

Ida Svenningsen Poiesz

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An Analysis of First-Grade Students' Engagement with Culturally Diverse Picturebooks

Master's thesis in Primary and Lower secondary Teacher Education for Years 1-7- Masters

Supervisor: Alyssa Lowery

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NTNU

Kunnskap for en bedre verden

Abstract

“That’s what my mom said to me too!’: An Analysis of First-Grade students’ Engagement with Culturally Diverse Picturebooks” is a qualitative study using data collected from interviews with a first-grade teacher and observation and discussions with a group of nine first-grade students before, during, and after reading culturally diverse picturebooks. During the sessions, we discussed the diversity in the literature, and the connections the students found between their own lives and the books. “Read-alouds are a frequent practice in the early childhood classrooms, that provide a lot of potential when developing literacy skills for young learners, which include vocabulary, comprehension, text structure awareness, visual literacy and fluency.” (Håland, Hoem, & McTigue, 2020, p. 1). Students find most of the stories engaging, but various factors, such as having to sit still, being a part of a diverse classroom and their young age seemed to prevent them from responding beyond the surface level.

Sammendrag

“En analyse av første klasse elevers engasjement med kulturelt mangfoldige bildebøker» er en kvalitative forskning som bruker data som er samlet inn gjennom intervjuer med en første-klasse lærer, og observasjoner samt diskusjoner med en gruppe av 9 første klasse elever før, samtidig og etter høylesninger av kulturelt mangfoldige bildrebøker. Gjennom høylesningene, diskuterte vi mangfoldet i litteraturen, samt tilknytningene elevene fant i bøkene og sine egne liv. «høylesning er en hyppig praksis i de første årene på skolen som gir mye potensiale for utvikling a leseferdigheter for unge elever. Sette inkluderer ordforråd, forståelse, tekststrukturbevissthet, visuell leseferdighet og flyt» (Håland, Hoem, & McTigue, 2020, p. 1). Elevene synes de fleste historiene var engasjerendes, men på grunn av varierende faktorer, som vanskeligheten med å sitte stille, elevs tilhørighet til et mangfoldig klasserom og deres unge alder, forhindret dem i å respondere utover overflatenivå.

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List of Abbreviations (or Symbols)

NSD	Norsk senter for forskningsdata
NTNU	The Norwegian University of Science and Technology
LGBTQ+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transexual, Queer +

1 Introduction

This thesis is dedicated to the importance of culturally diverse literature in the elementary school classroom. As Rudine Sims Bishop famously wrote in 1990, "Literature transforms human experience and reflects it back to us, and in that reflection, we can see our own lives and experiences as a part of the larger human experience. Reading, then, becomes a means of self-affirmation, and readers often seek their mirrors in books" (Bishop, 1990, p. 1). In 2018, 3134 children's books were published in America, where 50% of all new children's books had a White main character and 27% had animals or other. The closest group of marginalized were African Americans, and it were as low as 10% (appendix 1). These numbers do not include LGBTQ+ or children with disabilities. Children often get a distorted or negative picture of who they are, when they cannot find themselves in literature (Bishop, 1990). It is therefore important that classrooms are a place where all children can find a mirror of themselves, but it is also important to see other social groups through a window and see the reality of how the world is (Bishop, 1990).

In this study, I chose culturally diverse picturebooks that I wanted to read out loud for a group of students. Originally, I wanted the group to be third graders, however, due to the coronavirus, it took some time finding a teacher who would let me conduct my study in their classroom and I ended up at a recipient school, in the first grade. When I found out where my research was taking place, I had to figure out how I would gather the data. At the end, I ended up dividing it into three parts, *Research Data*, *Observation Data*, and *Book Club Data*. Before I started with my data collection, I had to apply to NSD to be allowed to do audio and video recordings. This was a long process where different forms had to be filled out and detailed descriptions of my research had to be submitted, to make sure that I followed every rule, and to make sure I understood the importance of making my participants anonymous. I had to make a permission slip from NSD that all the parents of my participants had to sign, before starting my study. When that was finished, I was allowed to do my recordings (Norsk senter for forskningsdata, 2021). Among other elements, the research data includes a summary of an ethnographic interview with the teacher of the students who participated in the read-alouds. It can be categorized as an ethnographical interview since it was more of a conversation between colleagues, where we both asked questions back and forth, and an interview where one asks question and the other one answers (Blommaert & Jie, 2012). In the interview, we discussed the teachers' own experiences with literature in the classroom, what she expected I would get out of the study, and some discussion on the participants of the study. My observational data, was during the actual read-alouds. Here, I video and audio recorded each reading sessions, so that I could look at the students' movements, facial expressions and it gave me a better idea of who spoke at the different times. This was conducted before, during and after the readings. The Book Club data connects a lot to the observational data, however, here I focused more on the discussions and conversations going on before, during and after all readings, rather than looking at the movements, as I did in my observations. After figuring out how to do the study, my research question became clear: "How do first-grade students engage with culturally diverse literature presented through interactive read-alouds?".

The theoretical framework of this thesis describes the importance of culturally diverse literature, the benefits of literature use, and how the Norwegian teachers use literature in the classrooms. Louise Rosenblatt's *Reader Response Theory* discusses the difference between efferent and aesthetic stances, which is a big part of my theoretical framework. Since all of my readings were of picturebooks, I have a section that is dedicated to them, and why you should use them in the lower grades. Reading is a great part of a school day. It can be books, assignments or small texts in the workbooks, or on the smart screen. Schools often try to have an efferent stance to most of the readings, however, during my readings I noticed that most of my students had an aesthetic stance to the books. In my theory section, I discuss the benefits of both, and what they mean. Before going into this research, I had not considered that I would observe as much movement as I did. Because of this, I dedicated some of my theory to developmentally appropriate behaviour, and the reasonings for the movements and impulse reactions children have.

When presented with culturally diverse read-alouds, the first-grade students who participated in my study engaged primarily from an aesthetic stance, demonstrating pleasure and enjoyment in the texts. When they engaged efferently, they made text-to-self connections, observing similarities between themselves and the characters without explicitly discussing elements of cultural diversity. These literary transactions are valid and valuable, and students would benefit from more frequent exposure to culturally diverse interactive read-alouds.

2 Background

There are many important topics to research when it comes to school practices. My interest in the topic of culturally diverse picturebooks came in my third year at university. We had an assignment where we had to make a lesson plan where we had to use a book that had a child with disabilities as our main focus. Our teacher had many different books with her that we could choose from, but I wanted to go to the Norwegian bookstores to find one for myself. After going into four different stores and not finding any books that had a child with disability as a character, I started asking friends that were teachers if they had any books to recommend, or if they knew of some book that I could borrow from the school libraries. They did not know of any. This made me think back to the times when I myself was a student at elementary school, trying to remember if the books that was being read to us had diversity of any kind. As a cis, white, straight girl, I had never really felt that I was not represented in the books that were being read to me as a young girl. Most of the books that had been read to me during my childhood were always mirrors of myself.

As a young girl growing up, some of my thoughts and views of different culturally diverse groups were stereotypical. The stories that were on television, the movies we saw, were often seen from a white man's perspective, making them what Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie has famously called single stories. "A single story creates stereotypes, and the problem with stereotypes is not that they are untrue, but incomplete. They make one story the only story" (Adiche, 2009). Rudine Sims Bishop (1990) introduced the concepts of mirrors and windows. Stating that there is huge importance to seeing yourself in the literature, and seeing others' lives and cultures. Mpike wrote the article *Diversity and Positive Representation in Nordic Children's Literature* in the book *Actualize Utopia*, That the books that are available to Norwegian children in Norway, there is only one out of twenty that has a main character that has a clear multicultural background (Mpike, 2019). When we use culturally diverse literature in the classroom, we can actively avoid single stories, and help destroy the negative stereotypes that are following certain often marginalized groups (Mpike, 2019).

For this thesis, I read five different books to a group of first graders, all of which represent marginalized identities: *Just Like a Mama* (Duncan, 2020), *The Proudest Blue* (Muhammad, 2019), *When We Are Kind/ Nihá'ádaahwiinít'ígo* (Gray Smith, 2020), *Parker Looks Up* (Curry & Curry, 2019), and *Stella Brings the Family* (Schiffer, 2015). *Just Like A Mama* (appendix 2), is about a girl who is in foster care. She misses her parents, but Mama Rose takes good care of her, and her life is as normal as it can be. *The Proudest Blue* (appendix 3) is a story about two sisters, Asiya and Faizah. Asiya is the older sister who is going to start wearing a hijab at school. Faizah thinks it is the most beautiful thing in the world and sees her sister as a princess. However, during recess there are some boys who are quite mean to Asiya because of her hijab. Luckily Asiya is strong and ignores the bullies. *When We Are Kind/Nihá'ádaahwiinít'ígo* (appendix 4) is a story written in both English and Diné, the language of North America's indigenous Navajo people about how it feels when someone is kind and how to be kind to the earth. *Parker Looks Up* (appendix 5) is a colorful book about a girl who goes to the

museum with her mother, sister, and friend and discovers a picture of Michelle Obama, a Black woman who has accomplished so much. She is inspired and reflects on a world of opportunities for herself later in life. *Stella Brings the Family* (appendix 6) features a character preparing to celebrate Mother's Day at school, but who has two dads. She does not know what to do and talks to her friends. They are surprised that she does not have a mom, asking who makes her lunch, or tucks her in for bed. She explains that her fathers do all those things, and the only problem is who to bring to the party. She ends up bringing her whole family: both fathers, an aunt, a cousin and more.

There are many debates about the best language to describe literature that represents minoritized communities. However, I have chosen to use the term "culturally diverse" because my books represent a variety of experiences and identities across several of the different groups that are often marginalized. The collection includes stories about class, family composition, religion, ethnicity, race, and the LGBTQ+ community, representing a number of marginalized groups.

3 Theoretical Framework

In Norwegian classrooms, it is common for teachers to use read-alouds as a classroom management strategy. Students are expected to sit quietly and listen, and they are rarely asked to engage deeply with the material. However, Louise Rosenblatt's reader response theory indicates that literary experiences can and should be transactional. In this section, I explore the efferent and aesthetic stances Rosenblatt describes. I also relate those stances to the developmentally appropriate behaviours exhibited by the first graders with whom I worked. Since the books used during my read-alouds are culturally diverse, there is also a section on the importance on diverse literature and literature in general in the classroom, as well as benefits of reading picturebooks to the younger grades.

Even though my research is conducted in Norway, most of my theory is articles and books written in different countries, stating that the issue I am looking at, is not an issue that is specified in Norway and Norwegian schools, but a general issue across earth.

3.1 The Value of Children's Literature in the Classroom

In his 2013 book *When Nothing Else Works: What Early Childhood Professionals Can Do To Reduce Challenging Behaviours*, William DeMeo writes, "Reading to children is a very important component to their development. Children's literature provides a safe medium for children to explore concepts, feelings and attitudes that allow them to better understand their environment, community, and societal expectations" (DeMeo, 2013, p. 141). He claims that reading can help children raise their self-esteem and can provide comfort and help with the development of coping mechanisms. It can introduce vocabulary and new concepts and help stimulate meaningful conversations. "When children experience difficulties in their daily lives, reading about characters with similar problems helps them cope. Narratives outside the child's individual situation provide story lines that aid in understanding their own feelings and help children realize they are not alone in their situation" (DeMeo, 2013, pp. 141-142). Håland, Hoem and McTigue write in their article *The quantity and Quality of Teachers' self-perceptions of Read-Aloud practices in Norwegian First Grade Classroom* that "Read-alouds are a frequent practice in the early childhood classrooms that provide a lot of potential when developing literacy skills for young learners, which include vocabulary, comprehension, text structure awareness, visual literacy and fluency." (Håland, Hoem, & McTigue, 2020, p. 1). If the potential should be filled, teachers must select meaningful texts and plan activities that encourage engagement. I contend that simply reading half-heartedly chosen books as a classroom management strategy during lunch breaks is an insufficient use of an important educational resource.

By encouraging the student's interaction in the read-alouds, the students can get better self-perceptions and identities as readers, find pleasure in it and help get the students more interested in books in general. Providing different types of literature can also give a better understanding of oneself and others when offering insights into different people's unique lives (Håland, Hoem, & McTigue, 2020). Nussbaum states in the article *Not for Profit: Why Democracy needs the Humanities* that this gives the students

narrative imaginations, that again gives them the ability to feel another person's emotions, wishes and desires (Nussbaum, 2010). These kinds of read-alouds can also give the students access to more cultural capital, despite their ability to read, of the literacy environment at home.

3.1.1 The Use of Read-Alouds in the Norwegian First-Grade Classroom

Even though read-alouds are frequently used, they have not been considered systematically in the early Norwegian classrooms (Håland, Hoem, & McTigue, 2020). According to Beck and McKeown, Norwegian teachers also often prefer well-known children's literature, over informational texts (Beck & McKeown, 2001).

Norwegian teachers use read-alouds primarily for entertainment purposes rather than educational. They also expect the students to listen quietly, rather than participate themselves. One can argue that this is because when the teachers do read-alouds, it is often when the children are eating, and they look at this time as an "educational break", where the children can relax and enjoy their food quietly. This means that the teachers often use read-alouds to manage students' behaviour, rather than developing the literacy skills (Håland, Hoem, & McTigue, 2020, p. 10). However, to maximize the effectiveness of read-alouds, teachers should invite the students to engage in the text, before, during and after (Beck & McKeown, 2001).

The use of read-alouds as mere classroom management tactics rather than as opportunities for engagement and education is contraindicated by Sandra Lennox's 2013 "Interactive Read-Alouds—An Avenue for Enhancing Children's Language for Thinking and Understanding: A Review of Recent Research". She writes that children do not only adopt literacy by only listening to literacy. How much thought the teachers spends on the books that they choose, the way they are shared, and the quality of the interactions are during the read-alouds, can either open or close the learning opportunities to use the language for many different purposes (Lennox, 2013). Giving the students opportunities to interact with the readings gives them a higher chance of learning, than just sitting and listening.

3.2 Picturebooks

Picturebooks are important to children. I use the single word "picturebook" following David Lewis's *Reading Contemporary Picturebooks: Picturing Text*, where he argues that the compound word "reflects the compound nature of the artifact." Where I have quoted authors who use the separated "picture book," that usage is reflected (Lewis, 2001). Writing in *Barnelitteratur - sjangrar og teksttypar*, Birkeland and Mjør (2000) describe picturebooks as the first meeting with picture and written art, marking the start of the relationship between a child and literacy. "Picture books are a multimodal and compound text form that communicates through several models or expressions" (Birkeland & Mjør, 2000, p. 69) Since picturebooks have both text and picture, readers can both read and see what is going on simultaneously (Birkeland & Mjør, 2000). William Moebius writes in his chapter "Picturebook Codes" for Maybin & Watson's *Children's Literature: Approaches and Territories* that picturebooks represent "a bound sequence of images/text" and that the two are "inseparable in our reading experience one from the other" (Moebius, 2009, p. 311). Words and pictures are the information units in a picturebook. They represent the people, actions, events, feelings, thoughts and dialogues that have different communicative potential (Birkeland & Mjør, 2000). If there is a

picture of a person or a landscape, a detailed description of them would be excessive, and gives a greater risk for the reader to become tired of reading. Joyce Irene Whalley also had an article in Maybin and Watson's book called, *Texts and Pictures: A History*, where she stated that "a bad illustrated book is one where the pictures and the text are not relevant to each other" (Whalley, 2009, s. 300).

Colours are also an important resource in picturebooks. The ways in which readers experience these colours are largely covered by conventions, and picturebooks can either choose to follow them or challenge them (Birkeland & Mjør, 2000). Colours can be of the traditional association of feelings and moods. The brighter colours often represent exhilaration and discoveries, while dark colour often is associated with disappointment and confusion (Moebius, 2009, p. 319). Martinez, Harmon, Hillbrun-Arnold and Wilburn cite Nodelman's (1988) observation that colours speak "to the unconscious, that aspect of being which resides outside of the boundaries of the world we can name with language" (Martinez, Harmon, Hillbrun-Arnold, & Wilbrun, 2020, p. 9). Together with feelings and emotions, colours can also highlight particular objects in the illustrations, and links between different characters and/or objects.

Authors of "Messages Matter. Investigating the Thematic Content of Picture Books Portraying Underrepresented Racial and Cultural Groups" Aronson, Callahan, and O'Brien write that picturebooks can also be served as didactic tools that can promote social norms, values and expectations (2018, p. 166). When children are too young to be able to read for themselves, they look at the pictures and listen to the reader's voice. This reading experience adds another layer of meaning associated with the performative elements introduced by the person reading aloud. The use of character voices, inclusion of breaks, variation of pace, and dramatization through movement contributes to the meaning-making process and results in a multimodal literary experience influenced by the mediator. A basic principle in the multimodal theory is that the text itself has different modes. If the reader adapts to the interaction between the picture and the text by adding the sounds, breaks and dramatic effects that fit them, it can increase listeners' engagement with and enjoyment of a book.

Picturebooks simultaneously shape children's identities. The lack of diversity in children's books can affect later in life, as one only sees white characters and their lives, and not their own (Aronson, Callahan, & O'Brien, 2018, p. 166). Picturebooks can be served as didactic tools, and can help promote social norms, values and expectations. When there is an absence of people of colour in children's books, it can affect self-assurance and feelings of significance.

3.3 Culturally Diverse Literature

Rudine Sims Bishop (1990) famously writes, "Literature transforms human experience and reflects it back to us, and in that reflection, we can see our own lives and experiences as a part of the larger human experience. Reading, then becomes a means of self-affirmation and readers often seek their mirrors in books" (Bishop, 1990, p. 1). She offers the metaphor of literature as windows and mirrors for human experience. The mirrors are a metaphor for seeing oneself in the literature, and recognizing oneself in the characters, gaining self-confidence and getting a feeling of significance. The windows represent a view into another world through characters who live differently than oneself.

Aronson, Callahan and O'Brien suggest that this orientation can foster curiosity and empathy towards others and result in a better understanding of different lives. "Books and the ideas they represent have influence over the minds of the people who read them; not all diverse books convey the same message, and not all messages have the same effect" (Aronson, Callahan, & O'Brien, 2018, p. 165). Being mirrored in literature affects our self-understanding which is essential for developing critical literacy skills. Aronson, Callahan and O'Brien cite a study by Smith and Lewis (1985) who found that Black children were better at recalling and retaining information and the general plot of the book if there were Black characters, rather than just white or animal characters (Smith & Lewis, 1985). Because of this, teachers who use cultural matters to impact the learning, will often be more successful in empowering their students, and helping them find more motivation in becoming literacy learners (Aronson, Callahan, & O'Brien, 2018).

Writing in "Creating Diverse Classroom Literature Collections Using Rudine Sims Bishop's Conceptual Metaphors and Analytical Frameworks as Guides," Karla J. Möller (2016) states, "Multicultural literature is one of the most powerful components of a multicultural education curriculum, the underlying purpose of which is to help make the society a more equitable one." (Möller, 2016, p. 64). When finding culturally diverse literature, having cultural accuracy is an essential step in finding authentic books where children find authentic mirrors and windows. However, even if the titles are free of stereotypes and misinformation it is important to look at the reoccurring themes that appear are. It is important to ask the question "how are they represented?" not just "who is represented?". "A diverse group of culturally authentic books might still imply that black experience is defined by pain and struggle, that natives all lived long ago or that Asian, Latinx and Middle Eastern lives are exotically foreign" (Aronson, Callahan, & O'Brien, 2018, p. 169)

3.3.1 «The Danger of a Single Story»

In her widely cited 2009 TED Talk, "The Danger of a Single Story," Congolese author Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie highlights the importance of culturally diverse literature. An avid reader from an early age, Adichie began writing stories herself at the age of seven. However, her stories did not have characters that reminded her of herself, but characters that resembled those in the European books she had read: white, blue-eyed that played in the snow. She felt that because of the books she read as a young girl were all of foreigners, that was how books should be, with things she could not personally identify with. It was not until he found books by African authors that she found books that mirrored her own life, and she could relate to. Many years later, she went to study in America. Her American roommate was shocked that Adichie could speak English and thought that she would not be able to use a stove. The roommate felt sorry for Adichie before meeting her, because she only knew one single story of Africa: poverty, hunger and charity work. She also had a professor, who also had a single story of Africa, as he thought her novel was not "authentically African". The professor meant that the characters were too much like him, an educated middle-class man. "The characters were driving and not starving; therefore, they were not authentically African" (Adiche, 2009).

"So that is how to create a single story, show a people as one thing, as only one thing, over and over again, and that is what they become. (...) Power is the ability not just to tell the story of another person, but to make it the definitive story of that person." (Adiche, 2009). Later she spoke at a university, and a student came up to her and

thought that all Nigerian men were all physical abusers since the father character in her book was abusive. This is one of the dangers of a single story. Since the student only had read this story of Africa, they thought that this is how it is in Nigeria. Since we have so many stories from America, we are not left to assume that every American is a serial killer based only on a reading of *American Psycho*. "A single story creates stereotypes, and the problem with stereotypes is not that they are untrue, but incomplete. They make one story become the only story" (Adiche, 2009). Listening to Adiche's talk about her experiences, I feel even more confident that diverse books are important for combatting the single story.

3.4 Reader Response

Amanda Woodruff and Robert Griffin write in "Reader Response in Secondary Settings: Increasing Comprehension Through Meaningful Interactions with Literary Texts," an engagement with Louise Rosenblatt's celebrated reader response theory, "Reading is a lifelong skill that students must master to become critical, engaged readers and thinkers in both school and life" (Woodruff & Griffin, 2017, p. 108). What is commonly known about Rosenblatt's theory reader response, is that it is important that reader is developing a meaning from a text. Rosenblatt's foundational theory contends that the reader gives the texts life, no matter what knowledge they had of the text beforehand. "Although teachers sometimes find it easier to impart their knowledge directly about a literary piece, students benefit most from reading texts when they are provided opportunities to think critically and thoughtfully on their own terms without first being bombarded by the thoughts of others. Reader response theory supports this process for students to become engaged, thoughtful and critical readers" (Woodruff & Griffin, 2017, p. 108). Rosenblatt describes literary experiences as transactional, involving a communion between the world of the text and the lived experience of the reader. Readers, for their part, can read from aesthetic stances, privileging pleasure and delight in the literary experience, or from efferent stances, aiming primarily to gain information from the literary transaction.

3.4.1 Efferent vs. Aesthetic Readings

Rosenblatt states that every reading act is an event where "transactions involve particular readers and particular configuration of marks on a page, that occur for a time and a context. When reading, certain organismic states, ranges of feeling and verbal and symbolic linkages, are mixed together in a linguistic reservoir" (Rosenblatt, 1988, p. 7) This means that a transaction happens between the reader and the text. She contends that readers bring a variety of stances to literary transactions, ranging from the efferent to the aesthetic. A stance is always a reflection of what the reader's purpose is (Rosenblatt, 1988). Efferent reading means reading for information, and aesthetic reading is reading for pleasure. Most reading events often fall somewhere in a column that is determined by whether the reader adopt Rosenblatt's term "the predominantly aesthetic" stance, or "the predominantly efferent" stance (Rosenblatt, 1988, p. 7)

When looking at the efferent stance, the main attention is focused on learning what needs to be learned, and the focus on the learning is done when the readings end. Examples of different readings that readily fit in the "efferent predominant" box are newspapers, textbooks or a legal brief, though any text can be read from an efferent stance. When reading efferently, the main focus is the "tip of the iceberg", meaning that "the abstraction from the readings often becomes an analytic structuring of the ideas,

information, directions, conclusions to be retained, used, or acted on after the readings" (Rosenblatt, 1988, p. 7)

The predominantly aesthetic stance covers the other half of the continuum. When reading with an aesthetic stance, the reader adopts an attitude that focuses the attention on what is being lived through during the readings, such as the "sensations, feelings, images and the ideas that comes from psychological events that involve those words and referents" (Rosenblatt, 1988, p. 7). When reading aesthetically, one reads for pleasure and enjoyment rather than to accomplish an intellectual goal. "Aesthetically predominant" texts include literary work such as poems, stories and plays. It gives an object of the reader's "response" and their own "interpretation" while reading, and after the reading event is finished.

When choosing something to read for a reading event it is important to select what kind of stance to have when reading. Even though many of the readings do fall into the extreme sides of the stances, either efferent or aesthetic, there are many that falls in the centre, where both parts are equally involved. When reading a particularly aesthetic reading, your attention can fall over to an efferent analysis, and vice versa. One of the main differences on the two stances however, is that an efferent text can be read for us, and we could acceptably paraphrase it. When speaking of an aesthetical text, no one can read it to us in the same way, as it is one's own experiences, and the literary art works differently for each of us (Rosenblatt, 1988, p. 8).

Since every reading has different circumstances, any text that is being read can be received either efferently or aesthetically. This means that different readers can interpret the same text differently, even though some texts are more naturally inclined to one stance than another. In efferent reading, the focus of attention is mainly on the learning, often prioritizing the author's intended message over the reader's lived experience (Rosenblatt, 1988, p. 10). Conversely, the aesthetic stance prioritizes the reader's own lived experiences in relation to the text.

When looking at education and schools, it is necessary to encompass both the efferent and the aesthetic ends of the continuum. It is important that students learn the differences between the two stances and when to use them. Rosenblatt contends that schools often have an overemphasis on the efferent, which can ultimately end in failure in successfully teaching other ways of reading and writing. Teaching practices should include both efferent and aesthetic linguistic activities to foster habits of selective attention and the ability to draw on relevant elements in different transactions, which is especially important in the earlier years. There are unfortunately a lot of counterproductive practices that either "[fail] to encourage a definite stance" or that "implicitly [require] an inappropriate one" (Rosenblatt, 1988, p. 20).

Even though most schools often focus on the efferent stance on reading, it is important for language learning to have a mixture of both efferent and aesthetic readings, to become a more all-around reader, and knowing the difference in reading for knowledge or pleasure.

3.5 Developmentally Appropriate Behaviour

Thompson and Stanković-Ramirez so thoughtfully wrote “Teaching young children requires an understanding of the interactions among typical patterns of child development, children’s individual characteristics, and their social and cultural contexts.” There are three core considerations of developmentally appropriate practice (DAP): commonality, individuality and context. Commonality is the understanding of all processes in child development that apply to all children, including the understanding that all development and learning happens during specific linguistic, social and cultural concern. Individuality connects the fact that each child is unique, and lastly context is about the social and cultural context that each child, educator and programme have (Thompson & Stanković-Ramirez, 2021).

3.5.1 Lower and Upper Part of the Brain

To understand why the students are moving around and acting the way they are, Siegel and Bryson wrote the book *The Whole Brain Child: 12 Revolutionary Strategies to Nurture Your Child’s Mind*, where they discuss where in the brain different emotions and actions originate from, which give an explanation to the different actions. Siegel and Bryson used a metaphor comparing the upper and lower part of the brain with a house. There is a downstairs, where the brainstem and the limbic region is, which is more primitive, since it is responsible for the more basic functions like breathing and blinking (Siegel & Brysin, 2011, p. 51). It is also responsible for more innate reactions and impulses like fight or flight and the stronger emotions like anger or fear. They compare it with the first floor of the house, where most of the basics of the family are met. The upstairs brain is very different. They write, “The upper part of your brain is made up of the cerebral cortex and its various parts – particularly the ones directly behind your forehead. Including what’s called the middle prefrontal cortex” (Siegel & Brysin, 2011). This part is more evolved and contributes a more complete perspective on the world. The upper brain is the more sophisticated part of the brain, and it controls analytical thinking, taking charge of many of the characteristics we need such as decision making and planning, having control over our emotion and body, empathy and having a better self-understanding (Siegel & Brysin, 2011).

If a child has a properly functioning upper brain, they will demonstrate mature and healthy characteristics, being able to regulate emotions and consider consequences of different actions, as well as to consider others’ feelings. “As you might expect, a person’s brain works best when the upstairs and downstairs are integrated with each other” (Siegel & Brysin, 2011, p. 52). A goal should be for the upper and the lower part of the brain to connect, so building a fully functioning staircase, can help the brain to become vertically integrated. If this is successful, the upper brain can monitor the lower brain, and help calm down stronger reactions and impulses from the lower brain. This also works the other way, as decisions from the upper brain should not be made in a vacuum that avoids all emotions and instinct from the body.

3.5.2 Setting Appropriate Expectations

Siegel and Brysin contend that it should always be the main goal of adults who work with children to build the metaphorical staircase in children’s brains. However, it is important to maintain realistic expectations. Even though the lower part of the brain is well developed already at birth, the upper brain takes time to develop and is not fully developed until the mid-twenties (Siegel & Brysin, 2011). This is important to remember

as a parent and as a teacher, because all the abilities listed above, such as thinking of others' feelings, decision making and having a better self-understanding, is still a working process for many years to come and is not fully developed in the brain as a child. "Children are often *trapped* in the lower brain, making it more understandable that they often make poor decisions and have a general lack of empathy and self-understanding" (Siegel & Brysin, 2011, p. 54).

"Research has shown that bodily movement directly affects brain chemistry. So, when a child has lost touch with their upper brain, a powerful way to help them regain balance is to have them move their body" (Siegel & Brysin, 2011, p. 70). There is research that states that if we change our physical state through movement and relaxation, we can also change our emotional state (Siegel & Brysin, 2011). Our body is always full of information that is being sent to the brain. Movement can often help the body release energy and can be a tool to help relax afterwards. If children have a hard time calming down or regaining control, one should look at ways to make them move. Moving can also be a way to control the emotions that is bubbling up inside, making it easier to connect the lower and upper brain, giving the children an easier time to connect with what is going on around them.

The expectation for children to sit quietly and engage effortlessly with literature is in direct contradiction with the biological process Siegel and Brysin describe. Since the upper brain is not fully connected to the lower brain until mid-twenties, it is in a child's nature to not behave rationally, as they often react on impulse and do not have the ability to control strong emotions.

3.5.3 Wiggling Children

William DeMeo, author of *When Nothing Else Works: What Early Childhood Professionals Can Do to Reduce Challenging Behaviours*, states, "Many children feel an uncontrollable urge to fidget and move around" (DeMeo, 2013, p. 134). When children feel the uncontrollable urge, they usually use self-regulated tools that can calm both body and mind. Movement is often regarded by teachers as a distraction for children themselves, and for the ones around them. However, when children have an opportunity to engage in fidgeting, it can help them release tension and help them to concentrate (DeMeo, 2013). Children often need to wiggle, which is frequently regarded as a problem during reading lessons. Teachers often want their students to sit still when they should be paying attention to what is going on, especially during read-alouds and class discussions. However, Rae Pica writes in her article *Children can Wiggle and Learn* that children are often less likely to be able to concentrate when teachers insist on them sitting still when they are feeling wiggly, and even more so if they have to sit in a specific position such as knees together and hands on their thighs (Pica, 2018). Pica cites stories indicating that some children have an easier time focusing when they are moving rather than sitting still. If a child is being ordered to sit still, they might use all of their concentration on actually being still, rather than the actual task they have been assigned, leaving them with little mental energy for the actual learning (Pica, 2018).

4 Methodology

Cresswell's "Research Methodologies and the Doctoral Process" describes methodology as a perspective developed through socialization in a field of study that shapes the direction of research. He defines it as a belief system that serves as the backbone of a research approach (Cresswell, 1997). A qualitative observation is when the researcher uses the senses to gather subjective data on the behaviour and activities of individuals at the research site (Creswell & Creswell, 2018, s. 186). A qualitative researcher may also engage in multiple roles, from non-participant to a complete participant. "Qualitative research is that type of research that finds out about people's experiences and helps us understand what is important to us" (Silverman, 2021, p. 3). When researchers are looking at people's experiences, it is often more subjective than quantitative research, which pursues objective facts (Silverman, 2021). There are different types of methodology, and this research includes elements of ethnographic study and case study. In this section I give a concrete description of where, how and with whom the study was conducted, as well as an outline for the interview procedures, and a description of how the observations in the classroom were structured and documented. I also describe the process of data analysis. Finally, I discuss relevant ethical considerations and the limitations of the research. All of my interviews and the students' comments were in Norwegian, and I have translated them for the purposes of this thesis.

4.1 Ethnographic Methodologies

A true ethnographic study is a very long-term and immersive process that is descriptive of human society, requires a complete immersion of the anthropologist in everyday life, and can take place over multiple years (Britannica, T. Editors of Encyclopadia, 2020). This study is not a true ethnography. However, I used some ethnographic methods while collecting the data and invoked a particular scientific tradition. This tradition is often misunderstood or misrepresented. Blommaert and Jie state that ethnographic data fundamentally different from data collected through most other approaches (Blommaert & Jie, 2012, p. 1). When going into an ethnographic method, you do not provide a "do" and "don't" guidebook on how to steer your fieldwork. Here, the focus relies more on knowledge-construction. "At actual range of forms of behaviour that people display, and that visual does not coincide with that of the culture in its whole: it is always a mistake to equate the resources of a language, culture or society with those of its members" (Blommaert & Jie, 2012, p. 2). As the researcher, I needed to look at all aspects of the participants. This was important to get the full picture of thoughts, feelings and point of view. It was also important for me to ask questions that I wanted answers to, but also to observe closely. You often learn more from observing than from asking because participants answer questions using their own pre-conceived notions about their actions (Blommaert & Jie, 2012, p. 3).

Fieldwork itself is humanly demanding, as a fieldworker needs to give proof of every quality in life, the good and the bad. One needs to have everything sketched out and planned, as well as read a lot of theory that can help your ideas, but however much you plan for your fieldwork, when you arrive, you can get a lot of surprises, not always

good. Fieldwork is chaotic (Blommaert & Jie, 2012). "We should not be surprised if the social events we observe are not linear, not perfectly logical, not clearly sequential, not dominated by rational decisions and so on: life is not like that" (Blommaert & Jie, 2012, p. 25). This is definitely something that I experienced, when I joined a group of first graders. When I started to learn how to process my fieldwork, it was chaotic, unnerving and a lot to handle, however, I gradually was able to replace some chaos with order. The longer I was there, the more it became as a routine, I understood more of the process, and the chaos lessened. Fieldwork is a learning process and should not be reduced to only data collection. As the researcher, I arrived as an outsider, with limited to no-knowledge of the students participating, their everyday patterns, or the culture of the classroom (Blommaert & Jie, 2012, p. 26). Even though I had a conversation with their teacher and did some research on each of the children and the classroom environment before entering their classroom, there was still some unspoken routines and conventions that I did not learn before my reading sessions started. However, I gradually learned these codes, which helped me move better into the social environment, and my reading sessions became a more natural part of the student's school pattern, and it became a routine for them.

4.2 Case Study

Flyvbjerg describes a case study as "an intensive analysis of an individual unit (as a person-or-community) stressing developmental factors in relation to environment" (Flyvbjerg, 2011). As this study is only taken place in one group of students, it can be seen as a case study, also because case studies are typically seen in the fields of social sciences. Heale and Twycross states that a case study can be defined as an intensive study about a person or a group of people, that is used to generalize several units. A case study is often intense and systematically investigated, and the investigators examine the in-depth data that is relating to several variables (Heale & Twycross, 2018). Following the definitions above, I am certain to say that this is a case study.

4.3 Data Collection

There are three different aspects to my data collection: research data, observational data and book club data. The research data includes an interview with the teacher about her thoughts to the project, her own experiences with the use of literature in the classroom, and a short briefing about the students that were joining the study. The observational data consists of the observations that were made of the students first reactions when the books were read, their ability to pay attention, and to observe developmentally appropriate behaviour, as these things were hard to observe since I was the teacher conducting the read-alouds. The books were connected to the smart screen, making it easier for the students to see the pages, and for me to video record everyone. Lastly, the book club data was a group interview with the students who were part of the reading sessions. In the group, we discussed their thoughts, feelings and emotions, before, during and after each reading session. During the reading sessions, I was alone with the students, so I did the observations and the readings by myself, making the video and audio recordings quite important.

The students that were chosen to participate in the research were the ones who had their parents sign the permission slip from NSD. These were handed out right after

Christmas break. When having the interview with the teacher, I had already gotten eight participants, and one came later, after two or three readings.

4.3.1 Permission from NSD

To make it easier for me to collect my data, I wanted to record the interviews and the readings. To be allowed to do so, I needed permission from NSD. This was a long process where several forms and descriptions of my study had to be filled in, so that the Norwegian Senter of Data Research could see if my study followed a safe and legal route, making sure that I knew the rules, and giving the participants a feeling of safety. Before being allowed to record any of the participants, they or their guardians have to sign that they agree to be allowed to be recorded. It also states that they are not bounded to the contract, and are allowed to leave the study if they need to. It also states that the recording is only to be used during the research, and all will be anonymous (appendix 7 and 8).

4.3.2 Interview with Teacher – Research Data

After the teacher signed her NSD permission slip (appendix 7), we could start the interview process. The interview was built up as an ethnographic interview, as it was an informal and natural setting, where we both engaged in the conversation and asked each other questions. "There is nothing intrinsically ethnographic about an interview, and doing interview does not make your research ethno-graphic" (Blommaert & Jie, 2012, p. 42). Before starting the process, the teacher knew somewhat what my idea for the project was, however, she had not taken her time to really look into it, so we had a conversation about the assignment before we started talking. I asked if she thought if I should do the readings in front of the whole class or if it should be in a small group with the students who had agreed to be in the research. After some thinking, we agreed that it would be better and easier for me to take the group with me into another classroom, that way I got the group a little close, and it would be easier for them to speak up and share their experiences. Being with the group alone also made it easier to record video and audio, without the risk of catching any other students who did not sign the permission slip. After figuring out how, we continued our discussion on when and how often I was allowed to come and read for the students. I wanted to have a day apart from each reading, since I wanted to have time go over the data between each session before the next one. We then decided that I could come twice a week, where each session lasted around half an hour.

We continued our discussion and I wondered how they chose the books that they read in the classroom and what their thought process was before choosing. She said "It depends what subject I am using the book in. I try to connect them as much as possible to the theme we are working on. Since we now are in the first grade, we are working a lot on creating a good environment in the classroom." In the first grade, they heavily gravitated towards books that helped the students see the importance of being kind to one another, learning to take care of each other, and how to talk to each other. The school is also a part of a learning environment project, that is called "*vær grei, si hei*" (be nice, say hello). They also stated the importance of finding something that the students enjoy in order to keep their attention. The teacher reflected, "You can choose a book that is great pedagogically, however, if the kids do not enjoy it, they are not going to pay attention. Read-alouds are supposed to be fun." Students in the first grade are at the age where they enjoy picturebooks, however, if the books were to be used to follow the curriculum, there are many books that can be used interdisciplinarily, and in the subjects

of Norwegian, religion and social studies. They themselves, used books the most during lunch, so the students could enjoy their food and just listen.

The teacher wondered if I had any specific theme in mind, and explained that my study is culturally diverse, which means that there is not one specific group that are often marginalized that is represented, but many different ones. I explained that my main goal with the study was to see whether the participants noticed that the books had a wide range of diverse characters, and that I really wanted them to learn something from the books. I asked if she thought the students would learn anything from the experience, and her response was that she believed that children absorb, however, they do not always show it right there and then. This means that even if I do not see results or think that they are learning something from it, they might still do so. The teacher was not convinced that I would get the reactions I wanted. Her reasoning was that since the participants are only first graders, they might be just a little too young to notice the diversity. She came with an example that if a black and white students stood beside each other at that age, if you asked them what was different between them, they might answer different colours on their shirts. They brought up that the school is a recipient school, and the students are so used to diversity that they do not notice it in the same way other schools that lack diversity would.

From this interview, I felt that I learned a lot about the teacher's thoughts towards books and what her experiences in using them in the classroom were. I was more nervous to begin reading because she did not think I would get the results I wanted, but was intrigued to see how the students reacted to the readings.

4.3.3 Observation – Classroom Observation Data

Blommaert and Jie describe observation as something that is happening constantly. "Whenever your eyes and ears are open and you are in a clear state of mind, things around you register." (Blommaert & Jie, 2012, p. 29). Researchers and fieldworkers begin by observing everything, eventually narrowing focus to a specific target. An observer's main instruments are usually the eyes, ears, mouth and notebook or visual recordings (Blommaert & Jie, 2012).

My main observation was conducted during the read-alouds with the help of video recordings. At first, the main focus was to notice the student's initial reactions to the different books but evolved to both first reactions and how the participants acted during the whole session, before, during and after. Were the students interested in the books? What were their behaviours while listening? Were they paying attention to the stories? Since I was reading the read-alouds myself, the video recordings recorded all movement, facial expressions and audio, as well as a second recording for audio, giving me the opportunity to concentrate on the readings, and acting as a regular teacher for the students. If I did not get the permission from the NSD to record, it would have been close to impossible for me to get any findings during the fieldwork. I had a big learning curve during the process of looking over the documented recordings, helping me in finding a narrower path to the research than I originally had.

Before stepping into the classroom, I had to make sure I had a general image on how the classroom worked. It was also important for me to remember the observer's effect. The first few times we met, the students were not yet certain with me, and wondered who I was and why I was there. However, the more reading sessions I had,

the better it got. I was very lucky and was able to be a substitute teacher in the classroom in the same time period as my research was going, giving me time to get to know my participants in their normal school environment, helping me understanding them better, and letting them get to know me better. This helped the readings, as they knew me better, and felt more comfortable speaking to me. The first reading, the students did not know me, and I saw results accordingly. There was a difference in how intently they paid attention to the books, and their willingness to discuss the book before, during and after the reading, as they did not know me well enough. However, the more the students got to know me, the easier it was for them to have discussions.

Blommaert and Jie state, "Usually, making recordings is considered to be an intrusive measure" (Blommaert & Jie, 2012, p. 34). Since audio and video recordings are capturing "on the spot" language, there are often words and sentences that are not well thought through, which can come of differently than what the person meant. Knowing that you are being recorded an also make us behave differently than we normally do. During this research, the students where quite occupied with the video recordings⁷ and asked if they could look at it right after the readings several times. However, during the sessions, it did not seem like they remembered, only if the camera made a sound, or when I went to cut the recordings did they seem to care. It is important to state that the recordings are always to be handled as sensitive material. It is only to be used as data collection to this project, and since the participants are anonymous, they will be deleted when the research is finished (Blommaert & Jie, 2012). To even be allowed to do these recordings, I had to have an official permission from NSD, and promise that everything would be anonymous. The teacher that I recorded, and the students that took part in the reading sessions, had to sign a waiver that stated that the recordings were only to be used for academic purposes, but they are essential for them, and that the data is modified, so that all the individuals that are participating are protected (Blommaert & Jie, 2012) (Norsk senter for forskningsdata, 2021). The different waivers are in appendix 7 and 8.

4.3.4 Group Interviews with Participants – Book Club Data

My book club data is the data collection that has the participants thoughts, feelings, emotions and discussions of the different reading sessions. Here I have listened to both the audio and the video conversations. When going through the audio, I was incredibly happy that I also had a video recording, otherwise, it would have been impossible to know who said what. This data was created to get a better sense of what the students were thinking, feeling and learning during the reading sessions. The books were connected to a big screen, so that all students had a good view of each page, and having this opportunity, gave me the opportunity to have them longer away from me, giving me a better camera angle, making it possible to see all student's face expressions and movements.

The book club discussions were divided into three categories: before reading, while reading and after reading. Before reading we had discussions of what they thought the theme of the books where, by only looking at the cover picture. Then, they heard the title, which furthered the discussion. During the readings, there was ongoing conversations about what was happening at that time and space, and I often experienced that the students had often had similar experiences as the characters in the books, often telling stories of how they had reacted in similar interactions, or how they would have

reacted if they were put in the same place as the characters. I often started these discussions with questions like, "How would you have felt if it was you?" or "What would you have done if you were put in that situation?" There were however times where they started the conversation themselves, wanting to show me and the other students that they had been in similar situations, and how they handled it. Both during and after the readings, I often asked the question, "Can you relate to this in your own life?" This question was asked to guide them in the direction of my research questions, as the beginning of my thesis, as my main thoughts and ideas was to have everyone see themselves in the mirror during the readings. At the end of each read-aloud, I also asked a question about enjoyment. However, the responses often felt forced and were basically the same after all readings: they liked the book and thought it was fun.

When reading, I took breaks at parts where it felt natural, to give the students time to give responses and to discuss what was being read, as it is much easier to talk about the different themes when they are happening. This was also done because Beck and McKeown in 2001 said that it maximizes the effectiveness of read-alouds to allow the students to engage before, during and after the readings (Beck & McKeown, 2001). The breaks during the readings gave me most of the data that was collected, as the students gave me their thoughts right there and then, rather than trying to think back to what had been read after the book was finished.

4.4 Coding of Data

In *The Coding Manual for Qualitative Researcher* (2013) Johnny Saldăna explains, "A code in qualitative inquiry is most often a word or short phrase that symbolically assigns a summative, salient, essence-capturing, and/or evocative attribute for a portion of language-based or visual data" (Saldăna, 2013, p. 3). There are different reasons for coding your data. Coding data is a process of systemising the data you collected and dividing it into different groups, to get a better sense of trends and patterns, ultimately supporting theorization.

Codes during observation should be written in a descriptive code, (a one-word code that capitalizes on what the meaning of the sentences might mean) (Saldăna, 2013), an example might be "- Avoidance - students are not paying attention when teacher is reading". I also used in vivo codes, or codes that are taken directly from the participant's own words. For example, "- 'comfortable' - the teacher felt quite comfortable with our discussion" (Saldăna, 2013, p. 4). If there is a good coding system, the data will be easier to understand, and researchers can see where the priorities in the study should be. "When we reflect on a passage of data to decipher its core meaning, we are decoding (...) understanding that coding is the transitional process between data collection and more extensive data analysis" (Saldăna, 2013, p. 5).

At the end, I had different types of data. I started off with audio and video recordings that were transcribed in different ways. The audio recordings were transcribed first word for word in their original languages, and then translated into English. The video recordings were described differently. Here, I focused more on movement, and when the students were speaking, how long the pauses were and some verbal communication. As this was more focused on the general picture than the audio recordings, these files were directly translated to English. The first-cycle coding helped me identify and apply a descriptive and in vivo code to the transcripts. Moving on

to the second cycle of coding, I began "theming the data". I looked for patterns that were familiar in all books and went on to decide what I found most common and interesting, helping me decide what to pay attention to. At the end, I ended up dividing my findings into these different categories: "Teachers Thoughts and Experiences", "Empathetic Literary Transactions", "Efficient and Aesthetic Engagement with Read-Alouds", "Pleasurable Literary Transactions" and "Developmentally Appropriate Attention Challenges".

4.5 Ethical Considerations

It is important to think about the ethical considerations when doing research, especially when children are involved. As mentioned earlier, all recordings are only used for educational matters, and every participant is anonymous. To be allowed to record, I had to apply through NSD. This was a long process that took several weeks to get approved. This was to make sure that I as the researcher had a real idea of how to out fold my interviews, to make sure that I knew how to anonymize the participants, and to see if my plans met ethical requirements. It was also to make sure that the participants were informed about what kind of research they joined and what would be expected for the purposes of the study. It was also important for them to know that they could, at any time of the study, stop participating if they wanted to exit later, and that joining was not a binding contract. Since most of the participants in this study are under-age with the exception of the teachers, their guardians were the ones that signed the document (appendix 8). Even though it was the guardians that signed the papers, it was important for the students to know that if they did not want to participate, they did not have to. This was stated in the form the parents signed; however, this was also ascertained by me before the readings.

4.6 Participations

Doing a qualitative methodology, the participants are purposefully selected (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The participants were 6-9 students in the first grade between the ages of 6-7 years who attend a recipient school, which means that there are many different cultures and national origins in the group. There were many ways that this study could be done, another way would have been looking at it from a school where only students are originally from Norway, but the reasoning for me doing the research at the recipient school was so that the books would have given the students a bigger sense of belonging and more feelings and emotions towards the books, fitting my ideas of the study better. The books that were being used were culturally diverse picturebooks, which I thought were more appropriate around the ages 6-10 than what it would have been at higher ages and grades. My reasoning for this is that the books might feel childish, or maybe a little boring in the higher grades. The recipient school was chosen to give more students a chance to see themselves in some of the books that are being read to them, and to have a feeling of seeing themselves in the mirror in the books that was being read (Bishop, 1990). I also had a teacher participate in this study. The teacher has been working in the classroom for a long time, and have some experiences with picturebooks in general, and they knew the student participant better than I did and had some thoughts about what might be hard for me and how I should read to get their attention. Doing the research at a recipient school felt like the best way to see the issues with little to no diverse literature. However, when starting the study there were only three participants that had minority backgrounds. One had a second-generation father from a European country, while the two others had parents that came from Asian

countries. That there were only three that were not white and Norwegian-born was a lower number than I first hoped would be participating in the study. One of the students had more than one learning disability, making it harder for him to pay attention and sit still however, he only joined two readings, as he usually did not follow the rest of the class during the lessons. To my knowledge, none of the students had any family members that is represented in the LGBTQ+, were Muslims or had foster parents, so most of my books were seen through a window, rather than a mirror, which was my initial thought.

4.7 Limitations

Since this study was conducted in the middle of a pandemic, there were some issues finding a class to conduct the reading sessions in. Several of the teachers I asked to help me with the study were quite tired after two hard years of coronavirus. Originally, I wanted to do the read-alouds in a higher grade. I wanted students who had a little more experience at school, having executed tasks where they had to develop own thoughts, and have been a part of discussion tasks before. My initial thoughts were that second or third graders had some experiences having discussions in the classroom, making my study a little easier to follow, and giving me more to work with after the fieldwork.

In the time during which my fieldwork was conducted, there were several times when my readings were cancelled for several reasons. As the participants are first graders, their schedules sometimes vary. During my time there, the class had been at school for a hundred days, and this was celebrated with a party at the time one of the readings were scheduled. Another time I had a reading scheduled, the teachers made a spontaneous trip into the forest, where they grilled hotdogs. These are fun parts of the school day, and I cancelled the readings so that students could participate with their class on these days. Other readings were also cancelled because of sickness, as the class I did my research had a lot of instances with coronavirus. Some of the readings would have only had two participants if I would have executed them. Because of this, I did not get to read as many books as I wanted to. I also had some issues when looking at space, when I did my video recordings. There were times when the camera stopped in the middle of a discussion, making it harder to collect the data at both the observational data, since I no longer could see the students, but also at the Book Club Data, as it became quite hard to know who said what when I could not see who spoke.

When a researcher enters a classroom, the whole environment changes. The students often react to the new person in the classroom, and there will be adjustments and adaptations to them, which is the first thing the researcher will observe (Blommaert & Jie, 2012). As the researcher, you do not belong in the classroom "naturally" and being a foreign body in the classroom, can give a ripple effect in the surface. when being in a classroom that you do not belong in and the students are not familiar with you, there will always be an observers' effect (Blommaert & Jie, 2012). Because of this, there was a huge difference in the first reading session and the last. As the students became more used to me, and got to know me better, they opened up more and more during each reading, making the discussions more productive.

5 Analysis

In the following chapter, I will present the findings and some discussion on the different culturally diverse picturebooks that I have successfully read to my group of six to eight first-graders, over the time extension of four weeks, and the interview with their teacher beforehand on expectations, and the teacher's thoughts on using books in the classroom. As mentioned in the background section, the books that are represented are; *Just Like A Mama* (Duncan, 2020), *The Proudest Blue* (Muhammad, 2019), *When We Are Kind/Nihá'ádaahwiinít'ígo* (Gray Smith, 2020), *Parker Looks Up* (Curry & Curry, 2019), and *Stella Brings The Family* (Schiffer, 2015). Every reading had a discussion on what we thought the book was about, only looking at the cover, several stops during the reading to talk about what happened, and a small discussion about the books after, talking about what we thought about the books, and what the students enjoyed the most or did not enjoy.

I am going to be using examples from my recordings, however, since the study is anonymous, the names of the students will be changed to a different name, so there will be no way of tracking them down. In the study I have eight different students, however none of the readings had a complete set of students participating

5.1 Teachers Thoughts and Experiences

When I arrived at the research school, my first encounter was with the students' main teacher. We had a conversation about how they use books in the classroom, and when they use them. At this stage, I had not chosen the different books that I used, so the conversations were more loosely based, rather than addressing specific books. As a first-grade teacher, she indicated that literature can be used in most subjects, alone, or interdisciplinarily. When asking her thought process when choosing books in the classroom, she reported that they mostly used the books to help strengthening the classroom dynamic.

Researcher: When choosing books, what are your thought process?
When do you choose the books in the classroom? The ones you read in the classroom? Do you have any specific thoughts when you choose?

Teacher: It depends on which subject I am supposed to use them in, but I usually try to connect them as much as possible to what we are working on. However, it is the first grade and here it's a lot about creating a great class environment. It is important to think about how we can be nice to one another, how to care for each other, and what we say to each other. It is important to find books that are enjoyable for the students, if we don't, we lose. It can be a great pedagogical book, but if the students don't enjoy it, they will not pay attention and you will lose them. [...] It has to be fun!

Further, the engagement of the students came up. Much of my theory is connected to Rudine Sims Bishop's theory about mirrors and windows (1990), so the

conversation steered in the direction of moments in the classroom when students saw a mirror of themselves in what they had read or seen in school.

Teacher: We had a funny situation. We were watching a movie about friendship, and in the movie was a boy who became very sad or very angry. When they saw this boy, student yelled out, "That's how I am!" He had a lot of insight in how he was. He was able to relate and connect to what was happening on the screen.

Further, my expectations to the study were discussed. The conversation extended towards whether she thought my expectations would be met, and her reasoning as to why they would or would not be met.

Researcher: My thoughts with the project is that everyone will be able to see themselves in the books that are being read, or if they learn something about someone else's lives. What do you think? Do you think you would be able to see a change in the students or that they learn something, or do you think they are too young?

Teacher: Children often absorb a lot, but don't always show it directly, but can maybe show it later... not necessarily right there and then.

Researcher: A lot of the books that I am choosing from have black characters as their main characters. I feel like most books have a white main character, and now I want someone else to be represented.

Teacher: What is nice with this school, is that I don't think they think about it. They do not think about the fact that some of them are black and others are white. Being so young, I don't think they are aware of those things. I see this as a strength here, that does not apply to schools that are mainly white. But kids are difficult... they are unpredictable. You never know what they will learn, say or do.

Lastly, we discussed the students that had already signed the papers, and who were joining my read-alouds, and she expressed that it was a good variety of students where some would be quite talkative, while others might not say anything.

5.2 Empathetic Literary Transactions

In this section I will show different experiences where the students are demonstrating their ability to bring their own experiences, and emotions to the literary experiences they had. William DeMeo says that children's literature gives children a safe space to explore concepts, feelings and attitudes to better understand their environment (DeMeo, 2013). My observations support this claim.

In the readings, there were several places the students saw themselves in the books we read. However, they were not in the way I first anticipated. In the book *Just Like A Mama* (appendix 4), Mama Rose is teaching Carol Olivia Clementine how to ride a bike, and the importance of a helmet. Here, the students are invited to take an efferent stance. Noticing the facial expressions of the characters and noticing the importance of wearing a helmet, helps them learn about everyday knowledge. In this particular part,

there were a lot of engagement, which also shows that the book was aesthetically pleasing, as I could read the enjoyment on their faces.

Natalie: She (pointing at mama Rose) is running after, because she (Carol) is cycling soooo faaast!

Elisabeth: Maybe she (mama Rose) is afraid that she (Carol) is going to fall!

Elisabeth is making a gasping noise, trying to sound like the mama Rose, and Natalie copies her.

Ahmed: When they hit a rock when they are going so fast, what if she falls down? There can be blood!

Natalie: it looks like the girl is smiling, while the mom is scared.

Both Elisabeth and Natalie are noticing the different emotions that the characters show, not only telling me about the emotions, but also showing me the expressions and sounds they think mama Rose is making. Further, Ahmed is looking further to what can happen after the scene, perhaps having experienced that scenario himself, or having seen someone else do it. At this moment we adopt an efferent stance and discuss the importance of wearing a helmet.

Natalie: I have seen someone that did not wear a helmet, and they had to go off the bike right away!

Later in the book, there is a section about the fact that even though mama Rose is not Carol's "real" mother, she still acts like it₇ by having rules such as not being allowed to get dessert before eating her vegetables. This was something that prompted a big discussion, as many of the students had the same rules at home, and they gave explanations to how it worked at their homes.

Ahmed: That's what my mom said to me too! When I did not eat my food! When I did not eat my vegetables... When I did not finish my food, I did not get any cake, but after I finished all my food, then my stomach was full!

Natalie: My mom says that if I do not finish my food, I will not get the muffin that we have baked. I do not like vegetables, but when feast my mom made it and put it on my plate₇ and we had mashed potatoes and sausages too, I asked if I could eat two sausages and a whole spoon of mashed potatoes, and then she said "Okey," and then I got muffins afterwards!

After the books ended, we discussed the book, and the feelings and emotions that students experienced during the read-aloud. Mathilda had noticed that the girl seemed upset since she was not able to be with her parents. Here, she saw through a window into someone else's world, and read her emotions, feeling empathy for the girl.

In *The Proudest Blue*, Faizah asks her big sister if she is excited about her first day wearing a hijab at school. Asiya expressed that she indeed was quite excited for it.

As my students had recently started school, they recognised the emotions that Asiya felt.

Elisabeth: I thought it was a little bit scary and exciting when I started school

Lina is nodding excitedly, indicating that she was also excited about starting school.

In several places in the book, Asiya is bullied about her hijab. At those points in the book, the students had an efferent stance, learning and thinking about the repercussions different actions have.

Researcher: Why do you think the boy pointed and laughed at Asiya?

Elisabeth: Because she is wearing a hijab?

Researcher: Yes, do you think that is a nice thing to do?

Everyone: Noooo

Researcher: How would you have felt if someone pointed and laughed at you?

Natalie: I would have been sad.

Elisabeth: Sad and angry.... And upset! If that happens, you have to tell someone.

At one point in the book, a boy yells to Asiya "I'm going to pull that tablecloth off your head!" (Muhammad, 2019). The students reacted strongly to this narrative event.

Researcher: What does he mean when he is saying that?

Elisabeth: That he is going to tear the hijab off her head.

Researcher: That is correct... What do you think of that?

Elisabeth: That is not a nice thing to do!

Everyone agrees.

The discussion continued in an efferent direction, about what one should say and do when someone is saying bad words to you or giving you a hard time. Some of the students shared advice they have gotten from their parents, showing that this is something they most likely have had some experience with.

Natalie: Daddy says that if anyone says anything stupid to you, then you just tell them that you do not care, and then you tell them to leave.

When the book was finished, they learned that the book was based on the childhood of the author, and we saw a picture of her. The students all agreed that she was very pretty with her hijab, and that they had someone in the classroom that had used a hijab on some occasions at school, and that they thought it was really pretty.

These were only a few examples of how the students participated in empathetic transactions in the read-alouds. They all found some similarities towards their own life in most of the books, and most had empathetic feelings towards the characters in the books.

5.3 Efferent and Aesthetic Engagement with Read-Alouds

While reading, the students often showed an artistic appreciation of the books. There were several times the students pointed at the pictures and engaged in the colours and drawings. This was especially obvious in the book *Parker Looks Up*. The book is quite aesthetically pleasing, with beautiful colours and drawings. While reading, it looked like there was sparkle in the eyes of the students, and there were several comments on the beautiful drawings. *Parker Looks Up* was the first book I read to the students, and there was not a lot of discussion around it, other than the beauty of it. There were a lot of bright colours, which Maybin and Watson explain often represents exhilaration and discoveries (2009, p. 319). In the book, Parker, a young Black girl, looks up at a picture of Michelle Obama, and reflects on the success and achievements of an incredible Black woman. In hindsight, I think that if I should have used this book in a more efferent way, it would have been better in America, as the students did not know who she was. However, the students loved the art in the book making it a successful book at the end.

The child participants in this study were extremely interested in the visual components of the picturebooks. This was obvious during the readings. In most of the pauses, I asked the students what they saw, and the first responses were usually descriptions of the picture. Explaining and describing the colours, characters, and the environment in the books.

Elisabeth: The people are singing, because their mouths are open!

Researcher: What are we thinking when we see the first picture?

Lina: A girl with blue hair that is really water?

Natalie: And the girl is sitting in a boat

Elisabeth: that is sailing out to the sea

Ahmed: There is a strawberry on the page! And, and a cake!

Picturebooks invite an aesthetic stance that encourages the students to engage in an aesthetic posture. There are several different ways to show that you enjoy a book, without using words. Most of the students had their eyes glued to the screen where the book was most of the readings. Their facial expressions showed me that they did enjoy the readings. The efferent stance in the books were not as concrete as I thought they would be before starting the reading sessions; however, the students did manage to read

the pictures to gather information and learning how most of everyday life works outside of school.

5.4 Pleasurable Literary Transactions

During the duration of the fieldwork, I was working as a substitute teacher at the same school, often in the same classroom where my read-alouds were being executed. On these days, I did not have sessions planned, due to the fact that I was working. However, on multiple occasions, many of the students that were in my group asked, "Can we go into the other room and read today?" The readings became something that they looked forward to during the week. If there was not a reading during the week⁷ due to conflicts in the schedule or just because too many of the students were home sick, the remaining students were upset. Students who were not attending the readings came to me, came to sit on my lap and begged to join. This happened after every reading, but also when I was substituting the class and even if they saw me substituting another class. My readings had such a big impact on the student's week, that they looked forward to them and longed for them. Teachers from other grades came to me to tell me that my first-grade students had talked to them about the readings, and how much they enjoyed them.

Rosenblatt states that when reading aesthetically, the reader adopts an attitude that focuses on living through the reading's sensations, feelings and images (Rosenblatt, 1988). "Aesthetic reading, by its very nature, has an intrinsic purpose, the desire to have a pleasurable, interesting experience for its own sake" (Rosenblatt, 1988, p. 275). She further states that it is important to have aesthetic readings, and to just read for fun, rather than just efferent readings, which schools often highly prefer. Even though Rosenblatt is speaking more than 30 years ago about schools in the U.S, it can to some extent be transferred to the Norwegian classrooms today. No matter how much you intend for a reading to have a fully efferent or aesthetic stance, it depends on the one listening.

5.5 Developmentally Appropriate Attention Challenges

When students bring developmentally appropriate behaviours to class, we often look them as obstacles to overcome, rather than as resources to support learning. A common thread throughout all readings was the students' inability to sit still. There was always movement; either it was stomping or moving their feet, finding a chair that was not stable⁷ and wobbling on it or finding something to fidget with in their hands. While some of the student's moved more than others, there was always movement in the rows where they were sitting. Some excerpts from my notes read:

- James is moving his arm together in a "fistbump" with himself. Mathias is sitting next to him, watching while tilting on his chair.
- Elisabeth has a chair where one leg is shorter than the others, she is tilting back and forth.
- Lina is twisting her tongue under her upper lip.
- Mathilda has her knees on the seat of the chair, swinging back and forth with her feet, her hands are on the desk in front of her.
- Natalie copies Mathilda, and they are both sitting with the knees on the chair, swinging back and forth.
- Ahmed is lying on the desk behind his classmates, supporting his head in his hands.

- Both Sander and Mathias are moving their feet back and forth, under the table.
- Tatiana is gliding back and forth on the desk in front of her, always looking at the screen.
- While paying attention, Birger is chewing on his thumbs.
- The door opens to the room, and everyone is looking in the direction of the door. Wondering who opened it.

In all of these cases, students are participating in developmentally appropriate behaviour. Since the lower and upper part of the brain is yet to connect properly, the students are more likely to follow the lower brain, where impulses such as the once described above are developed (Siegel & Brysin, 2011).

As every child is an individual, who develops at their own speed, there are two of the children that had the hardest time sitting still. James has a medical diagnosis which relates to difficulty sitting still, not only in my reading sessions (which he only participated in the first two times), but also in the classroom in general. Below are some of the field notes I took about his movements:

- James' chair has one leg that is shorter than the others. He is now tilting back and forth on the different legs.
- James stands up for half a second, then he sits down again, a lot closer to Mathias this time.
- James slaps himself on top of his head, before raising his hand to answer my question.
- Another student is late for school and comes into the room. This is very disruptive for James.
- James stands up and is standing behind his chair.

All of the different examples I have of James are from a time period of four minutes during one session, and even though he was moving more than most of the other students, he did raise his hand, join the discussions, and have opinions about the book. After the first lessons, I was also a substitute teacher in the classroom, and in my reading sessions with fewer students, are the most I have seen him participate in class.

The smallest in the group, Tatiana, was the one of the students that were at most reading sessions, and she had the hardest time sitting still. In one of the reading sessions, she danced the whole time while sitting on her chair. There were hand movements, stomping her feet to a rhythm and then some more hand movements. During another reading lesson, she had a necklace with her that she took on and off at several occasions, switching between playing with it on the desk, and having it around her neck. I noted,

- Tatiana is dancing with her hands and body while sitting in her chair. The movements are getting bigger after a while
- She stopped dancing, but is now tapping her feet in a distinct rhythm.
- Tatiana lets everyone know that there is someone in the hallway.
- Tatiana does a little shimmy, shaking her body fast
- She takes her necklace on and off, and plays with it on the desk, moving it back and forth before putting it on again. This is something that is done several times throughout the session.

In every reading, she was either laying with most of her body on top of the desk or looking for something under it. If there was a movement from different parts of the classroom, she had to look at it, and when some discussions went a little further than her concentration span allowed, she started playing with other students. As DeMeo suggests, some students need to wiggle to concentrate, and even use fidgets to calm themselves, having a place to re-route their energy (DeMeo, 2013). Before my reading sessions started, the teacher warned me that she likes to make herself "smaller" and often answers with "I don't know". This is something that I did not notice, however, when she did talk, she often referred more to the colours and the pictures in the book, rather than the theme or the discussion that was going on. I think there might be a correlation between the movement levels and the basic levels of her discussions, as she might not be as developed in her upper part of the brain as some of the other students in the group.

Sometimes during the sessions, I had to ask the person that was wiggling on their chair or stomping their feet to stop, as they kept going for a while. Many of the students also made faces, and often had their face inside their arms, while leaning forward with their elbows on the desk. Sometimes, the students had fingers inside their mouth, or just played with their hair. The students rarely took their eyes off the screen, even though they had many movements. They also often shifted positions, sometimes sitting on their knees on the chair, or having one foot under or over the other knee. Some also would sit straight, but let their feet dangle, swinging back and forth.

During the reading sessions, there often came distractions in forms of other students being late for school, and going to wash their hands behind us, and teachers or other students opening the door to our classroom. When these types of distraction came across a reading, most of the students paid more attention to what was going on around them, rather than what I was reading and talking about. Giving that the students are only six years old, everything going on around them is often distracting.

6 Discussion

Before going into my fieldwork, I had some idea of what I was going into, however, in my head the experience was quite different than what I experienced. Before my first read-aloud, I had this idea that the participants would have big discussions, and notice that Parker in *Parker Looks Up* (Curry & Curry, 2019), was black. I hoped that they saw themselves in the book, and that we could discuss it vigorously. What I ended up with was small *yes* and *no*'s when I asked questions, and some of them saying that they enjoyed the pictures. In a last attempt, I asked if they saw something from their own lives in the book, and I got the answer, "No..." I felt defeated after the first reading. I had no clue as to what I could write about in this thesis if that was what all my readings would become. However, I changed my thoughts, and listened to the students, and learned that they did see themselves in the books, they enjoyed each reading, and we had some discussions after the other books. Even though I did not get what I originally wanted out of the readings, I did learn a lot about the value of aesthetic and efferent readings, both together and combined. I saw the students learn about how everyday life works, and even if they did not notice some of what they learned, I believe, that being exposed to culturally diverse literature, can help them better their perspective on the world.

6.1 Subverting Expectations of Efferent Readings

Going into this study, my expectations were in a completely different direction than what I found. I wanted and hoped that the students would engage with the political implications of the texts, but that was not the case. At the beginning, I hoped that the students would notice that the books represented to them contained a wide range of cultural diversity and was disappointed at the beginning when they did not notice. Looking more closely at my data collection, I found that the students did engage efferently by connecting the stories with their own lives and finding mirrors in the general human experience. In *When We are Kind/ Nihá'ádaahwiinít'igo* (Gray Smith, 2020), the students recognized themselves being kind when helping their parents with chores. In *Just Like A Mama* (Duncan, 2020), they too had to eat their vegetables before being allowed to eat dessert, and in *The Proudest Blue* (Muhammad, 2019), they had also been excited and nervous when going to school. Even though I wanted the students to notice the different colours, there were never a mention of the sort. They were used to a diverse everyday life, and for them, that was the norm.

During the fieldwork, I noticed that the students primarily engaged aesthetically with the texts, enjoying pictures and appreciating the stories artistically. They looked forward to the reading sessions and their eyes were mostly glued to the screen. Their engagement towards the readings did not only begin and end in my questionings, but continued with fingers pointing at beautiful pictures and enjoyable screams over the fact that there was cake on the page. As mentioned earlier, the students often came to me when I was a substitute teacher, asking if we were able to have a reading. Other students in the first-grade stated that it was unfair, and that they too wanted to read with me, which give me an idea that the students who did participate talked to their classmates about the readings, making them wanting to join.

6.2 The Efferent Stance in the Classroom

When having an efferent stance, it indicates that the learner is directing their attention towards the information that can be retained after the reading is finished. Efferent stance is therefore often used in the classroom. There are many workbooks in school who has those types of assignment, were they have to read a text, and answer questions to the text afterwards. These types of assignment are well suited for content-based learning. Other ways to use efferent stance in the classroom is to get the students to read and listen to informational texts, and create and share reports or project where you describe what you have learned. Rosenblatt meant that schools often have too much focus on the efferent stance, which can harm the teaching methods. I do see her point of view, as it can be quite tedious if all we want to do is find information, and analyse what different texts mean, rather than to have fun with the text that are being read or produced. Only looking at the information in texts are an important thing to learn, but there should be a balance.

6.3 The Aesthetic Stance in the Classroom

When reading aesthetically, you read for pleasure. Rosenblatt states that aesthetic reading has the reader acknowledging the relationships in the texts (Rosenblatt L. M., 1982). Having fun with the books and texts one is reading is important to wanting to continue reading. If every text and book that is being read in the classrooms are "boring" and only theoretical, the students could lose or never gain a love for reading. Finding literature that encourage you to read more opens up different worlds and nourishes the whole person.

In the Norwegian classroom, aesthetic readings often occur during the student's lunch breaks. The teacher uses those readings as a tool, making the students sit quietly and pay attention. The often call these times "educational breaks", giving the students some time to turn their brains off (Håland, Hoem, & McTigue, 2020). The teacher I interviewed had worked as a teacher for many years and said that she too, used books at lunch time, to let the students relax while they ate. Although this is a fine way to conduct lunch time, there should also be aesthetic read-alouds where the teacher invites the students to engage in the texts. Having more engaging read-alouds can help develop literacy skills (Håland, Hoem, & McTigue, 2020).

Even though it is the reader who defines what type of stance they are reading, there are some texts that highly lean towards one or the other. In the classroom, as a teacher, I think it is important to try to find texts, books, or assignments that has a mixture of both, making the texts fun and knowledgeable. This can help the students have more motivation to read, write or finish assignments. I chose my books, hoping that the students would have an efferent stance towards the cultural diversity, however, the participants did not notice. They themselves have a classroom that are quite diverse in terms of race and religion. In the sense of *Stella Brings the Family* (Schiffer, 2015), the students did not know anyone with two dads, but did not think more of it. Instead of having the efferent stance towards culturally diversity as I hoped for, they had more of an aesthetic stance, enjoying the read-aloud sessions, and wanting more of them. Every time they saw me, they asked when we would read together again, giving me the thoughts that fun read-alouds where the students can interact is not executed enough in the classroom.

6.4 Suggestions for Application of Findings

As all of the students followed their developmentally appropriate attention, I would suggest to make the movement a part of the readings going forward. Getting the students to be more involved with the books might get them to concentrate even more than they did during my readings. For some of the books, there could have been drama activities, or even different movements that were appropriate in the books. In *Just Like A Mama* (Duncan, 2020), there were several scenarios that could have been acted out by different students. One could have been mama Rose, yelling at Carol for not eating her vegetables, or the two when they are riding a bike, mama Rose terrified, while Carol is laughing and having fun. For *When We are Kind/ Nihá'ádaahwiinít'íigo* (Gray Smith, 2020) we could come up with our own things we do when we are kind. In *The Proudest Blue* (Muhammad, 2019), Faizah counts her step across the street, and do cart wheels, here there could be a possibility to also do thirteen steps all together, or ask if someone else can do a cartwheel, and if they wanted to show the rest of the group. Being allowed to move during the reading sessions, or even participating more in the books in general, I think that I might have gotten whole new data's, maybe with more engagement in the discussions.

I believe that one of my biggest mistakes during the read-alouds was my lack of expression when reading. If I had been more present in my readings, and not as nervous about getting information out of the students, I think it could have gone differently. If I had moved around while reading and adjusted my voices after which character that was speaking, the students might have been more involved too. Since I had the books on my computer, and I was video recording the students, I was sitting still at my desk while reading, and not bringing enough energy to the readings. I think there is a strong possibility that if I had given myself more thought, instead of being so focused on what I needed to find in the student's movements and answers, the conversation and discussions might have become more natural, and the students themselves would be more engaged.

During my fieldwork, I wanted my students see the culturally diverse variety of books I choose to use, and comment on it. Even though that did not go as I planned, I would use the same books to have a guided discussion about the different topics. Here, we could have a conversation about the different topics in mind, whether it was colour, religion, sexual orientation, disabilities, or other marginalized groups. I believe that if there is a steady current with books that shows how the world truly looks, in all its colours, sexualities and disabilities, it becomes a normality, and seeing someone different then ourselves might not be so intriguing that children do not feel the need to stare and point as I have seen many children do to something they have not seen before. It gives the students a possibility to either see themselves in a mirror, that is not always stereotypical, or see through a window, seeing that even though we are a little different, we are still worth the same.

Doing these readings at a more regular basis, gives the students time to enjoy the readings, learn about other cultures and groups, as well as ask questions in a safe environment. Some of the readings can be guided in a more aesthetic direction and other more in the efferent. I do think that a completely aesthetic or efferent reading, especially when using culturally diverse picturebooks like I did during the fieldwork, is close to impossible. Reading a book that only has an aesthetic stance is hard, since there is

always some efferent stance to it, whether you learn manners, grammar, how sentences are built, learning about facial expressions, or by just having characters that you are not used to in the books you normally read. I also sincerely doubt that you can find a picturebook that is meant for children that only has an efferent stance, as they usually have fun wordings, bright colours and beautiful pictures. As the Teacher said during our interview, the read-alouds should be fun, otherwise you will lose the students attention.

7 Conclusion

Seeing as this is a case study, the transactional nature of the literary experience means that the specific reaction of my participants cannot be generalized to a larger population. The study was as mentioned, at a recipient school and the participants came from a racially diverse classroom, however there were only three of the participants that fitted that profile, where one had one parents were second generation from a European country. As none of my participants where Black, had family that was a member of the LGBTQ, lived in foster homes or were Muslims, I did not have the same mirror as I wanted before starting my fieldwork. However, since the participants did attend a quite diverse classroom, they did not notice the diversity in the books. My findings could have been completely different if I had conducted my research at a school, that did not have a diverse classroom, if I had a participant that had a familiar connection to any of the topics, or if I had the same group, only a little older. Since the students are only in the first grade, there is a possibility that they have not read as many books yet, and not seen the lack of diversity that we often see in books, and the participants would also be more acquainted with discussions as they have been going to school longer than 100 days. Every child is an individual with their own thoughts, emotions and movements, so even if I had nine different participants from the same class, my findings could still be different. Even though there might be other results if I would have conducted the study elsewhere, the principles may be relevant in other contexts.

Culturally diverse texts are a valuable resource in classrooms, regardless of whether students approach them from an efferent or aesthetic stance. By making culturally diverse literature a frequent flyer in the classroom, it normalizes the celebration and representation of diverse people's perspective. Making it a frequent part of the classroom, shows the students that there are a lot of diversity in the world, yet, we are still the same. Continuously, it gives the students a safe space to ask questions and explore the differences that enrich our communities. Normalizing the differences through books and other literature, can help the students learn, that even though we are different, we are still worth the same. Even though we can use the books to help teach us about the society, reading culturally diverse literature from an aesthetic stance is also valuable because it encourages students to associate difference with pleasure and enjoyment.

Continuously, these texts can be used to their best advantage if teachers use them in an engaging way, activating the whole brain and allowing for enthusiastic participation from the listeners. It is developmentally appropriate for the students to move, so allowing them to do so, might make them concentrate more. Dramatizing some of the scenes in the book, allows the students to interfere more, giving them opportunities to be more involved and visualize the emotions, conflicts and activities that unfold on the page. The books can also be useful to be a guidance of the different topics that are being targeted. In *The Brightest Blue* (Muhammad, 2019), Asiya has her first day wearing a hijab at school, and there are some boys who bullies her for it. After reading the book, we had conversations about bullying, and how and what the students would have done, had it been them. They themselves had a classmate that had used a

hijab at school, and so the discussion could be directed as to how to behave and how not to.

Even though I did not get the reactions I wanted during my read-alouds, I did learn a lot. Students at all ages should have a balance of efferent and aesthetic stance in their readings and writings. Being able to associate readings with pleasure and enjoyment, benefits in all learning, and can help develop vocabulary and literacy skills (Håland, Hoem, & McTigue, 2020). Culturally diverse literature can help students see themselves mirrored in the literature, as well as looking through a window in how other live their lives. In the lower grades, culturally diverse picturebooks can help the students normalize diversity, and get a better picture of how the world is. culturally diverse picturebooks can help the students normalize diversity, and get a better picture of how the world is. Allowing the students to be more interactive in the literary world, gives them opportunities to learn, ask questions and be more connected to the books. Using more literature in the classroom, whether it is through read-alouds or allowing the students to choose more books that confirm their aesthetic stance, can benefit the whole learning environment.

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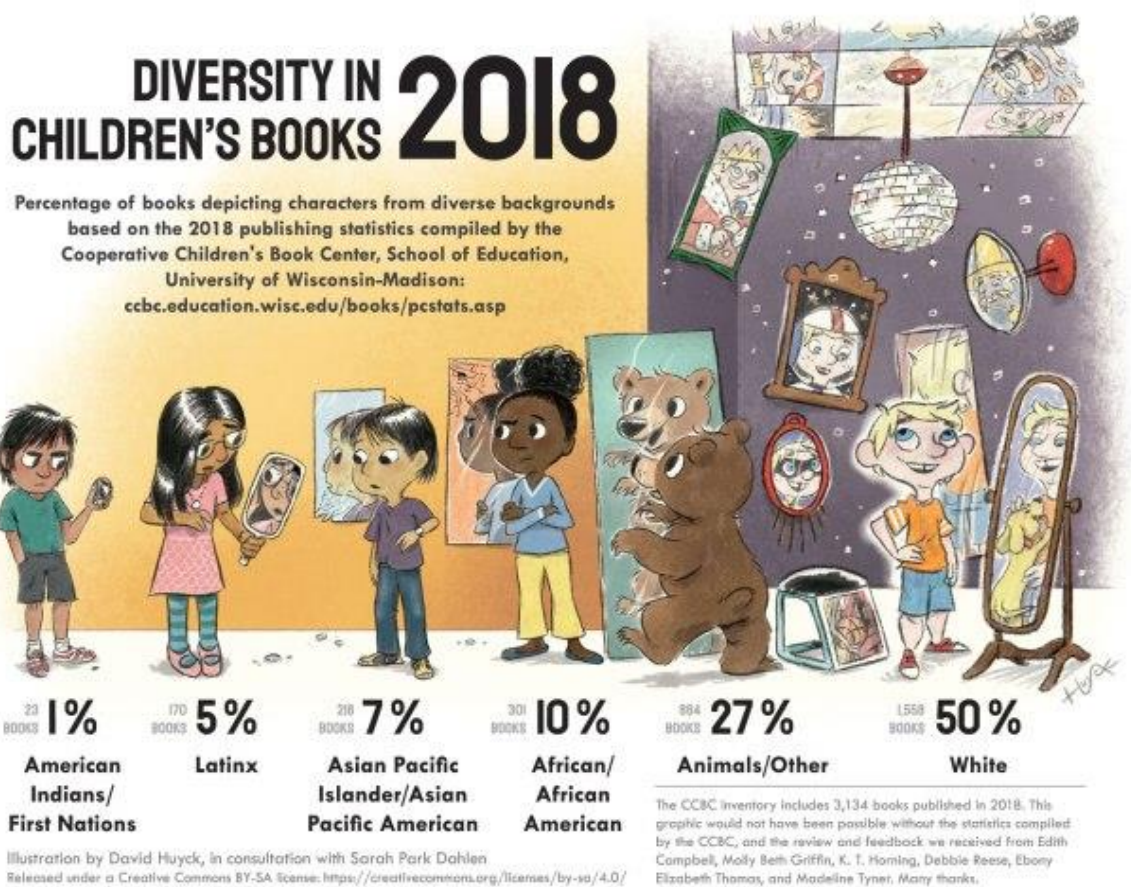
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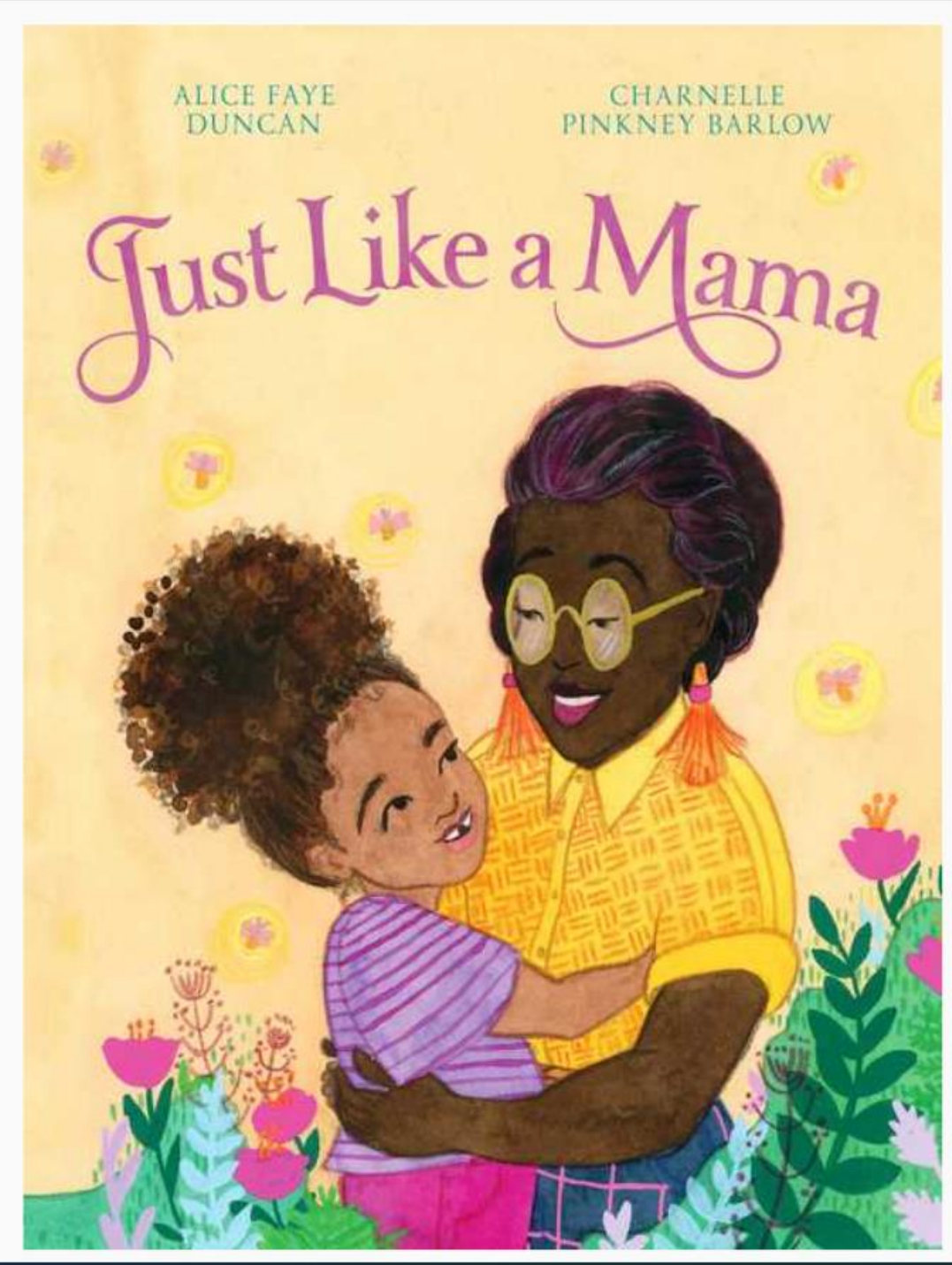
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9 Appendixes

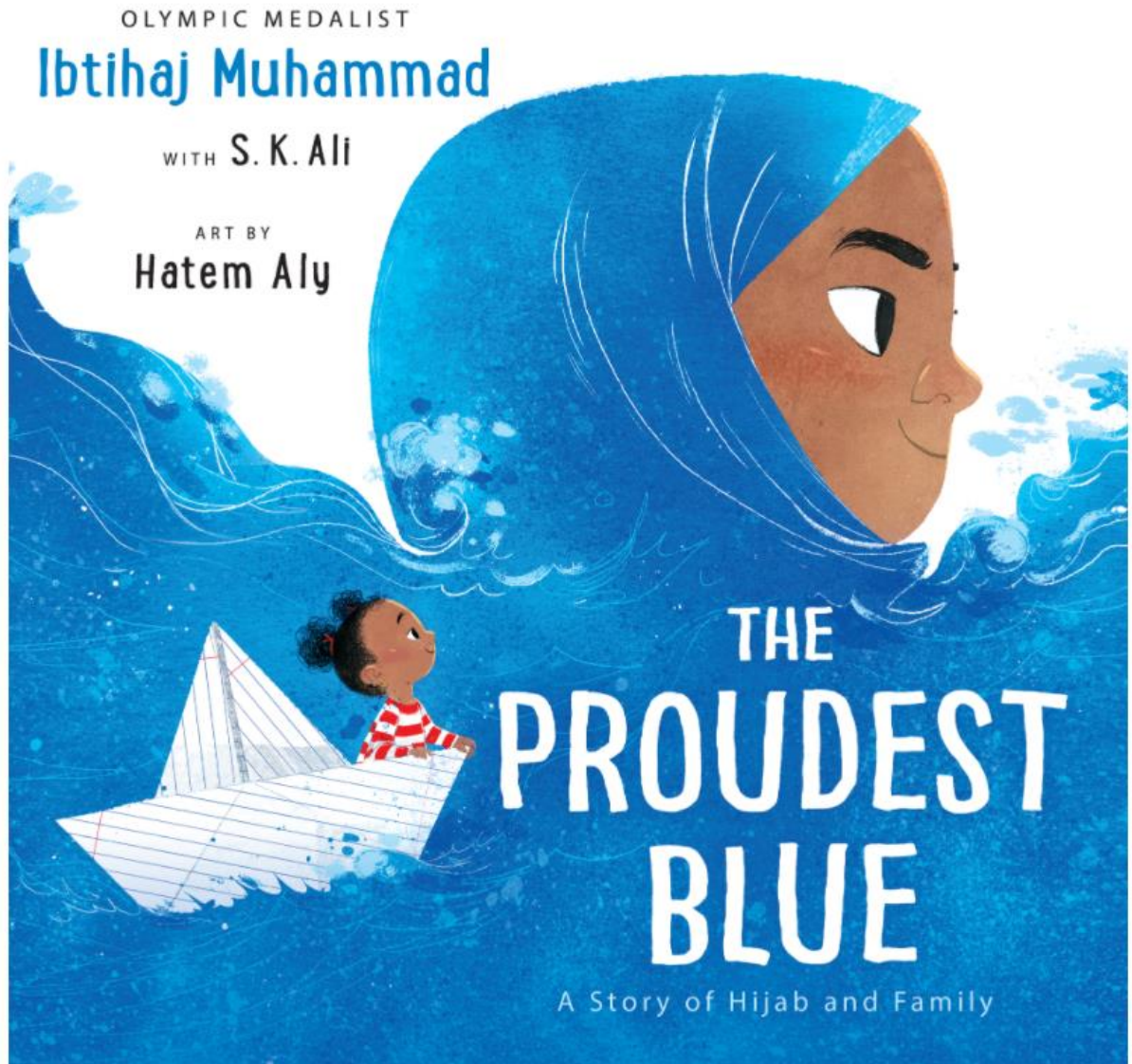
Appendix 1



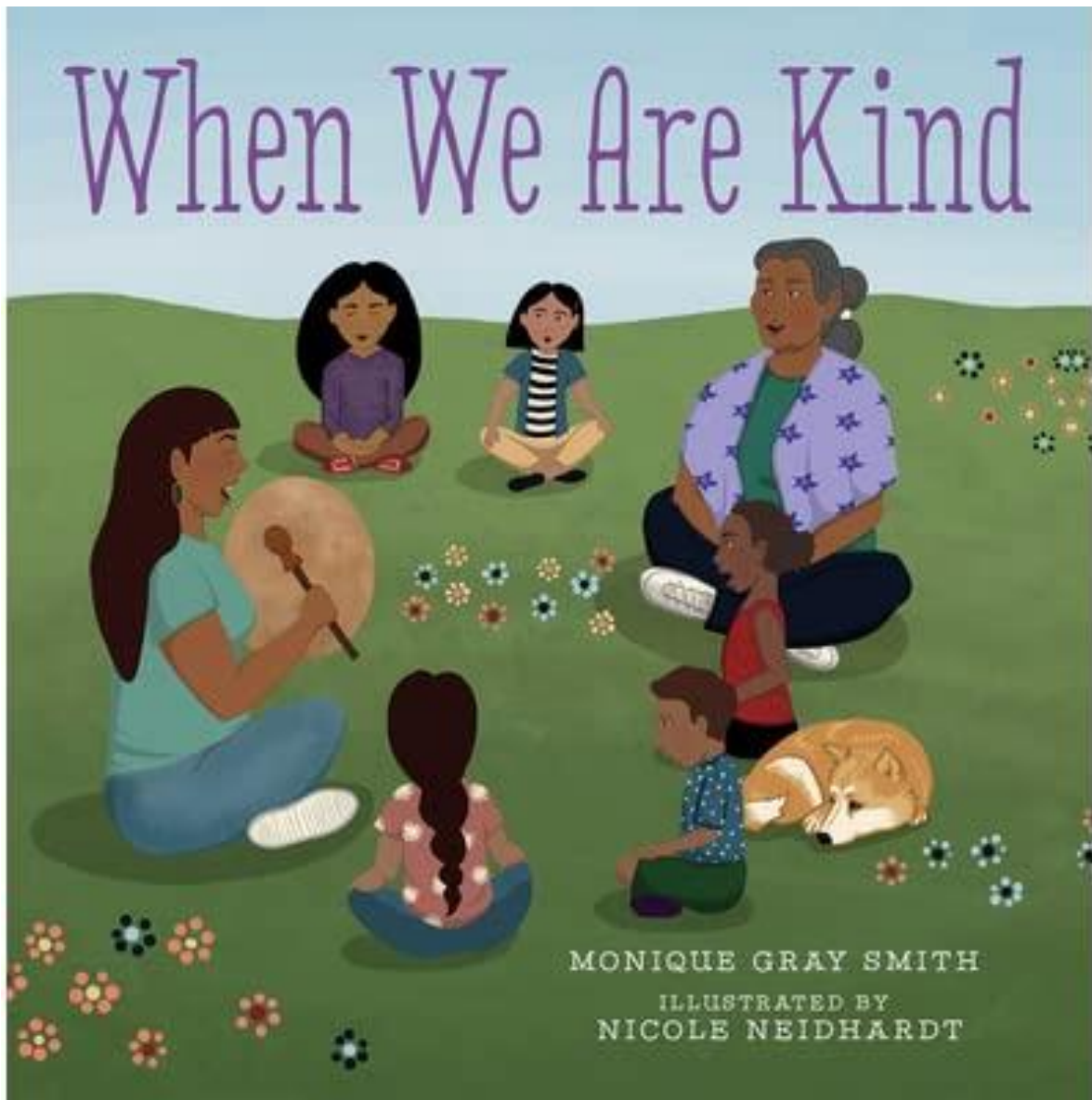
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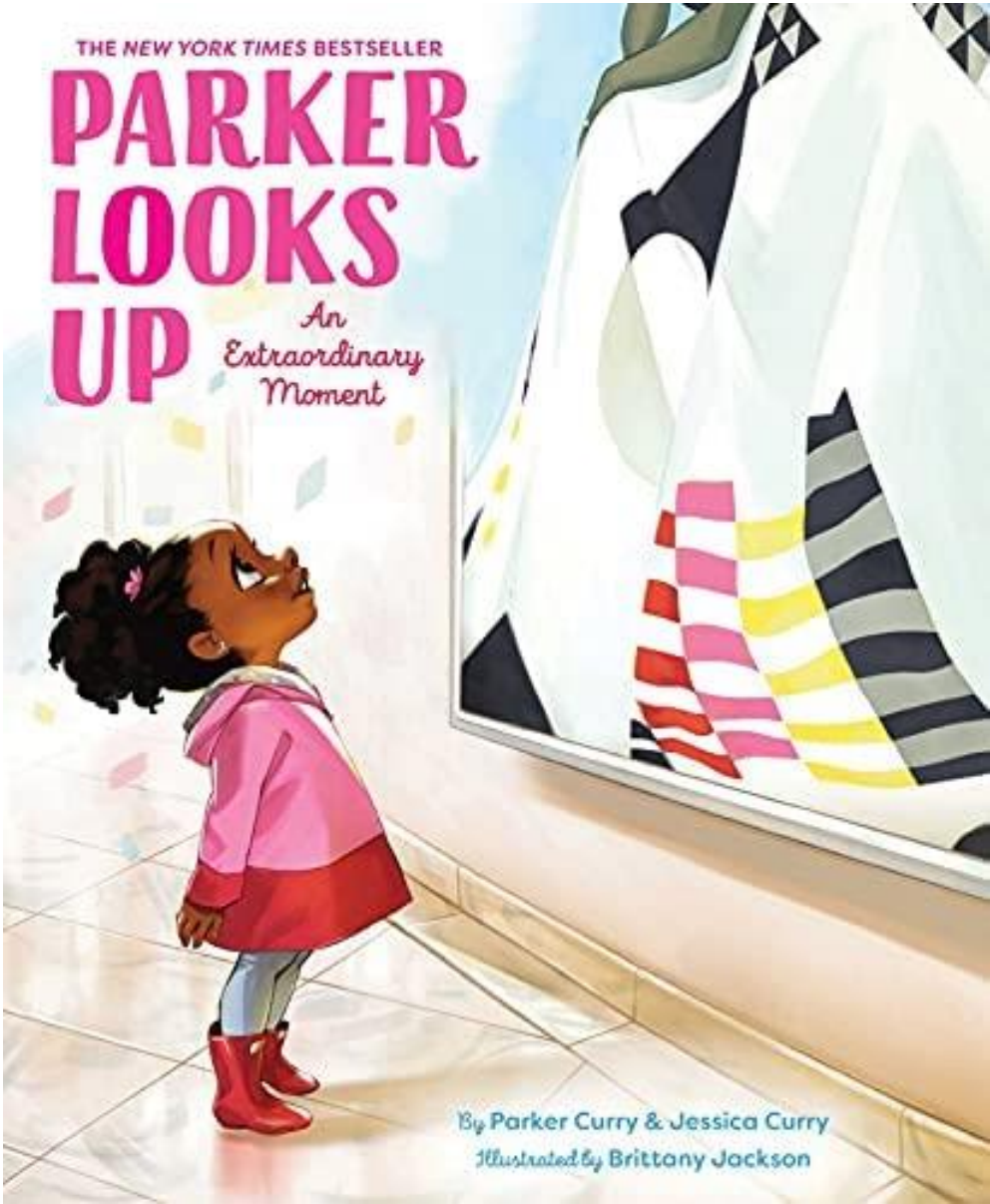
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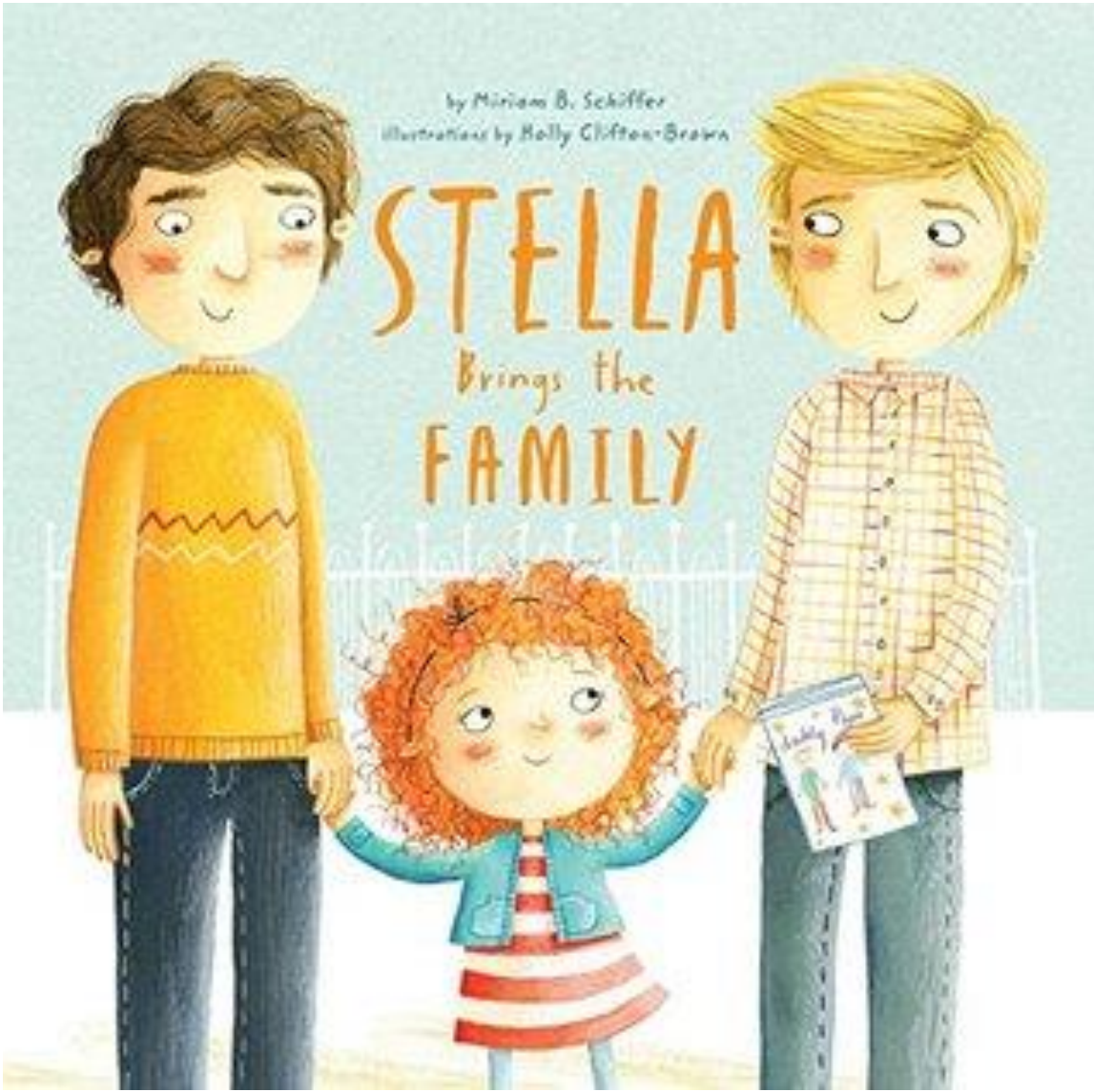
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Appendix 5



Appendix 6



Appendix 7

Vil du delta i forskningsprosjektet

Bruken av multikulturelle bildebøker på barneskolen

Dette er et spørsmål til deg om å delta i et forskningsprosjekt hvor formålet er å se hvordan barn reagerer på multikulturelle bildebøker.

. I dette skrevet gir vi deg informasjon om målene for prosjektet og hva deltakelse vil innebære for deg.

Formål

For denne master oppgaven vil jeg jobbe i ditt barns klasserom. Jeg vil gi deg et stort bibliotek med multikulturelle engelske bildebøker. Jeg vil besøke klasserommet 2-3 ganger i uken i litt over en måned og jobbe ved siden av deg, med å hjelpe til med å planlegge timer hvor bøkene blir brukt. Jeg vil også observere klassens reaksjoner på opplesning av bøkene i seg selv, ved hjelp av opptak og film. Jeg vil også ha ett gruppe intervju med noen av barna hvor vi diskuterer bøkene. Diskusjonene vil bli transkribert og kodet gjennom data analysen. Etter jeg har samlet inn, transkribert, og kodet mine observasjoner og intervjuene, vil jeg bruke et kode system til å identifisere mønstre, for å se om det er noen teorier i bruk av mangfold i høyt-lesing i det norske klasserom.

Hvem er ansvarlig for forskningsprosjektet?

NTNU er ansvarlig for prosjektet.

Hvorfor får du spørsmål om å delta?

Klassen din har ett rikt mangfold i klassen, og det er riktig alder i forhold til innholdet i bøkene.

Hva innebærer det for deg å delta?

Hvis du velger å delta, vil du bli intervjuet av meg, om valg av bøker du har valgt, og hvorfor du har valgt dem, samt at vi lager en time sammen hvor bøkene da blir brukt i klasserommet. Om du selv ikke vil ha høytlesingen, tar jeg den delen. Intervjuet vil ikke vare lenger enn 1 time, og all informasjon vil bli transkribert, og kodet så du ikke er gjenkjennelig. Jeg kommer til å ta lydopptak og notater gjennom intervjuet. I klasserommet vil jeg bruke rundt 30 minutter. Dette gjelder høytlesing, og intervju med noen av dine elever.

Det er frivillig å delta

Det er frivillig å delta i prosjektet. Hvis du velger å delta, kan du når som helst trekke samtykket tilbake uten å oppgi noen grunn. Alle dine personopplysninger vil da bli slettet. Det vil ikke ha noen negative konsekvenser for deg hvis du ikke vil delta eller senere velger å trekke deg.

Om ditt barn ikke deltar, vil det ikke gå utover undervisningen, og barnet ditt vil ha et alternativt opplegg i undervisningen.

Ditt personvern – hvordan vi oppbevarer og bruker dine opplysninger

Vi vil bare bruke opplysningene om deg til formålene vi har fortalt om i dette skrevet. Vi behandler opplysningene konfidensielt og i samsvar med personvernregelverket.

Det er kun jeg og min veileder, Alyssa Lowery ved NTNU som vil ha tilgang til opplysningene.

All personopplysningene vil bli erstattet med koder som lagres på egen navneliste adskilt fra øvrige data.

Deltakerne vil ikke kunne gjenkjennes i publisering.

Hva skjer med opplysningene dine når vi avslutter forskningsprosjektet?

Opplysningene anonymiseres når prosjektet avsluttes/oppgaven er godkjent, noe som etter planen er 25 mai, 2021. Etter endt prosjekt vil all data bli slettet.

Dine rettigheter

Så lenge du kan identifiseres i datamaterialet, har du rett til:

innsyn i hvilke personopplysninger som er registrert om deg, og å få utlevert en kopi av opplysningene,

å få rettet personopplysninger om deg,

å få slettet personopplysninger om deg, og

å sende klage til Datatilsynet om behandlingen av dine personopplysninger.

Hva gir oss rett til å behandle personopplysninger om deg?

Vi behandler opplysninger om deg basert på ditt samtykke.

På oppdrag fra NTNU har NSD – Norsk senter for forskningsdata AS vurdert at behandlingen av personopplysninger i dette prosjektet er i samsvar med personvernregelverket.

Hvor kan jeg finne ut mer?

Hvis du har spørsmål til studien, eller ønsker å benytte deg av dine rettigheter, ta kontakt med:

NTNU ved Alyssa Lowery. Hennes email er alyssa.lowery@ntnu.no

Vårt personvernombud: Thomas Helgesen – thomas.helgesen@ntnu.no

Hvis du har spørsmål knyttet til NSD sin vurdering av prosjektet, kan du ta kontakt med:

NSD – Norsk senter for forskningsdata AS på epost (personverntjenester@nsd.no) eller på telefon: 55 58 21 17.

Med vennlig hilsen

Ida Poiesz & Alyssa Lowery (veileder)

(Forsker/veileder)

Samtykkeerklæring

Jeg har mottatt og forstått informasjon om prosjektet Bruken av multikulturelle bildebøker på barneskolen, og har fått anledning til å stille spørsmål. Jeg samtykker til:

å delta i intervju og planlegge timer sammen

Jeg samtykker til at mine opplysninger behandles frem til prosjektet er avsluttet

(Signert av prosjektdeltaker, dato)

Appendix 8

Vil du delta i forskningsprosjektet

Bruken av multikulturelle bildebøker på barneskolen

Dette er et spørsmål til deg om å delta i et forskningsprosjekt hvor formålet er å se hvordan barn reagerer på multikulturelle bildebøker.

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.

Hvem er ansvarlig for forskningsprosjektet?

NTNU er ansvarlig for prosjektet.

Hvorfor får du spørsmål om å delta?

Klassen til ditt barn har fått spørsmål om å delta siden dere har ett rikt mangfold i klassen, og det er riktig alder i forhold til innholdet i bøkene.

Hva innebærer det for deg å delta?

Hvis du velger å la barnet ditt delta, vil barnet vil bli filmet gjennom høytlesing av bildebøker, og noen vil bli intervjuet i en gruppe i klasserommet, som en del av undervisningen. Intervjuet vil ikke vare lenger enn 20 minutter, og all informasjon vil bli transkribert, og kodet så ingen er gjenkjennelig. Jeg kommer til å ta lydopptak og notater gjennom intervjuene, og filme selve høytlesingen.

Om Barnet ditt deltar, og du vil se et intervju guide på forhånd, ta kontakt.

Det er frivillig å delta

Det er frivillig å delta i prosjektet. Hvis du velger å delta, kan du når som helst trekke samtykket tilbake uten å oppgi noen grunn. Alle dine personopplysninger vil da bli slettet. Det vil ikke ha noen negative konsekvenser for deg hvis du ikke vil delta eller senere velger å trekke deg.

Om ditt barn ikke deltar, vil det ikke gå utover undervisningen, og barnet ditt vil ha et alternativt opplegg i undervisningen.

Ditt personvern – hvordan vi oppbevarer og bruker dine opplysninger

Vi vil bare bruke opplysningene om deg til formålene vi har fortalt om i dette skrevet. Vi behandler opplysningene konfidensielt og i samsvar med personvernregelverket.

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All personopplysningene vil bli erstattet med koder som lagres på egen navneliste adskilt fra øvrige data.

Deltakerne vil ikke kunne gjenkjennes i publikasjon.

Hva skjer med opplysningene dine når vi avslutter forskningsprosjektet?

Opplysningene anonymiseres når prosjektet avsluttes/oppgaven er godkjent, noe som etter planen er 25 mai, 2021. Etter endt prosjekt vil all data bli slettet.

Dine rettigheter

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Hvor kan jeg finne ut mer?

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Med vennlig hilsen

Ida Poiesz & Alyssa Lowery (veileder)

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Samtykkeerklæring

Jeg har mottatt og forstått informasjon om prosjektet Bruken av multikulturelle bildebøker på barneskolen, og har fått anledning til å stille spørsmål. Jeg samtykker til:

å delta i gruppe intervju

å delta i video mens lærer har høytlesning.

Jeg samtykker til at mine opplysninger behandles frem til prosjektet er avsluttet

(Signert av prosjektdeltaker, dato)

