

## **The Best Wordless Books**

by Chazda Albright -

<http://greatstorybook.com/the-best-wordless-books/>

This entry is part 12 of 13 in the series [Recommended Reading](#)

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**If you want to be in a market, you need to know what is on the market. In order to tackle any kind of project, you need to do your homework, meaning: find out what is out there, what is quality work, what is shoddy work, and what you can bring that no one has really done (or done that well) as yet.**

**Here are some of the best wordless books on the market today.**

Though there are some shining exceptions, I am not a fan of storybooks that go along with their story to then have a fully illustrated spread with no words at all. It interrupts the flow of the story, and if storytime is before bed, you really don't want the child to get wound up again. That said, I do have some books with wordless pages and I would even recommend them - with the caveat that they *not* be read before bedtime.

**Wordless books are not meant for bedtime reading with a child. They are daytime inspiration - awakening books. These are deeply visual storybooks that convey story with images alone. The**

**point of such books is to incite the imagination, to invite the reader to make-up the words that go with the story.**

This can be a wonderful teaching tool in the classroom or tutoring session (especially with adults). There is something about a storybook that invites a person to unload their fears of losing face and share ideas they would otherwise keep to themselves.

These are the best of the wordless books.

1. [Flashlight](#) by Lizi Boyd. This book is visually brilliant. It plays with black and we see color only where the beam of the flashlight shows. This is where storybook is a form of art.
2. [Fox's Garden](#) by Princesse Camcam. The artform of this book is alone something to talk about, because they are photographs taken of Camcam's artfully created paper shadowbox images. It is just neat, and ultimately inspires all sorts of hands-on projects. I would say this is a must-have for any art teacher.
3. [Where's Walrus?](#) by Stephen Savage. This is a geometric, purist, graphic book. It's just fun, and kids really love it, especially the little ones.
4. [Journey](#) by Aaron Becker. Becker's books are fantastical and packed with detail. If you love lush illustrations, this is your choice.
5. [The Girl and the Bicycle](#) by Mark Pett. This is a really sweet story about two key themes: persistence and generosity. A good one to study if you are wanting to delve into wordless storytelling.
6. [Flora and the Flamingo](#) by Molly Idle. Really funny and whimsical. A little girl in a pink leotard and tutu dances with a flamingo. Just a really fun and sweet book.
7. [The Lion and the Bird](#) by Marianne Dubuc. This isn't quite wordless, but nearly so. It's a lovely story that uses space and silence to indicate loneliness and longing. It's a pretty book, and rather solemn in its form and message.
8. [The Hole](#) by Øyvind Torseter. This book is hilarious. It does have a small amount of dialogue but the words are so sparse you can really consider this a wordless, or at least nearly wordless book. The images focus around an actual hole in the pages of the book... so this is a special project that absolutely must be in print. The hole moves around and it is quite a problem for our protagonist, who needs to put it in a box and bring it to a lab for investigative testing.

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9. [Chalk](#) by Bill Thomson. This story is about the transformational and inspirational affect of drawing. Children draw images in chalk on the ground and they come alive. The illustrations by Thomson are textured dry pastel drawings with a great amount of detail.

10. [The Red Book](#) by Barbara Lehman. This talented illustrator has done several amazing illustrated books using just pictures to convey a story, and they are all really good. This is probably the most romantic one and it won her the Caldecott Honor. It's a lovely and whimsical story about how a book can transport you.

11. [Pancakes for Breakfast](#) by Tomie dePaula. This author and illustrator is best known for his series of books about Strega Nona and Big Anthony. In this particular story, an elderly lady wants to make pancakes for breakfast - only to find, step-by-step, that she has none of the ingredients. She needs milk, so gets it by milking the cow. She needs butter too, and so churns the butter. She needs eggs - quite a lot of work before a first cup of coffee! It's a sweet book, very idealistic, showing through images where things come from. Kids really enjoy pointing out the little story details in this book.

12. [Zoom!](#) by Istvan Banyai. Banyai has also created a sequel to this title. The idea is clever and it draws the viewer into what is happening. We go deeper and deeper into an image until it ultimately becomes a completely different image. It's fun, and can get a class vividly talking about it.

These are my personal picks, some of them chosen for their artistry, some chosen for the story they reveal. What do you make of wordless books? Do you have a favorite? Write below and let me know.

Keep creating, no matter what.

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