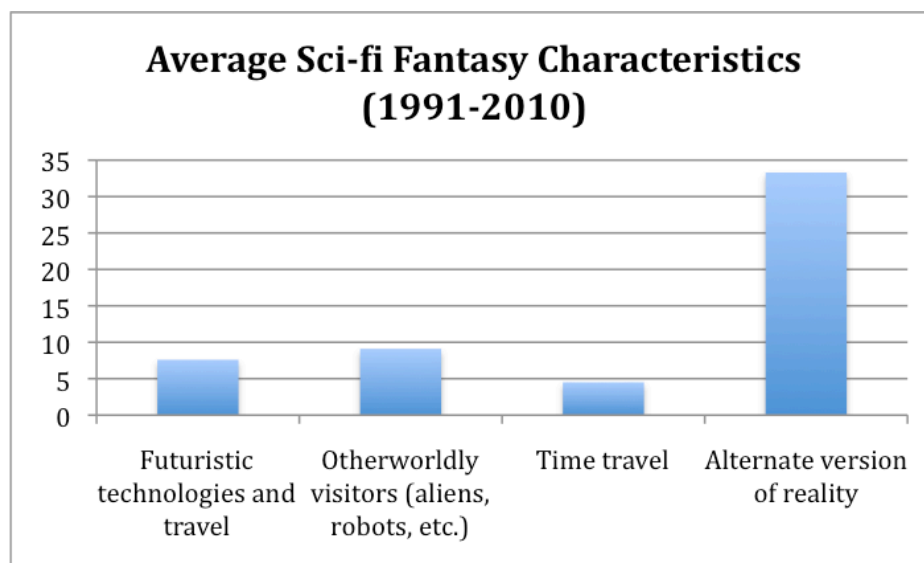
The characteristic of magical activity/magic derived from magical objects was not at all present until 2001-2005, when 18.2% of texts featured the characteristic. Although the percentage decreased to 13.5% in 2006-2010, it should still be noted that this represents five texts as opposed to two in 2001-2005. The increase of this characteristic in the later year ranges may reflect the huge popularity of the *Harry Potter* series by J. K. Rowling, which relies heavily on magical activity and magic derived from magical objects. Interestingly, though, all of the instances of this characteristic in 2006-2010 are part of the *Polo* series by Regis Faller. His texts depend quite heavily on the features of magical occurrences and objects, as well as imaginary worlds. These texts let fantasy loose in all its forms, with several in the series featuring elements of all three categories of fantasy.

The categories of conflict between good and evil and imaginary worlds only appeared in 2006-2010. Only one text, *Midsummer Knight* by Gregory Rogers, featured a conflict between good and evil, although it might more aptly be described as a conflict between good and villainous. Much as the depiction of an entire world in which to set

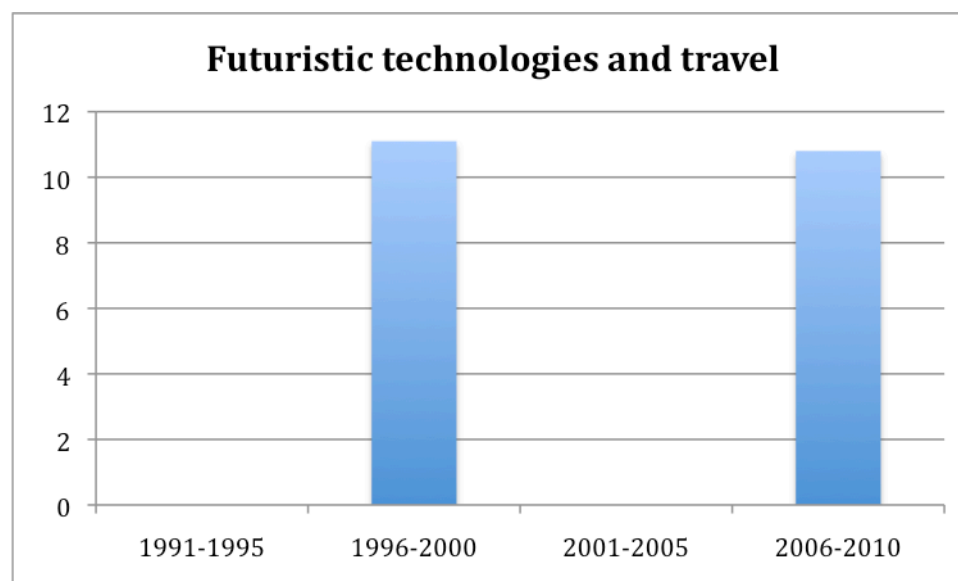
high fantasy can be challenging to encompass in a wordless picture book, the concept of evil is difficult to depict effectively, even in a novel-length text with words. It is unsurprising that the good versus evil conflict is not often addressed in wordless picture books, since it is a very nuanced topic that often requires extensive character development or narration to understand fully. The characteristic of imaginary worlds, although only appearing in 2006-2010, was quite frequent in that year range, with 32.4% of texts displaying the feature. This may be due in part to the ability of an imaginary world to feature in only a small portion of a text; it does not necessarily need to be the entire setting of the book. However, many of the texts displaying this characteristic are again the *Polio* series by Regis Faller. It is impressive that these lively cartoon-style books feature so many high fantasy characteristics; this may be a factor in their popularity. Although none of the Classic/High Fantasy characteristics reached over 20% when averaging characteristics from all years studied, the presence of any of these characteristics indicates that despite the challenge of including high fantasy elements in wordless picture books, it is still an important aspect of the fantasy genre.

### *Sci-fi Fantasy*

Sci-fi Fantasy is not very prevalent overall, with only the characteristic of an alternate version of reality appearing with any frequency. This may be in part due to the fact that this element of Sci-fi Fantasy is quite versatile and can be used in texts that do not contain the other, almost stereotypical, elements of Sci-fi Fantasy.



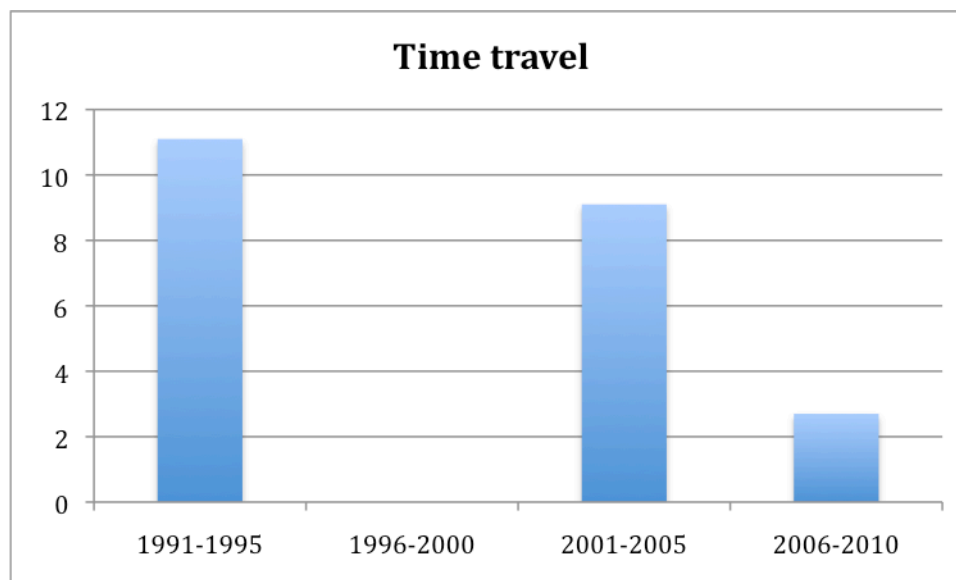
The other elements of Sci-fi Fantasy are quite specific to that genre, and that may be why wordless book authors are relatively reluctant to use them. The element of futuristic technologies and travel does appear in two different year ranges.



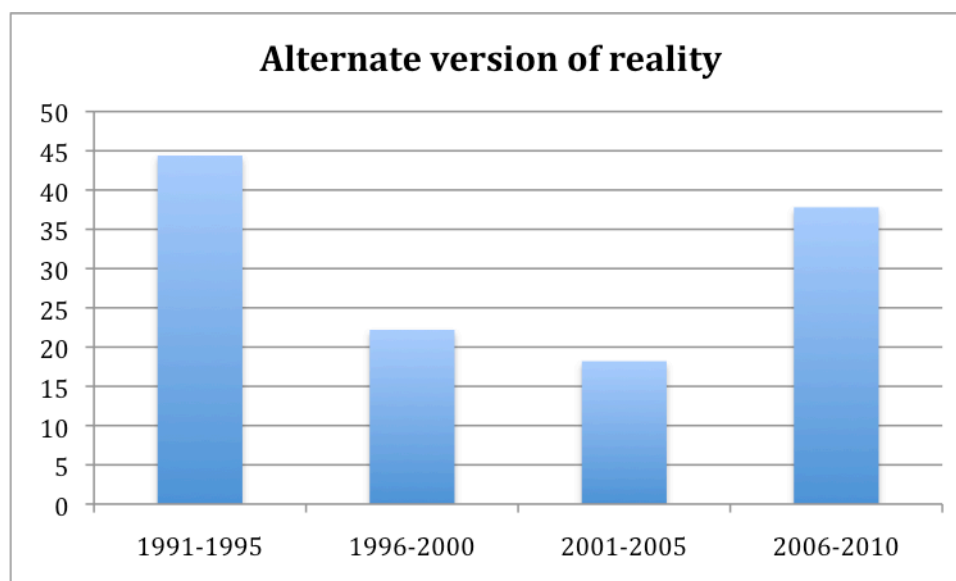
Again, although the percentages are almost equal, it is important to note that only one book presented this characteristic in 1996-2000, as opposed to four in 2006-2010. The characteristic of otherworldly visitors was also not very well-represented overall in the years studied; only 16.2% of texts in 2006-2010 did show the characteristic. As

mentioned above, this element of Sci-fi Fantasy is fairly stereotypical of the genre, and wordless book creators may be avoiding it for that reason.

The characteristic of time travel, unlike that of otherworldly visitors, was present in books from three of the year ranges studied.



While it is notable that only one text from each of these time periods displayed this characteristic, it was in a higher percentage of texts in 1991-1995 than in 2001-2005, and again in 2001-2005 than in 2006-2010.





As mentioned in the earlier discussion, the chart shown on the previous page displays the relative popularity of the alternate version of reality characteristic. Although it was the most prevalent in 1991-1995 at 44.4%, it did not totally leave the picture in 1996-2000 and 2001-2005 before the resurgence in 2006-2010, with 37.8%. It is significant that this is the only Sci-fi Fantasy characteristic that was present in texts from all four year ranges in this study. Overall, the main trend in the results from the characteristics of Sci-fi Fantasy is that none but the alternate version of reality were consistently present in texts; Sci-fi Fantasy does not seem to be a part of the fantasy genre that lends itself well to wordless picture books with strong story elements.

## Conclusions

The content analysis of fantasy elements in wordless picture books with strong story elements indicated that, overall, the use of fantasy characteristics has increased in these books in the most recent five years of publishing. Additionally, the creators of the wordless picture books increasingly combined elements of fantasy from all three categories of fantasy. Killheffer (1997) noted that modern fantasy “derives its energy from the unexpected, strange, and different” (p. 35); the fusion of General Fantasy, Classic/High Fantasy, and Sci-fi Fantasy elements indicates that wordless picture book creators are participating in this trend of including the unexpected in their fantastic books. The publishing of wordless books with strong story elements has also increased significantly in recent years; thirty-seven out of sixty-six books in this study were published in the last five years.

The increased use of fantasy elements in wordless picture books follows the trend that fantasy and science fiction publishing in general have been increasing drastically ever since the 1950s. Recently, “the kids who are buying [fantasy and science fiction] still can’t seem to get their fill” (Corbett, 2006, p. 58), and wordless picture books are providing elements of the high-demand genres of fantasy and science fiction to young and struggling readers. It is impressive to note that only four out of sixty-six books in this study used no elements of fantasy whatsoever. Fantasy is clearly linked to wordless books that contain strong elements of story; this is most likely due to the importance of imagination to both the genre of fantasy and the format of wordless books. Fantasy

“stimulates the imagination” (Stoodt-Hill & Amspaugh-Corson, 2001, p. 169), and wordless books inspire imaginative co-creation as they “nudge readers to create words for the story” and “ask us to use our imagination and stretch our thinking beyond current boundaries” (Mitchell, 2003, p. 79). Fantasy seems to be the preferred way in which the creators of wordless books with strong story elements inspire the imaginations of their readers so that new and unusual stories may be created with each reading.

The texts in this study were selected because they showed the elements of story: clear plots with conflict or problem and resolution or solution, consistent characters, and identifiable setting. It was found that almost all these texts contained elements of fantasy as well. It seems only natural that the hugely imaginative genre of fantasy would be widely present in the co-creative format of wordless picture books. The wordless picture books used in this study are excellent tools for helping children develop their sense of story, oral language skills, and visual literacy skills. However, beyond the utility of the texts, these books are purely enjoyable for their artistic creativity, refreshingly unusual subject matter, and stimulation of the imagination.

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## Appendices

### *Appendix A: Annotated Bibliography*

Alborough, J. (2000). *Hug*. Cambridge, MA: Candlewick Press.

With the help of an elephant and her child, Bobo the chimp finds his mother and the hug he's been looking for. This heartwarming story uses three words ("hug," "Bobo," and "Mommy") and expressive illustrations to convey emotions, ranging from wistfulness to overwrought sadness to joy as Bobo travels among other jungle babies and parents giving and receiving hugs.

*Fantasy elements: A1*

Blake, Q. (1996). *Clown* (1<sup>st</sup> Am. ed.). New York: Henry Holt and Company.

When a toy clown and his bedraggled friends are tossed into the trash, the clown embarks upon a journey to find them all a new home. After being chased by a dog and flung into the air by a tattooed thug, the clown lands in the run-down apartment of a teary girl and her tantrum-throwing little brother. The clown's antics stop the tears, and together they clean up the apartment and rescue the other toys before the children's mother comes home to a newly welcoming apartment.

*Fantasy elements: A2, B1*

Butterworth, N. (1991). *Amanda's butterfly*. New York: Delacorte Press.

Amanda's fruitless butterfly-catching attempts end when rain forces her into the garden shed, where she discovers a fairy with a torn wing who needs her help. The illustrations show the book's age, but they balance detail and simplicity well to create a sweet story.

*Fantasy elements: B2*

Collington, P. (1992). *The midnight circus*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

A young boy, distraught after his beloved coin-operated storefront pony ride is replaced with a new rocket ride, dreams that the pony comes to life. Together they become the stars of a circus, rescuing a young acrobat from an escaped gorilla that is later revealed to be a costumed performer. This revelation seems intended to be comforting, but actually makes the previous menace seem rather confusing and mean-spirited toward the unwitting boy. Otherwise the story is a fanciful dream romp, with a happy ending when the pony ride is returned to the storefront.

*Fantasy elements: A2, A5, C4*

Key to fantasy elements: General Fantasy: **A1**-Personified animals; **A2**-Inanimate objects personified or brought to life; **A3**-People, animals, or things smaller or larger than normal; **A4**-Impossible figures or characters; **A5**-Impossible situations; **A6**-Magical occurrences in everyday life. Classic/high Fantasy: **B1**-Search/quest; **B2**-Supernatural figures; **B3**-Conflict between good and evil; **B4**-Magical activity/magic derived from magical objects; **B5**-Set in legendary times; **B6**-Imaginary worlds. Sci-fi Fantasy: **C1**-Futuristic technologies and travel; **C2**-Otherworldly visitors; **C3**-Time travel; **C4**-Alternate version of reality.



Collington, P. (1995). *The tooth fairy*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

The tooth fairy turns out to be quite industrious; she mines, melts, and casts the metal for the coin she exchanges for a child's tooth. She then fashions the tooth into the ivory for the last key of her homemade piano. While it is a bit unsettling to think of teeth being cut up for piano keys, it at least provides a plausible explanation as to why a fairy would want children's lost teeth.

*Fantasy elements: A3, A5, A6, B2, C4*

Collington, P. (1997). *A small miracle*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

A penniless old woman manages to rescue the collection bucket for the needy from a thug who has vandalized the nativity scene in a church. After fixing the nativity, the woman collapses in the snow on her way home. The nativity figures come to life, carrying the woman home and fixing her a warm Christmas meal in this sweet story of charity rewarded.

*Fantasy elements: A2, A4, A6*

Cooper, E. (2010). *Beaver is lost*. New York: Schwartz & Wade Books.

Framed by the sentences "Beaver is lost" and "Home," Cooper's book simply and beautifully illustrates a beaver's journey into a big city on a lumber truck and the many challenges it faces in making its way home. Comic-book style panels alternate with full and double-page spreads, providing an ebb-and-flow pace to the story.

*Fantasy elements: A1*

Day, A. (1993). *Carl goes to daycare*. New York: Farrar Straus Giroux.

A few sentences frame this story of Carl the Rottweiler and his young charge, Madeleine. The daycare teacher is accidentally locked out, but the intelligent dog runs the programs as scheduled until the teacher finally gets back in to the room. Carl's ability to read requires some suspension of disbelief, but the idea of a big dog running a day care makes for an amusing story.

*Fantasy elements: A1, A2*

Day, A. (1997). *The Christmas we moved to the barn*. New York: Harper Collins Publishers.

A copy of a much-forwarded eviction letter and three sentences of dialogue begin this warmly illustrated Christmas tale of a small family and their many animals who must leave their house on Christmas Eve night. Each family member, human and animal alike, pitches in to move the household items into a nearby barn, decorating for Christmas in the process.

*Fantasy elements: A1*

Key to fantasy elements: General Fantasy: **A1**-Personified animals; **A2**-Inanimate objects personified or brought to life; **A3**-People, animals, or things smaller or larger than normal; **A4**-Impossible figures or characters; **A5**-Impossible situations; **A6**-Magical occurrences in everyday life. Classic/high Fantasy: **B1**-Search/quest; **B2**-Supernatural figures; **B3**-Conflict between good and evil; **B4**-Magical activity/magic derived from magical objects; **B5**-Set in legendary times; **B6**-Imaginary worlds. Sci-fi Fantasy: **C1**-Futuristic technologies and travel; **C2**-Otherworldly visitors; **C3**-Time travel; **C4**-Alternate version of reality.

Diamond, D. (2010). *The shadow*. Somerville, MA: Candlewick Press.

When a young girl sees a sinister figure in her shadow, she faces down her fears and banishes the monstrous shadow. The final scene leaves readers questioning whether the monster was real or imaginary and may be frightening for very young readers.

*Fantasy elements: A4*

Faller, R. (2006). *The adventures of Polo* (1<sup>st</sup> Am. ed.). New Milford, CT: Roaring Brook Press.

Polo, an endearing floppy-eared dog, pulls on his backpack and sets out for the day. His adventures include flying on clouds, exploring the ocean floor, climbing a glacier, and meeting round green aliens on another planet. In Polo's world, anything can happen, and it is delightful to see how he reacts to each new situation. Faller's illustrations are colorful and appealing.

*Fantasy elements: A1, A5, A6, B4, B6, C1, C2*

Faller, R. (2007). *Polo: The runaway book* (1<sup>st</sup> Am. ed.). New Milford, CT: Roaring Brook Press.

Polo receives a new book as a gift, but when a glowing pea-like alien steals the book, Polo gives chase through magic mirrors and jungles, up a beanstalk and into a kingdom in the clouds. When he finally catches up to the aliens, they all share a storytime before returning to Polo's home for a party.

*Fantasy elements: A1, A4, A5, A6, B4, B6, C2*

Faller, R. (2009). *Polo and Lily* (1<sup>st</sup> Am. ed.). New York: Roaring Brook Press.

Polo is quietly enjoying his life of fishing, cooking, and reading, but when Lily zooms in on a cloud, his world turns upside down. Each simple activity becomes an adventure, and Polo is sad to see her go until he realizes that she's left him a telephone so that they can still talk to each other.

*Fantasy elements: A1, A5, A6, B6*

Faller, R. (2009). *Polo and the dragon* (1<sup>st</sup> Am. ed.). New York: Roaring Brook Press.

Polo sets sail in his boat on a snowy day, but soon becomes stuck in ice. In a *Harold and the Purple Crayon* move, he draws a door in the air that leads him into a jungle cave occupied by a dragon. After a brief scare, the two become friends. They team up, with the dragon melting the ice so that they can return to Polo's house and share dragon-flame-roasted kebabs. As always, Polo's escapades are wonderfully fantastical.

*Fantasy elements: A1, A5, A6, B2, B4, B6, C4*

Key to fantasy elements: General Fantasy: **A1**-Personified animals; **A2**-Inanimate objects personified or brought to life; **A3**-People, animals, or things smaller or larger than normal; **A4**-Impossible figures or characters; **A5**-Impossible situations; **A6**-Magical occurrences in everyday life. Classic/high Fantasy: **B1**-Search/quest; **B2**-Supernatural figures; **B3**-Conflict between good and evil; **B4**-Magical activity/magic derived from magical objects; **B5**-Set in legendary times; **B6**-Imaginary worlds. Sci-fi Fantasy: **C1**-Futuristic technologies and travel; **C2**-Otherworldly visitors; **C3**-Time travel; **C4**-Alternate version of reality.

Faller, R. (2009). *Polo and the magic flute* (1<sup>st</sup> Am. ed.). New York: Roaring Brook Press.

After a giant wave strands Polo's boat on a hilltop, a mysterious panda gives him a magic flute. The panda teaches Polo how to use it to make a carpet fly, and the two journey back to Polo's home together.

*Fantasy elements: A1, A5, A6, B4, B6*

Faller, R. (2009). *Polo and the magician!* (1<sup>st</sup> Am. ed.). New York: Roaring Brook Press.

In another surreal adventure, Polo's house floods and he floats to sea in his armchair. After washing ashore at a circus and becoming the star of the magic show, Polo's quick wits save himself and the audience from an angry tiger.

*Fantasy elements: A1, A5, A6, B4, B6*

Geisert, A. (1991). *Oink*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.

While their mother naps, a litter of resourceful piglets find a way into an apple tree for a feast, only to be discovered and reprimanded by their mother.

*Fantasy elements: A1*

Guillope, A. (2004). *One scary night*. New York: Milk and Cookies Press.

Black and white paper-cut style illustrations provide a beautifully cinematic feel to this suspenseful story. A sinister, wolf-like animal stalks a boy walking through the woods. However, the tension dissolves after the creature leaps to push the boy out of the path of a falling tree and is revealed to be friendly.

*Fantasy elements: A1*

Heuer, C. (2005). *Lola and Fred*. Long Island City, NY: 4N Publishing.

Lola the turtle and Fred the frog long to fly like the seagulls they see soaring above them. Rockets, wings, slingshots and catapults all fail, but a giant kite proves more successful than expected when it hauls both of them into the air. There they encounter an escaped circus monkey in a hot air balloon, and this first part of the story ends with the new friends floating off into the sunset.

*Fantasy elements: A1*

Heuer, C. (2005). *Lola and Fred and Tom*. Long Island City, NY: 4N Publishing.

The hot-air-balloon traveling animals Lola, Fred, and Tom (a monkey) narrowly escape a lightning storm at sea. While exploring their desert island refuge, a new elephant friend joins the trio. Playful, cartoonish illustrations propel a simple, clear storyline with endearing characters.

*Fantasy elements: A1*

Key to fantasy elements: General Fantasy: **A1**-Personified animals; **A2**-Inanimate objects personified or brought to life; **A3**-People, animals, or things smaller or larger than normal; **A4**-Impossible figures or characters; **A5**-Impossible situations; **A6**-Magical occurrences in everyday life. Classic/high Fantasy: **B1**-Search/quest; **B2**-Supernatural figures; **B3**-Conflict between good and evil; **B4**-Magical activity/magic derived from magical objects; **B5**-Set in legendary times; **B6**-Imaginary worlds. Sci-fi Fantasy: **C1**-Futuristic technologies and travel; **C2**-Otherworldly visitors; **C3**-Time travel; **C4**-Alternate version of reality.

Hogrogian, N. (2009). *Cool cat*. New York: Roaring Brook Press.

A black-and-white cat begins painting an idyllic countryside scene over the brown, trash-strewn vacant lot he lives in. Other animals and birds join in to help paint, and the story of urban transformation ends with the cat snoozing in a leafy stand of flowers.

*Fantasy elements: A1, A5, A6, C4*

Khing, T. T. (2007). *Where is the cake?* (English ed.). New York: Abrams Books for Young Readers.

When two rats steal a cooling cake from outside Mr. and Mrs. Dogs' house, the chase is on! While the dogs pursue the cake thieves, the other animals of the forest are bound in the same direction with concerns of their own. Fortunately the thieves are apprehended and the cake is shared among all the animals. Side storylines for the other animals are perfect for the child who loves to notice every little detail.

*Fantasy elements: A1*

Khing, T. T. (2009). *Where is the cake now?* (English ed.). New York: Abrams Books for Young Readers.

The animals from *Where is the cake?* are off to a picnic, this time with two beautiful cakes provided by the dogs. After a difficult hike, the cakes are found to be missing once again. After the culprits are discovered, the cake is happily shared. The main story is simple to tell, but the side storylines and clues to the theft provide plenty of details to reward rereading.

*Fantasy elements: A1*

King, S. M. (2009). *Leaf* (1<sup>st</sup> Am. ed.). New York: Roaring Brook Press.

A boy runs from a haircut only to have a seed dropped on his head by a passing bird. When a plant begins to sprout there, the boy and his dog care for it tenderly, watering it in the shower and holding an umbrella for shade. After the inevitable haircut comes, they plant the seedling and over time it grows into a flourishing tree. Humorous sound effects are the only words in the book.

*Fantasy elements: A1, A2, A5*

Lee, S. (2010). *Mirror* (English ed.). New York: Seven Footer Kids.

Using the center of each double-spread page to represent a mirror, Lee tells the story of a sad young girl who plays with her reflection. When the reflection takes on a life of its own, the girl shatters the mirror and returns to her original state of sadness. This book moves from playful delight to dark moodiness in a flash and would be useful for discussing emotions with older children.

*Fantasy elements: A5, C4*

Key to fantasy elements: General Fantasy: **A1**-Personified animals; **A2**-Inanimate objects personified or brought to life; **A3**-People, animals, or things smaller or larger than normal; **A4**-Impossible figures or characters; **A5**-Impossible situations; **A6**-Magical occurrences in everyday life. Classic/high Fantasy: **B1**-Search/quest; **B2**-Supernatural figures; **B3**-Conflict between good and evil; **B4**-Magical activity/magic derived from magical objects; **B5**-Set in legendary times; **B6**-Imaginary worlds. Sci-fi Fantasy: **C1**-Futuristic technologies and travel; **C2**-Otherworldly visitors; **C3**-Time travel; **C4**-Alternate version of reality.

Lee, S. (2010). *Shadow*. San Francisco: Chronicle Books.

In her attic, an imaginative girl gradually transforms the shadows of broken household appliances into a thriving jungle scene. Boundaries blur between the real world and the imaginary one, but the call to dinner returns the girl to reality. When she leaves, however, the light switch clicks again to reveal her imaginary world rollicking along on its own.

*Fantasy elements: A2, A4, A5, A6, B6, C4*

Lee, S. (2008). *Wave*. San Francisco: Chronicle Books.

A little girl tentatively plays in the waves at the beach, running away from them at first, but eventually splashing happily. When a large wave crashes over her, she realizes that the scary event also brings a bounty of shells to collect. The wide double-page spread illustrations recreate the sense of endless horizon experienced at the beach.

*Fantasy elements: A1*

Lehman, B. (2004). *The red book*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.

A flash of red in a snowdrift turns out to be a book, and the little girl opens her treasured find in school. It shows her an island and a boy reading a similar red book. When she discovers they can see each other through the pages, the girl buys a balloon vendor's entire stock and floats to meet her new friend. The book falls from her arms, and the reader's last sight is of another child finding the book, leaving room for imaginative continuation of the story.

*Fantasy elements: A5, A6, B4, C4*

Lehman, B. (2006). *Museum trip*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.

After a boy loses the rest of his class on a field trip to an art museum, he discovers a hidden door into a room filled with drawings of mazes. As he looks at them, he shrinks to the right size to navigate the now three-dimensional labyrinths. After completing the final maze, he receives a medal and rejoins his class, now normal-sized again. The museum official who sees them out the door wears a similar medal, indicating that it might not have all been imaginary.

*Fantasy elements: A3, A5, A6, B6, C4*

Lehman, B. (2007). *Rainstorm*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.

A bored, lonely boy in a mansion discovers a mysterious key and finds that it opens a massive chest containing a ladder down to a secret passage. The passage leads to a distant lighthouse on an island, where the boy befriends a group of children. He reluctantly returns home for a solitary dinner and is delighted when his friends come to visit him the next morning.

*Fantasy elements: A5, A6*

Key to fantasy elements: General Fantasy: **A1**-Personified animals; **A2**-Inanimate objects personified or brought to life; **A3**-People, animals, or things smaller or larger than normal; **A4**-Impossible figures or characters; **A5**-Impossible situations; **A6**-Magical occurrences in everyday life. Classic/high Fantasy: **B1**-Search/quest; **B2**-Supernatural figures; **B3**-Conflict between good and evil; **B4**-Magical activity/magic derived from magical objects; **B5**-Set in legendary times; **B6**-Imaginary worlds. Sci-fi Fantasy: **C1**-Futuristic technologies and travel; **C2**-Otherworldly visitors; **C3**-Time travel; **C4**-Alternate version of reality.

- Lehman, B. (2008). *Trainstop*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.  
A girl and her parents are riding a train through the city when the train emerges from a tunnel into an idyllic green countryside. A miniature man flags down the train, and since the adults are all suddenly asleep, the girl answers the call for help. A crowd of tiny people cheers when she rescues their aviator from his entanglement in a tree. Though it seems like a dream, the wee people reappear at the girl's house with a gift of thanks.  
*Fantasy elements: A3, A5, C4*
- Lubach, P. (1992). *Harry and the singing fish*. New York: Hyperion Books for Children.  
Harry's bagpipe playing elicits a surprise duet with a talented singing fish. The townspeople are delighted with the fish, but when it is booked for a big solo performance, only Harry's bagpipes can help the fish overcome stage fright.  
*Fantasy elements: A1, A5*
- McCully, E. A. (2001). *Four hungry kittens*. New York: Dial Books for Young Readers.  
While their mother is out hunting, four kittens get into trouble around the barn. The responsible sheepdog comes to the rescue multiple times before the mother cat finally returns with a mouse for her kittens.  
*Fantasy elements: A1*
- McDonnell, P. (2008). *South*. New York: Little, Brown and Company.  
A snoozing bird is awakened by the drop of the last autumn leaf, only to realize that his flock has already departed on its winter migration. Mooch the cat helps the little bird make the journey to catch up with his flock in this sweet tale of friendship.  
*Fantasy elements: A1, B1*
- McPhail, D. (2009). *No!*. New York: Roaring Brook Press.  
A young boy journeys through a war-torn city to deliver a letter, standing up to a bully along the way. On his return, the city is transformed, with tanks pulling ploughs and soldiers giving gifts to children. The last page shows the letter, a note to the president asking if the president has rules against bullying. The book's message is a little preachy, but could be used to spark a basic discussion of war or of bullying.  
*Fantasy elements: C4*

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Newgarden, M. (2007). *Bow-wow bugs a bug*. Orlando: Harcourt.

Bow-wow angrily follows a bug that dared to sit on his food bowl. As he trails it around the block, he runs into some surreal versions of his situation, such as a giant Bow-wow and bug, an entire army of dogs following bugs, and a corresponding army of dog-sized bugs following bug-sized dogs. The drawings are bright and clear, and the silly situations are entertaining.

*Fantasy elements: A1, A3, A5, C4*

Newman, J. (2010). *The boys*. New York: Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers.

The new kid in town wants to join in the neighborhood baseball game, but he is too shy. Instead, he makes friends with four old men sitting on a park bench. In comical scenes, the old men begin playing on the playground, riding bikes, and starting up their own baseball game to encourage the boy to participate in age-appropriate activities. Their efforts pay off when he finally musters the courage to join the kids' baseball game.

*Fantasy elements: None*

Ommen, S. V. (2003). *The surprise*. Asheville, NC: Front Street.

Sheep has a special present in mind. After measuring, dying, and shaving her wool, she has it spun into yarn that she knits into an unknown item. A trip on her moped to Giraffe reveals the gift to be a long-necked sweater. The simple paintings and linear story are sweet and easy to narrate.

*Fantasy elements: A1*

Pinkney, J. (2009). *The lion and the mouse*. New York: Little, Brown and Company Books for Young Readers.

Pinkney's Caldecott Medal-winning book, wordless save for animal sound effects, sets this traditional fable in the African Serengeti. The lush illustrations are realistic but provide just enough anthropomorphic expression to make readers care for the animal characters.

*Fantasy elements: A1*

Polhemus, C. (2007). *The crocodile blues*. Cambridge, MA: Candlewick Press.

A man and his cockatiel buy an egg, but are dismayed when it hatches into a crocodile. They abandon their apartment but are appeased when they receive an invitation to the swanky nightclub that the crocodile has set up in their former home. Stylized silhouette-style illustrations in black, white, gray, yellow and blue are modern and visually appealing.

*Fantasy elements: A1, A5, C4*

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Rodriguez, B. (2010). *The chicken thief* (1<sup>st</sup> Am. ed.). Brooklyn, NY: Enchanted Lion Books.

A fox kidnaps a white hen from her yard, and her animal friends chase the fox through the forest, over a mountain and across the ocean. When they finally catch up with the pair, they are surprised to discover that the chicken is actually in love with the fox, and all ends happily. The panoramic full-spread illustrations give the story a cinematic feel.

*Fantasy elements: A1*

Rogers, G. (2004). *The boy, the bear, the baron, the bard*. Brookfield, CT: Roaring Brook Press.

When a London boy retrieves his lost soccer ball from backstage at an abandoned theatre, he finds himself transported to Shakespeare's Globe Theatre, where he disrupts a performance. In his flight from the irate bard, the boy makes friends by releasing a caged bear and saving an imprisoned baron from execution. The lively drawings of Elizabethan life will make readers want to pore over this story again and again.

*Fantasy elements: A1, A5, A6, B4, C3*

Rogers, G. (2007). *Midsummer knight* (1<sup>st</sup> Am. ed.). New Milford, CT: Roaring Brook Press.

All the characters are back in this sequel to *The boy, the bear, the baron, the bard*. The bear opens a door in a tree trunk and emerges into a miniature fairy world where the boy appears. The pair rescues the baron and baroness from the dastardly bard, who had imprisoned them and stolen their treasure. This adventurous romp of a story is propelled by dynamic, detailed comic-style drawings.

*Fantasy elements: A1, A3, A4, A5, A6, B3, B6*

Rogers, G. (2009). *The hero of Little Street*. Crows Nest, NSW, Australia: Allen & Unwin.

The boy returns in this third book of the Boy Bear series. After seeking refuge in a museum from a gang of bullies, the boy finds himself entering the world of Vermeer's Holland with a canine companion from another painting. The boy must use all his ingenuity to save the dog from the bard, now incarnated as a villainous dog-catching butcher.

*Fantasy elements: A1, A2, A5, A6, B6, C3, C4*

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Rohmann, E. (1994). *Time flies*. New York: Crown Publishers.

A small bird trapped in a museum hall of dinosaurs must fly for its life when the dinosaurs mysteriously come to life and decide the bird would make a great snack. The unexplained switch to the age of the dinosaurs is slightly bewildering, but the rich illustrations and dynamic escape scene make this an entertaining read, especially for children who love dinosaurs.

*Fantasy elements: A1, A2, A5, C3, C4*

Schories, P. (2004). *Breakfast for Jack*. Asheville, NC: Front Street.

Jack, an adorable spotted dog, eagerly awaits his breakfast while his family hustles to get ready for the day. Despite Jack's efforts to remind his young owner, the family leaves without feeding him. The day is saved when the boy remembers just in time and returns to fill Jack's dish.

*Fantasy elements: None*

Schories, P. (2004). *Jack and the missing piece*. Asheville, NC: Front Street.

Jack's owner has a friend over, and they construct an elaborate tower of blocks. Jack knocks the tower over each time he bounds in to play and gets sent away in disgrace. When the crowning block goes missing, Jack redeems himself by finding it beneath the seemingly innocent cat.

*Fantasy elements: None*

Schories, P. (2006). *Jack and the night visitors*. Asheville, NC: Front Street.

Jack and his boy are about to go to sleep when a spaceship full of tiny robot-like aliens shows up outside the window. They all play together and share a snack of cereal, but the aliens beat a hasty retreat when the boy tries to capture an alien in a glass jar. The distress of the capture is alleviated when Jack frees the little creature just in time for it to leave with its companions.

*Fantasy elements: A1, C2*

Schories, P. (2008). *Jack wants a snack*. Asheville, NC: Front Street.

Jack's owner's little sister is having a tea party with her toys, complete with popcorn. Jack won't stop interrupting the party to beg for a snack, but while the girl is distracted with Jack, a chipmunk takes the opportunity to snag some popcorn too!

*Fantasy elements: None*

Key to fantasy elements: General Fantasy: **A1**-Personified animals; **A2**-Inanimate objects personified or brought to life; **A3**-People, animals, or things smaller or larger than normal; **A4**-Impossible figures or characters; **A5**-Impossible situations; **A6**-Magical occurrences in everyday life. Classic/high Fantasy: **B1**-Search/quest; **B2**-Supernatural figures; **B3**-Conflict between good and evil; **B4**-Magical activity/magic derived from magical objects; **B5**-Set in legendary times; **B6**-Imaginary worlds. Sci-fi Fantasy: **C1**-Futuristic technologies and travel; **C2**-Otherworldly visitors; **C3**-Time travel; **C4**-Alternate version of reality.

Schories, P. (2010). *When Jack goes out*. Honesdale, PA: Boyds Mills Press.

Jack has been chained out by his doghouse for the night, but after the boy leaves, the aliens from *Jack and the night visitors* show up again. They unchain Jack and play together in the sandbox and the pond, but the fun ends when they try to chain Jack to their ship and take him home with them. Fortunately, Jack's collar slips off, but even the possibility of a puppy abduction may be slightly unsettling for readers.

*Fantasy elements: A1, A5, C1, C2*

Sís, P. (1992). *An ocean world*. [New York]: Greenwillow Books.

Beginning with a postcard and a short sentence explaining that a captive-raised whale is about to be released into the ocean, this book depicts a whale's lonely journey in search of her own kind. Readers will be amused at the whale-shaped items she approaches, such as a submarine, a wrecked ship, and a small island, and will share in her happiness when she finally finds another whale.

*Fantasy elements: A1, B1*

Thomson, B. (2010). *Chalk*. Tarrytown, NY: Marshall Cavendish Children.

Bill Thomson's almost photographic paintings depict three children who discover a bag of magical chalk on a rainy day at the playground. After a drawing of the sun dries up the rain, a dinosaur drawing comes to life and chases them into the play set. A hasty raincloud drawing washes away the menacing dinosaur, and the children leave the chalk for the next playground visitors.

*Fantasy elements: A5, A6, C4*

Varon, S. (2006). *Chicken and cat*. New York: Scholastic Press.

Cat comes to live with his friend Chicken in the city, and the two have a great time despite Cat's trepidations about the dirt and hectic pace of the city. Cat clearly misses his country home, so Chicken comes up with the solution to plant a garden in the vacant lot across the street. The bold illustrations will appeal to fans of comics and cartoons.

*Fantasy elements: A1*

Varon, S. (2009). *Chicken and cat clean up*. New York: Scholastic Press.

Cat is just not cut out to be Chicken's partner in her house cleaning business. However, he gets kicked out of the employer's apartment just in time to apprehend a mouse thief who has snatched a ladybug's purse. The heroic act makes him famous, and the reward money lets him buy the pet he's been dreaming of.

*Fantasy elements: A1*

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Villeneuve, A. (2010). *The red scarf* (English ed.). Toronto, Ontario: Tundra Books.  
 Turpin, a white mole taxi driver, discovers that his most recent passenger has left a red scarf in the taxi. Turpin follows the man into a circus, and accidentally becomes part of the show. The magician presents him with the scarf as thanks for his efforts, and the taxi driver happily leaves. The final page shows a circus worker running behind with his forgotten cabbie hat, providing a spark for continuations of the story.  
*Fantasy elements: A1*

Vincent, G. (2000). *A day, a dog* (1<sup>st</sup> Am. ed.). Asheville, NC: Front Street.  
 This heartbreakingly realistic book opens with a dog being dumped from a moving car. The dog attempts to chase down its owners, but fails. After running into the path of another car and causing an accident, the dog slinks away into a nearby town, where it encounters a child. The story is open-ended, leaving readers hoping that the dog will find a home with the friendly child, but worried about the possibility that it will remain homeless.  
*Fantasy elements: None*

Wakeman, D. (2005). *Ben's big dig*. Custer, WA: Orca Book Publishers.  
 Ben, not particularly thrilled about an overnight visit at his grandmother's house, decides to dig a tunnel to the other side of the world. When the excavation lets loose a geyser of water filled with sea creatures, Ben's grandmother comes to the rescue, stanching the eruption with a pile of pies. The comic-book style illustrations are lively, but some logical holes remain in the story – for example, why does the grandmother have a kitchen piled absurdly high with spare pies?  
*Fantasy elements: A1, A5, C4*

Wakeman, D. (2007). *Ben's bunny trouble*. Custer, WA: Orca Book Publishers.  
 Young Ben packs some provisions and his pet bunnies and embarks on a spaceship journey to find his bunnies (which mysteriously multiply during the trip) a better home. The backstory of needing a better home must be assumed; otherwise it can be a little disturbing to think of Ben abandoning his pets on a faraway planet, despite its perfect flora of giant carrots growing everywhere.  
*Fantasy elements: A1, A3, B1, B6, C1, C2, C4*

Key to fantasy elements: General Fantasy: **A1**-Personified animals; **A2**-Inanimate objects personified or brought to life; **A3**-People, animals, or things smaller or larger than normal; **A4**-Impossible figures or characters; **A5**-Impossible situations; **A6**-Magical occurrences in everyday life. Classic/high Fantasy: **B1**-Search/quest; **B2**-Supernatural figures; **B3**-Conflict between good and evil; **B4**-Magical activity/magic derived from magical objects; **B5**-Set in legendary times; **B6**-Imaginary worlds. Sci-fi Fantasy: **C1**-Futuristic technologies and travel; **C2**-Otherworldly visitors; **C3**-Time travel; **C4**-Alternate version of reality.

Wiesner, D. (1991). *Tuesday*. New York: Clarion Books.

David Wiesner's Caldecott Medal-winning wordless book depicts, in detailed paintings, the chaos caused in a small town as a flotilla of frogs cruises through on flying lily pads. The phenomenon is not explained, but the caption of "Next Tuesday, 7:58 P.M." precedes the final paintings of delightfully surprised flying pigs, allowing readers to hypothesize what it is about Tuesday nights that makes the impossible possible.

*Fantasy elements: A1, A5, A6, C4*

Wiesner, D. (1999). *Sector 7*. New York: Clarion Books.

On a clouded-over field trip to the Empire State Building's observation deck, one boy is taken by a friendly cloud to visit Sector 7, the mid-air cloud factory. The boy shakes things up by drawing new blueprints for the clouds bored of the same old fluffy shapes, but the grown-up operators of Sector 7 send him back to his class. Once the class reaches street level, they are amazed at the shapes they see in the clouds. The detailed cloud world is realized through beautiful illustrations.

*Fantasy elements: A1, A2, A4, A5, A6, C1, C4*

Wiesner, D. (2006). *Flotsam*. New York: Clarion Books.

In Wiesner's second Caldecott Medal-winning wordless picture book, a boy finds an old-fashioned camera washed up on the beach. He develops the film inside, discovering photographs of a surrealist underwater world, as well as one of a girl holding another photograph. By using his magnifying glass and microscope, the boy realizes that each image is of a child holding an older photograph of another child. The boy takes his own photograph and lets the sea reclaim the camera until the next child discovers its secrets.

*Fantasy elements: A1, A5, B2, B6, C1, C2, C4*

Weitzman, J. P. (1998). *You can't take a balloon into the Metropolitan Museum*. New York: Dial Books for Young Readers.

A softhearted museum guard agrees to watch a little girl's forbidden balloon while she and her grandmother visit the museum. When a mischievous pigeon frees the balloon, the guard is led on a madcap chase after the balloon across New York City. The scenes of havoc and confusion in the city loosely mirror the artworks being viewed by the girl and grandmother in the museum.

*Fantasy elements: A1, A2*

Key to fantasy elements: General Fantasy: **A1**-Personified animals; **A2**-Inanimate objects personified or brought to life; **A3**-People, animals, or things smaller or larger than normal; **A4**-Impossible figures or characters; **A5**-Impossible situations; **A6**-Magical occurrences in everyday life. Classic/high Fantasy: **B1**-Search/quest; **B2**-Supernatural figures; **B3**-Conflict between good and evil; **B4**-Magical activity/magic derived from magical objects; **B5**-Set in legendary times; **B6**-Imaginary worlds. Sci-fi Fantasy: **C1**-Futuristic technologies and travel; **C2**-Otherworldly visitors; **C3**-Time travel; **C4**-Alternate version of reality.

Weitzman, J. P. (2000). *You can't take a balloon into the National Gallery*. New York: Dial Books for Young Readers.

In this Washington, D.C. follow up to *You can't take a balloon into the Metropolitan Museum*, the little girl's balloon gets away from the woman taking pictures with a cardboard cutout of George Washington. The balloon leads her on a frenetic chase past all of the capitol's landmarks, accumulating a crowd of followers before ending up back at the museum just in time to meet the girl coming out. The art in the museum reflects the scenes in the chase.

*Fantasy elements: A1, A2*

Weitzman, J. P. (2002). *You can't take a balloon into the Museum of Fine Arts*. New York: Dial Books for Young Readers.

The third book in the balloon series pits a mischievous balloon against the little girl's impressively spry grandmother while the girl and her brother enter the museum with their grandfather. The scenes of the chase through the landmarks of Boston are humorously juxtaposed with the art being viewed by the children and grandfather.

*Fantasy elements: A2*

Wilson, A. (1999). *April Wilson's magpie magic*. New York: Dial Books for Young Readers.

A sketched magpie flies off the drawing paper and begins to make mischief with the rest of the colored pencils. The child illustrator attempts to curb the havoc by drawing a cage. An eraser provides a means of escape from the cage, but the magpie must be resourceful when the child tries to erase it too.

*Fantasy elements: A1, A2, A5, A6, C4*

Yum, H. (2008). *Last night*. New York: Farrar Straus Giroux.

A young girl is sent upstairs to bed after refusing to eat her dinner. In her dreams, her comforting teddy bear grows to real bear size and leads her into the forest to dance and play hide-and-seek with his animal friends. The girl grows more and more tired and disenchanted with the festivities and wakes up to seek comfort from her mother's embrace rather than from the bear.

*Fantasy elements: A1, A2, A3, A5, C4*

Key to fantasy elements: General Fantasy: **A1**-Personified animals; **A2**-Inanimate objects personified or brought to life; **A3**-People, animals, or things smaller or larger than normal; **A4**-Impossible figures or characters; **A5**-Impossible situations; **A6**-Magical occurrences in everyday life. Classic/high Fantasy: **B1**-Search/quest; **B2**-Supernatural figures; **B3**-Conflict between good and evil; **B4**-Magical activity/magic derived from magical objects; **B5**-Set in legendary times; **B6**-Imaginary worlds. Sci-fi Fantasy: **C1**-Futuristic technologies and travel; **C2**-Otherworldly visitors; **C3**-Time travel; **C4**-Alternate version of reality.

*Appendix B: Charts of Fantasy Characteristics by Text*

**General Fantasy**

Title	Year	A1: Personified animals - experience emotions, have ability to reason, may talk	A2: Inanimate objects personified or brought to life	A3: People, animals, or things smaller or larger than normal	A4: Impossible figures or characters (ghosts, witches, angels, etc.)	A5: Impossible situations (entering other worlds, invisibility, things flying that cannot normally fly, etc.)	A6: Magical occurrences in everyday life
Amanda's butterfly	1991						
Oink	1991	X					
Tuesday	1991	X				X	X
The midnight circus	1992		X			X	
Harry and the singing fish	1992	X				X	
An ocean world	1992	X					
Carl goes to daycare	1993	X	X				
Time flies	1994	X	X			X	
The tooth fairy	1995			X		X	X
Clown	1996		X				
A small miracle	1997		X		X		X
The Christmas we moved to the barn	1997	X					
You can't take a balloon into the Metropolitan Museum	1998	X	X				
Sector 7	1999	X	X		X	X	X
April Wilson's magpie magic	1999	X	X			X	X
Hug	2000	X					
A day, a dog	2000						
You can't take a balloon into the National Gallery	2000	X	X				
Four hungry kittens	2001	X					
You can't take a balloon into the Museum of Fine Arts	2002		X				
The surprise	2003	X					
One scary night	2004	X					
The red book	2004					X	X
The boy, the bear, the baron, the bard	2004	X				X	X
Jack and the missing piece	2004						
Breakfast for Jack	2004						
Lola & Fred & Tom	2005	X					
Lola & Fred	2005	X					
Ben's big dig	2005	X				X	
The adventures of Polo	2006	X				X	X
Museum trip	2006			X		X	X

## General Fantasy, continued

Title	Year	A1: Personified animals - experience emotions, have ability to reason, may talk	A2: Inanimate objects personified or brought to life	A3: People, animals, or things smaller or larger than normal	A4: Impossible figures or characters (ghosts, witches, angels, etc.)	A5: Impossible situations (entering other worlds, invisibility, things flying that cannot normally fly, etc.)	A6: Magical occurrences in everyday life
Jack and the night visitors	2006	X					
Chicken and Cat	2006	X					
Flotsam	2006	X				X	
Polo: the runaway book	2007	X			X	X	X
Where is the cake?	2007	X					
Rainstorm	2007					X	X
Bow-wow bugs a bug	2007	X		X		X	
The crocodile blues	2007	X				X	
Midsummer knight	2007	X		X	X	X	X
Ben's bunny trouble	2007	X		X			
Wave	2008	X					
Trainstop	2008			X		X	
South	2008	X					
Jack wants a snack	2008						
Last night	2008	X	X	X		X	
Polo and the dragon	2009	X				X	X
Polo and the magician!	2009	X				X	X
Polo and the magic flute	2009	X				X	X
Polo and Lily	2009	X				X	X
Cool cat	2009	X				X	X
Where is the cake now?	2009	X					
Leaf	2009	X	X			X	
No!	2009						
The lion & the mouse	2009	X					
The hero of Little Street	2009	X	X			X	X
Chicken and Cat clean up	2009	X					
Beaver is lost	2010	X					
The shadow	2010				X		
Shadow	2010		X		X	X	X
Mirror	2010					X	
The boys	2010						
The chicken thief	2010	X					
When Jack goes out	2010	X				X	
Chalk	2010					X	X
The red scarf	2010	X					

## Classic/High Fantasy

Title	Year	B1: Search/quest for lofty purpose or rich reward	B2: Supernatural figures (dragons, elves, fairies, dwarves, goblins, etc)	B3: Conflict between good and evil	B4: Magical activity / magic derived from magical objects	B5: Set in legendary times	B6: Imaginary worlds
Amanda's butterfly	1991		X				
Oink	1991						
Tuesday	1991						
The midnight circus	1992						
Harry and the singing fish	1992						
An ocean world	1992	X					
Carl goes to daycare	1993						
Time flies	1994						
The tooth fairy	1995		X				
Clown	1996	X					
A small miracle	1997						
The Christmas we moved to the barn	1997						
You can't take a balloon into the Metropolitan Museum	1998						
Sector 7	1999						
April Wilson's magpie magic	1999						
Hug	2000						
A day, a dog	2000						
You can't take a balloon into the National Gallery	2000						
Four hungry kittens	2001						
You can't take a balloon into the Museum of Fine Arts	2002						
The surprise	2003						
One scary night	2004						
The red book	2004				X		
The boy, the bear, the baron, the bard	2004				X		
Jack and the missing piece	2004						
Breakfast for Jack	2004						
Lola & Fred & Tom	2005						
Lola & Fred	2005						
Ben's big dig	2005						
The adventures of Polo	2006				X		X
Museum trip	2006						X



## Classic/High Fantasy, continued

Title	Year	B1: Search/quest for lofty purpose or rich reward	B2: Supernatural figures (dragons, elves, fairies, dwarves, goblins, etc)	B3: Conflict between good and evil	B4: Magical activity / magic derived from magical objects	B5: Set in legendary times	B6: Imaginary worlds
Jack and the night visitors	2006						
Chicken and Cat	2006						
Flotsam	2006		X				X
Polo: the runaway book	2007				X		X
Where is the cake?	2007						
Rainstorm	2007						
Bow-wow bugs a bug	2007						
The crocodile blues	2007						
Midsummer knight	2007			X			X
Ben's bunny trouble	2007	X					X
Wave	2008						
Trainstop	2008						
South	2008	X					
Jack wants a snack	2008						
Last night	2008						
Polo and the dragon	2009		X		X		X
Polo and the magician!	2009				X		X
Polo and the magic flute	2009				X		X
Polo and Lily	2009						X
Cool cat	2009						
Where is the cake now?	2009						
Leaf	2009						
No!	2009						
The lion & the mouse	2009						
The hero of Little Street	2009						X
Chicken and Cat clean up	2009						
Beaver is lost	2010						
The shadow	2010						
Shadow	2010						X
Mirror	2010						
The boys	2010						
The chicken thief	2010						
When Jack goes out	2010						
Chalk	2010						
The red scarf	2010						

## Sci-fi Fantasy

Title	Year	C1: Futuristic technologies and travel	C2: Otherworldly visitors (aliens, robots, etc.)	C3: Time travel	C4: Alternate version of reality
Amanda's butterfly	1991				
Oink	1991				
Tuesday	1991				X
The midnight circus	1992				X
Harry and the singing fish	1992				
An ocean world	1992				
Carl goes to daycare	1993				
Time flies	1994			X	X
The tooth fairy	1995				X
Clown	1996				
A small miracle	1997				
The Christmas we moved to the barn	1997				
You can't take a balloon into the Metropolitan Museum	1998				
Sector 7	1999	X			X
April Wilson's magpie magic	1999				X
Hug	2000				
A day, a dog	2000				
You can't take a balloon into the National Gallery	2000				
Four hungry kittens	2001				
You can't take a balloon into the Museum of Fine Arts	2002				
The surprise	2003				
One scary night	2004				
The red book	2004				X
The boy, the bear, the baron, the bard	2004			X	
Jack and the missing piece	2004				
Breakfast for Jack	2004				
Lola & Fred & Tom	2005				
Lola & Fred	2005				
Ben's big dig	2005				X
The adventures of Polo	2006	X	X		
Museum trip	2006				X

## Sci-fi Fantasy, continued

Title	Year	C1: Futuristic technologies and travel	C2: Otherworldly visitors (aliens, robots, etc.)	C3: Time travel	C4: Alternate version of reality
Jack and the night visitors	2006		X		
Chicken and Cat	2006				
Flotsam	2006	X	X		X
Polo: the runaway book	2007		X		
Where is the cake?	2007				
Rainstorm	2007				
Bow-wow bugs a bug	2007				X
The crocodile blues	2007				X
Midsummer knight	2007				
Ben's bunny trouble	2007	X	X		X
Wave	2008				
Trainstop	2008				X
South	2008				
Jack wants a snack	2008				
Last night	2008				X
Polo and the dragon	2009				X
Polo and the magician!	2009				
Polo and the magic flute	2009				
Polo and Lily	2009				
Cool cat	2009				X
Where is the cake now?	2009				
Leaf	2009				
No!	2009				X
The lion & the mouse	2009				
The hero of Little Street	2009			X	X
Chicken and Cat clean up	2009				
Beaver is lost	2010				
The shadow	2010				
Shadow	2010				X
Mirror	2010				X
The boys	2010				
The chicken thief	2010				
When Jack goes out	2010	X	X		
Chalk	2010				X
The red scarf	2010				

*Appendix C: Tables of Percentages of Fantasy Characteristics*

Percentages of Characteristics by 5-Year Range	General Fantasy	Classic/High Fantasy	Sci-fi Fantasy
1991-1995	31.5	5.6	13.9
1996-2000	35.2	1.9	8.3
2001-2005	19.7	4.5	6.8
2006-2010	33.8	9.9	16.9
Overall (1991-2010)	31.3	7.3	13.6

Percentages of General Fantasy Characteristics	Personified animals	Inanimate objects personified or brought to life	People, animals, or things smaller or larger than normal	Impossible figures (ghosts, witches, angels, etc.)	Impossible situations (entering other worlds, invisibility, flying)	Magical occurrences in everyday life
1991-1995	66.7	33.3	11.1	0	55.6	22.2
1996-2000	66.7	66.7	0	22.2	22.2	33.3
2001-2005	63.6	9.1	0	0	27.3	18.2
2006-2010	73	10.8	16.2	10.8	56.8	35.1
Overall (1991-2010)	69.7	21.2	10.6	9.1	47	30.3

Percentages of Classic/High Fantasy Characteristics	Search/quest for lofty purpose or rich reward	Supernatural figures (dragons, elves, fairies, dwarves, goblins, etc)	Conflict between good and evil	Magical activity / magic derived from magical objects	Set in legendary times	Imaginary worlds
1991-1995	11.1	22.2	0	0	0	0
1996-2000	11.1	0	0	0	0	0
2001-2005	0	0	0	18.2	0	0
2006-2010	5.4	5.4	2.7	13.5	0	32.4
Overall (1991-2010)	6.1	6.1	1.5	10.6	0	18.2

Percentages of Sci-fi Fantasy Characteristics	Futuristic technologies and travel	Otherworldly visitors (aliens, robots, etc.)	Time travel	Alternate version of reality
1991-1995	0	0	11.1	44.4
1996-2000	11.1	0	0	22.2
2001-2005	0	0	9.1	18.2
2006-2010	10.8	16.2	2.7	37.8
Overall (1991-2010)	7.6	9.1	4.5	33.3

Percentages of Fantasy Elements within Individual Books	No Fantasy Elements	Elements from One Fantasy Category	Elements from Two or Three Fantasy Categories
1991-1995	0.0	44.4	55.6
1996-2000	11.1	55.6	33.3
2001-2005	18.2	54.5	27.3
2006-2010	2.7	37.8	59.5