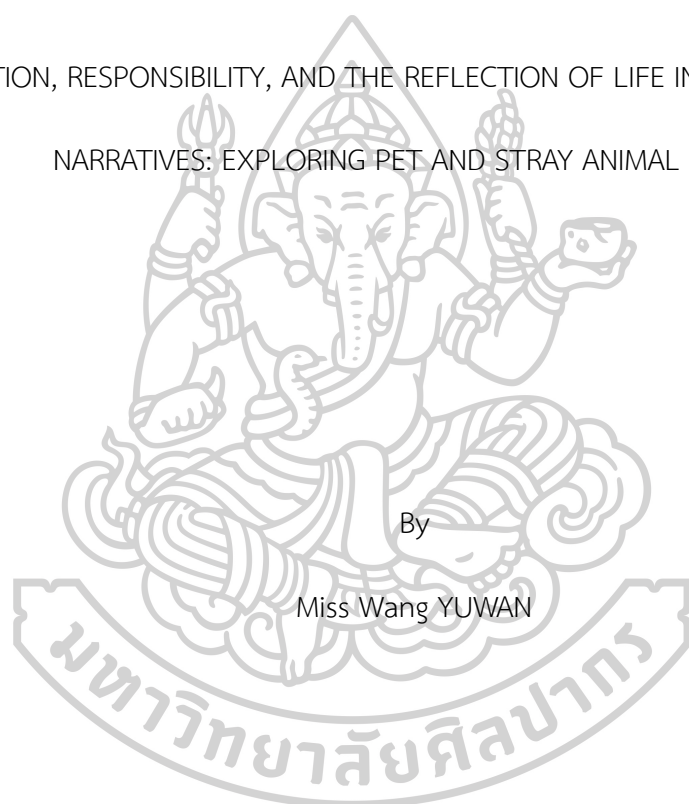




EMOTION, RESPONSIBILITY, AND THE REFLECTION OF LIFE IN PICTURE BOOK

NARRATIVES: EXPLORING PET AND STRAY ANIMAL ISSUES



A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

for Master of Fine Arts Design Arts (International Program)

Silpakorn University

Academic Year 2024

Copyright of Silpakorn University



โดย

MissWang Yuwan

มหาวิทยาลัยศิลปากร

วิทยานิพนธ์นี้เป็นส่วนหนึ่งของการศึกษาตามหลักสูตรศิลปมหาบัณฑิต

ศิลปะการออกแบบ แผน ก แบบ ก2 (หลักสูตรนานาชาติ)

มหาวิทยาลัยศิลปากร

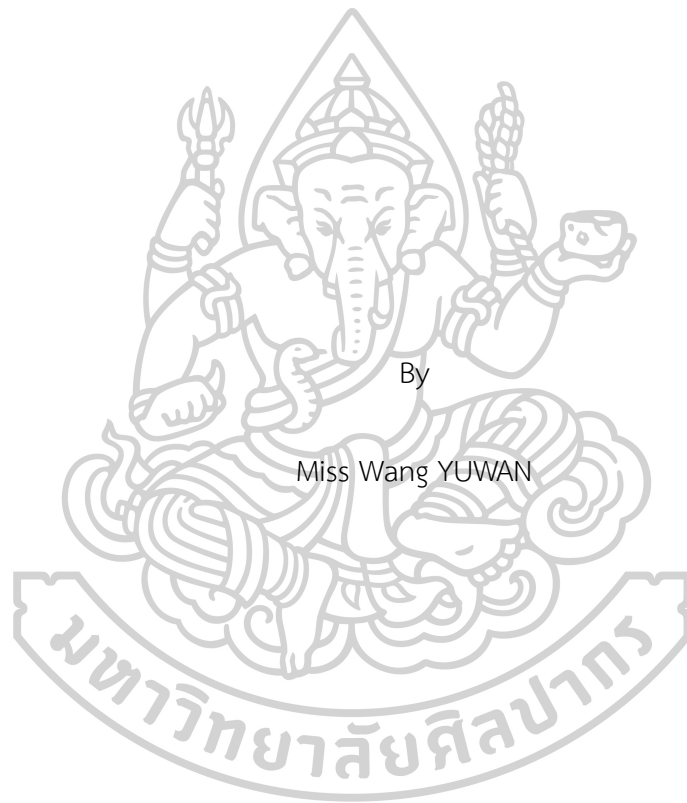
ปีการศึกษา 2567

ลิขสิทธิ์ของมหาวิทยาลัยศิลปากร



EMOTION, RESPONSIBILITY, AND THE REFLECTION OF LIFE IN PICTURE BOOK

NARRATIVES: EXPLORING PET AND STRAY ANIMAL ISSUES



A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

for Master of Fine Arts Design Arts (International Program)

Academic Year 2024

Copyright of Silpakorn University

Title EMOTION, RESPONSIBILITY, AND THE REFLECTION OF LIFE IN
PICTURE BOOK NARRATIVES: EXPLORING PET AND STRAY ANIMAL
ISSUES

By Miss Wang YUWAN

Field of Study Design Arts (International Program)

Advisor Assistant Professor Dr. Veerawat Sirivesmas, Ph.D.

Co advisor Associate Professor Dr. Pairoj Jamuni, Ed.D

Faculty of Decorative Arts, Silpakorn University in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Master of Fine Arts

.....Dean of Faculty of
(Associate Professor Arwin Intrungsi) Decorative Arts

Approved by

.....Chair person

(Professor Dr. Eakachat Joneurairatana, Ph.D.)

.....Advisor

(Assistant Professor Dr. Veerawat Sirivesmas, Ph.D.)

.....Co advisor

(Associate Professor Dr. Pairoj Jamuni, Ed.D)

.....External Examiner

(Professor Dr. Suppakorn Disatapundhu, Ph.D.)



670420001 : Major Design Arts (International Program)

Keyword : Picture Books, Emotional Expression, Social Responsibility, Pet, Stray
Animals, Storytelling

Miss Wang YUWAN : EMOTION, RESPONSIBILITY, AND THE REFLECTION OF
LIFE IN PICTURE BOOK NARRATIVES: EXPLORING PET AND STRAY ANIMAL ISSUES Thesis

advisor : Assistant Professor Dr. Veerawat Sirivesmas, Ph.D.

This research explores the narrative potential and social impact of picture books as a medium for addressing pet and stray animal issues, with a focus on themes of emotion, responsibility, and reflections on life. While traditionally viewed as children's literature, picture books have evolved into a versatile storytelling form capable of conveying complex emotional and ethical narratives to broader audiences. Through a multidisciplinary methodology encompassing literature review, case analysis, visual storytelling, and character design, this study investigates how picture books can foster empathy, promote responsible pet ownership, and raise awareness about animal welfare.

The research framework integrates narrative theory, ethical literary criticism, and multimodal discourse analysis to examine the emotional and social dimensions embedded in selected picture books. Furthermore, this study presents original visual and narrative prototypes, culminating in the creation of a picture book that serves as both an artistic expression and an educational tool. The findings contribute to

academic discourse on children's literature, while also offering practical insights for educators, illustrators, and advocates seeking to bridge the gap between storytelling, education, and social responsibility.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The completion of this thesis and graduation project would not have been possible without the support and guidance of many individuals. As I write these words, my heart is filled with gratitude for everyone who has accompanied me along this journey.

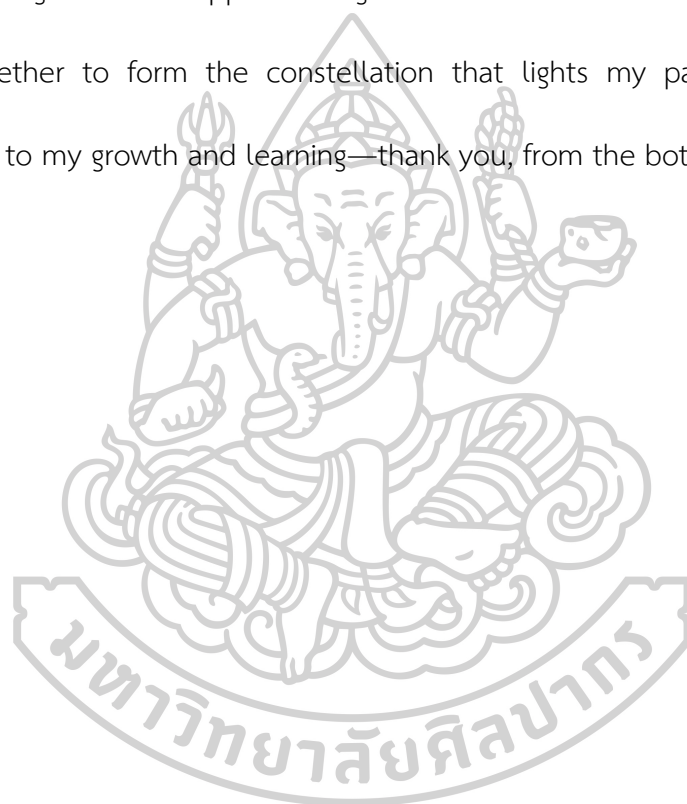
First, I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to Claire, who accompanied me throughout the thesis process. Her presence provided not only intellectual clarity but also emotional reassurance during moments of pressure and doubt. With steady insight and quiet encouragement, she helped guide me through the most challenging parts of the research. She has been a gentle yet consistent force throughout my academic journey.

Secondly, I am sincerely grateful to all professors who supported me with care and dedication. From offering inspiring ideas during the development of my graduation project to providing detailed feedback and revisions throughout the thesis writing process, your guidance has been invaluable. Your ability to nurture both creative vision and academic precision has helped me elevate this project into something both meaningful and complete.

Finally, I would like to express my deep appreciation to Silpakorn University for providing an open and supportive platform that allowed me to grow both

intellectually and artistically. I am also thankful for the freedom and inclusiveness of Thailand, which gave me the space to express my emotions, ideas, and stories through a cross-cultural lens. This experience has profoundly shaped my understanding of art, identity, and life.

Each gesture of support and guidance has been like a star in the night sky, coming together to form the constellation that lights my path. To all who have contributed to my growth and learning—thank you, from the bottom of my heart.



Wang YUWAN

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ABSTRACT	D
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	F
TABLE OF CONTENTS	H
LIST OF TABLES	L
LIST OF FIGURES	M
CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 Significance of Research.....	1
1.1.1 The versatility and social impact of picture books.....	1
1.1.2 Current Significance of Pet and Stray Animal Problems.....	1
1.1.3 Academic and Social Value of the Topic.....	1
1.2 Statement of the Problem	2
1.3 Objectives of the Research.....	4
1.4 Scope of the Research	4
1.5 Research Framework.....	6
1.6 Conceptual Research.....	7

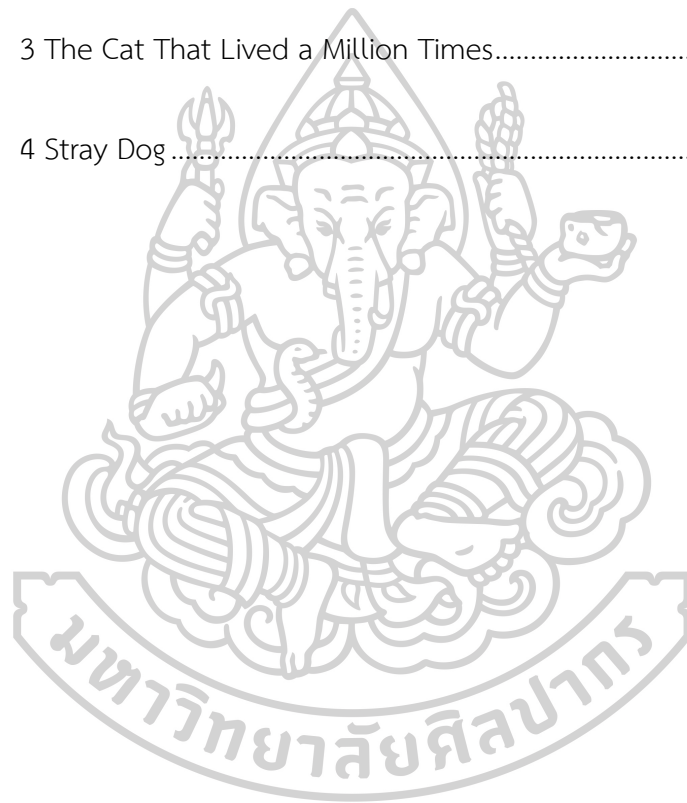
1.7 Research Methodology.....	8
1.8 Limitation of the Research.....	9
1.9 Research Output.....	9
1.10 Definition of Terms.....	10
1.11 RQ RO RM ROP.....	12
CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW.....	13
2.1 The Origin and Development of Picture Books.....	13
2.1.1 The Origin and Cultural Background of Picture Books.....	13
2.1.2 Trends and Innovations in Picture Book Design.....	18
2.1.3 The literary and educational value of picture books.....	20
2.2 Theoretical Studies on Picture Book Design.....	20
2.2.1 Multimodal Narratives and Visual Storytelling in Picture Books.....	20
2.2.2 The Emotional and Symbolic Role of Colors in Picture Books.....	22
2.2.3 Visual Strategies of Character Design in Picture Books.....	24
2.3 Social Significance of Pet and Stray Animal Narratives in Picture Books.....	26
2.3.1 The Social Evolution of Human-Animal Relationships.....	26
2.3.2 The Emotional Importance of Pets as Companions.....	26
2.3.3 The Representation of Stray Animal and Ethical Dilemmas.....	27

2.4 Case Studies.....	28
2.4.1 Emotional Expression and Empathy Building in Picture Books.....	28
2.4.2 Life Themes and Reflections on Responsibility in Picture Book Creation	31
2.4.3 The Role of Picture Books in Advocating for animal Welfare and Social Awareness	34
CHAPTER 3 DESIGN PROCESS/RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.....	37
3.1 Research Methodology.....	37
3.2 Classification Types of Research.....	38
3.3 Platforms of Art and Design Research.....	41
3.4 Methodology	42
3.5 Examples for Design Process.....	44
CHAPTER 4 DESIGN DEVELOPMENT	58
4.1 Outputs for Design Development: Art Results.....	58
4.2 Examples for Design Development:.....	59
CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSION.....	80
REFERENCES	81
VITA.....	84



LIST OF TABLES

	Page
Table 1 The Relationship Between Research	12
Table 2 I' ll Always Love You.....	30
Table 3 The Cat That Lived a Million Times.....	33
Table 4 Stray Dog.....	36



LIST OF FIGURES

	Page
Figure 1 Scope of the Research.....	4
Figure 2 Research Framework.....	6
Figure 3 Conceptual Research.....	7
Figure 4 Research Methodology.....	8
Figure 5 The Visible World.....	14
Figure 6 Caldecott's Collection of Pictures & Songs.....	15
Figure 7 Caldecott's Collection of Pictures & Songs.....	15
Figure 8 Caldecott Medal.....	16
Figure 9 Illustration by Randolph Caldecott (1878).....	16
Figure 10 The Tale of Peter Rabbit.....	17
Figure 11 The Tale of Peter Rabbit.....	17
Figure 12 All of my world is you.....	19
Figure 13 Book of Asmodeus.....	19
Figure 14 The Heart and the Bottle.....	23
Figure 15 Mr. Tiger Goes Wild.....	25

Figure	16 The Tale of Peter Rabbit.....	25
Figure	17 Research Methodology.....	38
Figure	18 Character design sketch.....	45
Figure	19 Character costume and dynamic expression design.....	46
Figure	20 Comics Story Board.....	46
Figure	21 The comic "Thai Taste Battle" is about the story of Thai street food	47
Figure	22 Comic Design Exhibition.....	48
Figure	23 Reader interaction and feedback.....	48
Figure	24 Community building renovation.....	49
Figure	25 Residents of the community.....	51
Figure	26 Community Residents Animal Anthropomorphic Design.....	51
Figure	27 Community changes over time,.....	52
Figure	28 Community comic stories and Mid-Autumn Festival.....	53
Figure	29 Lantern structure design process.....	54
Figure	30 Chinese scroll pattern.....	54
Figure	31 Lantern border and texture design.....	55
Figure	32 Lantern installation and layout.....	56

Figure	33 Lantern Lighting Atmosphere Application Test	56
Figure	34 Community Comic Lantern Art Installation.....	57
Figure	35 The First Character Design	59
Figure	36 First Edition Storyboard	59
Figure	37 Second Edition Storyboard.....	60
Figure	38 Character design of the protagonist "Dou Zi".....	61
Figure	39 Character design of the supporting character "Fu Gui"	61
Figure	40 Character design of the supporting character "Rose"	61
Figure	41 Character design experiment of Bichon "Dou Zi"	62
Figure	42 Picture book character design finalization and color experiment.....	62
Figure	43 The final draft of the storyboard.....	64
Figure	44 First poster design: About the characters and story	64
Figure	45 The first exhibition experiment.....	65
Figure	46 Exhibition layout and decoration	66
Figure	47 Spine and cover design	67
Figure	48 Ring lining design.....	67
Figure	49 Title page design.....	67

Figure 50 Picture book design: Color matching and texture addition for
"Forget-me-not Rainbow Dream" 76

Figure 51 Picture book printing and binding 77

Figure 52 Exhibition layout and decorative painting pasting..... 78

Figure 53 Product design and production 79



CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Significance of Research

1.1.1 The versatility and social impact of picture books

Picture books are timeless narrative media with unique value and function. Today, picture books are no longer just children's literature, but also have the additional function of exploring meaning and expressing emotions through creative forms. Picture books not only inspire thinking, but are also a powerful medium to promote solutions to social problems. The versatility and creative potential of picture books make them a powerful educational tool that can reach readers of all ages and inspire them to reflect and act.

1.1.2 Current Significance of Pet and Stray Animal Problems

From personal observation and reflection, the growth of pet culture not only reflects the change in lifestyle, but also highlights the increasing human need for emotional connection and companionship in modern society. At the same time, the social status of stray animals has gradually become an important issue, promoting public awareness and promoting deeper consideration and practice of social responsibility and animal rights.

1.1.3 Academic and Social Value of the Topic

The themes of emotion, responsibility, and reflection in the picture book stories, focusing on the issues of pets and stray animals, have great academic and social

value. Academically, the picture book explores how picture books serve as a medium to explore important issues of life and relationships, offering a creative approach to studying the emotional bond between humans and animals. Socially, the picture book emphasizes the importance of promoting empathy and social responsibility, using storytelling to increase awareness about the welfare of pets and stray animals.

By addressing these issues, the topic encourages readers to reflect on their own responsibilities toward animals, nurturing a sense of care and compassion. It also bridges the gap between art, education, and advocacy, offering an innovative way to inspire action and deepen the connection between humans and the natural world.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

While picture books are increasingly recognized as a powerful medium for storytelling and education, significant content gaps remain, particularly when it comes to addressing complex social issues such as pet welfare and stray animal rights. Traditional picture books have focused primarily on entertainment or moral education for young children, often simplifying complex emotional and ethical issues (Sipe, 2007). As media continues to evolve to appeal to a wider audience, including teens and adults, there is a pressing need for more complex stories that critically examine issues of emotion, responsibility, and human-animal relationships. Recent research highlights the importance of integrating social responsibility and ethical

reflection into children's literature to foster deeper empathy and critical thinking (Kümmerling-Meibauer, 2018).

Many contemporary picture books that address the issue of pets and stray animals often fail to provide a comprehensive perspective. While some stories highlight the emotional bond between humans and animals, few critically examine the underlying causes of pet abandonment, the realities that stray animals face, or the ethical responsibilities humans have towards these animals. This lack of depth limits the ability of picture books to raise public awareness, promote empathy, and facilitate meaningful social change.

Furthermore, these works often struggle to balance artistic expression with advocacy. Some stories are too sensitive, obscuring the complexities of real-life situations, while others have an overly didactic tone that can inhibit emotional engagement. Without engaging and engaging storytelling, picture books risk failing to inspire deeper reflection or motivate readers to take action.

This study aims to explore how picture books can more effectively integrate emotional depth, a sense of responsibility, and reflection on life to meaningfully engage with the issue of pets and stray animals. The study aims to analyze storytelling strategies, visual formats, and social impact to bridge the gap between literature, education, and advocacy, providing new insights into how visual storytelling can cultivate empathy, raise awareness, and promote responsible attitudes towards animal welfare.

1.3 Objectives of the Research

1. Explore the narrative strategies of picture books and analyze how the combination of text and images helps readers identify the creator's thoughts and emotions.
2. Study the design and shaping of animal characters in picture books and explore their role in emotional expression.
3. Analyze the theme and narrative of picture books to reveal how they convey the meaning of life and guide readers to reflect on social responsibility.

1.4 Scope of the Research

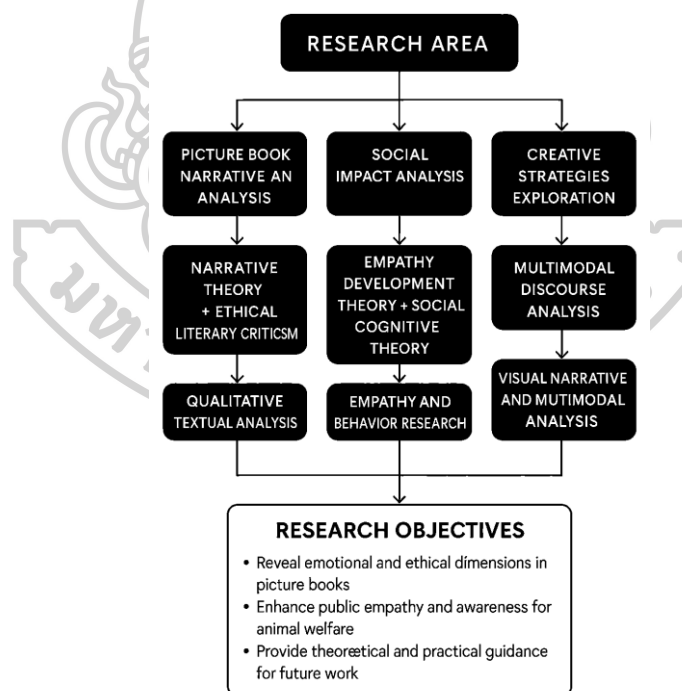
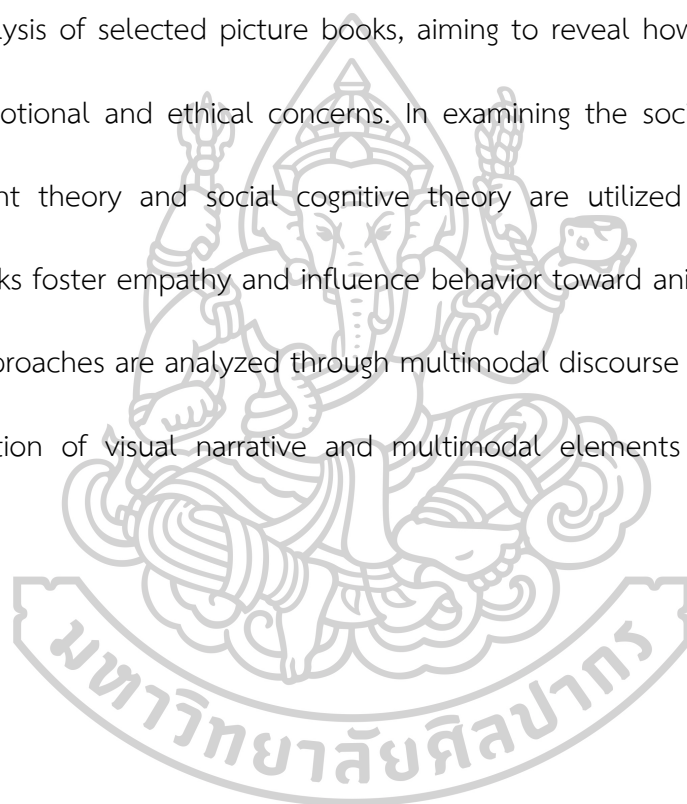


Figure 1 Scope of the Research

This research adopts a multi-dimensional analytical framework to explore how picture books convey messages related to pet welfare and social responsibility. The study is structured across three major scopes: picture book narrative analysis, social impact analysis, and creative strategies exploration. Under the narrative analysis, the research applies narrative theory and ethical literary criticism to perform qualitative textual analysis of selected picture books, aiming to reveal how narrative strategies address emotional and ethical concerns. In examining the social impact, empathy development theory and social cognitive theory are utilized to investigate how picture books foster empathy and influence behavior toward animal welfare. Finally, creative approaches are analyzed through multimodal discourse analysis, focusing on the integration of visual narrative and multimodal elements in delivering social messages.



1.5 Research Framework

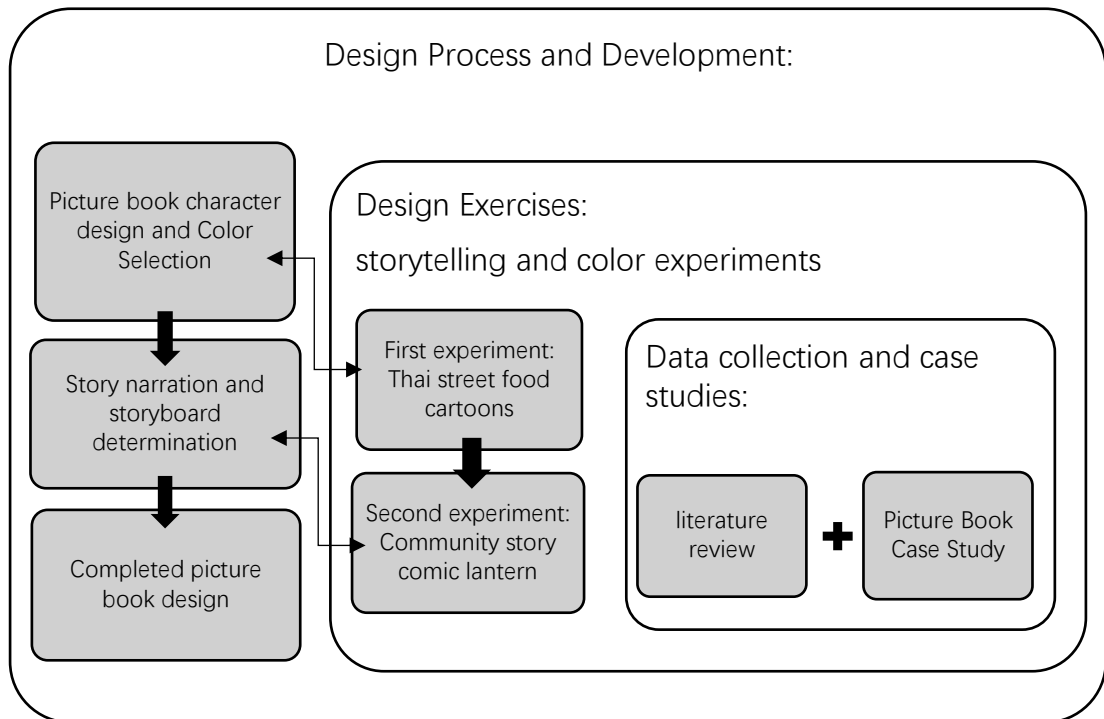
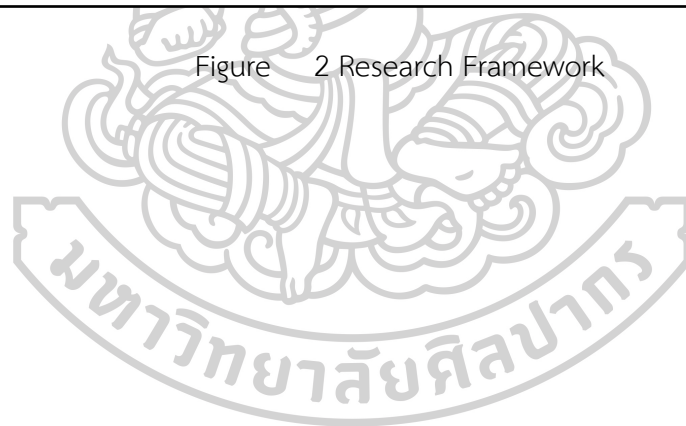


Figure 2 Research Framework



1.6 Conceptual Research

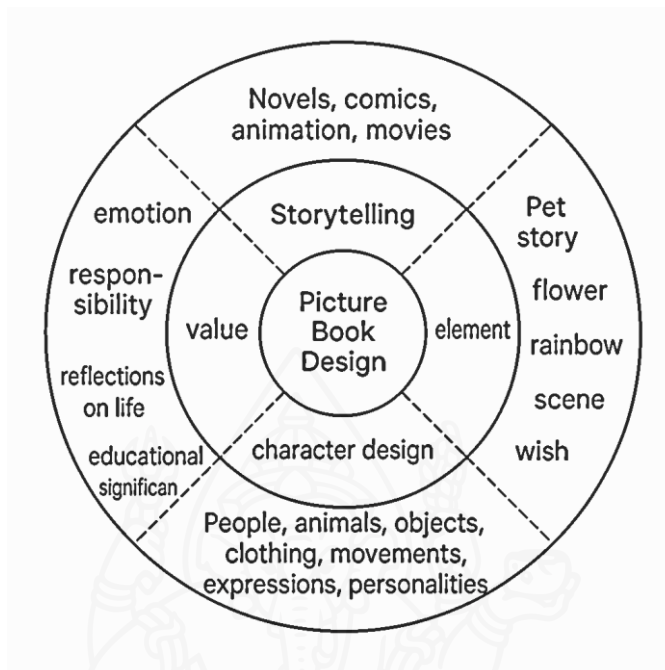


Figure 3 Conceptual Research

This study categorizes and analyzes the keywords within four conceptual dimensions: Storytelling, Elements, Character Design, and Value. The storytelling dimension encompasses narrative mediums such as novels, comics, animations, movies, and dramas. The elements dimension includes animals, stray animals, emotions, floral imagery, wishes, and dreams, which collectively construct the narrative atmosphere and thematic expression. Character design focuses on enriching the narrative by depicting the clothing, movements, expressions, and personalities of humans, animals, and objects. The value dimension emphasizes responsibility, significance, and social reflection, highlighting the profound emotional and societal impacts of the story. By constructing such a multi-layered analytical framework, this

study aims to better understand how picture books and other narrative forms convey emotions, stimulate reflection, and ultimately realize educational and social value.

1.7 Research Methodology

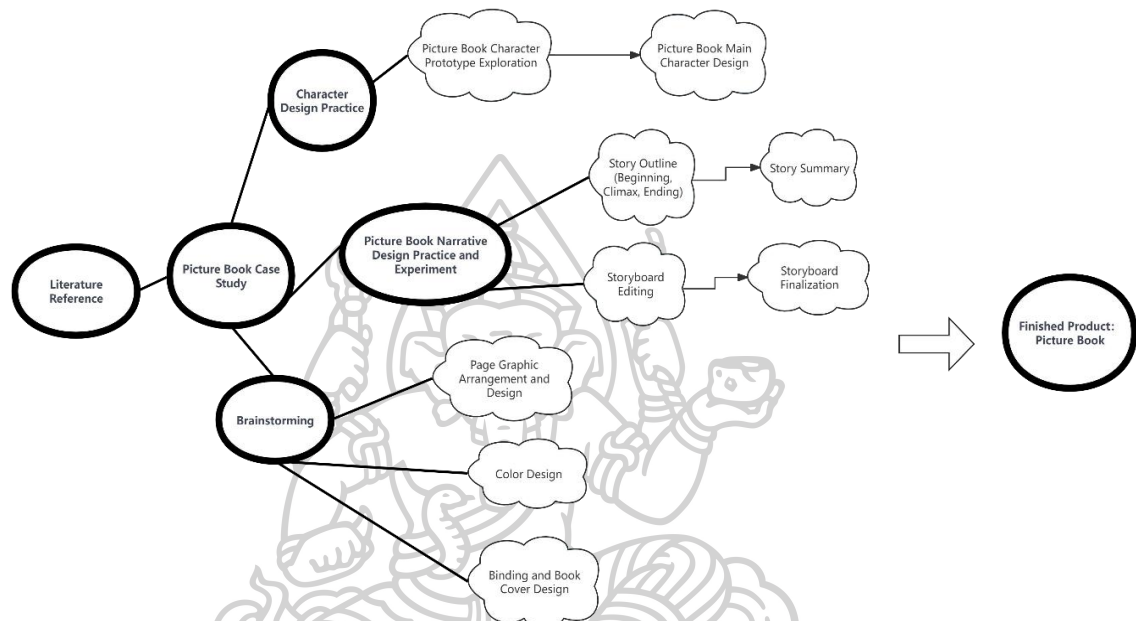


Figure 4 Research Methodology

This study adopts a multi-method approach to enhance the scientific and practical value of picture book creation. First, literature review and case analysis are conducted to clarify the research direction on themes such as stray animals, character design, and visual storytelling. Then, in the stages of character and narrative design, story structure, color psychology, and storyboard optimization are applied to strengthen emotional expression and visual appeal. Finally, brainstorming is used to refine layout, color schemes, and cover design, ensuring the overall aesthetic quality and communicative effectiveness of the work.

1.8 Limitation of the Research

1. Cultural Context Differences – Different cultures have varying perceptions and attitudes toward pet ownership and stray animal issues. This study may primarily analyze picture books within specific cultural contexts, making the findings less universally applicable.

2. Constraints in Audience Research – While this study explores the impact of picture books on readers of different age groups, due to time and resource limitations, it may not include extensive field studies or large-scale audience feedback collection, which could affect the accuracy of evaluating the social impact of picture books.

3. Connection Between Picture Books and Real-World Actions – Although this study examines the role of picture books in social advocacy, it cannot directly measure their impact on real-world actions, such as increased pet adoption rates or policy changes in animal protection. The study will rely on theoretical analysis and case studies to infer the potential effects.

1.9 Research Output

1. This study aims to deepen the understanding of pet and stray animal issues through the medium of picture books. By conducting a literature review and analyzing existing picture book cases, this research will help uncover the emotional and social values embedded in such narratives.

2. Based on in-depth analysis, the study will create character prototypes, color schemes, and sample illustrations, providing new conceptual approaches to visual storytelling in picture books. These design elements will inspire illustrators, writers, and educators interested in exploring themes related to pets and stray animals.

3. The study will culminate with a complete picture book prototype that integrates storytelling techniques, character development, and emotional expression, focusing on themes of responsibility, compassion, and reflection on life. The picture book will serve as a valuable reference for the educational and arts communities, stimulating broader discussions about the relationship between humans and animals.

1.10 Definition of Terms

1. Reflection of Life

Reflecting on life involves considering and interpreting the meaning of life through various forms of expression such as literature, art, and storytelling, including the value of life for pets and strays, the emotional bonds formed, and the social impact of these animals. In the context of a picture book, the book emphasizes the ways in which stories express the relationship between humans and animals, exploring the preciousness of life, the sense of responsibility, and concern for animal welfare.

2. Narratives

Narratives are structured expressions of events, experiences, or concepts conveyed through spoken, written, or visual storytelling. They serve as a medium for

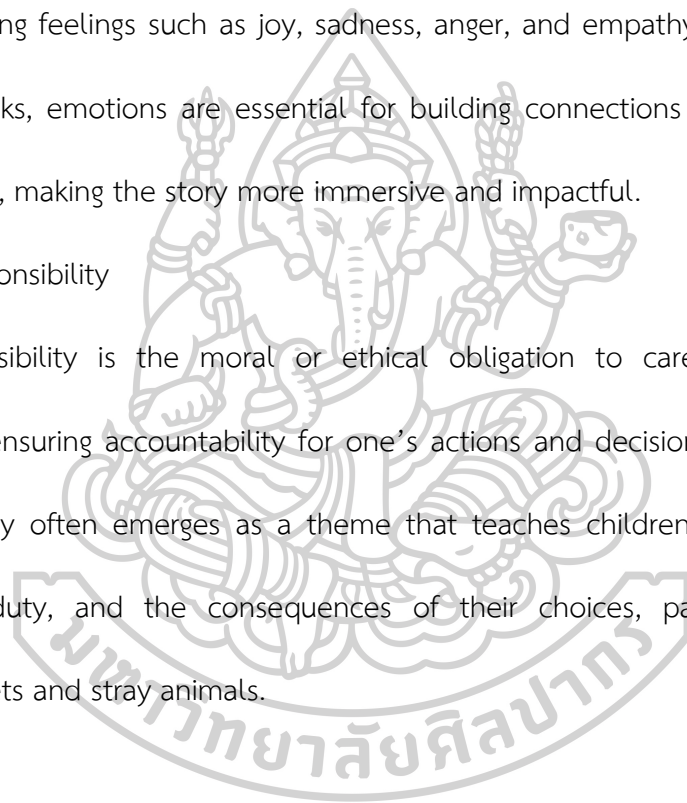
communication, allowing the transmission of knowledge, emotions, and cultural values. In picture books, narratives play a crucial role in shaping the storyline, character development, and thematic depth.

3. Emotion

Emotion refers to a complex psychological and physiological response to stimuli, encompassing feelings such as joy, sadness, anger, and empathy. In storytelling and picture books, emotions are essential for building connections between characters and readers, making the story more immersive and impactful.

4. Responsibility

Responsibility is the moral or ethical obligation to care for something or someone, ensuring accountability for one's actions and decisions. In picture books, responsibility often emerges as a theme that teaches children and readers about empathy, duty, and the consequences of their choices, particularly in stories involving pets and stray animals.



1.11 RQ RO RM ROP

RESEARCH QUESTIONS	RESEARCH OBJECTIVES	RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	RESEARCH OUTPUTS
How do picture books convey emotion, responsibility, and reflections on life through pet and stray animal narratives?	Analyze how picture books express human-animal emotional bonds, ethical dilemmas, and social responsibility.	Literature review of existing picture books addressing pet and stray animal issues.	Case studies of picture books exploring pet and stray animal themes.
How can visual storytelling enhance empathy and awareness of pet and stray animal issues in picture books?	Explore how visual elements, character design, and color schemes influence readers' emotional engagement and empathy.	Character and scene analysis, color psychology in picture books, and visual storytelling techniques.	Character prototypes, color scheme designs, and sample illustrations.
How can picture books educate readers on responsible pet ownership and animal welfare while maintaining narrative depth?	Investigate the educational value of picture books in fostering social awareness and ethical reflections. Develop an original picture book addressing these themes.	Storyboarding, character development, and picture book creation.	A complete picture book prototype exploring emotion, responsibility, and reflections on life through pet and stray animal issues.

Table 1 The Relationship Between Research

CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 The Origin and Development of Picture Books

2.1.1 The Origin and Cultural Background of Picture Books

Before the 17th century, human society had not yet developed a clear concept of “childhood.” Therefore, although illustrated books have a history that dates back to earlier times, picture books specifically created for children did not emerge until 1658. This historic shift is marked by the publication of *Orbis Pictus* (The Visible World), a work by Czech educator John Amos Comenius, which is widely considered the first children’s picture book. Although it is still essentially a textbook, *Orbis Pictus* represents a significant shift in educational philosophy, as it respects the individuality of children and cleverly utilizes their psychological characteristics. Through 150 short illustrated chapters, the book systematically introduces various aspects of the world. Its content aligns with children’s cognitive interests, which is why it quickly became popular in Europe. (Leprij, 2020)



Figure 5 The Visible World

Source: (John Amos Comenius, 1658)

With the development of printing technology, picture books flourished in the 19th century. During this process, British illustrator Randolph Caldecott played an important role and is often regarded as the “father of modern picture books.” Caldecott created and illustrated many popular children’s storybooks, such as The Complete Collection of Pictures and Songs by Randolph Caldecott, Brace bridge Hall, and Aesop’s Fables with Modern Instances.

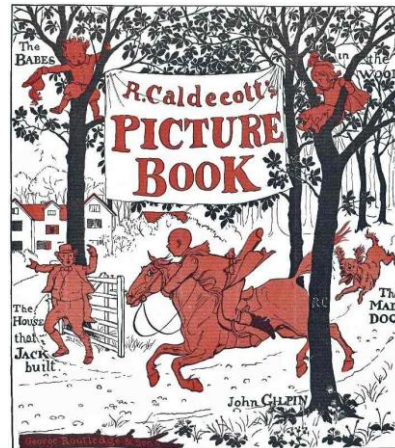


Figure 6 Caldecott's Collection of Pictures & Songs

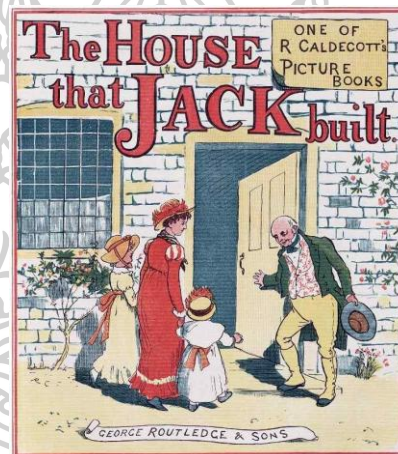


Figure 7 Caldecott's Collection of Pictures & Songs

To honor this outstanding illustrator, the Caldecott Medal was established, which has become one of the most prestigious awards for children's picture books worldwide. For example, the illustration from Caldecott's *The Diverting History of John Gilpin* (1878) became the basis for the design on the front of the Caldecott Medal.



Figure 8 Caldecott Medal

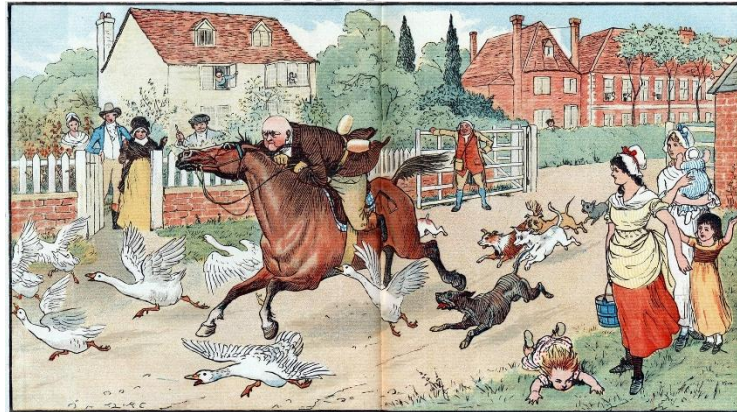


Figure 9 Illustration by Randolph Caldecott (1878)

of *The Diverting History of John Gilpin*

In the 20th century, picture books matured as an art form. The Peter Rabbit series by British writer and illustrator Beatrix Potter is widely regarded as the true beginning of modern picture books. The series is known for its rich depictions of the British countryside, with a simple style and soft watercolor shading. Potter was the first to combine children's everyday experiences with fantasy, creating a unique, dreamlike visual world.

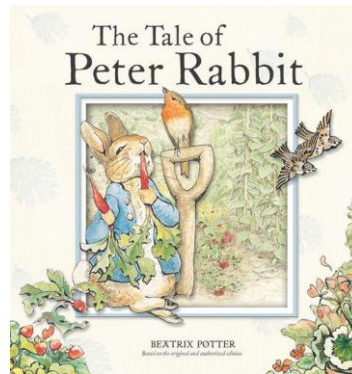


Figure 10 The Tale of Peter Rabbit



Figure 11 The Tale of Peter Rabbit

Source: (Beatrix Potter)

In the 1950s, picture books spread from Europe to Asia, first becoming popular in Japan and later entering China in the early 21st century. During the May Fourth New Culture Movement, Zhou Zuoren proposed the idea of “discovering children,” emphasizing that children also need literature and art. In 1922, the Children’s World magazine was published by Commercial Press, and its “Picture Story” column can be seen as the beginning of picture books in China. In 1931, the Children’s Magazine was founded, and it published a special issue on “Children’s Art,” featuring patterns and cartoons by artists such as Feng Jicai, laying the foundation for the development of

Chinese picture books. These developments marked the transition of picture books from educational tools to independent art forms, gaining global recognition.

Thus, over time, picture books have gradually evolved into not only tools for children's education but also an art form that has influenced cultural and artistic development worldwide.

2.1.2 Trends and Innovations in Picture Book Design

With the development of the times, digital picture books have emerged and gradually become an important trend in the evolution of picture books. Digital picture books significantly enhance reader engagement by incorporating interactive features. For instance, research demonstrates how touchscreens and animations improve the narrative experience for both children and adult readers, allowing them to engage more deeply with the story. The interactive design in apps and eBooks not only permits personalized reading experiences but also fosters active participation, which traditional print books cannot achieve (Nikolajeva & Scott, 2013).

With the development of digital media technology and the deep integration of science and education, innovation in the picture book industry has been further promoted. AR technology has emerged as an innovative presentation method for picture books. Compared with traditional picture books, these interactive versions offer enhanced visual expressiveness and greater fun, thereby broadening the research perspective in the field of picture books and improving the quality and efficiency of the market (柴阳丽 et al., 2022).

Modern Publishing House released the picture book *My World is All You* by Taiwanese picture book artist Jimmy in July 2016, and a virtual reality version was launched in December 2017. In this VR version, when children push aside the black balloon in front of them with their hand, they enter a room alongside a little girl. The experience is divided into four distinct virtual spaces, where they meet different characters from Jimmy's picture book and experience various lives (李萌, 2019).



Figure 12 All of my world is you

Source: (Jimmy, 2016)

Realic's 2021 AR picture book, *Book of Asmodeus*, uniquely blends a physical book with AR elements. By integrating voice recognition, puzzles, and horror, it lets readers shape the narrative while immersing them in a horror-film-like atmosphere where voice commands summon demons.

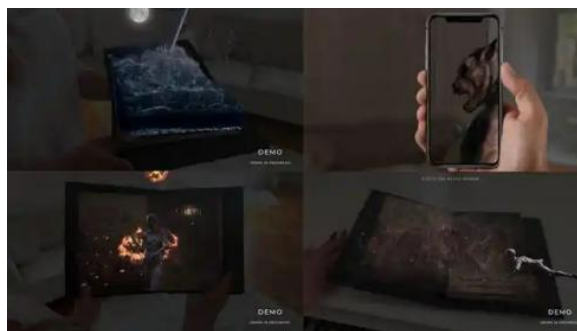


Figure 13 Book of Asmodeus

Source: (Realic,2021)

2.1.3 The literary and educational value of picture books

Children's literature is an important educational tool in transmitting basic information such as conceptions, rules and values of the society to children (Bradford et al., 2008).

Picture books, as a form of a combination of both verbal and visual arts, create unlimited possibilities for word and image interaction (Nikolajeva & Scott, 2013).

MacIntyre noted, Picture books are a richly constructed combination of language and semiotics which provide readers with varied understandings and multiple interpretations. The values from the selected Picture books were investigated as seeking personal spaces, connectedness, and the existence of peacefulness, happiness and affluence (MacIntyre, 2011).

2.2 Theoretical Studies on Picture Book Design

2.2.1 Multimodal Narratives and Visual Storytelling in Picture Books

1. Theoretical Foundation of Visual Narrative Grammar in Multimodal Discourse Analysis

Visual narrative grammar has its roots in multimodal discourse analysis, which draws on the theory of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) developed by the British scholar Halliday. Multimodal discourse analysis extends beyond traditional linguistics by emphasizing that meaning-making involves the interaction of a variety of semiotic resources, of which language is just one of many (张德禄, 2009).

Clare Painter uses a multimodal discourse analysis framework to study visual grammar through three different perspectives:

(1) Interpersonal Meaning – focuses on exploring the social relationships between the participants in the image (character roles), the communicative intentions expressed by the illustrator, and the level of engagement the viewer has with the image (the relationship between the reader and the character).

(2) Representational Meaning – focuses on the relationships between different types of images or between the various elements within a single image.

(3) Composing Visual Space – examines the spatial interaction between images and text, the organization of information, and the arrangement of images on the page.

These three aspects comprehensively cover all visual elements involved in picture books. The unique visual semiotic language presented in picture books effectively conveys emotions and helps readers understand the story (Painter et al., 2013).

2. The Role of Perspective and Scene Transitions in Visual Narratives

The focus system includes various visual languages to express the character's perspective, where gaze serves as an essential clue. According to Painter's theory, the perspective in an image can determine whether the protagonist establishes visual contact with the reader. A subjective perspective can create an interactive

relationship between the image and the reader, allowing the reader to participate in the story and evoke emotional resonance (Painter et al., 2013).

Scene transitions are also crucial in visual narratives. Among nine picture books analyzed, 103 images employ newly redrawn scenes to depict story progression. Even when a story takes place in a fixed setting, the visual effect can be enriched by changing the character's perspective or transitioning between indoor and outdoor scenes.

3. Story Progression and the Use of Visual Elements

The development of a story is primarily driven by the character's actions or by depicting their psychological activities and sensory perceptions. Props and accessories in the images also serve as effective tools for dynamic storytelling, as their changes can indicate story progression.

In summary, when representing story development through representational meaning, traditional artistic techniques in original picture books often rely on a single visual narrative approach, leading to repetition. Painter's visual narrative framework can be used to enhance the visual language for depicting story progression (Painter et al., 2013).

2.2.2 The Emotional and Symbolic Role of Colors in Picture Books

The atmosphere system in visual storytelling plays a pivotal role in guiding readers' emotional engagement, with color serving as a primary visual tool. Painter emphasize that the principles of brightness and saturation significantly shape

emotional tone (Painter et al., 2013). High-brightness and high-saturation hues often evoke a sense of energy, enthusiasm, and vitality, which are especially effective in depicting joyous or dynamic scenes. Conversely, low-brightness and low-saturation colors tend to create subdued, melancholic, or reflective atmospheres. These color strategies function as emotional cues, prompting psychological resonance and supporting the reader's immersion in the story world.

A notable example is *The Heart and the Bottle* by Oliver Jeffers, which uses muted, desaturated tones to mirror the protagonist's grief after loss. As the character isolates emotionally, the color palette shifts to grays and browns, visually translating emotional numbness (Jeffers, 2010). When healing begins, more vibrant hues reappear, illustrating the recovery of emotional connection. This dynamic use of color directly maps the character's emotional journey, reinforcing Painter et al.'s framework on how visual atmospheres regulate affective engagement.



Figure 14 *The Heart and the Bottle*

Source: (Oliver Jeffers, 2010)

2.2.3 Visual Strategies of Character Design in Picture Books

In addition to the use of color in the environment, character design also incorporates the use of color to add depth to the story. The deliberate use of specific colors on characters, such as warm tones to convey kindness or cool tones to convey indifference, helps readers perceive their personalities and emotional states. According to Painter, Martin, and Unsworth, such visual storytelling techniques not only intensify or soften the emotional impact of characters, but also help guide readers through the complex emotional dynamics within a story. The interplay between characters' bodies, gestures, and colors thus becomes a key element in creating emotionally resonant and richly symbolic characters (Painter et al., 2013).

For example, in *Mr. Tiger Goes Wild* by Peter Brown, the titular character begins the story dressed in dark, restrictive clothing that symbolizes conformity (Brown, 2014). As he yearns for freedom, he removes his clothing and returns to nature, with the surrounding colors changing from soft greys to dark greens and bright oranges. The changes in both his attire and his environment emphasize his emotional release. Similarly, Beatrix Potter's *The Tale of Peter Rabbit* features Peter in a distinctive blue jacket, which sets him apart from the other rabbits and symbolizes his adventurous and mischievous nature. His expressive gestures, such as crouching, running, and hiding, as well as his costume and facial expressions, complete the character and make him emotionally relatable (Potter, 1990).

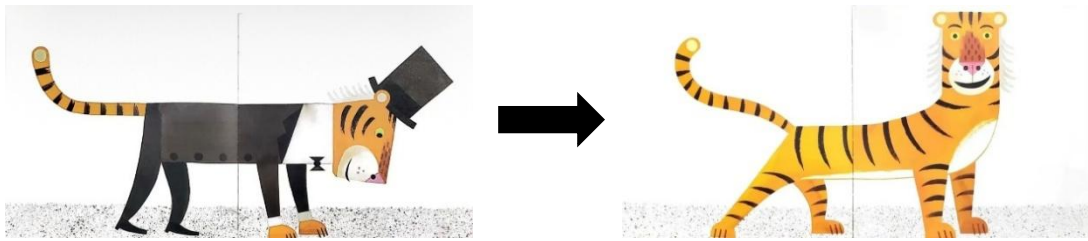


Figure 15 Mr. Tiger Goes Wild

Source: (Peter Brown,2014)

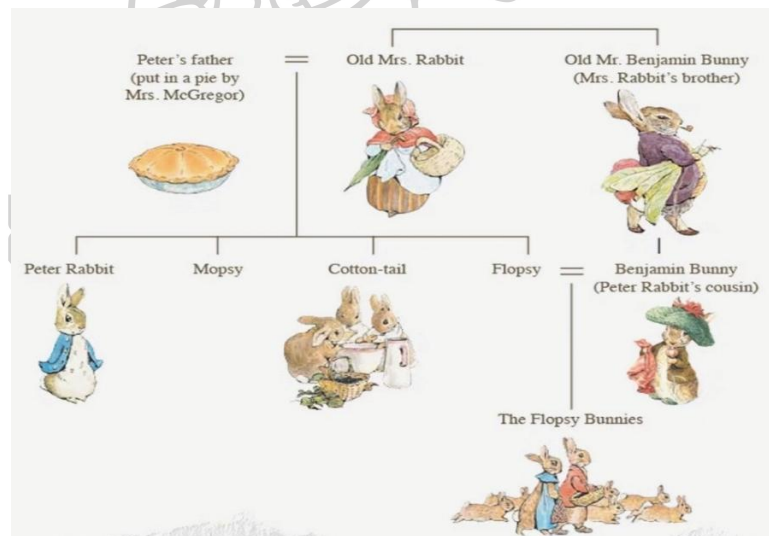


Figure 16 The Tale of Peter Rabbit

Source: (Beatrix Potter,1990)

2.3 Social Significance of Pet and Stray Animal Narratives in Picture Books

2.3.1 The Social Evolution of Human-Animal Relationships

The field of animal studies and human-animal relations is rapidly developing, with significant changes in scholarly attitudes. Animals are no longer seen as passive backdrops to human history, but as active historical agents. Early research focused on human perceptions of animals, viewing them as automatized beings, similar to Descartes' automatons. However, this perspective has been abandoned. As Fudge (2006) puts it, scholars are now exploring "the ways in which humans create animals, and in turn, animals are created by humans." This shift has prompted a reassessment of the reciprocal roles between humans and animals in shaping each other's lives.

2.3.2 The Emotional Importance of Pets as Companions

Friedmann's landmark study showed that having a pet is good for heart health. The study also pointed to the importance of social support in people's overall well-being (Friedmann et al., 1980). For example, people who own pets tend to cope better with stress. They have lower resting heart rates and blood pressure, are less reactive to minor stresses, and recover faster after stress (Allen et al., 2001) (Allen et al., 2002).

Recent studies on hormones involved in human-animal bonding indicate that oxytocin levels are highest during close physical interactions, such as those between mothers and infants. Similarly, oxytocin levels increase during positive interactions between humans and dogs. This increase in oxytocin may explain why bonding with

animals lowers cortisol levels and helps people feel more relaxed (Uvnäs-Moberg et al., 2011). The social support provided by animals appears to be significant throughout various stages of life.

2.3.3 The Representation of Stray Animal and Ethical Dilemmas


Stray animals—primarily unclaimed dogs and cats—are now common sights in city parks, university campuses, and residential areas. Their numbers have surged because of abandonment, lost pets, and uncontrolled breeding, creating significant urban-scale social problems.





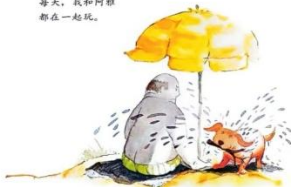

Each year, millions of these animals worldwide face a survival crisis marked by scarce food, water, and medical care. Beyond daily deprivation, they endure traffic accidents, infectious diseases, abuse, severe weather, and fierce competition for limited resources; in some cases, they can even threaten public safety. Morally, the situation is complex: stray animals are sentient beings worthy of compassion, yet unchecked populations can disrupt local ecosystems and city life.

Balancing animal welfare with effective population control has therefore become a pressing challenge. China's Pet Industry Report (2021) estimates at least 53 million stray cats nationwide—a figure that continues to rise—deepening ethical debates around sheltering, adoption, and humane management. Finding solutions that respect animal rights while curbing overpopulation remains an urgent priority for urban governance and animal-protection efforts.

2.4 Case Studies

2.4.1 Emotional Expression and Empathy Building in Picture Books

Title:	"I'll Always Love You"	
Author:	Hans Wilhelm	
Publisher:	Dragonfly Books	
Story Summary:	This heartwarming story follows a boy and his beloved dog, Elfie, who grow up happily together. When Elfie grows up and eventually passes away, the boy is deeply saddened, but finds comfort in remembering the love Elfie gives him every day without regret. This picture book helps children understand the meaning of loss through a sweet tale, emphasizing the importance of showing love and cherishing the good times together (Wilhelm, 2015).	
Themes:	<p>Love and Companionship: The story conveys unconditional love and appreciation for pets.</p> <p>Coping with Loss: It helps children understand the natural cycle of life and teaches them how to remember and accept loss with love.</p> <p>Compassion and Empathy: It showcases the boy's care for Elfie and the emotional depth of grief and remembrance.</p>	
Artistic Analysis:	<p>1. Use of Colors</p> <p>The book's color palette is soft and warm, creating a cozy atmosphere. Scenes depicting Elfie's youth are painted with bright, cheerful colors, whereas those showing her aging and passing use more muted, subdued tones, even incorporating cooler shades. This gradual shift in colors reinforces the emotional depth of the story, subtly guiding readers through the process of loss.</p>	

			
	<p>2.Narrative Style</p>	<p>The first-person narration immerses the reader in the protagonist’s experience, making it easier to empathize with his emotions. The simple, direct language allows children to grasp the theme of losing a pet, while the repeated phrase, “I told Elfie I loved her every day”, reinforces the message of cherishing loved ones.</p>	 <p>这是阿雅的故事，她是世界上最好的狗。</p>  <p>我让阿雅睡在软软的枕头上。每晚在她临睡前，我都要跟她说：“我永远爱你。”我知道她会懂的。</p>
	<p>3.Expression of Emotions</p>	<p>Showing Love Through Actions: The protagonist consistently expresses his love for Elfie while she is still alive, making the story feel genuine rather than focusing solely on grief after her passing.</p>	 <p>每天，我和阿雅都在一起玩。</p> 
		<p>Gradual Emotional Build-Up Through Aging: The depiction of Elfie’s transition from an energetic puppy to an elderly dog, and eventually her passing, helps readers accept the reality of loss while learning to cherish the moments they have.</p>	

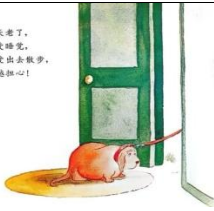









			<p>阿雅一天着了， 她越来越爱睡觉， 越来越不爱出去散步， 我也越来越担心！</p> 
		<p>Delicate Visual Details: The illustrations capture touching moments between Elfie and the boy, such as playing together and resting side by side. These details highlight their deep emotional bond, making the impact of loss more poignant.</p>	 
<p>Conclusion:</p>	<p>I'll Always Love You employs soft, warm color transitions, fluid and delicate linework, and a gently unfolding narrative to create an atmosphere imbued with empathy. The synchronization between visual progression and emotional storytelling enables young readers to comprehend the concept of loss while fostering the ability to express love and gratitude. The book's mastery of tonal balance and visual pacing has directly informed my own choices in constructing a tender and emotionally resonant illustration style.</p>		

Table 2 I'll Always Love You

2.4.2 Life Themes and Reflections on Responsibility in Picture Book Creation

Title:	“The Cat That Lived a Million Times”		
Author:	Yoko Sano		
Publisher:	Kodansha		
Story Summary:	<p>This story follows a cat that has “lived a million times.” Throughout its countless lives, it has been owned by various people—a king, a sailor, a magician, and more—but it never truly loved anyone, nor did it care about others. No matter how many times it died and was reborn, it remained indifferent and proud.</p> <p>One day, the cat is finally free and becomes a wild cat. It meets a gentle white cat who does not admire or flatter it but simply stays by its side. Over time, the cat learns what it means to love and care for another. It spends a lifetime with the white cat and their kittens. When the white cat eventually passes away, the once-proud cat is overwhelmed with sorrow. Unlike before, it does not return to life again—it chooses to stay with its love in death (Simont et al., 2001).</p>		
Themes:	The Meaning of Life and Reflection: The cat only realizes the true meaning of life after experiencing love and companionship.		
	Responsibility and Growth: The transition from arrogance to cherishing others illustrates a journey toward emotional responsibility		
	Death and the Cycle of Life: The book explores the inevitability of death and invites readers to reflect on the value of a meaningful life.		
Narrative & Visual Analysis:	1. Narrative Style – From Indifference to Warmth	<p>In the first half of the story, despite experiencing multiple deaths and rebirths, the cat remains emotionally detached. The repetitive phrase “Cat don’t care whether they live or die.” emphasizes its lack of emotional connection, making its long life feel hollow. However, after</p>	<p>有一回，猫是国王的猫。 猫讨厌什么国王。 国王爱打仗，总是发动战争。打仗时，国王把猫关在漂亮的监牢里，带在身边。 有一天，猫被一支飞来的箭射死了。 正打着仗，国王却抱着猫哭了起来。 国王仗也不打了，回到了王宫，然后，把猫带到了王宫的院子里。</p> 
		<p>有一回，猫是一个孤独老太太的猫。 猫讨厌什么老太太。 老太太每天抱着猫，从小窗户往外看。 猫整天在老太太的腿上睡大觉。 不久，猫老死了。猫死光秃秃的老太太抱着死了的猫，哭了一整天。 老太太把猫埋到了院子的树底下。</p> 	

		<p>meeting the white cat, the tone of the narration shifts, becoming more tender and introspective. The final statement, “The cat never came back to life.” marks a significant emotional transformation, reinforcing the idea that a truly meaningful life is one filled with love.</p>	<p>有一回，猫是一个小女孩的猫。 猫讨厌什么小女孩。 小女孩有时把猫背在背上玩，有时就紧紧地抱着猫睡觉，她哭的时候，还会用猫的后背来擦眼泪。 有一天，猫被小女孩后背的管子勒死了。 小女孩抱着尸体哭得猫都哭了，哭了一整天。然后，她就把猫埋到了院子的树底下。 猫已经不在乎死不死了。</p>  <p>猫再也没有活过来。</p> 
<p>2. Visual Representation –</p>	<p>Emotional Shifts Through Color and Composition</p>	<p>During its previous lives, the illustrations use bright colors, yet the cat’s expression remains indifferent, symbolizing its emotional detachment.</p>	<p>有一回，猫是小偷的猫。 猫讨厌什么小偷。 小偷抱着猫，在漆黑的小巷上，像猫一样悄悄地走来走去。 小偷只偷养狗的人家，趁着狗冲着猫叫的时候，小偷就开保险箱。 一天，猫被狗咬死了。 小偷抱着猫和偷来的钻石，在漆黑的小巷上边走边哭。然后，回到家里，把猫埋到了院子下面。</p> 
		<p>As a free wild cat, the colors shift to softer, natural tones, reflecting its newfound sense of self.</p>	<p>后来，猫不再是别人的猫了。 成了一只野猫。 猫头一次变成了自己的猫。 猫头喜欢自己了。 怎么说，漂亮的虎斑猫终于变成了漂亮的野猫。</p> 
		<p>After meeting the white cat, the palette warms, and the compositions focus on their togetherness, visually conveying</p>	<p>小猫长大了，一个个走掉了。 “他们都成了漂亮的野猫啦。” “噢。” 白猫说，然后她的嗓子眼里发出了温暖的“咕噜咕噜”声。 白猫慢慢地老了。 猫对白猫更温暖了，嗓子眼里也发出了“咕噜咕噜”声。 他多想和白猫永远地一起活下去呀！</p> 


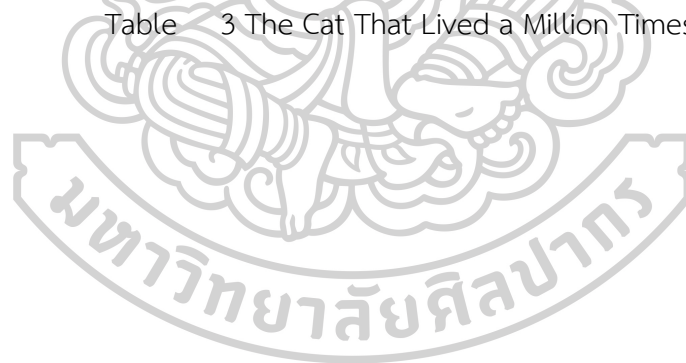

		emotional depth.	
		Following the white cat's passing, the illustrations become sparse and quiet, This change in visual storytelling powerfully reinforces the fragility of life and the weight of love and loss.	<p>有一天，白猫静静地躺在猫杯里一动也不动了。</p> <p>猫抱着白猫，流下了大滴大滴的眼泪。他头一次哭了。从晚上哭到早上，又从早上哭到晚上，哭啊哭啊，猫哭了有100万次。</p> <p>早上，晚上……</p> <p>一天中午，猫的笑声停止了。</p> <p>猫静静地，一动不动地躺在白猫的身边。</p> 
Conclusion:	The Cat That Lived a Million Times utilizes a fable-like structure alongside expressive brushstrokes and stark compositional contrasts to portray the protagonist's emotional transformation—from apathy to genuine love. The interplay between symbolic imagery and chromatic shifts effectively amplifies the philosophical reflections on love, life, and death. In my own creative process, I drew upon this work's approach to symbolic visual language and color-based emotional transitions to enrich psychological depth within narrative scenes.		



Table 3 The Cat That Lived a Million Times



2.4.3 The Role of Picture Books in Advocating for animal Welfare and Social

Awareness

Title:	“Stray Dog”		
Author:	Marc Simont (USA)		
Publication Year:	2001 (Winner of the 2002 Caldecott Honor)		
Story Summary:	<p>This picture book tells the story of a stray dog wandering through the bustling city streets. Facing loneliness and harsh weather, the dog encounters different people—some indifferent, while others offer small gestures of kindness. One day, a family meets the dog while having a picnic in the park. The children name him “Willy” and play with him, but when they leave, the dog disappears. However, his presence lingers in their hearts. Upon returning to the city, they spot Willy again, still wandering alone. Finally, they decide to take him home, giving him a loving family and a place to belong.</p>		
Themes:	The Struggles of Stray Animals: The story highlights the challenges faced by stray dogs, such as hunger, homelessness, and a lack of care, encouraging readers to empathize with their plight.		
	The Bond Between Humans and Animals: The children’s affection for Willy reflects the innate connection between people and animals, emphasizing kindness and companionship.		
	Compassion and Responsibility: By choosing to adopt Willy, the family demonstrates social responsibility, reinforcing the idea that “adoption is better than buying.”		
Narrative and Visual Analysis:	<p>1. Narrative Style – Warm and Relatable</p>	<p>The book’s color palette is soft and warm, creating a cozy atmosphere. Scenes depicting Elfie’s youth are painted with bright, cheerful colors, whereas those showing her aging and passing use more muted, subdued</p>	

		<p>tones, even incorporating cooler shades. This gradual shift in colors reinforces the emotional depth of the story, subtly guiding readers through the process of loss.</p>	 <p>"Let's take Willy home," said the children. "No," said the father. "He must belong to somebody," explained the mother, "and they would miss him."</p> 
<p>2. Visual Representation – Colors and Composition Highlight the Plight of Stray Animals</p>	<p>Depiction of the City: The early illustrations use cool tones and empty streets, emphasizing the dog's loneliness and isolation.</p>		 <p>On the way home the girl said, "Maybe Willy doesn't belong to anybody."</p>
	<p>Human and Animal Interaction: When the children play with Willy, the illustrations shift to warmer colors, symbolizing care and hope.</p>		 <p>The children played with him and taught him to sit up. They named him Willy. They kept playing until it was time to go.</p>
	<p>Emotional Progression: The final scenes, where Willy is adopted, feature bright and cozy imagery, reinforcing feelings of belonging and happiness.</p>		
<p>Conclusion:</p>	<p>Stray Dog adopts a sketch-like, naturalistic drawing style and a muted, earthy palette to highlight the vulnerability and resilience of stray animals. Through</p>		

	<p>subtle expressions and minimalist compositions, the book invites both empathy and social reflection on animal welfare and responsible pet ownership. This visual treatment of social themes has provided a valuable reference in my own work, particularly in depicting stray animals with emotional nuance and ethical sensitivity.</p>
--	---

Table 4 Stray Dog



CHAPTER 3 DESIGN PROCESS/RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Methodology

This study adopts a combination of research methods to ensure the scientific foundation and practical value of picture book creation. The problem this research addresses is the lack of emotionally resonant and socially responsible narrative strategies in picture books that deal with stray animals and pet loss. Therefore, the study aims to construct a design system that integrates emotion, responsibility, and reflection on life.

To achieve this, the research is conducted in three main phases:

1. Literature Review and Case Analysis: A review of academic literature and an analysis of existing picture books are conducted to examine how they portray themes such as stray animal care, character empathy, and visual storytelling. This helps define the research direction and identify gaps in current practice.

2. Narrative and Visual Design Experimentation: Based on the insights gathered, character design, story structure, color psychology, and storyboard planning are tested and iterated upon. This phase aims to enhance the emotional depth and visual appeal of the picture book, creating a more immersive and relatable experience for readers.

3. Design System Refinement: Through brainstorming, page layout, color palette selection, and book cover design, the visual and narrative elements are integrated

into a cohesive system. This ensures both aesthetic consistency and communicative effectiveness in the final work.

By following this structured methodology, the study not only explores artistic practice but also establishes a problem-based design system that reflects on emotional responsibility and life values within picture book storytelling.

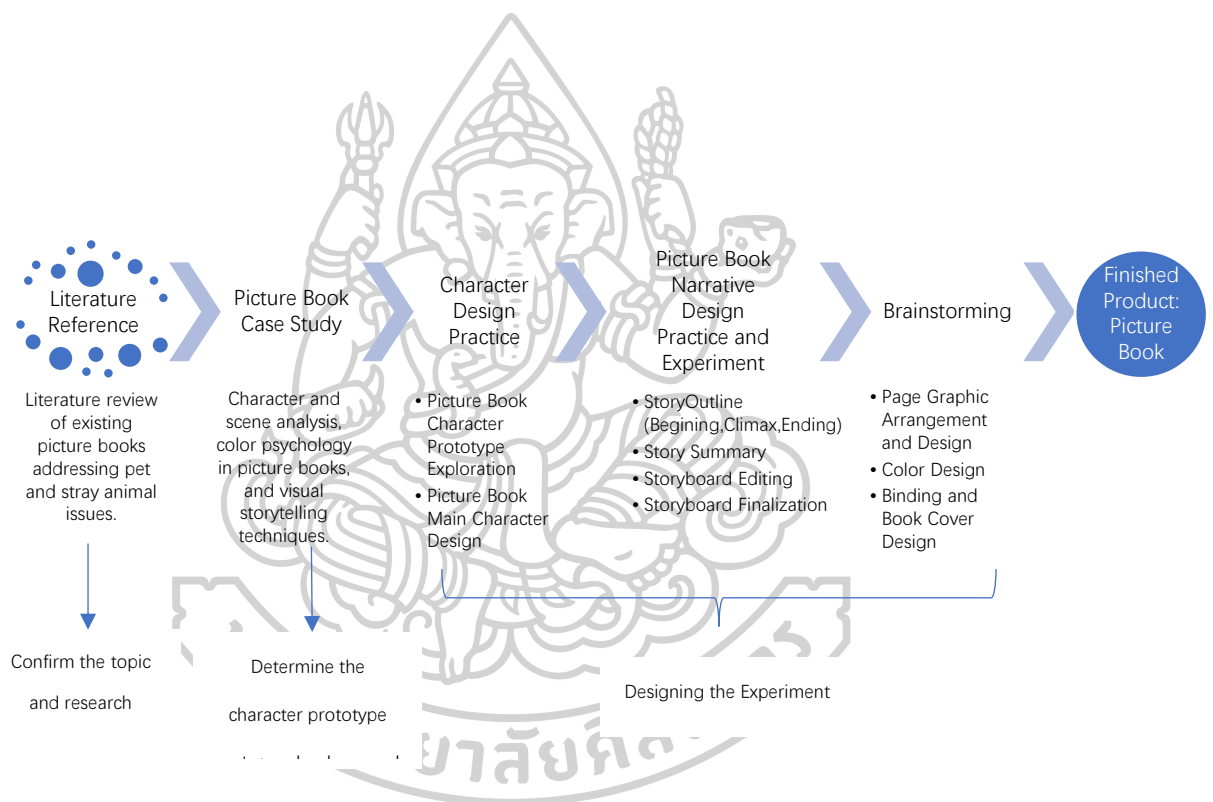


Figure 17 Research Methodology

3.2 Classification Types of Research

Practice-based Research:

This research examines the representation of emotions, responsibility, and the reflection on life through the narrative of a picture book that explores pet and stray animal issues. The central characters in the book, primarily pets, are based on real

animals, with many created from stories of pets that have passed away, gathered from people around the researcher. This personal connection to the characters enhances the emotional depth and responsibility themes presented in the book.

1. Design Analysis

The story and visual design have been carefully crafted to present complex issues such as loss, responsibility, and compassion for animals. The characters are portrayed in a way that reflects both their personalities and their role in conveying an important message about animal welfare. The storyline has been designed to portray a journey of understanding, empathy, and respect for animals, with a particular focus on stray animals and their struggles.

Design elements, such as color tones and character expressions, are chosen to evoke specific emotions. For example, warm colors are used in scenes of friendship and love, while cool colors are used in scenes involving the struggles and sorrows of stray animals. The illustrations are soft yet emotional, conveying the vulnerability of animals and the emotional connection they have to humans.

The text complements the content by providing simple but profound reflections on the responsibility of pet owners and society in caring for animals, through the stories of pet characters. The book encourages readers to consider their own role in protecting and caring for animals in need.

2. Experimentation

The research process involved iterative design and continuous experimentation in various aspects of the book's creation. Taking inspiration from the illustration techniques and narrative structures seen in *I've Always Loved You, The Cat That Lived a Million Times*, and *Stray Dogs*, the experimental phase focused on achieving emotional realism and visual resonance.

The character designs were developed through multiple trial and error iterations based on observations of real pets to ensure realism in emotional expression. A soft, warm color palette, such as that used in *I've Always Loved You*, was tested to evoke tenderness and empathy. Additionally, textured brushstrokes and symbolic imagery, inspired by *The Cat That Lived a Million Times*, were explored to depict the characters' emotional growth and inner transformation. The sketchy, delicate drawing style seen in *Stray Dogs* also influenced the depictions of stray animals, aiming to convey both vulnerability and resilience through visual subtlety.

Feedback was actively sought from pet owners and individuals who had experienced pet loss, and their personal narratives were incorporated into both the character development and the overall emotional tone of the story. This participatory approach enriched the content, ensuring that the emotional portrayals were both genuine and relatable.

The narrative structure underwent multiple rounds of testing and refinement. The pacing and emotional intensity were carefully adjusted to create a progression

that educates readers on the themes of loss and responsibility, while maintaining an accessible and emotionally engaging tone for a dual audience of children and adults. Techniques from the referenced works—such as gradual emotional buildup, the use of visual metaphors, and balanced compositional flow—were selectively integrated to support these goals, ensuring the final product achieved both educational and emotional resonance.

3.3 Platforms of Art and Design Research

Based on the research methodology and design process, this study falls under the following three platforms of art and design research:

1. Research on Design Arts: This study explores existing picture books and visual storytelling techniques related to the themes of pets and stray animals. Through analyzing case studies, color psychology, and character representation, it integrates theoretical insights into the creative process.

2. Research for Design Arts: This research employs literature review, observation, and various design methods to explore the attributes of picture book storytelling. It uses primary and secondary sources, including books, visual references, and expert analysis, to refine character design, narrative structure, and composition. Additionally, hand-drawn sketches are used for initial design, followed by Procreate for outlining and Photoshop for coloring and post-production to further enhance the visual appeal.

3. Research through Design Arts: This study adopts an experimental approach to picture book creation, using iterative prototyping and design refinement. Through the development of characters and narrative, as well as visual composition trials, the study generates new knowledge and insights into effective storytelling techniques. During this process, page layout design and other software platforms are employed to adjust and optimize the final layout of the picture book to ensure its artistic and communicative effectiveness.

3.4 Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative research approach, utilizing multiple stages and different research tools to ensure the artistic and practical value of the picture book creation. The specific research process is as follows:

1. Literature Review

In the initial stage of the research, a review of relevant literature and existing picture books is conducted to explore the background of picture book creation focusing on stray animals and pets. The literature review covers topics such as color psychology, visual storytelling, and character design, providing a theoretical foundation and design guidance for the subsequent creative process.

2. Case Analysis

By analyzing successful picture book cases, both domestically and internationally, especially those with social significance and emotional expression, the study examines their narrative structure, character settings, and visual representation. Case

analysis not only helps clarify the creative direction of the picture book but also provides practical references and inspiration for the design process.

3.Character Design and Sketch Creation

Based on the results of the literature review and case analysis, the research moves into the character design phase. Initial sketches are made by hand to conceptualize the characters, considering factors such as story plot, character traits, and emotional expression. The design of each character's appearance, attire, and facial expressions is carefully crafted to ensure that each one conveys specific emotions and themes.

4. Observation and Feedback

During the character design process, focus group discussions and feedback are held with the target audience (e.g., teens, adults, and pet owners) to observe their reactions and feelings towards the design elements. The character design, story, and visual elements are then refined based on the feedback received to ensure the picture book resonates with readers.

5. Narrative Design and Visual Expression

Characters are outlined using Procreate and storyboards are created to define the narrative structure and page layout. In designing the narrative, emphasis is placed on the integration of visual and textual elements, ensuring that the images and words on each page work together to convey the emotional tone of the story.

Coloring is also used in Photoshop, using techniques such as contrast, color and temperature, to enhance the visual impact of the picture book.

6. Layout and Page Design

After character and page design is complete, the project enters the layout design phase, where digital layout tools are used to refine page layout, fonts, and overall aesthetics to ensure the picture book flows smoothly and provides a great reading experience. Layout design also focuses on details such as page spacing, text placement, and image placement to enhance the overall artistic quality of the book.

7. Final Testing and Optimization

Once the picture book is complete, it is tested with small-scale users and feedback is collected to further evaluate its effectiveness and audience response. Based on the testing results, the content, layout, and design of the picture book are optimized to ensure that the final product aligns with the creative intent and effectively engages the target audience.

3.5 Examples for Design Process

Character Design and Comic narrative practice Based on Iconic Thai Street Foods:

1. Character Design Practice:

(1) Character Prototype Exploration: Explore various character designs based on Pandan Cake, Thai Milk Tea, and Butterfly Pea Flower, each with distinct features that reflect the food they represent. For example, Pandan Cake might have a soft and

sweet appearance, Thai Milk Tea could be bold and energetic, and Butterfly Pea Flower could be elegant and mysterious.



Figure 18 Character design sketch

(2) Main Character Design: Develop the final designs for each character, ensuring their personalities shine through their looks and their unique roles in the food competition. The designs should be vibrant and visually distinct, reflecting the food's qualities and the character's role in the narrative.



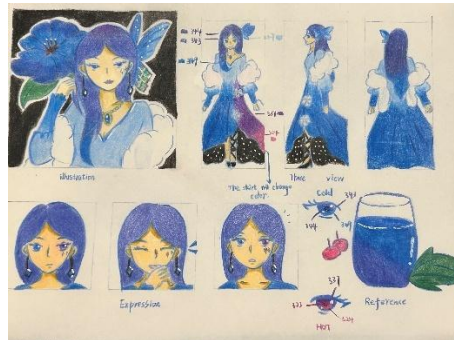


Figure 19 Character costume and dynamic expression design

2. Narrative Design Practice and Experiment:

Storyboard Editing and Finalization: Create and edit the storyboard, ensuring that each page reflects the action of the competition. The transitions between the different rounds of the food contest should be clear and dynamic. Finalize the storyboard by adjusting pacing to make the comic both engaging and easy to follow.



Figure 20 Comics Story Board

3. Brainstorming:

(1) Page Graphic Arrangement and Design: Plan the layout for each page, ensuring that the action flows smoothly from panel to panel. The comic's style should highlight the excitement and drama of the competition, with vibrant illustrations and expressive character designs.

(2) Color Design: Choose a color palette that represents the lively atmosphere of a street food competition, using bright and contrasting colors to emphasize the characters and their food-related abilities. Each food character should have its own dominant color that matches its essence: Pandan Cake in green, Thai Milk Tea in brown and orange, and Butterfly Pea Flower in purple and blue.

4. Finished Product: Comic Story

The comic will celebrate the diversity and uniqueness of Thai street food culture, with each character representing a beloved dish that has a special place in the hearts of the people.



Figure 21 The comic "Thai Taste Battle" is about the story of Thai street food

5. Exhibition Testing:



Figure 22 Comic Design Exhibition



Figure 23 Reader interaction and feedback

Community Story Comic Lantern Design:

1. Design Case Study:

(1) Character and Scene Analysis: Analyze how traditional lanterns have been adapted in modern art forms.

(2) Determine the Prototype and Story Background: The lantern design will serve as a vessel for the stories from the Luen Rit community. The narratives will explore

themes of change, tradition, and connection, capturing the essence of community life in a visually compelling way through comic art.

2. Design Practice:

(1) Prototype Exploration: Initial sketches will explore various ways to incorporate the stories of the Luen Rit community within the lantern's design, creating a balance between tradition and innovation.



Figure 24 Community building renovation

(Source: Lun Rit)

(2) Main Design Concept: The final design will fuse the traditional aspects of lantern making with the expressive qualities of comic art. This will ensure the lantern not only tells a story but also serves as an artifact of cultural preservation.

3. Narrative Design and Experiment:

(1) Story Outline: The comic narrative will follow the transformations within the Luen Rit community, capturing both personal and collective experiences. The lantern will function as a symbolic object, casting shadows that reveal key moments from the community's history and future aspirations.

(2) Story Summary: The lantern tells the story of the Luen Rit community, highlighting its historical roots, cultural richness, and the changes it has undergone. Through the interplay of light and shadow, the lantern will act as a bridge between past and present, blending traditional craftsmanship with modern storytelling to engage contemporary audiences.

(3) Storyboard Editing and Finalization: A storyboard will be created, focusing on how the comic elements are visually integrated into the lantern's structure. The interaction of shadows, light, and storytelling will be fine-tuned for clarity and impact.

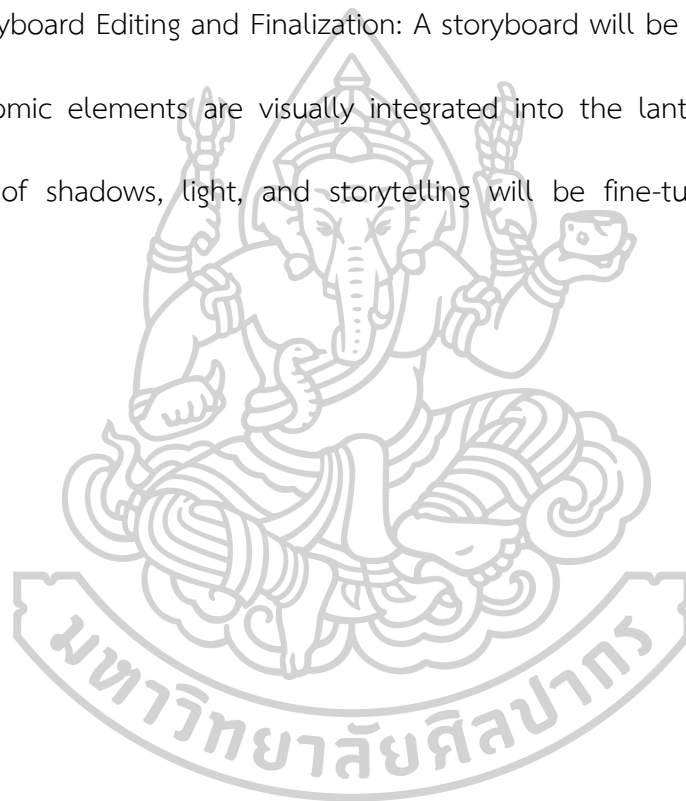




Figure 25 Residents of the community

(Source: Lun Rit)

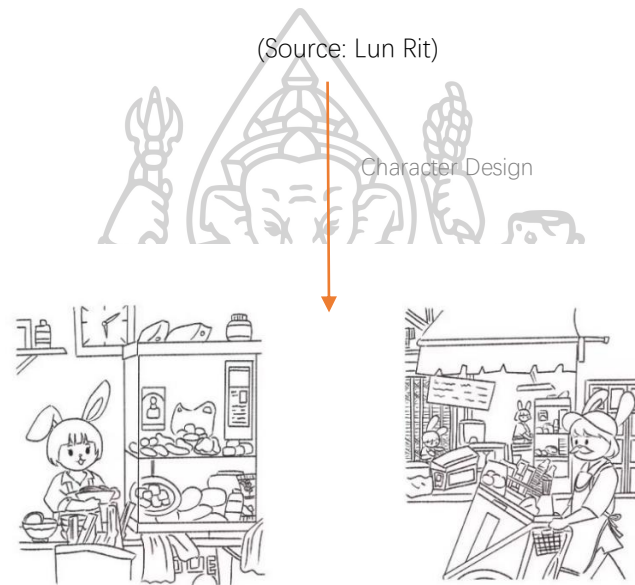


Figure 26 Community Residents Animal Anthropomorphic Design





Figure 27 Community changes over time,
community story lines and storyboards

4. Brainstorming:

Color Design: The primary color palette will consist of warm tones, predominantly orange and yellow, to create a comforting and inviting atmosphere. These colors will also evoke the golden hues of mooncakes, adding a cultural layer to the design while reinforcing the theme of celebration and warmth.



Figure 28 Community comic stories and Mid-Autumn Festival

5. Finished Product: Comic Lantern Design

The final product will be a wire shadow lantern that showcases the stories of the Luen Rit community through a combination of comic art and traditional lantern design. The use of orange and yellow tones will create a warm, inviting atmosphere, drawing connections to the Mid-Autumn Festival. As a finished piece, the lantern will not only serve as a functional object but also as an art piece, offering a deeper connection to the cultural traditions and modern experiences of the community.

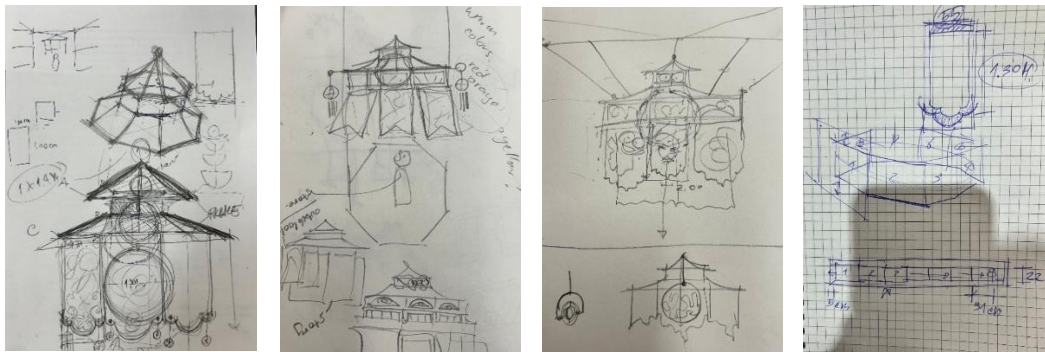


Figure 29 Lantern structure design process



Figure 30 Chinese scroll pattern

(Source: Xiaohongshu, WenMaiLiuJin)

By redesigning the traditional Chinese pattern of curly grass and applying it to the border of lantern patterns.

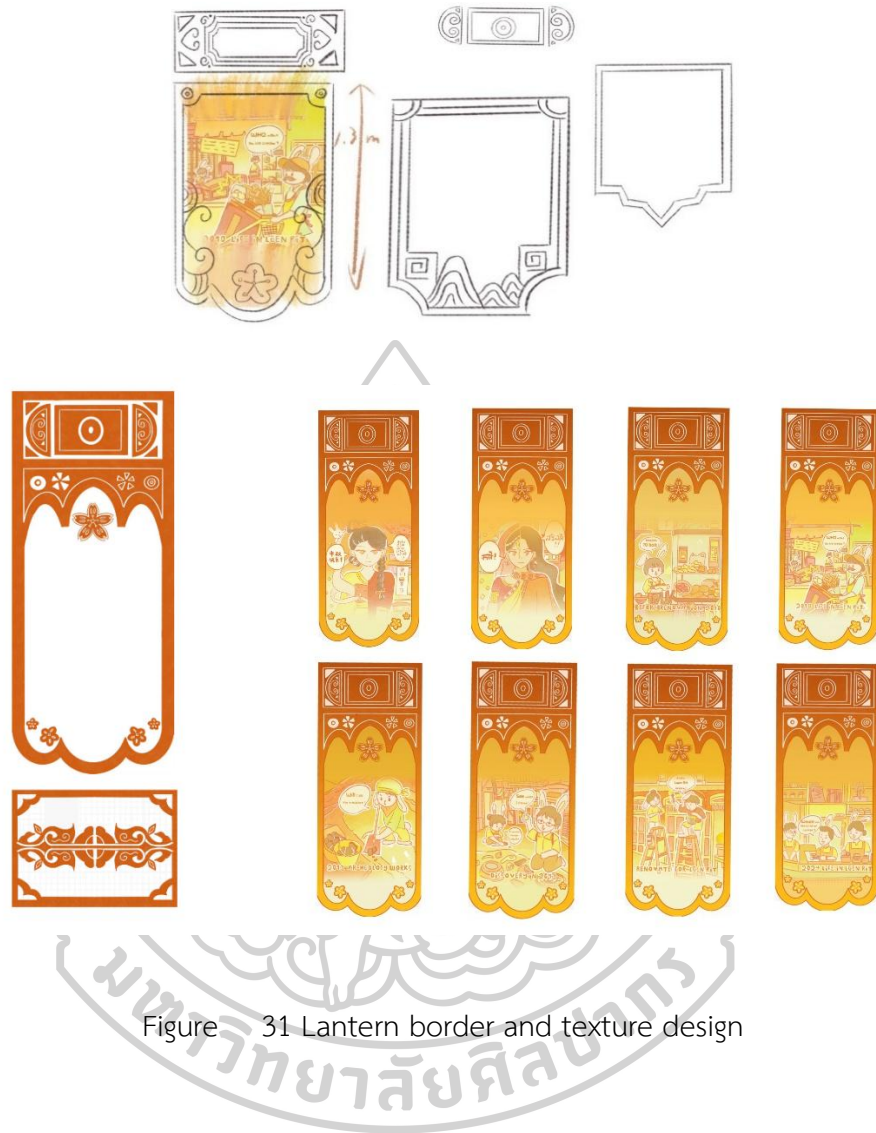


Figure 31 Lantern border and texture design

5. Exhibition Testing:



Figure 32 Lantern installation and layout



Figure 33 Lantern Lighting Atmosphere Application Test



Figure 34 Community Comic Lantern Art Installation

CHAPTER 4 DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

4.1 Outputs for Design Development: Art Results

The primary output of this design development process is a picture book that not only serves as a visual and narrative artwork but also engages deeply with the themes of emotion, responsibility, and reflection on life. The book explores the complex relationships between pets, animals, humans, and nature, provoking thought about the responsibilities we hold toward the animals in our lives and the broader world around us.

This artwork captures the emotional journey of caring for animals, particularly stray pets, and invites readers to reflect on the responsibilities that come with pet ownership. Through its evocative illustrations and storytelling, the picture book evokes strong emotions, encouraging empathy and deeper contemplation of life's fragility and the interconnectedness between all living beings.

The book is designed not only for children but also for adults, allowing both groups to engage with its narrative and visual elements on different levels. For children, it introduces important lessons about love, loss, and responsibility, while for adults, it serves as a thoughtful reminder of the deeper connections we share with animals and nature. Ultimately, the picture book creates a space for reflection on life, fostering a sense of shared responsibility and a deeper understanding of the emotional bonds between humans and animals.

4.2 Examples for Design Development:



Figure 35 The First Character Design

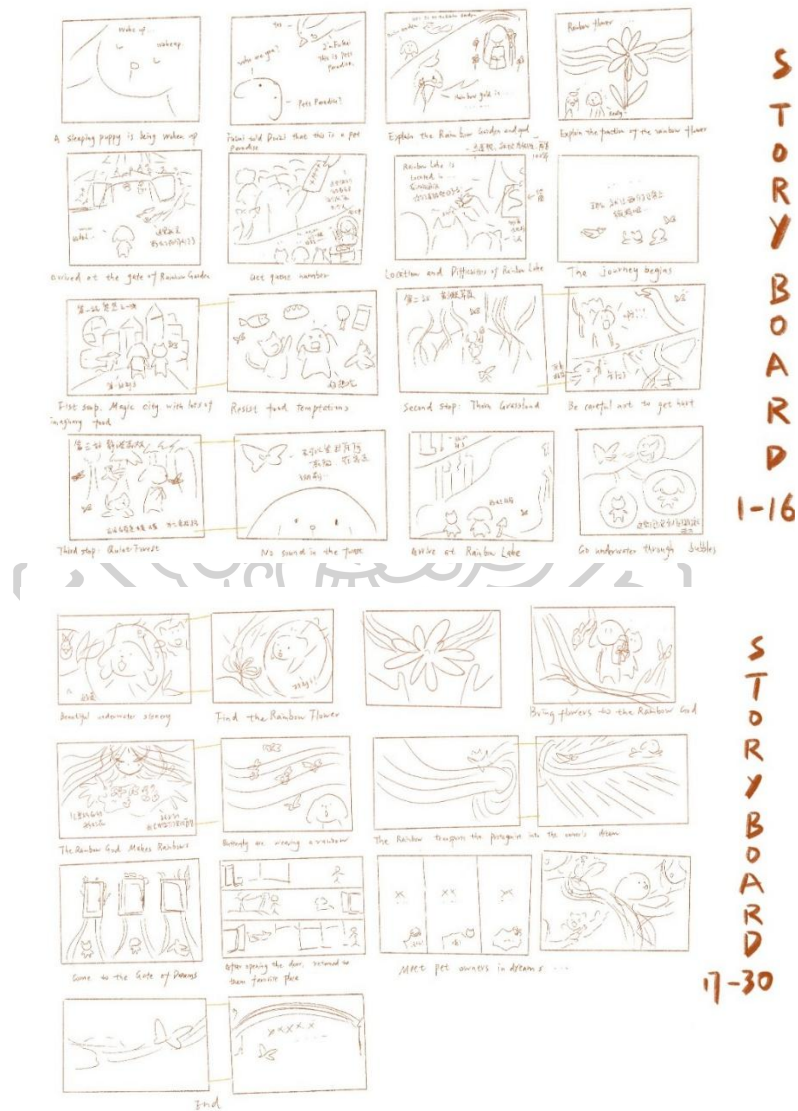


Figure 36 First Edition Storyboard

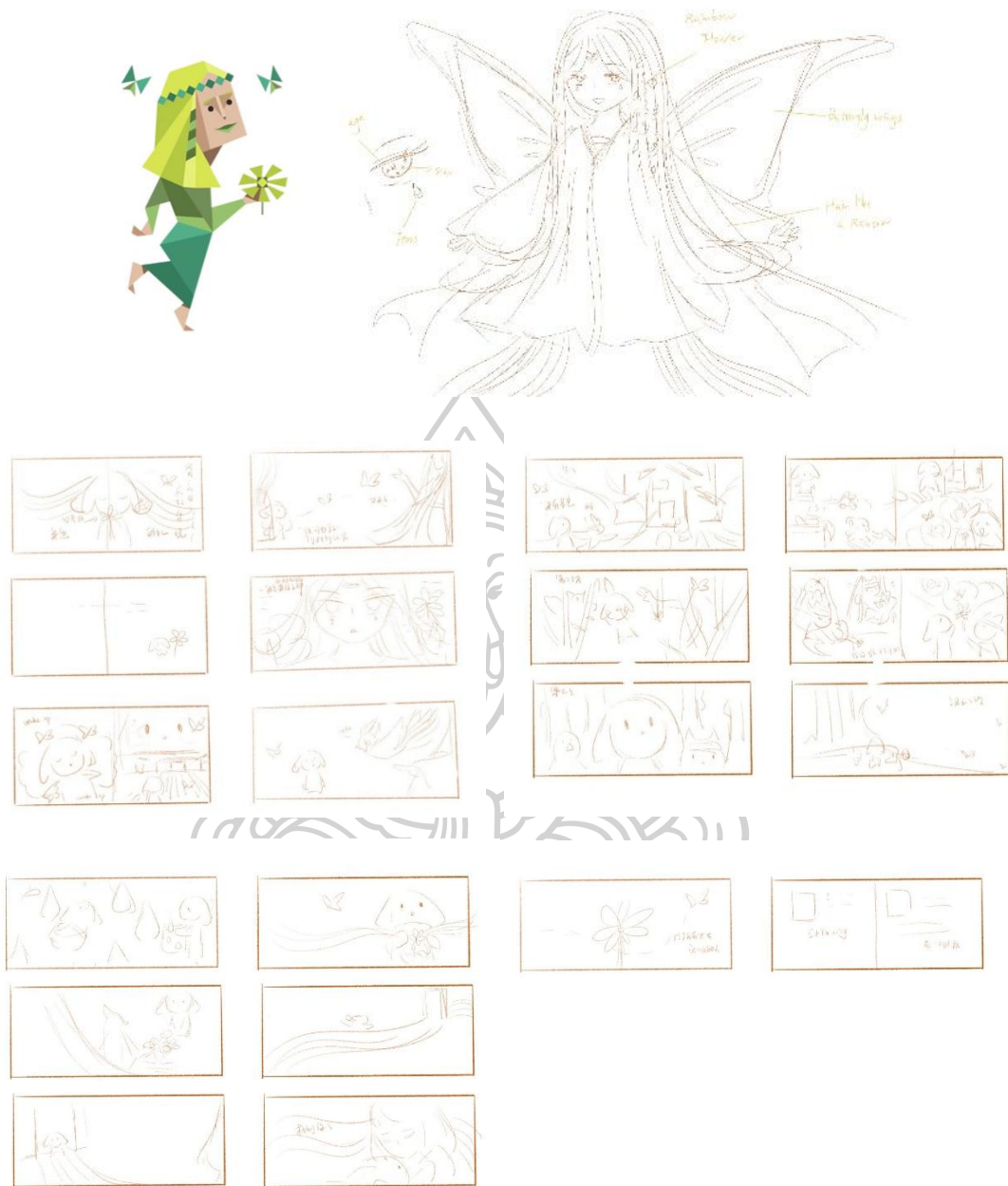


Figure 37 Second Edition Storyboard



Figure 38 Character design of the protagonist "Dou Zi"



Figure 39 Character design of the supporting character "Fu Gui"



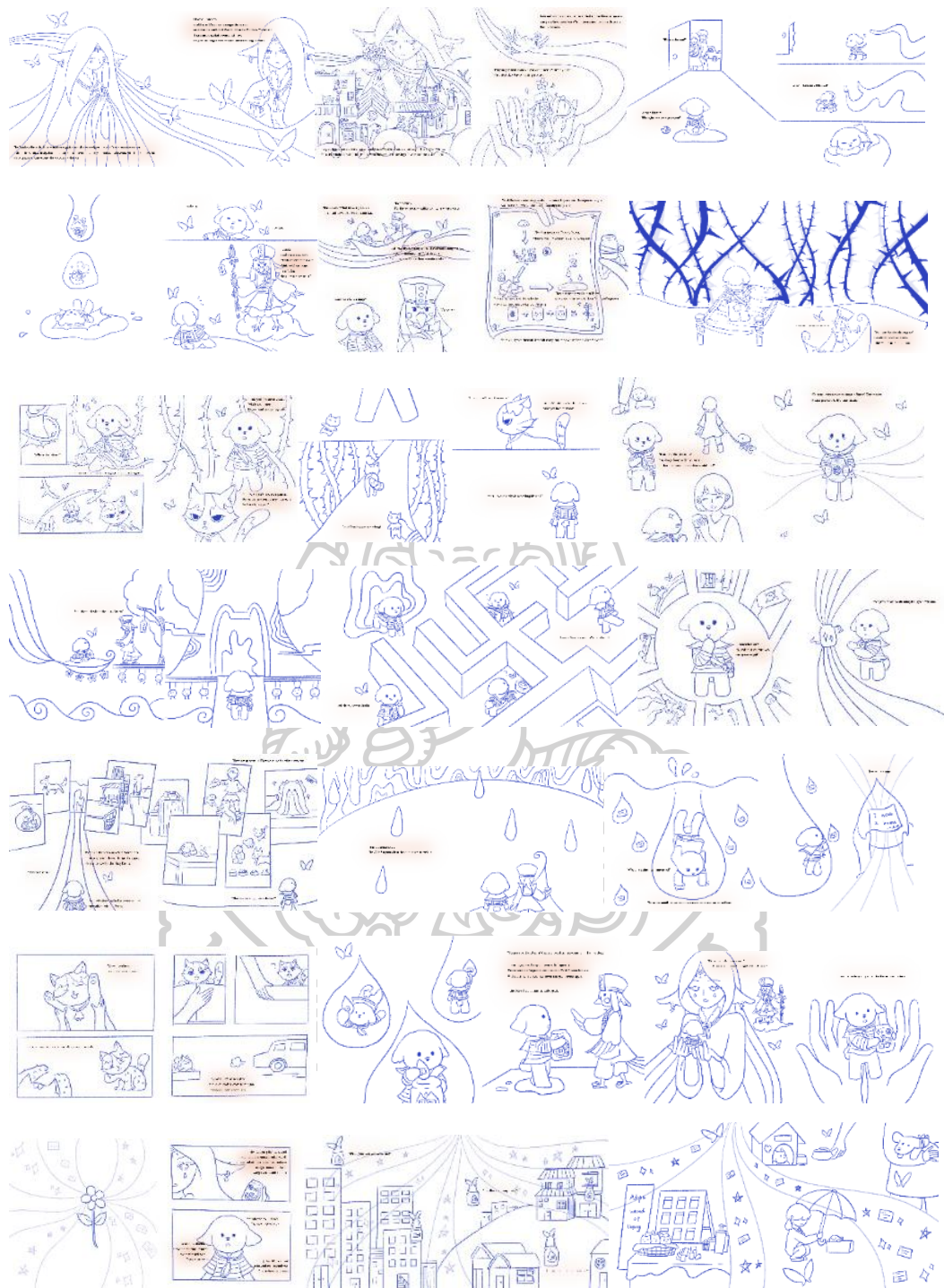
Figure 40 Character design of the supporting character "Rose"



Figure 41 Character design experiment of Bichon "Dou Zi"



Figure 42 Picture book character design finalization and color experiment



The first exhibition test:

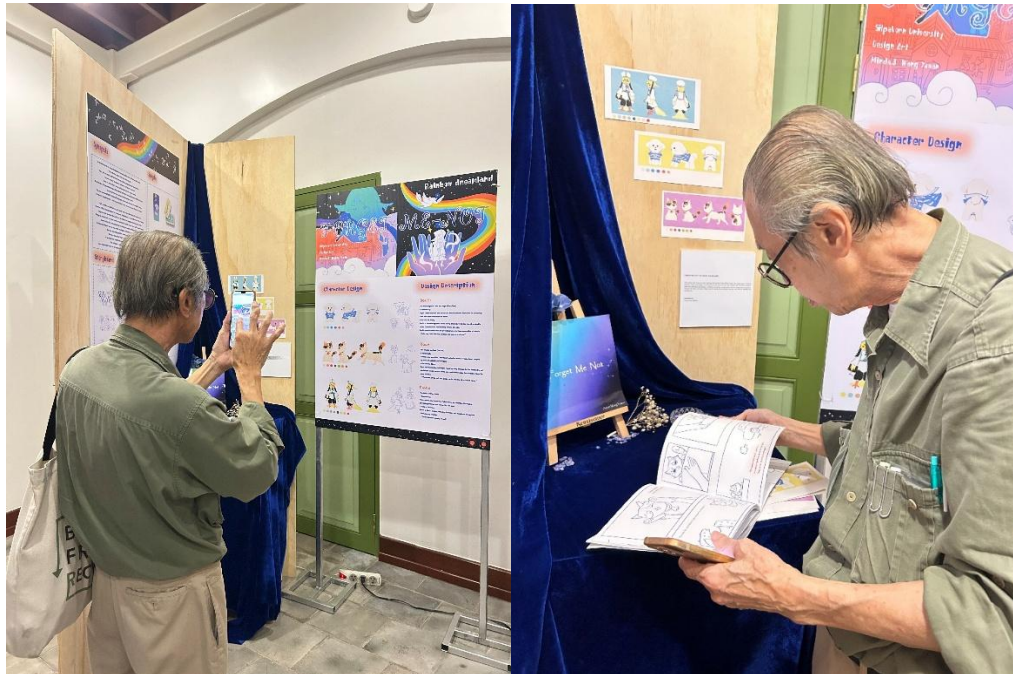


Figure 45 The first exhibition experiment

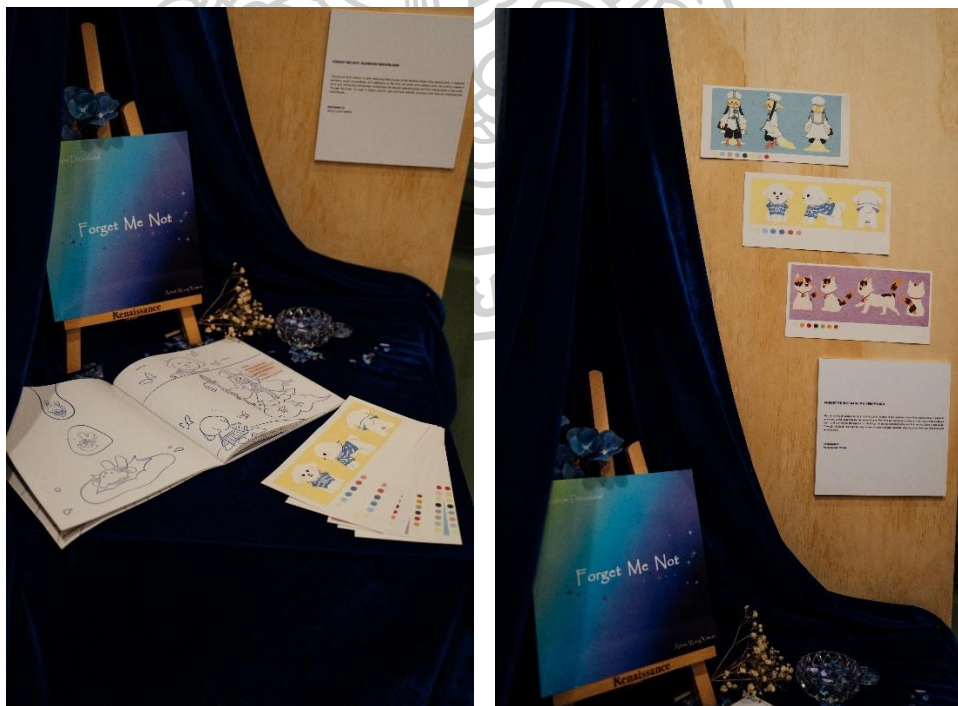
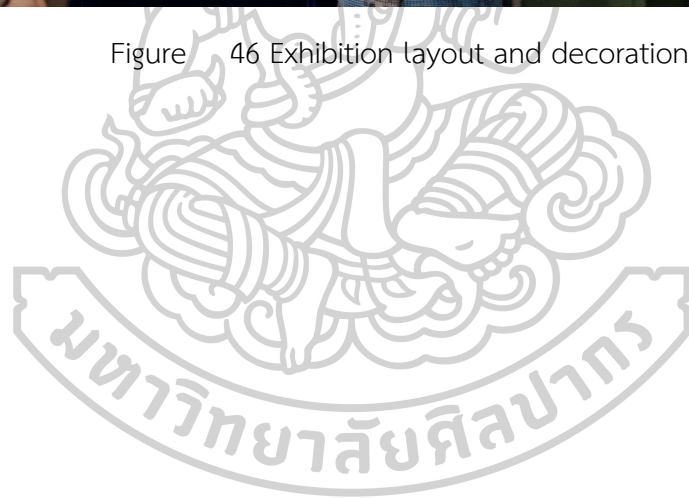




Figure 46 Exhibition layout and decoration



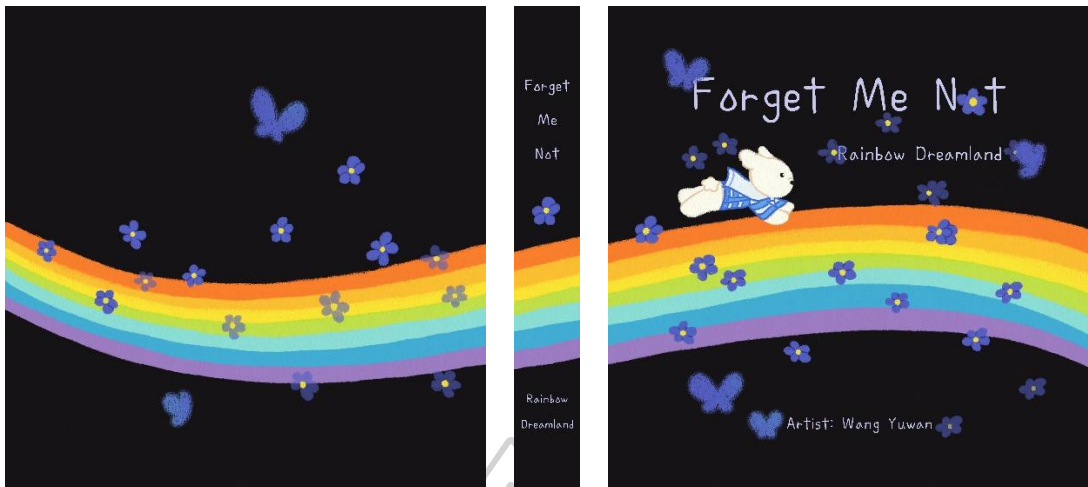


Figure 47 Spine and cover design

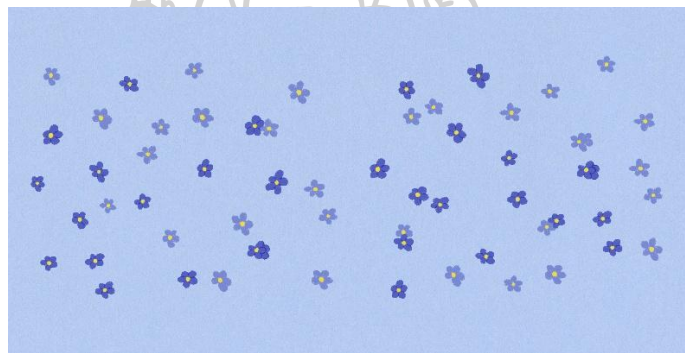
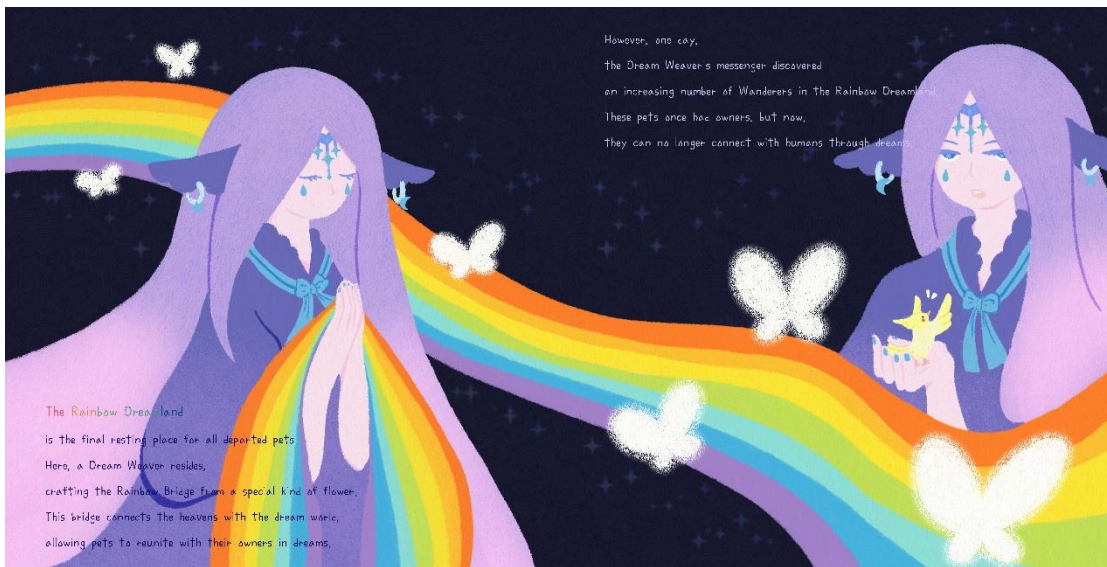


Figure 48 Ring lining design



Figure 49 Title page design

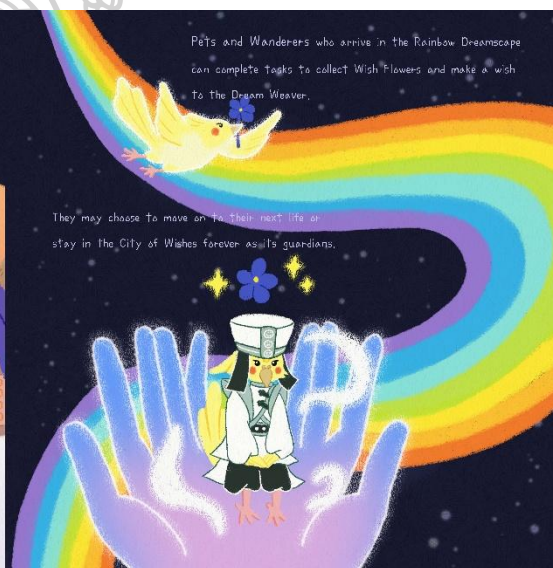


The Rainbow Dreamland is the final resting place for all departed pets. Here, a Dream Weaver resides, crafting the Rainbow Bridge from a special kind of flower. This bridge connects the heavens with the dream world, allowing pets to reunite with their owners in dreams.

However, one day, the Dream Weaver's messenger discovered an increasing number of Wanderers in the Rainbow Dreamland. These pets once had owners, but now, they can no longer connect with humans through dreams.

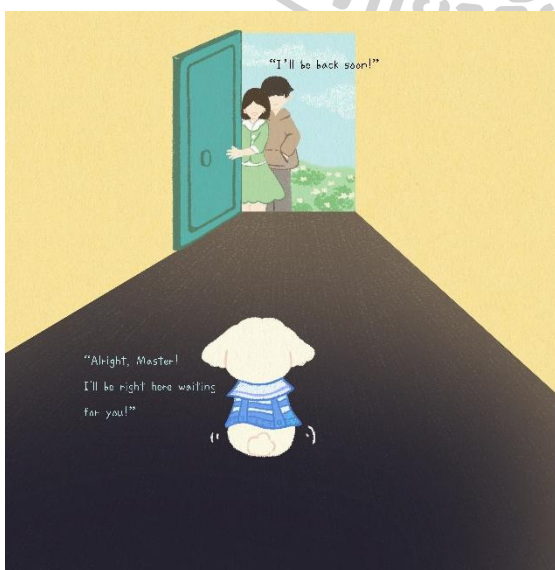


To give these souls a place of peace, the Dream Weaver created a new city: The City of Wishes. This city is built from the thoughts of Wish Flowers, each carrying the wishes of the lost animals.



Pets and Wanderers who arrive in the Rainbow Dreamscape can complete tasks to collect Wish Flowers and make a wish to the Dream Weaver.

They may choose to move on to their next life or stay in the City of Wishes forever as its guardians.



"Alright, Master! I'll be right here waiting for you!"

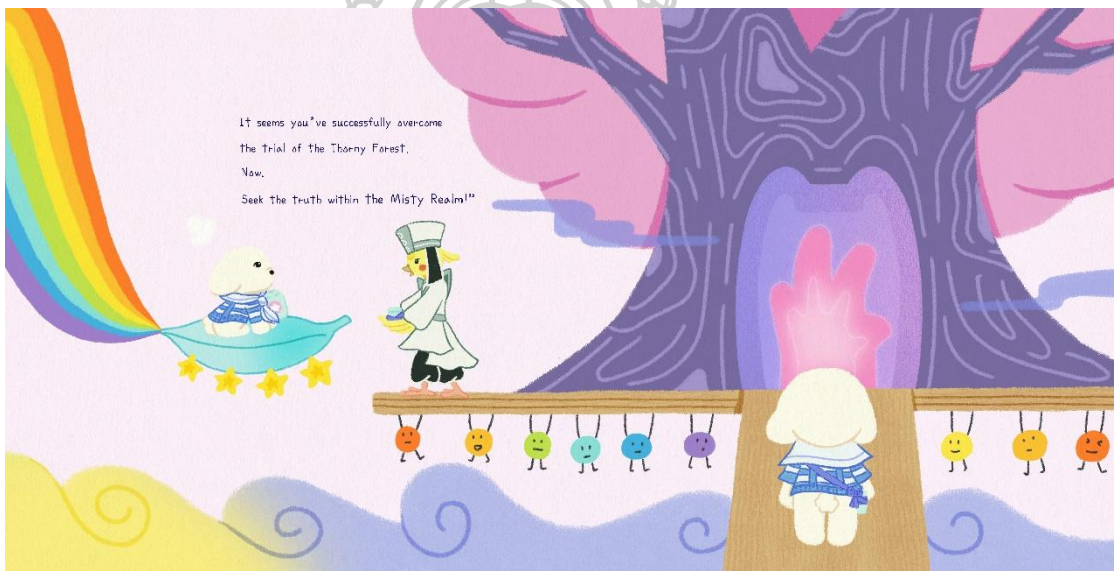
"I'll be back soon!"

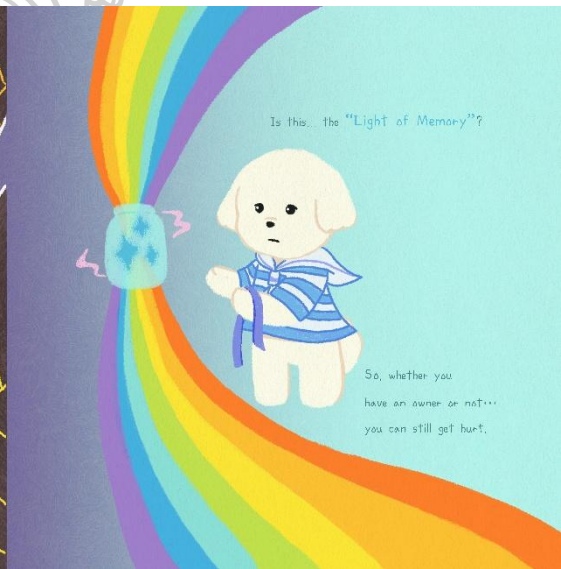


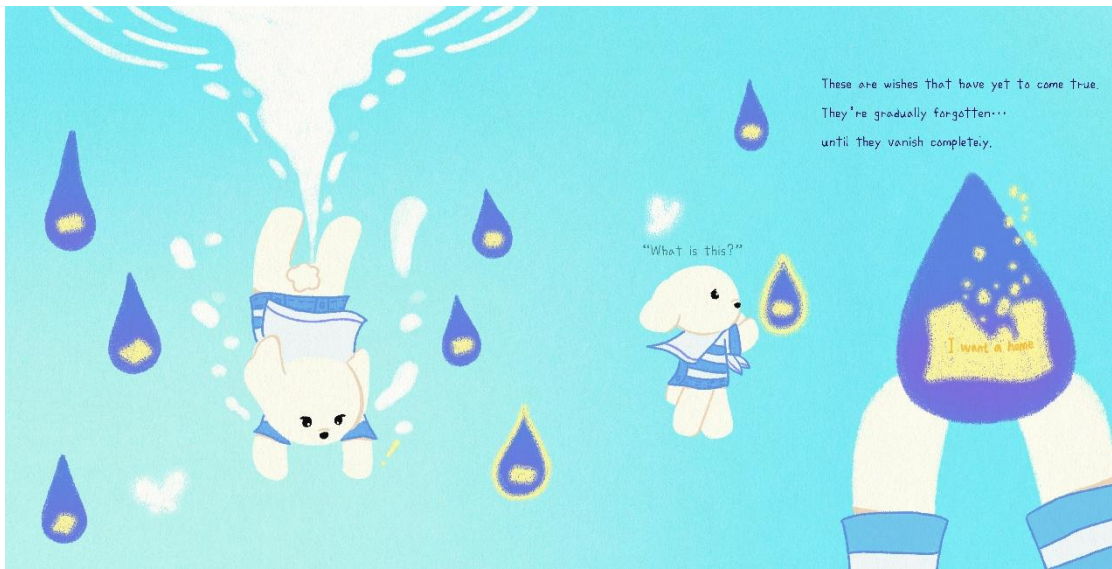
"Wow! That smells delicious!"

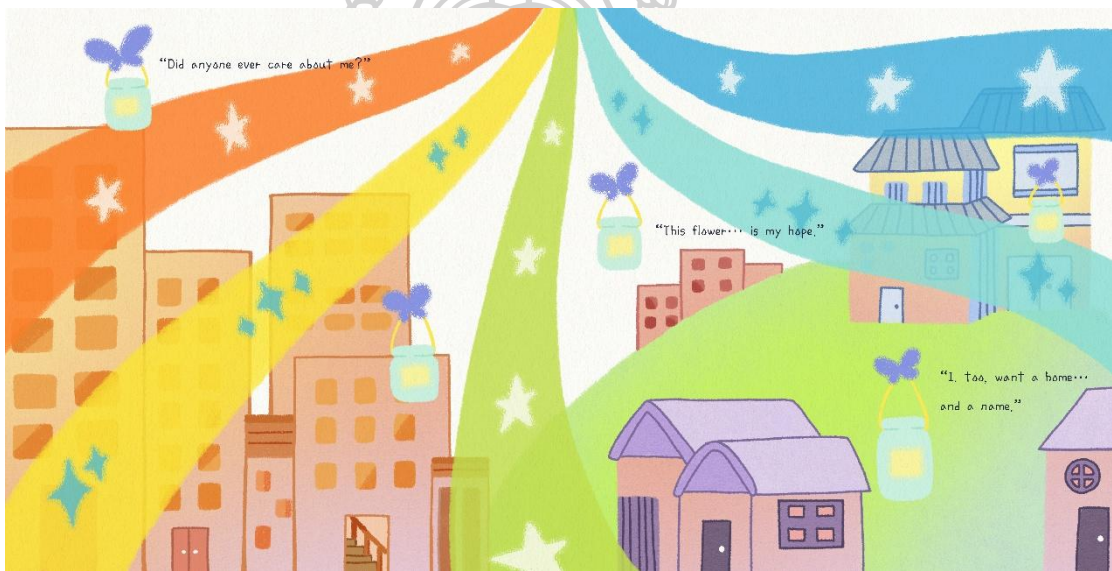












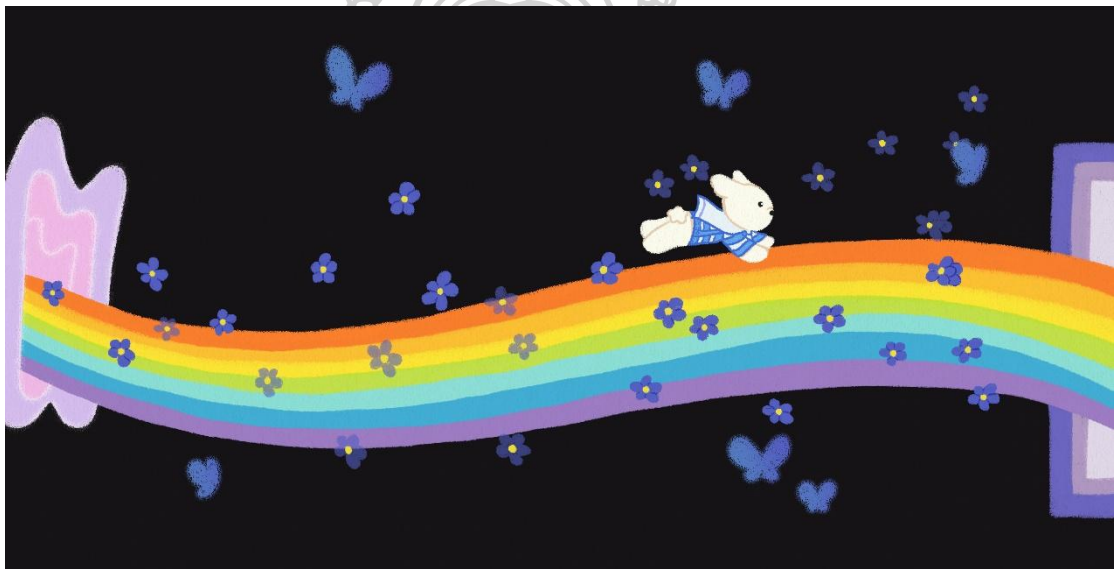
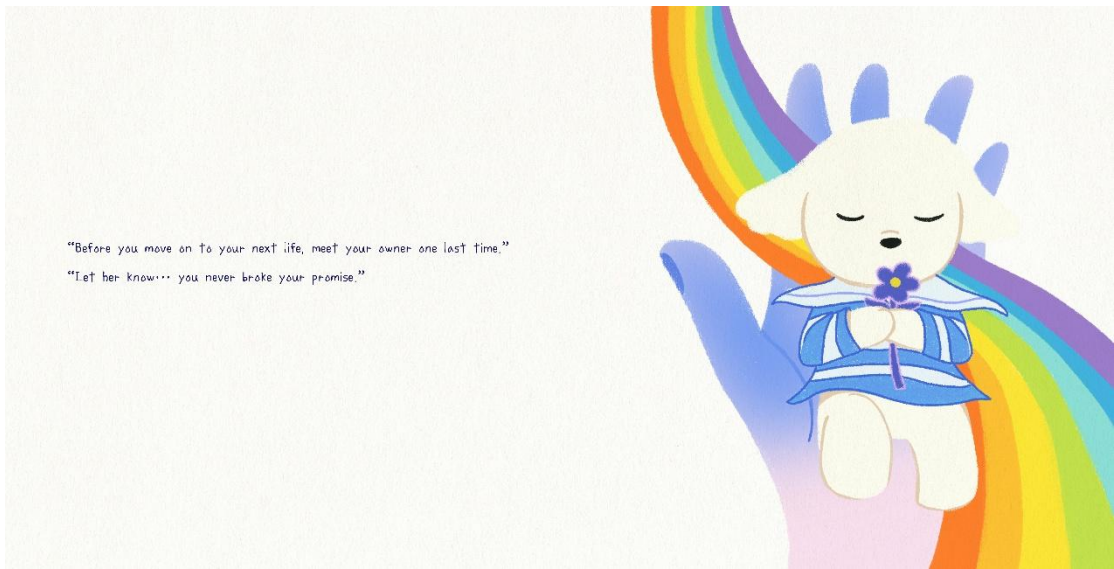




Figure 50 Picture book design: Color matching and texture addition for "Forget-me-not Rainbow Dream"

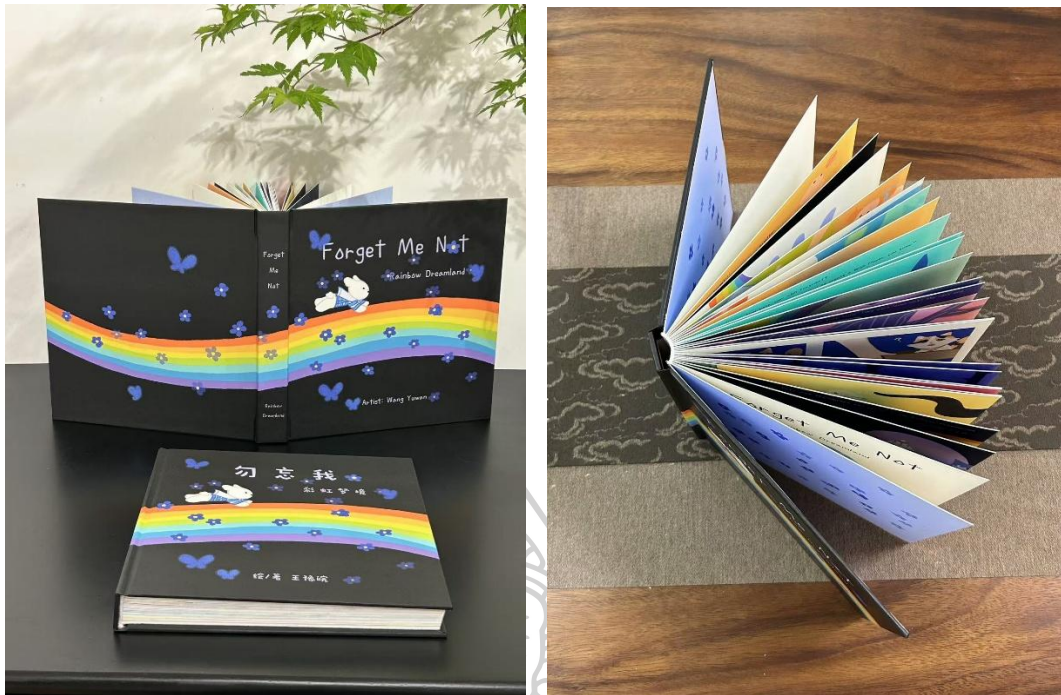


Figure 51 Picture book printing and binding

Final exhibition test:



Figure 52 Exhibition layout and decorative painting pasting



Figure 53 Product design and production

CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSION

This study highlights the unique power of picture books as a multidimensional medium for conveying complex emotional and social themes, particularly those related to pet and stray animal welfare. Through the integration of storytelling, visual design, and character development, picture books are shown to be more than mere children's literature—they serve as bridges between art, education, and social advocacy. By focusing on emotional expression, social responsibility, and reflections on life, this research reveals how picture books can evoke empathy, inspire critical thinking, and raise awareness about ethical human-animal relationships. The creation of an original picture book prototype demonstrates how visual storytelling can be both emotionally engaging and socially meaningful, offering a creative tool for public education and dialogue. Ultimately, this study encourages further exploration of picture books as catalysts for compassion, responsible behavior, and deeper human connection with the natural world.

REFERENCES

- Allen, K., Blascovich, J., & Mendes, W. B. (2002). Cardiovascular reactivity and the presence of pets, friends, and spouses: The truth about cats and dogs. *Biopsychosocial Science and Medicine*, 64(5), 727-739.
- Allen, K., Shykoff, B. E., & Izzo Jr, J. L. (2001). Pet ownership, but not ACE inhibitor therapy, blunts home blood pressure responses to mental stress. *Hypertension*, 38(4), 815-820.
- Bradford, C., Mallan, K., Stephens, J., & McCallum, R. (2008). *New world orders in contemporary children's literature: Utopian transformations*. Springer.
- Brown, P. (2014). *Mr Tiger goes wild*. Pan Macmillan.
- Friedmann, E., Katcher, A. H., Lynch, J. J., & Thomas, S. A. (1980). Animal companions and one-year survival of patients after discharge from a coronary care unit. *Public health reports*, 95(4), 307.
- Jeffers, O. (2010). *The heart and the bottle*. Penguin.
- Kümmerling-Meibauer, B. (2018). *The Routledge companion to picturebooks*. Routledge
New York.
- Lepri, C. (2020). Beatrix Potter's Contribution to Children's Literature between Reality and Narrative Representation. *Studi sulla Formazione/Open Journal of Education*, 23(1), 289-299.

- MacIntyre, P. (2011). Visual identities: Australianness in Australian picture books. In *Teaching Australian Literature: From classroom conversations to national imaginings* (pp. 352-368). Wakefield Press.
- Nikolajeva, M., & Scott, C. (2013). *How picturebooks work*. Routledge.
- Painter, C., Martin, J., & Unsworth, L. (2013). Reading visual narratives: Image analysis of children's picture books.
- Potter, B. (1990). *The tale of Peter rabbit*. Baker's Plays.
- Simont, M., Sassa, R., & Dufres, W. (2001). *The stray dog*. HarperCollins Publishers.
- Sipe, L. R. (2007). *Storytime: Young children's literary understanding in the classroom*. Teachers College Press.
- Uvnäs-Moberg, K., Handlin, L., & Petersson, M. (2011). Promises and pitfalls of hormone research in human-animal interaction.
- Wilhelm, H. (2015). *I'll always love you*. Knopf Books for Young Readers.
- 柴阳丽, 张相学, & 陈雯冰. (2022). AR 赋能学习的机理剖析及其阐释——基于 AR 绘本和纸质绘本阅读的对比实验. *现代教育技术*, 32(9), 64-72.
- 李萌. (2019). 基于虚拟现实技术的数字绘本设计特点研究. *科技风*(4), 203-204.
- 张德禄. (2009). 多模态话语分析综合理论框架探索. *中国外语*(1), 24-30.



VITA

NAME

WANG YUWAN

INSTITUTIONS ATTENDED

2024-2025 SILPAKORN UNIVERSITY

2018-2022 INNER MONGOLIA NORMAL UNIVERSITY

