**A Variety of Ways to Use Wordless Picture Books**

* *Focus on use of specific types of words.* Ask your students to tell the story using specific nouns, adjectives, prepositions or verbs (e.g. Retell the story using the prepositions *under, over, around, through, beside*, above). 
* *Focus on text structure.* Depending on the plot, ask students to retell the story focusing on beginning/middle/end or cause/effect, problem/solution, compare/contrast or sequence, etc.
* *Identify vocabulary.* Help students use key vocabulary to construct an oral retelling by labeling images, objects and actions.
* *Identify what in the story is familiar* to their home country and *what is different.*
* *Consider layering the interpretation of a book over several readings.* Begin by exploring the setting - what visual details inform the reader of where the story takes place, such as time of day, place, weather. Next, identify the character layer -- who are the characters involved? What role(s) do they play? Third, identify the sequence of events. Once these layers are understood, students can move on to creating a meaningful interpretation.
* *Help students determine multiple levels of meaning* that may be present in a text.
* *Use the* *Say Something strategy*: Pair students and ask them to tell the story to each other a page at a time, switching the teller from one page to the next so that they both are engaged equally.
* *Record the story inspired by the wordless book*. Dictate a story to a teacher, tutor, volunteer, or use computer software that converts children’s speech to print. If an audio or videotape is made, make it part of a lending library and send it home in a plastic case.
* *Change the format of a wordless book*. “Translating” a story from one format to another provides good practice in comprehension. Children could convert a wordless book into a big book or pocket-sized book with a written text. They might try creating a book with moving parts, such as a lift-the-flap book.
* *Draw a prequel or a sequel*. Wordless books help children to develop a sense of story and narrative abilities, particularly if they imagine the past and future of the story.
* *Focus on the plot*. Children can chart or map the plot. Use a paperback copy or duplicated copy of the pictures, cut apart, laminate and arrange in sequence on the floor or chalkboard ledge. One book that is especially well suited to this is Jeannie Baker’s (1991) *Window*, a story that shows what happens as a country environment becomes increasingly urbanized.
* *Dramatize the story*. Children can role play a particular scene or the entire story, invent dialogue between and among characters, or use simple puppets to reenact the story. Try dramatizing *Changes*, *Changes* (Hutchins, 1971) using blocks and toys.
* *Create a group mural*. Draw a mural with cartoon bubble dialogue, a storyboard that is presented in frames, like a cartoon strip, or use cardboard tubes to create a story scroll.
* *Write a text in a different language*. Wordless books are well suited to support linguistically and culturally diverse students and families. Invite parents and their children to invent a story for the wordless book in their first language, and then share the story in both languages with the children.
* *Revisit the invented text for a wordless book*. After children have written a text to accompany a wordless book, they can return to it and make a different story or a story from another character’s point of view.
* *Use photographs of classroom or center activities*. A series of photographs can become the basis for a wordless book. After the children have arranged the photos to document an event, invite them to write captions for each one.
* *Invent original wordless books*. Wordless books support creative expression and can be used to explore different art media and technology. Try having one group of children create the illustrations for a wordless book, then have another group dictate or write a text for the book.
* *Make a book with a text into a wordless book*. Convert a new story book or a book that is unfamiliar to the children into a wordless book using strips of construction paper to cover the words. Ask the children to imagine what the author wrote about each picture before actually reading it.
* *Investigate an artist’s style*. Gather two or more wordless books by the same author, and then gather the books of different authors. Ask the children to cluster books together by looking at illustrations alone and ask them to explain how they decided. Point out that these things are the artist’s style.
* Consider a project in which students, such as 6th graders or high school art students, *create a wordless big book* and present it to young children. Smaller sized wordless books can be produced, laminated, and donated to the library. Older children can also volunteer to type or print the original texts that children create for wordless books.
* *Contrast wordless books in different media*. Use the film version Mercer Mayer’s (1973) *Frog Goes to Dinner*. The film is live action while the book consists of cartoon drawings. Invite children to compare/contrast the two using a Venn diagram.
* *Invent a wordless book*. Using clipart on the computer, create a wordless language experience story (e.g., Our Trip to the Zoo), then compose a text and make into a big book or story chart.

Resources:

Jalongo, M.R*.,* Dragich, D., Conrad, N. K. and Zhang, A. (2002). Using wordless picture books to support emergent literacy. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, *29(*3).

Louie, B. & Sierschynski, J. (2015). Enhancing English learners’ language development using wordless picture books. *The Reading Teacher.* *(69)*1, 103-111.