

A Content Analysis Case Study: The Story Picture Book “*The Sandwich Swap*” by Queen Rania Al Abdullah of Jordan with Kelly DiPucchio as a Children’s Literature

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Received: August 17, 2012 Accepted: August 30, 2012 Published: September 1, 2012

doi:10.5296/ijl.v4i3.2255 URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5296/ijl.v4i3.2255>

Abstract

This study aimed at analyzing “*The Sandwich Swap*” by her majesty queen Rania Al Abdullah of Jordan with Kelly DiPucchio and illustrated by Tricia Tusa as a type of children's literature to find out to what extent it agrees with a group of criteria developed by the researcher himself. The criteria is a checklist of thirteen items grouped under five subheadings: a) the title, b) the story, c) characters, d) the theme and e) the illustrations. Each of the criterion follows Likert Scale: Excellent, good, adequate, poor, totally lacking mandatory ,optional and not applicable. After analyzing the story depending on those criteria, the findings of the study revealed that “*The Sandwich Swap*” as a story picture book is of great educational value that reflects a unique royal writing in children's literature and it agrees with criteria used in the analysis process with an "Excellent of four points “in Likert Scale in all the thirteen items.

Keywords: Content analysis, Children's literature, Children book, picture book, Queen Rania Al Abdullah of Jordan and Kelly DiPucchio

1. Introduction

"Books are humanity in print".

Barbara Tuchman (n.d.)

Wisdom, insight, pleasure, entertainment and being helpful are some of the good lessons that children can learn when they pass through a piece of children's Literature. Simply, they can know and learn more about different people from different countries in the world and that enlarges their understanding and concern of humanity as a deep concept. Children's picture book is not an exception as a type of that literature. Educationists see that Pictures books are useful in: First, promoting the core values that underpin the curriculum. Second, generating thoughtful debate on a range of issues. Third, providing ideal material to develop students' visual literacy. Fourth, helping them to achieve outcomes in the viewing mode of the learning area. Benson (n.d.) adds:

"I think any good literature, whether it's for children or for adults, will appeal to everybody. As far as children's literature goes, adults should be able to read it and enjoy it as much as a child would."

Hefflin and Barksdale-Ladd (2001) described children's literature as a "powerful medium through which children construct messages about their cultures and roles in society". Kramer (2012) explained that "Children's literature is the early foundation for our imagination, understanding of others, and the way we approach the world". That agrees with Thibault (n.d.) who sees that:

"Using children's literature, teachers can help their class through difficult situations, enable individual students to transcend their own challenges, and teach students to consider all viewpoints, respect differences, and become more self-aware. Two approach will help you get the most out of children's literature bibliotherapy, which uses books to help children deal with specific situations; and building critical literacy, the ability to consider various points of view"

Kennedy (2012) defines picture book as "A book in which the illustrations are as important as (or even more important than) the words in telling the story. Picture books are generally 32 pages long. In picture books, there are illustrations on every page or on one of every pair of facing pages". She explains that the definition of "picture book" became more popular when Brian Selznick won the 2008 *Caldecott Medal* for picture book illustrations for his book *The Invention of Hugo Cabret*, a 525-page middle grade novel that told the story in a series of sequential illustrations along with Selznick's words.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

As a matter of fact, children's literature is seen helpful and of great practical benefits in raising and teaching children in many ways: First, helping children develop the language skills listening, speaking, reading and writing. Second, opening up new worlds which enrich children's lives. Third, enhancing children's social skills. Fourth, improving hand-eye coordination and fifth, providing children with plenty of good fun and enjoyment.

Calabrese (2010) explained that story pictures books are of great importance for many reasons: First, the illustrations of a picture book help children understand what they are reading and allow young readers to analyze the story. She sees that illustrations are helpful when children are having difficulty in two ways: a) figuring out the meaning of what they are reading .b) helping English learners comprehend the story. Second, they allow children to practice the sounds of language. So she sees that it is the parents' responsibility to introduce new and interesting words at every opportunity because the rhythm and rhyme in many picture books make for great read-aloud and children learn words more easily when they hear them spoken often. Third, the repetition in picture books allows a child to participate in the story because young readers get excited when they can anticipate a forthcoming line and children learn skills like phonemic awareness, phonics, comprehension and fluency. Fourth, picture books are multi-sensory, which aids a child's growing mind and stimulates their imagination because children hear the story, they see the illustrations, and smell and touch the pages. Fifth, picture books can be a useful tool for teaching the concept of cause and effect. Sixth, picture books help develop story sense. She sees that Children learn the beginning, middle and end of a story and can often relate to the age-appropriate issues and conflicts presented in a picture book. Seventh, picture books allow an entirely different, more interactive communication between parent and child because they allow parents to spend time talking with their children about the story, pictures and words and eighth picture books are fun and the key is to always make the reading experience fun and a time to look forward to.

His majesty King Abdullah II bin Al-Hussein of Jordan and her Majesty queen Rania of Jordan are well known for their humanitarian work and their efforts to make education accessible to more children who are deprived of education throughout their home country and the world. *"The Sandwich Swap"* can be seen as part of queen Rania's effort to encourage cross-cultural understanding amongst children.

The researcher thinks that it is of great importance to shed the light on the Story of the children's Picture Book *"The Sandwich Swap"* by queen Rania Al Abdullah of Jordan with Kelly DiPucchio to find out to what extent it agrees with a group of criteria developed by the researcher himself. Doing so, it will give and show a kind of focused look about this unique story as a type of children's literature.

1.2 Purpose of the Study

This study aimed at analyzing the Story of the children's Picture Book *"The Sandwich Swap"* by queen Rania Al Abdullah of Jordan with Kelly DiPucchio as a type of children's literature to find out to what extent it agrees with a group of criteria developed by the researcher himself. (Appendix A)

1.3 Significance of the Study

"The Sandwich Swap" is a fruitful reminder and great encourager to embrace and appreciate differences between people by increasing awareness, sensitivity and opening hearts and minds. The significance of this study gains its importance from being that it sheds the light on a special unique experience in writing children's literature. Writing *"The sandwich swap"* is

considered important and unique for many reasons: First, it was written by a queen, It was written by queen Rania Al Abdullah of Jordan and that reflects to what degree that children and teaching them is important, it reflects some of her humanitarian work and her efforts to make education accessible to more students. Second, "The Sandwich swap" by queen Rania Al Abdullah of Jordan based on her real life experiences. Third, "The sandwich swap" by queen Rania Al Abdullah was written in English at the time it is considered a foreign language in Jordan which reflects a high quality of appreciation because writing literature in a foreign language is not an easy process, not to mention children's literature. Fourth, the importance of the theme of the "*The sandwich swap*" which is using what it is called "the skills of understanding and acceptance". Fifth, the idea of cooperation in authoring and writing "*The sandwich swap*" as a children's literature. A cooperation between a queen, Rania Al Abdullah of Jordan, who writes for children based on her own experience and an author, Kelly DiPucchio, who is well known in being interested in children's writings.

1.4 Questions of the Study

This content analysis study attempts to answer the following question:

To what extent does "*The sandwich swap*" agree with the group of criteria of children's literature developed by the researcher? (Appendix A)

1.5 Definition of Terms

1.5.1 Children's literature

Lynch-Brown & Tomlinson (2005) define children's literature as "good quality trade books for children from birth to adolescence, covering topics of relevance and interests to children of those ages, through prose and poetry, fiction and nonfiction".

1.5.2 Children Book

Odgers (2012) sees that there are two definitions of "a children's book". One is the popular definition, the other is the professional definition used by many people in the book industry: The popular definition is "A children's book is a book intended for children of primary (or elementary) school age" while the professional definition is "A children's book is a book intended specifically for any readers below the age of eighteen".

1.5.3 Picture Book: Backes (n.d.) defined and explained that:

"Traditionally, picture books (also called "picture story books") are 32-page books for ages 4-8 (this age may vary slightly by publisher). Manuscripts are up to 1500 words, with 1000 words being the average length. Plots are simple (no sub-plots or complicated twists) with one main character who embodies the child's emotions, concerns and viewpoint. The illustrations (on every page or every other page) play as great a role as the text in telling the story. Occasionally a picture book will exceed 1500 words; this is usually geared toward the upper end of the age spectrum. Picture books cover a wide range of topics and styles".

2. Background

2.1 Content Analysis

"The analysis of the thing is not the thing itself"

Aaron Allston (n.d.)

Bekkedal (1973) sees that Content analysis offers a sound approach to research on children's books because it is an objective, systematic, and quantitative method of describing content. He explained that the investigator can move away from subjective opinions based on recollections of individual titles to an objective description of the contents of a systematically selected group of books.

Holsti (1969) defined content analysis as "any technique for making inferences by objectively and systematically identifying specified characteristics of messages". While Berelson (1952) defined it as a systematic, replicable technique for compressing many words of text into fewer content categories based on explicit rules of coding.

Palmquist (1990) explained that there are two general categories of content analysis: conceptual analysis and relational analysis. a) Conceptual analysis: can be thought of as establishing the existence and frequency of concepts in a text. b) Relational analysis: it builds on conceptual analysis by examining the relationships among concepts in a text.

Content analysis process as a research technique is of Five stages: First, Selecting content for analysis .Second, Units of content. Third, Preparing content for coding. Fourth, coding the content. Fifth, counting and weighting and sixth, drawing conclusions. Krippendorff (cited in Stemler (2001)) insisted that six in chain questions are answered in content analysis when it is used as a research technique: which data are analyzed?, how are they defined?, what is the population from which they are drawn?, what is the context relative to which the data are analyzed?, what are the boundaries of the analysis? and finally, what is the target of the inferences?

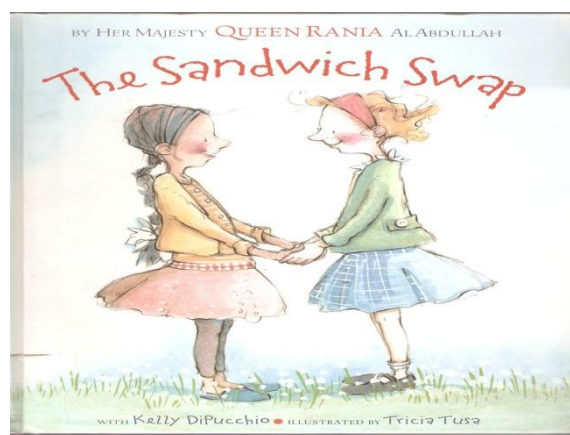
Berelson (1952) suggested group of possibilities for the uses of content analysis: First, revealing international differences in communication content. Second, detecting the existence of propaganda. Third, identifying the intentions, focus or communication trends of an individual, group or institution. Fourth, describing attitudinal and behavioral responses to communications and Fifth, determining psychological or emotional state of persons or groups

Palmquist (1990) insisted that content analysis is of four advantages: It looks directly at communication via text or transcripts and hence gets at the central aspect of social interaction, it can allow for both quantitative and qualitative operations, it can provide valuable historical and cultural insights overtime through analysis of text and it allows a closeness to text which can alternate between specific categories and relationship and also statistically analyzes the coded form of the text and it can be used to interpret texts for purpose such as the development of expert system. In contrast, he showed that content analysis is of four disadvantages: First, it can be extremely time consuming. Second, it subject to increase errors. Third, it is inherently reductive and fourth it can be difficult to automater computerize.

2.2 "The Sandwich Swap"

"The Sandwich Swap" is a story picture book based on her majesty queen Rania Al Abdullah of Jordan nursery-school experiences. The book was co-authored by queen Rania and Kelly DiPucchio. It was illustrated by Tricia Tusa. The age of reading level of this books is three and up. It is of 32 pages with dimensions of 8.9 x 0.5 x 11.3 inches and one pounds Shipping Weight. The book was published by Hyperion Book CH in April 20, 2010 and won multiple awards including the National School of Character Award. It is a picture book that is appropriate for children ages three and up and could be used in the Pre-K early elementary classroom to discuss and point out the importance of cultural differences and how it is worthwhile to appreciate and respect diversity and the uniqueness of cultures of others. The story is of effective important messages: a) students, as a human beings, do not have to do and like the things their close friends do. b) They must not give a chance to the small things get to them. c) They must not be afraid to try new things.

The events of "The Sandwich Swap" as a story are summarized as the following: Two very close friends who do everything together but they found themselves that they eat different food at the day lunch. Although they did not taste each other's food, They discovered that they disliked each other's lunches and ended up not friends anymore. But After being given themselves a chance to try each other's sandwich, they liked each other's and became close friends again.



The main cover of "The sandwich Swap" by her majesty queen Rania Al Abdullah of Jordan with Kelly DiPucchio and illustrated by Tricia Tusa.

3. Review of Related Literature

"Literature is analysis after the event".

Doris Lessing (n.d.)

Reviewing literature, we cannot escape noticing that studies conducted about children's literature are many and rich. Those done about pictures books content analysis are not exceptions. Following are some of those international and local studies presented chronologically.

3.1 International Studies

Grauerholz and Pescosolido (1989) selected 2216 children's books from the children's catalog which contained an extensive list of titles and is used in assisting librarians in purchasing books for their library collections. The researchers studied if males and, or females were present in the title, the gender and type of central character (e.g., adult, child, animal), and the gender of the author. After that, they established ratios (males to females) using the number of books mentioning males and females and their character role such as the central or secondary character. The results of the study showed the following: First, there were unequal representations between males and females. Second, a more egalitarian representation in the titles and central roles between males and females. Third, males became more prevalent over time when stories focused only on adults or animals.

Gooden and Gooden (2001) used 83 notable children's books obtained from the American Library Association to investigate gender representations in titles, central characters, and illustrations between 1995 through 1999. The researchers found: First, an increase in females who were the central characters over this period. Second, gender stereotypes decreased slightly and stereotypical images were prevalent in the illustrations. Fourth, males were often depicted alone within illustrations compared to females.

Hamilton, Anderson, Broadus, and Young (2006) did a research to study gender representations, character behaviors, settings, personality, and gender of authors. Some results were found as the following: First, males were two times as likely to be the central character and appear in the title of the story and they were depicted more often in illustrations than females. Second, females were portrayed as more nurturing and located inside a home or other building more often than males. Third, the types of jobs held by male and female characters were stereotypical.

Fitzpatrick and McPherson (2010) studied Coloring books as cultural object in children's books. They found that male characters were more prevalent in coloring books than female characters. In addition, they found that 44% of male and 58% of female characters displayed stereotypical gendered behavior. Finally, they found that 53% of male characters engaged in gender-neutral behaviors compared to 36% of female characters.

3.2 Local Studies

Up to the best knowledge of the researcher, only a limited amount of research has been done in content analysis about children's literature and stories children's books in Jordan. In contrast, the researcher found that most of the content analysis studies conducted in Jordan were done on EFL textbooks such as *AMRA* textbooks, *PETRA* textbooks and *Action Pack* textbooks.

Al-jarrah (1987) conducted a study on *PERTA* series of fifth and sixth grade in Jordan. The results of the study revealed that; First, *PETRA* textbooks are good and effective concerning rationale, objectives. Second, *PETRA* textbooks are good and effective concerning language skills, vocabulary, grammar, content, methods of teaching and technical factors.

El-Mostafa (1988) evaluated *PETRA* textbooks of seventh grade in Jordan. The results of the revealed that: First, there are significant differences of male and female teachers to the subscales, rationale, vocabulary and structure. Second, there are significant differences between the responses of female and male students to vocabulary and structure.

Al-marzouq (1992) analyzed *The New English for Nurses* textbook used in the nursing stream in Jordan for the second secondary class. The findings revealed that the objectives and the vocabulary are suitable for communication in hospital.

Al-Qudah (1997) studied the English material of agriculture of twelfth grade of agriculture stream in Jordan. The findings of the study proved that vocabulary items were chosen are suitable for the communication in the field of agriculture.

Al-Momani (1998) conducted a study *AMRA* textbooks of first and second secondary class in Jordan. The findings of the study showed that: First, the objectives of the textbooks were based on teaching English for communication and they are satisfied for students' needs. Second, the vocabulary items were chosen to match the students' level to facilitate communication. Third, the sequenced grammar and the structural functions of the textbooks were selected to fit the students' backgrounds.

Magableh (2000) analyzed the textbook of the functional English language of first commercial secondary class. The study showed a kind of lack of colures, grammar, role-play, punctuation, spelling, phonetic transcription of the vocabulary, tests, visual aids and dialogues.

Ababneh (2007) analyzed the content of *Jordan Opportunities* of tenth grade students and investigated the teachers' and supervisors' perspectives concerning that content. The study revealed that the new vocabulary items are distributed through the modules of the textbook.

4. Methodology

4.1 Criteria of Analysis

The researcher used a list of criteria of thirteen items grouped under five subheadings: a) the title, b) the story, c) characters, d) the theme, and e) the illustrations. (Appendix A)

4.2 Units of Analysis

The researcher used the story "*The Sandwich Swap*" as the unit of analysis.

4.3 Data Analysis

The researcher used a list of criteria concerning evaluating stories pictures books. The criteria of thirteen items grouped under five subheadings: a) the title, b) the story, c) characters, d) the theme, and e) the illustrations. Each of the criterion follows Likert Scale: Excellent (4), good (3), adequate (2), poor (1), totally lacking (0), mandatory (m), optional (O) and not applicable (n).

5. Findings and Discussion of Results of the Study

To answer the question of the study, the researcher analyzed the story "*The Sandwich Swap*" as a unit of analysis depending on a checklist of assessment of thirteen items grouped under five subheadings: a) the title, b) the story, c) characters, d) the theme and e) the illustrations. The findings of the analysis of the study are presented in checklist (1).

Checklist (1). The findings of the analysis of the study

Assessing children's Literature checklist								
" <i>The Sandwich Swap</i> " By Queen Rania Al Abdullah of Jordan with Kelly DiPucchio.	Excellent (4)	Good (3)	Adequate (2)	Poor (1)	Totally Lacking (0)	Mandatory (m)	Optional (o)	Not Applicable (n)
A. The title :								
1-The title is unambiguous, appropriate and clear without a play on words.	✓							
2- The title is semantically attractive.	✓							
B. The story :								
1-The story is suspenseful.	✓							
2-The story is appropriate for the children's age that written to.	✓							
3-The story encourages positive dialogues.	✓							
4 -The story has a happy positive end.	✓							
C. Characters:								
1-The characters of the story are described fully.	✓							
2-The main characters of the story represent people from	✓							

different cultures and backgrounds									
D. Theme:									
1-The story has a main theme.	✓								
2 -The story has a lesson to be learned.	✓								
3-The story has a positive message about human differences.	✓								
4-The story encourages understanding of our society diversity and world.	✓								
E. Illustrations:									
1- Illustrations are appropriate.	✓								

Checklist (1) shows the findings of the analysis of *"The Sandwich Swap"* as follows:

A. The title

First, regarding the criteria "The title is unambiguous, appropriate and clear without a play on words", The analysis shows that the title of the story is excellent for being unambiguous, appropriate and clear for many reasons: (a) it is easy to remember.(b) it is not too long and (c) it is not complicated. simply, there is no "a play on words".

Second, about the criteria "The title is semantically attractive", the analysis shows that the title of the story is excellent in being attractive semantically for many reasons: First, it is very easy to pronounce. Second, it is an "event" or "activity ".Third, it is a popular expression, fourth, it is direct and without a hidden meaning and fifth, it is memorable for being connected to the story itself.

B. The story

Regarding the results concerning the four criteria related to the subheading "The story"the analysis shows the following:

First, The story is excellent in being suspenseful. In Fact, group of issues labeled the story like that: a) The short sentences make the events seem to move faster. b) The good organization where a clear beginning, middle, and ending. c) The topic development that used descriptive language enough information and to satisfy the readers and d) Sentence structure which is rich in a variety of sentence types and lengths that added to the flow of the story.

Second, The story is appropriate for the children's age that written to. Syntax, grammar, pictures and word usage makes the story easy to read for children of the age for which it is written.

Third, the story does encourage positive dialogues. An example of that the following dialogue between main characters Lily and Salma found in the story:

"Finally, Lily got up the courage to speak.

"Would you like to try a bite of my peanut butter and jelly?"

Salma grinned."Sure. Why not? Would you like to try my hummus and Pita?"

Lily laughed." I'd like that."

"On the count of three?"

"Okay. On the count of three

1.....23!

"Hey, this is *delicious* !"

"And this *heavenly*!"

The girls giggled.

And hugged.

And traded sandwiches".

The researcher thinks that the dialogue displays the respect for the children's intelligence, understanding, abilities and appreciations in dialogue.

Fourth, the story is excellent for having a happy end. Educationists see that those stories with happy end are usually more successful in carrying the positive message that they were written for. The girls agreed to try each other food and when they did that they discovered that their food are delicious and heavenly.

C. Characters

First, regarding the criteria "The characters of the story are described fully", the analysis shows that the story is excellent in describing the main characters lily and Salma. It fully explained everything about them in the first pages and by pictures as follows:

"Salma and lily were best friends at school.

They draw pictures together.

The played on the swings together.

They jumped rope together.

And they ate their lunches together.

But just what they ate was a little different.

Lily ate a peanut and jelly sandwich everyday for lunch.

Salma ate a hummus and pita sandwich every day for lunch."

Second, about the second criteria "The main characters of the story represent people from different cultures and backgrounds", the analysis shows that the story is excellent in showing that the main characters of the story represent people from different cultures and backgrounds. In fact, that issue is cleverly shown by two ways: a) By using names: Salma is an Arab public name. In contrast, Lily is not. It is more popular in west. b) Using pictures: an example of that is the picture of the special event for the whole school where children's counties are presented by flags.

D. Theme

Regarding the results concerning the four criteria related to the subheading "Theme" the analysis shows the following:

First, The story has an excellent main theme: embracing and respecting the diversity of others especially those who come from different cultural backgrounds. Simply, we can like the same things. At the same time we can also like things that are different. what we need for that are just tolerance, understanding and expanding our horizons. Second, usually excellent theme is a result of good lesson .Sandwich swap teaches young children group of things: a) They learn empathy and the importance of putting differences aside in order to create the possibility of learning something new about the others and about ourselves. b) As human beings, we do not have to do and like the single little things our best friends do. c) We should not let unimportant things get to us and d) We should not be afraid to try something new.

About the Third and fourth criterion , The story has an excellent positive message about human differences. We are different but we are still human beings. We must respect the others to give them the chance to respect us. In that way, The story promotes understanding of our society diversity and world

E. Illustrations

Illustrations in children's literature are of great importance for many reasons: First, accentuating the cognitive function. Second, matching the feeling established by the text. Third, sharpening the children's perception. Fourth, stimulating children's imagination. Fifth, increasing their observation sense. Sixth, giving children a sense of personal identity and an awareness of their cultural heritage and seventh, eliminating stereotypes and correct wrong cultural notions.

Concerning the criteria of illustrations, the analysis of the story shows that illustrations are excellent For many reasons: First, The main cover picture conveys and summarizes the main theme and the lesson taught by the story. Second, The appropriateness of the number of the whole illustrations. Third, The appropriateness of the size of illustrations. Fourth, the use of color that suits the words and fifth, the colors of pictures that helps in showing diversity. All

of these attract the children's eyes as the primary intended audience and convey the theme and mood as the rest of the story.

6. Conclusion

It can be concluded that *"The Sandwich Swap"* as a story picture book is of great educational value that reflects a unique royal writing in children's literature dependent her majesty queen Rania Al Abdullah of Jordan nursery-school experiences. The presentation of the text is rich in clarity, accuracy, interesting pictures and words. The story agreed with criteria used by the researcher in the analysis process with an "Excellent of four points" in Likert Scale in all the thirteen items.

7. Recommendations

In the light of the results of the study, the researcher recommends the following: First, conducting studies on children's literature in Jordan taking into consideration that *"The Sandwich Swap"* is an important unique part in this literature. Second, schools, nurseries and kindergartens should make use of this story in teaching English as a foreign language in Jordan. Third, public libraries, school libraries and university libraries should have copies of this story to give pupils, students, teachers, TEFLERS and researcher a chance to make use of it.

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Appendix A

Assessing children's Literature checklist									
“The Sandwich Swap” By Queen Rania Al Abdullah of Jordan and Kelly DiPucchio.		Excellent (4)	Good (3)	Adequate (2)	Poor (1)	Totally Lacking (0)	Mandatory (m)	Optional (o)	Not Applicable (n)
A. The title :									
1-The title is unambiguous, appropriate and clear without a play on words.									
2- The title is semantically attractive.									
B. The story :									
1-The story is suspenseful.									
2-The story is appropriate for the children's age that written to.									
3-The story encourages positive dialogues.									
4 -The story has a happy positive end.									
C. Characters:									

1-The characters of the story are described fully.								
2-The main characters of the story represent people from different cultures and backgrounds								
D. Theme:								
1-The story has a main theme.								
2 -The story has a lesson to be learned.								
3-The story has a positive message about human differences.								
4-The story encourages understanding of our society diversity and world.								
E. Illustrations:								
1- Illustrations are appropriate.								