



## Tutor Report Form

Student name:	Pam Wright
Student number:	506840
Module title:	Graphic Design 1
Assignment number:	Assignment 2: Problem Solving

Dear Pam

Thanks for your respond to the second part of the module, which explored problem solving, working to a brief, designing a book cover, visualising your ideas, critiquing your work, finishing your artwork and designing for a point of sale display.

### Overall Comments

Overall an excellent response to the second assignment and the exercises, you've produced a substantial amount of work for this part of the module and it's clear that you can deal with the practical demands of designing as well as demonstrating strong design thinking.

Your working to a brief exercise showed a clear and analytical design process, in which you unpicked the assumptions and implications of each of the options very well. This form of questioning is very important in drilling down into the core of what is required / necessary to answer a particular design problem. I thought the way you also assessed your own interests and skills levels was both realistic and a good way to judge a suitable brief to undertake, and I agree with you that the simple briefs are often the hardest. Yes, your right this part of the module is all about working methodologies and the HG Wells book cover exercise displayed this design process in action very well, from research, gathering source material to ideas development and critiquing what worked and why. I like the fact that you're trying to condense the process to get your ideas out quickly – half an hour in Waterstones to look at book

spines, fast tracking your understanding of HG Wells, etc. Research should be driven by specific questions rather than a more amorphous sense of being influenced, so defining your research questions early on will really help you move on quickly. The suggestion to try something radical is a way of fast tracking your creative process by producing ideas that are in some ways beyond what is required – so, radical in an unexpected sense – thereby putting ideas down that are at the edge of the brief's requirements. Sometimes these radical solutions can refresh your thinking, provide reassurance that a more conservative approach is required or simply be the answer required. I can see how the word might not resonate with you – it is a very loaded term – but equally 'outside the box' is very loaded in a business context. Your ideas of continuum was a great response and I do think you've come to a conclusion; a continuum of most expected / literal to least expected / literal is a perfect summation of the process.

The HG Wells covers themselves have really benefited from your design process; solid research into existing covers, the nature of the novels themselves, interest source material to work from and a range of experimentation and idea development. I thought the abstraction of your watercolour pieces were great – very simple shapes that left the interpretation more open for the reader – I loved the Island of Dr Moreau cover (two eyes staring in a Day-Glo pink beam?) but perhaps the fresh colours and watercolours made it feel too friendly? The Redsand reference material was excellent – a really interesting visual link between the description of the War of the Worlds invaders and the island. The drawn set had vibrant colours, loose open line work and some interesting typography – with a bit more work these could have really developed – the relationship between the type and image needed a little more consideration as well as the overall composition. Taking the type off the image and perhaps exploring how you could place the main images off centre would have helped – at the moment everything is competing for the same visual space. The Island of Doctor Moreau was the strongest of the set, with a slightly more sinister use of colour and the relationship between the type and island worked well. Your second set using the glass jug were great – much more intriguing – which also referenced classic sci-fi film (The Incredible Journey) and had an almost 1960s quality to them. In terms of working process, this risk taking is great – even though they only took half an hour, they've given you a new set of ideas and visual language to work with.

The point of sales exercise, as you've pointed out is not as easy as you first imagined – trying to get food to look good in print is a difficult exercise, however I thought you did a decent job of it, the photos worked very well. The sliced montage approach was

a good choice, thereby giving you a selection of food to present and a way of cropping the images to get the best from them. The typography is strong enough to sit over these images without too much disruption and the use of green ties in nicely with your green beans. I thought your strap-line on Israeli products added another dimension to the project – one which you could have pursued in addition to the brief – how could you use this political stance within your design thinking – images of specific fruit and veg that comes from the region, etc?

It was great to see that you were able to bring the poster exercise into a live context. This piece really benefited from some careful pruning – clients always seem to want to over narrate their story, when in reality a few key points are all that people are going to take away from reading something – what is it, when is it, who's it for, where is it, how much, etc. Occam's razor seems to have really worked here. It's interesting that your initial reaction was to opt for photos as a way of making things arty and that you saw type only as being more functional. Can you not be creative / arty and only use type?

### **Feedback on assignment**

I thought the ideas and realisation of the cards was excellent; you moved the brief away from celebrating new days to a much more open-ended card that encouraged a sort of camaraderie through the sentiments of 'well done'. The link between the visual and the sentiment wasn't that linear, the card was more decorative than specific to an event – could you remove the 'well done' to leave the card completely open to interpretation and it still would have worked?

Again your design analysis, research and thinking was central to the project – identifying the fluffy and fizzy end of the market and positioning yourself as an alternative. Your mood boards worked very well as a visual representation of your research, ideas and overall direction – nothing wrong with following your gut reactions.

Your playful design thinking started with your leaflet cities and ended up with a beautiful and very useable take on the traditional oblong card. The experimentation with folds was central to the creative process, allowing you

the room to play and develop a format to explore. I'm not sure if I agree that you've not got a handle on your methodology yet – you clearly set your research questions – how can I play with pattern, colour and not use images – and then went about exploring this but trying out different combinations, taking risks and evaluating the results. Seems like a good design process to me.

Excellent use of colour and layout, the combinations of textile and colours worked very well across all your sets but I do think the final set has resolved some of the smaller issues – where to place your text, the relationship of the stripes to the images and the sets of colours. The first set are perhaps a little too bold, the second a little insipid but the final set has a good balance between the two. Once they're folded they look great.

### **Learning logs/critical essays**

Excellent learning journal in which you have demonstrate some strong design thinking, analysis and reflection. I like the fact that you've used the journal to summarise your thinking, working process and decision making, highlighting the key points and identifying gaps in your knowledge and understanding. **It is clear that writing is an important part in your working process.** It was interesting to note your posts of working with freeware software, I might have to pick your brains on this later.

### **Suggested reading / viewing**

Given your interest in political posters and design you might want to look at my recent OCA post of the first things first manifesto and Adbusters, as well as Liz McQuiston's Graphic Agitation. [www.weareoca.com](http://www.weareoca.com)

Keep up the good work, all the best Christian

Tutor name:	Christian Lloyd
Date	6 April
Next assignment due	20 May