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Elizabeth L. Lee

May 2017

EXPLORING DIVERSITY REPRESENTATION IN LITERATURE FOR CHILDREN:
A CONTENT ANALYSIS OF THE 2015-16
TEXAS BLUEBONNET AWARD MASTER LIST

A Dissertation Presented to the
Faculty of the College of Education
University of Houston

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education

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Abstract

Each year the Texas Bluebonnet Award Program publishes the Texas Bluebonnet Award Master List (TBAML). The TBAML is a list of 20 trade books from which eligible students vote for their favorite book to be considered for the award. Today trade books supplement lessons, workbooks, textbooks, and stock school and classroom libraries. They are increasingly being used in conjunction with all subjects. Culturally relevant books have been shown to improve literacy rates and connect students to the curriculum, which makes it important for students to be represented in the books they read. The purpose of this study was to examine the 20 books on the 2015-16 TBAML to determine if the demographic diversity of the main characters reflected the demographic diversity of Texas students in grades 3-6 in terms of disability, family structure, gender, grade level, race, and socio-economic status. The researcher used content analysis to collect demographic data about the main characters in the books on the TBAML. The researcher collected data from the Texas Education Agency (TEA) and the United States Census Bureau concerning the demographics of Texas students. The researcher compared the data collected from the books to the data collected from the TEA and the United States Census Bureau in order to determine whether the demographic diversity of the targeted readers was represented by the TBAML. The results of this study indicated that of the six categorical variables examined, race and socio-economic status were the most underrepresented followed by family structure and disability. Grade level and gender were sufficiently represented. Diversity representation influences readers and should be an important factor in determining the content of children's literature and its associated

awards. The TBAML book selection committee should ensure that all Texas students are proportionately represented by the characters in the TBAML books.

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Chapter I

Introduction

As the student vicariously shares through literature the emotions and aspirations of other human beings, he can gain heightened sensitivity to the needs and problems of others remote from him in temperament, in space, or in social environment; he can develop a greater imaginative capacity to grasp the meaning of abstract laws or political and social theories for actual human lives. Such sensitivity and imagination are part of the indispensable equipment of the citizens of a democracy. (Rosenblatt, 1976, p. 274)

Introduction

Every year children's trade books are nominated for and receive awards. The award examined in this study is the Texas Bluebonnet Award (TBA). It was established in 1979 and is sponsored by the Texas Association of School Librarians (TASL) and the Children's Round Table (CRT) of the Texas Library Association (TLA). The mission of the TBA program is to encourage Texas children to "read more, explore a variety of current books, develop powers of discrimination, and identify their favorite books" (Texas Library Association, 2015).

According to the TLA (2015), a committee that consists of librarians representing various regions of Texas selects books for the Texas Bluebonnet Award Master List (TBAML). The List is published annually in November. Titles to be considered are recommended by librarians, teachers, parents, students, and any other interested parties. After receiving nominations, the selection committee reads and discusses the nominated books and then selects 20 titles based on two initial criteria: the author must be a living citizen of the United States or someone who currently resides and publishes in the United States (or has done so in the past), and the titles must have been published within the

three years prior to the TBAML release date. The committee also considers student interests, content, any prior journal reviews, and the literary quality of the books. The committee then decides which books will be on the TBAML. Finally, the students vote on the winner.

Research shows that award-winning books are “the ones that are given as gifts, recommended by professional journals and often [bought in] multiple copies by local libraries” (Albers, 1996, p. 268). Specifically, the TBAML books will be purchased by Texas schools participating in the TBA program and be read by more than 100,000 students in grades 3-6 (Serafini, 2010). Therefore, research on diversity representation in the TBAML books is important because many students from diverse backgrounds will read them. If students feel represented by the main characters in the books they might connect with the literature in more meaningful ways. For example, according to Arbuthnot & Sutherland (1986) diversity in literature offers opportunities for children to have their developmental needs met such as understanding their relationship to society and the natural world as they progress through cognitive and socio-emotional developmental stages. Children’s literature also has the potential to “allow all students to understand their uniqueness, to understand the complexities of ethnicity and culture, and to take pride in who they are as people as well as learn to respect other cultural groups” (Banks, 1989, p. 6).

Therefore, this study will investigate the demographics of the main characters in the books on the 2015-16 TBAML in order to determine the extent to which the diversity of Texas students is represented.

Statement of the Problem

As Cowan and Taxel (2011) pointed out, the United States is a nation of immigrants. Immigration has increased the amount of diversity in Texas, a state that shares a border with Mexico. Due to immigration across that shared border, the Texas public school system has a high Hispanic population (Miller, 2003, p. 282). As Ramsey (2015) noted,

Public schools in Texas are changing rapidly. The picture that emerges in the latest version of the annual snapshot reported by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) is of a giant system of enormous and microscopic school districts with a huge variety of geographic, ethnic, racial, economic and educational diversity. (p. 2)

According to TEA (2016), during the 2015-16 school year Hispanic students made up 52.5% of the total student population in grades 3-6. Further, more than 60% of students from each of those four grade levels were either on the free or reduced price lunch program. Research shows that a lack of representation is particularly significant among readers who belong to ethnic minority groups who are English Language Learners with low family incomes because it is in these groups that the incidence of reading failure is highest (Lonigan & Shanahan, 2010). The Nation's Report Card (2015) states that 68% of 4th grade students classified as English Language Learners performed below the basic reading achievement level. Among the 4th graders eligible for the National School Lunch Program, 44% performed below the basic reading achievement level. In order to raise literacy rates, all children need to be able to connect to the books they read in school.

In addition, the Cooperative Children's Books Center (CCBC), housed in the School of Education at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, annually reports the

number of multicultural titles in print. Compared with titles deemed “mainstream” or “popular,” the number of published multicultural titles by and about people of color remains low. In a CCBC survey of 3,400 titles, Horning (2016) reported the following:

- 7.9% were about African-Americans.
- 1.2% were about Asian-Pacific Americans.
- 3.3% were about U.S. Latinas and Latinos.
- 2.4% were about Native Americans.

The National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) released a Position Statement entitled the “Resolution on the Need for Diverse Children’s and Young Adult Books,” which states that the children’s books published today do not mirror the increase in diversity in states across the country (NCTE, 2015). The relative absence of diversity in children’s and young adult literature attests to the history of bias found in the publishing industry in the United States, which is perhaps a result of American democratic ideals and the effects of political agendas (Kiefer, 2009).

Research also indicates a lack of diversity representation among the individuals who write, review, publish, market, purchase, and choose the recipients of awards in the field of children’s literature (Burton, 2010). Between April 9th and December 11th, 2015, Lee & Low Books (2015) performed a Diversity Baseline Survey of eight review journals and 34 publishers of all sizes across North America. The study found that the majority of those who hold the power in the children’s book industry are heterosexual (88%), White (79%), non-disabled (92%), and female (78%). The homogeneity among those involved with children’s book publishing has not gone unnoticed by others involved in the field.

Miller (2003) asserts, “It is problematic that adults manipulate the system by creating the myth that these books are chosen by children when typically the list of choices is pre-selected by adults” (p. 44). Burton (2010) explained,

Adults write the books, review them, award them, and purchase them. This can create a situation where adults’ opinions and values drive the publication and recommendations of children’s books. In considering children’s literature, it is important to take a close look at what the children themselves are saying about the books. (p. 42)

Miller further maintains, “If the state book award should represent the children of Texas, then all the children of Texas should be voting on books nominated by children” (p. 365). Perhaps more student participation would increase the likelihood that the books would represent the demographic diversity of the readers.

It is important for organizations, researchers, educators, and those involved with children and their literature to critically examine the content of books. The organization We Need Diverse Books has advocated for “essential changes in the publishing industry to produce and promote literature that reflects and honors the lives of all young people” (We Need Diverse Books, 2015). This organization acknowledges the importance of including all types of diversity in books, including, but not limited to, non-heterosexuals, people of color, gender diversity, people with disabilities, and ethnic, cultural, and religious minorities. Those who support the growth of diversity representation in literature for children and seek to influence change should “interrogate the power structures that discriminate against certain groups and privilege others. Beyond this, as a society, we must confront race, class, and gender relations, the impact of history, and other social issues” (Botelho & Rudman, 2009, p. 9).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to examine the 20 books on the 2015-16 Texas Bluebonnet Award Master List to determine if the demographic diversity of Texas students in grades 3-6 is represented by the characters in the TBAML books.

Research Question

This study is designed to answer the following question:

To what extent do the main characters in the 20 books on the 2015-16 Texas Bluebonnet Award Master List reflect the diversity of Texas students in grades 3-6 in terms of disability, family structure, gender, grade level, race, and socio-economic status?

Significance of the Study

According to Serafini (2010), “Every year over 100,000 children in grades 3-6 vote for their favorite book from a list of titles” nominated for the TBAML. Books nominated for the TBAML are purchased by schools and local libraries and are used in classrooms across the state of Texas (Texas Library Association, 2015). Therefore, it is significant to determine whether the books on the TBAML include literature that “recognize[s], accept[s], and affirm[s] human differences and similarities related to gender, race, handicap, and class” (Sleeter & Grant, 1988, p. 137) and “include those from various religious backgrounds and geographic regions” (Hillard, 1995, p. 728). As Daniels & Zemelman (2014) stated, “Some of what kids read in school should hold up a mirror to them by including their story, their culture, their experience” (p. 71).

Definitions of Terms

Content Analysis: A system for gathering data in order to identify patterns and messages in a related group of texts.

Diversity: Characteristics related to disability, family structure, gender, grade level, race, and socio-economic status.

Family Structure: The living situation of the main character (both parents, mother only, father only, neither parent).

Gender: The sex of the main character.

Main Character: The character most likely to influence the students who read the books on the TBAML and whose presence and voice are dominant throughout the book.

Race (according to the 2015-16 Texas Education Agency report entitled, “Enrollment by Grade and Race/Ethnicity”): African-American, American Indian, Asian, Hispanic, Pacific Islander, White, or Multiracial.

Disability: The Texas Education Agency’s Public Information Report (PIR) included the following disabilities: auditory impairment, autism, deaf or blindness, emotional disturbance, intellectual disability, learning disability, orthopedic impairment, speech impairment, traumatic brain injury, visual impairment, or other health impairment. According to Texas Education Code § 89.1040, other health impairment may include acute health problems such as asthma, attention deficit disorder or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, diabetes, epilepsy, a heart condition, hemophilia, lead poisoning, leukemia, nephritis, rheumatic fever, sickle cell anemia, and Tourette’s disorder.

Socio-economic Status: For the purposes of this study, there are two categories: students enrolled in the free or reduced price lunch program and those students not

enrolled in the free or reduced price lunch program, determined by using information provided by the Texas Education Agency.

Trade Books: A book published by a commercial publisher and intended for a general audience.

Overview

This content analysis explores how the diversity of Texas students in grades 3-6 is represented in the books on the 2015-16 TBAML using the categorical variables disability, family structure, gender, grade level, race, and socio-economic status. These categorical variables are used to collect data from the books as well as to collect information from the Texas Education Agency and the United States Census Bureau.

Chapter II

Review of the Literature

Introduction

Many researchers have examined diversity in children's literature and its associated awards. Literature serves as a guide as children form their own identities and learn to understand the world. According to Eaton, et al. (1969), literary content that has been considered appropriate for children has been influenced by the mores of society, which, in turn, help define the scope and content of the education of children. What is developmentally appropriate for children has been taught within the guidelines of theoretical ideas, political and legislative agendas, religious beliefs, and the social mindset of public opinion dominant in society. A battle still wages between traditional, conservative values and the "new realism" in which literature deals with topics formerly considered taboo (Root, 1977). Zipes (2001) explained,

Children's literature was in its infancy in the first half of the nineteenth century, and as it instituted itself, the texts, used in many different ways, became the arena in which battles were fought over the bodies and souls of children. And it is not much different today. (p. 155)

Currently, diversity is a mainstream topic (Loden, 1996). Research reveals that diversity in children's literature and associated awards continues to be important because diversity has an immediate influence on the lives of children and how they view themselves as members of society (Banks, 1989). Further, the definition of diversity has grown to include an expanding number of minority groups such as the non-heterosexual community, which previously received little to no acknowledgment. As the definition of diversity expands so does the need to include additional forms of diversity in children's literature. The messages sent through the content in stories matter. However, despite the

important role that diversity in children's literature plays in the lives of children, research consistently suggests that change is needed in order for children's books to reflect society's cultural, ethnic, and other diversity (Horning, 2016; Lee & Low Books, 2015). In her keynote speech at the American Bookseller's Association Institute, Rhodes (2015) noted,

Given 21st-century environmental and sustainability issues, global conflict and terrorism, lack of social mobility, and hate crimes reported and unreported, America can't afford any child's wasted mind, spirit, or voice. All stories have power, but that power is amplified when it mirrors specificities of race, class, religion, gender, health—physical and mental—and the myriad expressions of love and sexuality. (p. 19)

Demographic diversity may be an important factor to consider when choosing books for children because literature contributes to children's development as they experiment with trying to "master the tools of the culture" (Arbutnot & Sutherland, 1986). Understanding the expanding role diversity in literature plays in the lives of children is valuable in the United States since it is a country where each state has its own unique diverse demographic make up. For example, Texas has the second-largest population in the United States, and the state's demographic make up is largely influenced by its shared border with Mexico (McNichol & Johnson, 2012). The Texas Education Agency (TEA) released a report that stated that the total Hispanic student population in Texas in grades 3-6 was 52.5% for the 2015-16 school year. Such demographic information can be of use to those who nominate children's literature for an award such as the Texas Bluebonnet Award (TBA), as well as anyone involved with children and their literature.

In this chapter, the review of literature will first cover the background of the children's publishing industry, the socio-political factors in the world of children's

literature, and the importance of diversity in trade books. This chapter will then examine related studies that fall under four subcategories which include content analysis of children's literature, content analysis of children's literature award lists, content analysis of diversity in children's literature, and content analysis of the TBAML books.

Background of the Children's Publishing Industry

Children's literature emerged as an independent form of literature in the second half of the 18th century when storytellers recited stories primarily to entertain adults. According to Eaton, et al. (1969), "Even before the beginning of the art of writing, our remote ancestors had a literature in the vast collection of dear, familiar stories told around the cottage fires and humble houses, or any great poetic narratives recited or sung in the halls of palace and castle" (p. 1). Children overheard and were influenced by these stories.

As literature for children became a recognized genre educators began focusing on it as a tool for learning due to "many enlightened educationalists in the 16th and 17th centuries pleading for children to be treated with greater consideration, and for learning to be made a pleasure" (Hunt & Butts, 1995, p. 11). Opinions on children's literature became polarized. On one side were those who believed that its purpose was to influence children on the importance of character, religion, and morals. On the other side were those who believed that the primary purpose of books and reading was enjoyment, with content secondary (Eaton et al., 1969). In the mid-1700s the British publisher John Newbery founded the first children's book publishing house, writing and publishing literature for children for the sole purpose of entertainment (Jacobs & Tunnell, 2013). Today, he is the namesake of the oldest children's literature award in the world, the

Newbery Award.

During the age of enlightenment, children's literature became respected and accepted based on literary quality, and

[b]y the end of the eighteenth century, children had access to entertaining alphabet books, nursery rhymes, and poetry, fairytales and information books. The nineteenth century saw the rise of the novel in the form of family stories, adventure stories, and animal stories. (Kiefer, 2009, p. 69)

Compared to previous centuries, however, the 20th century saw the most growth in literature for children as a learning tool and mechanism for behavioral influence, particularly after the Age of New Realism which occurred during and after the 1960s (Despain, Tunnell, Wilcox, & Morrison, 2015; Zipes, 2001).

The 20th century gave birth to many important events that drove the creation and success of the literature for children's market. According to Epstein (1996),

In the second decade of the twentieth century... several companies decided that the juvenile market was deemed large enough to warrant special staff attention. Firms began to appoint editors with the specific responsibility of producing an independent list of children's books. (p. 479)

According to Silvey (1995), "In 1957, when the Soviet Union became the first country to launch an unmanned satellite, *Sputnik*, into space, the school market for children's books surged into the forefront of juvenile publishing" (p. 543). Many Americans believed that investing in math and science literature for school libraries would help make American students more internationally competitive in those fields. However, Larrick's (1964) study on the lack of presence of African-American characters in children's literature revealed to society that the characters in these books almost exclusively represented the mainstream Anglo-American culture. According to Morgan (2011), "The feelings that many Americans had toward cultural minority groups were

expressed through stereotypes in children's books" (p. 373). Thus, there was a need for diversity representation, which further grew after the *Immigration and Nationality Act* (1965) passed allowing people of different ethnicities to immigrate to the United States at an expanded rate.

Kiefer (2009) noted that two other developments in the 20th century furthered the need for diversity in children's literature: the establishment of the *Council on Interracial Books for Children* (CIBC) which put forth guidelines for selecting bias-free textbooks and story-books (CIBC, 1980) and the Supreme Court decision concerning *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) which forced integration in public schools. These events influenced the children's literature trade in America, particularly by increasing the amount of diversity of the characters in published works (Kiefer, 2009). As Zipes (2001) explained, "The increase in diversity has been determined by shifting institutional practices within the educational system and social practices within family, culture, and industry" (p. 67).

Despite efforts to ensure growth of diversity representation in children's literature, the National Council for Teachers of English (2015) recently published a position statement entitled "Resolution on the Need for Diverse Children's and Young Adult Books," which pointed out that children's book publishing rates do not adequately mirror the decades worth of societal progress. The content of published material must evolve as society becomes more diverse because "What we have in literature is not only a continuous record of childhood, but a continuous record of society as a whole—and what is more important—of the ideals and standards that society wishes to calculate into each new generation" (Eaton, et al., 1969, p. xvii). As the National Council of Teachers of

English (2015) noted, “Stories matter. Lived experiences across human cultures including realities about appearance, behavior, economic circumstance, gender, national origin, social class, spiritual belief, weight, life, and thought matter.” The content of children’s literature matters.

Sociopolitical Factors in the World of Children’s Literature

The world of children’s literature is influenced by sociopolitical factors that contribute to diversity representation, or lack thereof, and often determine the accessibility of the literature itself. As the NCTE noted,

In the world of literature for young people, the kinds of print and digital texts that are accessible to youth are determined and authorized by influential individuals and professional organizations: editors/publishers, agents, authors/book creators, illustrators, distributors, booksellers, librarians, educators, parents, and the media. (2015, para. 1)

As Botelho & Rudman (2009) stated, “Texts reproduce the dominant values of a culture at a particular time. Therefore, the sociopolitical context shapes the writing, illustrating, and publishing [of] children’s books” (p. 8). Additionally, “[T]extbooks, literature for children, and the social relations of classrooms are dominated by the world views and ideological perspectives of those occupying positions of socio-economic preeminence in society” (Taxel, 1986, p. 254). These concepts could be applied to the TBA program concerning some of their practices. Miller (2003) stated,

At this time, only children who attend schools that have paid the registration fee to TLA are eligible to vote. In reality, participating in the TBA program is a class issue. Only those schools that purchased the right to participate gain access for their students. (p. 365)

Committees analyzing and selecting books for award nominations should “take into consideration the institutional component from within which we read, the power relations involved, and their implications for social justice” (Botelho & Rudman, 2009, p. 9). The

sociopolitical influence, as well as the social identities and worldviews of individuals involved with children's literature, influence the entire genre.

The American Library Association along with professional and review journals such as *Horn Book* and *School Library Journal* can influence the popularity of children's books. These journals have recently pursued the critical voices of reviewers from more diverse backgrounds (Mendoza & Reese, 2001). Moreover, in an attempt to promote awareness concerning the need for diversity representation, the Assembly on Literature for Adolescents of the National Council of Teachers of English devoted its entire Winter 2015 volume of *The Alan Review* (entitled *Race Matters: The Presence and Representation of Authors and Characters of Color in YA Literature*) to the theme of race. This exemplifies the ideas that large coalitions create influence and that some are showing support for more diverse literature for children. Despite apparent efforts to address the need for diversity representation, progress has been slow. In 2013 the director of the CBCC performed a mid-year check for diversity representation, and reported the following:

I counted 191 picture books with human characters, which is a little over half (53.8 %) of the total number of this year's picture books in our collection. Of these 191 titles, 28 (or 14.6%) feature a child of color as the protagonist. In the overall total number of picture books, adding together human and nonhuman characters, children of color make up just 7.8% of the total number of picture book protagonists.

Nonfiction is another genre that includes a lot of books about animals, outer space, etc. We have received 472 nonfiction titles so far this year, which makes up 31.27% of the total number of books. Just 130 of these books (or 27.5%) are about nonhuman subjects. People of color fare a little bit better in nonfiction than they do in picture books: of the 342 books about people, 60 are about people of color, which amounts to 17.5% of the total number of nonfiction books. (Horning, 2013, para. 5-6)

According to Aronson (2001), to counter a lack of minority representation, some large organizations have created awards that are meant to represent literature from communities bonded by a similar characteristic. These awards are known as identity-based awards. One example is the Coretta Scott King Award, given to an African-American children's or young adult author or illustrator whose writing shows an appreciation for the African-American culture and/or for universal human values. Another is the Pura Belpré Award, given to a Latino or Latina's children's or young adult author or illustrator whose writing shows an appreciation for the Latino and Latina culture. These awards are meant to establish more equal representation of authorship. However, award-nominated books based on the ethnicity of the author do not necessarily reflect the literature most deserving of an award based on literary merit. Aronson (2001) stated,

There is pure existential value in being acknowledged (as a group representative of American multi-ethnicity), but [also] stated that more importantly, the American Library Association (ALA) should do everything in their power to encourage the growth of a more diverse literature, but not by predefining who will create it. (p. 274)

Some authors, such as South African children's book author Beverley Naidoo, encourage the growth of more diverse literature as well. As Naidoo (2001) stated, "In my writing, I have always aimed to reveal the impact of the wider society and its politics on the lives of my young characters" (p. 130). Other authors voice the same idea. In the words of poet, essayist, and activist June Jordan (1985),

If we lived in a democratic state, our language would have to hurdle, fly, course and sing, in all the undeniable and representative and participating voices of everybody here. We would make our language conform to the truths of our many selves, and we would make our language lead us into the quality of power that a democratic state must represent. (p. 30)

Applebee (1992) concluded that it is necessary to find the proper balance among the many traditions, both separate and intertwined, that make up the complex fabric of society (p. 32).

The Importance of Diversity in Trade Books

The utilization of trade books as an educational tool is a growing trend in today's classrooms. In almost all subject areas lessons are supplemented with trade books such as those featured on the Texas Bluebonnet Award Master List (TBAML). According to Brownson (2012), "Many reading textbook series now include, among their components, libraries of children's literature that are used in conjunction with the reading textbook" (p. 51). Further, Morgan (2011) reported that since the 1990s, reading instruction has moved from the use of basal readers as the main form of reading instruction to a more balanced approach that combines skills and trade books. Considering that children's literature is used in content areas such as math, science, and social studies (Harb, 2007), it is clear that a large part of the school day is spent using various genres of trade books in a variety of learning situations.

Baumann, et al. (1998) replicated a survey originally developed by Austin and Morrison (1961) and found that today's trade books play a much greater role in the teaching of reading than they did previously. Among the key findings:

- Of all teachers, 94% had a goal of developing independent readers who could choose, appreciate, and enjoy literature.
- Most 1st grade teachers used Big Books and picture trade books extensively, and 72% of grade 5 teachers reported moderate or greater use of chapter books.

- Of pre-K-2 teachers, 97% regularly read aloud to their classes from trade books.
- Of grade 3-5 teachers, 67% used trade books instructionally.

The trend toward using trade books throughout the school day makes issues of diversity representation in the content of the books increasingly important (Miller, 2003). Trade books that are nominated for, or win, awards will be chosen for use in classroom settings because teachers understand the need to increase the use of quality literature when teaching students. Norton (2009) stated,

Many educators today are urging for culturally relevant curriculum that portrays all groups accurately and authentically. This will be difficult to achieve if children's books fail to represent people from diverse demographic groups or include descriptions portraying these groups as inferior, foreign, undesirable or strange. High-quality multicultural children's literature helps young students to develop cross-cultural understanding. (p. 1)

Bang, et al. (2013) also noted, "The use of literature from diverse cultures in schools is a well-rehearsed need ... there are important differences in portrayals of the natural world and the relationships of humans to it in children's literature" (p. 2). Through literature, "children can discover worlds other than their own" (Kiefer, 2009, p. 88) and are "offered a route into exploring our common humanity" (Cliff-Hodges, 2010, p. 65). As we move away from dependence on a single textbook, we can show students

the range of views, the variety of theories, the different schools of thought that make intellectual life in our subject interesting, controversial, even exciting. Getting both sides, or the many sides of the story, is an adult life skill that cannot be learned and practiced too early. (Daniels & Zemelman, 2004, p. 63)

Research has shown that culturally relevant texts help connect minority students to the school curriculum (Astolfi, 2012). Providing students with culturally relevant

books to which they can relate makes reading more interesting and leads to increased motivation and higher literacy rates (Freeman & Feeney, 2010). Reading skills directly improve children's academic performance and overall quality of life (Venezky, 1992; Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998). Further, success in the workforce also may depend on the ability to read. Individuals with lower reading comprehension skills are at greater risk for unemployment, while proficient readers are more likely to be better integrated into society, engage in civic activities, and are less likely to be alienated from society (Venezky, 1992).

For such reasons, it is problematic that only 28% of Texas 4th grade students read at or above a proficient reading achievement-level, while 37% rank at the basic level, and a staggering 35% rank below the basic level (Nation's Report Card, 2009, p. 15). The incidence of reading failure is even higher within low-income families, ethnic minority groups, and English-language learners (Lonigan & Shanahan, 2010). A significant proportion of the individual variation is explained by differences between children's socio-economic background and minority status (National Opinion Research Center, 2013). The education of all students matters, which makes the challenge of promoting diversity representation in literature for children worthwhile. As classrooms become more diverse, teachers need to develop a stable classroom community where all children can be comfortable (Smith-Darezzo, 2003). As Loden (1996) noted,

One of the critical challenges of implementing diversity is helping individuals appreciate how core differences like age, gender, race, and mental and physical abilities *do* matter—a task that is often difficult to accomplish, due to widespread reluctance to acknowledge how core differences help to create hierarchies of privilege. But while this is a difficult topic to explore, the recognition of this hierarchy can be the first step toward valuing diversity. For it is only after we appreciate the subtle ways in which one's core identity can help open doors to opportunity—while others with different core identities remained locked out—

that we can resolve to value all core identities equally and create a truly level playing field on which to compete and succeed. (pp. 18-19)

Quality children's literature trade books such as the books on the TBAML may be used as a resource in the endeavor to create a more equal playing field, but only if they represent the diversity found among students.

A Focus on the Content of Children's Literature and its Awards

This section will present topics in content analysis related to children's literature, award lists, diversity, and the Texas Bluebonnet Award. These subsections will include content analyses of children's literature, content analyses of children's literature award lists, content analyses of diversity in children's literature, and content analyses of the TBAML books.

Content analysis of children's literature. As children's books earned recognition researchers began to notice that they contained messages and themes that required closer examination. Martin (1936) performed a content analysis entitled "Nationalism in Children's Literature" in which she stated, "at that time the nationalistic uses of children's literature had only recently been noticed" (p. 405). Her study examined symbolism and messages portrayed through key words in 24 American, British, and European children's books. In order to determine the extent to which these words inclined the reader toward nationalism or against internationalism, she placed vocabulary from the texts into one of nine categories. These categories included: social/economic, occupational, patriotic, vernacular, geographic, personal, nautical, animal, and fictitious. She noted,

Publishers, especially, should be encouraged to define more closely the factors, which in combination are shown to command the international market. Authors should be interested in the fact that intimate description

of national life must be couched in something like international vocabulary if the book is to pass beyond the frontiers of the country which produced it. Any distributors of children's books—librarians, book-dealers, and educational authorities—should be aided by the fact that an excessive reference to the enthusiasms and loyalties particular to the country of authorship will preclude the foreign popularity of most books for children (Martin, 1936, p. 418)

Shepard (1962) performed a content analysis on the portrayal of heroes and heroines in 16 books that parents, teachers, and librarians reported as being chosen often by students in their middle and upper grade years. These books spanned a century, with authorship ranging from Louisa M. Alcott to John R. Tunis. Shepard examined the characters in these books in terms of whether or not the author portrayed them as favorable or unfavorable. The characters were reported as being either positively or negatively portrayed according to contrasting characteristics relating to six categories: race, nationality, religion, physique and appearance, socio-economic status, and standards of conduct and attitude. In summary, Shepard found:

Heroes and heroines strongly tend to be clean, white, healthy, handsome, Protestant Christian, middle-class people. Villains much more often turn out to be ugly, physically undesirable persons of non-Caucasian races, often either very poor or of the wealthy classes. About the same percentages of heroes and villains turn out to be Americans in books with an American setting. Because the number of favorable characters is almost 3 times that of unfavorable in these books (152 to 60) young readers meet many more American heroes than villains. In addition, when an unfavorable character was portrayed as an American, there were no evil qualities associated with his 'Americanness.' On the other hand, villains portrayed as foreigners were often given some negative national stereotypes. With respect to general behavior, all of the villains were painted in evil, unacceptable ways. (Shepard, 1962, p. 672)

Murr (1997) used a qualitative content analysis methodology to examine 200 picture storybooks published between 1946 and 1995 for children between the ages 2 to 7. The purpose of this study was to investigate the text and illustrations in order to

observe parenting behaviors and identify changes over time. This study spanned five decades, and 40 books were chosen from ten-year ranges. The books chosen for the study had to meet various criteria. They had to be available to children, present in North Central Texas libraries, and had to include a minimum of one adult (human or animal) as well as one child. The researcher also utilized Ownby and Wallbrown's (1991) model of dimensions of parenting behavior to examine parental behaviors in terms of Active Involvement, Affection, Caretaking, Control, Maturity Pressures. These dimensions focused on how much time a parent spent with the child, the child's health and hygiene, the extent to which a parent used physical punishment or positive reinforcement to regulate behavior, and suggestions made by the parent to encourage the child to act in a more mature manner, including recommending that the child become more self-regulated and control their desire for immediate gratification. The results of this study showed that parenting behaviors were included in the text and illustrations of picture storybooks. Further, the female parental figure portrayed the parenting behaviors 49% of the time. In terms of the Ownby and Wallbrown parenting dimensions, Active Involvement was the most observable behavior. Affection was second, followed by, Caretaking, Control, and Maturity Pressures. Murr also noted that fathers only displayed parenting behaviors 29% of the time. "This could be representative of the fact that more mothers spend time in childrearing tasks with children preschool to age 7 years or for the fact that more mothers were represented in the books in the sample" (p. 68).

Griffith (2008) performed a content analysis that examined the 25 most circulated fiction titles as reported by the end-of-year summative circulation reports from eleven Texas middle school libraries for grades six through eight. The purpose of this study was

to determine what characteristics adolescents look for in their literature. The researcher described the bibliographic characteristics of the books and examined the extent to which Havighurst's (1972) Adolescent Development Tasks occurred within the storylines. The researcher also analyzed the protagonists' actions, dialogue, internal thoughts, and reputation to determine the extent to which they reflected Havighurst's tasks. The analysis revealed that adolescents prefer series books, sequels, and stand-alone titles in which the protagonists are "achieving independence from parents and other adults (Task 4), and understanding changing family roles (Task 5)" (p. 381).

Brady (2009) performed a content analysis that examined the portrayal of caring teachers. The purpose of the study was to illuminate the social identities, personal characteristics, attitudes, behaviors, and institutional practices of teachers in children's books. It also aimed to provide information about messages embedded in children's books with regard to caring teachers. The researcher examined 38 children's books including picture storybooks, transitional books, and children's novels. The books chosen for the study were published between 1998-2008. All of the books included in the sample took place in an elementary school setting where the teacher was depicted as a main character who actively taught throughout the story. The researcher examined the gender, race, ethnicity, and culture associated with the teacher. The researcher also examined personal dispositions related to caring as well as the teaching practices of the teacher. The results of the study indicated an increasing positive portrayal of teachers in literature. The results also indicated that the majority of teachers were depicted as White, European-American, and female, which according to statistical information on the demographics of teachers for 2009, did not accurately reflect the population of

elementary school teachers. Lastly, the results indicated that the literature reflected a narrow perception of caring teachers, although when present, it did positively correlate perceived caring from teachers by students to teaching and learning effectiveness, as well as to student motivation (p. 46).

Sanders, Foyil, & Graff (2010) performed an inductive qualitative content analysis examining religious pluralism in children's literature books. The purpose of this study was to examine the engagement methods used by authors to portray religious diversity in the literature. The books included in the study were comprised of 14 fiction and non-fiction books including picture books, young adult novels, short stories, a poetry book, and a historical fiction novel. The texts chosen for use in this study were ones deemed able to engage readers in inter-religious dialogue that included the perspectives of at least two religions. In order to carry out the study the researchers explored questions such as, "What do the authors have characters do or say that works toward the goal of religious pluralism? What religious issues are addressed? How do the authors help readers learn about multiple perspectives? What authorial strategies do the authors employ toward pluralism?" (p. 172). The researchers found that authors often addressed religious violence in a straightforward manner, used a respectful, yet, assertive tone, when he or she described the beliefs of a group, emphasized ways in which religions shared similarities, and described religion as a spiritual journey that may have commenced after a major life event, possibly mediated by a spiritual mentor or life coach. Lastly, they found that authors often used five main archetypes to present varying perspectives. These included the One Truth Believer, The Questioner who is redefining his or her beliefs, The Counterpoint Character who provides an alternative perspective,

The Atheist, and The Coach who assists The Questioner. The researchers concluded, “The authors of these religiously pluralistic texts employed five archetypes to create conflict, inform readers about world religions, highlight commonalities, challenge ideas of one right or superior religion, encourage questioning, and promote interreligious dialogue” (p. 184).

Showalter (2015) performed a qualitative content analysis that examined virtues (character strengths) and vices (opposing traits) in 30 best-selling children’s literature books popular between 2006-10. The purpose of the study was to examine whether or not virtues were positively represented in contemporary children’s literature as well as to understand the extent to which it was being reinforced within the stories young children read. The researcher also aimed to examine whether any vices were presented as desirable within storylines, as well as the extent to which characters exhibited these virtues and vices. The researcher explained that it was important for readers to be exposed to boys and girls their age in literature so that they could learn about virtues and vices through the actions of their peers. For example, the researcher maintained that “no scenes or plots [were] dedicated to portraying young boys overcoming anger and disagreements which are common challenges” for the age group (p. 70). The idea for the study grew from the “Positive Psychology” movement, which is focused on the origins and development of the positive characteristics of humans. The researcher used Peterson & Seligman’s (2004) list of 24 virtues. The researcher provided an operational list of vices to be used in one-to-one correspondence with Peterson & Seligman’s virtues. The book sample chosen for the study included six of the best-selling books from 2006-10. The results of this study showed that kindness, love, vitality, and citizenship were found

to be the most common virtues present in the books in the study, while the virtues of integrity, self-regulation, and fairness were not present at all. Forgiveness, mercy, humility/modesty were also almost completely absent. Further, this investigation reported that of the 24 vices examined, 7 were never addressed. These included irresoluteness, sterility, disinterest, lackluster attitude toward learning, bitterness, disdain for beauty and excellence, and rejection of transcendence. Certain vices were always portrayed as wrong or harmful in the literature. These included apathy, hatred, fairness, and closed mindedness. However, the findings of this study revealed that vices such as vanity and indulgence/impulsivity were presented as praiseworthy behaviors, while “nearly half of the books presented seeking self-pleasure and confirming self-importance as valuable and acceptable” (p. 71). The researcher summarized the results of this study by stating, “The message of most of these picture storybooks involves depicting children or main characters learning good lessons and pro-social behaviors. But these lessons are compromised by the stronger message that ‘living life to the fullest’ for the American child is merely a sequence of impulse expression and self-indulgence” (p. 71).

Some researchers choose to examine themes such as desirable bibliographical traits in order to understand what motivates children to want to read. Others take on ideological topics such as religion, or societal-related topics such as the portrayal of parental figures. By studying children’s literature many details are revealed about children’s reading interests, topics authors write about, what is chosen for publication, as well as the deeper meanings and messages presented in the stories. Some researchers choose to study the genre of children’s literature. Others choose to examine only

children's literature that has been awarded. The next section will present research that has examined topics in award-winning children's literature.

Content analyses of children's literature award lists. Each year children's books receive awards. The American Library Association (ALA) is responsible for granting many of these awards. Since the very first children's literature award was created, the Newbery Award, the number of awards given for contributions to the field has grown. The increase in the number of awarded books represents an attempt to recognize the many forms of literary merit. Consequently, more researchers are studying children's literature awards to better understand the content of books chosen for award.

Kimmel (1990) studied stereotypes in awarded children's literature. The purpose of the study was to examine racial and sexual stereotypical behavior depicted in Newbery awarded books. The Newbery books were examined in comparison to other awarded books, aside from Newbery, from the same 20-year time period of 1970-90. The researcher used content analysis to examine the sex, ethnicity, and occupation for each type of character present in the stories. Behavior/trait/capability was also examined and included criteria that helped the researcher categorize the characters. For example, the researcher may have categorized the characters as adventurous, aggressive, and ambitious or talkative, quiet, or strong. Ethnic group portrayals were also examined. In the results of the study, the researcher concluded that stereotypes existed in much of the literature and at much the same frequency for both Newbery and non-Newbery award books. Racial group portrayals in all sets of award books existed at rates that did not represent their occurrence in society. Further, the researcher reported that racial stereotypes were a major tool used to portray non-Caucasian characters. Additionally, females were often

only background characters, in submissive roles, or depicted as evil, and the behavior of any ambitious or assertive female characters was corrected by society or circumstances and ceased directly. Overall, men were assigned positions of power. The researcher concluded that in comparison to previous studies on Newbery books, there has been some progress, but not nearly enough to reflect actual society at the time of the study.

Wallis (1997) performed a content analysis that examined the surface features of selected texts, story structure, developmental tasks, literary structure, content, and children's literature expert's opinions, with the purpose of identifying the shared qualities of books repeatedly chosen as favorites. The researcher examined 20 books from the school years 1980-81 through 1995-96 that had won a minimum of six state popularity awards. These books were voted on by 6th through 8th grade students. The researcher found that students are most often interested in fictional books with realistic plots, single focal characters, integral contemporary settings, well-developed characters who are 10-12 years old, first person omniscient narrators, informal conversational writing styles, memorable language, conflict between persons that has a satisfactory resolution, episodic plot structure, explicitly-stated themes that relate to family life and personal growth, that are of a third or fourth grade readability level, 160 pages, 8 ½" x 6 ¼", with appealing covers that predict the plot of the story.

Burton (2010) used qualitative content analysis to analyze 30 award-winning and honor books read by students in grades 3-5 that had won either the Newbery Award, the Dorothy Canfield Fisher Children's Book Award, or the Teacher's Choice Award. The purpose of this study was to examine evidence from the books to determine if the texts supported the needs of children during childhood according to Sutherland (1996).

Sutherland described seven needs of childhood, which included the need to love and be loved, to belong, to achieve competence, to know, as well as the need for beauty, order, and physical well-being. Sutherland's needs were grounded in theories offered by psychological and learning theorists. The researcher found that most award-winning books did employ one or more of Sutherland's needs. The need to love and be loved was most prevalent, while the need for change appeared least often among the books examined (p. 86).

Foreman (2010) performed a content analysis that examined resiliency in juvenile fiction awarded by the ALA. The purpose of the study was to determine if a relationship existed between the age, gender, or race of the protagonist, and also to observe how these characters exhibited characteristics of resiliency, or the ability to adapt to change and to overcome obstacles, which are defining traits of resiliency as defined by the study (p. 1). This study placed emphasis on the ability for students to learn vicariously through role models found in the literature. Learning by observing the behavior of others is known as Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 2006). The Jew, Green, & Kroger (1999) measures of resiliency were used to quantify the presence of resiliency in the literature. These resiliency measures included rapid responsivity to danger, precocious maturity/pseudo adulthood, disassociation of affect, information seeking, formation and utilization of relationships for survival, positive projective anticipation, decisive risk-taking, the conviction of being loved, idealization of aggressor's competence, cognitive restructuring of painful events, altruism, optimism, and hope. Information was collected from the texts and then entered into the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) as well as into the Predictive Analytical Software (PASW). The results of the study offered evidence

that all 12 resiliency factors were present in some manner in each of the books examined. The formation and utilization of relationships for survival, decisive risk taking, the conviction of being loved, optimism and hope were the most frequently found throughout the texts. Rapid responsivity to danger, precocious maturity, cognitive restructuring of painful events, the idealization of aggressor's competence, and disassociation of affect were among the least represented characteristics throughout the texts.

Forest (2014) performed a qualitative content analysis. The primary purpose of the study was to deconstruct portrayals of social class in 42 Newbery and honor books that had received awards between 2004-13. The researcher placed focus on the sociology of knowledge learned in schools, therefore, the Newbery books were chosen because of their assumed accessibility to children in school settings. The years 2004-13 were chosen because of the economic turmoil and recession that affected people from all social classes during that nine-year period (p. 84). The researcher focused on which social classes were present in the literature and to what extent these social classes were portrayed as valuable. This study was positioned within a critical literacy framework, which supports the theory that literature is a means by which children learn about culture and how they fit into society. The researcher focused on four main social class groupings: upper class, middle class, working class, and poor. For the deductive portion of the coding procedures, the researcher used class frames created by Kendall (2011) as a coding scheme. The researcher categorized the study as inductive as well, because if a coding scheme appeared in-text that was not part of Kendall's class frames, it was still included in the findings. The researcher reported that the books did contain a socio-economic hierarchy, that upper class characters had power and control, and that the working class

and poor were often portrayed as powerless unless they banded together to enact change. However, the researcher also stated that the reader's perception would determine whether the socio-economic class was perceived positively or negatively. This was because all of the social classes were intermittently presented in both positive and negative manners that could be negotiated depending on the opinion or viewpoint of the reader.

Wagner (2014) examined the characters in 11 Caldecott-winning children's books awarded between 2002-12. In order to determine if a particular set of character traits were present in the texts, the researcher examined how frequently positive and negative traits were present, and which traits were most predominant. Another guiding purpose of the study was to determine which texts could be best utilized by teachers during character development lessons. Qualitative content analysis was used to examine the texts for traits represented by the acronym C.H.A.R.A.C.T.E.R. (Bryant, 2008). The acronym represented the character traits of caring, helpfulness, acceptance, respect, ambition, citizenship, trustworthiness, encouragement, and responsibility. Five raters met to establish protocols for coding and to ensure inter-rater reliability. After meeting, each of the raters independently examined the texts used in the study and attended weekly meetings to discuss findings. The results of the study showed that the most common character trait among the 11 books was caring/compassion, followed by a tie between helpfulness and ambition. Citizenship and encouragement were not found to be the main trait or theme among any of the books (pp. 89-90).

Despain, Tunnell, Wilcox, & Morrison (2015) examined family structures present in the Newbery-winning and honor books from 1930-2010. The purpose of the study was to examine existing family structures in English-speaking Western societies. Prescriptive

content analysis was utilized to identify characteristics of messages found within the texts through the use of objective and systematic examination (Holsti, 1969). A total of 87 contemporary realistic fiction texts that featured English-speaking families in Western settings were included in the study. The researchers examined reports obtained from the United States Census Bureau and then compared that data to the representation of family structures in the texts. The results of the study found that the Newbery-winning and honor books awarded during the decades of the 1930s, 1940s, & 1950s, did not represent the actual census data for family structures during that time period. However, family structures examined in the texts for the decades following the 1950s more closely matched corresponding census data, starting with the 1960s. Lastly, the researchers reported that the most recent winners and honor recipients included books with traditional family structure representations, but that some books also included diverse family structures which were found to be representative of the actual reality of shifting family structures.

In decades since the 1960s researchers have dedicated their studies to various topics concerning children's literature and its awards. The demographics of the United States are changing rapidly. Therefore, many researchers are currently focusing on topics concerning diversity. According to Moffett (2015), "It is no wonder that social scientists will occasionally pursue an understanding of how children's literature is mirroring society, or how society is mirroring children's literature" (p. 6). Such research reveals the extent to which diversity representation is or is not keeping pace with the growth of diversity in the United States. The next section will present previous content analysis research that has examined topics of diversity in children's literature.

Content analyses of diversity in children's literature. In an article entitled, "Mirrors, Windows, and Sliding Glass Doors" Bishop (1990) reminded us that children learn about themselves and others through stories, therefore, as many forms of diversity as possible should be present in children's literature. In this way, children can learn about the world and their role in society. They can also gain insight into what life is like for others different from themselves. Diversity in children's literature may include diversity in gender roles, family structures, or religion, and is not limited to issues of cultural, ethnic, and racial diversity. Due to the important role of representation in literature for children, many researchers have devoted their studies to examining the topic from various perspectives concerning diversity.

Larrick (1964) carried out a study that was one of the first to highlight the lack of racial diversity in literature for children. The purpose of the study was to examine trade books spanning three years, 1962-64, in order to determine the extent to which African-American characters were present. The study examined questionnaires completed by 63 children's trade book publishers covering 5,206 trade books published during those years. The questionnaires specifically asked about the number of children's trade books published during those years, the number of books that included one or more African-American characters in the text or illustrations, and about the depiction of African-American characters. The results revealed that there was a drastic underrepresentation of African-American characters. Larrick also enlisted the help of four African-American librarians, who worked with children in the Northeast, to examine trade books for depictions of African-American characters. The result of their analysis was that most

children's books depicted African-American characters, either in the illustrations or in the text, in unsatisfactory and negatively stereotyped ways.

Hillman (1976) examined occupational roles as presented in children's books. The purpose of the content analysis was to compare sex-related occupational roles for males and females as portrayed in books published during two eras of American history, the 1930s and the 1960s. In order to perform this content analysis 60 books were examined from the two eras. Books chosen from the Early Era were published in 1932, 1935, or 1938. Books chosen to represent the Late Era were published in 1965, 1968, and 1971. The researcher read and coded the male and female occupational roles for each of the 120 books on charts. The results of the study showed that during the Early Era, 169 occupations, or 84.9%, were related to males and only 39, or 15.1%, were related to females. In the Late Era 150 occupations (79.4%) were related to males and 39 (20.6%) were related to females. The totals from the two eras were then combined. For the two eras 263 total occupations were assigned to males while only 63 were assigned to females. This resulted in a ratio of about 4:1. The research also showed that the depiction of women in a variety of occupational roles had not changed between the decades while the variety of occupational roles of men grew to encompass occupations that resulted in social change and increasing technological specificity (p. 3).

Lowery (1998) performed a thematic content analysis in order to examine ways in which immigrants to the United States from 1820 to the 1990s were represented in children's literature. The purpose of the study was to examine ways in which these representations may have been different from one immigrant group to another, as well as across time periods, particularly according to race and class. By drawing upon the

interdisciplinary approaches of Critical Literacy and Sociology of Literature, the researcher closely examined seventeen children's books in order to examine the relationship between actual history and the ways in which immigrants were represented in the stories. The core set of books chosen for the study had to be found to contain characters that directly represented the American immigrant experience. They were also divided into three immigrant waves categorized as the early wave, or prior to 1900, the middle wave from 1900-20, and new wave, which began in the late 1960s. The results of this study showed that immigrants were negatively portrayed in a majority of the novels examined. It offered further support that immigrants are often portrayed as the "others" who are outside of the existing social formations created and dominated by white people (p. 254). Lowery suggested that children's literature portraying immigrants should instead, seek to offer contrasting opinions, and should refrain from reinforcing existing stereotypes.

Goodroe (1998) performed a qualitative content analysis of the 100 best-selling children's picture books from 1988-98 to order to examine gender role stereotyping. The purpose of the study was to determine if differences existed between gender representations in children's literature over the decade. The books were selected from a random sample of 279 total books. A chi-square analysis was used to keep track of significant differences between male and female representation. The results of the study showed that males were represented more often in text and in illustrations than females, males were more involved in overall activities, and males were found to participate in more active/mobile activities, particularly from 1991-97. Further, the occupations of males were depicted more clearly and in a far wider variety. However, no directional

trend in gender representation or stereotyping could be proven from the books under examination.

Smith (2000) studied the presence of characters with disabilities in children's literature in a qualitative content analysis. The purpose of the study was twofold. The researcher wanted to study literature that contained characters with disabilities in order to highlight the similarities shared by all people, as well as to bring attention to literature that could be used in the classroom to represent populations of people with disabilities. The researcher visited schools. During the school visits, adults and students from grades 4-6 read the selected texts. Four lenses, or modes of analysis, were used to gather data about the books. These lenses included a reader response from an adult (primary lens used in the study) and reader responses from multiple children. The reader responses served to highlight the participants' thoughts concerning the portrayal of people with disabilities in the books. The author's background was examined in order to better understand the perspective from which the book may have been written. A structural analysis of the books was completed for each text, which included examining the literary elements of theme, plot, characterization, style, setting, the accuracy of issues dealing with disabilities, as well as an analysis of the authors' background (pp. 24-30). The results of the study concluded that the books examined would be useful in a variety of classroom settings including use in a classroom library, during lessons or units covering disabilities, and during small group lessons in order to help students develop more positive attitudes. However, the researcher also presented evidence that there were some basic needs that still needed to be met in order to better include characters with disabilities. First, there were both subtle and obvious stereotype characterizations present

in some texts. For example, it was made more acceptable and obvious for a character to have a learning disability rather than a mental disability. Many of the books that featured a character with a disability featured them as secondary characters, particularly as the sibling of a main character without a disability. There were too few texts that portrayed children with Attention Deficit Disorder, and when present, these characters were not presented in a manner that portrayed the disability with a well-rounded approach. Few of the books portrayed girls as the character with the disability. Lastly, the researcher concluded that more books featuring characters with disabilities should be published.

Hamilton, Anderson, Broaddus, & Young (2006), performed a study on gender stereotyping and underrepresentation of female characters in popular children's picture books. The purpose of the study was to examine top-selling children's picture books in order to assess gender bias as well as to test whether or not previous Caldecott-winning books were representative of the books read to children at the time of the study. The book sample for this content analysis included 30 Caldecott-winning and honor books as well as 155 best-selling children's picture books that had not received an award. These books were listed on the top sellers from 1999 to 2001. Books from other sources were also included in the study such the top-selling Little Golden Books and books from the 2001 New York Public Library list of books everyone should know. The total sample included 200 best-selling children's picture books. In order to examine gender representation, the researchers examined the pictures and characters in the books. The character's behaviors and personality, the setting, and the relationship between the sex of the author and the sex of the characters in the books were included in the examination. The survey instrument included 22 items that helped the researcher keep a record of data

through frequency counts, classification of material, and fill-in-the-blank questions.

Book title, year of publication, and author were also noted in the first three questions on the 22-question survey instrument. The results of the study showed that there were more male characters than female characters overall. The study also revealed that of male and female authors, at least 2 male authors tended to favor male characters in their stories.

Female authors were not found to favor one gender over the other. Female main characters were three times more likely to perform nurturing or caring behaviors over male characters. Slightly more female characters were found indoors rather than outdoors. Neither sex was more likely to be portrayed as active or passive. Out of 23 female adult characters shown with an occupation, 21 had stereotypically feminine occupations. Of the 37 adult male characters with occupations, 33 were shown in stereotypically masculine occupations. Males also had a broader range of occupations. The researchers also compared the Caldecott book sample to the sample of best-selling books. Both book samples had a total of more male than female characters, however, Caldecott books underrepresented female characters to a greater extent. The researchers further analyzed changes in representation and portrayals of gender. They did so by comparing percentages and ratios from their study to the results of studies covering Caldecott-winning books and non-award-winning books published the 1980s and 1990s. The researchers concluded that there had been no increase in the proportion of female characters since the 1980s. Earlier studies did, however, portray an even more narrow range of occupations for female characters. The researchers reported that while some improvement was observed in the portrayal of male and female occupations, equality had not been reached. They also reported that about equal percentages of male and female

main characters were portrayed as active and that women were typically still slightly portrayed indoors versus outdoors over males. The researchers also suggested that there was little evidence to show that less gender stereotyping existed. Further, women continued to be more likely portrayed as homemakers. Additionally, nurturing behaviors were even more likely to be portrayed by female characters than male characters at the time and study than in the 1980s or 1990s. In terms of comparing the Caldecott books to other popular books, the overall conclusion was that female characters were still underrepresented in children's picture books, but at an even higher rate in Caldecott-winning books. However, the researchers stated that continued research is needed because comparisons within and across Caldecott and other books have yielded inconsistent results. In sum, the researchers concluded that at the time of the study modern children's picture books continued to show males as more interesting and more important than females.

Paynter (2011) examined gender stereotypes and representation of female characters in picture books for children. The study replicated an original study carried out by Hamilton, Anderson, Broadus, & Young (2006), which examined whether stereotyping and female underrepresentation had changed over the time period of a decade. The purpose of this quantitative content analysis was to examine 48 best-selling picture books from 2010 as well as 3 Caldecott winners from 2011 in order to provide an update to the Hamilton et al. (2006) study. The majority of books included in the study were best-selling picture books. This was because the researcher found them to be more widely circulated than award list literature for children (p. 2). The researcher enlisted the help of "six library media specialists—three males and three females, two each from

elementary, middle, and high schools—to act as the book raters. The researcher paid every rater \$100 after each finished the rating obligations” (p. 43). The instrumentation used in the study included 45 questions that covered topics about the characters and text in the books. Responses included yes/no circling, frequency counts, and listing occupations of each gender. Chi-square tests were also used to organize data, particularly pertaining to any relationship between the gender of the author and the gender of the characters in the story. The seven research questions examined topics such as whether there was a relationship between the gender of the characters in the story and the gender of the author or illustrator, the gender of the main character and characteristics portraying that character, whether the occupations of characters mirror stereotyped occupations, and whether the stereotyping and representation of female characters have changed since the Hamilton et al. (2006) study. From the results of the study, the researcher concluded that male characters did not differ statistically from females. There was no statistical difference between the gender of the book’s author or illustrator and the characters in the story. Further, male authors and illustrators did not outnumber female authors and illustrators. There was no significant statistical difference between the characteristics of males and females in the story. Further, adult male characters were just as likely to have stereotyped occupations as female characters. Lastly, gender stereotyping and underrepresentation of female characters had not changed since the Hamilton et al. study.

Koss (2015) examined gender, race, and disability status of characters in 455 contemporary children’s literature books in 2012. The purpose of the study was to gain a better understanding of diversity present in contemporary American picture books. This content analysis employed many theories. First, Critical Race Theory (CRT) was utilized

in the study, which states that racism is inherent, must be acknowledged, and must be a focal point of analysis (Solóranzo & Yosso, 2002). Gender Schema Theory (GST) was also used to examine the social construction of gender and how it affects child development (Bem, 1983). Critical Disability Theory (CDT), which focuses on the assumption that people with physical, emotional, or cognitive disabilities cannot participate in mainstream social activities, was used to examine the inclusion of characters with disabilities in the stories (Hunt, 1966). The research questions focused on which characters and populations were present in the books as well as the ethnicities and genders of the authors and illustrators. A Priori coding system was used to evaluate the books. Frequency counts and percentages were calculated after data was retrieved from the books. The results showed that white characters were the majority of primary characters (45%) and secondary characters (21%). Aside from a few representations of African-American characters, all of the ethnicities were lacking. Male and female characters were nearly evenly distributed between all titles. Characters who had a physical disability exceedingly represented the majority at 196 out of 455, while only two books represented characters with a cognitive disability, and no books were found to represent any characters with an emotional disability. A total of 90% of the authors and 83% of the illustrators were White, followed by 25 authors and 28 African-American illustrators. Asian, Latino, and Native American authors and illustrators were represented in very low numbers.

These studies represent the idea that diversity comes in many forms and is not limited to racial diversity. Researchers are likely to continue examining topics such as occupational roles, immigrant representation, gender portrayal, disability characteristics,

author ethnicity, and race in order to make informed observations concerning what is being presented to children in their literature. The previous sections covered general topics of research in children's literature, award lists, and diversity representation. The next section will include a study that is the most similar to the current study on diversity representation.

Content analyses of the TBAML books. Miller (2003) performed the study most closely related to the topic of this study on diversity representation in the 2015-16 TBAML books. Miller examined issues of diversity representation in children's literature. The researcher stated three main purposes for the study. First, the researcher wanted to investigate the ways in which award-winning literature, particularly the Texas Bluebonnet Award books, portrayed or did not portray all kinds of children. The researcher also wanted "to gain an understanding of the value society placed on literature about children outside the socio-political mainstream" (p. 3). Lastly, the researcher wanted to explore the ideas of some of the TBA members in order to better understand how they perceived their roles as part of the Selection Committee.

The researcher utilized mixed methods to carry out the study. This included four qualitative case studies as well as a quantitative content analysis. Qualitative case studies were performed with four of the members from the TBA Selection Committee. By interviewing the Selection Committee, the researcher hoped to gain a better understanding of the TBA book selection process as well as perceptions held by Selection Committee members concerning their roles. Three-tiered interviews, questionnaires, field notes from audio recordings, and a reflexive journal, aided in data collection for the case study portion of the research. Quantitative content analysis was utilized in order to

examine data from the TBAML books. The researcher examined 21 TBA Winners and 418 Master List books from 1981-2002, as well as the books from the TBA Nominated List from 2001-02.

A recording sheet was used to keep track of the books in the study. The recording sheet consisted of three columns where the book's title, summary, and descriptors were recorded. In order to evaluate the books for attitudes that could have influenced perceptions about people, the researcher used Banks' (2001) Criteria, which included ten criteria to observe when examining children's literature. Through the use of guiding questions, Banks' Criteria allowed the researcher to examine the text for issues such as tokenism and stereotyping. These guiding questions addressed topics such as whether or not any group was presented in a demeaning or derogatory manner, whether or not the characters were stereotypically alike or if they were depicted as individuals with different and unique characteristics, or whether groups were presented in subservient or passive roles as opposed to being presented in leadership or action roles. The researcher created an Attitudes Recording Sheet that included eight out of ten of Banks' Criteria. The following criteria were included on the Attitudes Recording Sheet: check the illustrations, check the storyline, look at life-styles, weigh relationships, note the "heroes", observe effects on self-image, as well as loaded words, and copyright date. Finally, the researcher examined all books for issues of diversity using the following indicators of diversity representation: age, gender, socio-economic status, sexual orientation, religion, handicapping condition, family circumstances, sex roles, and race.

The results of the study showed that gender was evenly distributed among the 21 TBA winners from 1981-2002. Two books included age through the use of

multigenerational storylines. One book was found to deal with issues pertaining to social class as depicted indirectly through its use as a plot device. Neither religion nor non-traditional sex roles were represented in any of the books. Although the winners included a variety of family circumstances, same gender parent households were completely left out. Lastly, all of the TBA winners were about White characters. Overall, the researcher found diversity to be underrepresented among the TBA winners.

Again, gender was equally represented and the least problematic among the 418 books nominated for the Master Lists. The socio-economic status of characters focused on the middle class while little to no mention of other classes was present. Stereotypical portrayals of characters with handicapping conditions were present in a few titles. Family circumstances were well represented with the exception of same gender parent households. However, integrated families were portrayed in a negative manner, particularly pertaining to stepparents and stepsiblings. Twelve books presented characters in non-traditional sex roles. For data concerning race, 358 out of 418 books included White characters. Further, the researcher noted that it took until 1990 before a book containing a Hispanic character made it onto the Master List which the researcher stated was unacceptable in a state with a prominent Hispanic population (p. 282). Overall, the researcher found diversity to be underrepresented among the books on the Master Lists.

Finally, among the books nominated for the 2001-02 Master List, none included depictions of age, socio-economic status, religion, or non-traditional sex roles, and only two books depicted handicapped characters. Further, no books contained American Indian/Eskimo characters, one book contained an Asian or Pacific Islander, and only two

books contained a Black character. The rest contain White characters. Again, the researcher concluded that diversity was severely underrepresented. The researcher supported this claim by explaining that although many books containing diversity representation were nominated for the 2001-02 Master List, they were not included. Data supporting this claim is as follows. Of the nominated books, 15 had multigenerational storylines, 13 included socio-economic status a part of the storyline, seven books mentioned religion including one on world religions, two books included characters with a handicapping condition, and four books included characters living in non-traditional sex roles. The nominated list included books containing characters of the following races: 11 books included American Indian/Eskimo, 11 Asian or Pacific Islander, 38 Black, 22 Hispanic, 21 White, and one coded as other. The researcher summed up the study by concluding that more diversity representation is needed if all children are to feel represented by the book presented to them by the TBA.

Further, in order to collect data concerning the Master List book selection process, the researcher performed case studies on four members of the TBA Selection Committee. First, the researcher stated that the lack of diversity among the TBA Selection Committee members was problematic. When asked personal demographic questions, the committee members individually revealed that they were all White, female, over the age of 40, of the middle class, with college or graduate degrees. Of further concern, according to the researcher, when the committee members were asked about how they chose books for the Master List they stated that they chose books primarily based on personal preference. Very little selection criteria were mandated by TBA requirements. Additionally, great variations in understanding were present when each of the four members described the

purpose of their role in the selection process. It was clear from the interviews that the committee members valued a variety of genres over diversity representation. Oddly, up until the point of the study, only fiction titles had ever won the TBA Award. In accordance with the committee member interviews, among ranking factors such as length, content, genre, illustrations, and diversity of representation, none of the committee members ranked diversity of representation as a top criterion (p. 107). The researcher concluded that the lack of diversity representation among the TBA-winning and Master List books was likely due to the homogeneous demographics of the committee members combined with their lack of understanding concerning the value of diversity representation in literature for children.

Research shows that various demographic groups continue to have unequal representation in literature for children. As Smalls (2015) stated,

Racism continues to exist in American society because we teach racism to each generation of American children through our children's books ... As Walter Dean Myers writes in his piece, 'Books transmit values. They explore our common humanity. What is the message when some children are not represented in those books?' (para 6)

Adichie (2009) noted that "The single story creates stereotypes, and the problem with stereotypes is not that they are untrue, but that they are incomplete. They make one story become the only story." Books tell stories that shape lives. Although progress has been made in that more children today "can see themselves reflected in the pages of the books they read" (Kiefer, 2009, p. 88), in support of further progress, research on diversity representation in children's literature remains significant. The books on the 2015-16 TBAML affect the perceptions held by our youth; therefore, it is important to examine what and who is being represented in those stories to ensure that the diverse

demographic make up of Texas students is represented.

In closing, scholarly work on children's literature and its awards has resulted in a significant amount of data revealing a lack of diversity in books for children. This study contributes to knowledge in the field in two ways. First, this study examines diversity representation in books nominated for a state award as opposed to awards that have been more widely examined such as the Caldecott or Newbery Awards. Second, this study directly compares demographic data collected about the main characters in the TBAML books to the demographic data of Texas students in grades 3-6. It is the hope of the researcher that this content analysis will fuel further progression toward diversity representation in literature for children.

Chapter III

Methodology

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to identify the extent to which the characters in the books on the 2015-16 Texas Bluebonnet Award Master List (TBAML) reflected the diversity of Texas students in grades 3-6 in terms of disability, family structure, gender, grade level, race, and socio-economic status. This chapter details the following: (1) research methodology; (2) materials needed for the study; (3) selecting and organizing categorical variables; (4) collecting data from the books on the TBAML; (5) collecting data on Texas readers in grades 3-6; (6) data analysis procedures; (7) limitations of the study; and (8) summary.

Research Methodology

Content analysis was the methodology used for this study. Krippendorff (1980) explained, "Potentially, content analysis is one of the most important research techniques in the social sciences, [as] it seeks to understand data not as a collection of physical events but as symbolic phenomena and to approach their analysis unobtrusively" (p. 7). Martin's (1936) study, "Nationalism in Children's Literature," is one of the earliest studies that used content analysis to examine books for children. Since Martin's study, fields of research that have employed this methodological approach have broadened, resulting in various operational definitions, most of which have fundamentally analogous meanings.

For example, Krippendorff (2004) defined content analysis as a way to examine information in an unbiased manner, while White and Marsh (2006) referred to it as a

method for analyzing texts in order to describe the written artifacts of a society or social group. Holsti (1969) defined content analysis as a communication paradigm and stated, “Content analysis is any technique for making inferences by objectively and systematically identifying specified characteristics of messages” (p. 25). He further explained that content analysis is “a plan for collecting and analyzing data in order to answer the investigator’s question” (p. 24). This study defined content analysis as a system for gathering data in order to identify patterns and messages in a related group of texts.

Content analysis studies have not only been defined in numerous ways, they have also been classified in various manners depending on their use in different fields, and for different topics. Janis (1965) offered three main classifications of content analysis studies. She described them as either being Pragmatical, Semantical, or Sign-vehicle. The Pragmatical deals with classifying signs according to their probable cause and effect. The Semantical seeks to classify signs according to the frequency of their use. Sign-vehicle is the examination of psycho-social properties such as the ways in which emotional words are used. According to these classifications, this content analysis was classified as a Semantical Content Analysis because the researcher performed frequency counts according to how often a pre-determined set of variables were referred to in-text, using words to make the references. This method of analysis was particularly accurate for the nature of this study in instances where a categorical variable was not directly referenced by name. In such cases, the researcher used words and context clues to determine how to code that character according to the set of six categorical variables. For example, if the grade level of a character was not directly stated in the text, the researcher

ascertained the grade level of the character by noting that the character stated that they would be in sixth grade the following year. Therefore, the character was coded as being in grades 3-6.

Further, this study was also classified as a Message Systems Analysis (Gerbner, 1969). Gerbner discussed cultural indicators of messages sent to viewers through television. Although Gerbner's study was published in the field of technology, content analysis studies are utilized across fields of study. It can be argued that books are also public message systems. In two of his four precepts Gerbner analyzed "what is," meaning what messages are being portrayed about the existence of something, and, "what is related to what," meaning, how is the existence of "what is" related to or associated with another entity? These two precepts from his study parallel the purpose of this content analysis. This analysis examined what demographics were present in the books on the TBAML and how they related to the actual demographic data reported about the readers of the TBAML. By this reasoning, this study was also considered a Message Systems Analysis.

Rogers (1997) suggested that the study of literature is the study of culture, as literature is where cultural norms are found and assimilated by readers of all backgrounds. Knowledge is assimilated as ideas transfer between the reader and the text during the reading process. Meaning created through the transfer of ideas between the reader and the text is known as Transactional Theory (Rosenblatt, 1976). Rosenblatt wrote about the importance of the reader and the text. She argued that readers bring their own experiences as well as their understanding of themselves and the world to the text in order to create meaning during the reading process. Based on this theory, when reading

the books on the TBAML readers will bring their experience and understanding to the text, and ideas will transfer about cultural constructs and societal representations as depicted to the readers through the demographics of the characters in the literature. However, in this study, the researcher did not formulate conclusions based on inferential assumptions about the reader, the text, or the transaction. The researcher compared data collected from the books on the TBAML to statistical data from the Texas Education Agency (TEA) or the United States Census Bureau and systematically presented factual information. Comparison of the two data sets allowed the researcher to objectively communicate results about which demographic groups were represented, which ones were not, and by what percent.

In this study, the researcher collected data from the books on the 2015-16 TBAML in order to determine the extent to which the demographic make up of Texas students in grades 3-6 were represented by the main character(s) in the story. For example, Texas is the second-most populous state in the United States and the demographic make up of Texas schools is influenced by the state's shared border with Mexico (McNichol & Johnson, 2012). According to TEA (2016), during the 2015-16 school year, Hispanic students in grades 3-6 made up 52.5% of the total student population in Texas. TEA also reported that more than 60.6% of students in each of these four grade levels were on either the free or reduced price lunch program. Using such data, the researcher looked for patterns of representation in the content of the books in order to determine what changes, if any, needed to be made in order to better include all of the demographic identities of the readers of the TBAML.

Lastly, a generic methodological framework for examining diversity in this content analysis can be used for subsequent content analysis studies. The following list is the generic methodological framework followed in this study.

1. Identify the selection of books for content analysis.
2. Develop a research question.
3. Cultivate a method for locating data in the texts during the reading.
4. Formulate a plan for extracting data from the texts in an organized manner.
5. Report findings based on the intention of the research question.
6. Communicate how the research contributes to the existing field of knowledge.

By employing this methodological framework, this study sought to answer the following research question:

To what extent do the main characters in the 20 books on the 2015-16 Texas Bluebonnet Award Master List reflect the diversity of Texas students in grades 3-6 in terms of disability, family structure, gender, grade level, race, and socio-economic status?

Materials Needed for the Study

In order to complete this content analysis, the researcher purchased the 20 books nominated for the 2015-16 TBAML. The researcher created a summary for each book (see Appendix A). The following is the 2015-16 TBAML in alphabetical order organized by the author's last name.

2015-16 Texas Bluebonnet Award Master List:

- Auxier, J. (2014)

The Night Gardener

- Brown, D. (2013)

The Great American Dust Bowl

- Bryant, J. & Sweet, M. (2014)

The Right Word: Roget and His Thesaurus

- Cavanaugh, N. J. (2014)

Always Abigail

- Cammuso, F. (2013)

The Misadventures of Salem Hyde: Book One: Spelling Trouble

- Daly, C. & Brown, L. (2014)

Emily's Blue Period

- de los Santos, M. & Teague, D. (2014)

Saving Lucas Biggs

- Eddleman, P. (2013)

Sky Jumpers

- Egan, K., Lane, M., & Wight, E. (2014)

The Vanishing Coin

- Ehlert, L. (2014)

The Scraps Book: Notes from a Colorful Life

- Gandhi, A., Hegedus, B., & Turk, E. (2014)

Grandfather Gandhi

- Healy, C. (2012)

The Hero's Guide to Saving Your Kingdom

- Hill, L. C. & Taylor, T., III (2013)

When the Beat Was Born: DJ Kool Herc and the Creation of Hip Hop

- Philbrick, R. (2014)

Zane and the Hurricane: A Story of Katrina

- Schanen, Adriana Brad. (2014)

Quinny & Hopper

- Searles, R. (2014)

The Lost Planet

- Singer, M. & Hendrix, J. (2013)

Rutherford B., Who Was He?: Poems About Our Presidents

- Tonatiuh, D. (2014)

Separate Is Never Equal: Sylvia Mendez & Her Family's Fight for

Desegregation

- Turnage, S. (2014)

The Ghosts of Tupelo Landing

The researcher created a reading timeline and read all 20 books between April and June 2016.

Selecting and Organizing Categorical Variables

For use in reading and coding each of the 20 books, the researcher selected categorical variables that represented aspects of the diversity of Texas students. In order to select these categorical variables, the researcher referred to Loden's Diversity Wheel (1996), seen in Figure 1. Loden's Wheel has been commonly used by the American workforce to train employees to interact in diverse work environments. The wheel contains widely accepted designations for the variables related to diversity.

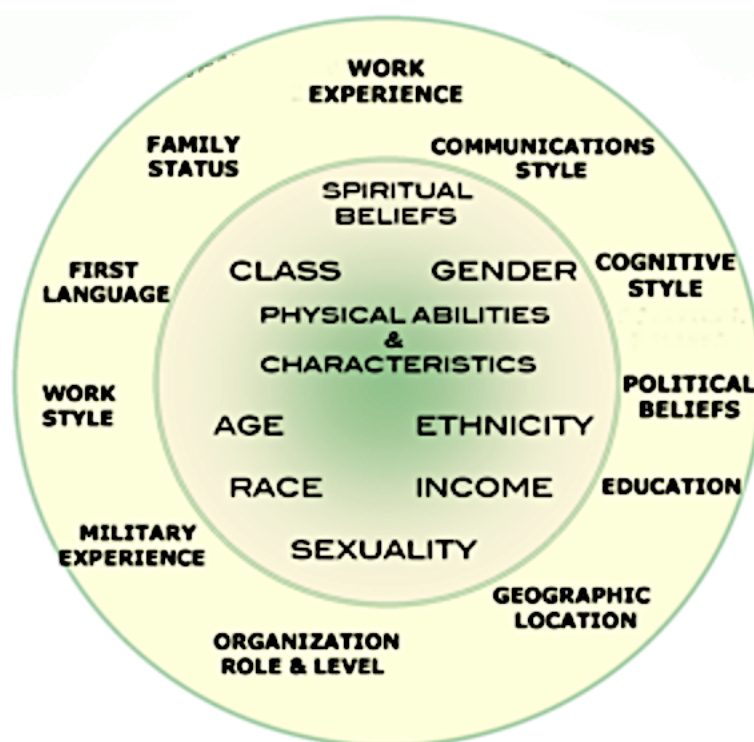


Figure 1. *Loden's Diversity Wheel (1996)*

Due to an understanding of the complex nature of diversity the researcher recognized that more than six categorical variables could have been chosen for the study. For example, sexual orientation was a topic of interest to the researcher, however, it was not included among the categorical variables because it was not reported on by TEA or the United States Census Bureau for the age bracket of the sample population. Consequently, the researcher chose six categorical variables from Loden's Wheel based on what could most directly be compared to statistical information published by the TEA and the United States Census Bureau strictly concerning the demographics of Texas students in grades 3-6. Further, although the researcher used Loden's Wheel as a resource for initially ascertaining six categorical variables, she used terms for the categorical variables that matched the terms published in reports released by the TEA and

the United States Census Bureau. For example, while Loden's Wheel used the term, age, the TEA reported on this categorical variable using the term, grade level. Therefore, the term grade level instead of age was used in the study. The resulting categorical variables were disability, family structure, gender, grade level, race, and socio-economic status.

Collecting Data From the Books on the TBAML

The researcher created a system for collecting data from the books on the TBAML. First, one colored tab was assigned to each of the six categorical variables. Then during the reading process the researcher marked pages with these colored tabs in order to code demographic information pertaining to the main character(s). Designating a colored tab to each categorical variable allowed the researcher to keep track of the exact page that contained information valuable to the study, which made data easily retrievable post-reading. Finally, after completing each book the researcher filled out data tables organized by categorical variable. There were six tables total, one for each categorical variable (see Appendix C).

Collecting Data on Texas Readers in Grades 3-6

Data were collected from two agencies including the TEA and the United States Census Bureau. Statistical data concerning demographic information pertaining directly to Texas students in grades 3-6 were collected from reports published by the TEA for the 2015-16 school year. The TEA reports included information that aligned with five out of six of the categorical variables. These included disability, gender, grade level, race, and socio-economic status. Statistical data regarding one out of six of the categorical variables, family structure, were collected from a report published by the United States Census Bureau entitled, "Household Relationship and Living Arrangements of Children

Under 18 Years, by Age and Sex: 2016,” which reported on family structure by grouping children into multiple age brackets. For the purpose of this study, the researcher used statistical data reported for the age bracket, 9-11 years, because it most closely aligned to the age bracket of the readers of the TBAML. Family structure statistics were reported for the entire population of the country and were not specific to Texas students in grades 3-6. They were also reported for the calendar year 2016, and not for the 2015-16 school year.

When necessary, the categorical variables were subdivided into groups that aligned with the reporting techniques of TEA and the United States Census Bureau. This helped ensure the validity of the study and allowed data collected from the books to be compared to data on Texas readers in as direct a manner as possible. For accuracy and ease of reporting, five out of six categorical variables were subdivided to align with the method of data organization used by TEA and United States Census Bureau reports. Grade level was the only category not subdivided. It covered the age range from 8-12, which is the typical age bracket of students in grades 3-6. Persons with disabilities in Texas was subdivided into two categories including those who are listed on the TEA Public Information Report (PIR) as having a disability, and those who do not. TEA’s PIR included the following disabilities: auditory impairment, autism, deaf or blindness, emotional disturbance, intellectual disability, learning disability, orthopedic impairment, speech impairment, traumatic brain injury, visual impairment, or other health impairment. According to Texas Education Code § 89.1040, the category, other health impairment, may include acute health problems such as asthma, attention deficit disorder or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, diabetes, epilepsy, a heart condition, hemophilia, lead

poisoning, leukemia, nephritis, rheumatic fever, sickle cell anemia, and Tourette's disorder. Family structure was subdivided into subcategories for children living with both parents, the mother only, the father only, or neither parent. The category for children living with neither parent includes adopted children. Gender was subdivided into two subcategories including male and female. Race was subdivided into African-American, American Indian, Asian, Hispanic, Pacific Islander, White, or Multiracial. Finally, socio-economic status was subdivided into two categories including one for students who were on the free or reduced price lunch program during the 2015-16 school year, and those who were not. For the purposes of this study, those who were on the free or reduced price lunch program were considered economically disadvantaged.

Data Analysis Procedures

First, the researcher determined the total number of main characters that would be used from the 20 books on the TBAML for the data calculations. Of the 20 books, 17 of them had one main character. There were two books that had more than one main character. These books included *A Hero's Guide to Saving Your Kingdom*, which had four main characters, and *Quinny and Hopper*, which had two main characters. Further, the book entitled, *Rutherford B. Who Was He?*, which outlined all of the presidents of the United States, was eliminated from all calculations because the information concerning the characters presented in the book was found to skew the set of data collected from the books as it would have added 44 main characters to the data calculations.

After determining the total number of main characters, the researcher determined the disability status, gender, grade level, family structure, race, and socio-economic status for each of the main characters. This information was organized on charts (see Appendix

C). The total number of characters who possessed or did not possess a particular demographic characteristic was totaled, and a percentage was calculated for that categorical variable. For example, the researcher found that only one out of twenty-three main characters were represented in-text as having a disability. Therefore, the researcher calculated the percentage for one out of twenty-three, which resulted in 4.3% of characters among the twenty-three total characters having a disability, and 95.7% not having a disability. After a percentage was calculated for each subdivision of the categorical variables the data was compared to corresponding data percentages calculated using reports released by the TEA and the United States Census Bureau.

The total number of Texas students in grades 3-6 was used to calculate percentages from TEA reports. For example, there were a total of 1,591,089 students in grades 3-6 during the 2015-16 school year. Among them, 149,656 in grades 3-6 were reported by TEA as having a disability. In order to derive a percentage that could be compared to the data percentages calculated for the main characters on the TBAML, the researcher calculated 149,656 percent of 1,591,089, which is 9.4%. It should be noted that the percentages from the United States Census Bureau were calculated using the age bracket 9-11 and included all of the children in that age bracket in the United States.

Lastly, the researcher used the data percentage sets from the books and the report to show that 4.3% of characters from the books on the TBAML were represented as having a disability, while 9.4% of students in grades 3-6 actually had a disability. This process of comparing percentages from the data sets was repeated for each subdivision of the six categorical variables. These percentages conveyed the extent to which diversity representation was present in the books on the 2015-16 TBAML, and how well that

representation mirrored the demographics of the readers of the books on the TBAML. Results will be explained in Chapter IV.

Limitations of Study

Although this study was carefully designed, there are some possible limitations that may exist. Only one researcher performed this study. Therefore, it was impossible to utilize inter-coder agreement in order to create empirical validity and reliability when selecting the categorical variables, during data analysis, and in reporting. Further, it was possible that subjectivity could have skewed how the material was coded. In order to avoid this possible limitation, data from the books was collected according to a predetermined list of categorical variables using a prescriptive color-coding system. The categorical variables concerning disability, gender, grade level, socio-economic status, and race, were retrieved from the TEA and were specific to students in grades 3-6 for the 2015-16 school year. However, data concerning family structure was retrieved from the United States Census Bureau, which reported information for the age bracket 9-11, and included the entire population of the country as opposed to the state. Typically, students enter the third grade at the age of eight and leave the sixth grade at the age of twelve. Neither age was included in the 9-11 age bracket. This may be considered a limitation of the study. Further, the United States Census Bureau published an annual report concerning family structure. Therefore, those statistics were for the year 2016 and were not specific to the 2015-16 school year. This could also be considered a limitation of the study. However, voting for the 2015-16 TBA winner did take place during 2016. Lastly, it could be considered a limitation that only the 20 books from the 2015-16 TBAML were evaluated, as opposed to a larger sample including multiple previous TBAML's.

Summary

This chapter began by providing information about the definitions and classifications of content analysis. It explained what materials were used in the study, how the categorical variables were selected and organized, how data was collected from the 20 books on the 2015-16 TBAML, how the demographic data on Texas readers in grades 3-6 was collected and managed, data analysis procedures, and possible limitations of the study.

Chapter IV

Results

Introduction

The purpose of the study was to explore the extent to which the demographics of the Texas readers in grades 3-6 during the 2015-16 school year were represented by the demographics of the main characters in the books on the 2015-16 Texas Bluebonnet Award Master List (TBAML). Data concerning Texas students were collected from Public Information Reports (PIR) released by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) as well as the United States Census Bureau. A content analysis was performed to collect data about the characters in the books. Tables displaying the data can be found in this chapter. Additional comprehensive data tables can be found in Appendices B and C. The previous chapter described the methods used to perform the content analysis. This chapter includes the results of data analyzed for the study. The sections in this chapter are organized in the alphabetical order of the categorical variables including disability, family structure, gender, grade level, race, and socio-economic status.

Disability

According to the TEA, a student who receives special education services may have a disability that falls under one or more of the following categories: auditory impairment, autism, deaf or blindness, emotional disturbance, intellectual disability, learning disability, orthopedic impairment, speech impairment, traumatic brain injury, visual impairment, or other health impairment. According to the Texas Education Code § 89.1040, the disability called other health impairment may include acute health problems such as asthma, attention deficit disorder or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder,

diabetes, epilepsy, a heart condition, hemophilia, lead poisoning, leukemia, nephritis, rheumatic fever, sickle cell anemia, and Tourette’s disorder. Table 1 illustrates a comparison between the disability status of the main characters in the 2015-16 TBAML books in relation to the disability status of Texas students in grades 3-6 during the 2015-16 school year as reported by the TEA.

Table 1

Disability Status of Texas Students in Grades 3-6 During the 2015-16 School Year Compared to the Disability Status of the Main Characters in the 2015-16 TBAML books

	With a Disability	Without a Disability	Total
Grades 3-6	9.4%	90.6%	100%
Main Characters	4.3%	95.7%	100%

The results of this study found that when compared to the percentage of Texas students in grades 3-6 reported as having a disability, the main characters in the books on the TBAML underrepresented this demographic population by 5.1%. Further, it is noteworthy that during the 2015-16 school year the TEA reported that 149,656 (9.4%) students in grades 3-6 received services for one or more disabilities. See Appendix B for a comprehensive table illustrating the total number of students in each grade level who received special education services for specific disabilities.

Family Structure

Family Structure referred to the living situation of the main characters. Statistical data regarding family structure of Texas students in grades 3-6 were collected from a report published by the United States Census Bureau entitled, “Household Relationship and Living Arrangements of Children Under 18 Years, by Age and Sex: 2016,” which

reported on family structure by grouping children into multiple age brackets including both parents, mother only, father only, or neither parent. The researcher used statistical data reported for the age bracket 9-11 years because it most closely aligned to the age bracket of the readers of the TBAML. Family structure statistics were reported for the entire population of the country and were not specific to Texas students in grades 3-6. Also, they were reported for the calendar year 2016, and not for the 2015-16 school year. However, it was the most relevant of what was available.

Table 2 illustrates a comparison between the family structure of the main characters in the 2015-16 TBAML books in relation to the family structure of children in the United States between the ages of 9-11 during 2016 as reported by the United States Census Bureau.

Table 2

Family Structure of Children in the United States in the 9-11 Age Bracket During 2016 Compared to the Family Structure of the Main Characters in the 2015-16 TBAML books

	Living With Both Parents	Living With Mother Only	Living With Father Only	Living With Neither Parent	Total
Children in U.S Between Ages 9-11	68.3%	23.9%	4.1%	3.7%	100%
Main Characters	69.6%	8.7%	0.0%	21.7%	100%

The 2016 United States Census Bureau data showed that a majority (68.3%) of children in the United States between the ages of 9-11 lived with both parents. This percentage was followed by the percentage of children Living With Mother Only (23.9%). Very few children were reported as Living With Father Only (4.1%) or Living

With Neither Parent (3.7%). Sixteen out of twenty-three (69.6%) of the main characters in the TBAML books were represented as Living With Both Parents. Two out of twenty-three (8.7%) of the main characters in the TBAML books were represented as Living With Mother Only. None of the main characters in the TBAML books were represented as Living With Father Only (0.0%). Five out of twenty-three (21.7%) of the main characters in the TBAML books were represented as Living With Neither Parent.

The results of the study showed that when compared to the percentage of children in the 9-11 age bracket in the United States Living With Both Parents, the main characters in the TBAML books overrepresented this demographic population by 1.3%. When compared to children in the 9-11 age bracket in the United States Living With Mother Only, the main characters in the TBAML books underrepresented this demographic population by 15.2%. When compared to children in the 9-11 age bracket in the United States Living With Father Only, the main characters in the TBAML books underrepresented this demographic population by 4.1%. Finally, when compared to children in the 9-11 age bracket in the United States Living With Neither Parent, the main characters in the TBAML books overrepresented this demographic population by 18%. Therefore, the TBAML did not accurately represent the children Living With Mother Only, or Living With Father Only, and in fact, acknowledged no representation of children Living With Father Only.

Gender

Gender was determined by whether an individual was male or female. Table 3 illustrates a comparison between the gender make up of the main characters in the 2015-

16 TBAML books in relation to the gender make up of Texas students in grades 3-6 during the 2015-16 school year as reported by the TEA.

Table 3

Gender Make Up of Texas Students in Grades 3-6 During the 2015-16 School Year Compared to the Gender Make Up of the Main Characters in the 2015-16 TBAML books

	Male	Female	Total
Grades 3-6	51.3%	48.7%	100%
Main Characters	52.2%	47.8%	100%

When compared to the percentage of Texas students in grades 3-6 reported by TEA as Male, the main characters in the TBAML books were found to overrepresent the male demographic population by .9%. On the other hand, when compared to the percentage of Texas students reported as Female, the main characters were found to underrepresent the female demographic population by .9%. Therefore, the results of the study indicated that the percentage of male and female main characters in the TBAML books were close in comparison to the percentage of male and female students in Texas in grades 3-6 during the 2015-16 school year.

Grade Level

For the purposes of this study, grade level refers to the total student population in grades levels 3-6 as reported by TEA for the 2015-16 school year. This typically includes students in the age bracket of 8-12 years. Table 4 illustrates the percentage of main characters in the 2015-16 TBAML books who were and who were not in the same grade level as the readers of the TBAML.

Table 4

Grade Level of Texas Students in Grades 3-6 During the 2015-16 School Year Compared to the Grade Level of the Main Characters in the 2015-16 TBAML books

	In Grades 3-6	Not in Grades 3-6	Total
Main Characters	69.6%	30.4%	100%

Among the main characters in the TBAML books, 69.6% were found to be in the same grade level as Texas students. Conversely, 30.4% were outside the peer group of the readers.

Race

In the 2016 PIR released by the TEA entitled “Enrollment by Grade and Race/Ethnicity” race was organized into seven categories including African-American, American Indian, Asian, Hispanic, Pacific Islander, White, or Multiracial. Table 5 illustrates a comparison of the racial make up of the main characters in the books to the racial make up of Texas students.

Table 5

Racial Make Up of Texas Students in Grades 3-6 During the 2015-16 School Year Compared to the Racial Make Up of the Main Characters in the 2015-16 TBAML books

	African Am.	Am. Indian	Asian	Hisp.	Pacific Islander	White	Multi-racial	Total
Grades 3-6	12.5%	.4%	4.1%	52.5%	.1%	28.4%	2.1%	100%
Main Characters	4.3%	0.0%	4.3%	8.7%	0.0%	78.3%	4.3%	100%

Texas students in grades 3-6 were found to be 12.5% African-American, .4% American Indian, 4.1% Asian, 52.2% Hispanic, .1% Pacific Islander, 28.4% White, and 2.1% Multi-racial. Of the main characters in the books on the TBAML, one out of twenty-three (4.3%) of the main characters was African American, Asian, or Multi-racial. Further, two out of twenty-three (8.7%) of the main characters were Hispanic, and eighteen out of twenty-three (78.3%) were White. No Pacific Islander or American Indian characters were represented.

Accordingly, this study showed that the main characters in the books on the TBAML underrepresented the Hispanic demographic population by 43.8%, the African-American demographic population by 8.2%, the American Indian demographic population by .4%, and the Pacific Islander or American Indian demographic population by .1%. Further, the main characters in the books on the TBAML overrepresented the White demographic population by 49.9%, which is almost three times as much, and doubled the Multi-racial demographic with an overrepresentation of 2.2%. Finally, the Asian demographic population was about equally represented with a difference in representation of only .1%.

Socio-economic Status

The TEA reported the total number of Texas students in grades 3-6 who were enrolled in the free or reduced price lunch program during the 2015-16 school year. For the purpose of this study, the socio-economic status of students was differentiated by those who received a free or reduced price lunch and those who did not. Students enrolled in the free or reduced price lunch program were considered economically disadvantaged. Students not enrolled in the free or reduced price lunch program were not

considered economically disadvantaged. Table 6 illustrates a comparison between the socio-economic status of the main characters in the 2015-16 TBAML books in relation to the socio-economic status of Texas students in grades 3-6 during the 2015-16 school year as reported by the TEA.

Table 6

Socio-economic Status of Texas Students in Grades 3-6 During the 2015-16 School Year Compared to the Socio-economic Status of the Main Characters in the 2015-16 TBAML books

	Economically Disadvantaged	Not Economically Disadvantaged	Total
Grades 3-6	60.6%	39.4%	100%
Main Characters	13%	87%	100%

TEA reported that 60.6% of students were found to be economically disadvantaged and 39.4% were found to be not economically disadvantaged. Three out of twenty-three (13%) of the main characters in the TBAML books were found to be economically disadvantaged, while twenty out of twenty-three (87%) were found to be not economically disadvantaged. Therefore, when compared to Texas students in grades 3-6, the main characters in the books on the TBAML underrepresented the economically disadvantaged demographic population by 47.6%.

Summary

This chapter reports the results of data analysis for the study. Specifically, this chapter includes results from the content analysis which sought to answer the following question: To what extent do the main characters in the 20 books on the 2015-16 Texas

Bluebonnet Award Master List reflect the diversity of Texas students in grades 3-6 in terms of disability, family structure, gender, grade level, race, and socio-economic status? Sections in this chapter were organized alphabetically according to the six categorical variables.

In sum, the findings of this study showed that the demographic populations found to be most underrepresented by the main characters in the TBAML books were Hispanic main characters, the economically disadvantaged, those living with only their mother, and those not in grade levels 3-6. The demographic populations found to be most overrepresented were White main characters, those who were not economically disadvantaged, and main characters living with neither parent. Demographic populations found not to be represented at all were main characters living with only their father and main characters who were of the American Indian or Pacific Islander demographic groups. Results were reported in this chapter by comparing the demographic data retrieved from the 2015-16 TEA PIRs and the 2016 United States Census Bureau to demographic data collected about the main characters in the books on the 2015-16 TBAML. The next chapter will conclude this study with a discussion of the results and implications concerning diversity representation in the 2015-16 TBAML books.

Chapter V

Discussion and Conclusions

Introduction

This research study was conducted to compare the demographics of the main characters in the 2015-16 Texas Bluebonnet Award Master List (TBAML) to the demographics of Texas students in grades 3-6. Students are exposed to literature throughout their personal and academic lives. The content of that literature can influence how they learn to view themselves as members of society and can affect their ability to connect with the school curriculum. Since research shows that the demographic diversity in Texas schools is growing, there is a need to examine the demographic content of children's literature in relationship to the make up of the targeted audience. The goal of this study was to examine and compare whether the main characters in the TBAML books are reflective of the readers. It is the hope of the researcher that this study will encourage progress and growth in the representation of all demographic groups in children's literature and its associated awards.

The researcher sought to answer the following question: To what extent do the main characters in the 20 books on the 2015-16 Texas Bluebonnet Award Master List reflect the diversity of Texas students in grades 3-6 in terms of disability, family structure, gender, grade level, race, and socio-economic status? Initially, the researcher selected six demographic categorical variables to use for comparison and then examined characteristics of the main characters to determine the presence or absence of those six variables. After reading the books, the researcher compared that information to the data in the reports released by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) and the United States

Census Bureau.

The previous chapters conducted a review of the literature, explained the methodology used to carry out the study, and presented the results of the study. This chapter will review the background of the children's publishing industry, sociopolitical factors in the world of children's literature, and the importance of diversity in trade books. It will also discuss findings of the study, implications for future research, and conclusions.

Background of the Children's Publishing Industry

Research concerning children's literature and its awards increased significantly after the mid-20th century. It became a time marked by public school desegregation, an increase in immigration into the United States, and growth in the children's literature publishing market. Public school segregation was abolished by the U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954). This decision brought students from varied backgrounds together in common educational settings. The *Immigration and Nationality Act* (1965) increased the immigration of people of varying ethnicities into the United States that consequently increased the ethnic diversity of schools. Furthermore, as what some have called the boom decade of the 1950s began, 1,400 new children's books were published annually and the juvenile publishing industry had achieved status. "The school market for children's books surged into the forefront of juvenile publishing" (Epstein, 1996, p. 474).

Those landmark events and others resulted in attention being focused on children's literature and its awards. Educators began to notice that children's books contained messages and themes that required closer examination as they applied to

students. Topics of interest included the presence of handicapped characters, the influence of social mores, the presentation of the lives of characters with regard to economic trends, gender issues, human sexuality, culture and race (Bekkedal, 1973). More recently, researchers have explored topics such as childhood needs in children's literature (Burton, 2010), depictions of resiliency exhibited by the characters (Foreman, 2010), and popular traits common to the characters (Wagner, 2014). However, despite the variety of researched topics, a reoccurring theme was found. Stereotyping instead of adapting to the evolving demographics of the classroom was dominant in children's literature.

Sociopolitical Factors in the World of Children's Literature

According to Mickenberg & Nel (2011), "Individuals and groups interested in influencing the future recognize the need to influence children" (p. 446). Adults involved with children's literature have shaped the sociopolitical characteristics of main characters and, as a result, control the amount of diversity representation in children's literature. They are the dominant influence on what is published, sold, and read by children. The NCTE commented,

In the world of literature for young people, the kinds of print and digital texts that are accessible to youth are determined and authorized by influential individuals and professional organizations: editors/publishers, agents, authors/book creators, illustrators, distributors, booksellers, librarians, educators, parents, and the media. (2015, para. 1)

Those in charge of children's literature are largely from a homogeneous group of individuals. Lee & Low Books (2015) recently brought attention to that homogeneity in their Diversity Baseline Survey of eight review journals and 34 publishers. The study found that the vast majority of those who hold the power in the children's book industry

are heterosexual (88%), White (79%), non-disabled (92%), and female (78%).

According to Moffet (2016), “It is important to remember that the award committees are composed of people who are existing in and a product of their time” (p. 80). Therefore, it is reasonable to suggest that adults are choosing literature representative of what they encountered during their own childhood, literature with which they can personally identify, or literature representative of their current milieu. Additionally, it is also possible that adults are choosing literature for demographic groups they mistakenly believe represent the majority of mainstream students.

Fortunately, the lack of diversity representation in children’s literature has begun to receive much needed attention. The organization, We Need Diverse Books, has advocated for “essential changes in the publishing industry to produce and promote literature that reflects and honors the lives of all young people” (We Need Diverse Books, 2015). Various organizations have also created awards that are meant to represent literature from communities bonded by a similar characteristic (Aronson, 2001). These awards are known as identity-based awards. Further, several journals have heeded the critical voices of reviewers for more diverse backgrounds (Mendoza & Reese, 2001).

Although progress has been made, there is still a need for continued examination of diversity in texts presented to children. It has been a repeated finding of researchers that change is needed for children’s books to reflect society’s cultural, ethnic, and other diversity (Horning, 2016; Lee & Low Books, 2015). As Daniels & Zemelman (2014) stated, “Some of what kids read in school should hold up a mirror to them by including their story, their culture, their experience” (p. 71).

The Importance of Diversity in Trade Books

Trade books, which are the type of books found on the TBAML, are playing an increasing role in the teaching of reading (Baumann, et al., 1998; Austin & Morrison, 1961). Books such as those on the TBAML supplement lessons, workbooks, textbooks, stock classroom libraries, and are used in conjunction with all areas of school curriculum.

Research indicates that providing students with culturally relevant books to which they can relate makes reading more interesting and leads to increased motivation and higher literacy rates (Freeman & Feeney, 2010). Culturally relevant texts can also help minority students connect with the school curriculum (Astolfi, 2012). A lack of diversity representation can negatively impact readers who belong to omitted or underrepresented groups. It is among these groups that the incidence of reading failure is highest (Lonigan & Shanahan, 2010). When considering the percentage of Texas students who belong to such groups one may reasonably conclude that diversity representation is particularly important to student reading success.

During the 2015-16 school year, Hispanic students made up 52.5% of the total student population in grades 3-6 (TEA, 2016). Further, more than 60% of those students were either on a free or reduced price lunch program (TEA, 2016). Ramsey (2015) made a noteworthy observation about Texas schools. He stated,

Public schools in Texas are changing rapidly. The picture that emerges in the latest version of the annual snapshot reported by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) is of a giant system of enormous and microscopic school districts with a huge variety of geographic, ethnic, racial, economic and educational diversity. (p. 2)

Within the same year the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) released a Position Statement entitled the “Resolution on the Need for Diverse Children’s and Young Adult Books,” which stated that the children’s books published today do not mirror the increase in diversity in states across the country (NCTE, 2015). This reinforces the need for content analysis of children’s literature.

A Focus on the Content of Children’s Literature and its Awards

Research concerning the content analysis of children’s literature began with Martin’s (1936) landmark study that examined children’s books for symbols and messages. Martin reported that excessive references to the enthusiasms and loyalties of a particular country would likely undermine a book’s ability to be popular among readers outside of the country of authorship because readers would not be able to connect with the story. Martin’s study supports the idea that it is important for readers to be able to relate to literature. Diversity representation increases the likelihood that readers will find some way with which to relate to the content of the literature. Despite the emergence of this idea more than 80 years ago, researchers have continued to report a disproportionate presence of stereotypes and a lack of meaningful diversity in children’s literature.

For example, Shepard (1962) discovered that when villains were portrayed as foreigners they were usually not Caucasian and their nationality was negatively stereotyped. However, when villains were portrayed as Americans there were no evil associations with their nationality. Larrick (1964) reported that African-American characters were depicted in negatively stereotyped ways. Hillman (1976) found that occupational gender role stereotyping was a common occurrence. Her research indicated that stereotyped depictions of characters in children’s literature are not a new occurrence.

More recent research proves that despite the growing amount of classroom diversity, stereotyped depictions are still prevalent.

Kimmel (1990) discovered that racial group portrayals were not proportionate to their representation in society and that males and females were typically depicted in extremely stereotyped sex roles. Murr (1997) examined parenting behaviors in picture storybooks from 1946-95 and presented information that depicted mothers as the parent primarily displaying parental behaviors. Goodroe (1998) found that males were depicted more frequently and in a wider variety of occupational positions, which Hamilton, Anderson, Broadus, & Young (2006) also discovered years later, as well as Paynter (2011). Lowery (1998) presented findings supporting the idea that immigrants were negatively portrayed in a majority of examined novels. Miller (2003) also found a number of stereotypes among the results of her study, particularly pertaining to family structure, socioeconomic status, handicapping conditions, sex roles, and race.

Brady (2009) wrote that the majority of teachers depicted in children's literature were White, European-American females which did not accurately align with statistical information concerning the demographics of teachers included in the study. Showalter (2015) researched virtues and vices. The conclusion of that study was that the strongest message sent was that "living life to the fullest" for the American child was depicted as impulsive and self-indulgent, which is a commonly stereotyped portrayal of American children. Finally, Koss (2015) revealed that White primary and secondary characters were dominant by a large percentage and the portrayal of characters with disabilities was extremely stereotyped.

Adichie (2009) stated, "The single story creates stereotypes, and the problem with

stereotypes is not that they are untrue, but that they are incomplete. They make one story become the only story.” Her statement emphasizes the continued need for content analysis of children’s literature and its associated awards.

Findings Related to the Results

Disability. In order to examine disability, the researcher noted the extent to which the main character was presented in the text as having one or more disabilities outlined by the TEA. These included auditory impairment, autism, deaf or blindness, emotional disturbance, intellectual disability, learning disability, orthopedic impairment, speech impairment, traumatic brain injury, visual impairment, or other health impairment. According to the Texas Education Code § 89.1040, the disability categorized as “Other Health Impairment” may include acute health problems such as asthma, attention deficit disorder or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, diabetes, epilepsy, a heart condition, hemophilia, lead poisoning, leukemia, nephritis, rheumatic fever, sickle cell anemia, and Tourette’s disorder. Among the books on the 2015-16 TBAML, 4.3% of the main characters were found to have a disability compared to 9.4% of Texas students in grades 3-6 who were reported as having a disability. Therefore, the percentage of students with a disability was somewhat underrepresented by the characters on the TBAML.

Only one book in this study depicted a male character as having a disability. This character had the learning disability known as Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). The majority of students in Texas in grades 3-6 who have a disability are classified as having a learning disability (see Appendix B). Therefore, the one book on the TBAML that represented a character with a disability represented only the most common, physically unnoticeable disability among the targeted readers. Further, it is

important to note that the disability was never referred to by name in the literature. The symptoms of the disability were briefly referred to in a page and a half during the first chapter of the book, and the character was described as exhibiting many of the stereotypical descriptors of a child with a learning disability. These descriptors included being male, not being able to sit still, and frequently being in trouble for not being able to focus on schoolwork.

The depiction of a male character with a disability presented in a stereotyped manner aligned with Smith (2000) who studied the presence of characters with disabilities in children's literature. Smith stated that it was made more acceptable and obvious for a character to have a learning disability rather than a mental disability. Smith further explained that in her study characters with ADHD were not presented in a manner that portrayed the disability with a well-rounded approach.

Three years later Miller (2003), who studied the Texas Bluebonnet Award-winning, Master List, and nominated titles, reported that among the books nominated for the 2001-02 Master List very few depicted handicapped characters. However, even among those stereotypical portrayals were common.

More than a decade later Koss (2015) examined 455 contemporary children's picture books from 2012 and offered a slightly different point-of-view from the present study. A majority of characters in her study were found to have a physical disability. However, she reported that only two books contained characters with a cognitive disability. She further reported that no characters with emotional disabilities were present in any of the books. During the 2015-16 school year, TEA reported that 8,884 students were found to have an emotional disability (see Appendix B). TEA annually

reports on more than two dozen disability categories. This is significant because it supports the argument that if more equal representation is to occur in children's literature then both males and females of different categories of disabilities should be present in the literature.

Family structure. For the categorical variable pertaining to family structure, the researcher examined the living situations of the main characters according to whether they lived with both parents, their mother only, their father only, or neither parent. Statistical information concerning the family structure of children in the United States between the ages of 9-11 years was gathered from United States Census Bureau. Of the books on the 2015-16 TBAML, 69.6% of main characters lived with both parents compared to 68.3% of children in the United States. This representation is in close alignment with statistical data as well as with the findings of related literature.

Among characters living with their mother, only 8.7% were represented in this living situation compared to 23.9% of children in the United States. This cohort was underrepresented. Further, among characters living with their fathers only, none were depicted, as compared to 4.1% of children in that situation in the United States. This cohort was completely missing. When combined, characters living with a single parent only represented a total of 8.7%. In contrast, 28% of the children in the United States live with a single parent according to the United States Census Bureau. On the other hand, among characters living with neither parent were 21.7% compared to only 3.7% of children in the United States. This was a significant overrepresentation.

Miller (2003) reported that the 21 TBA winners from 1981-2002 and 418 books nominated for the Master Lists included a variety of family circumstances. However,

integrated families were portrayed in a negative manner and particularly pertaining to stepparents and stepsiblings. It should be noted that integrated families, stepparents, and stepsiblings were also not represented in the books on the 2015-16 TBAML.

Despain, Tunnell, Wilcox, & Morrison (2015) examined family structures and found that the Newbery-winning and honor books awarded during the decades of the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s did not represent the actual census data for family structures during that time period. However, family structures examined in texts starting in the 1960s are more closely matched to corresponding census data. They also reported that the most recent winners and honor recipients included books with traditional family structure representations, but that some books also included diverse family structures which were found to be representative of the actual reality of shifting family structures.

Griffith (2008) conducted a research study in which she examined the most circulated titles among Texas middle school libraries for grades six through eight. She reported that students like to read about changing family roles. Perhaps students enjoy that because they can relate to the lives of the characters whose family structures do not align with the traditional two-parent home, or maybe they simply enjoy reading to learn about the lives of others. Characters who live in non-traditional family structures such as single father households, same sex parent households, or households with a stepparent or stepsiblings still need more representation so that children's literature will better reflect the lives of all students.

Gender. The researcher examined gender by determining whether an individual was male or female. The gender of the characters in the books on the 2015-16 TBAML was counted and compared to the total number of characters included in the study. Gender representation was nearly evenly distributed among the books in the study. When compared to the number of males and females in Texas in grades 3-6, gender was found to almost exactly match the data reported by TEA.

Kimmel (1990) found that stereotypes existed in much of the awarded children's literature. Some of these stereotypes included females being depicted as background characters, in submissive roles, or depicted as evil. The behavior of any ambitious or assertive female characters was restricted or muted by society or circumstances, whereas men were generally assigned positions of power. Goodroe (1998) examined the 100 best-selling children's picture books from 1988-98 and reported that males were represented more often in text and in illustrations than females. Males were also more involved in overall activities and were found to participate in more mobile activities in books published from 1991-97. Further, the occupations of males were depicted more clearly and in a wider variety. Five years later Miller (2003) studied the Texas Bluebonnet Award-winning, Master List, and nominated titles and found that gender was evenly distributed among the 21 TBA winners from 1981-2002, as well as among the books nominated for the 2001-02 TBAML. She further concluded that gender representation was the least problematic among the 418 books nominated for the Master Lists.

Hamilton, Anderson, Broaddus, & Young (2006), performed a study on gender stereotyping and underrepresentation of female characters in popular children's picture books. In terms of comparing the Caldecott books to other popular books, the overall

conclusion was that female characters were still underrepresented in children's picture books, but at an even higher rate in Caldecott-winning books. The researchers concluded that modern children's picture books continued to show males as more interesting and more important than females.

Paynter (2011) also examined gender stereotypes and representation of female characters in picture books for children. The study replicated a study carried out by Hamilton, Anderson, Broaddus, & Young (2006). It concluded that gender stereotyping and underrepresentation of female characters had not changed since the Hamilton et al. study. However, Koss (2015) examined characters in 455 contemporary children's literature books from 2012 and reported that male and female characters were nearly evenly distributed between all titles.

Although there has been some variation in the representation of males and females in children's literature, the present study aligns with the results of Miller (2003) who also found that males and females were equally represented.

Grade level. For the purpose of this study, grade level refers to the total student population in grade levels 3-6 as reported by TEA for the 2015-16 school year. It included students in the age bracket of 8-12 years. Among the characters in the books on the TBAML, the number of characters in grades 3-6 was found to be 69.6%. The total number of book characters found to be outside of grades 3-6 was 30.4%. However, it should be noted that six out of the seven of the characters started out as children within the peer group in the beginning of the stories. For example, one of the books was a fairy tale that contained main characters who, in the beginning of the book, were close in age to the readers. For the majority of the story these characters were not in the peer group of the readers, but the introduction to these characters got the attention of the readers by starting with their lives as children. Other stories where the main character was not in the peer group of the readers for the entire story included biographies and autobiographies. Again, the characters started out within the peer group of the readers but the story spanned the character's life outside of the grade level of the readers. This information is important because children prefer to read stories in which the main characters are in their grade level and age group.

Wallis (1997) performed a content analysis of books from the school years 1980-81 through 1995-96 that had won a minimum of six state popularity awards with the purpose of identifying the shared qualities of books repeatedly chosen as favorites. These books were voted on by students in grades 6-8. The researcher found that students are most often interested in well developed characters who are 10-12 years old, which was the age of the targeted readers. Children like to read about characters who are in their peer group.

Griffith (2008) performed a content analysis that examined the 25 most circulated fiction titles as reported by the end-of-year summative circulation reports from eleven Texas school libraries. The purpose of this study was to determine what characteristics adolescents enjoy in their literature. The researcher described the bibliographic characteristics of the books and examined the extent to which Havighurst's (1972) Adolescent Development Tasks occurred within the storylines. The analysis revealed that adolescents prefer stand-alone titles in which the protagonists are achieving independence from parents and other adults because they too are learning to get along with their peers and understand social groups without adult persuasion. This conclusion is also supported by the research of Showalter (2015) who performed a qualitative content analysis that examined virtues (character strengths) and vices (opposing traits) in 30 best-selling children's literature books popular between 2006-10. The researcher stated that it was important for readers to learn about virtues and vices through the actions of their peers. She showed concern that in her study "no scenes or plots [were] dedicated to portraying young boys overcoming anger and disagreements which are common challenges" for the age group (p. 70).

Children like to read about characters of their age and grade level who are experiencing developmental milestones similar to their own. The books on the 2015-16 TBAML were generally relatable to the target readers.

Race. In the 2016 Public Information Report (PIR) released by TEA report entitled, “Enrollment by Grade and Race/Ethnicity,” race was organized into seven categories including African-American, American Indian, Asian, Hispanic, Pacific Islander, White, or Multiracial. The total number of main characters found to be White was 78.3%. This represented an exceedingly high majority over the representation of any other race. Even when the representation of all of the other racial groups in the books were added together they only represented 21.6%. Among those, 4.3% of the characters were African American, Asian, or Multi-racial, and 8.7% were Hispanic. American Indians and Pacific Islanders were not represented in any of the books.

Shepard (1962) studied 16 books that parents, teachers, and librarians reported as being chosen by students in the middle and upper grade levels. Race was among the attributes reported to describe the heroes and heroines in these books. He reported that heroes and heroines were often “clean, white, healthy, handsome, Protestant Christian, middle-class people” and that villains were portrayed as foreigners” (p. 672). Larrick (1964) conducted a study that highlighted the lack of racial diversity in literature for children. She noted that most children’s books depicted African-American characters, either in the illustrations or in the text, in unsatisfactory and negatively stereotyped ways. Kimmel (1990) reported that racial group portrayals in all sets of Newbery and non-Newbery award books existed at rates that did not represent their occurrence in society. She further reported that racial stereotypes were a major tool used to portray non-Caucasian characters. Lowery (1998) reported that immigrants were often portrayed as people who are outside of the existing social order created and dominated by white people (p. 254). Lowery suggested that children’s literature should show opposing

opinions and points-of-view and should refrain from reinforcing existing stereotypes.

Miller (2003) found that all winners of the TBA from 1981-2002 were about White characters. Further, for the same time period, 358 out of 418 Master List books included White characters. That is 85.6%, which is a strikingly close percentage to the 78.3% found in the present study that was completed more than a decade after Miller's study. Further, Miller's research reported that it took until 1990 before a book containing a Hispanic character made it onto the Master List which she stated was unacceptable in a state with a prominent Hispanic population (p. 282).

The present study found that, although Hispanic students made up more than half the population, they were still severely underrepresented in the literature examined. Further, no books in Miller's study contained American Indian or Eskimo characters. One book contained Asian or Pacific Islanders. Two books contained a Black character. The rest contained White characters. All of Miller's findings concerning race were similar to the findings of the present study despite the 13 year difference in which the studies took place. Miller did report that during the time of her study there was more diversity among the books being nominated for the Master List but reported that they were not being chosen by the TBA committee for the TBAML. According to committee member interviews, the ranking factors for choosing books for the TBAML included length, content, genre, illustrations, and diversity of representation. However, none of the committee members ranked diversity of representation as a top criterion (p. 107). Miller attributed the lack of diversity representation in the books to the homogeneous demographics of the committee members and their lack of understanding concerning the value of diversity.

Koss (2015) performed the most recent study and examined gender, race, and disability status of characters in 455 contemporary children's literature books in 2012. She used Critical Race Theory (CRT) which maintains that racism is inherent. The results showed that white characters were the majority of primary characters (45%) and secondary characters (21%). Aside from a few representations of African-American characters, all other racial representations were minimal. Further, a total of 90% of the authors and 83% of the illustrators were White. African Americans were a distant second followed by a small number of Asian, Latino, and Native Americans.

Of the six categorical variables examined in the present study, race was the most concerning. Hispanic students, who make up the majority of the population in Texas schools, were severely underrepresented while other racial groups were minimized or omitted. When characters of other races were presented in the literature they were often used to educate readers about the historical struggle or hardship of the race, or to specifically teach readers about the other culture. Rosenblatt (1976) referred to this as efferent reading versus aesthetic reading. Efferent reading is reading to obtain information while aesthetic reading is meant for enjoyment. TBAML books should proportionately include main characters from different races in a fictional narrative format intended for the enjoyment of the readers. Presenting non-Caucasian characters in literature that mainly highlights differences among races or only informs readers on issues of discrimination perpetuates stereotyped thinking.

Socio-economic status. The TEA reported that 60.6% of the total number of Texas students in grades 3-6 during the 2015-16 school year were economically disadvantaged and, as a result, were enrolled in the free or reduced price lunch program. However, only 13% of the main characters in the books on the TBAML were economically disadvantaged. Therefore, the book characters did not represent the socio-economic status of the readers.

Shepard (1962) described the socio-economic status of heroes and heroines as middle class. He stated that they were often “clean, white, healthy, handsome, Protestant Christian, middle-class people” and, whereas, villains were described as “either very poor or of the wealthy classes” (p. 672). Miller (2003) also reported that there was a focus on the middle class, but reported that little to no mention of other classes was present.

Most recently, Forest (2014) performed a study which examined portrayals of social class in 42 Newbery and honor books that had received awards between 2004-13. The researcher placed focus on the sociology of knowledge learned in schools. The Newbery books were chosen because of their assumed accessibility to children in school settings. The years 2004-13 were chosen because of the economic turmoil and recession that affected people from all social classes during that nine-year period (p. 84). The researcher reported that the books did contain a socio-economic hierarchy. The upper class characters had power and control. The working class and poor were often portrayed as powerless unless they banded together to create change. All of the social classes were intermittently presented in both positive and negative manners that could be interpreted depending on the viewpoint of the reader.

The socio-economic status of the majority of the characters in the books on the

TBAML did not proportionately reflect the status of the targeted readers. It was one of the most underrepresented cohorts. It is important that all students be given the opportunity to understand the lives of people from varying socio-economic classes.

Implications of the Study

Although research indicates that some progress has been made concerning diversity representation in children's literature, additional progress is needed to reflect the growing demographic diversity of Texas schools. The findings of this study suggest that of the six categorical variables examined, race and socio-economic status were the two groups most underrepresented.

The results of this study indicated that 52.5% of the Texas student population in grades 3-6 during the 2015-16 school year was Hispanic, yet only 8.7% of the characters in the books on the TBAML were Hispanic. Over a decade ago Miller (2003) pointed out the importance of Hispanic representation. After finding a severe lack of Hispanic representation in her study, she stated that such underrepresentation was unacceptable in Texas because of the prominent Hispanic population.

This study shows that the TBA committee and those associated with it need to refocus. They need to choose books that represent the students for whom they are intended. Writers and publishers must pay attention to the obvious, evolving demographic trends. Librarians and school boards need to look at the characteristics of their student bodies before purchasing literature. Principals and superintendents can invite authors to talk about the importance of diversity in their work. At the university level, professors who teach students studying education should emphasize the significance of diversity in children's literature.

It is the desire of the researcher that adults involved with children's literature will use the information presented in this study to address the needs of Texas students.

Implications for Future Research

The purpose of this study was to examine the extent to which the demographics of Texas students in grade 3-6, who are the targeted readers of the TBAML, were represented in the literature. This research is significant because students will be introduced to a variety of literature in their academic lives from which they will be expected to learn about themselves, their society, and the world. Therefore, future research that supports more diverse demographic representation in children's literature is valuable and necessary.

Future studies might examine the demographic representation among the characters in the books previously nominated for the TBAML, those selected for the TBAML, and the winners to determine what progress is being made in diversity representation. Future studies might also examine the demographic population of only the schools that participate in the TBA program and compare those statistics to diversity representation in the books on the TBAML. An investigation of the demographic population of schools that do not participate in the TBA Program might also be of value. Among those schools, a survey could be conducted in order to determine the reasons for their not participating. Future studies can also examine the demographic characteristics of the authors and illustrators whose work is chosen for the TBAML, as well as other previously researched topics such as the representation of gender roles, sexism, depictions of adults and the elderly, leadership roles, or the portrayal of a social or behavioral theory.

It is important that diversity is represented in literature so that young people find a reflection of themselves in what they read. Literature should meet the needs of all students. Depicting a variety of diverse populations in the literature we share with young people can help them become literate and engage with their own learning (Hughes-Hassel, Barkley, & Koehler, 2009). Future research is significant to the continued growth of diversity representation in children's literature.

Conclusions

The two most revealing categorical variables examined in the present study were race and socio-economic status. Hispanic students and the economically disadvantaged, who make over one-half of the Texas school population in grades 3-6, are significantly underrepresented. It is of further importance that books include characters living with a single parent. This cohort makes up more than one-fourth of the population of children living in the United States. Lastly, representation of characters with a disability as well as those from varying racial backgrounds should be included in future TBAMLs.

In conclusion, the demographic information from TEA and the United States Census Bureau used in comparison to the main character's demographics in the books on the 2015-16 TBAML showed that the White, able-bodied, middle-class, two parent home demographic is still overrepresented in children's literature. This is important because success in the personal and academic lives of students who do not belong to those groups may be negatively affected and particularly in relation to skills in reading and writing. Almost all of the books on the TBAML which included main characters who were not White intended to show the main character overcoming cultural struggles and hardships within a social environment. It is important that diversity is represented naturally within

the content of narratives and not just in the style of informational texts.

Children must have access to literature in which they find themselves represented because if education is to be inclusive then all students must feel included. As Koss (2015) stated, “Seeing diverse populations in children’s literature needs to become the norm and not the exception” (p. 39). If all students count, then all students must be counted. The future of America will be determined by the quality of its education.

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Appendix A

2015-16 TBA Master List Titles and Summaries

2015-16 Texas Bluebonnet Awards Master List Books

The following list is organized in alphabetical order of the author's last name. It provides the name of the author and/or illustrator, the year of publication, and a book summary.

1. Auxier, J. (2014). *The Night Gardener*.

Molly and Kip are two Irish orphans who travel through England to work as servants. They become employed by mysterious people who dwell in a creepy manor that stands in the shadow of a menacing tree. In this ghost novel, Molly and Kip learn about greed and the power of storytelling as they discover the truth about the manor and its inhabitants.

2. Brown, D. (2013). *The Great American Dust Bowl*.

On April 14, 1935, whipping winds cause the air to thicken, the sky to blacken, and a series of catastrophic events that change the lives of people for a decade to come. This graphic novel delivers a magnificent overview of the devastating events that are now remembered as The Great American Dust Bowl.

3. Bryant, J. & Sweet, M. (2014). *The Right Word: Roget and His Thesaurus*.

Young Peter writes lists to organize his ideas about the world. His lists help him find exactly the right words to explain his thoughts. Timid and shy, Peter eventually grows into an adult who accomplishes many great things, most notably, the creation of the thesaurus.

4. Cavanaugh, N. J. (2014). *Always Abigail*.

Abigail struggles when she is placed in the class of everyone's least-favorite teacher for homeroom, her two best friends are assigned to a different homeroom, and the school outcast is assigned as her new pen pal for an assignment. Through lists and letters, this novel tells the story of a girl who learns that being a true friend is more valuable than popularity.

5. Cammuso, F. (2013). *The Misadventures of Salem Hyde: Book One: Spelling Trouble*.

Salem Hyde is not like other kids. She is a witch. After she accidentally turns the school's crossing guard into a dinosaur, she knows she needs help with her spells. Although she does not like being told what to do, her cat companion, Percival J. Whamsford, III, guides her as she aims to become a better witch and works to win the school spelling bee.

6. Daly, C. & Brown, L. (2014). *Emily's Blue Period*.

Emily admires the artistic works of Pablo Picasso. When Emily's parents separate, her life feels as unstructured as some of Picasso's art. As Emily grieves, she adapts to the changes in her family and takes solace in Picasso's "Blue Period." This story is a window into the sometimes-complex journey of divorce and how art can assist with emotional expression.

7. de los Santos, M. & Teague, D. (2014). *Saving Lucas Biggs*.

Margaret knows her father is innocent and she will do anything to prove it. With the help of her best friend Charlie, and his grandpa Josh, she uses her family's forbidden secret of time travel to go back in time to try and alter the chain of events that has led to her father's current situation.

8. Eddleman, P. (2013). *Sky Jumpers*.

Hope is a twelve-year-old girl who lives in a post-apocalyptic town struggling to recover from the green bombs of World War III. The citizens in her town have had to learn to survive using the resources within their society, so they highly value creative inventions. Hope does not feel like an inventor, but when a band of bandits invades her town, her unique skills help make her a hero.

9. Egan, K., Lane, M., & Wight, E. (2014). *The Vanishing Coin*.

Mike, an aspiring magician, is a hyperactive kid who struggles to sit still in school. He reluctantly becomes friends with his new neighbor, Nora, who seems to be good at everything. Together, they visit the White Rabbit magic shop. Mike meets the

owner who convince that he is finally good at something. Magic!

10. Ehlert, L. (2014). *The Scraps Book: Notes from a Colorful Life*.

Author and illustrator Lois Ehlert was raised to be an artist. Her parents taught her to sew, saw wood, and pound nails, and they gave her colorful art supplies. This book takes the reader on a tour of her life, reveals her inspiration for creating art, and encourages readers to explore their own creativity.

11. Engle, M. (2013). *Mountain Dog*.

When Tony's mother is jailed, Tony is sent to live with his great uncle, whom he has never met, in the Sierra Nevada mountain range. Tony finds happiness and learns a new way of life in the mountains and he develops a strong bond with the Labrador retriever he received as a gift from his uncle.

12. Gandhi, A., Hegedus, B., & Turk, E. (2014). *Grandfather Gandhi*.

Through a message of peace, Mahatma Gandhi's grandson, Arun, tells the story of how he and his family went to live with his grandfather in a village in India. As Arun struggles with anger and the idea of having to live up to his family name, he discovers many things about life and how to "live as light."

13. Healy, C. (2012). *The Hero's Guide to Saving Your Kingdom*.

Four princes set out on a journey to save their own kingdom and their princesses. The princes in this story are not what you'd expect, and the princesses aren't the damsels in distress you'd find in a Disney story. This exciting journey includes trolls, witches, dragons, bandits, giants and more! This is an exciting twist on what "happily ever after" can really mean.

14. Hill, L. C. & Taylor, T., III (2013). *When the Beat Was Born: DJ Kool Herc and the Creation of Hip Hop*.

Clive Campbell spun the records for his sister's South Bronx block party. He

played the records in a way all his own and nicknamed himself DJ Kool Herc. His musical invention replaced gang fights with breakdancing and a new culture of music was defined. This story, spanning 1973-86, depicts the evolution of hip-hop, an American musical art form.

15. Philbrick, R. (2014). *Zane and the Hurricane: A Story of Katrina*.

Twelve-year-old Zane Dupree finds himself trapped and alone in his New Orleans home when Hurricane Katrina strikes. An elderly musician with a young girl in a boat rescues him. Their journey to safety is a story of heroism, the effects of racism, and the fight for survival set during and after the worst hurricane ever to hit New Orleans.

16. Schanan, A. D. (2014). *Quinny & Hopper*.

This story is told from the back-and-forth points of view of Quinny and Hopper, polar opposites and best friends who stick together in the face of bullies and a chicken killer. As summer ends, will their friendship also end, and will the new rules of third grade become too much of a challenge to their friendship?

17. Searles, R. (2014). *The Lost Planet*.

When Chase Garrety wakes up on planet Trucon, he can remember only one thing, a message to “Guide the star.” While on a joyride in a borrowed spaceship, Chase and his friend Parker witness the destruction of Planet Trucon. In order to discover the secrets behind the message, Parker must help guide Chase across the universe.

18. Singer, M. & Hendrix, J. (2013). *Rutherford B., Who Was He?: Poems About Our Presidents*.

Rhythm, rhyme, and complementary illustrations reveal behind-the-scenes information about the lives of the presidents of the United States. Speech bubbles, historical notes, and quotes are packed with interesting details and anecdotes about each. Singer and Hendrix introduce readers to all the U.S. presidents, in chronological order, through George W. Bush.

19. Tonatiuh, D. (2014). *Separate Is Never Equal: Sylvia Mendez & Her Family's Fight for Desegregation*.

After Sylvia Mendez is denied enrollment to an all-white school in California in 1944, Sylvia and her family fight to bring an end to segregation across the state. They form the Parent's Association of Mexican-American Children and file a lawsuit that they eventually win. This story recounts the road to equal rights through the life and struggles of Sylvia Mendez and her family.

20. Turnage, S. (2014). *The Ghosts of Tupelo Landing*.

Mo and Dale are assigned a school project that requires them to interview an elderly person in their Southern hometown, which leads to a fun and mysterious ghost hunt. Underlying the main storyline are more serious themes involving family problems and the destructive power of guilt and greed.

Appendix B

Data Tables from TEA and the United States Census Bureau

Table B1

Disability Status of Texas Students in Grades 3-6 During the 2015-16 School Year

Grade Level	With a Disability	Without a Disability	Total
Gr. 3	34,011	375,380	409,391
Gr. 4	36,802	360,254	397,056
Gr. 5	39,257	354,863	394,120
Gr. 6	39,586	350,936	390,522
Total	149,656	1,441,433	1,591,089
Percent	9.4%	90.6%	100%

Table B2

Texas Students with a Disability in Grades 3-6 During the 2015-16 School Year

Category of Disability	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Total	Percent
Auditory Impairment	490	528	496	500	2,014	.13%
Autism	4,431	4,454	4,468	4,484	17,837	1.12%
Deaf/blind	15	12	11	13	51	.003%
Emotional Disturbance	1,674	2,048	2,438	2,724	8,884	.56%
Intellectual Disability	3,491	3,921	4,000	4,041	15,453	.97%
Learning Disability	7,584	12,010	15,483	18,086	53,163	3.34%
Orthopedic Impairment	304	234	253	239	1,030	.06%
Other Health Impairment	4,899	5,590	6,370	6,234	23,093	1.45%
Speech Impairment	10,790	7,643	5,384	2,882	26,699	1.68%
Traumatic Brain Injury	64	89	92	97	342	.02%
Visual Impairment	267	271	260	285	1,083	.07%
With a Disability	34,009	36,800	39,255	39,585	149,649	9.4%
Without a Disability	375,380	360,254	354,863	350,936	1,441,440	90.6%

Table B3

Family Structure of Children in the United States in the 9-11 Age Bracket During 2016

Family Structure	Living With Both Parents	Living With Mother Only	Living With Father Only	Living With Neither Parent	Total
Total	8,476,000	2,965,000	507,000	453,000	12,401,000
Percent	68.3%	23.9%	4.1%	3.7%	100%

Table B4

Gender and Grade Level of Texas in Grades 3-6 During the 2015-16 School Year

Grade Level	Male	Female	Total
Gr. 3	210,274	199,117	409,391
Gr. 4	203,490	193,566	397,056
Gr. 5	202,256	191,864	394,120
Gr. 6	199,828	190,694	390,522
Total	815,848	775,241	1,591,089
Percent	51.3%	48.7%	100%

Table B5

Race of Texas Students in Grades 3-6 During the 2015-16 School Year

Grade Level	African Am.	Am. Indian	Asian	Hisp.	Pacific Islander	White	Multi-racial	Total
Gr. 3	51,222	1,520	16,242	216,487	596	114,163	9,161	409,391
Gr. 4	49,705	1,502	15,989	208,738	577	111,915	8,630	397,056
Gr. 5	48,885	1,412	16,226	206,346	509	112,548	8,194	394,120
Gr. 6	48,576	1,333	16,323	203,174	516	112,513	8,087	390,522
Total	198,388	5,767	64,780	834,745	2,198	451,139	34,072	1,559,089
Percent	12.5%	.4%	4.1%	52.5%	.1%	28.4%	2.1%	100%

Table B6

Socio-economic Status of Texas Students in Grades 3-6 During the 2015-16 School Year

Grade Level	Economically Disadvantaged	Not Economically Disadvantaged	Total
Gr. 3	253,449	155,942	409,391
Gr. 4	243,497	153,559	397,056
Gr. 5	237,774	156,346	394,120
Gr. 6	230,081	160,441	390,522
Total	964,801	626,288	1,591,089
Percent	60.6%	39.4%	100%

Appendix C

Data Tables from the TBA Master List

Table C1

Number of Main Character(s) With and Without a Disability in the Books on the 2015-16 TBAML

Books Titles	With a Disability	Without a Disability	Total
Always Abigail		1	1
Emily's Blue Period		1	1
Ghosts of Tupelo		1	1
Great Amer. Dust Bowl		1	1
Grandfather Ghandi		1	1
Hero's Guide		4	4
Lost Planet		1	1
Misadventures		1	1
Mountain Dog		1	1
Night Gardener		1	1
Quinny & Hopper		2	2
Right Word, Roget		1	1
Rutherford B	—	—	—
Saving Lucas Biggs		1	1
Scraps Book		1	1
Separate Never Equal		1	1
Sky Jumpers		1	1
Vanishing Coin	1		1
When Beat Born		1	1
Zane and Hurricane		1	1
Total	1/23	22/23	23/23
Percent	4.3%	95.7%	100%

Table C2

Number of Main Character(s) Living with Both Parents, Mother Only, Father Only, or Neither Parent in the Books on the 2015-16 TBAML

Book Titles	Living With Both Parents	Living With Mother Only	Living With Father Only	Living With Neither Parent	Total
Always Abigail	1				1
Emily's Blue Period		1			1
Ghosts of Tupelo				1	1
Great Amer. Dust Bowl	1				1
Grandfather Ghandi	1				1
Hero's Guide	4				4
Lost Planet				1	1
Misadventures	1				1
Mountain Dog				1	1
Night Gardener				1	1
Quinny & Hopper	2				2
Right Word, Roget	1				1
Rutherford B	—	—	—	—	—
Saving Lucas Biggs	1				1
Scraps Book	1				1
Separate Never Equal	1				1
Sky Jumpers				1	1
Vanishing Coin	1				1
When Beat Born	1				1
Zane and Hurricane		1			1
Total	16/23	2/23	0/23	5/23	23/23
Percent	69.6%	8.7%	0.0%	21.7%	100%

Table C3

Number of Male and Female Main Character(s) in the Books on the 2015-16 TBAML

Book Titles	Male	Female	Total
Always Abigail		1	1
Emily's Blue Period		1	1
Ghosts of Tupelo		1	1
Great Amer. Dust Bowl	1		1
Grandfather Ghandi	1		1
Hero's Guide	4		4
Lost Planet	1		1
Misadventures		1	1
Mountain Dog		1	1
Night Gardener		1	1
Quinny & Hopper	1	1	2
Right Word, Roget	1		1
Rutherford B	—	—	—
Saving Lucas Biggs		1	1
Scraps Book		1	1
Separate Never Equal		1	1
Sky Jumpers		1	1
Vanishing Coin	1		1
When Beat Born	1		1
Zane and Hurricane	1		1
Total	12/23	11/23	23/23
Percent	52.2%	47.8%	100%

Table C4

Number of Main Character(s) in Grades 3-6 and Not in Grades 3-6 in the Books on the 2015-16 TBAML

Book Titles	In Grades 3-6	Not in Grades 3-6	Total
Always Abigail	1		1
Emily's Blue Period	1		1
Ghosts of Tupelo	1		1
Great Amer. Dust Bowl		1	1
Grandfather Ghandi	1		1
Hero's Guide		4	4
Lost Planet	1		1
Misadventures	1		1
Mountain Dog	1		1
Night Gardener	1		1
Quinny & Hopper	2		2
Right Word, Roget		1	1
Rutherford B	—	—	—
Saving Lucas Biggs	1		1
Scraps Book		1	1
Separate Never Equal	1		1
Sky Jumpers	1		1
Vanishing Coin	1		1
When Beat Born	1		1
Zane and Hurricane	1		1
Total	16/23	7/23	23/23
Percent	69.6%	30.4%	100%

Table C5

Number of Main Character(s) of African American, American Indian, Asian, Hispanic, Pacific Islander, White and Multi-racial Races in the Books on the 2015-16 TBAML

Book Titles	African Am.	Am. Indian	Asian	Hisp.	Pacific Islander	White	Multi-racial	Total
Always Abigail						1		1
Emily's Blue Period						1		1
Ghosts of Tupelo						1		1
Great Amer. Dust Bowl						1		1
Grandfather Ghandi			1					1
Hero's Guide						4		4
Lost Planet						1		1
Misadventures						1		1
Mountain Dog				1				1
Night Gardener						1		1
Quinny & Hopper						2		2
Right Word, Roget						1		1
Rutherford B	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Saving Lucas Biggs						1		1
Scraps Book						1		1
Separate Never Equal				1				1
Sky Jumpers						1		1
Vanishing Coin						1		1
When Beat Born	1							1
Zane and Hurricane							1	1
Total	1/23	0/23	1/23	2/23	0/23	18/23	1/23	23/23
Percent	4.3%	0.0%	4.3%	8.7%	0.0%	78.3%	4.3%	100%

Table C6

Number of the Main Character(s) Who Are Economically Disadvantaged and Not Economically Disadvantaged in the Books on the 2015-16 TBAML

Book Titles	Economically Disadvantaged	Not Economically Disadvantaged	Total
Always Abigail		1	1
Emily's Blue Period		1	1
Ghosts of Tupelo		1	1
Great Amer. Dust Bowl	1		1
Grandfather Ghandi		1	1
Hero's Guide		4	4
Lost Planet		1	1
Misadventures		1	1
Mountain Dog		1	1
Night Gardener	1		1
Quinny & Hopper		2	2
Right Word, Roget		1	1
Rutherford B	—	—	—
Saving Lucas Biggs		1	1
Scraps Book		1	1
Separate Never Equal		1	1
Sky Jumpers		1	1
Vanishing Coin		1	1
When Beat Born	1		1
Zane and Hurricane		1	1
Total	3/23	20/23	23/23
Percent	13%	87%	100%

