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SENIOR THESIS APPROVAL

This Honors thesis entitled

“*The Field: A Study in Illustrations*”

written by

Kacy Alaina Earnest Spears

and submitted in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for completion of
the Carl Goodson Honors Program
meets the criteria for acceptance
and has been approved by the undersigned readers.

Autumn ~~Mortenson~~, thesis director

Dr. ~~Amy Sotheim~~, second reader

~~Dr. Jeff~~ Root, third reader

Dr. ~~Barbara~~ Pemberton, Honors Program director

May 14, 2018

Kacy Spears

“The Field: A Study in Illustrations”

A Senior Thesis

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Introduction

I have never experienced the black experience, and I never will. I was raised to believe that God made black to separate from white, creating a spectrum that does not touch.

After leaving home at 18 and integrating myself into college, I found that is not how God made man. It seemed the only way I can even try to understand a culture so foreign to my own is to read their children's literature and see what their young eyes saw. From this I try to piece together how their background and my background vary and how they are similar.

Senior year of college, I enrolled in Issues of Communication, a class focused on pinpointing the issues of racism and the long-term effects of microaggressions, defined by Merriam-Webster Dictionary as "a comment or action that subtly and often unconsciously or unintentionally expresses a prejudice attitude toward a member of a marginalized group (such as a racial minority)" ("microaggressions"). One of our guest speakers, Dean Bryan McKinney of the Hickingbotham School of Business, came to present "The Field," a short story written by his father, JV McKinney, about living in the 1950's segregated Arkansas Delta. Dean McKinney played a recording of his father reading "The Field," and I felt immediately moved by it. I had also grown up in a small Arkansas town with racial tension and a somewhat divided community. I grew up with African American neighbors, Mr. Ray to the right and Mr. Mario to the left. My father shunned these neighbors for no other reason than the fact that they were different. My father was raised to believe different meant a slew of other things, like lazy, rude, loud, and a burden on society. In reality, our neighbors were families just like us, trying to make it through the day onto the next, just like us.

As I sat in class, hearing JV's voice read his story, I cried. I cried with Bryan McKinney, mourning the loss of his father. I cried with JV, mourning the fallen state of this world where we

are blinded by our own misconstrued understanding. About a week went by, and I could not get “The Field” out of my mind. I kept listening to JV’s recording online and feeling what he felt. I had so many unanswered questions – What does racial reconciliation look like on a realistic face-to-face scale? How do children’s books shape our views as adults? How important is racial representation and diversity in children’s books? How do I represent controversial subject matter to children? Do I, as a white person, have the right/the voice to illustrate a children’s book about racial reconciliation?

To get answers, I started a thesis and created a plan to read various picture books. From those books, I would select aspects I like and that reflect “The Field” accurately, then select a design strategy of how I want the book to look and feel. Next I would break the book down into pages. Then finally, I would illustrate it.

Research and Notes

“Picturebooks are written artifacts that convey cultural messages and values about society and help children learn about their world.” - Melanie Koss

To possibly find some answers, my thesis advisors and I agreed that I should read various children’s books as well as articles that address issues within children’s books. By researching the following six topics, we felt that I could gain a clearer understanding of how to best represent “The Field”: the affects on children of racial representation within children’s literature, African American culture, racism presented within children’s books, design of text on the page, technique used by the illustrator, and the theme of baseball

To address those six topics, we created a bibliography that would serve as my roadmap to gaining a partial understanding of each and using that knowledge to mold my own version of a children’s book using JV McKinney’s short story.

First, I read articles that confronted the topic of representation of diversity within children’s literature in order to gain an understanding of the children’s literature market as a whole through graphs, comparisons, and author’s commentary. According to Melanie Koss, author of “Diversity in Contemporary Picturebooks: A Content Analysis,” children use literature as a mirror as they seek to find themselves (32). They also use children’s literature as maps to help them get to where they want to be (Koss 32). Koss performed a study with 144 children’s books analyzing the ethnicity, gender, and ability/disability represented. From that study, she found that 75 percent of the main characters represented were white. Only 15 percent were black, and the remaining 10 percent was divided between Asian, Latino, Native American, and Unknown ethnicities (Koss 35). It was clear to me that though Americans pride ourselves on

being a diverse country, that is not reflected in its children's literature. This is not to say that all children's books must accurately represent all cultures. Rather, Koss was providing data to prove that there is a general lack of effort and color in children's literature.

Without equal representation of cultures in literature, there will always be some group that feels underrepresented and thus misunderstood or displaced in society as a whole. While this may seem like an issue confined to children's literature, it is not. As Koss said, children use picturebooks to find themselves and to search for direction (32). By limiting the color within picturebooks, the feeling of being displaced or underrepresented remains with that child into adulthood and could potentially explain that persons feeling of being separated from power and influence.

Bryan Welch analyzed how harmful that 75 percent of white main characters within children's books can be in "The Pervasive Whiteness of Children's Literature: Collective Harms and Consumer Obligations." He says, "The pervasive whiteness of children's literature means that white children enjoy valuable goods that are less easily accessed by children of color...[It] also contributes to the notion that white is the norm or default while other races are variations from that norm" (375). Growing up in a majority white school with majority white friends, it is easy to see how whiteness can be considered the norm as it was all I saw. As a kid, I saw white presidents on TV, white characters in cartoons, white children in my books. It is an inverse relationship; as multiracial representation in printed media increases, the power of a singular race decreases.

In order to achieve the goal of gaining a clearer understanding of what the African American children's literature market looks like, I turned to Rudine Sims Bishop and her article

entitled "Reflections on the Development of African American Children's Literature." Within that article, Bishop analyzed children's literature published in the 1970's and 80's and found that most "reflected, with some slight variation, the same history of racist stereotypes and caricatures that has been identified in adult fiction" and that reflected current beliefs that African Americans were lesser (6). Bishop's survey questioned who were the primary audience of children's books featuring African Americans, to what extent a distinctive African American cultural experience was reflected in those books, and how the author's implicit cultural perspective and its effect on the treatment of the books theme and characters. From this, Bishop published her findings in *Shadow of Substance*. Bishop found that majority of the authors of African American children's literature were African American, "though about a quarter of them were not" (7). To me, this helped me better understand my role as a white illustrator of *The Field* and the legitimacy I might have in this process.

After reading several articles about the importance of representation in children's literature, the necessary emphasis of accurately portraying African Americans in illustrations, and the obligation of consumers to support minority-centered publications, I read several children's picturebooks ranging in theme and race to get an idea of how I wanted *The Field*¹ to look and feel. As a communications major that has taken a single design class, I value the look of words on the page and how text and illustrations dance together to tell a complete story.

¹ Note: "The Field" refers to JV McKinney's short story; *The Field* refers to my illustrations and JV McKinney's text combined.

The first book I read was *Black is Brown is Tan*, which tells of a multicultural family embracing how their skin tones spread across the spectrum. As the child narrator put it “this is the way it is for us. This is the way we are” (Adoff 20). As the children sing/narrate the book, the seasons change behind them as spring turns to summer turns to fall. It seems as if the author is slyly stating that change is inevitable, despite such uproar and demonization of multicultural families, times are changing; we are all changing.



A spread from *Black is Brown is Tan* to emphasize how the illustrations wrap around the words (Adoff, 9-10).

After reading *Black is Brown is Tan*, I had a better grasp of page format and illustrations. The words are formatted on the page to emphasize the illustrations. Arnold Adoff, the author of *Black is Brown is Tan*, and Emily Arnold McCully, illustrator, outline the illustrations and draw the eye down so the reader places equal value in the text and illustrations. The font choice is bold and fun, chosen to indicate this is an early reader book. While *The Field* will not be an early reader book, it is nice to see how to avoid tactics that would indicate it could be. The illustrations are done in watercolor with marker and pencil markings to add depth. Emily Arnold McCully, puts precise detail into the depiction of African American curly hair, a task not easily done with watercolor. It shows how intentional and sacred that aspect of African American culture is to the illustrator and author. I want to take that intentionality of illustrations and apply it to *The Field* as a way to communicate how to best use white privilege – by spending more time supporting people of color and encouraging them to be put in the spotlight equal to white people. Because of this, the white boys in *The Field* do not develop color or a tone to

their skin until the middle of the book, while the African American boys are drawn in a range of color, with unique hairstyle colors and textures. According to Neal Lester, African American hair “[signifies] continuing racial and gender biases about head hair both within and outside black cultural perceptions” (203). From this, I gathered that the texture, color, shape, and style of African American hair has historically represented their personality, and they use their unique hair texture to create their own standard of beauty.

Karen Katz’s *The Colors of Us* is presented from a similar perspective as *Black is Brown is Tan* with a child trying to understand her multicolored surroundings. Lena, a seven-year-old with “cinnamon”-colored skin walks the reader around town introducing her friends, neighbors, babysitter, and more while describing their skin color in positive comparisons to food or jewels (1). The style contrasts that of *Black is Brown is Tan* with the illustrations being done in marker and digital patterns. *The Colors of Us* has bolder illustrations with bright contrasting colors and multiple patterns on a single page; *Black is Brown is Tan* is done completely in watercolor with earthy tones. *The Colors of Us* follows Lena through a whole neighborhood of multicultural individuals, all with distinct features such as their hair texture, how voluminous or flat their hair is, the shape of their nose, the thinness of their lips, and colors of their heritage.

To find answers on how African American culture is already being represented in children’s picturebooks, I chose three books – Daniel Beaty’s *Knock Knock: My Dad’s Dream For Me*, Patricia Polacco’s *Chicken Sunday*, and Jane Kurtz’s *Forowoy Home*.

In *Knock Knock: My Dad’s Dream For Me* by Daniel Beaty and illustrated by Bryan Collier, an African American boy writes a letter to his father. Though it wasn’t explicitly stated in the book, Daniel Beaty writes in an author’s note that the boy’s father has left because he was

incarcerated, just as Beaty's father had been. The boy asks his dad to teach him how to become a man. He waits impatiently for a reply because he feels pressured to step into the place his father left as head of the household. His dad replies with a letter laying out how to shave and to ask his mother to make the eggs he likes. At the end of the letter, the dad hands off his father role to the boy. To me, this book addressed a few aspects of African American culture.

According to data compiled by Statista, there is a 37 percent difference between white families in the United States with two parents (76.5 percent) and black families in the United States with two parents (38.7 percent) (Statista). From this, I gleaned that traditional African American families are slim in number, but because of that they hold tight to the relationships they make. Also, due to the lack of male role models, many African American boys experience a loss of childhood because of the cultural expectations that African American men must provide for their families.

Similarly, in *Faraway Home*, written by Jane Kurtz and illustrated by E.B. Lewis, Desta, a young African American girl, tries to come to terms with her Ethiopian roots when her father must leave to care for her grandmother. This book reinforces the idea that men are to care for the whole family and play strong roles in African American culture. Desta tries to imagine Ethiopia through her first world lens and finds confusion in the differences. The family photos covering the tables and end tables in the living room of Desta's house show how communal and close families are in African American culture. Similarly to *Knock, Knock: My Dad's Dream For Me*, *Faraway Home* brings attention to the value of culture and family within minority families.

Chicken Sunday, written by Patricia Polacco and illustrated by Edward Miller, addresses a more universal theme of African American culture which is religion. In *Chicken Sunday*, the

character of Miss Eula ensures the readers know that religion is a driving force in Southern African Americans. From church, to hours of cooking, to serving guests, and having community and fellowship, Sundays are viewed as the most important day of the week to Miss Eula. When her grandsons and neighbor, a child of Polish immigrants, are falsely accused of vandalism, Miss Eula immediately feels the need to redeem herself, or really, redeem the name of African Americans in the South.

There were several similarities between *Chicken Sunday* and "The Field." First, both stories revolve around a mixed group of kids who become friends due to a shared love. For the kids in *Chicken Sunday*, it was a love of Miss Eula. For the kids in "The Field," it was a love of baseball and just being kids. Also, in both stories, the narrator flashes forward at the end to update the reader on the continued friendship and shared love.

To gain a clearer understanding of how baseball, sports, and minorities are illustrated within children's literature, I read *Baseball Saved Us*, written by Ken Mochizuki and illustrated by Dom Lee, a story about a Japanese American family in World War II turning an internment camp field into a baseball field to uplift spirits and find community.



A spread from *Just Like Josh Gibson* (Johnson, 21-22).

From *Baseball Saved Us*, I saw how shadow can create suspense and leave an eerie feeling on the page, and I also took note of how to illustrate boys playing baseball. I also read *Just Like Josh Gibson*, written by Angela Johnson and illustrated by Beth Peck. *Just Like Josh Gibson* is a heart-warming tale told by an African American grandmother to her granddaughter about how she overcame adversity and sexism by being better at baseball than all the boys and getting to play on the team. From *Just Like Josh Gibson*, I learned more about illustrating baseball with a different medium. I Finally, I read *Jojo's Flying Side Kick*, written and illustrated by Brian



A spread from *Jojo's Flying Sidekick* (Pinkney, 25-26).

Pinkney, which is a tale of a little girl learning lessons from her grandfather about Tae Kwon Do and having confidence in herself. Through Brian Pinkney's intentional lined and colors, I saw Jojo move and grow throughout the book, and I hope to apply

Reading these various children's books helped me better understand what is already in the children's literature market and what part illustrators play in the grand scheme of publishing a book. Illustrators are assigned to match the vision of the text, and in doing so, they create a whole new world to young readers that tells the story in a way that captivates and moves the eye across the page.

As a child, my favorite storybooks were written in rhyme and matched with bright colors and fictional characters – star-bellied sneeches and Santa Clause were my two favorites. As I

got older, I was drawn to a more mature style of book that did not have to rhyme or brightly colored. *The Velveteen Rabbit* was one of my favorites after I learned to read. The story was somber and matched with muted colors and limited text on pages. I learned that storytelling happens best when the words and illustrations work together to create the tone of the overall picturebook. I learned that storytelling happens from page to page as my chubby child hands turned pages, awaiting the next sentence or picture of *The Velveteen Rabbit*.

As a freshman at Ouachita Baptist University, I enrolled in a Children's Literature class that worked to analyze the story, illustrations, adaptations, and theme of fairy tales and folklore. I learned that the value of storytelling comes from its inherent representation of its origin culture or cultures that is then passed down to upcoming generations. The paper I wrote analyzing *Madeline's Rescue* is attached in this research section to provide a taste of my children's literature background.

From my years of reading children's literature and recent research, I hope to compile that knowledge of format, illustrations, African American culture, minority representation in children's literature, and a love of storytelling to create *The Field*.

Artistic Strategies

When I first heard "The Field," it was as if a movie were playing in my head. I knew exactly how I wanted this to be illustrated. However, I was constrained by time and ability. Of course, I wanted *The Field* to reflect the feelings I felt that day in class. I wanted future readers to see the illustrations and somehow hear the softness of JV McKinney's voice as his body was growing weaker yet gripping to this story. I decided that watercolor would achieve my goal of

portraying controversial subject matter to children in a way that allows them to engage with the text and subject matter. As Jerry Pinkney, an award-winning illustrator of over one hundred children's book puts it, "You have to be present with [watercolor]," referring to how the color moves across the page almost unexpectedly and blends with other colors or lines ("Conversation Currents" 449). It creates a smooth effect, which is pleasing to the eye and softens the content as a whole.

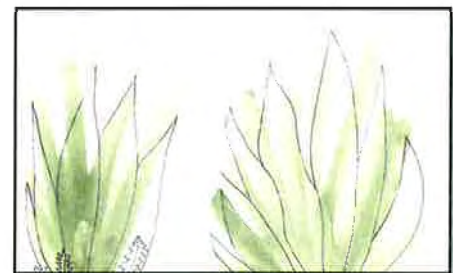
I originally decided to illustrate *The Field* completely in black and white to create a higher contrast and highlight the differences between the two races. However, the more I listened to JV read "The Field," I knew that is not what he would have wanted. After playing ball in the hot summer sun with a mosaic of friends, he would not have wanted to emphasize the stark contrast between him and his friends. The story is not about differences; it is about the lack of differences. This creates a balancing act between accurately representing both cultures and emphasizing the humanness of both ethnic groups. As I mentioned in the previous section, the white boys will not "gain" their peachy skin color until mid-way through the book; while the African American boys' skin tones will be one of the few colors in the first half of the book.

As most children's book and short stories, "The Field" has a clear beginning, middle, and end. It starts in seclusion, with high racial tension and no attempts at reconciliation. By the middle of the story, there's some reconciliation when the boys agree to play ball together and form friendships. Then, it flashes forward twenty years to a time when they are on the cusp of racial reconciliation. Because of this transitioning timeline, I wanted *The Field* to transition the same way. I decided to start in nearly black and white with a picture of a block of Division Street, the only color being a faint green on the Division Street sign. By the middle of the story,

it will be full color. I got the idea from reading *Black is Brawn is Tan*, where the seasons are changing slowly on each page until they've gone through a complete year. It interested me visually as well as helped me understand the story and the passing of time. I chose to put the last third of "The Field" in a note in the back of the book because it flashes forward a decade and might confuse young readers. Also, this allows for the illustrated two-thirds of *The Field* to end on a happy note with the boys realizing that their source of conflict was arbitrary because friendship is more valuable than racism. Since "The Field" has those three divisions, I decided to clearly indicate those with color and separating the text.

When I first decided to illustrate "The Field," I had a firm image in my mind of what it would look like – muted earthy colors, but lots of them, and no hard lines. I wanted the softness of the illustrations to contrast the hardness of the subject matter in order to possibly make the topic of racism and prejudice easier to discuss. As mentioned earlier, using watercolor was best because it softened the subject matter. Racism is a polarized topic, and if I can in some way make the book look soft and garner attention to the topic, I want to do that.

When I began illustrating, I tried to force my own mismatched style of unmatched colors and lines onto "The Field," and it clearly was not matching the style of the story. My personal mismatched style would be better suited for a children's picturebook with a lighter topic.

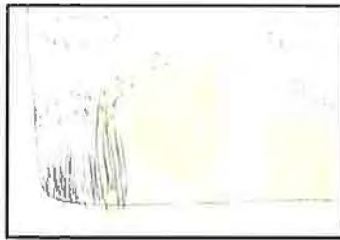


The original style I envisioned for "The Field" - mismatched

After some more experimentation, I found the style of “The Field” to be less mismatched and more architectural with intentional lines and blank space with more muted earthy colors to match the serious mood of the story.



The second attempt at the field with more color, disjointed clouds, and dandelions



Third attempt at the field- bright, stringy, tall grass, and empty clouds



Fourth attempt at the field and final design choice – muted earthy tones and tall, stringy grass

Text Strategies

JV McKinney wrote multiple versions of “The Field,” with different parts of the story serving as the introduction or omitting the ending. I chose this particular version to serve as the accompanying text to my illustrations because it has a clear beginning, middle, and end, which meets the needs of a middle school readership.

Darcy Pattinson, who wrote a blog about books and the standards of publishing, stated that the standard picturebook is thirty-two pages, no more, no less. After formatting “The Field” onto pages, it became 22 pages. I was adamant not to trim the text or try to make edits to JV McKinney’s words. The goal in creating this picturebook was to retain intentionality. He was incredibly intentional in choosing his words through various drafts, and I was intentional in how I handled that text.

In order to format the text of "The Field" onto pages, I had to decide how to divide the pages. I knew where some of the larger shifts or surprise moments happened, and I would have to be intentional in how I divided the text to create suspense or show a shift in time. For example, I originally chose to separate "We were back home for a brief visit that summer and sitting on the front porch when a huge African-American male walked into our yard and approached us. It was one of our friends from the field" across two pages to make it more of a reveal to the reader and possibly surface some racist tendencies in the reader (McKinney). I want the reader to leave this book evaluating their presuppositions and commit to a process of evaluation and change, and choosing to reveal that the large African American man was their friend and not a threat might help in reaching that goal. After editing the book down to fit into the guidelines of children's picturebooks, I chose to emphasize the gut feeling JV McKinney had when he and his friends excluded the African American boys from playing ball with them. I did this by separating the text "The next afternoon, our mound was flattened again. This destroy-and-rebuild malarkey went on for more than a week. We started to bring a load of dirt on the way down" from "It was a lot of work, and something did not feel right" (pages 11-12). It shows differing emotions on the same spread – one page shows bottled anger and a grudge against the African American boys, and the next page shows guilt and the beginnings of empathy.

Not every page is a large shift from the previous. Dividing the text onto pages and spreads was made easier by the text I was given. JV McKinney had divided his story into paragraphs so that it was paced similarly to how he would read it. These divisions are similar to what I wanted. I only broke up a paragraph if there was a shift within it or if it was too long to fit onto a spread.

This wasn't something I originally thought of, but the size of text and amount of text on a page can be indicative of what level of book it is. For example, if it's an early reader's book, the text will be large with not a lot of text on the page, while, a board book with a picture of an apple has the word "apple" in 55 point font above. So, formatting the text on the page in a reasonable, middle school grade reader 14 point font became a bit of a challenge. I chose the font Plain Standard for *The Field* because it is an easy to read serif that, to me, indicates a level of slight maturity but remains informal.

Deciding what text and which illustrations deserved a whole spread rather than just a page for both was difficult. For the most part, pivotal points in "The Field" are shown with a page of text and an accompanying illustration shown on the page beside it. For example, the pitcher's mound being disturbed was pivotal and deserved its own spread (pages 9 and 10).

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Kacy's Thesis Book List

1. *Black is Brown in Tan* by A. Adoff and E.A. McCully (1973) HarperCollins Publishers, New York
2. *Knock Knock: My Dad's Dream for Me* by D. Beaty and B. Collier (2013) Little, Brown and Company, New York.
3. *Mixed Me!* by T. Diggs and S.W. Evans (2015) Feiwel and Friends, New York.
4. *Jacob's New Dress* by S. Hoffman, I. Hoffman and C. Case (2014) Albert Whitman & Company, Chicago
5. *I, Too, Am America* by L. Hughes and B. Collier (text 1925, ill. 2012) Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers, New York
6. *Just Like Josh Gibson* by A. Johnson and B. Peck (2004) Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers, New York
7. *The Color of Us* by K. Katz (1999) Scholastic, New York
8. *Faraway Home* by J. Kurtz and E.B. Lewis (2000) Gulliver Books, San Diego
9. *My Name Was Hussein* by H. Kyuchukov and A. Eitzen (2004) Boyds Mills Press, Honesdale, Pennsylvania
10. *Baseball Saved Us* by K. Mochizuki and D. Lee (1993) Scholastic, New York
11. *Sit-In: How Four Friends Stood Up by Sitting Down* by A.D. Pinkney and B. Pinkney (2010) Little, Brown and Company, New York
12. *Jojo's Flying Side Kick* by B. Pinkney (1995) Aladdin Paperbacks, New York
13. *Chicken Sunday* by P. Polacco (1992) Scholastic, New York
14. *Pink and Say* by P. Polacco (1994) Scholastic, New York
15. *I Love My Hair!* By N.A. Tarpley and E.B. Lewis. Little, Brown and Company, New York
16. *Four Feet, Two Sandals* by K.L. Williams, K. Mohammad, and D. Chakya (2007). Eerdman's Books for Young Readers, Grand Rapids, Michigan.
17. *Each Kindness* by J. Woodson (2012). Nancy Paulsen Books, New York.
18. *Not All Princesses Dress in Pink* by J. Yolen, H.E.Y. Stemple, and A. Languetin (2010). Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers, New York.

Book Title	Author(s)	ISBN	Amazon Used Price	Amazon New Price	BetterWorldBooks
Black is Brown is Tan	A. Adoff and E.A. McCully	978-0064436441	\$4.92	\$6.99	\$3.48
Knock Knock: My Dad's Dream for Me	D. Beaty and B. Collier	978-0316209175	\$5.99	\$14.55	\$7.12
Mixed Me!	T. Diggs and S.W. Evans	978-1250047199	\$9.99	\$10.74	\$11.53
Jacob's New Dress	S. Hoffman, J. Hoffman, and C. Case	978-0807563731	\$12.30	\$12.31	\$17.17
I, Too, Am America	L. Hughes and B. Collier	978-1442420083	\$5.29	\$16.97	\$3.98
Just Like Josh Gibson	A. Johnson and B. Peck	978-1416927280	\$6.38	\$7.99	\$3.48
The Colors of Us	K. Katz	978-0805058642	\$5.99	\$7.99	\$6.90
Faraway Home	J. Kurtz and E.B. Lewis	978-0152000363	\$4.92	N/A	\$3.98
My Name Was Hussein	H. Kyuchukov and A. Eitzen	978-1563979644	\$29	N/A	\$27.98
Baseball Saved Us	K. Mochizuki and D. Lee	978-1880000199	\$4.92	\$8.95	\$3.98
Sit In: How Four Friends Stood Up By Sitting Down	A.D. Pinkney and B. Pinkney	978-0316070164	\$5.99	\$14.08	\$3.98
Jojo's Flying Sidekick	B. Pinkney	978-0689821929	\$4.99	\$7.97	\$3.98
Chicken Sunday	P. Polacco	978-0698116153	\$4.80	\$7.98	\$3.98
Pink and Say	P. Polacco	978-0399226717	\$4.92	\$10.95	\$3.98
I Love My Hair!	N.A. Tarpley and E.B. Lewis	978-0316525589	\$5.89	\$5.76	\$3.98
Four Feet, Two Sandals	K.L. Williams, K. Mohammad, D. Chayka	978-0802852960	\$13.72	\$13.72	\$15.40
Each Kindness	J. Woodson	978-0399246524	\$9.80	\$12.99	\$12.17
Not All Princesses Dress in Pink	J. yolen, H.E.Y. Stemple, A. Languetin	978-1416980186	\$6.73	\$13.98	\$12.39

The Field Page Divisions – Version One
Written by J.V. McKinney
Illustrated by Kacy Spears

Page 1

My brother and I grew up in a small town in the East Arkansas Delta in the '40s and '50s. We lived on Division Street. It was a great place to live if you were white.

Page 2

Our small frame rent house was in the last block of South Division before it passed under the railroad tracks and entered the African-American community.

(quarter page of the rent house and full block in view, division st clearly standing out)

Page 3

Bub and I and three white friends from that tiny one block area loved to play baseball. There was no organized ball back then and no good location to play.

However, just beyond the tracks and across Division, was a field covered with weeds knee high to a grown man. Our dad asked the owners of the field to mow it for us.

Page 4

(Full page of the overgrown field)

Page 5

I was 11 in that spring of '53. It was a time when kids could "just be" and adults did not micromanage every move.

After school that first day, the five of us grabbed our gloves, bats, and a ball and headed down to our new field, pulling a red wagon filled with dirt from our back yard for an official pitcher's mound.

(quarter page of kids pulling red wagon)

Page 6

The freshly mown grass smelled wonderful. The field was huge – room to run, throw and hit as hard as you could without any worry about breaking a window. It was pretty much heaven.

(field)

Page 7

Soon, some black kids about our age drifted in and watched us from the sidelines. After a time, the older one came over to me and asked if they could join us.

"Of course not," I said. "This is our field, and besides, you don't have any gloves or bats."

You just did not do things like that back then in the Delta.

Page 8

(two boys confronting each other)

Page 9

(pitcher's mound destroyed)

Page 10

We returned the next afternoon and our pitcher's mound was kicked to smithereens. The black kids were sitting quietly on the sideline. Immediately, we went back home, refilled the wagon, headed back, rebuilt the mound and played ball the rest of the day.

Page 11

The next afternoon, our mound was flattened again. This destroy-and-rebuild malarkey went on for more than a week. We started bringing a load of dirt on the way down.

Page 12

It was a lot of work, and something did not feel right.

(boys carrying the wagon down to the field stretching across both pages)

Page 13

One afternoon after rebuilding the mound, I simply walked up to the kid who had asked about playing. I told him my name and he told me his. When I handed him my glove, he took it, smiled and said "thanks."

Page 14

(boys sharing gloves)

Page 15

We shared equipment and players doubled. Ten kids had a blast that evening until dark. We could hit to all fields. Before, it was an out if you hit it to right field.

Page 16

The phrase "our field" forever took on a new meaning.

(all boys playing ball – laughing)

Page 17

(new field with burlap bags, chalk baseline, bright blue sky)

Page 18

After school the next day, the pitcher's mound was not disturbed. Also, someone had chalked baselines from home to first to third.

Burlap bags with sawdust had replaced our flimsy pieces of cardboard at each base.

The field had become a very special place for some lucky kids from both sides of the tracks.

Page 19

Four years later in Little Rock, grown-ups politicked to fears, activated troops, closed schools, embarrassed the state forever and took years to accomplish far less than a few kids did in a little over a week at the field.

Page 20

We soon did away with the built-up pitcher's mound. The center of so much conflict in the beginning was not even needed when we started playing together.
(half page of them playing on field without pitcher's mound)

Page 21

On blazing hot summer days, the whole crew would come to our house and play a creative version of "small ball" in the shade of the huge walnut tree in our backyard.
(boys playing under the walnut tree in the backyard, division st sign in the background, kool aid in the foreground, lots of color)

Page 22

Over a three-year period, we wore the grass down to bare dirt. The ball bounced true like on a gym floor. Mom would furnish Kool-Aid.

Page 23

It did not last forever. By junior high we each had other interests at different schools and drifted apart.

Page 24

The grass regrew in our backyard, and I played organized baseball through four years of college, followed by more than 20 years of adult league softball.
I never again played a single game with a black teammate.
Never.
(JV playing college ball, swinging bat)

Page 25

In 1969, dangerous racial tensions were crackling in our small Delta town. Mom and dad still lived in the old house on Division. My brother and I were very concerned.
(picket signs from racial protests?)

Page 26

We were in our 20s, married and with jobs in other cities. We were back home for a brief visit that summer and sitting on the front porch when a huge African-American male walked into our yard and approached us.
(Two brothers sitting on the front porch, African American man approaching)

Page 27

It was one of our friends from the field.

The three of us talked, laughed and shared great stories about beautiful times together years before.

(3 men laughing)

Page 28

Eventually, the conversation changed to ugly times happening right then in the town we loved.

As our friend started to leave, he said, "Don't worry about your parents. They will be safe."

Page 29

The field has become one of the driving narratives of my life. The small rent house is gone, but the field still exists, literally in dirt and grass, and powerfully in metaphor.

Page 30

I can still return to my hometown, walk to the center of the field and "just be."

(JV in the center of the field being)

Page 31

I remember the sweet smell of fresh-cut grass from decades before, the surprise of sawdust bags and chalked baselines, the way black and white hands looked together "climbing the bat" for first pick when choosing sides, the reverence our new friends displayed the first time they held a Jackie Robinson bat.

Page 32

(climbing the bat – hands from both sides)

Page 33

I will never forget the deep emotions stirred when our friend assured us of our parents' safety.

Page 34

My life has been filled with tremendous blessings. Without question, one was being part of a small group of black and white kids, just being kids, years ago in the East Arkansas Delta, playing ball past sundown – on the same side of Division.

Page 35

It was pretty much heaven.

(photo?)

The Field Page Divisions – Final Version
Written by J.V. McKinney
Illustrated by Kacy Spears

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(half page of them playing on field without pitcher's mound)

Page 21-22: The Rest of the Story

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It was pretty much heaven.

THESIS

"The Field"

1. Black is Brown is Tan

- First spread - fall watercolors I could incorporate fall as a season of change
- Difference in how white and African American hair is depicted. - AA has texture and more variance of color to create texture
- Format: small photos surrounding text on one side of the book, full page photo beside
- Spacing of the word "air"
- Changing seasons throughout the book
- Shadows of people - difficult but necessary
- Paced and read as a song

What's it about?

A multicultural family - white dad, African American mom, - and their children singing as the seasons change about how they are many colors.

2. The Colors of Us by Karen Katz

- Carrying the same image over from introductory page to note from the author - but expanding it, adding more
- Various patterns and colors of hands and fingerprints, shapes and sizes - digital? Marker?
- Depiction of African American hair - space between braids, block of color w/ waves
- Different colored panels beneath the text
- Facial features established only by lines
- So many patterns

What's it about?

A young African American girl wants to paint a self-portrait, but she doesn't have the right color of brown. Her mother, an artist, explains that there are several colors of brown and takes her around town to see the different skin colors of passersby. She, Lena, compares them to sweet things like coffee toffee or butterscotch. At the end, Lena has properly mixed all her paints to create accurate portraits of the people she saw.

3. Knock Knock: My Dad's Dream For Me by Daniel Beaty

- Title page establishes setting. *
- Collage style of art
- Detail - seeing wrinkles in a shirt, fine lines on the face
- Hair - textured by color, shape
- Colorful margins change each page
- Transition to adulthood

What's it about?

An African American boy who misses his father after his dad leaves. He writes a letter asking his dad to teach him things he needs to know to become a man, and his dad writes back in words of advice and says he's already a man.

* principle of legitimacy

Reflections on the Development of African American Children's Literature
By Rudine Sims Bishop

Kas

- Books in the 70s and 80s "reflected, with some slight variation, the same history of racist stereotypes and caricatures that had been identified in adult fiction..."

"Many books published in the 19th century and the first two-thirds of the 20th present Black characters as objects of ridicule and generally inferior beings, representation not likely to have been created primarily for Black children to enjoy."

Raises the questions

- Who is the primary audience of children's books featuring AA published between 1965 and 1979?
- To what extent is a distinctive African American cultural experience reflected in these books?
- How the author's implicit cultural perspective and ~~attitude~~ AS effect on the treatment of the book's theme and characters?

Study. Read 150 children's books and divided them into 3 categories →

- "social conscience"
- "meeting point" books
- "culturally conscious"

Honors Thesis - Scholars Day

Intro

I'm Kacy Speirs, a senior Mass Communications major. Freshman year, I took Dr. Amy Samreim's children's literature class and fell in love with children's books and the psychology behind the illustrations. Every choice has a very exact reason that helps tell the tale.

The Process

I chose to illustrate *The Field* because I felt a very strong connection to JV McKinney, author of the story, when I heard a recording of him reading this story in my Issues class.

We both grew up in somewhat small Arkansas towns with a lot of racial division. We both see people as people and seek opportunities to challenge ourselves.

When I decided that I wanted to illustrate the short story, I hesitated because my only art training is in costume rendering and design.

#more about where I
went to school
I read the story

However, I realized those are the only skills I need I realized that this story had such strong imagery the first time I heard it that the illustrations don't have to be perfect.

I started by reading various children's books with styles I liked or comparable stories.

- Two books about baseball
- African American culture (Knock, Knocks)
- The Color of Us - skin tones, style
- Various articles about children's literature, why representation is important (especially in children's literature), what these books do to minorities, etc.

From there, I narrowed in on which styles I liked the most, how the images complement the words on the page, how both parts the illustrations and the text work together to tell the story.

- Watercolor

- The way the text laid on the page

How I divided the text, too many words on a page
Why did I divide it the way I did?

From there, I broke the story down into units, where I saw natural breaks or important plot points. I then chose an idea for an illustration on each spread.

Size of the text
- Not a beginning reader book

Color choice
- muted colors
- increase in color throughout

Differing styles
- show different versions of overgrown field

Photos and author's note

* ~~Go to the~~ Upload to Parment and send it to Autumn

By the end of the week → Write the part of the thesis

Saturday, April 28 → Introduction part of the thesis

Pt. 1

- where the story came from
- your color (has I felt connected to it)
- where I heard it
- I am not an art major, but...

Pt. 2

Research

- what we read
- ~~what~~ why I read those books
- what I got out of them

Pt. 4
↓

Text Strategy

↓
Why?
How?

Author's Note at the end - why? How did I do that?

Pt. 3

Artistic Strategies

- why I chose what I chose and how I did that
- Why black and white?
- Why color?
- Why no clean lines?



Pt. 5

Illustrator's Note

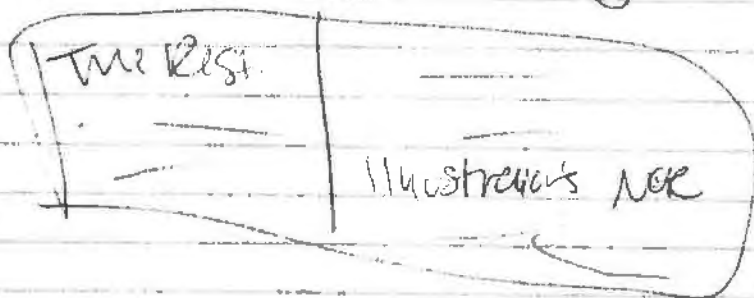
Pt. 6 - Reflection

- process
- what did and didn't work
- struggles to complete
- what I learned
- what I plan to do with this

Scott's idea

THESIS TO DO LIST:

- o In text citations
- o Rework works cited to MLA
- o Scan and input images referenced and my own that I reference
- o Discuss each article individually
- o Discuss my own reading pictorial journey
- o Watercolor as a buildable medium
- o ~~Complete 2 more images~~
- o 2 more sketches
- o Trace with an ink pen
- o Add parts of children's literature paper into research section
- ? o Pitching the concept?
 - o Focus of an analysis - NOT vagueness
 - o Add research
- o Flash forward at the end be an one page / two w/ a bunch of paragraphs
- o Start the book w/ JV remembering the field
 - "It was pretty much heaven"
- Put flash forward in illustrator's note
 - Put the text on the page as an appendix
 - The rest of the story



Children's Literature Paper
"Madeline: Now In Color"

Kacy Earnest

Dr. Sonheim

Children's/YA Literature- Caldecott Picture Book

February 2, 2015

Madeline: Now In Color

In the Caldecott-winning children's book, *Madeline's Rescue* (The Viking Press, 1951), written and illustrated by Ludwig Bemelmans, there are several tiny conflicts that all revolve around the presence of a dog in the lives of the twelve schoolgirls. In such a small book, there are moments of unrest and moments of ease, moments of loss and moments of gain. Since Ludwig Bemelmans both wrote and illustrated this, I believe that he had a firm grasp on exactly what any audience, young or old, would feel when they read this book. He portrayed this knowledge by carefully selecting which images to make colorful spreads rather than his signature yellow single-page illustrations and making his text and illustrations evoke different emotions that work together like a symphony.

Bemelmans is known for creating stories from his life experiences. He often made the claim that he had "no imagination" and that he is "not a writer but a painter."¹ Which is interesting because the reviewers for *Madeline's Rescue* praise that the "Madeline books have garnered a great deal of love from many members of the literary world,"² not the artistic world. I think this is because the words represent a story that was very true to Bemelmans, whereas the illustrations were made later around a somewhat-fictional character. Bemelmans admits that his

Madeline stories came from stories that his mother told him “of her life as a little girl in a convent of Altoetting”³ in combination with stories of his own life. Thus began Madeline.

In Ludwig Bemelmans’ first book of the series, *Madeline*, he opens the story with an all yellow illustration with grey and black lines to create the “old house in Paris.”⁴ Whereas in his Caldecott winning installment in the series, *Madeline’s Rescue*, the same house of the school girls is also illustrated on the first page but in color and panned out to show the Eiffel tower, a river, and some forestry around the house. The colors are that of bruised fruit except for the sky, which is a moody grey-blue. To me, this sets the mood of the upcoming story. Having a colorful opening page was an odd choice to make in a series that opens with the same words every time, but it is significant. In the original *Madeline*, it’s a more heart-jerking tale of a small girl being rushed to the hospital and taken away from her friends for a while because her appendix ruptured. In *Madeline’s Rescue*, the story has the same heart-sinking excitement that happens when tragedy occurs, but it only focuses on Madeline once during the many small conflicts throughout the story. By changing the opening page to something more bright and colorful, one can rightfully assume that the story would be, if anything, only slightly brighter.

After the colorful opening page with the typical Madeline opening-“In an old house in Paris that was covered with vines, lived twelve little girls in two straight lines”⁵ - the first small conflict begins on pages two and three with Madeline walking on the bridge and falling into the river (the only of the small conflicts centered on Madeline), illustrated on two yellow single pages. The next set of pages (four and five), are done in a colorful spread, showing the anguish of all the onlookers and of them rushing to save her. It’s a wide pan, showing Madeline, the river banks, the bridge, and slightly further. Pages six and seven are single yellow pages of a dog jumping into the river to rescue her. Noted in Ludwig Bemelmans Caldecott speech, this story

was based on a compilation of events in his own life. He noticed an object floating in the River Seine one day, and it turned out to be an artificial leg. He saw boys shouting and pointing at it, a group of school girls and their teacher leaning over the bridge to see the mysterious object, then “the dog jumped into the Seine and retrieved it, struggling ashore and pulling it from the water by backing up the stones.”¹ The next colorful page in *Madeline’s Rescue* illustrates what Bemelmans saw that one day by the Seine, a dog pulling Madeline (inspired by an artificial leg) onto the stony bankside of the river as Miss Clavel and the girls gather around (page eight). Since this was an actual event in Bemelmans’ life, he has a more personal attachment to the unfolding of the story and how the audience interprets it. Therefore, he makes a deeper connection with that section of the story and the spark of inspiration that came with it. That would be Bemelmans reasoning in choosing the color of the spread of pages four, five, and eight, a contrast from his default yellow pages.

The next colorful page, page nine, is really peculiar. Opposed to all the other pages in all the other books in the Madeline series, there are no words on page nine of *Madeline’s Rescue*. More interestingly, it’s one of the few colored pages in the book that wasn’t made a spread with the page next to it, making it stand out even more! Since there are no words, the illustration must tell the story of that single page. On it, Miss Clavel has Madeline draped on her shoulder like a baby after being rescued from the river, the eleven other school girls in their two straight lines ahead of her, and the rescuer wagging behind them. This illustration is filled with details. The girls and Miss Clavel with a damp Madeline are marching towards the Pantheon in Paris- a church originally dedicated to St. Genevieve. What’s the name of the four-legged hero trailing behind them? Genevieve! Bemelmans chose to skip the words and illustrate it this way as a way to wordlessly show that they are paying thanks to Genevieve!

The next small conflict occurs on page twenty-two. After many pages of gleefully playing with their Genevieve, of course, the trustees of the orphanage come for their annual inspection and find that there is a mutt living among them! The dog is thrown out. To which, Madeline replies that Genevieve shall have her “VEN-GE-ANCE!” (26) This leads to Miss Clavel and the two girls breaking their two straight lines to search all of Paris for Genevieve, the third conflict. The fourth and final conflict is on page forty-seven when Madeline awakes Miss Clavel. Shortly after, the reader is informed that Genevieve had a litter of puppies.

In the midst of the Madeline series, Bemelmans wrote and illustrated *Parsley*, a children’s book about deer being hunted in their homes. Opposed to the Madeline series, there’s color on every page, and the illustrations were made with more of an artist’s hand. The lines are more precise, creating a more realistic feel to the environment. The guns look real, the hunters vicious, and the animals more realistic, whereas, in the Madeline series, there are few pages of real color, and the characters have little detail to them- a mouth, black-dot eyes, and single-line eyebrows make their faces. The realistic guns and hunters in *Parsley* were made that way to present a more real and slightly morbid subject matter to children. It’s a much more dark story for Bemelmans. There are moments when the reader questions the lives of the deer. Rather than closing with a few joyful rhymes and an illustration of happy girls, *Parsley* closes with now Old Parsley guarding the forest through binoculars. The forest is safe for now, but the reader knows that danger could strike at any moment again. “If he doesn’t die of old age, he and his happy family and his friend the tree will live happily ever after.”⁶ (44)

To me, the Madeline series would fall under the category of children’s book, but if you think of the illustrations and text as two separate parts to one whole, then it may look different. *Saturday Review Magazine* said that “This is not only an amusing story, but a trip to Paris, for

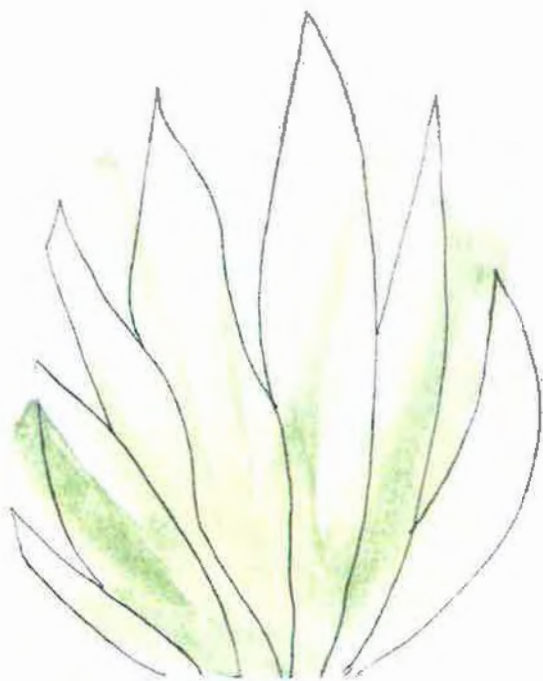
adults as well as children,"⁷ commenting on the effectiveness of the illustrations on a larger audience than intended. The illustrations in *Madeline* are usually a cool yellow with smiling schoolgirls and detailed yellow-hued pictures of Paris. The words create a different tone. Though she is said to be brave, the world is testing that. The text creates tales of woe to poor Madeline. She gets her appendix taken out after it ruptures in the first installment in the series. She falls into a river to her almost-death in *Madeline's Rescue*. It doesn't seem as jolly and bright as the pictures. Somehow, the illustrations and the text work together to present that though the things that happen to Madeline are dismal, she keeps a bright attitude and always works through it.

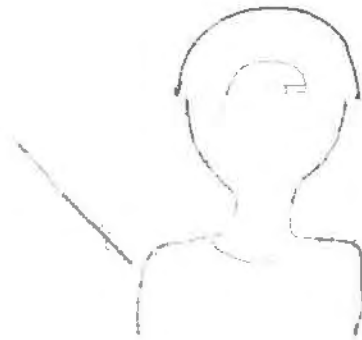
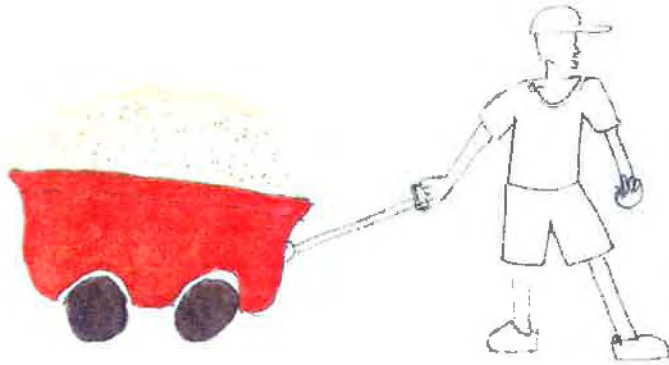
To conclude, Ludwig Bemelmans uses both text and colorful illustrations to portray the intended emotions of worry and delight to both the children and adult audience that *Madeline's Rescue* has reached.

Drawing Process



Draft of the field with various tests for skin colors







Drafts of the field and color testing sky color



Color testing for the field

Drafts of Research Paper

10 May 2018

Kacy,

If you have any questions about my
comments, maybe we could talk
~~Monday~~ Friday afternoon?

Dr. Sonheim

Kacy Spears

“The Field: A Study in Illustrations”

A Senior Thesis

Part 1: The Origin

Kacy,
Your 1st sentence
includes your
idea for other
students, but
re-launch
your idea for
an audience
off campus.
Your thesis is
not about a
guest speaker.
Isn't your
thesis about
storytelling?
How to tell a
story? How
to retell a
story? At
this point,
you're not
desperate.
Consider the
heart of
your project.
You need a
whole new
introductory
paragraph.

One day in Issues of Communication class with Dr. Rebecca Jones, we had a guest speaker. Dean Bryan McKinney of the Hickingbotham School of Business came to our class to present his father's short story entitled "The Field." JV McKinney, Bryan's father, wrote this non-fiction piece about his childhood in the Arkansas Delta, where racist tensions were high. His parents lived on Division Street, appropriately named, as it was the street that separate the white community from the African American community. "The Field" is set in 1950's Arkansas, which had not yet integrated.

That day in class, Dean McKinney played a recording of his father reading "The Field," and I felt immediately moved by it. I had also grown up in a small Arkansas town with racial tension and a somewhat divided community. I grew up with African American neighbors that my father shunned for no other reason than the fact that they were different, and he was raised to believe different meant a slew of other things, like lazy, rude, loud, etc. In reality, they were families just like us, trying to make it through today and then the next day, just like us. As I sat in class, hearing JV's voice read his story, I cried. I cried with Bryan McKinney, mourning the loss of his father. I cried with JV, mourning the fallen state of this world where we are blinded by our own misconstrued understanding. About a week went by, and I could not get "The Field" out of my mind. I kept listening to JV's recording online and feeling what he felt, though I've never played baseball and wasn't raised in the 50's, I felt connected to him. After getting the thumbs up from the McKinney family, I raced to my thesis advisor, then Dr. Wink, and he agreed to start this project with me.

Name these neighbors.

Common sense

Kacy,
As you explain the history of the project, move away from a play by play approach - to pitching the concept. Add 2 concepts:
1) What questions are you seeking to answer about storytelling?
2) What methods do you want to use to seek answers?
3) How does the process of your product live with the + time?

We created a plan to read various picture books, select aspects we like and that reflect "The Field" accurately, then select a design strategy of how we want the book to look/what feel we want the book to have, break the book down into pages, then finally, I ^{would} ~~will~~ illustrate "The Field."

Part 2: Research

"Picturebooks are written artifacts that convey cultural messages and values about society and help children learn about their world." - Melanie Koss

Kacy, Your approach ~~is~~ ^{is} ~~counters~~ ^{is} my philosophy of art. I believe that if a story is Good, it will transform you, but if a story tries to change you + its more didactic then just a good story, why read it?

At the beginning of this thesis, Dr. Wink, Autumn Mortenson and I agreed that we should read various children's books as well as articles that address issues within children's books. There

were six topics we wanted to cover: the theme of baseball, racism presented within children's books, the affects of racial representation within children's literature, African American culture, design of text on the page, and technique used by the illustrator.

To address those six topics, we created a bibliography that would serve as my roadmap to gaining a partial understanding of each of the six topics and using that knowledge to mold my own version of a children's book using JV McKinney's short story.

First, I read articles that confronted the topic of representation of diversity within children's literature in order to gain an understanding of the children's literature market as a whole through graphs, comparisons, and author's commentary. According to Koss (mentioned in the epigraph), children use literature as a mirror as they seek to find themselves and also maps as they use books to help them get to where they want to be. Koss also performed a

*On first name of an author, give full name and ^{full} title with date of publication. If the book has an illustrator, add the artist's name, too.

study with 144 children's books analyzing the ethnicity, gender, and ability/disability represented. From that study, she found that 75 percent of the main characters represented were white. Only 15 percent were black, and the remaining 10 percent was divided between Asian, Latino, Native American, and Unknown ethnicities. It was clear to me that though we

Add Kwame Alexander who has started a new imprint to launch book for all kind of kids.

Cite the study. Remember in research, you cite paraphrases as well as direct quotations.

Do not ~~do~~ introduce the quotation. Introduce it with author's title.

Without equal representation of all cultures in literature, there will always be some group that feels underrepresented and thus misunderstood or displaced in society as a whole.

"The pervasive whiteness of children's literature means that white children enjoy valuable goods that are less easily accessed by children of color...[It] also contributes to the notion that white is the norm or default while other races are variations from that norm."¹

Comment on quotation. Do not read paragraph with QT.

After reading several articles about the importance of representation in children's literature, how to accurately portray African Americans, and the obligation of consumers to support minority-centered publications, my thesis director and I read several books ranging in theme and race to get an idea of how I wanted *The Field*² to look and feel. As a communications major that has taken a design class, I value the look of words on the page and how text and illustrations dance together to tell the overall story.

Expand this so that you give mini-abstracts of each work. Shows what you surveyed. Saying you read books is not research. Sharing what you learned and analyzing it is.

The first book I read was *Black is Brown is Tan*, which tells of a multicultural family embracing that their skin tones spread across the spectrum. As the child narrator put it "this is the way it is for us. This is the way we are." As the children sing/narrate the book, the seasons

¹ Welch, Brynn F. (2016). The Pervasive Whiteness of Children's Literature: Collective Harms and Consumer Obligations. *Social Theory and Practice*, Vol. 42 (No.2), 375-376.

² Note: "The Field" refers to JV McKinney's short story; *The Field* refers to my illustrations and JV McKinney's text combined.

change behind them as spring turns to summer turns to fall. It's as if the author is slyly stating that change is inevitable, despite such uproar and demonization of multicultural families, times are changing; We are all changing.

Revisit to analyze what the format is.

Kacy's Quote from the text so we get the tone + feel of the pb.

I took away aspects of page format and illustrations from *Black is Brown is Tan*. The words are formatted on the page to emphasize the illustrations. They outline the illustrations and draw the eye down so as to take it all in. The font choice is bold and fun, chosen to indicate this is an early reader book. While *The Field* will not be an early reader's book, it is nice to see how to avoid tactics that would indicate that it could be. The illustrations are all done in watercolor with marker and pencil markings to add depth. The illustrator, Emily Arnold McCully, puts precise detail into the depiction of African American curly hair, a task not easily done with watercolor. It shows how intentional and sacred that aspect of African American culture is to the illustrator, author, and reader. I want to take that intentionality of illustrations and apply it to *The Field* as a way to communicate how to best use white privilege – by spending more time supporting people of color and encouraging them to be put in the spotlight above white people. The white boys in *The Field* do not develop color or a tone to their skin until the middle of the book, while the African American boys are drawn in full color, with a range of hairstyle colors and textures.

Do you know what the font is?

Give full author's name, date, + title.

* *The Colors of Us* has a similar feel. Lena, a seven-year-old with "cinnamon"-colored skin walks the reader around town introducing her friends, neighbors, babysitter, and more while describing their skin color in positive comparisons to food or jewels. The style is much different than *Black is Brown is Tan* with the illustrations being done in marker and digital patterns. It

"similar" tells me nothing. Give the feel.

focus contrast

shows a whole neighborhood of multicultural individuals, all with distinct features and colors of their heritage.

flesh this out.
I cannot see "distinct" features.

To address the topic of African American culture shown in children's picture books in my research, I chose three books – *Knock Knock: My Dad's Dream For Me*, *Chicken Sunday*, and *Faraway Home* – to help me gain a clearer understanding of a culture I am not a part of.

On 1st mention, use author's full names + illustrator's full names and dates of publication.

In *Knock Knock: My Dad's Dream For Me*, an African American boy writes a letter to his father after he leaves asking for his dad to teach him what he needs to know to become a man. He waits impatiently for a reply, for he is the only man of the house currently. His dad replies with a letter simply stating that he is already a man. To me, this book addressed a few aspects of African American culture: The large percentage difference between African American fathers and white fathers, the loss of childhood from societal expectations.

??? Explain this: what expectations?

Similarly, in *Faraway Home*, Desta, a young African American girl, tries to come to terms with her Ethiopian roots when her father must leave to care for her grandmother. This book reinforces the idea that men are to care for the whole family and play strong roles in African American culture. Desta tries to imagine Ethiopia through her first world lens and finds confusion in the differences. The family photos covering the tables and end tables in the living room of Desta's house show how communal and close families are in African American culture.

Chicken Sunday addresses a more universal theme of African American culture which is religion. In *Chicken Sunday*, Miss Eula ensures the readers know that religion is a driving force in Southern African Americans. From church, to hours of cooking, to serving guests, and having community and fellowship, Sundays are viewed as the most important day of the week to Miss Eula. When her grandsons and neighbor, a child of Polish immigrants, are falsely accused of

vandalism, Miss Eula immediately feels the need to redeem herself, or really, redeem the name of African Americans in the South.

There were several similarities between *Chicken Sunday* and "The Field." First, both stories revolve around a mixed group of kids who become friends due to a shared love. For the kids in *Chicken Sunday*, it was a love of Miss Eula and grandmother figures; For the kids in "The Field," it was a love of baseball and just being kids that bound them. Also, in both stories, the narrator flashes forward at the end to update the reader on the continued friendship and shared love.

To gain a clearer understanding of how baseball, sports, and minorities are represented within children's literature, I read *Baseball Saved Us*, a story about a Japanese American family in World War II turning an internment camp field into a baseball field to uplift spirits and find community; *Just Like Josh Gibson*, a heart-warming tale told by an African American grandmother to her granddaughter about how she overcame adversity and sexism by being better at baseball than all the boys and getting to play on the team; and *Jojo's Flying Side Kick*, a tale of a little girl learning lessons from her grandfather about Tae Kwon Do and having confidence in herself. **HOW DID THIS HELP WITH MY PROJECT

Part 3: Artistic Strategies

When I first heard "The Field," it was as if a movie ~~was~~ ^{were} playing in my head. I knew ~~what~~ ^{want to do} exactly how I wanted this to be illustrated. However, I was constrained by time and ability. So, I ~~paper~~ ^{wrote} researched a few children's literature illustrations (featured above), and decided on creating ~~on how~~ ^{on how} illustrations that are simple and reflect the heart of the story, nothing flashy. I originally ~~chose~~ ^{chose} ~~pb~~ ^{pb} ~~worked!~~

↳ Again, revise so that you are NOT writing a color commentary; rather, you are presenting an analysis.

I would insert here what you know @ storytelling though write picture in your favorite picture books; then, synthesize what you learned with what you want to do. You could insert the paper you wrote from on how you chose pb worked!

decided to illustrate *The Field* completely in black and white to create a higher contrast and highlight the differences between the two races. The more I listened to JV read "The Field," I knew that's not what he wanted. After playing ball in the hot summer sun with a mosaic of friends, he wouldn't have wanted there to be such a starch^{k?} contrast. The story isn't about differences; it's about the lack of differences. This creates a balancing act between accurately representing both cultures and emphasizing the humanness of both ethnic groups. As I mentioned in the previous section, the white boys will not "gain" their peachy skin color until mid-way through the book; While the African American boys skin tones will be one of the few colors in the first half of the book.

To me, there are three clear divisions within "The Field." It starts in seclusion, with high racial tension and no attempts at reconciliation. By the middle of the story, there's some reconciliation when the boys agree to play ball together and form friendships. Then, it flashes forward ^{twenty} 20 years to a time when they are on the cusp of racial reconciliation. Because of this transitioning timeline, I wanted *The Field* to transition the same way. I decided to start in nearly black and white with a picture of a block of Division Street, the only color being a faint green on the Division Street sign. By the end of the book, it will be full color. I got the idea from reading *Black is Brown is Tan*, where the seasons are changing slowly on each page until they've gone through a complete year. It interested me visually as well as helped me understand the story and the passing of time ^g better. Since "The Field" has those three divisions, I decided to clearly indicate those with color.

When I first decided to illustrate "The Field," I had a firm image in my mind of what it would look like – muted colors, but lots of them, and no hard lines. However, I was limited by

Who is
your
reader?
An adult?

make it more of a reveal to the reader and possibly surface some racist tendencies. I want the reader to leave this book evaluating their presuppositions and commit to a process of evaluation and change, and choosing to reveal that the large African American man was their friend might help in reaching that goal.

Not every page is a large shift from the previous. Dividing the text onto pages and spreads was made easier by the text I was given. JV McKinney had divided his story into paragraphs so that it was paced similarly to how he would read it. I found those to be similar to what I wanted. I only broke up a paragraph if there was a shift within it or if it was too long to fit onto a spread. This wasn't something I originally thought of, but the size of text and amount of text on a page can be indicative of what level of book it is. For example, if it's an early

You have
switched
to 2nd
person.

reader's book, the text will be large with not a lot of text on the page (think of a board book with a picture of an apple, and the word "apple" is in 55 point font above). So, formatting the text on the page in a reasonable, middle school grade reader 14 point font became a bit of a challenge.

I chose the font Plaine Standard for *The Field* because it's an easy to read serif that, to me, indicates a level of slight maturity but remains informal.

Decided what text and ^{??}photos deserved a whole spread rather than just a page for both was difficult. For the most part, pivotal points in "The Field" are shown with a spread of text on one page and an accompanying illustration shown beside it. For example, the pitcher's mound being disturbed was pivotal and deserved its own spread (pages 9 and 10). Contrastingly, the spread on page 34 and 35 doesn't even have a photo to accompany the text because the words are preparing the reader for the end and don't necessarily need a photo to say that

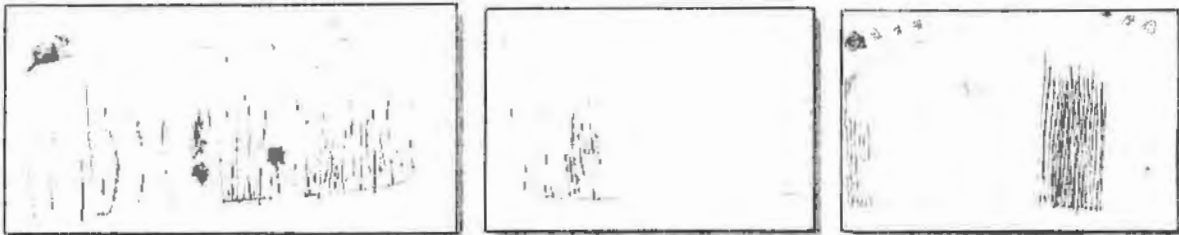
my own ability. I haven't had much training in anything but watercolor, so I came to the conclusion that in order to accurately represent the story, I must use my best skills. After starting the illustrations, I realized that using watercolor was best because it softened the subject matter. Racism is a polarized topic to discuss at the moment, and if I can in some way make the book look soft and eye-grabbing, I want to do that.

This doesn't look kitschy to me?!

When I began illustrating, I tried to force my own kitschy style of unmatched colors and lines onto "The Field," and it clearly wasn't matching the style of the story.



After some more experimentation, I found the style of "The Field" to be less kitschy and more architectural with intentional lines and blank space with more muted colors to match the mood of the story.



When did you switch from drawings to photos?

Part 4: Text Strategies

In order to format the text of "The Field" onto pages, I had to decide how to divide the pages. I knew where some of the larger shifts or surprise moments happened would have to be divided. For example, I chose to separate "We were back home for a brief visit that summer and sitting on the front porch when a huge African-American male walked into our yard and approached us/ It was one of our friends from the field" (pages 26-27) across two pages to

JV's story has multiple endings. You need 1 beg, middle, and.

Kacy, Most picture books have a standard dummy page count. JV's story has too many words for a picture book. You would need to severely trim its words; then, as in the end of Coleen by Wiesniewski, you could add an epilogue note about the outcome.

In order to format the text of "The Field" onto pages, I had to decide how to divide the pages. I knew where some of the larger shifts or surprise moments happened would have to be divided. For example, I chose to separate "We were back home for a brief visit that summer and sitting on the front porch when a huge African-American male walked into our yard and approached us/ It was one of our friends from the field" (pages 26-27) across two pages to make it more of a reveal to the reader and possibly surface some racist tendencies. I want the reader to leave this book evaluating their presuppositions and commit to a process of evaluation and change, and choosing to reveal that the large African American man was their friend might help in reaching that goal.

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Part 5: Illustrator's Note

I was inspired to bring this real life story back to life when I heard JV McKinney's voice read "The Field" in an undergraduate class. His son, Bryan McKinney, presented it to my Issues in Communications class, which focused on understanding the history of and modern day threat of racism.

JV McKinney has since gone to heaven, and I pray his story will be immortalized within these pages. Thank you to the McKinney family for providing me with pictures and answering all my questions in this process. More than anything, thank you for letting JV's story live on and for allowing me to get to know him.

Part 6: Reflection

This process has taught me a lot about myself. I'm a dreamer who clings to ^{her} ~~their~~ ideas and almost never fulfills them. When I started illustrating, I had clear images in my mind of how the field should look, Division Street, the boys, and all, but I'm not an artist. Getting my hand to do what my mind was thinking would take hours, sometimes as much as 5 hours to fully illustrate one half page illustration. It was long, and I'll admit to getting burned out. I've also learned that

I thrive on trying to do the impossible. When thesis deadlines were approaching, I flipped a switch into maximum overdrive and churned out content I was pleased with, but it was much less content than I wanted to create. I learned that I would much rather have a small project that meets my standards rather than a grand-scale project that is unreachable.

Through this process, I was reaffirmed in my belief that illustrations play an integral part of storytelling that draws the reader to the book, sets the stage, and allows the reader to suspend disbelief. I tried to be intentional with all my illustrations. Drawing Division Street on the first page was difficult and time consuming, but I wanted the readers to get the sense that this was a small town in the Delta with close neighbors and a friendly feel despite the racial tension. I wanted the racism to come as a shock to readers as if something like

microaggressions and segregation could never happen on a close-knit community like that of Division Street.

Have you
defined
"microaggression"
?

Overall, I enjoyed the process of walking in the shoes of an illustrator, and I hope to complete *The Field* shortly after this thesis is completed and possibly publish it with permission of the McKinney family.

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Are you
using AP?
Not sure?

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If the illustrator of the pb is different from the author, add his or her name to the citation.
Add your favorite picture books to the bibliography.

FW: Attached Image

Autumn Mortenson

Fri 5/11/2018 9:45 AM

to Kacy Earnest (ear58638) <ear58638@OBU.EDU>;

 1 attachment

0502_001.pdf;

Here are my most recent edits.

Best,
Autumn

From: Image Runner

Sent: Friday, May 11, 2018 10:24 AM

To: Autumn Mortenson <mortensona@OBU.EDU>

Subject: Attached Image

Part 1 : The Origin

I have never ^{WC} experienced the black experience, and I never will. I was raised to believe that God made black to separate from white, creating a spectrum that doesn't touch.

After leaving my family's home at 18 and integrating myself into college, I found that is not how God made man, and the only way I can even try to understand a culture so foreign to my own is to read their children's literature and see what their young eyes saw to try to piece together how their background and my background vary.

Senior year of college, I enrolled in Issues of Communication, a class focused on pinpointing the issues of racism and the long-term effects of microaggressions, defined by Merriam-Webster Dictionary as "a comment or action that subtly and often unconsciously or unintentionally expresses a prejudice attitude toward a member of a marginalized group (such as a racial minority)." ^{Quotation (author, page#).} One of our guest speakers, Dean Bryan McKinney of the Hickingbotham School of Business, came to present "The Field," a short story written by his father, JV McKinney, about living in the 1950's segregated Arkansas Delta. Dean McKinney played a recording of his father reading "The Field," and I felt immediately moved by it. I had also grown up in a small Arkansas town with racial tension and a somewhat divided community. I grew up with African American neighbors, Mr. Ray to the right and Mr. Mario to the left, that my father shunned for no other reason than the fact that they were different, ^{My father} and he was raised to believe different meant a slew of other things, like lazy, rude, loud, and a burden on society. In reality, ^{my neighbors} they were families just like us, trying to make it through ^{the day onto} today and then the next ^{day,} just like us.

As I sat in class, hearing JV's voice read his story, I cried. I cried with Bryan McKinney, mourning the loss of his father. I cried with JV, mourning the fallen state of this world where we are blinded by our own misconstrued understanding. About a week went by, and I could not get "The Field" out of my mind. I kept listening to JV's recording online and feeling what he felt. I had so many unanswered questions – What does racial reconciliation look like on a realistic face-to-face scale? How do children's books shape our views as adults? How important is racial representation and diversity in children's books? How do I represent controversial subject matter to children? Do I, as a white person, have the right/the voice to illustrate a children's book about racial reconciliation?

To get answers, I started a thesis and created a plan to read various picture books, select aspects I like and that reflect "The Field" accurately, then select a design strategy of how I want the book to look ^{and} what feel ~~I want the book to have~~, break the book down into pages, then finally, I would illustrate ^{it} "The Field."

Part 2: Research

"Picturebooks are written artifacts that convey cultural messages and values about society and help children learn about their world." - Melanie Koss

To possibly find some answers, my thesis advisors and I agreed that I should read various children's books as well as articles that address issues within children's books. By researching these six topics, we felt that I could gain a clearer understanding of how to best represent "The Field": the affects on children of racial representation within children's literature, African

American culture, racism presented within children's books, ^{Extra space?} design of text on the page, technique used by the illustrator, and the theme of baseball

To address those six topics, we created a bibliography that would serve as my roadmap to gaining a partial understanding of each of the six topics and using that knowledge to mold my own version of a children's book using JV McKinney's short story.

First, I read articles that confronted the topic of representation of diversity within children's literature in order to gain an understanding of the children's literature market as a whole through graphs, comparisons, and author's commentary. According to Melanie Koss, author of "Diversity in Contemporary Picturebooks: A Content Analysis" ^{Page 11} (2015), children use literature as a mirror as they seek to find themselves. They also use children's literature as maps to help them get to where they want to be. Koss also performed a study with 144 children's books analyzing the ethnicity, gender, and ability/disability represented. From that study, she found that 75 percent of the main characters represented were white. Only 15 percent were black, and the remaining 10 percent was divided between Asian, Latino, Native American, and Unknown ethnicities. It was clear to me that though ^{Americans} we pride ourselves on being a diverse country, that is not reflected in our children's literature. This is not to say that all children's books must accurately represent all cultures. Rather, Koss was providing data to prove that there is a general lack of effort and color in children's literature.

Without equal representation of cultures in literature, there will always be some group that feels underrepresented and thus misunderstood or displaced in society as a whole. While this may seem like an issue confined to children's literature, it is not. As Koss said, children use picturebooks to find themselves and to search for direction. By limiting the color within

picturebooks, the feeling of being displaced or underrepresented carries with that child into adulthood and has led to a separation of power and influence.

Bryan Welch analyzed how harmful that 75 percent can be in "The Pervasive Whiteness of Children's Literature: Collective Harms and Consumer Obligations" (2016) when he says "The pervasive whiteness of children's literature means that white children enjoy valuable goods that are less easily accessed by children of color...[It] also contributes to the notion that white is the norm or default while other races are variations from that norm. Growing up in a majority white school with majority white friends, it is easy to see how whiteness can be considered the norm as it was all I saw. As a kid, I saw white presidents on TV, white characters in cartoons, white children in my books. It is an inverse relationship; as multiracial representation in printed media increases, the power of a singular race decreases."

-Individually discuss each article, give mini-abstracts, show what I surveyed, share what I learned and analyze what it is

→ After reading several articles about the importance of representation in children's literature, the necessary emphasis of accurately portraying African Americans in illustrations, and the obligation of consumers to support minority-centered publications, I read several children's picturebooks ranging in theme and race to get an idea of how I wanted *The Field*¹ to look and feel. As a communications major that has taken a design class, I value the look of words on the page and how text and illustrations dance together to tell the overall story.

¹ Note: "The Field" refers to JV McKinney's short story; *The Field* refers to my illustrations and JV McKinney's text combined.

The first book I read was *Black is Brown is Tan*, which tells of a multicultural family embracing how their skin tones spread across the spectrum. As the child narrator put it "this is the way it is for us. This is the way we are." **CITATION** As the children sing/narrate the book, the seasons change behind them as spring turns to summer turns to fall. It seems as if the author is slyly stating that change is inevitable, despite such uproar and demonization of multicultural families, times are changing; we are all changing.

-Add a quote that tells of the tone and feel for *Black is Brown is Tan*

-What IS the page format of *Black is Brown is Tan*?

-Add a page from *Black is Brown is Tan* that captures the feel for the book and shows how the illustrations and text work together

After reading *BB*, I had a better grasp on ~~I took away aspects of page format and illustrations from *Black is Brown is Tan*~~. The words are formatted on the page to emphasize the illustrations. They ^{we?} outline the illustrations and draw the eye down so the reader places equal value in the text and illustrations. The font choice is bold and fun, **SIZE OF FONT?** chosen to indicate this is an early reader book. While *The Field* will not be an early reader book, it is nice to see how to avoid tactics that would indicate it could be. The illustrations are done in watercolor with marker and pencil markings to add depth. The illustrator, Emily Arnold McCully, puts precise detail into the depiction of African American curly hair, a task not easily done with watercolor. It shows how intentional and sacred that aspect of African American culture is to the illustrator, author, and ² reader. I want to take that intentionality of illustrations and apply it to *The Field* as a way to communicate how to best use white privilege – by spending more time supporting people of color and encouraging them to be put in the spotlight equal to white people. Because of this, the white boys in *The Field* do

not develop color or a tone to their skin until the middle of the book, while the African American boys are drawn in ~~full color~~, with ~~a range~~ ^{a range of unique} of hairstyle colors and textures.

Karen Katz's *The Colors of Us* (1999) is presented from a similar perspective as *Black is Brown is Tan* with a child trying to understand her multicolored surroundings. Lena, a seven-year-old with "cinnamon"-colored skin walks the reader around town introducing her friends, neighbors, babysitter, and more while describing their skin color in positive comparisons to food or jewels. ^{Citation} The style contrasts that of *Black is Brown is Tan* with the illustrations being done in marker and digital patterns. ^{The Color has bolder illustrations} It is ~~much more bold~~ with bright contrasting colors and multiple patterns on a single page, whereas *Black is Brown is Tan* is done completely in watercolor with earthy tones. *The Colors of Us* follows Lena through a whole neighborhood of multicultural individuals, all with distinct features such as their hair texture, how voluminous or flat their hair is, the shape of their nose, the thinness of their lips, and colors of their heritage.

-Give examples of how Lena describes colors of various neighbors

-Add images of *The Colors of Us*

To find answers on how African American culture is already being represented in children's picturebooks, I chose three books -- Daniel Beaty's *Knock Knock: My Dad's Dream For Me* (2013), Patricia Polacco's *Chicken Sunday* (1992), and Jane Kurtz's *Faraway Home* (2000). ^{Repetitious} ~~to help me gain a clearer understanding of the African American culture.~~

-Include illustrator's names

- Why did I choose these books to represent African American culture? Did they appear in search I did on African American children's literature?

by _____ e: illustrated by _____

In *Knock Knock: My Dad's Dream For Me*, an African American boy writes a letter to his father. **The boy's father has left because _____.** The boy asks for his dad to teach him ^{how to} become a man. He waits impatiently for a reply, for ^{b/c} he is the ~~only man of the house~~ ^{he} and feels pressured to step into the place ^{left} of his father as head of the household and provider. His dad replies with a letter simply stating that the boy is already a man **because _____.** To me, this

book addressed a few aspects of African American culture: The large percentage difference between African American fathers and white fathers, the loss of childhood from the cultural expectations that African American men are to provide for their families, ^{Awk} not matter their age.

What is this difference? That they don't love their children?

-Add more detail- What is the percentage of difference in fathers? What are the societal expectations? Are they shown in the book? How?

by _____ e: illustrated by _____

Similarly, in *Faraway Home*, ^{by _____} Desta, a young African American girl, tries to come to terms with her Ethiopian roots when her father must leave to care for her grandmother. This book reinforces the idea that men are to care for the whole family and play strong roles in African American culture. Desta tries to imagine Ethiopia through her first world lens and finds confusion in the differences. The family photos covering the tables and end tables in the living room of Desta's house show how communal and close families are in African American culture.

Is the book about religion?

-How does *Faraway Home* relate to "The Field," and what did I take away from it?

^{written by _____} *Chicken Sunday* addresses a more universal theme of African American culture which is ^{the character of} religion. In *Chicken Sunday*, Miss Eula ensures the readers know that religion is a driving force in Southern African Americans. From church, to hours of cooking, to serving guests, and having community and fellowship, Sundays are viewed as the most important day of the week to Miss Eula. When her grandsons and neighbor, a child of Polish immigrants, are falsely accused of

Awk

vandalism, Miss Eula immediately feels the need to redeem herself, or really, redeem the name of African Americans in the South.

There were several similarities between *Chicken Sunday* and "The Field." First, both stories revolve around a mixed group of kids who become friends due to a shared love. For the kids in *Chicken Sunday*, it was a love of Miss Eula and grandmother figures; For the kids in "The Field," it was a love of baseball and just being kids that bound them. Also, in both stories, the

Ask

narrator flashes forward at the end to update the reader on the continued friendship and shared love.

illustrated?

Ask - split into ind. sentences

To gain a clearer understanding of how baseball, sports, and minorities are represented within children's literature, I read *Baseball Saved Us*, a story about a Japanese American family in World War II turning an internment camp field into a baseball field to uplift spirits and find community; *Just Like Josh Gibson*, a heart-warming tale told by an African American grandmother to her granddaughter about how she overcame adversity and sexism by being better at baseball than all the boys and getting to play on the team; and *Jojo's Flying Side Kick*, a tale of a little girl learning lessons from her grandfather about Tae Kwon Do and having confidence in herself. What was your take-away?

who?

Reading these various children's books helped me better understand what is already in the children's literature market and what part illustrators play in the grand scheme of publishing a book.

How? In what way?

As a freshman, I enrolled in a Children's Literature class that worked to analyze the story, illustrations, adaptations, and theme of fairy tales and folklore. I learned that the value of

storytelling comes from its inherent representation of its origin culture or cultures that is then passed down for upcoming generations.

-What I know about storytelling through words and pictures in my favorite storybooks

-Synthesize what I learned with what I want to do.

Part 3: Artistic Strategies

When I first heard "The Field," it was as if a movie were playing in my head. I knew exactly how I wanted this to be illustrated. However, I was constrained by time and ability. Of course, I wanted *The Field* to reflect the feelings I felt that day in class. I wanted future readers to see the illustrations and somehow hear the softness of JV McKinney's voice as his body was growing weaker yet gripping to this story. I decided that watercolor would achieve my goal of portraying controversial subject matter to children in a way that allows them to engage with the material. As Jerry Pinkney, an award-winning illustrator of over one hundred children's book puts it, "You have to be present with [watercolor]," referring to how the color moves across the page almost unexpectedly and blends with other colors or lines. It creates a smooth effect, which is pleasing to the eye and softens the content as a whole.

What? Awk w c

text: sub: matter

Citation

I don't think you need to do this

-Mention what awards Jerry Pinkney has won

I originally decided to illustrate *The Field* completely in black and white to create a higher contrast and highlight the differences between the two races. The more I listened to JV read "The Field," I knew that's not what he wanted. After playing ball in the hot summer sun with a mosaic of friends, he wouldn't have wanted there to be such a stark contrast. The story isn't about differences; it is about the lack of differences. This creates a balancing act between

Would have

to emphasize the

-the differences between him & his friends

accurately representing both cultures and emphasizing the humanness of both ethnic groups. As I mentioned in the previous section, the white boys will not "gain" their peachy skin color until mid-way through the book. While the African American boys' skin tones will be one of the few colors in the first half of the book.

As most children's book and short stories, "The Field" has a clear beginning, middle, and end. It starts in seclusion, with high racial tension and no attempts at reconciliation. By the middle of the story, there's some reconciliation when the boys agree to play ball together and form friendships. Then, it flashes forward twenty years to a time when they are on the cusp of racial reconciliation. Because of this transitioning timeline, I wanted *The Field* to transition the same way. I decided to start in nearly black and white with a picture of a block of Division Street, the only color being a faint green on the Division Street sign. By the end of the book, it will be full color. I got the idea from reading *Black is Brown is Tan*, where the seasons are changing slowly on each page until they've gone through a complete year. It interested me visually as well as helped me understand the story and the passing of time. Since "The Field" has those three divisions, I decided to clearly indicate those with color.

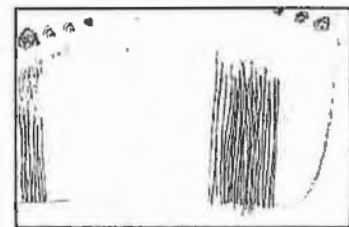
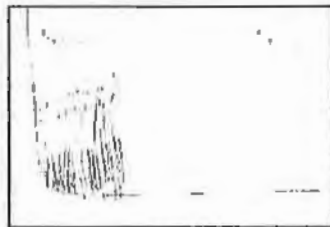
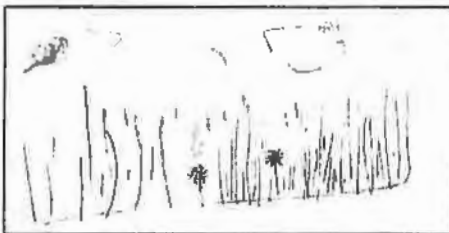
When I first decided to illustrate "The Field," I had a firm image in my mind of what it would look like – muted earthy colors, but lots of them, and no hard lines. I wanted the softness of the illustrations to contrast the hardness of the subject matter in order to possibly make the topic of racism and prejudice easier to discuss. As mentioned earlier, using watercolor

Will some of this
change b/c of adding
the flash forward as
a note?

was best because it softened the subject matter. Racism is a polarized topic to discuss ~~at the moment~~, and if I can in some way make the book look soft and eye-grabbing, I want to do that.

When I began illustrating, I tried to force my own kitschy style of unmatched colors and lines onto "The Field," and it clearly wasn't matching the style of the story.

After some more experimentation, I found the style of "The Field" to be less kitschy and more architectural with intentional lines and blank space with more muted colors to match the mood of the story.



-Find another word for "kitschy" – mismatched? Disjointed? State that it isn't a style that I felt fit children's picturebooks

Part 4: Text Strategies

JV McKinney wrote multiple versions of "The Field," with different parts of the story serving as the introduction or omitting the ending. I chose this particular version to serve as the accompanying text to my illustrations because it has a clear beginning, middle, and end, which meets the needs of a middle school readership.

Darcy Pattinson, who writes a blog about books and the standards of publishing, stated that the standard picturebook is thirty-two pages, no more, no less. After formatting "The Field" onto pages, it became ___ pages. I was adamant not to trim the text or try to make edits

to JV McKinney's words. The goal in creating this picturebook was to retain intentionality. He was incredibly intentional in choosing his words through various drafts, and I was intentional in how I handled that text.

In order to format the text of "The Field" onto pages, I had to decide how to divide the pages. I knew where some of the larger shifts or surprise moments happened, ^{and I} would have to be ^{intentional}

^{in how I} ^{the text} ^A divided to create suspense or show a shift in time. For example, I chose to separate "We were back home for a brief visit that summer and sitting on the front porch when a huge African-American male walked into our yard and approached us/ It was one of our friends from the

^{in whom} ^{the} ^{reader} field" (pages 26-27) across two pages to make it more of a reveal to the reader and possibly ^{Pre-conceived notions on who this person might be & what he would} surface some racist tendencies. The ideal readership of *The Field* was intended to be for middle schoolers. I want the reader to leave this book evaluating their presuppositions and commit to a process of evaluation and change, and ^{is not} choosing to reveal that the large African American man was their friend ^{might help in reaching that goal.}

Not every page is a large shift from the previous. Dividing the text onto pages and spreads was made easier by the text I was given. JV McKinney had divided his story into paragraphs so that it was paced similarly to how he would read it. I found those to be similar to what I wanted. I only broke up a paragraph if there was a shift within it or if it was too long to fit onto a spread. This wasn't something I originally thought of, but the size of text and amount of text on a page can be indicative of what level of book it is. For example, if it's an early reader's book, the text will be large with not a lot of text on the page, ^(For example, a board book with a picture of an apple has the word "apple" in 55 point font above) ^{while} So, formatting

the text on the page in a reasonable, middle school grade reader 14 point font became a bit of a challenge.

I chose the font Plaintain Standard for *The Field* because it's an easy to read serif that, to me, indicates a level of slight maturity but remains informal.

Deciding what text and which illustrations deserved a whole spread rather than just a page for both was difficult. For the most part, pivotal points in "The Field" are shown with a spread of text ~~on one page~~ ^{page} and an accompanying illustration shown ^{on the page} beside it. For example, the pitcher's mound being disturbed was pivotal and deserved its own spread (pages 9 and 10).

Contrastingly, the spread on page 34 and 35 doesn't even have an illustration to accompany the text because the words are preparing the reader for the end and don't necessarily need an illustration to convey that message.

May need to change?

Part 5: Illustrator's Note

I was inspired to bring this real life story back to life when I heard JV McKinney's voice read "The Field" in an undergraduate class. His son, Bryan McKinney, presented it to my Issues in Communications class, which focused on understanding the history of and modern day threat of racism.

JV McKinney has since gone to heaven, and I pray his story will be immortalized within these pages. Thank you to the McKinney family for providing me with pictures and answering all my questions in this process. More than anything, thank you for letting JV's story live on and for allowing me to get to know him.

Part 6: Reflection

-Process vs. outcome

-What I could have done differently

-Were the research methods effective?

→ This process has taught me a lot about myself. I'm a dreamer who clings to her ideas and almost never fulfills them. When I started illustrating, I had clear images in my mind of how the field should look, Division Street, the boys, and all, but I'm not an artist. Getting my hand to do what my mind was thinking would take hours, sometimes as much as ^{five} 5 hours to fully illustrate one half page illustration. It was long, and I'll admit to getting burned out. I've also learned that I thrive on trying to do the impossible. When thesis deadlines were approaching, I flipped a switch into maximum overdrive and churned out content I was pleased with, but it was much less content than I wanted to create. I learned that I would much rather have a small project that meets my standards rather than a grand-scale project that is unreachable.

Through this process, I was reaffirmed in my belief that illustrations play an integral part of storytelling that draws the reader to the book, sets the stage, and allows the reader to suspend disbelief. I tried to be intentional with all my illustrations. Drawing Division Street on the first page was difficult and time consuming, but I wanted the readers to get the sense that this was a small town in the Delta with close neighbors and a friendly feel despite the racial tension. I wanted the racism to come as a shock to readers as if something like microaggressions and segregation could never happen on a close-knit community like that of Division Street.

Overall, I enjoyed the process of walking in the shoes of an illustrator, and I hope to complete *The Field* shortly after this thesis is completed and possibly publish it with permission of the McKinney family.

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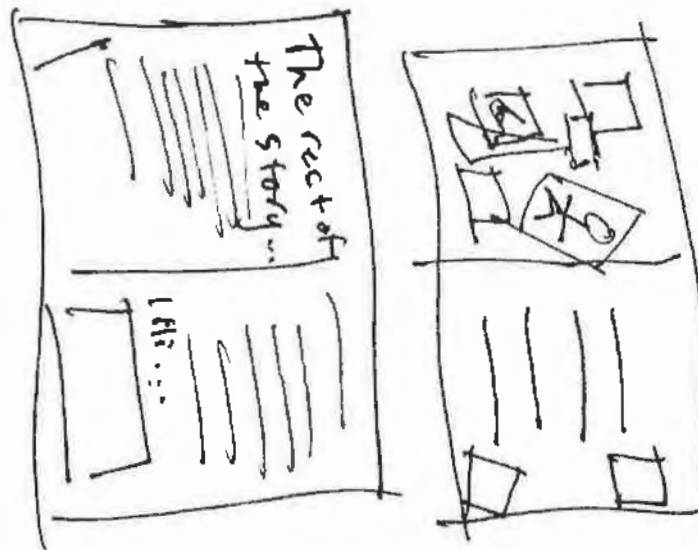
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TP
ped.

The Field

The Field

Written by JV McKinney
Illustrated by Kacy Spears

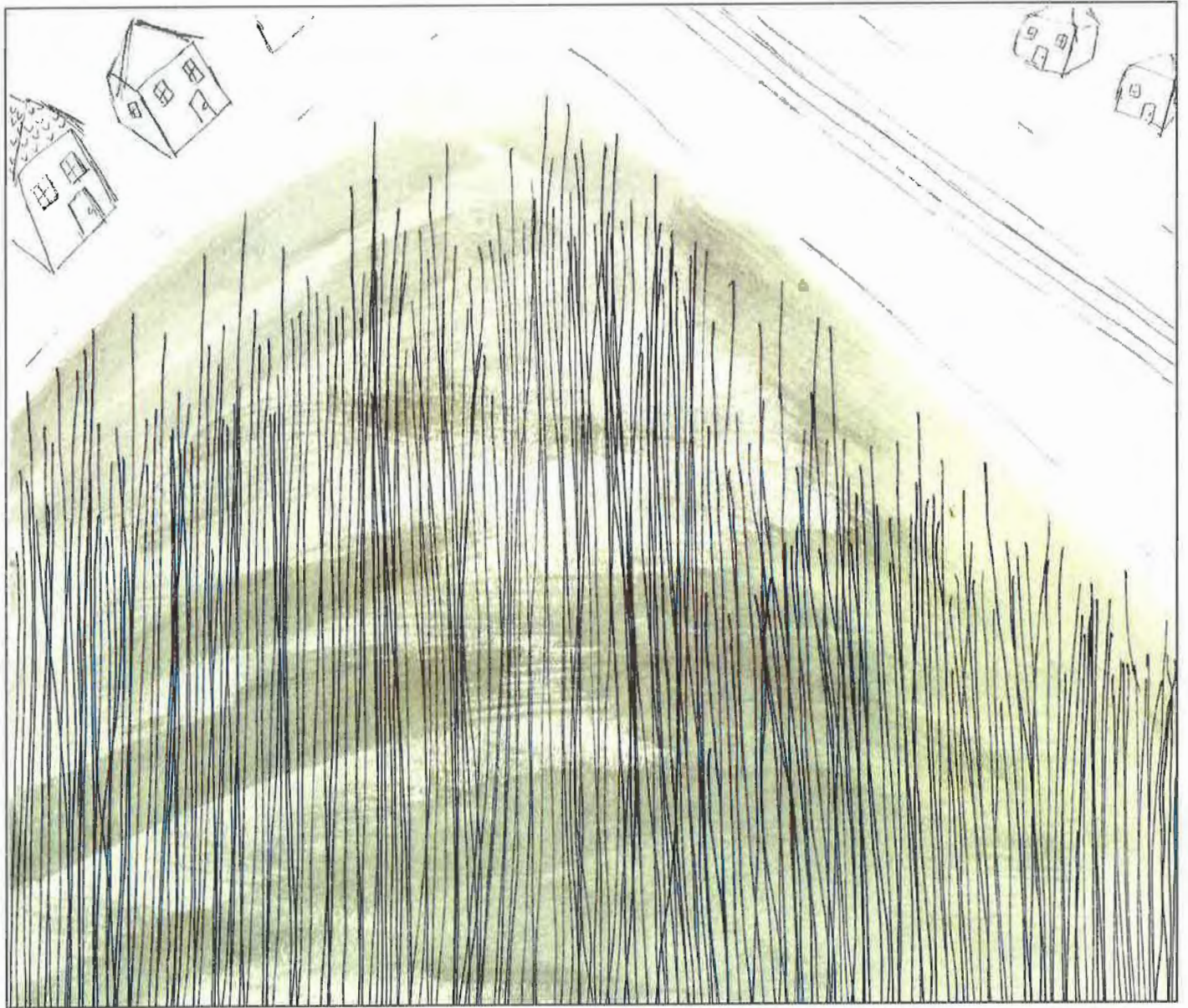


For The McKinney Family

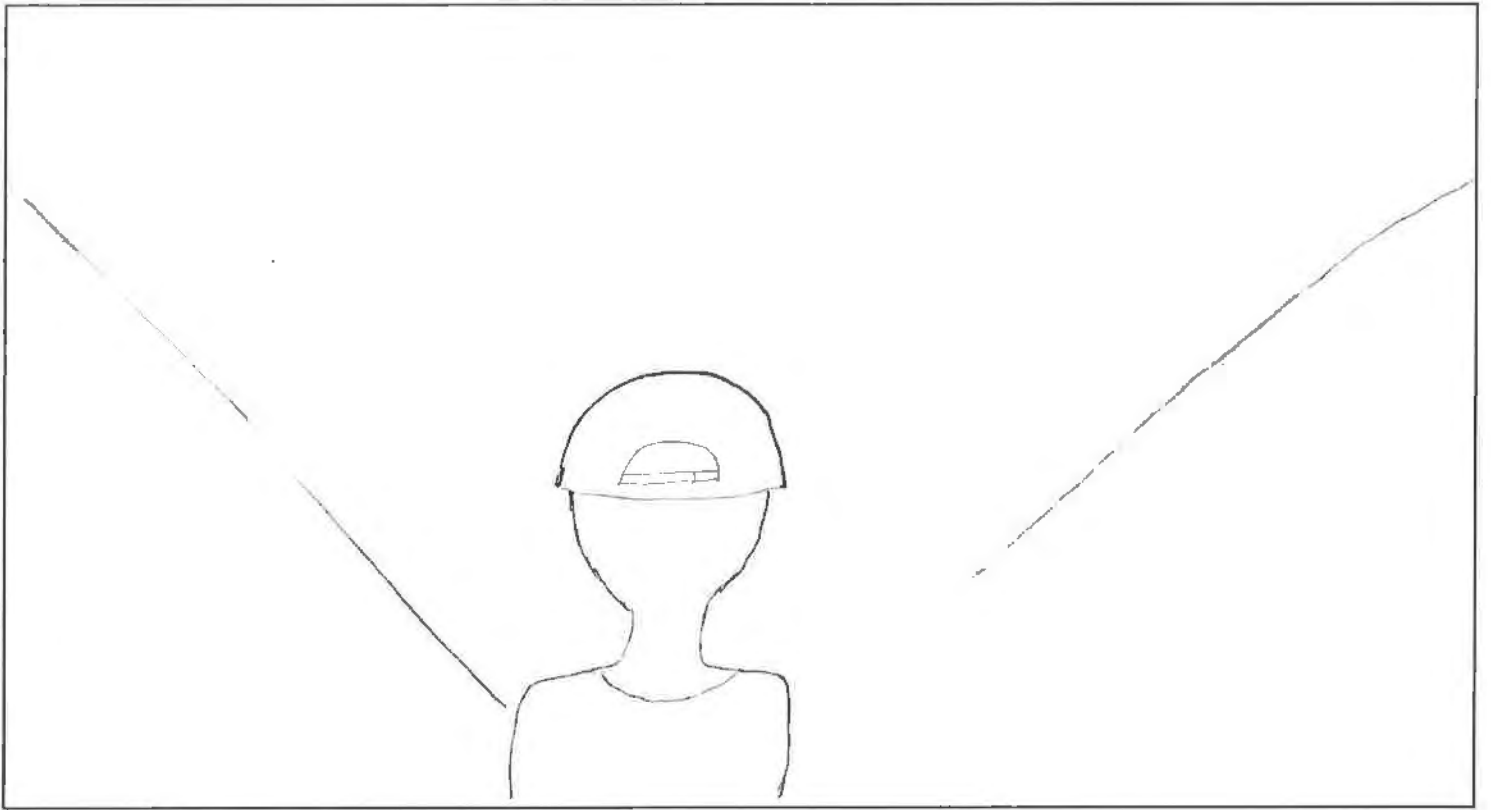
It was pretty much heaven.

Our small frame rent house was in the last block of
South Division before it passed
under the railroad tracks
and entered the African-American community.





Our dad asked the owners of the field to mow it for us.



The freshly mown grass smelled wonderful. The field was huge - room to run, throw and hit as hard as you could without any worry about breaking a window.

It was pretty much heaven.

Two boys confronting each other

We returned the next afternoon, and our pitcher's mound was kicked to smithereens.

The black kids were sitting quietly on the sidelines. Immediately, we went back home, refilled the wagon, headed back, and rebuilt the mound and played ball the rest of the day.

It was a lot of work, and
something did not feel right.



The phrase “our field”
forever took on a new meaning.

All boys playing ball - laughing

After school the next day,
the pitcher's mound was not disturbed.

Also, someone had chalked baselines
from home to first to third.

Burlap bags with sawdust had replaced
our flimsy pieces of cardboard at each base.

The field had become a very special place for some
lucky kids from both sides of the tracks.

The field has become one of the driving narratives of my life. The small rent house is gone, but the field still exists, literally in dirt and grass, and powerfully in metaphor.

I can still return to my hometown, walk to the center of the field and “just be.”

I remember the sweet smell of fresh-cut grass from decades before, the surprise of sawdust bags and chalked baselines, the way black and white hands looked together “climbing the bat” for first pick when choosing sides, the reverence our new friends displayed the first time they held a Jackie Robinson bat.

I will never forget the deep emotions stirred when our friend assured us of our parents’ safety.

My life has been filled with tremendous blessings. Without question, one was being part of a small group of black and white kids, just being kids, years ago in the East Arkansas Delta, playing ball past sundown - on the same side of Division.

It was pretty much heaven.

Illustrator’s Note

I was inspired to bring this real life story back to life when I heard JV McKinney’s voice read “The Field” in an undergraduate class. His son, Bryan McKinney, presented it to my Issues in Communications class, which focused on understanding the history of and modern day threat of racism.

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Illustrator's Note and Reflection

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Reflection

In the process of illustrating *The Field*, I hesitated to bring my brush to the page several times because I was worried that whatever I created would not accurately represent JV McKinney or the McKinney family. Once I realized that this memorializes JV, the pressure increased tenfold. What if I made a mistake? What if he would not have liked this? I realized, though, that God puts desires on our hearts for a reason. I was meant to do this and to overcome the struggles that accompanied it.

This process has taught me a lot about myself. I am a dreamer who clings to her ideas and almost never fulfills them. When I started illustrating, I had clear images in my mind of how *The Field* should look, Division Street, the boys, and all, but I am not an artist. Getting my hand to do what my mind was thinking would take hours, sometimes as much as five hours to fully illustrate one half page illustration. It was long, and I will admit to getting burned out. I have

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The process was a clear path to the outcome. I do not feel like either outweighs the other. Due to a time limitation, I feel that even though the final product is unfinished, it does match the process and effort put in. My research methods of reading articles about African American culture and representation in children's literature did help me see the importance of emphasizing minorities in children's literature, and reading the children's picturebooks allowed me to get an idea of what my personal style would be and how my illustrations and this story might fit into the children's literature market.

Overall, I enjoyed the process of walking in the shoes of an illustrator, and I hope to complete *The Field* shortly after this thesis is completed and possibly publish it with permission of the McKinney family.