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Scrutinizing and Supplementing Children's Trade Books about Child Labor

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State and national initiatives place an increased emphasis on both students' exposure to diverse texts and teachers' integration of English/language arts and history/social studies. The intent is for students to critically examine diverse accounts and perspectives of the same historical event or era. Critical examination can be accomplished through teachers' purposeful juxtaposition of age-appropriate, engaging trade books and relevant informational texts, such as primary source materials. To guide interested elementary and middle level teachers, researchers can evaluate trade books for historical representation and suggest divergent or competing narratives that compel students to scrutinize diverse perspectives. Researchers can locate germane primary sources and modify them in ways that maintain their historicity. As students read, they scrutinize, contextualize, and corroborate sources, which enables them to actively construct historical understandings. We examined children's literature centered on child labor. We juxtaposed trade books targeting elementary students with those intended for middle level students. While our findings revealed various forms of historical misrepresentation, child labor trade books appear far more historically representative than those centered on slavery.

Key words: Children's trade books, historical misrepresentation, historical thinking, elementary social studies, primary source material

Introduction

Historians use specific thinking patterns, or heuristics, to examine primary sources (Nokes, 2011; Wineburg, 2007). Historical thinking is a discipline-specific form of criticality, distinct from other cognitive tasks, and must be cultivated (Drake & Brown, 2003; Wineburg, 2001). Teachers in the primary grades can facilitate students' historical thinking using age-appropriate content and methods (Bickford, 2013b; Fallace, Biscoe, & Perry, 2007; Holloway & Chiodo, 2009). National educational initiatives target students' criticality, historical literacy, and college, career, and civic preparedness; the expectations are spiraled with increased readings of informational texts at the every grade level and juxtaposed primary and secondary accounts at the elementary level (Common Core State Standards Initiative [CCSSI], 2010; National Council for the Social Studies [NCSS], 2013). The initiatives contrast sharply with previous decades' time reductions for elementary social studies content (Heafner & Groce, 2007; McMurrer, 2008; Wilton & Bickford, 2012). To cultivate and assess historical thinking, students must frequently work with primary historical documents and secondary accounts like historians (Pace, 2012; VanSledright, 2014; Wineburg, Smith, & Breakstone, 2012). Teachers largely rely on textbooks, primary source materials, and trade books.

Textbooks are frequently used in history classrooms yet produce have many limitations (Fitzgerald, 2009; Loewen, 2010). History textbooks' narratives are wide in coverage, shallow in depth, and sanitized of both controversy and competing historical interpretations, which leaves students disinterested (Lindquist, 2009; Wineburg, 2001; Wineburg & Martin, 2009). Scholarship on textbooks' content indicates considerable inaccuracies, omissions, and

misrepresentations (Chick, 2006; King, Davis, & Brown, 2012; Loewen, 1995; Matusевич, 2006). Since teachers cannot utilize a single source, i.e., like a textbook, to meet the high standards of Common Core, researchers promote students' scrutiny of primary source material as a supplement to the textbook (CCSSI, 2010; Nokes, 2011; Wineburg, Martin, & Monte-Sano, 2011).

Primary sources are as indispensable to historians as numbers are to mathematicians. Unlike numbers, primary sources are subjective, partial, and cannot be removed from their historical context. (We acknowledge that Common Core uses the term informational texts [CCSSI, 2010] and National Council for the Social Studies uses the term primary sources [NCSS, 2013]; we utilize the terms interchangeably.) To historicize a primary source, historians examine the source's intent, credibility, and bias; they juxtapose it with other, divergent sources to determine if it is corroborated (Wineburg, 2001; Wineburg et al., 2011). Elementary students are capable of varying degrees of historical thinking (Bickford, 2013b; Baildon & Baildon, 2012). Primary sources can be easily adapted for young, inexperienced, or struggling students (Bickford & Wilton, 2012; Drake & Brown, 2003; Wineburg & Martin, 2009); yet, teachers rarely do (Fallace et al., 2007). Elementary teachers utilize trade books with history themes far more frequently than primary sources (Holloway & Chiodo, 2009; Wilton & Bickford, 2012).

Trade books, like primary sources, are rich in detail and remarkably diverse in perspective, topic, and reading level. Teachers rely on erudite organizations, like the National Council for the Social Studies and the Children's Literature Assembly, to review and suggest reputable trade books; yet, a cursory review indicates they provide more coverage than depth as countless historical periods appear and few books share the same historical era, event, or figure. These compendiums, therefore, do not guide students' examinations of multiple texts of the same event, an imperative cognitive task prescribed by the state and national initiatives (CCSSI, 2010; NCSS, 2013). These collections also do not account for palpable patterns of gender and historical misrepresentation within trade books, which are not held to a rigorous standard of historicity (Baker, 2013; Rycik & Rosler, 2009; Schwebel, 2011). While gender representations within trade books have improved (Chick & Corle, 2012; Chick, Slekar, & Charles, 2010), historical inaccuracies and misrepresentation manifest (e.g. Bickford, 2013a; Bickford & Rich, 2014a, 2014b; Powers, 2003; Schwebel, 2011; Williams, 2009). We do not contend children's and young adult literature should be peer reviewed; however, their historical lacunae cannot be dismissed.

Unlike textbooks, trade books have not been thoroughly scrutinized for historical representation and accuracy. Unlike primary sources, trade books have not been rigorously evaluated for usability. Children's trade books and young adult literature, however, have the potential to captivate contemporary students with tales from the past. Given the curricular potential and ubiquitous location of trade books within elementary social studies curricula, it is important to understand their degree of historicity. Simply determining trade books' levels of historicity and usability, though, is not enough for teachers vested in meeting the rigorous standards of state and national initiatives. Common Core's Reading Standards for Informational Texts for fourth grade, for instance, require students to determine a text's main idea and how it is supported by evidence, grasp an event's causation and implications, understand domain-specific words and concepts, juxtapose primary and secondary accounts, and consider authorial bias

(CCSSI, 2010). Researchers, therefore, must locate and modify primary source material for elementary educators to supplement with their selected literature.

We scrutinize and juxtapose the historicity of elementary and middle level children's trade books centered on child labor. Specific patterns of strong historicity along with areas of historical misrepresentation are reported. Primary source material is provided to fill the lacunae. Modeled after the similar research examining historical representation in children's literature (Bickford, 2013a; Bickford & Hunt, 2014; Bickford & Rich, 2014a, 2014b; Schwebel, 2011), we selected child labor as a topic because of its prominence or potential in elementary and middle level history curricula and its frequent inclusion in children's literature.

Research Methods

We adhered to a rigorous research methodology in order to generate a comprehensive, representative, and randomly selected data pool of children's literature (Kline, 2008; Krippendorff, 2013; Maxwell, 2010) and followed previously developed models (Bickford, 2013a; Chick & Corle, 2012; Forest, Kimmel, & Garrison, 2013). We first searched through all offerings from Scholastic®, a company whose website claims to be the largest publisher and distributor of children's books in the world, and Barnes and Noble, who purport on their website to be the Internet's largest bookstore. Using these resources, we collected all available titles of children's trade books centered on child labor in 19th and 20th century America. To ensure a current data pool, we jettisoned all titles with publication dates greater than 25 years. The data pool, at this point, totaled 97 books. To ensure a representative sampling from a total sample, more than 20% of the books were needed (Krippendorff, 2013).

We juxtaposed elementary with middle level content to determine if emergent historical patterns were dependent upon the targeted grade level. We wanted to see, for example, if certain content appeared in middle level books but not books intended for elementary students. To determine approximate reading level, we triangulated data generated from multiple indicators, specifically *Lexile Framework for Reading*, Grade Level Equivalent, Guided Reading Level, and Developmental Reading Assessment. We randomly selected 10 titles with elementary reading levels and 10 titles with middle level reading levels. The data pool is reported in Selected and Reviewed Children's Literature found in Appendix 1.

We created an initial content analysis tool to determine basic information about each book, which are represented in questions one through eight in the Content Analysis Protocol found in Table 1. Each book was read and an initial content analysis was completed. In working through the process, emergent patterns that were not considered in the initial content analysis tool were observed and recorded. We then discussed findings derived from the initial reading and modified the content analysis tool to incorporate the tentative patterns. Questions nine through 14 in the Content Analysis Protocol reflect these changes. Each book was then reread, and a revised content analysis tool for each book was completed. During this process, we observed and recorded emergent patterns that were not present in the revised content analysis tool. We discussed findings generated from the second reading and solidified the emergent patterns into tentative codes. A third reading of each book enabled empirical verification of the presence of each code.

Table 1

Content Analysis Protocol

1. Author's name, publication date, title, company.
2. For (about) what age/grade was this book intended?
 - a. Primary (k-2)
 - b. Intermediate (3-5)
 - c. Middle level (6-8)
3. What is the book's genre (historical fiction, narrative non-fiction, expository, graphic novel, or something else)?
4. Who was the main character? Provide supporting details (age, gender, occupation, social class, geographic location, and anything else of relevance).
5. Where—and in what work environment—did the story take place?
 - a. Factory/mill (include state/region):
 - b. Coal mine (include state/region):
 - c. Somewhere else:
6. Which historical misrepresentations emerged?
 - a. Presentism (using hindsight when viewing the past)
 - b. Omission (failing to include relevant events and considerations)
 - c. Chronological ethnocentrism (viewing contemporary people or society as inherently better than preceding people or societies)
 - d. Exceptionalism (representing as typical an anomalous historical figure)
 - e. Heroification (deifying a historical figure or group)
 - f. Villainification (condemning a historical figure or group)
7. Were any primary sources explicitly incorporated within the book? If yes, in which part of the book (foreword, narrative, afterward)?
8. Were there any historically inaccurate or implausible aspects of the narrative?
9. What work themes emerged within this book?
 - a. Was the pay high or low?
 - b. Was the work environment safe or unsafe?
 - c. What was the length of work day/week?
 - d. Was there job security or could workers be arbitrarily fired?
 - e. Were workers subjected to any forms of abuse?
 - f. Did the workers live in poverty?
10. Which social roles were recognized within this book?
 - a. Boss
 - b. Female child worker
 - c. Male child worker
 - d. Female adult worker
 - e. Male adult worker
 - f. An interested adult observer not connected to factory/mine
 - g. An interested child observer not connected to factory/mine

11. How were the owners/bosses portrayed?
 - a. Benevolent (helpful or motivated to positively affect change but impotent)
 - b. Malevolent (abusive or indifferent/apathetic to children's concerns)
12. Did the workers express hope for a better or different life in the future? If so, how?
 - a. Future school attendance
 - b. Future pay increase
 - c. Job stability
 - d. Labor advocacy and union activity
 - e. Something else
13. Which historical movements were recognized within this book?
 - a. Immigration to US
 - b. Industrialization of American society
 - c. Unionization of labor force
14. Did the narrative have:
 - a. A happy ending?
 - b. An adult defer the leadership role to a child or have a child assume an adult-like leadership role?
 - c. The mandatory schooling movement?
 - d. Opponents of child labor (e.g. National Child Labor Committee and Lewis Hine)?
 - e. The boss's and supervisor's families, homes, lifestyle, and other background?
 - f. Interethnic conflicts?
 - g. Immigrants' lives and poverty before arriving in the United States?
 - h. Pollution and other implications of industrialization?
 - i. An early 20th century end to child labor? Alternatively, was a global, contemporary perspective included?

Our findings guided our approach for locating supplemental primary source material. Specifically, we denoted the historical lacunae as locations in need of curricular enhancement. We followed previously developed models as in locating illustrative and rich primary source material (Bickford & Hunt, 2014; Bickford & Rich, 2014a, 2014b).

Findings

The data pool was purposefully organized so half were intended for elementary students and half for middle level students, but we did not select based on genre. The vast majority of elementary level books ($n = 9$; 90%) were historical fiction with one selection blending narrative non-fiction and reader's theatre (Isecke, 2009). Middle level books were evenly split between historical fiction ($n = 5$; 50%) and expository and narrative non-fiction ($n = 5$; 50%). The high percentage of historical fiction texts, especially at the elementary level, was expected considering the popularity of literature within in elementary and middle level schools (Donovan & Smolkin, 2001; Moss & Newton, 2002; Schwebel, 2011). The books' genres were as foundational to our understandings and analyses as the books' intended audience because their genres reveal the type of narrative the author intended to create.

Unlike research on textbooks where misleading historical nuances emerged frequently or significant distortions manifested infrequently (e.g. Chick, 2006; King, Davis, & Brown, 2012;

Lindquist, 2009; Loewen, 1995; Matusевич, 2006), findings in previous research on trade books about slavery, Native Americans, and Columbus revealed multiple and egregious historical misrepresentations (Bickford, 2013a; Bickford & Hunt, 2014; Bickford & Rich, 2014a). The vast majority of children's books on child labor, however, were historically representative on the most significant historical aspects of child labor with only a few negative patterns of note. The first subsection below addresses the former while the second subsection addresses the latter.

Historically Representative Patterns

Historians have studied and documented the working and living conditions of child laborers (Gersuny, 1976; Parker, 2007; Schmidt, 2010). Children, and their parents, were subjected to long hours of work, miserable working conditions, meager pay, six or more day work weeks, insecure employment with arbitrary dismissals, employer abuse, and abject living conditions (Hindman, 2002; Schmidt, 2005; Weatherford, 1995). The vast majority of books ($n = 17$; 85%) included the majority (four or more of the seven) of the aforementioned abysmal characteristics of child laborers' working and living conditions. While all of the 10 middle level books and seven of the 10 (70%) of the elementary books did so, three books (30%) intended for elementary readers noted only one (out of a possible seven) of the destructive features and disregarded the others (Flanagan, 2006; Hest, 1997; Wallace, 1999). Child labor children's literature, thus, depicted the brutish life and treatment in historically representative ways. Such historical representation was noteworthy considering the palpable absence of violence in the majority of books on American slavery, Columbus's interactions with Native Americans, and Native Americans (Bickford, 2013a; Bickford & Hunt, 2014; Bickford & Rich, 2014a).

Contemporary children's literature is replete with reciprocal role exchange between parents and children. The frequency of children's adult-like leadership roles within children's literature is likely due to the intended audience (Collins & Graham, 2001; Graham, 2001; Schwebel, 2011). Adults in 19th and early 20th century America did not defer to children (Schmidt, 2010; Schmitz, Traver, & Larson, 2004). In slavery-themed children's literature, parents repeatedly abandoned traditional authorial roles or deferred to their children's leadership (Bickford & Rich, 2014a; Schwebel, 2011; Williams, 2009). Unlike the slavery-themed literature, traditional parent-child roles were strictly maintained in the majority of child labor trade books ($n = 13$, 65%) and loosely maintained in nearly all of the child labor trade books ($n = 19$; 95%). A parent implausibly deferred to a child's wishes in only one (5%) narrative (McCully, 1996). Children assumed leadership positions in the six books (30%) that distinguished strict from loose maintenance of traditional parent-child roles (Bader, 1993; Goldin, 1992; Lieurance, 2008; Littlefield, 1996; Markel, 2013; McCully, 1996; Winthrop, 2006). Adults' non-deference to children throughout the reviewed child labor trade books indicates strong historicity; especially noteworthy considering the frequency of anachronistic parental deference in slavery-based children's literature (Bickford & Rich, 2014a; Schwebel, 2011; Williams, 2009).

Abject poverty compelled parents to secure employment for their children (Bodnar, 1985; Hindman, 2002; Weatherford, 1995). The children did not passively accept a miserly occupational existence. Child workers—historically and currently—sought and continue to seek advancements in salary, job security, safety, and other avenues for improvement in the workplace (Gorn, 2001; Parker, 2007; Schmitz et al., 2004). The reviewed children's literature historically represented the children's hope and action for change. All of the books included, to

some degree, child laborers' displeasure with their current state of existence. The vast majority of the books ($n = 17$; 85%) explicitly incorporated child laborers' specific ambitions for change. The three most frequently included goals were pay increase ($n = 11$; 55%), school attendance ($n = 8$; 40%), and job stability or security ($n = 6$; 30%). In view of the similar data pools of reviewed literature for child labor and slavery, the frequency of child laborers' expressed interest in improvement was anticipated considering the ubiquity of slaves' interest in freedom (Bickford & Rich, 2014a). The slaves in the reviewed literature, however, obtained freedom at far higher rates than the child laborers attained in their sought advancement. Only one main character successfully removed herself as a child laborer; even then, her subsequent occupation was uncertain (Winthrop, 2006). The vast majority of main characters ($n = 19$; 95%) remained as child laborers, which was far more historically representative than the endings found within slavery-based literature.

Historians have described employers of child labor as not eagerly nor willingly ending its practice (Hindman, 2002). National committees like the National Child Labor Committee (NCLC), local unions, and brave advocates, like Mother Jones, Eleanor Roosevelt, and Lewis Hine, compelled change and promoted compulsory schooling (Beasley, 2010; Gorn, 2001; O'Farrell, 2011; Trattner, 1970). While every narrative omitted the compulsory schooling movement, a majority included groups and people (both fictitious and historical) that advocated for the termination of child labor like national committees ($n = 11$, 55%), unions ($n = 16$; 80%), and individual activists ($n = 11$; 55%). The frequent inclusion of child labor advocates and advocacy groups was both expected and historically representative. Considering the ubiquity of abolitionists within slavery-based children's literature, the inclusion was expected and historically representative (Bickford & Rich, 2014a; Gorn, 2001; Hindman, 2002; Trattner, 1970).

A large majority of stories ($n = 15$; 75%) closed with an uplifting, distinctly positive ending. This was unexpected considering the vast majority of main characters ($n = 19$; 95%) remained as child laborers and that a majority of books ($n = 11$, 55%) included groups and individuals advocating for the end of child labor. Of the small percentage ($n = 5$; 25%) that did not end happily, four were expository and were without the traditional ending seen in fictional works (Bartoletti, 1999; Burgan, 2011; Freedman, 1994; Scott, 2008). While a positive end is typical in children's history-based literature (Collins & Graham, 2001; Lathey, 2001; Schwebel, 2011), illustrating that child laborers' lives were not entirely sated with misery and hopelessness is historically representative. Some of the stories' conclusions might center on anomalous or exceptional characters. An example of these are the young girl who decided to be a teacher of child laborers instead of working in the textile mill herself (Winthrop, 2006) and the boy who survived a collapsed mine and optimistically headed home knowing with certainty he would return to the mine the next day (Wallace, 1999). These examples, while unrealistic, demonstrate that happiness was not exclusive to middle and upper class children. Historians and researchers have detailed child laborers' perpetual poverty into adulthood and the miserly lives of contemporary child laborers, yet their lives held some contentment (Hindman, 2002; Parker, 2007; Schmitz et al., 2004). That the majority of authors chose to end their story in a positive way is likely more indicative of their intended audience than that of a historically misrepresentative narrative.

Historically Misrepresentative Patterns

The reviewed literature was not without historical misrepresentations. Villainification, the most egregious historical misrepresentation identified, was characterized in a previous research study as unwarranted blame given to a historical figure or group (Bickford & Rich, 2014a). While European explorers, like Christopher Columbus, deserve criticism for their mistreatment of Native Americans, not all Europeans were blameworthy. Villainification would manifest if a children's narrative portrayed all Europeans as nefarious and culpable. Villainification emerged in this study when nearly all employers and immediate supervisors were portrayed as malevolent. In the vast majority of narratives ($n = 17$; 85%), the bosses were explicitly depicted as abusive, dictatorial, or apathetic to children's concerns. In the three books (15%) that did not possess overtly malicious supervisors, two omitted all mention of bosses (Hest, 1997; Wallace, 1999) and one celebrated the opportunities available to rural New England girls working in the Lowell Mill, specifically the relatively higher wages and company-owned hospitals for injured workers (Flanagan, 2006). With the exception of the latter book, not one narrative referenced a single redeeming quality of the employers and immediate supervisors. No books took steps to humanize them, as there was no mention of the owners' children, families, and personal lives. This was unexpected considering the frequency of benevolent slave owners identified within children's literature (Bickford & Rich, 2014a; Schwebel, 2011; Williams, 2009). Instead, a pattern of blame was placed on the owners who employed the children while the parents who tolerated, and even encouraged, their children's labor were not faulted. While the employers and immediate supervisors of child laborers were certainly not entirely benevolent, villainification emerged when the authors only mentioned negative aspects of their jobs or malevolent elements of their disposition.

Omission, the historical misrepresentation of disregarding evidence or understandings relevant to the historical narrative, emerged in the reviewed literature (Bickford, 2013a; Bickford & Hunt, 2014; Bickford & Rich, 2014a, 2014b; Schwebel, 2011). It distinctly emerged in three instances. First, the trade books centered entirely all European immigrants or descendants of European or Russian immigrants and disregarded Asian and Asian American child laborers. The randomly selected data pool did not include a single non-European main character, which is a glaring omission.

Second, the children's literature largely disregarded the historical causes and implications of immigration. Due to poverty, war, pogroms, starvation, and disease, immigrants fled to the United States from around the world (Bodnar, 1985; Hindman, 2002). The immigrants and their children initially sought security and refuge and then employment with the hopes for eventual social mobility (Dublin, 1993; Thernstrom, 1964; Weatherford, 1995). Previously assimilated citizens and newly assimilated immigrants resisted (Bodnar, 1985; Hindman, 2002; Thernstrom, 1964). Every book incorporated, either explicitly or implicitly, immigration and immigrants' children working as laborers. A majority of books ($n = 14$; 70%) omitted the Old World turmoil that compelled immigration. Most trade books ($n = 16$; 80%) disregarded the tensions with assimilation that the new immigrants faced. When omitted, a young reader without strong historical background knowledge will likely make presumptions that are ahistorical or unrealistic (Wineburg, 2001). To omit Old World turmoil permits the young reader to focus on immigrants' willingness to tolerate less-than-ideal working conditions. The immigrants are dehumanized as the implications of their choices are mocked. The young reader is unaware of the conditions that

compelled immigrants' initial move and eventual employment. To omit tensions with assimilation minimizes the hostility and confusion that immigrants confronted from nativist sentiment as the young reader is likely aware of neither (Gorn, 2001; Hindman, 2002). One example of the literary inclusion of Old World turmoil was Rachel Boganovitch's, a Jewish Russian immigrant, statement, "We certainly had more money [in Russia] but our village was always being attacked because we were all Jewish. The attacks were called pogroms, and a lot of people were killed. That is why we left" (Bader, 1993, pp. 79-80). One example of the literary inclusion of tensions with assimilation was French-immigrant children mocking others who retained their distinct accents (Winthrop, 2006). Such examples were anomalous as the majority of books omitted content on immigrants' lives before living in America and tensions immigrants faced upon arrival. They illustrate the ease with which the historical content could have been included.

In a final example of omission, the reviewed literature largely, and wrongly, positioned child labor's conclusion in the early 20th century. While most textile mills, processing plants, and factories essentially discontinued employing child laborers in the early-to-mid-20th century (Hindman, 2002), child labor exists today both in and outside the United States (Parker, 2007; Schmitz et al., 2004). The vast majority of trade books ($n = 17$; 85%) either denoted or connoted the early 20th century as child labor's conclusion. Every elementary level book did so and the vast majority of middle level books ($n = 7$; 70%) followed suit. Three middle level trade books addressed child labor in contemporary society, an indication of the undesirable perpetuity of children's mistreatment (Freedman, 1994; Greenwood, 2007; Scott, 2008). The majority of books, however, did not recognize modern child labor. Such omission constructs a historically erroneous and gratuitously uplifting conclusion. The young reader is likely unaware of anything different and wrongly considers that the inhumane practice ended a long time ago.

Implications for Classroom Practice

Our scrutiny of child labor trade books found patterns of historical misrepresentation but not to the degrees reported in previous examinations of trade books centered on different historical eras, events, and figures. The findings suggested differing levels of historicity between elementary and middle level children's literature, but that was expected considering the distinctions between the age groups. Considering everything reported about the child labor trade books, we do not ascribe an arbitrary label like "best" to a single book or encourage teachers to remove another book from their shelf. Teachers will use their professional discretion when selecting literature that, for instance, captivates the reader with a compelling climax or that effectively combines literary devices like foreshadowing with an engaging narrative. We encourage teachers to meld their professional discretion in book selection with the cognitive tasks associated with state and national initiatives.

The Common Core Reading Standards for elementary grades include, among other things, the juxtaposition of multiple texts e.g., informational and literature, in various forms of the same event (RI9, RI7), analysis of authors' use of evidence and argument (RI8), and evaluation of authorial perspective and bias (RI6) (CCSSI, 2010). To meet such rigorous standards, elementary teachers are aware they cannot simply locate and read aloud one good book. Such practices yield, at best, students' comprehension of an author's historical narrative. Comprehension is not indicative of historical thinking. It will not satisfy the prescribed academic tasks of Common Core. To foster complex and historical thinking, elementary

teachers should utilize multiple trade books with varied narratives; they should incorporate primary sources that meaningfully connect with the narratives. The subsequent subsections guide teachers in positioning the trade books and incorporating historical documents.

Trade Books

The Common Core Reading Standards for Informational Texts are based on historians' heuristics. Historians do not report what happened; they evaluate the arguments within secondary source material (and scrutinize primary source material). To enable students to grapple with evaluating the secondary texts, the teacher should utilize age-appropriate secondary texts with distinctly different narratives; reading disparate narratives spurs scrutiny. Identifying age-appropriate prose may not pose the same challenge as finding competing stories. Our findings guide teachers towards divergent and competing narratives.

We characterize divergent narratives as those that significantly differ and that, figuratively, move apart. Divergent does not denote disagreement. Divergent narratives are two distinct paths that do not meet yet still occupy the same landscape. Teachers can select age-appropriate books that cover historically (and geographically) different occurrences; contrasting urban, factory-based contexts with rural, mine-based narratives is one possibility. Holly Littlefield's (1996) *Fire at the Triangle Factory* contrasts distinctly—and shares important historical similarities—with Ian Wallace's (1999) *Boy of the Deeps*. In Littlefield's novel, the main character Minnie, a female Jewish American immigrant, worked in New York's (in)famous factory. James, the main character in Wallace's work, toils in a Canadian coal mine. Familial poverty compels both Minnie and James to work; they each experience on-the-job danger and hardships associated with poverty like hunger and want for a better life. Their stories also exhibit important historical variations. Religious differences, ethnic distinctions, length of citizenship, villainous employers, and labor advocacy emerge within *Fire at the Triangle Factory* but not in *Boy of the Deeps*. *Fire at the Triangle Factory* and *Boy of the Deeps*, thus, converge and diverge in important ways.

To grasp the important similarities and differences presented by trade books, young students can disassemble the narratives and construct meanings based on shared patterns and unshared occurrences. Students can use concept maps, a graphic organizer, to distinguish the separate path each narrative takes (Bickford, 2011, 2012). Students can draw lines attaching similar events or ideas on the concept map to distinguish relationships and connections (Baxendall, 2003; Merkley & Jeffries, 2000). Concept maps effectively enable visual organization of understandings gleaned from two divergent narratives.

Teachers of middle level students, or elementary teachers who would like to spend more time on child labor literature, can assign more than two trade books with clearly divergent narratives. New York City's Triangle Shirtwaist Factory, for example, was the location of a lengthy, volatile strike and the deadly fire two years later, both of which were the center of many children's books. Two books focused solely on the strike (Bader, 1993; Markel, 2013); three books explicitly concentrated on the fire (Goldin, 1992; Lieurance, 2008; Littlefield, 1996). These five historical fiction narratives are relatively historically representative and, cumulatively, reach varied reading levels. The teacher can arrange students into two large reading groups—one strike-based novel and one fire-based novel—for the class then to graphically organize into a concept map. The teacher could also include most or all of the books and arrange the class into three-to-five single-book groups. More groups may generate complex concept maps with greater

complexity. For a far more nuanced concept map, the teacher could assign some of the other trade books that explicitly mention or loosely connect to the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory (Bartoletti, 1999; Freedman, 1994; Hest, 1997; Scott, 2008). Concept maps work well when teachers utilize divergent narratives because they enable students to visually represent the terrain covered by distinctly different books. These effective and age-appropriate graphic organizers enable students to graphically demonstrate newly generated understandings derived from readings of multiple trade books with divergent narratives.

We define competing narratives as those with distinct disputes. Competing narratives quarrel when read in concert. Barbara Diamond Goldin's (1992) *Fire!: The Beginnings of the Labor Movement* and Alice Flanagan's (2006) *The Lowell Mill Girls* have competing narratives. While both are historical fiction trade books with poor, preadolescent female textile workers as main characters, the tone of each narrative is quite dissimilar. Rosie, the main character in *Fire!: The Beginnings of the Labor Movement*, confronts low pay, a dangerous work environment, an unduly long workday, a malevolent boss, and urban overcrowding. She is quite aware that her job is without prospects for improvement yet maintains hope for a better, different life. Rosie becomes aware of labor advocacy through union meetings that are intended to address the aforementioned hardships (Goldin, 1992). When reading about Lucy, the main character in *The Lowell Mill Girls*, students learn Lowell textile companies: "offered wages that were better than women could earn [elsewhere]" (p. 9), "opened the first hospital for workers in the United States" (18-19), provided "generous" time off for meals and reduced work days (p. 21-22), and offered workers free schools, book stores, and lending libraries (p. 32-33).

Stark differences appear between *Fire!: The Beginnings of the Labor Movement* and *The Lowell Mill Girls*. For wide-ranging illustrations, the teacher could juxtapose books that historically represent the abysmal working and living conditions of child laborers with those that do not. The teacher could also contrast books that incorporated national committees, unions, and activists with books that disregarded these powerful agents of change. Students could read books with divergent conclusions, like one with a positive, uplifting end to child labor in the early 20th century and another that detailed child labor in contemporary society. Students could compare life and work for coal mining boys (Bartoletti, 1996; Carter & Debon, 2008; Rappaport, 1987; Wallace, 1999; Welch, 1992) with mill girls (Flanagan, 2006; Isecke, 2009; McCully, 1996; Winthrop, 2006). Students could contrast those that explicitly included Old World turmoil, violence, and poverty (Bader, 1993) with those that mentioned it briefly or implicitly (Freedman, 1994; Greenwood, 2007; Hest, 1997; Lieurance, 2008; Scott, 2008) or any one of the majority of books that omitted it. Juxtaposition of trade books with dissimilar content is a potentially powerful pedagogical choice.

To seize on the differences within competing narratives, students can utilize a Venn diagram to demonstrate the areas of convergence and distinction (Baxendall, 2003; Merkley & Jeffries, 2000). Students can visually represent similarities and differences by positioning events and ideas on the Venn. This is a helpful method for students to demonstrate their understandings of the encountered juxtaposition(s). Educators could arrange students into groups based on reading levels with a focus on the findings mentioned above. Such pedagogical arrangements facilitate students' engagement with historians' heuristics and Common Core.

Constructing a concept map or Venn diagram enables students to negotiate and explicitly position the understandings accumulated from multiple books. Teachers can first utilize two

competing or divergent narratives with half of the class reading one book or all students reading each. They could then consider using many books to complicate students' understandings and demonstrate the various distinctions. Such an approach facilitates differentiation and flexibility of grouping. While the resultant graphic organizers enable students to chart their understandings of the narratives' interconnections, they alone do not enable students to discern varying degrees of historical representation. Venn diagrams and concept maps reveal the narratives' similarities and differences; they do not answer the question that many students will likely ask, "So, who is right?" To do so, students need to critically analyze primary source material; they can then position their analyses next to the competing or divergent narratives.

Primary Sources

Historians do not analyze a primary source until they have thoroughly positioned it within the backdrop of secondary texts. Primary documents must be considered within the context in which they were created and juxtaposed with secondary texts. We encourage educators to incorporate primary sources that meaningfully connect with the trade books' narratives. Simple overlap, in a form like a twin text reading, is not constructive for our aims (Camp, 2000; Frye, Trathen, & Wilson, 2009; Furtado & Johnson, 2010). Students can effectively note shared elements and distinct variances when integrating primary sources with trade books. The Library of Congress's teacher section includes classroom materials and lesson plans—from preparation through implementation and assessment—about child labor in America. *Childhood Lost: Child Labor During the Industrial Revolution*, a *Library of Congress: Teaching with Primary Sources* site, has rich primary source material and guidance for educators. Other history education researchers have located meaningful primary source material and provided instructions for classroom implementation (Barrett, 1999; Eynon & Friedheim, 1997; Kirschbaum, 2005). The activities, however, are intended for much older students and the primary documents are not integrated with age-appropriate, secondary resources like the aforementioned children's trade books.

Primary documents, like the digital resources noted above, provide ample opportunity for linkage with the previously reported findings. Following our previously developed model (Bickford & Rich, 2014a, 2014b), we located historical documents that will pique students' interest with connections to events within the narratives and elicit students' scrutiny with content absent from the narratives (see Appendix 2). The reader will notice how the selected primary sources supplement the historical misrepresentations and complement the competing or divergent narratives. Regarding the former, primary document one reveals the effort by, hope for, and impotence of legislative action. The ubiquity of parents' complicity in child labor is apparent in primary documents two and three while evident in the narrative description of primary document four. The pollution and dangerous working conditions, omitted in many narratives, cannot be disregarded when confronted with primary documents five and six. Primary document seven confronts villainification, which teachers can modify to age-appropriate reading levels for students to question the source's credibility. The presence of labor advocates, as noted in primary documents eight, nine, and 10, supplement the various narratives where historical lacunae, or omissions, manifested. Through image and title, primary documents 11, 12, 13, 14, and 15 address the difficulty children had leaving the factories, mills, and mines behind, parents' and employers' complicity, and danger.

Elementary and middle level educators can utilize such primary documents to highlight events noted within the literature, settle disputes between competing narratives, and build bridges between divergent texts. Historians do similar tasks with similar texts. Teachers can position sources to address the rigorous skills associated with state and national initiatives, which are a distinct change from common instructional procedures in elementary social studies.

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Appendix 1

Selected and Reviewed Children's Literature

Intended for Elementary Readers

- Carter, A. & Debon, N. (2008). *Out of the Deeps*. Custer, WA: Orca Book Publishers.
- Flanagan, A. (2006). *The Lowell Mill girls*. Minneapolis, MN: Compass Point Books.
- Hest, Amy (1997). *When Jessie came across the sea*. Somerville, MA: Candlewick Press.
- Isecke, H. (2009). *Child labor and the Industrial Revolution*. Huntington Beach, CA: Teacher Created Materials.
- Littlefield, Holly (1996). *Fire at the Triangle Factory*. Minneapolis, MN: Millbrook Press.
- Markel, M. (2013). *Brave girl: Clara and the Shirtwaist Makers' Strike of 1909*. New York, NY: Harper Collins Publishers.
- McCully, E. (1996). *The bobbin girl*. New York, NY: Dial Books for Young Readers.
- Rappaport, D.(1987). *Trouble at the mines*. New York, NY: Bantam Skylark Books.
- Wallace, I. (1999). *Boy of the deeps*. Berkeley, CA: Groundwood Books.
- Welch, C. (1992). *Danger at the breaker*. Minneapolis, MN: Carolrhoda Books.

Intended for Middle Level Readers

- Bader, B. (1993). *East Side story*. New York, NY: Silver Moon Press.
- Bartoletti, S. (1996). *Growing up in Coal Country*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Company.
- Bartoletti, S. (1999). *Kids on strike!* Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Company.
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- Freedman, R. (1994). *Kids at work: Lewis Hine and the crusade against child labor*. New York, NY: Clarion Books.
- Goldin, B.(1992). *Fire!: The beginnings of the Labor Movement*. New York, NY: Puffin Books.
- Greenwood, B. (2007). *Factory girl*. Tonawanda, NY: Kids Can Press Ltd.
- Lieurance, S. (2008). *The locket: Surviving the Triangle Shirtwaist Fire*. Berkley Heights, NJ: Enslow Publishers Inc.
- Scott, J. (2008). *Kids have rights, too!* New York, NY: Children's Press.
- Winthrop, E. (2006). *Counting on Grace*. New York, NY: Yearling.

Appendix 2 – Primary Source Supplements

Primary Document 1. Hine, Lewis Wickes, Photographer. (1914) Exhibit panel. National Child Labor Committee Collection. Prints and Photographs Online Catalog. Library of Congress. <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/nclc/item/ncl2004004093/pp/>

Primary Document 2. Hine, Lewis Wickes, Photographer. (1913 or 1914?) Exhibit panel. National Child Labor Committee Collection. Prints and Photographs Online Catalog. Library of Congress. <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/ncl2004004087/PP/>

Primary Document 3. Hine, Lewis Wickes, Photographer. (1913 or 1914?) Exhibit panel. National Child Labor Committee Collection. Prints and Photographs Online Catalog. Library of Congress. <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/nclc/item/ncl2004002769/pp/>

Primary Document 4. Hine, Lewis Wickes, Photographer. (1909 March) (See also 600 and 660.) (Called "Bologna") Tony Casale, 11 years old been selling 4 years. Sells until 10 P.M. some times. His paper boss told me the boy had shown him the marks on his arm where his father had bitten him for not selling more papers. He (the boy) said "Drunken men say bad words to us." Location: Hartford, Connecticut. National Child Labor Committee Collection. Prints and Photographs Online Catalog. Library of Congress. <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/ncl2004000788/PP/>

Primary Document 5. Hine, Lewis Wickes, Photographer. (1911 January) A view of Ewen Breaker of the Pa. [Pennsylvania] Coal Co. The dust was so dense at times as to obscure the view. This dust penetrates the utmost recesses of the boys' lungs. (See also labels 1927 to 1930 for names of some of these.) Location: South Pittston, Pennsylvania. 1911. National Child Labor Committee Collection. Prints and Photographs Online Catalog. Library of Congress. <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/ncl2004002615/PP/>

Primary Document 6. Hine, Lewis Wickes, Photographer. (1911 January) Breaker boys working in Ewen Breaker of Pennsylvania Coal Co. For some of their names see labels 1927 to 1930. Location: South Pittston, Pennsylvania. 1911. National Child Labor Committee Collection. Prints and Photographs Online Catalog. Library of Congress. <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/ncl2004002611/PP/>

Primary Document 7. Child Labor in the Gulf Coast. 1913. Edward F. Brown. National Child Labor Committee Carbon typescript copy, 1913. Manuscript Division. Library of Congress. Page 1 <http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/treasures/images/s55.4a.jpg>. Page 2 <http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/treasures/images/s55.4b.jpg>

Primary Document 8. Strike pickets. (1910 February) Strike pickets. Photograph shows four women strikers from Ladies Tailors union on picket line during the "Uprising of the 20,000," garment workers strike, New York City. Bain News Service, publisher. Bain Collection. Prints and Photographs Online Catalog. Library of Congress. <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/ggb2004004508/>

Primary Document 9. Mother Jones. (1915 Jan. 20) Bain News Service, publisher. Photograph shows labor activist Mother Jones (1837-1930) who was attending the 1915 hearings of the federal Commission on Industrial Relations at the New York City Hall, New York City. Bain Collection. Prints and Photographs Online Catalog. Library of Congress. <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/ggbain/item/ggb2005018262/>

Primary Document 10. Hine, Lewis Wickes, Photographer. (1913) Letter from manager of a department store in New Orleans. Location: New Orleans, Louisiana. National Child Labor Committee Collection. Prints and Photographs Online Catalog. Library of Congress. <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/ncl2004003557/pp/>

Primary Document 11. Hine, Lewis Wickes, Photographer. (1910 November) Mary and Minnie Gillim, fourteen and fifteen years old. They were commencing to attend the Mill School at Avondale, and had been to school but two weeks in their lives. Were in the low first grade in company with a child of six years. At that time (Nov. 30/10) their father was trying to take them out of school and put them back into the cotton mill. He has no obvious occupation. Location: Birmingham, Tennessee. National Child Labor Committee Collection. Prints and Photographs Online Catalog. Library of Congress. <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/ncl2004003557/pp/>

Primary Document 12. Hine, Lewis Wickes, Photographer. (1914 October) Whistle blows noon Opelika Cotton Mill. Smallest girl in photograph is Velma Smith a tiny little spinner with a steady job all day. I found her at home crying bitterly because her father refused to let her have any money out of the pay envelope she brought home. Mother said: "That haint no way to encourage children to work." Mother, father and several children work. Her mother admitted she worked here before 12 years old, and at Ella White Mill and one other city for about a year. Says they have no family record, but claims Velma is 12 now (which is doubtful). I saw her several times going and coming at 5:45 A.M. and noon. Location: Opelika, Alabama. National Child Labor Committee Collection. Prints and Photographs Online Catalog. Library of Congress. <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/ncl2004004125/PP/>

Primary Document 13. Hine, Lewis Wickes, Photographer. (1914 October) Going back to work. Youngest boy is Richard Millsap. The family record in bible says he is 11 years old - born Jan 22, 1903 (doubtful), and father says 12 years old. He appears to be under 9. Works every day at spinning, and has been working for some weeks. Boss saw investigator photographing him and whistled to him to get out. This photograph was gotten as he went in to work. Then boss took him off his regular job and put him helping others. Mother was furious at boss for not giving Richard and sister (a little older) more steady work. "He keeps changin em around and helpin others. I'll tell him that if he doesn't give em plenty of work there is plenty of mills that will." Father and mother both well and able to support family. Location: Opelika, Alabama. National Child Labor Committee Collection. Prints and Photographs Online Catalog. Library of Congress. <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/ncl2004004123/PP/>

Primary Document 14. Hine, Lewis Wickes, Photographer. (1911 May) Dependent (able-bodied) Parents. Fries, Va. Family of Albert Senter. He said, "I don't work steady. Have a garden here." Eleven year old Mandy has learned to "spin" by "helping." She said, "They say I'm too little to work steady." Father added, "I guess she'll get in all right in a little while. They've been extra careful, lately, 'cause the inspector's been around, but it'll be easier now for her to get in." The three girls work and Mandy helps, with one eye on a steady job. Location: Fries, Virginia. National Child Labor Committee Collection. Prints and Photographs Online Catalog. Library of Congress. <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/ncl2004000306/PP/>

Primary Document 15. Hine, Lewis Wickes, Photographer. (1908 December) National Child Labor Committee. No. 435. Flashlight photo of children on night shift going to work at 6 P.M. on a cold, dark December night. They do not come out again until 6:00 A.M. When they went home the next morning they were all drenched by a heavy, cold rain and had few or no wraps. Two of the smaller girls with three other sisters work on night shift and support a big, lazy father who complains he is not well enough to work. He loaf's around the country store. Location: Whitnel, North Carolina. National Child Labor Committee Collection. Prints and Photographs Online Catalog. Library of Congress. <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/ncl2004001355/PP/>

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