

Welcome to the Professional Booksellers School

Bookstore Development Series

Marketing, Display & Storytelling Excellence

Workshop Three of Five



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**With help, inspiration and collaboration from many.*

Instructions:

First, please print this document.

Think about a book you love. Maybe the last one that really struck you. Can you see the word on the page in places in your mind? Can you recall some of the key scenes as if you were IN them? Though research never concludes, it certainly provides a lot of supportive evidence that reading in a physical book is more powerful than listening OR reading on a screen. Our brains light up differently on an MRI. We score better on tests. We are more likely to remember what we read in a book for longer — a whole lifetime, perhaps — than what we heard or saw on a screen.

We wrote this in the belief that we're doing something important when we help someone read in a book. Does it make sense to print and use that superpower as we explore these topics together?

When you have completed the reading and your responses, **tackle the demonstration challenges** (it should take about an hour and a half for all of them) and document your efforts in our Discord channel]. **That will signal your completion of this session and help us award points toward completion.**

As before, you have two weeks to complete this workshop. We will talk via zoom about your experiences, leveraging the power of our cohort. After the zoom, the next workshop will be available.

To read more about the studies on reading retention from physical books and paper, reference the articles in the Bibliography and Reference section.

This is the third of the five workshops:

Completed: 1. Your Book Haven Space (Crafting Experiences & Setting the Scene)

Completed 2. I'm Curious... Marketing & Display as Emotional Curiosity - This week

3. Knowing You, Knowing Me (Using our Experience, Strength, Hope and Connections)

4. Better Together (How Marketing, Display, Events and Curation Work Better in Alignment)

5. Unforgettable (Methods of Storytelling in Display at Macro and Micro Levels)

Workshop Three: Knowing You, Knowing Me

Building on the Power of Curiosity with the power of personalization.

We've been thinking about sparking curiosity in thinking about our bookstore like a publisher thinks about a book: we've thought about our "big idea," the first line that we want in the heads and hearts of those who enter and 'read" our spaces with the help of Pattern Languages. You've thought about shelving protocols as part of your patterns. You've drawn your flow as people experience it, and thought about your flow as you want it to be. Flow is so important.

And together, we have thought about that flow – the structure of the plot – the Act I, Act II and Act III of a store visit. We've been thinking in big picture terms and in this session, we're thinking more granularly about display strategy.

If the previous two workshops were the equivalent of an overall structured edit to our book, this session is the equivalent of a workshop on good writing and design. We don't have typewriters or keyboards in the shop – we have books and book related objects that carry the store's narrative.

Our aim is to get rooted in the fundamentals of great display, informed by the retail scientists, successful bookshops and street markets of the world.

Think about the last time your curiosity was really engaged — and let's think beyond the walls of the bookshop. Think for a moment about something that sparked your curiosity recently. Was it from a conversation? A display in a store? An ad or piece of content on social media?

To be curious is to want to know more, to lean in, to attend mentally and emotionally and to be compelled forward in some way.

"Curiouser and curiouser!" Cried Alice (she was so much surprised, that for the moment she quite forgot how to speak good English)." — Lewis Carroll

Take a second and write two curiosities that have been sparked for you and where that "spark" happened:

1. _____

2. _____

Curiosity is a fundamental building block of good writing and also of book selling. And we know that curiosity is a word for a fledgling sort of interest. And interest is the key to all reading. A low level reader will outperform a high level reader in comprehension and completion if that low

level reader also has high interest in the text. And a high level reader will underperform if there is low interest in the text.

None of us are much readers without high interest.

And you know what sparks curiosity best? You. Authentic, interesting, vulnerable you.

You are the source of a vast canvas of curiosity-sparking experiences, ideas, and dilemmas.

We've often heard the refrain that booksellers and the personalization of the independent bookshop are the difference between an impersonal big box feeling and something real and wonderful.

It isn't about size: when Amazon tried to copy Indies, they copied many Indie practices. They copied shelves that were developed for Indie bookstores (feature faceouts), they copied our shelf talkers and our typical Indie footprint. But they lacked soul and fell flat. They lacked the "good writing" that comes from a real person (or persons) who inhabit the shop.

Interestingly, James Daunt as CEO of B&N (part of a longstanding Indie book family before helping Waterstone's), seems intent on bringing the Indie spirit into the B&N world, where bookseller passions are encouraged to drive displays.

It is ironic that sometimes we forget to infuse ourselves into the bookshop, when we are indeed the secret sauce. In her book on writing, Ruta Sepetys encourages writers to look at ourselves as a story, and her book *You: The Story* is the perfect muse for our work in book display.

Most of us have a large percentage of skimmers: they walked into our shops secretly hoping that their curiosity would be sparked, that they might make a discovery. If they make a discovery, it becomes a story that they'll tell someone else, because we are all storytellers and love good copy.

So let's give them some.

Shelf Talkers:

We do simple acts of writing with shelf talkers. Here are some thoughts as you write:

1. What makes you like this book? This is not what you like about this book, but what, deep in you, is stroked, prodded or compelled by this book? Think about your own experience – the personal, the real. First, know why you like this book – where it meets your life and experience. This is your powerful nugget of truth that will reverberate.
2. Show don't tell. In *You: The Story*, Ruta has a good example:
 - a. Telling: She was a moody teenager.

- b. Showing: At thirteen, she painted her entire bedroom a deep shade of fudge, even the insides of the drawers. She christened it “the poop cocoon.”

As an example for Lisa, writing a shelf talker about *The Song of the Cell* by Siddhartha Mukherjee:

1. What makes her like this book?

My Dad died of cancer, several of my friends have cancer, and I have had cancer and it helped me see cells completely differently. It felt empowering in otherwise powerless situations.

2. Show, don't tell:

Tell: This book helps you understand the history of cellular biology.

Show: Empowered: I know what my friend should ask the oncologist this week.

Or for a memoir like *Bomb Shelter* by Mary Laura Philpott?

1. What makes you like this book?

It is my favorite gift to stressed-out daughter-in-laws, particularly one who has had a hard time getting her groove back after her son was in an accident. And it relaxes me such that I fell asleep often while reading it.

2. Show, don't tell:

Tell: The queen of inner dialogue puts words to the human condition in a life-affirming and funny

Show: I fell asleep often while reading. It was the sweetest rest. Every read was like that – first, I was laughing, and then boom - sound asleep. The highest recommendation I have.

A third example – some YA fiction this time with another book by Ruta Sepetys, *Shades of Grey*.

1. What makes you like this book?

It's story driven rather than character driven and well told. I appreciate the research.

(This is intellectual, but not really powerfully personal, so let's try going a little deeper?)

It has become part of what I know, what I care about, what I believe and it feels so eerily connected to where we are today. My fears about our political situation as a country are played out in historical reality.

(Better, we're getting to the emotional answer – fear and hope – and ready to write.)

2. Show, don't tell:

Tell: A historically accurate narrative, this book provides stirring awareness of present day dynamics.

Show: The solemn awareness this book planted grows in me as I watch the news. I've bought a dozen of them as gifts...because it's something I must share.

Note: we love handwritten shelf talkers, and when you do that wonderful "show" statement, make sure it is legible and in print (many struggle to read cursive today).

Thought Pause: Now, try writing a powerful shelf talker about a book you love.

First: Name the book; what makes you like this book? (dig for the emotional/life answer that only could come from you)

Second: show, don't tell in a shelf talker: (write scintillating copy here – brief and real)

Books as Nerve Endings and Display Standards:

Imagine each book as a nerve ending in a living space—each one has the potential to ignite curiosity and draw customers into your shop. Our shelf talkers help them vibrate with energy, and so does our shelving practice. Your well-written shelf talkers – easy to read and scintillating copy – reflect the energy that YOU get from the book, and that energy translates to your customer.

And that book with the shelf talker is placed in a context with other books.

Let's move up one level from the individual book to a whole shelf and revisit how your shelves are speaking. Every book and book related item in your store IS a display – every single thing is on display. Often we use the term "display" when we're thinking about a floor fixture or table that is separate from the shelves. But we know that the shelves are not library shelves, nor home bookshelves. We don't have shelves for storage, but for connection and selling (which is why we call them fixtures – the physical cases and shelves have a job to do).

How are you doing with the protocols suggested by Lisa Gozashti of Brookline Booksmith in Workshop One? Have you tried something else?

As a reminder, some of her standards included starting and ending with spine outs in an always-full looking shelf. Lisa believes that a face out on the ends feels unframed – like it's falling off an edge somehow. And her aesthetic is that faceouts should be separated by at least 2 spine out books. We're looking for the faceouts to be easily read in an S-pattern by the eye, and it's especially nice if you can connect them with color.

She suggested that we not split authors between shelves, and that we use no more than 3 of a given book to maintain a feeling of specialness and scarcity.

Displays are a form of art and it is your artist's eye that is beckoned here.

For floor fixtures like tables, make sure your heights – when books are in place – are between 34" and 36". This is the optimal "waist high" that flies. Lower, at 30" or less, and books will move much more slowly.

And for face up displays, pay attention to the appearance of the approach – when you are approaching the display, do you see only whites of paper? We want to try to see as much communication as possible, and positioning the face up books such that their spines show on at least one side of the display makes it more attractive.

And, since you're creating an experience for many skimmers and dippers, it may be interesting group the most interesting and eye-catching covers without regard to rigid categories, but with some other connecting force, like a theme.

Fundamental Display Practices

Every display – every book, every shelf, every object – is part of a "whole story" that you are telling in this store. And it is "written" – developed and designed – for the personas who are your "target readers."

As examples:

At Plenty Bookshop, the big idea is that Mister Rogers and Dolly Parton had a baby and asked C.S.Lewis, Shel Silverstein and Brene Brown to be Godparents. Given that big idea, the story unfolds in each section as if Mister Rogers and Dolly are telling it: the curation is informed by this idea, with heavy emphasis on loving and knowing our neighbors, on reading for pleasure, on being yourself, and on discovering new things with an innocent sort of pure curiosity.

At Libreria in England, the manager left his work with Daunt to develop a new concept, which bends genres into thematic organization. Their big idea is serendipitous discovery and Libreria organizes all the books according to high interest themes. In this store, fiction, nonfiction,

poetry and memoir live happily together in the service of consistent themes that include “Enchantment for the Disenchanted,” “Mothers, Madonnas, and Whores,” “Madness and Civilization,” and “States of Mind.”

At Story and Song in Florida, the big idea is about bringing island dwellers together as a community of matures and sharing that community with visitors. Their personas include the Grandparent who wants to share experience and wisdom with grandchildren that live afar and the Retired Couple wanting to invest themselves in learning and personal growth. Their curation, their colors, lighting and display are all designed for this audience.

There are far too many display methods to cover in this session and you likely know many of them:

Rules of 3 and 5: people naturally gravitate to groupings of 3 or 5. There is something beautiful about that balance, so it’s something to think about when positioning books and objects.

Pyramidding: we like things to start at the top and pyramid toward the bottom. The top gives us a focal point and the pyramid gradually expands on our understanding of the display.

Color Flow: we like connected colors and are naturally drawn to color organization. If the display is predominantly one color or features a color, it feels more comprehensible. A bouquet of colors is also attractive, but even then, one or two color carry the theme.

Instead of the display methods, which would be in a more fundamentals of display course, let’s focus here on the underlying principles that inform all practices in a deep way:

1. Understand Your Target Audience

- **Persona:** Take time to define your personas – give them names, ages, birth places, experiences, a back story – just as you’d do with a character you’re writing in a story.
- **Motivations and Drivers:** Consider what is bringing them to your store and what they need and want – emotionally, psychologically, physically, intellectually...

Thought Pause:

My Chosen Persona as a Focus:

Pronoun, Name and Age:

Education and Interests:

Where does this person live and what kind of work do they do?

Motivations and Drivers:

What is bringing this person into your shop?

What are their deeper needs? (what HBR calls their “Job to be done?”)

Helpful service without red tape — what can you do to meet them where they are and serve their needs?

Sparkling Curiosity:

As you are writing shelf talkers and putting signs on displays, name one message that can authentically come from you — an interest, an experience – that will also be of interest to this person. What might spark curiosity for them?

Other Display considerations as you plan an ideal customer experience:

2. Location and Placement: we want to place fixtures to facilitate that path of discovery. If you have a straight-down-the-middle design, folks are likely to walk that path. If you design something that undulates through your space, you’re likely to see that.

Ideally, every placement leads and connects to the next visually... like bread crumbs or next chapters of your story.

We suggest you look back at your customer “heatmap” from Workshop One – what did you see customers doing when you tracked their movement? Use this to inform: placement and signage (we’re looking for scintillating and interesting signs, not just perfunctory and informative).

3.Theme, Design and Aesthetics: this is where we pull together color schemes, scintillating signs, graphics and objects from your life (remember that as a pattern language?)

Look at each display and ask “what is this saying?” “what is this about” — if it is clear then folks will read the display left to right or top to bottom. They’ll get all of it. When a display is like a sentence, it reads with clarity.

A theme is more than a topic. A topic is something like “Vacation Reads” while a theme is more like “I don’t remember my last adventure” or “My Life of Adventure.” And the theme needs to fit in this story – in this store – in a cohesive way. Edit what really doesn’t belong in your story — great editing is key to great writing, and it is key to great stores as well.

4. Use of Lighting: Lighting tells us what to feel, how to act, and what is important. In a theater, we move around when the lights are high, but we don’t move when the lighting focus is on the stage. The lighting makes the stage important and lighting a special book elevates the importance of that book. Everything can’t be equally important or it becomes boring (think overhead fluorescent lighting effects in big box stores) — the variations in lighting are like crescendos and climaxes in a book.

5. Accessibility and Navigation

- **Ease of Access:** Ensure that customers can easily reach and interact with the products. Avoid overcrowding and keep pathways clear. Notice things that stick out or tend to fall down — fragile attention is broken and it’s like spilling the drink on the dinner table. It really spoils the momentum of the story when things fall or are bumped.

6. Product Arrangement

- **Vertical and Horizontal Placement:** Utilize both vertical and horizontal space to display products at different heights and levels and remember the important sweet zone just above eye level down to thigh level (what the eye can reach without head movement)
- **Focal Points:** Make sure the eye has a place to LAND in each display and that the landing spot communicates in the way you want it to.
 - Example:
 - “My Life of Adventure” display on a three tiered unit — at the top of the display do you put “500 Places to Eat Before You Die” or “Hungry Planet” or the “Cast Iron” cookbook?

Answer: let the top book speak like a first line in the narrative. Any of these can work so long as you follow THAT book in theme horizontally or vertically below.

Note: the S-curve is key to horizontal and vertical working together. Without more instruction on that, try noticing how your eye travels.

7. Signage and Information

- **Clear Signage:** Use clear, concise signage to convey important information, such as prices, discounts, and those scintillating shelf talkers. Remember that we are trying not to DISRUPT the browse with a sign – so we want the signs to matter, or to be omitted altogether. Our hope is to get folks out of a “discarding” mentality where they say “not that, not that, not that...” and into a curious state where they are browsing and one thing leads to another.

8. Interactive Elements

- **Hands-On Interaction:** Include elements that encourage customers to touch, try, or test the products. This is the blank canvas that beckons your persona to participate – and when they participate, they are invested. A good analogy is the way that nail salons engage their customers, particularly with walk-in traffic where a customer is likely to wait. A good salon greets every newcomer and then invites them to pick a color. The moment we make a personal choice, we have made a personal connection. In the nail salon example, we’ll wait for a much longer time, and have a lot of patience about it, because we have made a personal choice.

Design some interactive elements that are great for your particular persona.

- **Digital Integration:** Consider incorporating digital screens or QR codes for additional information or interactive experiences.

9. Regular Maintenance

- **Cleanliness:** Keep the display clean and tidy to maintain a professional appearance. Do you prefer books to be all the way forward on the edge or tucked back? The edge helps avoid dust and helps you see where the books have been shopped, and some like it best for this reason.
- **Restocking:** Regularly restock and rearrange products to ensure the display remains appealing and fully stocked. A great bookstaff is always in motion – not putting piles of books on display (this takes away from specialness and scarcity) unless it is a very special area of focus – but constantly replenishing, repositioning and reviving the displays.

10. Use of Props and Decor

- **Props:** Enhance the display with props that complement the products and create a more immersive experience. Using objects from your life and home is a great way to add a sense of place. Story & Song used a big tree trunk in a display about Amelia Island, harkening to the hurricanes that had destroyed so many trees. Plenty’s staff regularly brings in props from home to flesh out a theme – from turtle dishes to basketballs. It’s fun and it has the feel of real – because it is.

11. Notice what they do and ask them

- Nothing will be as valuable as paying attention to customer behavior and talking with them about it. What would compel them to look at this section that everyone is walking past? What caused them to stop and pick this up?

A note about sales shelves: as Paco Underhill writes, the “sale at the front” is a real distraction, and he wasn’t even thinking about the kind of journey that we’re trying to create in a bookshop. If you want to integrate a “sale” – make it part of the discovery journey (“A treasure!”) Brookline Booksmith has secret sales that they give to their most loyal customers – allowing those customers to experience discounts when they find a special card in the curated collection. This is a good idea that keeps people “in the browse” and also rewards discovery, which is what we love to find in stories.

Thought Pause:

Given the principles just reviewed, what stands out as a focus for you?

When you walk into your bookshop, do YOU feel like you must touch all of the books or do they simply feel nice and tidy? Tidy and attractive is a first step – but we’re creating an experience here. We’re writing a story in books and igniting curiosity. If 10 people can walk by a shelf without touching anything, without pausing – then that shelf is underperforming and needs attention.

Thought Pause on Fixtures (Wall Shelving and Floor Unit Shelving):

What do you want your shelving “rules” to be in your store?

Have you tried them and seen their effectiveness?

How about for floor fixtures and face up displays? What are your “rules” for great display there?

The Light and Meeting the Eye:

Are your displays all in the light or when you photograph them do you see shadows? Things don't sell well in the shadows. Can you fix the lighting situation or reposition the books so that each one is fed by light? Perhaps we should think about books like we think about plants, asking each of them if they have sufficient light to connect with their reader.

Angles help tremendously in this quest. Try this: if you have the ability to angle your wall shelves, go to one of them that is positioned slightly below waist height. Look at it. Then try tipping it up toward you until you feel it – that perfect connection space for the eye. The “right” angle hits you emotionally, you feel it viscerally. If you happen to have Franklin Fixtures, they are designed for that angulation but even so, often that critical feature is under-used. If you don't have shelves built to angle (with a piece in the back to keep the books from hitting the back of the case), you can achieve angles with book stands as well. It's harder to get the perfect angle this way, but will still have an impact that you will see immediately in touch. And you can feel it yourself. This helps ease the eye and like a nice human greeting, it helps the books meet their people by looking them in the eye..

The psychology of lighting examines how different types and intensities of light affect human behavior, mood, productivity, and overall well-being. Here are some key aspects of how lighting influences psychology:

1. Mood and Emotion:

- **Bright Light:** Generally enhances mood and energy levels. It can evoke feelings of happiness and alertness.
- **Dim Light:** Often creates a more relaxed and intimate atmosphere, which can be calming but may also lead to feelings of lethargy or sadness if overused.
- **Natural Light:** Exposure to natural light improves mood, reduces stress, and increases feelings of well-being. It also helps regulate the body's circadian rhythms.

2. Productivity and Concentration:

- **Bright, White Light:** It can boost concentration, alertness, and focus.
- **Cool, Blue Light:** Known to enhance alertness, but feels like surgery should be performed. :)

3. Perception of Space and Environment:

- **Lighting Placement:** Proper lighting can make a space appear larger, more open, and more inviting. Poor lighting can make spaces feel cramped and unwelcoming.
- **Accent Lighting:** Highlights specific areas or objects, drawing attention and creating focal points. It can enhance the aesthetic appeal of a space.

4. Social Interaction and Behavior:

- **Warm, Soft Light:** Promotes social interaction and can make people feel more comfortable and relaxed. It's often used in restaurants, living rooms, and social spaces.

- **Harsh, Fluorescent Light:** Can create a sterile or uncomfortable atmosphere, potentially leading to stress and discomfort.
- 5. **Color Temperature:**
 - **Warm Light (2700K-3000K):** Creates a cozy, inviting atmosphere. Ideal for living spaces and areas where relaxation is the goal.
 - **Neutral Light (3500K-4100K):** Provides a balance between warmth and coolness, suitable for work environments and general lighting purposes.
 - **Cool Light (5000K-6500K):** Mimics daylight and enhances alertness and visibility. Commonly used in offices, hospitals, and task-oriented spaces.
- 6. **Intensity and Control:**
 - **Adjustable Lighting:** Allows for customization of the lighting environment to suit different activities and preferences. Dimmers and smart lighting systems provide flexibility and enhance comfort.
 - **Uniform Lighting:** Reduces shadows and glare, providing consistent illumination that can reduce eye strain and improve visual comfort.

Understanding the psychological effects of lighting is like understanding the use of font size and selection in a book: in a bookstore it tells you immediately what the experience is about. Turn up full fluorescents and you have a utility space, a work space, a transactional space. Turn on the warm string lights and you have a completely different environment – romantic, settling, relaxed, inviting. Skimmers will make a snap decision about your store based on the lighting and color choices – in less than a second they will label the space in their minds.

The Color:

For a “Skimmer” or even a “Dipper” – color is an especially important psychological shorthand. When the Kellogg company releases a new cereal, they spend months with teams focused on color choice. Color evokes feeling and feelings compel touch... and when we touch things, we are 73% more likely to buy them (Underhill).

Book publishers know that color is going to evoke an impression of the book and think thoroughly about reflecting the contents of the book in a way that speaks to the target audience. A lot of customers have remarked that the color and design in the cover doesn't seem to match the contents of *Lessons in Chemistry*, which has been a national top seller. But perhaps the color and image choice were aimed at the persona of the target buyer – attracting the same audience that appreciated the underlying message in the movie *Barbie*?

When you started putting together your bookstore, you thought about your big idea and the colors that would help you convey that idea. Now is a good moment to revisit that thinking. Do you have a brand document with established palettes? Are you being consistent in developing that palette throughout the store?

The choice of color and its use is strategically important. For the next movie you enjoy, notice that they've chosen a color palette that is present in every single scene, with varying degrees, connoting changes in plot and feeling. If they choose a dark green, a light green, beige and an atmospheric blue with some wood tones, you'll see those colors repeated in the cabinetry, wall art and papers, flooring and other set objects. And the characters all have color palettes too that communicate personality and help move the plot. If you were an extra on a movie set, you'd get the instruction to bring a suitcase full of clothes in particular hues and colors and one of the directors would determine what you should wear for the scenes.

So as we're thinking about your bookstore like a publisher would think about a book, let's think about your colors deeply. Color is in the bones of your store – in your wall and floor fixtures, in the ceiling, wall and flooring colors. Color is in the atmosphere of your store – in the amount of daylight, in the tone and placement of your in store lighting, in the reflected images from outside and even reflected from the clothing colors that people in your area of the world are wearing right now. And color is in the books and book related merchandise and reflected broadly in what you choose to show in a face out space.

Color, like music, signals feelings and messages.

1. **Red:**

- **Emotion:** Excitement, passion, energy, and urgency.
- **Behavior:** Can increase heart rate and create a sense of urgency. Often used to provoke immediate actions.
- **Perception:** Can be associated with danger or warning signs but also with love and warmth.

2. **Blue:**
 - **Emotion:** Calmness, trust, and serenity.
 - **Behavior:** Can reduce appetite and create a sense of security and stability. Commonly used by businesses to build trust.
 - **Perception:** Often associated with professionalism, reliability, and peace.
3. **Green:**
 - **Emotion:** Relaxation, nature, and health.
 - **Behavior:** Can promote a sense of balance and harmony, growth.
 - **Perception:** Associated with freshness, renewal, and safety.
4. **Yellow:**
 - **Emotion:** Happiness, optimism, and energy.
 - **Behavior:** Can stimulate mental activity and generate a sense of warmth. Sometimes used to grab attention.
 - **Perception:** Can be overwhelming if overused, but generally associated with cheerfulness and positivity.
5. **Purple:**
 - **Emotion:** Luxury, creativity, and spirituality.
 - **Behavior:** Can stimulate imagination and convey a sense of mystery and sophistication.
 - **Perception:** Often associated with royalty, wealth, and wisdom.
6. **Orange:**
 - **Emotion:** Enthusiasm, warmth, and excitement.
 - **Behavior:** Can increase energy levels and encourage social interaction. Often used to create a sense of playfulness.
 - **Perception:** Associated with friendliness, fun, and affordability.
7. **Pink:**
 - **Emotion:** Love, compassion, and nurturing.
 - **Behavior:** Can have a calming effect and reduce aggression. Often used to evoke feelings of tenderness and care.
 - **Perception:** Associated with femininity, sweetness, and romance.
8. **Black:**
 - **Emotion:** Power, elegance, and sophistication.
 - **Behavior:** Can create a sense of mystery and authority. Often used to convey luxury and exclusivity.
 - **Perception:** Can be seen as intimidating or depressing if overused, but generally associated with formality and seriousness.
9. **White:**
 - **Emotion:** Purity, cleanliness, and simplicity.
 - **Behavior:** Can create a sense of space and encourage minimalism. Often used to convey clarity and openness.
 - **Perception:** Associated with innocence, freshness, and modernity.

10. **Gray:**

- **Emotion:** Neutrality, balance, and calmness.
- **Behavior:** Can create a sense of composure and formality.
- **Perception:** Sometimes seen as dull or conservative, but generally associated with sophistication and practicality.

11. **Brown:**

- **Emotion:** Stability, reliability, and comfort.
- **Behavior:** Can create a sense of warmth and security. Often used to convey a sense of earthiness and authenticity.
- **Perception:** Associated with naturalness, dependability, and support.

These associations can vary based on cultural context and individual experiences, but these general trends provide a useful guide for understanding the psychological impact of colors.

Thought Pause on Light and Color:

Where do you see shadowed areas (books, shelves or whole fixtures) in your store and what would you like to do to improve?

Returning to your “big idea” and “first line”, what do you want your color palette to communicate? What colors are you intentionally using?

How might you improve or be more deliberate about consistent use of color?

Please take a couple of pictures of your shop and examine the lighting and colors, posting that in the student notes so that we can look at it together?

What have we done in this workshop? We're still telling your story in display..

First we looked at how you can bring your own voice into the store through the shelf talkers and display themes. As the “writer” – your story begins with a deep look at why you love these books and what they are doing in your life.

Then we looked at the individual book, with its shelf talker and the personal message that is both unexpected and real. It's like an important phrase in our store's story.

We also looked more deeply at one of your important personas, thinking about that person like we would develop a character profile in writing a book. We thought about their needs and motivations, drivers and hopes in entering your store.

Thinking about persona prepared us to think about serving them, and small things we might offer along the way to enhance their experience.

Then we looked at a shelf – like a paragraph in a book. We edited it and looked at a structure that was compelling, asking you to establish those shelving standards for yourself.

Finally, we pulled our gaze back more broadly to the entire store, looking at other forms of display and some undergirding principles. This is like pulling back and looking at how the story is unfolding overall. This is where we're refining our “heat map” from Workshop I – where we were noticing what people do – and starting to look for the ideal path through the shop. What is intended? What are we going to offer in what areas?

We looked at the color choices and lighting in more detail, looking for eye connections, shadows and the creation of mood and setting through these choices.

This course is about asking great questions – the kinds of questions that leave space for your thoughts and hopefully, igniting your own curiosity about what is possible in your space. We are not selling books – we are creating an experience worthy of retelling and revisiting. We are creating relationships through this experience through the language of grace that translates to an environment of grace.

And our hope is you and each person working in your store finds space to add as a writer – a contributor – to this cohesive story that is your bookshop. As you invite this authentic voice into your shelf talkers and display curation, and unite that voice with a shared story like a good editor, you'll connect with that person that this “story” was written to engage.

A great writer starts with knowing themselves. And a great storyteller knows their audience. “Knowing me, and knowing you” is at the heart of your story.