Educational Benefits from Immersion into Fiction and Nonfiction Literary Worlds

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complies with the regulations of the University and meets the accepted standards with respect to

originality and quality.

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Abstract

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Reading fiction is positively correlated with many educational and social benefits. The current study explored a comparison of historical fiction and nonfiction read alouds to determine if differences were observed in student's transportation, content learning and socio-emotional development. The participants consisted of 40 students with ages ranging from 9- to 12-years-old. Over the period of one week, four classrooms were visited by a researcher for three sessions where excerpts from a fiction novel or nonfiction book were read aloud. The participants were then assessed on their content knowledge of the Great Depression, and their self-reports of transportation, perspective taking, fantasy, empathetic concern and helping behaviours. Through quantitative and qualitative data analysis, it was discovered that both fiction and nonfiction groups learned the same amount of content; however, fiction allowed for more positive relationships between transportation and socio-emotional development self-reports. Therefore, fiction novels can provide opportunities for the learning of historical information, while enabling a child's growth in socio-emotional development.

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Reading is a highly personal and individualistic experience, which counterintuitively, can allow people to share in the same immersive stories and gain the same collective knowledge (Cunningham & Stanovich, 1998; Mar, Oatley, Hirsh, dela Paz, & Peterson, 2006; West, Stanovich, & Mitchell, 1993). Previous research has shown the importance of reading fiction in developing empathy skills in children (Johnson, 2012; Kozak & Recchia, 2018; Mar, Oatley, & Peterson, 2009; Vezzali, Stathi, Giovannini, Capozza, & Trifiletti, 2015). A separate literature has examined how reading fiction can contribute to individuals' world knowledge (Martin-Chang & Gould, 2008; Stanovich & Cunningham, 1993). This is especially relevant when reading historical fiction (Brugar, Roberts, Jiménez, & Meyer, 2018; Smith, 1993). Assuming that the goal of school is to increase social skills and world knowledge, teachers might be well served to incorporate fiction reading across their curriculum. However, there is limited research on the impact of fiction novels on learning historical content. Content learning is the information of a specific subject that is remembered and recalled (Smith, 1993). In this thesis, I examined whether immersing children in historical fiction would improve the content learning in children from the ages of 9- to 12-years-old. I hypothesized that as children became transported (Jensen, Christy, Krakow, John, & Martins, 2016) into the historical fiction novel, their sense of empathy with the protagonist would lead to increased content learning. Alternatively, it was possible that the extraneous details of the fictional story would interfere with learning. If this was the case, it would result in reduced retention of historical facts.

Transportation

In the reading field, being immersed in a story has been termed transportation (Green & Brock, 2000). Green and Brock (2000) suggest that transportation enables a specific "mental

process, an integrative melding of attention, imagery and feelings" (p.701). They created a scale of transportation to evaluate undergraduate's immersion into fictional stories. Green and Brock (2000) concluded that participants who had higher transportability scores tended to empathize with the protagonist by the end of the story.

Mar and Oatley (2008) posit that transportation allows empathetic feelings to flourish between readers and fictional characters. When readers are transported, they can view events from characters' perspectives that may be very different from their own. Fiction novels are sometimes positioned within specific cultures or periods of time. In these cases, transportation allows readers to learn, and in some ways, experience the societal norms within those settings (Overly & Spalding, 1993). Of specific interest to the current study, Rycik and Rosler (2009) hypothesized that reading historical fiction to students can create, "a vicarious experience for places and people they could otherwise never know" (Rycik & Rosler, 2009, p. 163). Therefore, these fictional worlds can be positive ways to teach students curriculum.

Reading fiction also allows students to learn about the feelings of different characters, and perhaps allows emotional connections to form between the reader and the characters (Rycik & Rosler, 2009). This understanding of the characters' emotional states, the entanglement of the fictional world with the reader's own world provides an avenue for readers to reduce possible prejudiced feelings of 'out group' members or of characters who are substantially different from themselves (Mar & Oatley, 2008). For example, Jensen et al. (2016) questioned a hundred 9-13-year-olds about being "easily lost in a story" and "feeling as if [they] are part of the story" (p. 669). The researchers noted that participants who scored higher on transportability also reported being more interested in the characters' emotions and thoughts (Jensen et al., 2016). Interestingly, the participant's transportability was also positively correlated with their reading

skills, academic performance and self-reported reading habits (Jensen et al., 2016). If students who are more easily transported read more on their own at home, this can potentially predict children's reading ability and academic interest as they age (Jensen et al., 2016). Throughout the studies discussed below, transportation will be a major aspect of the fiction reading experience.

Print Exposure

In addition to formal education, knowledge can be acquired through reading novels, magazines and newspapers; taken together the choice to read these forms of print is known as a person's 'print exposure' (Cunningham & Stanovich, 1998; Sparks, Patton, & Murdoch, 2014; Stanovich & Cunningham, 1993; West et al., 1993). Over two decades ago, Stanovich and Cunningham (1993) shed light on individual differences in exposure to print, television, and general world knowledge. The authors had 268 undergraduate students fill out several checklists. Their findings suggest that print exposure (as measured by the Author Recognition Test, Magazine Recognition Test, Newspaper Recognition Checklist) can have a large impact on an individual's general knowledge. In contrast, television exposure did not; indeed, there was a negative association between television exposure and general knowledge measures (Stanovich & Cunningham, 1993).

Cunningham and Stanovich (1997) completed a longitudinal study where children were followed from Grade 1 and Grade 11 to assess the role of print exposure on knowledge acquisition and literacy skills. It was learned that the children's reading abilities in Grade 1 significantly forecast their scores on reading comprehension, vocabulary and general knowledge in Grade 11, even after controlling for cognitive performance. Print exposure was a mediating factor, suggesting the importance of a smooth introduction to the literate world. A similar pattern was uncovered in 2014, where Sparks et al. (2014) replicated Cunningham and Stanovich's

(1993) '10 years later' study. The authors looked at 54 students in Grade 1 and their reading, listening comprehension, vocabulary and spelling and cognition skills. Then in Grade 10, the students were asked to fill out checklists based on their reading, language, cognitive ability, general knowledge, and print exposure. As was predicted, there was a significant relationship between print exposure and children's general knowledge in Grade 10.

Martin-Chang and Gould (2008) furthered these findings by investigating the relationships between personal reading experiences and various reading skills. They wanted to know if personal reading experiences were related to vocabulary, reading rate, and comprehension or whether "knowledge about authors" was another form of general knowledge that was positively corelated with other cognitive skills. The authors asked 171 undergraduate students to complete measures pertaining to their vocabulary, reading comprehension, reading rate and print exposure (ART-R; Martin-Chang & Gould, 2008). They discovered that the participants' own reading experience was correlated with their reading rate, comprehension and vocabulary skills, whereas general knowledge about authors was correlated, albeit less strongly with vocabulary and comprehension. This demonstrates how an individual's personal experiences with print can be directly related to their reading skills.

Torppa et al. (2019) also examined how personal reading experiences shape children's reading skills. This study followed 2,525 children from Grades 1 through to Grade 9. The authors collected parent reports of leisure reading in Grades 1 – 4 and children's self-report of reading from four categories (books, newspapers, magazines and digital platforms) from Grade 6 on. Their outcome measures were reading fluency and comprehension tests throughout each grade. The authors examined cross lagged effects and noticed that within person differences for reading comprehension did occur. They found a positive relationship between comprehension and

amount of leisure reading in Grades 1-4. This trend also continued after Grade 4. However, as a child's reading fluency meets a certain threshold, there can be a decrease in its impact on leisure reading in later grades. These direct changes over the child's life demonstrated that more exposure to leisure reading allows for greater reading comprehension in the future. Therefore, it is once again evident that leisure reading can have a great impact on a child's reading skills.

Content Learning

Content learning has been defined as retaining knowledge about specific subject matter and being able to recall this information at a later date (Smith, 1993). Smith's (1993) study was one of the first to examine content learning using fiction in the classroom. One hundred and forty-three students in Grade 5 were divided into two groups within a classroom setting, where one group was given a historical fiction novel and the control group teachers followed their typical curriculum. Teachers were provided with prereading activities, the book and some discussion questions, along with enrichment activities to engage students in the text. The children were assessed on their answers to three open-ended free-recall questions pertaining to the American Revolution, Slavery and Witch Trials within the three novels. Smith (1993) learned that the children within the historical fiction group recalled twice as much information about the content in the novel than the children in the control group. This resulted in the experimental group being more knowledgeable in the historical details and main ideas. However, as this study employed open-ended free-recall questions, the results may have been impacted by children struggling with the demands of this task, not necessarily because they did not know the answers. Perhaps a more accessible recognition assessment may have shown a greater deal of knowledge learned.

Likewise, Hicks and Martin (1997) incorporated historical fiction into the classroom, assessing 9-13 year-old children. Hicks and Martin (1997) observed that reading about medieval times aided in the children's integration of facts and understanding of the time period into their own stories. Their findings also suggested the positive impact historical fiction can have on learning.

Similarly, Camp's (2000) article presents five teachers' firsthand accounts of incorporating fiction into different curriculums using the 'Twin Text' approach. The 'Twin Text' approach as defined by Camp (2000) is the pairing of a fiction novel with a nonfiction book. The teachers reported that allowing students to gain a general sense of the topic first using a fiction novel, permits students to retain the content without the dense initial overload of information, allowing for a smoother transition from imaginative to factual information. However, Camp's hypotheses were not subject to empirical study.

To test Camp's (2000) hypothesis on the benefits of using historical fiction, Brugar et al. (2018) conducted an empirical study to examine the potential for a graphic novel to increase historical content learning. Sixteen students in Grade 6 were involved in the intervention. Brugar et al. (2018), first obtained a baseline measure of the students' knowledge and relevant vocabulary. Then the students read a section of the book together and independently and then discussed the reading as a group. To determine if content was learned, the authors asked the students to complete an assessment that included multiple choice questions, timelines and comparison tables. The findings suggested that as the children were exposed to the historical fiction graphic novel, their post-test scores increased. However, there was no control group to verify if the children's responses were associated with the introduction of the graphic novel. Would an introduction of a nonfiction book have also allowed for more learning?

Marsh, Meade, and Roediger (2003) conducted an empirical study to investigate the relationships between fiction reading and general knowledge when asking specific content questions. In the first experiment, 28 undergraduate students were asked to read one of nine fictional short stories created by the authors. Each story contained information about the real world that was either stated explicitly or implicitly. For the explicitly framed information, the answers to later questions on the content test were referenced directly, whereas the implicitly framed information was not. The students were then required to answer some basic questions about the stories and then complete a content test, which pertained to the explicitly and implicitly framed information. As predicted, the participants who had explicitly framed information in the stories they read, scored higher on the content test. Another portion of this study investigated how participants use historical information embedded into fictional stories to complete a post-test content quiz. They realized that participants used the facts within the fictional story to correctly answer the post-test. Though this study did not deal directly with historical facts, the method of presenting the information was vital, with stating facts directly resulting in better learning. As well, the fiction reading allowed for an increase in content scores.

Thus far the articles presented highlight the positive impact historical fiction novels can have on children's comprehension of content. However, comparing the type of reading material provided to children when studying their comprehension is imperative. Kuhn, Rausch, McCarty, Montgomery, and Rule (2017) were interested in comparing comprehension skills based on experiencing either fiction or nonfiction readings. The comprehension skills included, "(1) determine importance, (2) use schema, and (3) visualize while working with the nonfiction or fiction genre" (Kuhn et al., 2017, p. 287). Children were provided two weeks of fiction lessons where a fictional storybook was read aloud to the class and participants were asked to speak

about plot, characters and social aspects of the story while using the selected comprehension skills. For the following two weeks nonfiction lessons were taught, where participants were taught a lesson about real objects and their relationship to each other. The participants were then instructed to read a nonfiction book and identify aspects of the lesson they just received, while using the new comprehension skills.

This innovative study design uncovered some contradictory results when compared to the literature on historical fiction reading and content learning (Kuhn et al., 2017). The authors learned that in the youngest age group (Grade 1) the nonfiction lessons were more positive for enhancing the comprehension skills of the students. In addition, observational sessions by teachers highlighted that students seemed more engaged in the nonfiction lessons. The authors also found that the students were able to integrate the information learned from the nonfiction lesson into their individual reading of a nonfiction text. The second grade classroom seemed to be using the first comprehension skill, determining importance, strongly in their conversations surrounding the nonfiction lesson. This study highlights the finding that nonfiction lessons were more positive for students when applying these new comprehension skills. However, it is important to note that these comprehension skills are not content, therefore this can merely be applied to content learning. Therefore, it is possible that nonfiction information is an important factor to investigate when understanding teaching content to children in the classroom.

The literature presented thus far, suggests that introducing fiction across curriculum areas might lead to more content learning (Brugar et al., 2018; Hicks & Martin, 1997; Marsh et al., 2003; Rycik & Rosler, 2009; Smith, 1993). However, the vast majority of the evidence reviewed above is comprised of teacher accounts and review articles (e.g., Camp, 2000; Hicks & Martin, 1997; Rycik & Rosler, 2009). Few studies involved an empirical design of content learning and

historical fiction (e.g., Brugar et al., 2018; Marsh et al., 2003; Smith, 1993), even fewer included a control group and none provided a nonfiction book as a comparison. Though Kuhn et al. (2017) looked at nonfiction instruction with a similar methodology of teaching skills to students, all students completed the combined approach of using fiction and nonfiction. This lack of comparison suggests a missing piece in the literature. Therefore, a study on the impact of fiction compared to nonfiction on historical content learning in the classroom is needed.

Socio-emotional Development

As Bishop (1990) expressed, books can act as windows, where the reader can see into worlds offering different perspectives. The windows can also become sliding glass doors that allow for readers to pass into new worlds and stories, creating transportation into the content of the novel. Finally, these novels can also be mirrors, where the reader is able to see themselves in a different light.

The above analogy positions the reader in the world of the characters and this may cause deep entanglement in the story. Fiction can allow for deep entanglement in the reality of the book, and it has also been shown to enhance empathetic feelings and development (Mar et al., 2006). Similarly, Johnson (2012) was interested in having young adults read a story crafted for the project, which contained prosocial behaviour, and measuring the "participants' subjective, behavioural and perceptual responses" (Johnson, 2012, p. 150). This study's purpose was to see how a fictional story created emotions of affective empathy and prosocial behaviour. Johnson (2012) discovered that participants had higher affective empathy for the story characters and prosociality in the prosocial task when the reader experienced higher transportation. This is a consistent finding with Brock and Green (2000) and Mar et al. (2009) where individuals had

more positive feelings towards characters in novels when they rated a high level of transportation.

  Likewise, Bal and Veltkamp's (2013) article investigated the relationship 66 university students had with fiction and empathy. The authors' hypothesized that transportation would impact empathy over a period of time. And to discover if over the span of a week, transported participants would increase in empathy after reading fiction compared to nonfiction. The participants were asked to complete an empathy scale right before and after the experiment, as well as a week later. The authors observed that reading fiction transported readers into the story and was a high predictor for empathy that increased at each timepoint, whereas a plateau of empathy for those not transported into the story. Therefore, Bal and Veltkamp (2013) show how a participant's transportation can positively impact their empathic responses when reading fiction narratives. Fictional reading is thought to improve relationships and personal understandings of the self, specifically creating higher empathy. However, it is possible that people with a higher level of empathy can observe these fictional worlds in a deeper way to make stronger connections to characters.

  When working to develop empathy, allowing for practical experiences in situations with others can be positive. Mar et al. (2006) hypothesized that fictional worlds provide readers the opportunity to practise their social skills, building connections with various characters and experiencing social situations. These simulations of diverse worlds can aid in empathetic growth and the social understanding of others (Mar et al., 2006). Readers can learn social skills and recognize situations that arise in their own lives, providing a baseline of what other people may do or how others have felt in similar situations (Mar et al., 2006).

Mar et al. (2006) examined this notion by asking 94 female adults to complete the Author Recognition Test, Interpersonal Reactivity Index, Reading the Mind in the Eyes Test-revised and Interpersonal Perception Task-15. The authors concluded that there was a positive correlation between fiction reading and higher scores on social ability measures. In contrast, no such link was observed between nonfiction and social ability (Mar et al., 2006). Indeed, students who read more nonfiction scored lower on empathetic skills, compared to those who read more fiction (Mar et al., 2006). Mar et al. (2009) went on to show that print-exposure, specifically reading fiction, forecasts the participants' responses on empathy tasks (e.g., Reading the Mind in the Eyes). Therefore, it seems that transportation can be associated with being immersed in a story and empathizing with the feelings of the characters. This allows fiction readers to step into the fictional social network and practise their social skills (Mar et al., 2006).

Similar findings have been replicated with young children. Mar, Tackett, and Moore (2010) worked with 55 parents who had children from the ages of 4- to 6-years-old. The parents were tested on their knowledge of storybooks, television, and movies. The children were asked to complete Theory of Mind (ToM) measures and also basic reading skills. Findings demonstrated that when parents' scored higher on knowledge of children's storybooks and movies, their children had higher scores for their ToM tasks even after controlling for the children's age, sex, vocabulary, and family income. This shows how children's media is associated with children's social development and their understandings of others. Investigating media's influence on social development in older children is lacking in the literature, although some studies have suggested the positive social and emotional skills that can be learned from the act of transporting into a fiction story.

Prejudice Reduction

Novels are sometimes able to provide fictional and real-world situations in tandem, which can create an enchanting experience for the reader. As novels can provide the reader with opportunities to experience social situations that could arise in their daily lives, and readers may find similarities in fiction to their own environments, and these moments can aid in reducing prejudice (Fong, Mullin, & Mar, 2015; Johnson, 2013; Vezzali et al., 2015). Fong et al. (2015) were interested in how gender stereotyping can be impacted by an individual's experiences with books. The authors surveyed 378 undergraduate students with a questionnaire measuring print exposure, gender role attitudes and personality scales. The findings suggest that exposure to fiction was significantly correlated with a reduction in gender stereotyping and sexual conservatism, whereas nonfiction showed no significant relationships with the participants' sexual attitudes. Interestingly, these findings remained even when controlling for gender, age, English language fluency and the Big Five Personality traits.

Similarly, as novels incorporate real life experiences that individuals may recognize or relate to, there is an opportunity for strong connections to develop with the characters. With this feeling of kinship with characters in fiction novels comes the ability to be transported into a story. Johnson (2013) was able to see a reduction in prejudice and an increase in empathetic feelings towards views of Arab-Muslims. Sixty-seven adult participants read a fictional piece about a woman who was Arab-Muslim, but who did not hold the common beliefs stereotypically associated with her culture; participants who were more transported into the story scored lower in prejudiced thoughts towards Arab-Muslims after reading the fictional text compared to the control group who read nonfiction (Johnson, 2013). Through fiction novel's robust deliverance

of both information and examples of anti-prejudice with adults and children, why might these instances of reduced self-report prejudice develop?

Vezzali et al. (2015) addressed this question with 34 students in Grade 5 by asking them to complete a pre and post-test questionnaire about their feelings towards immigrants (Vezzali et al., 2015). The participants listened to sections of Harry Potter novels that contained discussions of prejudice for the experimental group and the control group was read neutral passages. For example, Harry Potter novels' storyline focuses on the mistreatment of witches and wizards who are not born of pure magical blood. The authors uncovered that the children who listened to chapters dealing with prejudice, were less prejudice towards immigrants in the post-test questionnaire, than the control group. This is an exciting finding because it highlights that reading something magical and fictional can result in improved responses about prejudice moving towards social equality.

Vezzali et al.'s (2015) second study replicated the general findings of the first study with a population of high school students. The dependent variable changed to address prejudice against homosexuality. The 117 students were given two questionnaires. The first, asked about the participant's previous exposure to Harry Potter. The second, asked about their baseline attitudes towards homosexuals. Results from the first study were replicated, highlighting that previous exposure to Harry Potter was positively correlated with reducing prejudice attitudes towards homosexuals. In Vezzali et al.'s (2015) third study, the authors worked with 75 undergraduate to understand how attitudes towards refugees were shaped. The participants were asked to complete online questionnaires regarding previous exposure to Harry Potter movies and books, general book and television habits and items about refugees. The authors concluded that perspective taking with high scores of exposure to Harry Potter was positively associated with

reduced prejudice towards refugees, moderated by the participants' identification with the positive main character (Harry). As this study has demonstrated, reading books containing themes of prejudice is associated with positive attitudes about outgroups.

Current Study

The positive influences of fiction reading are seen in a breadth of areas pertaining to educational and socio-emotional development. Fiction novels can enable the reader to become immersed into the world written on the pages, allowing for transportation (Green & Brock, 2000; Mar & Oatley, 2008). Research conducted with fiction readings has implications for general knowledge (Cunningham & Stanovich, 1993; Sparks et al., 2014; Stanovich & Cunningham, 1993), though few empirical studies have considered historical fiction novels in relation to children's content learning (cf. Brugar et al., 2018; Smith, 1993). The experience of transportation is associated with readers' growth in social and emotional development, specifically reducing their prejudice attitudes (Fong et al., 2015; Vezzali et al., 2015) and increasing empathy skills (Bal & Veltkamp, 2013; Johnson, 2012; Mar et al., 2010). Reading can make a large impression on a young child, through delving into the stories and situations of children of a similar age, gender or interests allowing for insight into challenging obstacles that may be present in the children's life (Kozak & Recchia, 2018). The study aimed to determine if an increase in empathy and transportation into a story would allow for an increase in content learning of historical information. Also, I was interested in how the different components of socio-emotional learning interact with each other, a child`s enjoyment level of a book, and their content learning of historical information.

Method

Participants

Ethical approval was provided by Concordia University and Sir Wilfrid Laurier School Board for data collection for this study. The sample consisted of 40 students (19 females and 21 males) from four split grade classrooms within the same school; the ages ranged from 9- to 12-years-old (M_{age} = 10.03 years, SD = 1.10). Each classroom was balanced to ensure an equal amount of children from each grade level were within each group. See results for descriptive properties of each group. The participants were in Grades 3 to 6 (Grade 3, n = 5; Grade 4, n = 18; Grade 5, n = 12; Grade 6, n = 5). The parents signed consent forms and assent forms were obtained from the children. Children that did not bring in consent forms also completed the assessments, however their information was discarded and not assessed. The percentage of children from the four classrooms that consented was 63%. The study took place within the students' classroom and took approximately 25 min per session, for 3 sessions over one week.

Materials

Initial Assessment.

Reading Habits Questionnaire. All participants were asked to complete the Reading Habits Questionnaire (Spear-Swerling, Brucker, & Alfano, 2010). This questionnaire documents children's self-reported reading habits outside of school. The original scale contains 12-items, however four questions were removed to ensure all items pertained to reading books. See Appendix A. Scores were calculated based on Spear-Swerling et al. (2010), where questions were analysed individually, and a percentage of each response given was found for each question. For example, a score of 1 was given for circling yes to "Have you read for fun any fiction books outside of school in the past 7 days?" and no was given a 0. This question was then analysed for the whole sample. This style of analysis allows one to understand each question separately and compare responses across the group, therefore a composite score is not

recommended (Spear-Swerling et al., 2010). This scale had an acceptable level of internal consistency, as the Cronbach's alpha was 0.60.

Great Depression Previous Knowledge Quiz. All participants were asked to complete the Great Depression Quiz to find a baseline level of content knowledge, which was created for the study. The quiz contained five open ended questions asking for specific information about the Great Depression. This took approximately 5 min. See Appendix B. A score of 1 was given for each question. If the child was able to mention one important aspect for the question, they were given a score of 1. Incorrect responses or no response were scored as zero. The children's total score was summed.

Fiction and Nonfiction.

Fiction Novel. The novel *Bud, not Buddy* (Curtis, 1999) was selected as the historical fiction novel. After speaking with some educators in Montreal, it was found that this novel has been widely used in classrooms for language arts lessons. *Bud, not Buddy* (Curtis, 1999) was read by myself and two professionals in the field of literacy to ensure its appropriateness for upper elementary students. The Flesch-Kincaid Grade level ranged from 4.1 to 6.1 and it is appropriate for Grades 3-8 (Scholastic, 2019). This novel was written by an award-winning author, Christopher Paul Curtis, and tells the story of a young boy during the Great Depression in the United States. Three, 10 min sections of this novel because they contained critical plot points. Additional facts were incorporated into the novel at appropriate sections (Appendix O). The additional facts were used to ensure content was the same across groups.

Nonfiction Book. The book *What was the Great Depression?* (Pascal, 2015) was selected for the nonfiction portion as it is appropriate for the Grades 3-7 and an age group of 8- to 12-years-old (Penguin Random House, 2019). The novel's genre and style of book has been

used in classrooms in various subjects and it was read by myself and one professional in the field of literacy to ensure its appropriateness. This is a nonfiction educational book that explains aspects of the Great Depression in a child-friendly format with appropriate language and explanations. Three, 5 min sections of this novel were read to the nonfiction group. The additional 5 min were supplemented with math word problems (see below in Nonfiction Filler Activity).

Nonfiction Filler Activity. After each reading session of the nonfiction book, an activity pertaining to the Great Depression was presented to ensure the children were not being given too many facts about the Great Depression. This included math word problems with some reference to the Great Depression, however the answers were not analysed. This was a suggestion made by the School Board where the data were collected. See Appendix E.

Sessional Assessments.

Sessional Enjoyment Questionnaire. After each session, the participants were asked to fill out an enjoyment questionnaire. This questionnaire contained three items using a 5-point Likert scale about the participant's interest in the books. These scores were totaled and compared across groups. See Appendix C and D. This scale had a high level of internal consistency, as the Cronbach's alpha was 0.79.

Attention Check. After each session, the participants were asked to fill out the attention check. This was a word checklist to ensure that the children were listening to the sections read aloud. The checklist words were selected as they were mentioned in the portions of the text read aloud. This list of nine words included three foils to ensure the participants were not simply selecting all the words and attaining a high score. The words were specific to each selection of text. These scores were totaled and compared across and within groups. See Appendix C and D.

Post Read Aloud Assessment.

Scale of Transportability. All participants were asked to complete the Scale of Transportability (Jensen et al., 2016), which aimed to determine a child's level of transportation, by looking at their emotional connection to the story. The Jensen et al. (2016) Scale of Transportability is a 13 item 5-point Likert scale whereby children were asked to circle from 1 to 5, with 1 strongly disagree and 5 strongly agree. This took approximately 10 min. Based on Jensen at al. (2016), the Likert scale was scored by summing the values of each answer to create a score for each participant. These scores were then compared across and within groups. See Appendix F and G. A graduate student, blind to the conditions of participants, was trained on the Scale of Transportability (Jensen et al., 2016) coding scheme, and coded 25% of participants. There was 100% inter-rater reliability.

Interpersonal Reactivity Index. All participants were asked to complete the Interpersonal Reactivity Index (IRI; Davis, 1980). The IRI was originally created by Davis (1980) and the perspective taking scale, fantasy scale and empathic concern scale were used, whereas the personal distress scale was removed as it does not pertain to this study. The final 18-item index included statements that I modified to relate to the book or novel read aloud and each statement related to either the perspective taking, fantasy or empathic concern scale. The items were on a 5-point Likert Scale where 1 describes me very poorly and 5 describes me very well. This took approximately 15 min. Based on Davis (1983), each scale within the index was calculated separately to look at the individual's scale score. Therefore, the Likert scale responses for the perspective taking scales were scored by summing the values of each answer to create a score for each participant, and the same format was used for the other scales. There were 5 reversed-scored items. Each subscale was analysed separately, and this allowed the data to be compared

across the group, therefore a composite score is not recommended (Davis, 1983). See Appendix H and I. A graduate student, blind to the conditions of participants, was trained on the IRI (Davis, 1983) coding scheme, and coded 25% of participants. The Perspective Taking Scale had 98.33% inter-rater reliability, the Fantasy Scale had 100% inter-rater reliability and the Empathetic Concern Scale had 96.67% inter-rater reliability.

Helping and Attributions Scale. All participants were asked to complete a helping scale, which was created for the study. With the knowledgeable advice of Dr. Recchia, these items aimed to decipher the participant's feelings towards helping characters in the book or novel read to them. These items were rated on a 5-point Likert scale where 1 definitely no and 5 was definitely yes. There were also two reversed scored items. The Likert scale was scored by summing the values of each answer to create a score for each participant. These scores were then compared across and within groups. See Appendix J. A graduate student, blind to the conditions of participants, was trained on the Helping and Attributions Scale coding scheme, and coded 25% of participants. There was 100% inter-rater reliability.

Great Depression Content Quiz. All participants were asked to complete a post read aloud Great Depression Content Quiz. The quiz contained multiple choice and open-ended questions to gauge the children's understanding of the facts presented in the book or novel read. The quiz took approximately 10 min. The participant's answers were analyzed through a coding system. The system allowed for only the exact correct answer to receive a full point. These scores were totaled to find the summed score and compared across and within groups. These scores were also totaled to find the summed score and compared across and within groups. The maximum score a participant could receive was an 8, if they answered all questions correctly. The final question asked participants to list anything else they learned during the read alouds, however this was

removed from analysis as few children answered this question. See Appendix K. A graduate student, blind to the conditions of participants, was trained on the Great Depression Content Quiz coding scheme, and coded 25% of participants. There was 100% inter-rater reliability.

    Overall Enjoyment Questionnaire. All participants were asked to complete an overall enjoyment experience questionnaire, which was created for the study. The questionnaire contained questions regarding the children's overall enjoyment of the study and the novel or book read. The first two items were rated on a 5-point Likert scale, where 1 not at all and 5 very much, then there contained 2 "yes or no" questions and one final open-ended question. The Likert scale questions were scored by summing the values of each answer to create a score for each participant. These scores were then compared across and within groups. The scores for the "yes or no" questions were 1 or 0. These scores were totaled to find the summed score and compared across and within groups. See Appendix L and M. This scale had a high level of internal consistency, as the Cronbach's alpha was 0.80. The open-ended question was coded using in-vivo coding and relevant repetitive themes were uncovered. A graduate student, blind to the conditions of participants, was trained on the Overall Enjoyment Questionnaire coding scheme, and coded 25% of participants. There was 100% inter-rater reliability.

Procedure

    Before the research commenced, a pilot study with a child in each group was conducted to ensure questions were clear and understood by this age group. Some questions were removed based the children`s feedback. Participants' stayed within their original classrooms to listen to the read alouds and to complete the measures. The classrooms were visited by a researcher three times in total. She followed a script to ensure she provided similar introductions and information for both groups (See Appendix N). In the first session, she obtained parental consent and child

assent (See Appendix P). She then administered the initial assessment of the Reading Habits Questionnaire (Spear-Swerling et al., 2010) and Great Depression Previous Knowledge Quiz to find a baseline level of knowledge. After the baseline measures were finished, she read the selected text aloud (either fiction or nonfiction). In the fiction group, the novel *Bud, not Buddy* (Curtis, 1999) was read to the class for 10 min, following which the participants completed a Sessional Enjoyment Questionnaire. The read aloud took place during two additional classroom visits. During each session a different section of *Bud not Buddy* was read, after which Sessional Enjoyment Questionnaires were filled out by the students. The control group also met for three sessions during which the researcher read three different sections of the nonfiction book called *What was the Great Depression?* (Pascal, 2015) to the class for 5 min. These readings were also followed by the completion of the Sessional Enjoyment Questionnaires.

To ensure that the same amount of time was spent in both groups, grade appropriate mathematical word problems were also given out in the control classrooms. The School Board asked to include a mathematical activity in the nonfiction group as a filler task. On the fourth classroom visit, the post read aloud assessments were administered. These included the Jensen et al. (2016) Scale of Transportability, the Interpersonal Reactivity Index (Davis, 1980), the Helping and Attributions Scale, the Great Depression Content Quiz and the Overall Enjoyment Questionnaire. The tasks were administered in the same order for all participants in both groups. At the end of the sessions, each classroom was thanked for their participation and a final report stating findings will be provided to the Sir Wilfrid Laurier School Board.

Results

Quantitative Data

To ensure that there were no differences between the fiction and nonfiction groups, *t*-tests were run for the age, gender, grade and the Reading Habits Questionnaire (Spear-Swerling et al., 2010). The means and standard deviations for both groups are found in Table 1. As depicted in Table 1, the groups were well balanced on these variables.

The main focus of my study was to determine if there would be differences in participant's scores of socio-emotional assessments based on whether they listened to excerpts from a fiction or nonfiction book. I was expecting to find heightened levels of transportation, empathy, helping behaviours and enjoyment after listening to *Bud, Not Buddy* (Curtis, 1999) (fiction). However, when independent-samples *t*-tests were run for the Scale of Transportability (Jensen et al., 2016), the Interpersonal Reactivity Index (Davis, 1980), the Helping and Attributions Scale, and the Overall Enjoyment Questionnaire there were no statistically significant differences between the mean scores of the fiction and nonfiction groups (see Table 2). The means and standard deviations for both groups are found in Table 2.

The attention checks were then analysed to determine if there were differences uncovered in the children's attention to the fiction or nonfiction books. There was only one statistically significant difference in the mean scores of attention found in Session 2, when independent *t*-tests were run comparing the groups for each session (See Table 3). A 3x2 way Mixed ANOVA was run with session (Session 1-3) as the within subject variable and group (fiction and nonfiction) as the between subject variable. There was a main effect of session, $F(2,76) = 4.06$, $p = .02$, $\eta^2 = .10$. As can be seen in Table 3, students scored higher on the attention checks in Session 2 compared to other sessions. There was no main effect of group, $F(1, 38) = 2.51$, $p = .12$, $\eta^2 = .06$. Session x Group Interaction was statistically significant, $F(2,76) = 3.03$, $p = .05$, $\eta^2 = .07$. When looking at the means scores it is evident that the student's in the fiction group

recognized more content words in the second Session compared to the nonfiction group (See Table 3).

As content knowledge was a key component in this study, I analysed the participant's initial scores on the Great Depression and revealed there to be no statistically significant differences between the two groups $t(38) = 1.66$, $p = .11$. In order to determine if the groups learned differently from the read alouds, an independent t-test was run comparing their post read aloud assessment content scores. The t-test $t(38) = .81$, $p = .42$, showed that participants learned the same amount of content in the fiction ($M = 49\%$, $SD = 17.5\%$) and nonfiction ($M = 45\%$, $SD = 14.5\%$) groups (See Table 4). To determine if there was a main effect of time, a 2x2 way Mixed ANOVA was run with content (initial assessment and post read aloud) as the within subject variable and group (fiction and nonfiction) as the between subject variable. There was a main effect of content, $F(1,38) = 384.49$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .91$. This demonstrates that the participants in the fiction ($M = 3\%$, $SD = 7\%$) and nonfiction ($M = 0\%$, $SD = 0\%$) groups learned content from the read alouds. There was no main effect of group, $F(1,38) = 1.20$, $p = .28$, $\eta^2 = .03$. The Session x Group interaction was not statistically significant, $F(1,38) = .20$, $p = .66$, $\eta^2 = .01$, indicating that both groups learned the same amount of content after hearing the read alouds.

I was also interested in the participant's self-reported sessional enjoyment. Perhaps the participant's level of enjoyment increased during the sessions and this was dependent on the group they were in. The sessional enjoyment data was ordinal, therefore I ran nonparametric tests to determine if the ANOVA was reporting similar findings (Laerd Statistics, 2015). A Kruskal-Wallis test found no statistically significant difference in groups, $H(1) = .42$, $p = .52$, and a Friedman's test also found no statistically significant difference between groups $\chi^2(2) = 5.22$, $p = .07$. A 3x2 Way Mixed ANOVA was run and the results were compared with the nonparametric

findings, with session (Session 1-3) as the within subject variable and group (fiction and nonfiction) as the between subject variable. As can be seen in Table 5, students in both groups scored similarly on self-report sessional enjoyment. The main effect of session was not statistically significant, $F(2,76) = 2.14$, $p = .13$. The main effect of group was also not statistically significant, $F(1,38) = 2.25$, $p = .14$. Session x Group Interaction showed no statistically significant interactions between the 3 Sessional Enjoyment Questionnaires, $F(2,76) = .78$, $p = .46$, partial $\eta^2 = .02$. Therefore, the groups did not differ in terms of their sessional enjoyment self-report scores.

Correlations. Kendall's tau-b correlation were used because the data obtained from the Likert scales were nonparametric in nature (Laerd Statistics, 2015). The relationship between transportation and content learning was a main component of this study. However, no significant relationships were found when the whole sample was analysed $\tau_b = .17$, $p = .17$. Grades were analysed separately to determine if there were differences in the relationships between content learning and transportation. Once again, no differences were found (Grade 3 $\tau_b = .00$, $p = 1.00$, Grade 4 $\tau_b = .07$, $p = .72$, Grade 5 $\tau_b = .00$, $p = 1.00$, Grade 6 $\tau_b = .91$, $p = .07$). Therefore, the grades were collapsed together within each group to increase power.

As some questions within the IRI were specific to the novel or book read and others related to reading in general, they were separated into general and book specific. The questions were then analysed separately to determine if differences were found. The general book reading questions were positively correlated with the helping and attributions scale $\tau_b = .28$, $p = .02$, and overall enjoyment $\tau_b = .26$, $p = .03$. In contrast, the book specific questions in the perspective taking scale were positively correlated with overall enjoyment $\tau_b = .31$, $p = .01$, helping and attributions $\tau_b = .35$, $p < .001$, and the scale of transportability $\tau_b = .32$, $p < .001$. However, the

book specific fantasy, and empathetic concern subscales had no positive correlations with the other socio-emotional measures.

Fiction correlations. Another main goal was to investigate the potential relationships between different components of socio-emotional learning and transportation into a story, therefore the relationships were analysed separately for each group. The fiction group`s correlations between Scale of Transportability (Jensen et al., 2016), the entire Interpersonal Reactivity Index (Davis, 1980), the Helping and Attributions Scale and the Overall Enjoyment Questionnaire are reported in Table 6. As the measures analyzed contained Likert Scales, a Kendall's tau-b correlation was used as these data were nonparametric (Laerd Statistics, 2015).

The participant's transportation scores were moderately positively significant with the Perspective Taking scale, the Fantasy scale, and the Helping and Attributions Scale. Therefore, participants who were more transported also were more likely to relate to take the character's perspective, fantasize about being involved in the reading, and indicate that they would like to help Buddy. Whereas those who scored lower in transportation scored lower on perspective taking, fantasy scale, and potential helping behaviours.

All of the subscales of the IRI were positively correlated with each other, showing the strength of this scale. The participant's scores for the Perspective Taking scale were uncovered to have a moderate positive statistically significant correlation with the Fantasy scale, the Empathic Concern scale, and a strong positive statistically significant correlation with the Helping and Attributions Scale. Though the participants who scored lower on perspective taking scored lower on fantasy, empathy and potential helping behaviours. The participant's scores for the Fantasy scale were strongly positively statistically significantly correlated with the Empathetic Concern scale. While those who scored lower on fantasy scored lower on empathy.

Participant's Helping and Attributions scores had positive statistically significant relationships with the Perspective Taking scale and Transportation scores. Whereas the children who scored lower on potential helping behaviours scored lower in transportation and perspective taking. These findings display socio-emotional assessments and their associated positive relationships to transportation within the fiction group.

The Transportation scale, Perspective Taking scale, Fantasy scale and the Helping and Attributions scale were all positively statistically significantly correlated to the Overall Enjoyment Questionnaire.

Nonfiction correlations. The same procedure was repeated with the nonfiction group (See Table 7 for Kendall's tau-b). Once again, the entire IRI was used for analysis. In contrast, the nonfiction group only had three relationships. The participant's transportation scores had a moderately positively statistically significant correlation with the Fantasy scale and Overall Enjoyment. Therefore, participants who were more transported were also more likely to fantasize about being involved in the reading and those who were less transported were less likely to experience fantasy. The participant's scores for the Perspective Taking scale had a moderate positive statistically significant correlation with the Fantasy scale. Whereas those were scored lower in perspective taking scored lower in fantasy. There were no statistically significant relationships with the IRI and Transportation scores for the Empathetic Concern scale. Similarly, the participant's Helping and Attributions scores had no statistically significant relationships with the IRI and Transportation scores.

Qualitative Data

Despite the focus of this study on quantitative data, there were a few instances for qualitative interpretations. The last question in the Overall Enjoyment Questionnaire allowed for

open-ended answers and asked, "What was your favourite/important moment during *Bud, not*

Buddy? Why did you like this?" or "What was your favourite/important moment during *What*

was the Great Depression? Why did you like this?". The first cycle coding used was in vivo

coding (Saldaña, 2013). This method respects the actual words that the participant used. In vivo

coding aims at reaching the participants' true feelings, which is excellent for groups whose

words are not normally seen as important, such as children. The second level coding used in this

study was focused coding in order to categorize the data by themes. Finally, axial coding was

used to choose the most central themes brought up by participants. The themes were then broken

down into two categories; themes that focused on the participant's feelings towards the

characters or people in the books ('Character/Person Focused') and interest or mention of the

events that occurred ('Event Focused'). Therefore, the categories of themes were

'Character/Person Focused' and 'Event Focused'.

      Fiction data. Overall, the fiction group provided six answers containing

'Character/Person Focused' codes. 'Helping Behaviours' were discovered to represent Lefty

Louis, a character in *Bud, Not Buddy* (Curtis, 1999). The children suggested that Lefty was

helping Bud when he needed to eat and when he was travelling to find his father. Lefty appeared

to be a positive character that emerged and provided direction and food, guiding Bud during a

difficult portion of his journey. A participant stated, "I liked the moment where the guy gave him

food because it was very kind and it really helped bud because he was struggling." 'Bravery' was

also a theme that emerged to describe Bud. The participants described Bud to be brave when

deciding to run away from his new foster home, after he was treated unfairly. For example, "my

favourite part was when he escaped. He had the courage to escape, so that proves he is brave".

Another interesting theme that emerged was 'Struggles', where the participants highlighted the

difficult situations the characters were facing. Bud was mentioned as being hungry and struggling as he made his way to find his father.

The 'Event Focused' category also allowed for interesting themes to emerge. The fiction participants produced 17 'Event Focused' comments pertaining to the events in the stories. The theme that emerged the most was 'Jumping on Trains'. The participants seemed to enjoy this portion of the novel and mentioned it seven times. Statements such as, "the part when they ran for the train because it gives the story a good twist", were used to describe their favourite moment of the novel. Another theme evident was 'Lefty Offering Food', where participants spoke about when Lefty provided food to Bud. Some of their answers contained descriptions of simply how the event unfolded, while others spoke specifically about how Bud felt or what Lefty must have been thinking when he provided the food. In addition, one participant mentioned, "I would like a little more pages". This is an important statement as it relates to the potential limitations of only reading small sections of the novel.

Nonfiction data. Overall, the nonfiction group provided five answers containing 'Character/Person Focused' codes. 'Bravery' was a theme that emerged to describe both the fictional story and the people in the nonfiction book. Nonfiction participants stated that bravery was exuded by the people of the 1930's as they fought against President Hoover's ignorant ideas for the United States of America. 'Struggles' was also found within the nonfiction group, where the participants described how they felt about the people in the story. The nonfiction group stated, "… I found it sad that the town went down and didn't have any money".

'Event Focused' codes were also uncovered embedded in the nonfiction group. The nonfiction participants produced 20 'Event Focused' comments. The theme 'Jumping on Trains' was mentioned four times, which was the most common mention among participants. One

participant stated, "my favourite part is when they were jumping on trains". 'Lost Possessions' and 'Importance of Possessions' were also addressed in the nonfiction group. The participants wrote about how people lost their valuables; "I did not like when people lost their house car and stuff". The children seemed to relate to these items being taken from the people during the Great Depression. The participants also mentioned how they learned new things about the Great Depression, and how they had "fun learning" about this unfamiliar historical time.

Discussion

Current research states that reading fiction offers the potential for both literacy development (Cunningham & Stanovich, 1993; Kozak & Recchia, 2018) and socio-emotional learning (Bal & Veltkamp, 2013; Johnson, 2012; Mar et al., 2010). Links between print exposure and world knowledge are noted, however previous investigations failed to differentiate between the effects of reading fiction and nonfiction on the accumulation of declarative knowledge (Sparks et al., 2014; Stanovich & Cunningham, 1993). Interestingly, my data showed that participants in both experimental groups were equally transported, and benefited similarly in terms of content learning, after being exposed to fiction or nonfiction books, however positive associations involving the helping and attributions scale and empathetic concern were found exclusively in the fiction group. The following discussion will focus on the entire IRI.

Transportation

Green and Brock (2000) proposed that an individual can be transported into a fiction novel through immersion and entanglement in the character's feelings and experiences. The possibility for a deep connection to the story, has been shown to allow empathy to grow towards characters in the novel (Mar & Oatley, 2008). The reader can then become involved in the protagonist's adventure and be exposed to various social experiences (Mar & Oatley, 2008;

Overly & Spalding, 1993). More specifically, students can acquire knowledge from their involvement with historical fiction novels in the classroom, and discover how people may have lived in different time periods and places all around the world (Jensen et al., 2016; Rycik & Rosler, 2009).

When looking specifically at the current study, the participants were equally transported into the fiction and nonfiction read alouds. This could be due to the read aloud methodology and the fact that only excerpts of the novel and book were read. For example, one child in the fiction group stated that he wanted to hear "more pages" of the novel. Reading the entire novel or book might have allowed the children to become more connected with the characters and rooted deeper into the story. In addition, the nonfiction was specially selected to be engaging to students. Therefore, it may have stimulated the children by drawing them into the time period of the great depression, even though it did not contain any fictional characters or storylines. Further exploration will be needed to tease apart these various hypotheses.

When looking at the fiction and nonfiction groups separately, there were differences uncovered in the relationships between transportation and measures of socio-emotional development. In the fiction group, being transported into *Bud, not Buddy* (Curtis, 1999) was associated with how well children could take on the perspective of Bud, and how much they expressed feeling a part of the story, and in providing guidance and support to those in need. These findings are consistent with the findings of Jensen et al. (2016) where the authors reported that students who were more transported also stated having more interest in how the character was feeling, wanting to understand their thinking process. Similar to Rycik and Rosler's (2009) hypothesis, the participants worked to understand the reasoning behind Bud's actions and in

doing so were learning about his experience during the Great Depression. In addition, students who were more transported also reported higher overall enjoyment.

The nonfiction groups' transportation level was only correlated with their ability to fantasize about being within the story. The Fantasy Scale of the IRI (Davis, 1980) is essentially describing feelings of transportation, therefore the nonfiction group's feeling of immersion into the story did not have any associations with the other socio-emotional measures. This is an interesting finding as it demonstrates how differences in transportation can be evident between fiction and nonfiction. Even though both groups reported being equally transported, the nonfiction group's underlying relationships with empathetic concern, perspective taking and imagining helping someone in need were significant. Similar to fiction, the students who were more transported also reported higher overall enjoyment. This demonstrates that nonfiction can elicit transportation and that, in turn, transportation can aid in the enjoyment of nonfiction books.

As Mar and Oatley (2008) described, the ability to experience a character's world by looking at their personal conflicts and relationships can be extremely positive for learning societal norms. Through transportation, the participants may have been able to understand what living in the Great Depression felt like and the possible similarities and differences within these stories and their own lives (Mar & Oatley, 2008; Rycik & Rosler, 2009). Therefore, the data reported here add to the literature by demonstrating that well-written nonfiction books can also allow for transportation in the story, which can lead to positive learning experiences about human emotions and circumstances. The fiction findings are consistent with the literature and provide additional support for the importance of transportation for forming connections with characters and storylines in literature (Jensen et al., 2016; Mar & Oatley, 2008). Lastly, both

fiction and nonfiction transportation scores were correlated with overall enjoyment, which demonstrates that feeling immersed in a story is important for appreciating the novel or book.

Content Learning

Another main area of interest in this study was content learning, which is the act of absorbing information about a specific topic, comprehending the data and recalling it during an assessment (Smith, 1993). Historical fiction novels can be positive avenues for teaching information in the classroom, allowing for content learning (Brugar et al., 2018; Hicks & Martin, 1997; Smith, 1993). Smith (1993) demonstrated that a group of children who received a historical fiction novel and various enrichment activities, learned more than a control group who received the standard curriculum. This finding was replicated in studies that showed that being exposed to historical fiction allowed the reader to comprehend the facts in a more conducive and stimulating way (Brugar et al., 2018; Hicks & Martin, 1997). However, in stark comparison, Kuhn et al. (2017), demonstrated that nonfiction was more beneficial for students in Grade 1 and 2, when they were asked to apply new comprehension skills to a nonfiction book.

To address both fiction and nonfiction, the current study directly compared these groups while assessing the content learned by participants. Though no differences in amount of content learned were observed between the groups in this sample, the children's scores from the time of their previous knowledge quiz to the content quiz after the read aloud showed a large growth in content learned. Therefore, both groups learned content equally. This finding highlights that fiction novels can allow for the same amount of content learned as a nonfiction book, while accumulating the positive socio-emotional benefits correlated with fiction (Kozak & Recchia, 2018; Mar et al., 2006).

The additional facts added to the fiction novel was used to control for the amount of information provided to each group, ensuring the nonfiction group was not simply just receiving more historical content (See Appendix O). This also acted to mimic a teacher providing more information on the fiction novel read in their classroom. This methodology allowed for the simulation of a real classroom activity or lesson, to ensure the data collected are attainable and realistic when applying it to a classroom environment. In addition, Kuhn et al.'s (2017) result of a nonfiction book allowing for more understanding of new comprehension skills, compliments the current finding that nonfiction books can be positive tools for content learning. Perhaps nonfiction's clear and direct way of describing content is positive for learning specific facts. Therefore, this research was able to add to the literature by dismantling the apparent difference in learning content through fiction or nonfiction.

The current research also addressed the attention given to the content within the novel or book during each session to ensure attentiveness to the read alouds. This was used to ensure that participants were paying attention to the readings. It was discovered that the fiction group selected more correct content words in Session 2 then the nonfiction group. This portion of the novel, *Bud, not Buddy* (Curtis, 1999)*,* was very exciting and may have accounted for the extra attention in this section. For example, students listed in their open-ended enjoyment questions that 'jumping on trains' was a favourite part of the novel, which was read during Session 2. This section was described as, "a good twist" and a "favourite moment." Therefore, this finding is consistent with previous literature stating that historical fiction can stimulate the reader and aid in their learning of content (Brugar et al., 2018; Hicks & Martin, 1997; Smith, 1993).

Socio-emotional Development

It is posited that fiction allows the reader to form deep connections to the characters and events in the story (Bal & Veltkamp, 2013; Johnson, 2012; Mar et al., 2006) thereby creating the opportunities to learn socio-emotional skills from the characters and their experiences (Mar et al., 2006). Children are still acquiring social skills and discovering connections from stories to their own personal experiences, so it is important to simulate social situations (Mar et al. 2006). Therefore, the current study investigated possible relationships that perspective taking, fantasy and empathetic concern could have with the measures of transportability and helping behaviours and attributions. The fiction participants who scored higher on taking Bud's perspective tended to be more empathetic to Bud's difficult situations. This is consistent with findings where people who score higher in transportation also tend to empathize more with others (Mar et al., 2006). Furthermore, the children who understood why Bud acted in a certain way, also felt the need to help him and others in similar situations during the Great Depression. This could be due to the fact that when an individual works towards taking on the perspective of others, they can see their needs more clearly, and perhaps offer assistance.

The children in the nonfiction group provided some contrasting results. Participants who self-reported imagining the thoughts of the people in the novel or book, were able to imagine themselves in the story. However, feelings of empathy and helping behaviours were not correlated with perspective taking of the people or fantasizing about being immersed in the story. It is possible that as the student's empathy and helping behaviours were not associated with transportation, they were not able to connect to these other socio-emotional concepts. This would be consistent with findings that heightened transportation allows for empathetic feelings to thrive amongst the reader and fictional characters (Mar et al., 2006; Mar & Oatley, 2008).

In addition, when open-ended questions were analyzed, the categories of 'Character/Person Focused' demonstrated how the participants discussed their feelings toward the characters in the novel or book. The participants described their thoughts about how these abstract people were feeling in their current situations. The participants described Bud as being brave and having courage, showcasing the children's understanding of his intentions. The knowledge that the participants were thinking critically about the emotional states of these characters is an example of how, in this case, a fiction novel allowed for an exchange of the human experience. The themes of 'Event Focused' codes provided further support that the participants were able to learn new information and enjoy this process while seeming to be invested in the lives of these characters.

Similarly, fiction novels can provide positive learning experiences, while teaching valuable lessons about other's ways of life (Fong et al., 2015; Johnson, 2013; Vezzali et al., 2015). When an increase in the connection to characters was formed, Johnson (2013) was able to find a reduction in prejudiced views against an ostracized group. This reiterates how fiction can provide the reader with a simulation of social situations and experiences of others (Mar et al., 2006). Fiction that contains passages relating directly to prejudice, can allow the reader to learn from this mistreatment and apply this knowledge to their everyday lives (Vezzali et al., 2015).

To address the idea that fiction can aid in the understanding of others, I investigated the relationships between the helping behaviours and attributions and the socio-emotional measures. These helping behaviours attempted to address removing prejudiced ideas surrounding underprivileged people during the Great Depression. Results were only uncovered in the fiction group, where children who were more transported into the story, were able to take into account how Bud was feeling and therefore reported wanting to help people who found themselves in

similar situations. This compliments the research that illustrates how higher levels of transportation after listening to fiction, can create reductions in prejudice against outgroups (Johnson, 2013; Vezzali et al., 2015). Finally, 'Helping Behaviours' were present in the open-ended questions written by participants. Lefty Louis from *Bud, not Buddy* (Curtis, 1999)*,* was praised by the children for providing food and shelter to Bud when he most needed it. This acknowledgement of the kindness Lefty shared with Bud could potentially have modelled how to provide assistance to someone in need. Therefore, this is another important finding from this research, as it establishes the idea that participants can be reminded of helping behaviours, which they can then apply to their lives.

Fiction reading research to date, demonstrates the benefits associated with content learning (Smith, 1993; Sparks et al., 2014; Stanovich & Cunningham, 1993), transportation into a fictional world (Green & Brock, 2000; Mar & Oatley, 2008), and the opportunity for socio-emotional development (Bal & Veltkamp, 2013; Mar et al., 2006; Vezzali et al., 2015). Through investigating the potential for differences between fiction and nonfiction groups with the methodology of a read aloud, it was determined that transportation is linked to feelings of empathy, perspective taking of main characters, and an increase in possible helping behaviours in the fiction group. Both groups equally learned content over the sessions, and attention seemed to be strongest when self-report expressions of participant's favourite moments were mentioned. In addition, perspective taking and helping behaviours were highly positively correlated in the fiction group, whereas in the nonfiction group transportation and perspective taking was the only significant relationship.

Limitations

As with most research, this study is not without limitations. The sample of participants is not generalizable as it was selective and contained children from the same school in Quebec. Although 3 Grade levels were able to provide data for this study, the participants' stayed within their original classrooms to complete the read alouds and measures. This created a nested sample, as the students were not divided randomly into the fiction or nonfiction groups. It is possible that this may have impacted the data, though when simple *t*-tests were run, there were no statistically significant differences in the groups based on their age, gender, reading habits and previous knowledge of the Great Depression. In the future, research should aim to work with children from various neighbourhoods and schools, to capture the experiences of a wider group of children.

It is possible that the methodology of having the children complete the measures separately at their desks could have impacted the scores. The participants were reminded to ask questions if they were unclear, however this may not have always occurred. In addition, self reports of transportability, perspective taking, fantasy, empathetic concern and helping behaviours were measured, therefore the groups may have been subject to social desirability. This may have led to the findings of equal transportation, socio-emotional development, and helping and attributions for the groups. As the novel and book were read aloud to each group it is hard to generalize what would have happened if they had been asked to read the texts themselves. To address these methodology limitations, a future direction would incorporate an interview portion so that if children need assistance during their completion of measures, they would feel more comfortable asking questions.

To ensure the fiction novel incorporated enough information related to the Great Depression, two facts were added to each session. These additional facts in *Bud, not Buddy*

(Curtis, 1999), worked to simulate a real lesson that a teacher and their students would participate in. It is possible that both groups learned the same amount of content due to the additional facts that were added to the fiction novel to ensure both groups were receiving enough information about the Great Depression. Therefore, future research should involve a lesson component in each group to further this real-world application and determine which group would be best suited for content learning and socio-emotional development. Another future direction would be to assess the use of Camp's (2000) 'Twin Text' approach. By pairing a fiction novel and a nonfiction book with the same topic, it is hypothesized that the fiction novel works to introduce the reader to the topic to prepare them for the nonfiction information.

Finally, another limitation present is that only excerpts from the novel and book were read aloud. This could have reduced the amount of transportation and personal connection to the characters and people that participants reported. Though many studies have only used portions of the novel to assess transportation (e.g., Jensen et al., 2016) and socio-emotional levels in their participants (e.g., Vezzali et al., 2015). It would be interesting for future research to read through the entire novel or book with the children to investigate their transportation and socio-emotional development more accurately.

Conclusions and Implications

This work aimed to highlight the possible benefits or drawbacks of incorporating fiction and nonfiction in subject areas other than Language Arts. Though this study's methodology contains some limitations, interesting findings were discovered. The children who heard *Bud, not Buddy* (Curtis, 1999) and scored higher in transportation, had positive associations with their understanding of the main character, their ability to feel as if they were within the storyline, and their potential to assist those in need during the Great Depression. In addition, children in the

fiction and nonfiction groups learned the same amount of content. This demonstrates the potential created by incorporating fiction into the classroom when learning historical information. A secondary unexpected finding was that carefully selected nonfiction has the ability to be equally enjoyed as a fiction novel and interestingly offer transportation.

However, even though all participants reported being transported during the read alouds, the fiction group participants seemed to be more attentive during the portions of the novel they found more exciting. This highlights the positive impact fiction can have on its readers and the learning of content that can occur when interest is seen. Socio-emotional and helping behaviours had strong relationships with perspective taking, empathetic concern and immersion into the story in the fiction group. Whereas, helping behaviours and empathetic concern were not correlated with any of helping, transportation or other socio-emotion measures in the nonfiction group.

The current study adds to the literature by encouraging teachers and parents to promote literacy experiences in the classroom and home environment. Children can learn content through the medium of fiction (Hicks & Martin, 1997; Smith, 1993), and also experience real world simulations to gain knowledge about social norms (Mar et al., 2006). Nonfiction is also an effective way to create positive learning environments, when the book is well-written and adapted for appropriate age groups (Kuhn et al., 2019). In addition, read alouds may be a viable form for teachers to provide content to their students, as this study demonstrates that content can be learned through this methodology. Ultimately, the children in the fiction group had associations between empathy skills and transportation, which echoes the current research on fiction reading (Green & Brock, 2000; Mar et al., 2006; Mar & Oatley, 2008; Vezzali et al., 2015).

In conclusion, Cunningham and Stanovich (1998) boldly stated that early reading has the potential to predict positive relationships to literacy over the lifetime. The authors stated, "…students who get off to a fast start in reading are more likely to read more over the years, and, furthermore, this very act of reading can help children compensate for modest levels of cognitive ability by building their vocabulary and general knowledge" (Cunningham & Stanovich, 1998, p. 146-147). Ultimately, incorporating various forms of literature into the classroom will aid in comprehension, vocabulary and general knowledge longitudinally and prepare students for a lifetime of reading (Sparks et al., 2014; Stanovich & Cunningham, 1993; Torppa et al., 2019). When students are given different opportunities to learn both historical content and socio-emotional skills, children can use their literature experiences as avenues for improved knowledge of social situations and information acquisition.

Table 1

Summary of Participant's Means and Standard Deviations for Demographic Information and

Reading Habits Questionnaire (N=40)

Variable	Group	*M*	*SD*	*t(38)*	*p*
Age	Fiction	10.16	.96	.72	.47
	Nonfiction	9.90	1.22		
Gender	Fiction	1.42	.51	-.64	.53
	Nonfiction	1.52	.512		
Grade	Fiction	4.58	.84	.83	.41
	Nonfiction	4.33	1.02		
Reading Habits	Fiction	5.46	1.32	1.66	.10
	Nonfiction	4.65	1.71		

Table 2

Results of t-tests for Variables of Interest as divided by Group (N=40)

Measure	Group	*M*	*SD*	Minimum Score	Maximum Score	*t(38)*	*p*
Transportability	Fiction	2.46	.61	1.62	4.00	.26	.80
	Nonfiction	2.40	.93	.46	3.92		
Perspective Taking [a]	Fiction	2.18	.79	.83	3.33	-.37	.71
	Nonfiction	2.26	.50	1.33	3.17		
Fantasy Scale [b]	Fiction	2.12	.79	.83	3.67	-1.12	.27
	Nonfiction	2.38	.68	.83	3.83		
Empathetic Concern [c]	Fiction	2.56	.64	1.33	3.50	1.04	.30
	Nonfiction	2.35	.65	.67	4.00		
Helping and Attributions	Fiction	24.63	4.37	16.00	31.00	-1.86	.07
	Nonfiction	27.00	3.67	19.00	32.00		
Overall Enjoyment	Fiction	9.05	3.12	2.00	12.00	-1.27	.21
	Nonfiction	10.09	2.00	6.00	12.00		

Note. [a] = Interpersonal Reactivity Index- Perspective Taking, [b]= Interpersonal Reactivity Index-Fantasy Scale, [c]= Interpersonal Reactivity Index- Empathetic Concern.

Table 3

Results of t-tests for Sessional Attention Checks as divided by Group (N=40)

Measure	Group	*M*	*SD*	Minimum Score	Maximum Score	*t(38)*	*p*
Session 1- Attention Check	Fiction	4.32	1.11	2	6	-.42	.68
	Nonfiction	4.48	1.29	1	6		
Session 2- Attention Check	Fiction	5	1	3	6	2.81	.01
	Nonfiction	3.90	1.41	1	6		
Session 3- Attention Check	Fiction	3.89	1.41	1	6	.58	.57
	Nonfiction	3.67	1.06	2	6		

Table 4

Summary of Participant's Means and Standard Deviations for Initial and Post Read Aloud

Content Quizzes (N=40)

Measure	Group	*M*	*SD*
Initial Previous Knowledge Content Quiz	Fiction	.16	.37
	Nonfiction	.00	.00
Post Read Aloud Content Quiz	Fiction	3.95	1.39
	Nonfiction	3.62	1.16

Table 5

Summary of Participant's Means and Standard Deviations for Sessional Enjoyment (N=40)

Measure	Group	*M*	*SD*
Session 1- Enjoyment	Fiction	11	3.07
	Nonfiction	12.05	3.25
Session 2 - Enjoyment	Fiction	10.79	3.66
	Nonfiction	12.14	3.17
Session 3 - Enjoyment	Fiction	11.16	3.96
	Nonfiction	13.05	2.29

Table 6

Kendall's tau-b Correlations of Fiction Group Participants (N=19)

	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.
1.Transportability	1	.39*	.40*	.09	.51**	.47**
2.Perspective Taking [a]		1	.35*	.47*	.69**	.36*
3.Fantasy Scale [b]			1	.53**	.33	.36*
4.Empathetic Concern [c]				1	.30	.25
5.Helping and Attributions					1	.36*
6.Overall Enjoyment						1

Note. * = p < .05 level, ** = p < .001 level.

Note. [a] = Interpersonal Reactivity Index- Perspective Taking, [b] = Interpersonal Reactivity Index-Fantasy Scale, [c] = Interpersonal Reactivity Index- Empathetic Concern.

Table 7

Kendall's tau-b Correlations of Nonfiction Group Participants (N=21)

	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.
1.Transportability	1	.27	.45**	.11	.12	.54**
2.Perspective Taking [a]		1	.39*	.06	.12	.32
3.Fantasy Scale [b]			1	.05	-.05	.32
4.Empathetic Concern [c]				1	-1.7	.33
5.Helping and Attributions					1	.16
6.Overall Enjoyment						1

Note. * = *p* < .05 level, ** = *p* < .001 level.

Note. [a] = Interpersonal Reactivity Index- Perspective Taking, [b]= Interpersonal Reactivity Index- Fantasy Scale, [c]= Interpersonal Reactivity Index- Empathetic Concern.

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Appendix A
Initial Assessment All Conditions = Reading Habits Questionnaire (Spear-Swerling et al., 2010)

1. Have you read for fun any fiction books outside of school in the past 7 days?
   A. Yes
   B. No

2. Have you read for fun any nonfiction books outside of school in the past 7 days?
   A. Yes
   B. No

3. Have you read for fun any magazines or comic books outside of school in the past 7 days?
   A. Yes
   B. No

4. About how often do you read a book or magazine outside of school, for fun?
   A. Almost never
   B. About once a month
   C. About once a week
   D. Almost every day

5. About how often do you read for fun something in a newspaper (e.g., sports page, news stories, advice columns), outside of school?
   A. Almost never
   B. About once a month
   C. About once a week
   D. Almost every day

6. About how often do you go to a bookstore or the library just for enjoyment, not because of school assignments or homework?
   A. Almost never
   B. About once a month
   C. About once a week
   D. Almost every day

7. Out of all the books you have read yourself, which are your favorites? Name the titles of your favourite books?
   _____
   _____

8. Do you have any favorite authors whose books you look forward to reading? Name your favourite authors?
   _____
   _____

Appendix B
Initial Assessment All Conditions = Great Depression Previous Knowledge Quiz

Please answer these questions to the best of your ability.

1. When was the Great Depression?
   _____
   _____

2. Can you tell me anything about why the Great Depression started? Is there anything else you can think of?
   _____
   _____

3. Who was the President of the United States during the Great Depression?
   _____
   _____

4. Can you tell me anything about the dust bowls during the Great Depression? Is there anything else you can think of?
   _____
   _____

5. Can you tell me anything about the Hoovervilles or shantytowns during the Great Depression? Is there anything else you can think of?
   _____
   _____

Appendix C
Fiction = Sessional Enjoyment Questionnaire (Session 1)

Question	1= Not at all	2= Not really	3= Undecided	4= Somewhat	5= Very much
1. Did you like the section of the book read today?					
2. Did you learn something new from the book today?					
3. Would you like to read more of this book in the future?					

4. Put a check beside the key terms that you learned today.

Key Terms	Did you learn this today?
Human Rights	
Orphanage	
Foster home	
Banks	
Crime	
Jobs	
Flint, Michigan	
Great Depression	
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania	

Appendix C
Fiction = Sessional Enjoyment Questionnaire (Session 2)

Question	1= Not at all	2= Not really	3= Undecided	4= Somewhat	5= Very much
1. Did you like the section of the book read today?					
2. Did you learn something new from the book today?					
3. Would you like to read more of this book in the future?					

4. Put a check beside the key terms that you learned today.

Key Terms	Did you learn this today?
Hoovervilles	
Bus stops	
Trains	
The War	
Travelling South	
Hungry	
Hoover Blanket	
Bugs	
Recession	

Appendix C
Fiction = Sessional Enjoyment Questionnaire (Session 3)

Question	1= Not at all	2= Not really	3= Undecided	4= Somewhat	5= Very much
1. Did you like the section of the book read today?					
2. Did you learn something new from the book today?					
3. Would you like to read more of this book in the future?					

4. Put a check beside the key terms that you learned today.

Key Terms	Did you learn this today?
Franklin Roosevelt	
Labour union organizers	
Stock Market	
Railroad workers	
Lefty Lewis	
Factories	
Charities	
Dust Bowl	
Gassed up	

Appendix D
Nonfiction = Sessional Enjoyment Questionnaire (Session 1)

Question	1= Not at all	2= Not really	3= Undecided	4= Somewhat	5= Very much
1. Did you like the section of the book read today?					
2. Did you learn something new from the book today?					
3. Would you like to read more of this book in the future?					

4. Put a check beside the key terms that you learned today.

Key Terms	Did you learn this today?
Population	
Orphanage	
Stock market	
Financial	
Crime	
Loans	
Economy	
Great Depression	
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania	

Appendix D
Nonfiction = Sessional Enjoyment Questionnaire (Session 2)

Question	1= Not at all	2= Not really	3= Undecided	4= Somewhat	5= Very much
1. Did you like the section of the book read today?					
2. Did you learn something new from the book today?					
3. Would you like to read more of this book in the future?					

4. Put a check beside the key terms that you learned today.

Key Terms	Did you learn this today?
Hoovervilles	
Bus stops	
Hitching rides	
Diseases	
Harvest	
Mayors	
Hoover Blanket	
Bugs	
Recession	

Appendix D
Nonfiction = Sessional Enjoyment Questionnaire (Session 3)

Question	1= Not at all	2= Not really	3= Undecided	4= Somewhat	5= Very much
1. Did you like the section of the book read today?					
2. Did you learn something new from the book today?					
3. Would you like to read more of this book in the future?					

4. Put a check beside the key terms that you learned today.

Key Terms	Did you learn this today?
Franklin Roosevelt	
Labour union	
New Jersey	
Strikes	
Independence	
Bargaining	
Charities	
Dust Bowl	
Gasoline	

Appendix E
Nonfiction = Math Word Problems about the Great Depression for Grade 4

1. Billy is a young boy during the Great Depression. He had $10.00. He bought a loaf of bread for $2.30 and some ham for $5.50. How much money did he have left?

2. Maria works in a factory that builds car parts. She is working 5 days a week and earning $26.23 a day. How much money does Maria earn a week?

3. If the factory workers have a 5 hour work shift and they start at 10am, what time are they finished?

4. Anthony has 8 pairs of socks with blue stripes and 3 pairs of socks with green stripes, how many socks does he have in total?

5. There are about 310 passengers in each car of the city train. As there are 8 cars for each train, there are about _____ passengers on each train.

6. The first bus had 96 passengers and the second bus had 107 passengers. There are about _____ passengers into total.

Appendix E
Nonfiction = Math Word Problems about the Great Depression for Grade 6

1. Darla worked in a Bank right before the Great Depression started. Part of her job included writing a test to make sure she was qualified. She earned a grade of 80% on this test that had 20 problems. How many problems on this test did Darla answer correctly? (round to the nearest whole number)

2. Max is helping his mother at her job in a clothing factory. A machine can produce 16 metres of fabric in 2 minutes. How much fabric can the machine produce in 1 hour?

3. A train travels 120 kms in 3 hours (with a constant speed). How far will it take to travel 200 kms?

4. At the corner store close to the Chicago Hooverville 50 apples cost $3.25. How much would 75 apples cost?

5. In her backyard, Nancy is planting rows of peppers. To plant a row of peppers, Nancy needs 2/5 metres. There are 6 metres in Nancy's backyard, so how many rows of peppers can Nancy plant?

6. After Jason picked 10 pears, he wanted to share them with his fellow classmates. If Jason wants to give 2/3 of a pear to each of his classmates, then how many classmates will get some pear?

Appendix F
Post Read Aloud Fiction = Scale of Transportability (Jensen et al., 2016)

Question	1= Not at all	2= Not really	3= Undecided	4= Somewhat	5= Very much
1. I can easily see myself in the events described in *Bud, Not Buddy*.					
2. I get involved in *Bud, Not Buddy*.					
3. I sometimes feel as if I am part of *Bud, Not Buddy*.					
4. I really want to find out how *Bud, Not Buddy* ends.					
5. I find that I can easily think like the characters in *Bud, Not Buddy*.					
6. I am often emotionally affected (sad, angry, happy) by what I've read in *Bud, Not Buddy*.					
7. I have vivid images of the characters in *Bud, Not Buddy*.					
8. I find myself accepting events that I might have otherwise considered unrealistic/fake in *Bud, Not Buddy*.					
9. I find myself thinking what the characters may be thinking in *Bud, Not Buddy*.					
10. I find myself thinking of other ways *Bud, Not Buddy* could have ended.					
11. I find myself feeling what the characters may feel in *Bud, Not Buddy*.					
12. I easily identify with the characters in *Bud, Not Buddy*.					
13. I have vivid images of the events in *Bud, Not Buddy*.					

Appendix G

Post Read Aloud Nonfiction = Scale of Transportability (Jensen et al., 2016)

Question	1= Not at all	2= Not really	3= Undecided	4= Somewhat	5= Very much
1. I can easily see myself in the events described in ***What was the Great Depression***.					
2. I get involved in ***What was the Great Depression***.					
3. I sometimes feel as if I am part of ***What was the Great Depression***.					
4. I really want to find out how ***What was the Great Depression*** ends.					
5. I find that I can easily think like the people in ***What was the Great Depression***.					
6. I am often emotionally affected (sad, angry, happy) by what I've read in ***What was the Great Depression***.					
7. I have vivid images of the people in ***What was the Great Depression***.					
8. I find myself accepting events that I might have otherwise considered unrealistic/fake in ***What was the Great Depression***.					
9. I find myself thinking what the people may be thinking in ***What was the Great Depression***.					
10. I find myself thinking of other ways ***What was the Great Depression*** could have ended.					
11. I find myself feeling what the people may feel in ***What was the Great Depression***.					
12. I easily identify with the people in ***What was the Great Depression***.					
13. I have vivid images of the events in ***What was the Great Depression***.					

Appendix H
Post Read Aloud Fiction = Interpersonal Reactivity Index (Davis, 1980)

Question	1= Describes me very poorly	2= Describes me poorly	3= Describes me okay	4= Describes me well	5= Describes me very well
1. I daydream and fantasize regularly, about things that I read.					
2. I often have tender, concerned feelings for people less fortunate than me that I read about.					
3. I sometimes find it difficult to see things from *Bud, Not Buddy's* character's point of view.					
4. Sometimes I don't feel very sorry for *Bud, Not Buddy's* characters when they are having problems.					
5. I really get involved with the feelings of the characters in *Bud, Not Buddy*.					
6. I am usually not impacted when I read a book, and I don't often get completely caught up in it.					
7. I try to look at all of *Bud, Not Buddy's* character's sides of a disagreement before I make a decision.					
8. When I see *Bud, Not Buddy's* characters being taken advantage of, I feel kind of protective towards them.					
9. I sometimes try to understand the book characters better by imagining how things					

look from their perspective.					
10. **Bud, Not Buddy's** character's misfortunes do not usually disturb me a great deal.					
11. After reading **Bud, Not Buddy**, I have felt as though I were one of the characters.					
12. When I read about **Bud, Not Buddy's** characters being treated unfairly, I sometimes don't feel very much pity for them.					
13. I am often quite touched/affected by things that I read about.					
14. I believe that there are two sides to every problem that **Bud, Not Buddy's** characters face and I try to look at them both.					
15. When I read **Bud, Not Buddy**, I can very easily put myself in the place of a main character.					
16. When I am upset at **Bud, Not Buddy's** characters, I usually try to "put myself in his/her shoes" for a while.					
17. When I am reading **Bud, Not Buddy**, I imagine how I would feel if the events in the story were happening to me.					
18. Before criticizing somebody in **Bud, Not Buddy**, I try to imagine how I would feel if I were in their place.					

Appendix I
Post Read Aloud Nonfiction = Interpersonal Reactivity Index (Davis, 1980)

Question	1= Describes me very poorly	2= Describes me poorly	3= Describes me okay	4= Describes me well	5= Describes me very well
1. I daydream and fantasize regularly, about things that I read.					
2. I often have tender, concerned feelings for people less fortunate than me that I read about.					
3. I sometimes find it difficult to see things from *What was the Great Depression's* people's point of view.					
4. Sometimes I don't feel very sorry for the people in *What was the Great Depression* when they are having problems.					
5. I really get involved with the feelings of the people in *What was the Great Depression*.					
6. I am usually not impacted when I read a book, and I don't often get completely caught up in it.					
7. I try to look at all of *What was the Great Depression's* people's sides of a disagreement before I make a decision.					
8. When I see the people in *What was the Great Depression* being taken advantage of, I feel kind of protective towards them.					
9. I sometimes try to understand the people in the book better by imagining how things look from their perspective.					
10. *What was the Great Depression's* people's					

misfortunes do not usually disturb me a great deal.					
11. After reading **What was the Great Depression**, I have felt as though I were one of the people in the book.					
12. When I read about the people in **What was the Great Depression** being treated unfairly, I sometimes don't feel very much pity for them.					
13. I am often quite touched/affected by things that I read about.					
14. I believe that there are two sides to every problem that the people in **What was the Great Depression** face and I try to look at them both.					
15. When I read **What was the Great Depression**, I can very easily put myself in the place of the people in the book.					
16. When I am upset at the people in **What was the Great Depression**, I usually try to "put myself in his/her shoes" for a while.					
17. When I am reading **What was the Great Depression**, I imagine how I would feel if the events in the story were happening to me.					
18. Before criticizing somebody in **What was the Great Depression**, I try to imagine how I would feel if I were in their place.					

Appendix J
Post Read Aloud All Conditions = Helping and Attributions Scale

Question	1= Definitely No	2= Probably No	3= Unsure	4= Probably Yes	5= Definitely Yes
1. Would you want to help the people in the book who are living in Hoovervilles?					
2. Would you give your snack to a person in the book who is living in a Hooverville?					
3. Do you think the people in the book who lived in the Hoovervilles deserve to live there?					
4. Would you give some of your birthday presents to a child in the Great Depression?					
5. Would you visit a friend who lived in a Hooverville?					
6. Do you think the people who did not have money in the Great Depression should have been more careful about their spending?					
7. Do you think the people who live in Hoovervilles live there because of things out of their control?					

Appendix K

Post Read Aloud All Conditions = Great Depression Content Quiz

Please answer these questions to the best of your ability.

1. What year did the Great Depression start? _____

2. Who was the President of the United States during the Great Depression?

   _____

3. Why did people use old newspapers as blankets?
   A. The president told people to use newspapers as blankets.
   B. It was very hot in the summer and blankets were too thick.
   C. People could not afford blankets.
   D. People wanted to read before they went to sleep.

4. The shantytowns some people lived in were called Hoovervilles because:
   A. Many people blamed the Great Depression on President Hoover.
   B. All new towns had to be named Hoover.
   C. Most people really admired President Hoover.
   D. President Hoover gave money to these towns for construction.

5. Many men travelled by _____ to find jobs in other parts of the country.
   A. Jumping on trains
   B. Hitching car rides
   C. Walking
   D. Taking buses

6. The _____ crash started the Great Depression.
   A. Bank
   B. Stock Market
   C. Labour union
   D. Hooverville

7. Why did many workers strike during the Great Depression?
   A. They wanted to be paid more money.
   B. They wanted to work in better conditions and be paid more money.
   C. To work at a factory, you had to go on strike.
   D. Workers thought this would help stop the Great Depression.

8. Why did the Dust Bowl happen?
   A. No one had money to buy food, so farmers didn't plant any crops.
   B. It had not rained in a long time and all plants died.
   C. Farmer's plants died because of not enough rain and so they dug up their plants.
   D. President Hoover asked all Farmers to dig up their plants to feed the hungry.

9. What are some other things that you learned about the Great Depression that you want to share with me? Is there anything else you can think of?

   _____

   _____

Appendix L

Post Read Aloud Fiction = Overall Enjoyment Questionnaire

Question	1= Not at all	2= Not really	3= Undecided	4= Somewhat	5= Very much
1. Did you enjoy **Bud, Not Buddy**?					
2. Did you like learning the information about the Great Depression?					

3. Would you like to have a copy of **Bud, Not Buddy**?
    Yes   or   No

4. Will you look up more information about the Great Depression after reading **Bud, Not Buddy**?
    Yes   or   No

    Please answer this question to the best of your ability.

5. What was your favourite/important moment during **Bud, Not Buddy**? Why did you like this?

    _____
    _____
    _____

Appendix M

Post Read Aloud Nonfiction = Overall Enjoyment Questionnaire

Question	1= Not at all	2= Not really	3= Undecided	4= Somewhat	5= Very much
1. Did you enjoy *What was the Great Depression*?					
2. Did you like learning the information about the Great Depression?					

3. Would you like to have a copy of *What was the Great Depression*?
   Yes   or   No

4. Will you look up more information about the Great Depression after reading *What was the Great Depression*?
   Yes   or   No

   Please answer this question to the best of your ability.

5. What was your favourite/important moment during *What was the Great Depression*? Why did you like this?

   _____
   _____
   _____

Appendix N

Script for Fiction Read Aloud Sessions
Session 1

- Hi everyone! I am Meredyth, a student from Concordia University, and I am really excited to be here to read to you and work with you.
- I am very interested in what you all think about reading. I am a student just like you excited to learn more about reading in the classroom and how you all learn. Thank you for letting me read to you and speak with you all.
- I will be reading you this book (point to book) "Bud, Not Buddy" a book written by Christopher Curtis. He is a famous author and this book has even won awards. I have read it and I am super happy that I get to share some of it with you all over the next few days.
- The book is about a young boy, Bud, during the Great Depression, which happened 90 years ago in 1929. The story takes place in Flint Michigan and we get to know Bud and his many adventures. Flint is about 8 hours from Montreal in the USA (Show a picture on a map).
- I will read some of the book now and if you all could listen because we will be speaking about it and I will ask you to answer some questions.
- Read pg. 1-8 (9 minutes)

  End of Chapter

- (Wrap up and thank again for listening) Next time I am here we will hear about Bud and what he decides to do about being sent to a Foster home.
- Sessional Enjoyment Questionnaire

Session 2

- Hi everyone, it's me again, Meredyth from a few days ago. I am back and ready to read more of "Bud, Not buddy" the book I read to you all last time. We got to hear the first little bit about Bud, a really cool young boy who lived during the Great Depression.
- I can't read this whole book because you and your teachers are super busy with all of your awesome school work, but I wish I could read you it all because it is an amazing book.
- We left off learning that Bud is living in an orphanage and he is being sent to live in a foster home with a new family. Bud is sent to live with this new family, but they are not very nice to him, so he runs away. That is not something kids today should do, because this book takes place 90 years ago. Bud meets his friend, Bugs, from the orphanage and they decide to ride a train outwest to pick some fruit. They are going to "ride the rails" which means they will jump on and off trains without paying. This is something that people did 90 years ago, but not today. Let's see what Bud's next adventure is!

- Read pg. 63-68, 80-86 (12 minutes)

  End of Chapter

- (Wrap up and thank again for listening) Next time I am here we will hear about Bud and his travels to try to find his father! What kind of trouble will he get into now?
- Sessional Enjoyment Questionnaire

Session 3

- Hi everyone, it's me again, Meredyth! I am back and ready to read more of "Bud, Not buddy", I hope you have all been enjoying the story, learning about Bud and all of his crazy expeditions. As you know, I can't read this whole book because you and your teachers are super busy with all of your awesome school work, so I will fill you in on what happens inbetween.
- We left off learning that Bud and his friend from the orphanage Bugs, who he bumped into, went to a Hooverville and met some people who lived there. The Hooverville was right beside a trainyard, so they went to jump onto the trains and travel out West to make some money by picking fruit. Unfortunately, Bud does not make it onto the train and so he walks back to the Hooverville with some other stragglers.
- Bud looks again at his suitcase and the flyers inside and notices that the poster says, Grand Rapids Michigan! Bud then begins his journey of walking to Grand Rapids Michigan to find his dad.
- Let's see how his travelling goes….
- Pg. 96-106 (6 minutes)
- Now Bud travels with the man who gave him a sandwich and a ride to Grand Rapids. He spends the night at his house, has breakfast with his family and then Mr. Lefty Lewis, the man, offers to drive Bud to the house his father lives in.
- Pg.130-139 (7 minutes)

  End of Chapter

- (Wrap up and thank again for listening) Thank you again for helping me with my research, I really enjoyed spending time with you all and reading this cool book! I will write the names of these books on the board in case you are interested in finding them to finish reading!
- Sessional Enjoyment Questionnaire
- Post-test

Appendix N

Script for Nonfiction Read Aloud Sessions
<u>Session 1</u>

- Hi everyone! I am Meredyth, a student from Concordia University, and I am really excited to be here to read to you and work with you.
- I am very interested in what you all think about reading. I am a student just like you and am excited to learn more about reading in the classroom and how you all learn. Thank you for letting me read to you and speak with you all.
- I will be reading you this book (point to book) "What is the Great Depression" a book written by Janet Pascal. This is one of a series of books about history and famous people throughout time. I have read it and I am super happy that I get to share some of it with you all over the next few days.
- I can't read this whole book because you and your teachers are super busy with all of your awesome school work, but I wish I could read you it all because it is an amazing book.
- The book gives us an idea of how life was like during the Great Depression, which happened 90 years ago in 1929. We will learn about why this happened, and the way people were impacted.
- I will read some of the book now and if you all could listen, then we will speak about it and I will ask you to answer some questions.
- Read pg. 1-3, 29-34 (5 minutes)

  End of Chapter

- Now I have a colouring sheet for you and you can colour or do something else creative with it. It is a picture of people during the Great Depression
- (Wrap up and thank again for listening) Next time I am here we will hear some more about the Great Depression and how people just like us lived during this time!
- Sessional Enjoyment Questionnaire

<u>Session 2</u>

- Hi everyone, it's me again, Meredyth from a few days ago. I am back and ready to read more of "What was the Great Depression" the book I read to you all last time. We got to hear the first little bit about what happened during the Great Depression.
- Like I mentioned last time, I can't read this whole book because you and your teachers are super busy with all of your awesome school work, but I wish I could read you it all because it is an amazing book.

- We left off learning about how the Great Depression started and how people had to adjust their lives to deal with how the banks failed. Also I read about how people started to lose a lot of money.
- Let's see what else we can learn about the Great Depression!
- Read pg. 35-38, 40, 44-45, 47 (5 minutes)

  End of Chapter

- (Wrap up and thank again for listening) Next time I am here we will hear more about how people lived during this time and how their jobs were affected.
- Sessional Enjoyment Questionnaire

<u>Session 3</u>

- Hi everyone, it's me again, Meredyth! I am back and ready to read more of "Bud, Not buddy", I hope you have all been enjoying the story and learning about the Great Depression! As you know, I can't read this whole book because you and your teachers are super busy with all of your awesome school work, so I will fill you in on what happens between.
- We left off learning about how people lived in Hoovervilles and some men travelled on the train to find more jobs. We also learned how the Great Depression affected farmers and food supply.
- Let's see what else happens during this time 90 years ago….
- Pg.59-61, 80-85 (5 minutes)

  End of Chapter

- (Wrap up and thank again for listening) Thank you again for helping me with my research, I really enjoyed spending time with you all and reading this cool book! I will write the names of these books on the board in case you are interested in finding them to finish reading!
- Sessional Enjoyment Questionnaire
- Post-Test

Appendix O
Information Added to *Bud, not Buddy*

Session 1

- Pg. 2 (line 22) "…all over this country".
  -It's 1929 and things are tough. Ever since the banks lost their money, people have lost their homes and farms.

Session 2

- Pg. 68 (line 22) "…Hooverville for you."
  -"People use newspaper to blankets, call 'em hoover blankets, and cardboard for our shoes, call 'em hoover leather. But we stick together."
- Pg. 82 (line 25) "…got to be on it."
  -"We have to find work harvesting crops in the south to get money to bring back to our loved ones."

Session 3

- Pg. 104 (line 21) "…Grand Rapids, Sir.'"
  -Suddenly, a strong gust of dust blew into Bud's eyes and it has hard for him to see the man for a minute. Bud said, "why is it so dusty sir?". The man answered, "this is the dust bowl son. It hasn't rained in a very long time and because farmers dug up their dead plants, all the soil is left to blow away and get mixed into the air."
- Pg. 136 (line 18) "…and their children."
  -"They ask their bosses for better wages, money for their work, and if not they would strike, stop working until their bosses listen to them."

Appendix P

INFORMATION AND CONSENT FORM

Study Title: Educational Benefits from Immersion into Fiction and Nonfiction Literary Worlds
Researcher: Meredyth Dwyer
Researcher's Contact Information: meredyth.dwyer26@gmail.com
Faculty Supervisor: Dr. Sandra Martin-Chang
Faculty Supervisor's Contact Information: s.martin-chang@concordia.ca
You are being invited to participate in the research study mentioned above. This form provides information about what participating would mean. Please read it carefully before deciding if you want to participate or not. If there is anything you do not understand, or if you want more information, please ask the researcher.

A. PURPOSE

The purpose of the research is to examine Grade 4 to 6 student's content learning (ie. Factual learning) during historical fiction, and nonfiction reading.

B. PROCEDURES

If your child participates, he or she will be asked to complete various questionnaires and a content quiz before and after listening to the researcher read a historical fictional novel or a nonfiction book.

In total, participating in this study will take approximately 1.5 hours over 3 Sessions.

C. RISKS AND BENEFITS

There are no potential risks associated with participating in this study. However, potential benefits include being introduced to historical information about the Great Depression. Also, we anticipate that children will enjoy the fiction novel and nonfiction book read and hopefully read books by the same author in the future.

D. CONFIDENTIALITY

By agreeing to have your child participate in this study, you agree to let the researcher use the information gathered during the tasks. We will not allow anyone to access the information, except people directly involved in conducting the research. We will only use the information for the purposes of the research described in this form.

The information gathered will be coded. That means that no identifying information will be on your child's forms.

We will protect the information by ensuring the paper copies of all tasks are kept in a locked laboratory and all information transferred to a computer will be password protected.

We intend to publish the results of the research. However, it will not be possible to identify your child in the published results.

We will destroy the information five years after the end of the study.

F. CONDITIONS OF PARTICIPATION

Your child does not have to participate in this research. It is purely your decision. If he or she does participate, he or she can elect to have their data removed from the study.

There are no negative consequences for not participating or asking us not to use your information.

G. PARTICIPANT'S DECLARATION

I have read and understood this form. I have had the chance to ask questions and any questions have been answered. I agree to participate in this research under the conditions described.

Child's Name (please print)

_____

Parent's Name (please print)

_____

SIGNATURE   _____

DATE   _____

If you have questions about the scientific or scholarly aspects of this research, please contact the researcher. Their contact information is on page 1. You may also contact their faculty supervisor. If you have concerns about ethical issues in this research, please contact the Manager, Research Ethics, Concordia University, 514.848.2424 ex. 7481 or oor.ethics@concordia.ca.

ASSENT FORM

Hi,

Your parents have given permission for you to participate in a study about what kinds of books are best to use with kids your age. If you sign your name, it means I can use your information to help your teachers pick out the most interesting and useful books for you. I will not share your answers with anyone, including your teachers or your friends. There are no wrong answers, I just want you to do your best.

NAME (please print)   _____

DATE   _____

Please circle the correct information about yourself:

AGE   8   9   10   11   12   13   other=
_____

GRADE   3   4   5   6

GENDER   Male   Female   other= _____