



Greg Ruth, *A Pirate's Guide To Recess*

Close Your Eyes To See : First Steps in Narrative Art



Ms. Frisby and
Nicodemus from Don
Bluth's 1987 animated
film *The Secret of NIMH*.

Read the script and come to believe in it. If you can't believe in your script, you'd better choose another. Once you have your script, sit quietly with your eyes closed and envision the picture in your mind, finished if possible. Don't edit yourself at this point. Select a section of the script that you like and try to view it in your mind's eye. Envision the characters—their actions, costumes, and facial expressions. Hear the voices, the music, and the sound effects.

Don Bluth *The Art of Storyboard*

HEY BUB, WHAT'S THE BIG IDEA?

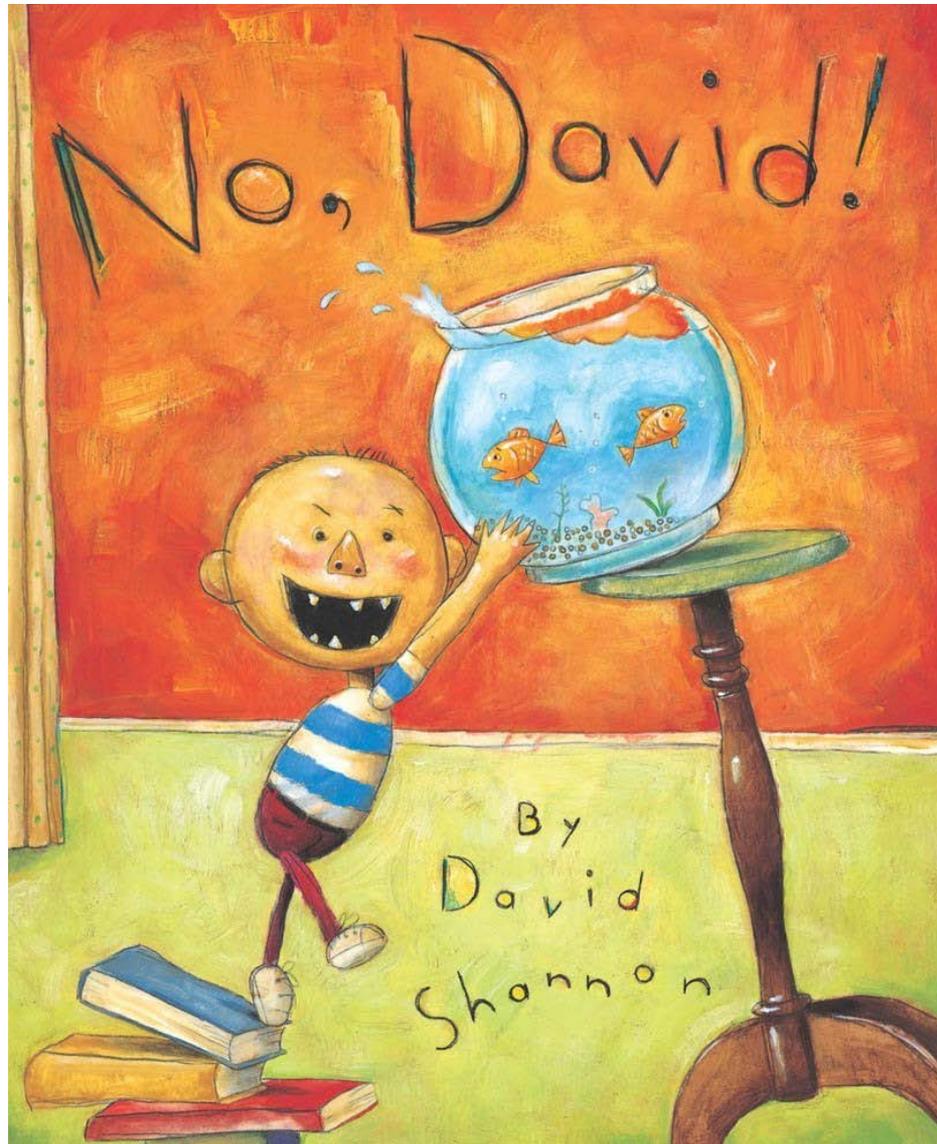


The **Big Idea** is what you know you want to communicate to the viewer before *you begin*. It is the *underlying theme of the illustration*. It is the *mood, the feeling, the opinion, or the plot point that you most want to get across*.



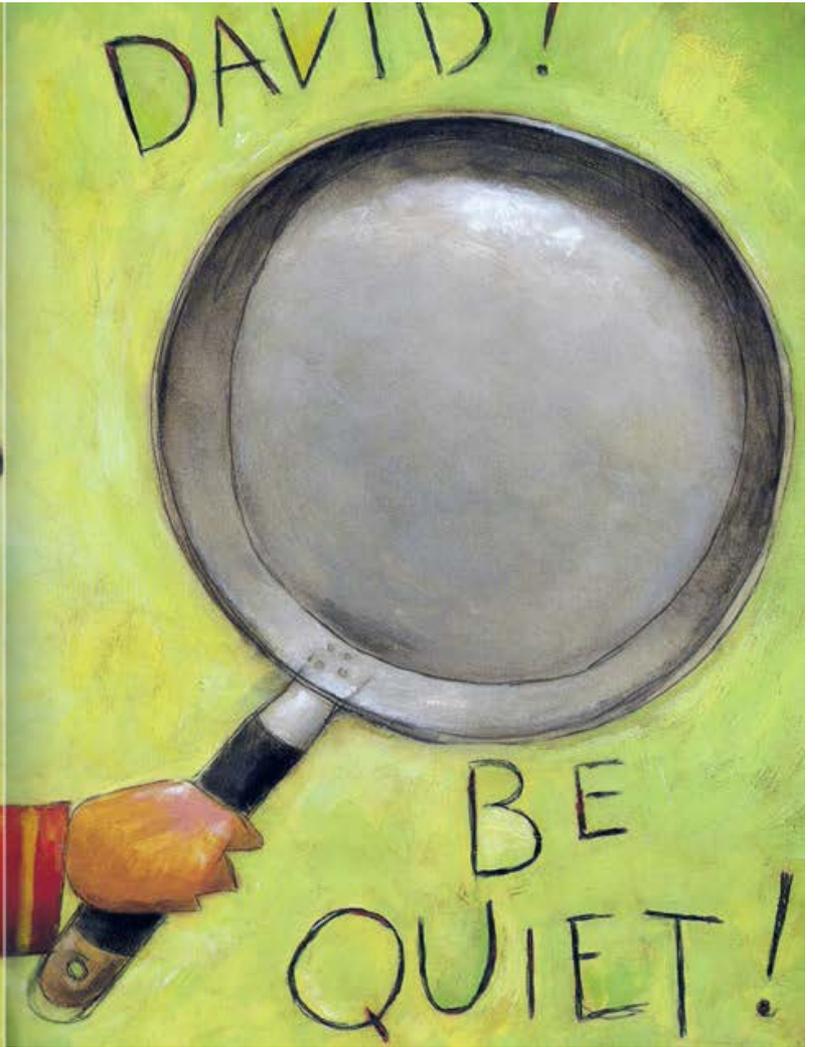
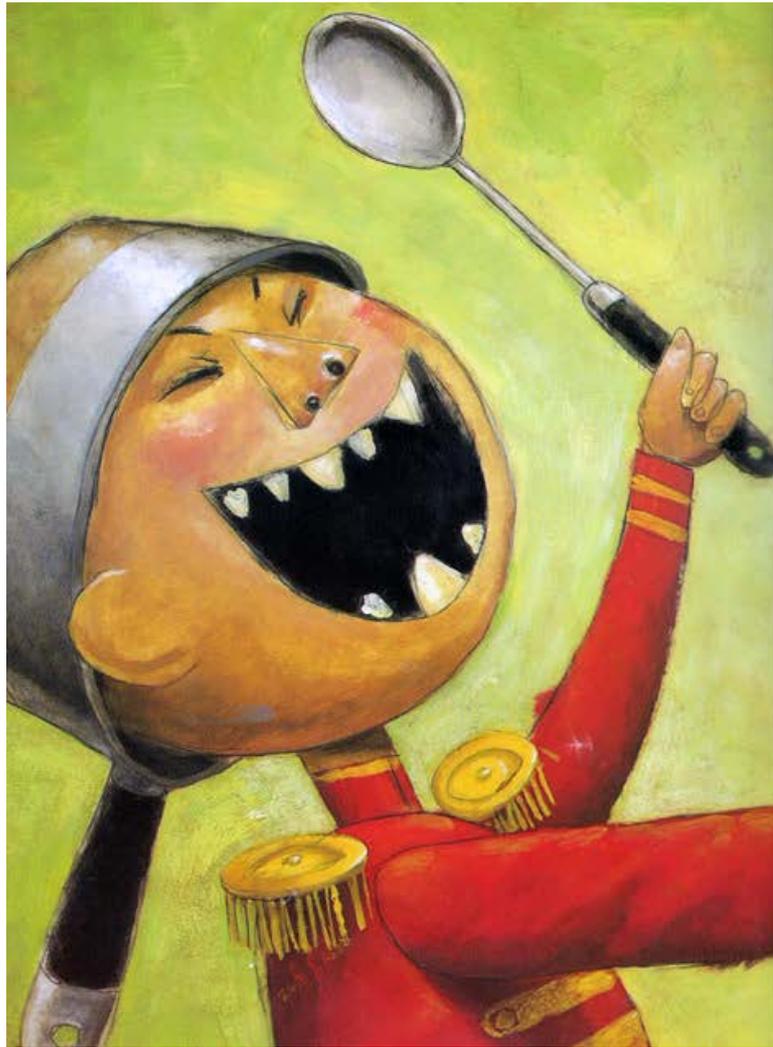
Examine this classic illustration by the renowned children's author-illustrator Maurice Sendak from his book *Where the Wild Things Are*. The big idea is synonymous with the one line of text that precedes the image.

Let the Wild Rumpus Start!



No, David!

By
David
Shannon



The **big idea** (concept) is what will guide you in making the rest of the decisions you will need to make to create an effective illustration.

Determining how you *feel* about a particular subject, as well as how your subject is *feeling* in the image, is the first step toward figuring the **big idea** out. It will inform every decision you make including :

character poses
mood
camera angle
setting
composition
lighting

After all, illustration is visual communication; therefore you need to have clear in your mind what it is you want to say before you say it.

Narrative Analysis: Identifying the Beats

Beat is a term most often heard when referring to music.

*In **Sequential Art** Beats are the key events, plot points, and scenes that take the story forward to its conclusion.*

Identify the beats.

Highlighting texts feels good. You can draw attention of people to a word or perhaps even to a whole sentence that spans across multiple lines in such a way that hypenation etc. are not affected.

Highlight the most important beats of the story. You can do this digitally, but it can be much easier as well as help you to better digest the material if you do this task the old fashioned way!

Here's an example of a very familiar story, broken down to just its essential beats:

FIRST HALF	SECOND HALF – DOUBLE UP
A little ship is pulled into a big ship.	The Millennium Falcon is pulled into the Death Star.
Leia attacks Stormtroopers. Is captured.	Luke and Han attack guards.
R2D2 and C3PO get to safety.	Luke and gang get to safety.
Leia is brought to Vader.	Luke and company discover that Leia is on the Death Star with Vader.
R2D2 is attacked by gang of Jawas.	Luke and company are attacked by a gang of Stormtroopers.
R2D2 and C3PO escape the Jawas by being purchased by Luke's uncle.	Luke and company escape down the garbage chute.
R2D2 runs off and Luke is almost killed chasing after him.	Luke is almost killed by the garbage monster.
Luke's aunt and uncle are killed.	Luke and gang are almost killed in the compactor.
Luke tells Obi Wan that he wants to save Leia.	Luke saves Leia by running around the Death Star with her.
Obi-Wan saves Luke in the bar with a fast light saber fight. Meet Han.	Obi-Wan saves the gang in the Death Star with a longer light saber fight.
Escape in the Millennium Falcon.	Escape in the Millennium Falcon.
They are followed and fired upon, but jump to hyperspace.	They are followed and fired upon, but destroy the fighters.
Death Star destroys Alderaan	Death Star follows them and is going to destroy the rebel base.
They see the Death Star and try to escape.	The rebels attack the Death Star and destroy it!

Case study: Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland*



Alice in Wonderland
Sir John Tenniel, 1865



Alice in Wonderland
Arthur Rackham, 1907



Alice in Wonderland, Leonard Weisgard, 1949



Alice in Wonderland, Walt Disney 1951



Alice in Wonderland, Ralph Steadman, 1973



Alice in Wonderland, Camille Rose Garcia 2010



Alice in Wonderland, Tim Burton 2010



Concept art for the Queen of Hearts

The Elements of Narrative: Choosing the Critical Moment



With just one moment in time to show, how do we choose?

Donald Teague



The Frozen Moment

What precise moment is best to illustrate in order to create the desired effect in the viewer?

- Should it be the moment before the event (the event being the climax)?
- Should it be during the event?
- Should it be after the event has occurred?

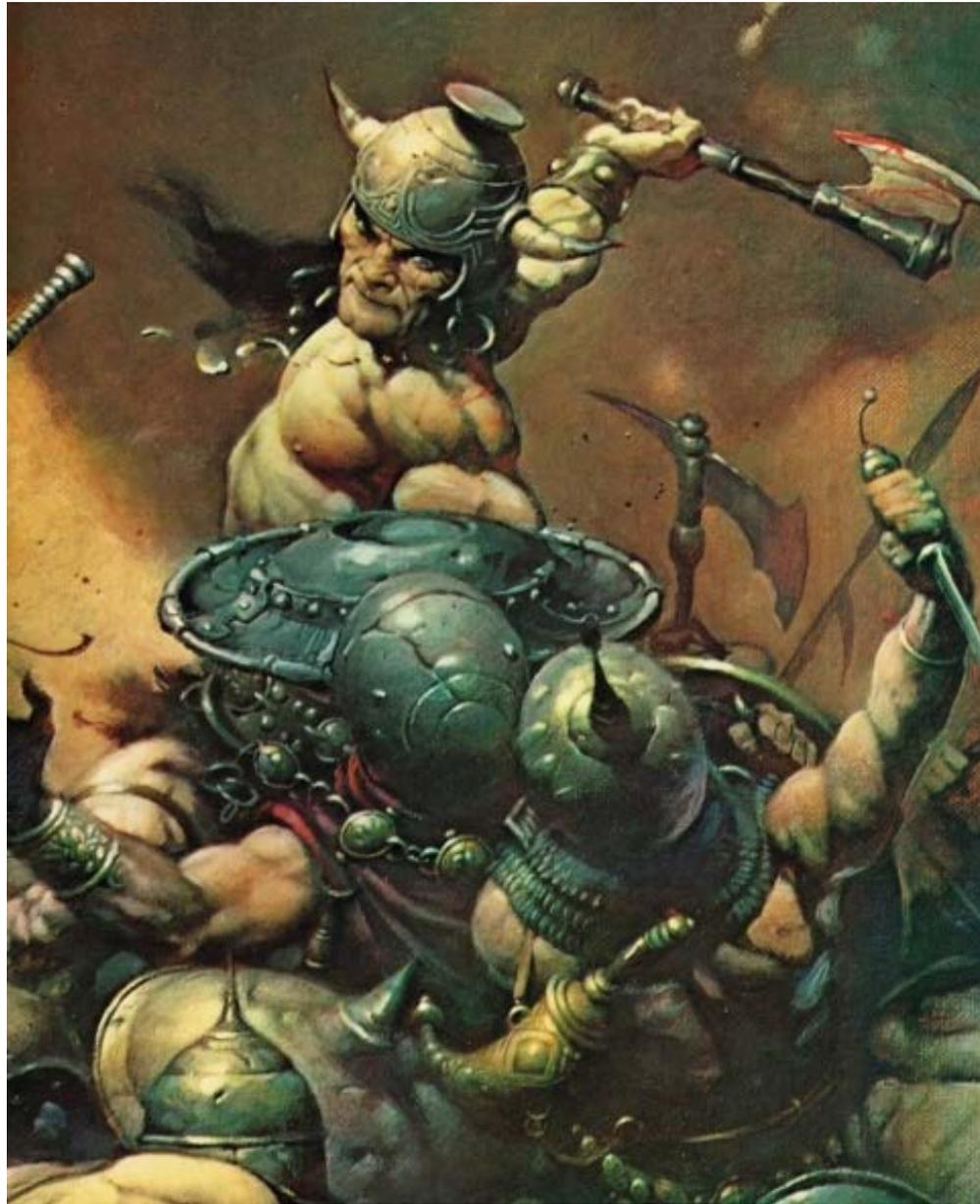


Batman, by Frank Miller

I TREAT 'EM ACCORDINGLY.



Free my?



The Destroyer, by Frank Frazetta



Tarzan, Frank Frazetta



Tomer Hanuka



Tomer Hanuka



Wing Chun, Victo Ngai