The Historical Representation of Thanksgiving Within Primary- and Intermediate-Level Children's Literature

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The Historical Representation of Thanksgiving Within Primary- and Intermediate-Level Children's Literature

JOHN H. BICKFORD III & CYNTHIA W. RICH

This study examines the historical representation of Thanksgiving-based children's literature. It juxtaposes findings for primary- and intermediate-level readers and balances misrepresentations with primary sources.

STATE AND NATIONAL INITIATIVES have compelled significant change in English language arts and social studies/history curricula. English language arts teachers are required to balance fiction (or literature) and nonfiction (or informational texts), which is a considerable change for a content area formerly occupied by fiction (National Governors Association Center for Best Practices & Council of Chief State School Officers [NGA Center & CCSSO], 2010). Social studies/history teachers are expected to juxtapose primary and secondary accounts, a similarly sizable adjustment for a content area previously dominated by textbooks (National Council for the Social Studies, 2013; NGA Center & CCSSO, 2010). Beginning in elementary school, students are now assessed on their close readings of rich, complex, and (sometimes) competing primary and secondary accounts of the same event, era, or topic (Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers, 2012). Thus, the new emphases on diverse literature and discipline-specific literacies compel change in erstwhile patterns of fiction in English classrooms and textbooks in history classrooms (McMurrer, 2008; Wilton & Bickford, 2012).

These initiatives do not provide sets of age-appropriate resources or curricular guides. Elementary educators cannot turn to academia for guidance because there is a dearth of scholarship investigating elementary-based curricular materials; curricula for Advanced Placement and high school history classes far outpace the curriculum intended for the elementary level. Elementary teachers, therefore, are left to rely on textbooks, trade books, and primary documents, each of which proves to be problematic. Although textbooks are often employed, they are costly and not differentiated for diverse reading levels and cannot independently meet

Elementary educators cannot turn to academia for guidance because there is also a dearth of scholarship investigating elementary-based curricular materials.
the aforementioned initiatives' rigorous standards; when empirically examined, various omissions and misrepresentations emerge (Chick, 2006; Clark, Allard, & Mahoney, 2004; Lindquist, 2009; Loewen, 2007; Matusevich, 2006). Primary sources are publicly available on various digital warehouses, such as the Library of Congress, and can be shortened and modified to ease difficulties for elementary students (Wineburg & Martin, 2009; Wineburg, Smith, & Breakstone, 2012). Students, though, must be trained in discipline-specific ways to scrutinize primary documents for source, context, bias, and corroboration (Bickford, 2013b; Nokes, 2011). Trade books are relatively inexpensive and intended for young students and have engaging narratives; numerous trade books appear for most historical topics represented in school curricula (Schwebel, 2011).

Trade books, in comparison with textbooks and primary source material, appear the logical choice for elementary teachers' restructuring of their curricula to meet the rigorous expectations of state and national initiatives. When making selections, teachers likely consider reading level and the historical event, era, or person covered. Publishers offer seemingly objective measures to indicate each book's reading level like Lexile measure, grade-level expectation, and Developmental Reading Assessment; yet, for histori­city, or historical accuracy and representation, they provide only the historical topic and genre. Online reviews should not be trusted, as they are likely written by nonexperts (e.g., teachers or parents) or those with a vested interest in the sale of the book (e.g., authors and editors). Empirical evaluations of trade books' historicity indicated the prominence of various historical misrepresentations (Bickford, 2013a; Bickford & Rich, 2014a, 2014b). There is a need for more scholarship, yet little exists and many reports are not empirical (Schwebel, 2011; Williams, 2009) or do not focus on a single event, era, or person (Chick & Corle, 2012; Chick, Slekar, & Charles, 2010; Tschida, Ryan, & Ticknor, 2014).

We examined Thanksgiving, and the surrounding people and events, because of its prominence in elementary curricula. As an oft-included elementary social studies topic, authors and publishers have produced a vast pool of possible trade books about the Pilgrims, the Mayflower, Plymouth Colony, and Thanksgiving for teachers' selection. Teachers, however, might be unaware of each book's historical representation of the people, events, and era. Knowing that children's authors cannot provide the detail that historians do, we investigated the historical content that was included (and omitted) and how.

Thanksgiving appears frequently in the curriculum in primary elementary grades (K–2) and in intermediate elementary grades (3–5); it is, thus, unintentionally spiraled. Spiraling is when novel content is introduced one year and reintroduced with new and nuanced details the next year; spiraling appears, for example, in mathematics as primary elementary students first learn single-digit addition prior to more complex addition and multiplication as intermediate elementary students (McMurrey, 2008). For history content to be repeated in multiple grades, the content's intricacies should increase, or else it is redundant; case study research has indicated ineffective spiraling in certain elementary history content, but its extent is unknown (Wilton & Bickford, 2012). Recognizing that Thanksgiving history content is unintentionally spiraled, we sought to examine how children's authors constructed different historical narratives for primary and intermediate elementary students.

Our research questions, therefore, are:

- How is Thanksgiving historically represented within children's books?
- What do intermediate elementary students learn that is new and different from what they learned in the primary grades?

Rooted in the theoretical frameworks of sociocultural theory and cognitive constructivism (Nokes, 2011; VanSledright, 2014; Vygotsky, 1978, 1934/1986; Wineburg, 2001), our inquiry has four presumptions:

- Children's books cannot comprehensively detail the minutiae of history, nor should they be expected to.
- Young children should not be exposed to graphic or brutal elements of history.
- Myths do not substitute for history.
- Historical trade books can be written in age-appropriate ways for young children and still maintain historicity and inclusivity.

Methods
This research, when reduced to its foundation, is a comparative examination of historians' understandings and children's authors' narratives. Seeking to distinguish history from myth, we investigated areas of convergence
and divergence. We relied heavily on the historiography of the 17th-century European presence in North America, specifically what is memorialized as the First Thanksgiving, the preceding events, and the resultant implications of contact and conflict (e.g., Appelbaum, 1984; Baker, 2009; Philbrick, 2006; Zinn, 2003). We also utilized relevant anthropological and interdisciplinary scholarship to inform our understandings of disease, technology, and 17th-century North America (Diamond, 2005; Mann, 2005, 2011). The people commonly called Pilgrims today were known then as Puritans, Separatists, Saints, and Leideners. Religiously, they were Puritan, Politically, they were Separatists. Socially, they referred to themselves as Saints or Leideners, after their relocation to Leiden, Holland. Whatever the denotation, they were less than half of the population on the Mayflower, as laborers and adventurers accompanied those who sought religious freedom.

The Pilgrims initially benefited from locating a deserted Native American settlement (whose inhabitants died from diseases, likely small pox, unknowingly passed from erstwhile European traders who were immune) and neighboring tribes unwilling to pose an immediate military challenge. Unprepared for the harsh winter, low on food, and grappling with disease and starvation, they robbed empty houses, storage containers, and even graves in a desperate attempt to survive the first winter. Spring afforded new hope and a helpful, English-speaking Native American named Squanto, who learned the language from years in captivity in England. Squanto, who may have had ulterior motives, informed and guided the settlers toward effective farming, hunting, and gathering techniques. The subsequent months, diligence in the fields, and cooperation with the neighboring tribes yielded a bountiful harvest and gratitude. Although a peace treaty was established, harmony did not last. Tension and armed conflict replaced the initial cooperation; more and new European settlements supplanted Indian land in nearly direct and reciprocal proportion. Acknowledging that every detail cannot be included in children's trade books, we investigated what was included (and omitted) in trade books and how. We also examined how children's authors approached primary elementary students differently than intermediate elementary students.

We used inductive content analysis, which is a rigorous qualitative research methodology (Krippendorff, 2013; Maxwell, 2010; Zhang & Wildemuth, 2009). To establish a representative and sizable sample, we first collected the titles of all Thanksgiving-based children's trade books currently in print. We used the three largest children's literature resources—Amazon, Scholastic, and Barnes & Noble—to generate this list. To determine each book's reading level and intended audience, we assessed and triangulated the books' readability using ATOS, Lexile measures, grade-level expectations, and the Developmental Reading Assessment. We then categorized the pool according to primary elementary (Grades K–2) and intermediate elementary (Grades 3–5) content. We employed systematic sampling, the most appropriate form of random sampling for children's literature, to ensure a representative and sizable sample (Krippendorff, 2013). To do so, we randomly selected 30% (n = 24) of the books in equal distribution to primary elementary content (n = 12) and intermediate elementary content (n = 12; see the Children's Literature Cited section). The steps to establish a representative, random, and sizable sample are consistent with best practice methods.

We utilized both open and axial coding to empirically generate findings. We first read each book while recording observable patterns and anomalies to the patterns. This initial scrutiny, or open coding, of the books' narratives was done to better understand what was and was not included. We then compared notes and discussed patterns. For instance, we noticed patterns in the title used to distinguish the groups of people and the inclusion (or absence) of historical events prior to and after the potluck meal. We then synthesized notes about emergent patterns into tentative, testable codes (axial coding). To determine the frequency and credibility of the codes, we then reevaluated each book and recorded the presence (or absence) of content. Recognizing that an adult writer might encode historical content that a child would not decode, we noted how it was included. Specifically, we distinguished content that was explicitly detailed from content that was included but minimized to an extent that a child, without strong prior knowledge, would not likely recognize its historical significance. In short, we scrutinized the content to determine whether it would be reasonably clear to a typical student who reads at the book's intended reading level. During this step, we located no new observable patterns that were in need of testing. Adjustments in the content analysis instrument are essential due to the ubiquity and unpredictability of historical misrepresentations within children's literature (see the Appendix). This qualitative research project—from the hypotheses to the data collection methods and the analytic techniques—cohered with best practice research methods (Krippendorff, 2013; Maxwell, 2010; Zhang & Wildemuth, 2009) and corresponded with similar children's literature research in history education (Bickford, 2013a; Bickford & Rich, 2014a, 2014b).
Findings

Quality history education increases in complexity as students advance in age and grade. Considering the oft-repeated nature, or unintentional spiraling, of the Pilgrims, the *Mayflower*, and Thanksgiving in elementary curricula, we anticipated that trade books intended for intermediate-grade levels would be more detailed and have fewer historical misrepresentations than trade books intended for primary-grade students. This was not always the case. We report only findings that are statistically significant and relevant for elementary educators and interested scholars.

GENRE

The data pool was almost entirely nonfiction; only one book in either age range—primary or intermediate—was historical fiction (Harness, 1995). This finding was anomalous when contextualized with similar research that found sizable percentages of historical fiction (Bickford, 2013a; Bickford & Hunt, 2014; Bickford & Rich, 2014a, 2014b; Schwebel, 2011; Williams, 2009). History-based nonfiction trade books have nuanced subgenres, such as narrative nonfiction, expository, and biography; history-based fiction trade books have only historical fiction. Considering that Thanksgiving commemorates an event within a specific period of time and not a singular person (like Martin Luther King Day), it seems logical that within the nonfiction genre, narrative nonfiction and expository trade books outnumbered biographies. The small portion of historical fiction in comparison with nonfiction, though, was unexpected and unlike any previous empirical examination of history-based trade books. Close reading scholarship yielded a ubiquity of historical fiction (Schwebel, 2011; Williams, 2009), whereas empirical examinations found a healthy mix of nonfiction and historical fiction (Bickford, 2013a; Bickford & Hunt, 2014; Bickford & Rich, 2014a, 2014b).

The absence of historical fiction and the preponderance of nonfiction likely contributed to the prevalence of primary source material within the intermediate-level narratives of Thanksgiving-based trade books. Primary source material is essential because it enables students to “compare and contrast a firsthand and secondhand account of the same event or topic” (NGA Center & CCSSO, 2010, p. 14). Almost half of the trade books intended for intermediate elementary students (n = 5; 42%) include primary source material such as direct quotes from letters and diaries, maps, and original drawings (Gioia, 2007; Grace & Bruchac, 2001; Harness, 1995; Herman & Koffsky, 2005; Sewall, 1996). This portion of trade books that integrate primary source material was a comparable percentage to similar empirical research (Bickford, 2013a; Bickford & Rich, 2014a, 2014b).

Because none of the literature targeting primary elementary students interweaves primary source material within the narrative, the incorporation of primary source material in intermediate-level books appeared to be contextually contingent to the trade books’ intended age range and indicative of the increased complexity expected in spiraled content.

RELIgIOUS PERSECUTION

The Puritans’ willingness to cross the Atlantic stemmed, in large part, from their motivation to obtain independence from King James’s religious decrees and his subsequent persecution of nonconformers. The Puritans’ relocation to, and eventual prosperity in, North America induced a sense of gratitude, which the settlers directed toward their native helpers. Thus, religious persecution is at the heart of the history of Thanksgiving.

Considering its historical relevancy, we anticipated both primary- and intermediate-level trade books to include the content to some extent; we also expected it to be explicitly detailed in the vast majority of intermediate-level trade books. We found that intermediate-level trade books historically represented the English royalty’s religious persecution of Puritans more frequently than primary-level trade books did; regrettable patterns, however, remained. Religious persecution is explicitly detailed in only one primary trade book (8%); included but minimized in a significant portion (n = 5; 42%) of primary books; and entirely disregarded in half (n = 6; 50%) of the primary books, with text like “Many years ago, some people who lived in England decided to start new lives in a faraway land” (Newman-D’Amico, 2005, p. 1). Primary elementary students reading only these books would not grasp the motivation behind initiation of Plymouth Colony, a seemingly vital detail. The historical content does not seem beyond the grasp of young children when reading Linda Hayward’s (1990) *The First Thanksgiving*:

The king declared that everybody must belong to his religion. The Pilgrims wanted their own religion. They tried meeting in secret. But the king sent spies to watch their houses. He sent soldiers to arrest their leaders. Even their neighbors turned against them. So the Pilgrims decided to leave England. (pp. 8–9)

As demonstrated in this excerpt intended for primary students, religious persecution could be incorporated in age-appropriate prose. Intermediate-level trade books include religious persecution more frequently; it is explicitly detailed in half of the books (n = 6), included but minimized in a quarter (n = 3), and disregarded in a quarter (n = 3). We report details in Table 1.
### TABLE 1

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This is arguably an unacceptable level considering how religious persecution contributed mightily to the origination of Plymouth Colony. Although intermediate students were provided with more historical information (along with more complex prose, syntax, and vocabulary), the percentage of authors who did not explicitly include more complex historical content appears regrettably large ($n = 6; 50\%$). Redundancy, not effective spiraling, emerges without increasingly complex historical content. The Pilgrims' motivation for leaving Europe appears to be both historically germane and palatable for intermediate elementary students; yet, it is absent in half of the intermediate-level trade books.

**RELOCATION TO HOLLAND**

The Puritans sought relief from King James's religious persecution through clandestine relocation to Holland, a land long recognized for tolerance. This move, when viewed from the distance of the 21st century, appears to be a transitional step; yet, the Separatists, as the Puritans were then known, viewed Leiden, Holland, as potentially permanent. The Leideners, however, experienced financial instability and struggled to maintain their English norms and traditions, especially among their children. After more than a decade, a sizable portion of the Separatists considered relocation to the New World; the vast majority chose to remain in Holland.

The Puritans' experience in Holland was serendipitous to those who remained and significant for those who left, yet likely superfluous for today's primary elementary students because too many historical details could muddy the metaphorical water for, say, a first grader. The Puritans' Holland experience is certainly digestible for intermediate students and possibly for primary students. If the content is to be repeated in multiple grades, new historical content is necessary. The vast majority of primary-level trade books ($n = 11; 92\%$) did not include the antecedent to Plymouth. One anomalous primary-level author illustrated the ease with which the content could have been included:

> The Pilgrims wanted to be free to have their own church, to worship God in their own way. So they had left England and gone to live in Holland. Now they had come back from Holland to sail for America. (Dalgliesh, 1954/1988, n.p.)
The majority of authors writing for primary elementary students, though, did not attempt to include such content.

A significant majority of intermediate-level trade books similarly omitted all reference to Holland (n = 8; 67%), and the rest explicitly included it (Bartlett, 2001; George, 2001; Grace & Bruchac, 2001; Harness, 1995). No books included minimized accounts of Holland. Robert Merrill Bartlett’s (2001) The Story of Thanksgiving is a representative example of how the content was explicitly included for intermediate students: “In England the Puritans were often thrown in prison and even killed for their beliefs. Some fled to Holland, where they lived for twelve years. But they wanted a country of their own” (n.p.). Bartlett included questionable details, which might cause a degree of concern for some teachers. That the majority of intermediate-level authors disregarded entirely the Separatists’ time in Leiden is of greater concern, especially for intermediate students exposed to multiple years of Thanksgiving content. Overall, the Saints’ experience in Leiden is underrepresented in the children’s literature intended for both primary- and intermediate-level students.

ENGLISH ROYALTY’S INTEREST
AND FINANCIERS’ INVESTMENT

Both King James and various investors had an interest in the Puritans’ successful colony in the New World. The king was well aware of competition from other European powers, especially the interest and presence the Dutch had in the Hudson River Valley and present-day Manhattan. King James actively supported the Leideners’ colony under the English flag, as evidenced by Separatists’ conspicuous departure from England and his financial contribution. Merchants, looking for a potential financial windfall, sought adventurers willing to sever European ties in order to initiate and maintain a colony. The Puritans could not have made the voyage without merchants’ investment and King James’s support.

The English royalty’s interest and financiers’ investment in what would become Plymouth might confuse primary elementary students in ways similar to the Puritans’ sojourn in Holland. However, it is historically pertinent and readily comprehensible for intermediate-level learners. Expectedly, writers targeting primary elementary students

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did not include the complex content. Unexpectedly, authors of intermediate-level trade books largely considered only one of the two to be worthy of inclusion.

Authors of both primary and intermediate trade books overwhelmingly disregarded King James's interest in New World settlements (n = 22; 92%). Two trade books included minimized references, as one implied King James's tolerance (“they planned to sail to the English colonies in America”; Bartlett, 2001, n.p.), and the other noted competition (“English, Dutch, and French explorers, fisherman [sic], and traders were here many years before the Mayflower”; Grace & Bruchac, 2001, p. 17). Although most trade books omitted King James's interest in and support of the Leideners, the same cannot be said for the Separatists' financiers. Authors of both primary- and intermediate-level trade books included content on financiers' investment in expectable patterns. The vast majority (n = 9; 75%) of primary-targeted titles omitted the content entirely, and three explicitly detailed it (George, 2001; Grace & Bruchac, 2001; Sewall, 1996). Financiers' investment was ubiquitously included in the intermediate-level trade books (n = 12; 100%). This indicated an increase in the historical content's complexity from primary to intermediate, which is the aim of spiraled curricula.

The omission of King James's interest and the inclusion of financiers' investment appears peculiar when juxtaposed. Although these two dozen different authors might each have had a different reason for including or excluding one or both (and the authorial liberty to do so), the pattern is palpable. The most reasonable explanation for this seeming confl ation involves a basic tenet of the Thanksgiving legend—the Pilgrims left England seeking religious freedom—and its logical corollaries. If the tenet is true (which it is), then the notion that European merchants financed their voyage and settlement is not contradictory; there is a logical consistency in the events that an adult writer can easily convey to young children. That the Pilgrims wanted to leave England to escape religious persecution from the English king, who then encouraged their venture, provided they sail under his flag, does not seem incongruous to adults (who tolerate and even appreciate nuance); an adult writing for children might deem it unnecessary. Although the origin of the omission is not germane, the pattern of omission is obvious. Omission, a common historical misrepresentation, emerged in other areas.

NATIVE AMERICANS' PRESENCE AND MALADIES

As Mann (2005, 2011) and Diamond (2005) have convincingly argued, the Americas were densely populated in the 17th century and had been for tens of thousands of years. To even the uninitiated, the Pilgrims of 1620 are a significant historical distance away from Columbus and 1492. Between these years, the Native Americans—both the nomadic and the nonitinerant tribes—were compelled to confront unknown diseases from unsuspecting European carriers. Through death and intentional distance keeping, the Wampanoag and surrounding native tribes appeared absent to the newly landed Europeans, yet their abandoned villages could not be dismissed (Appelbaum, 1984; Baker, 2009; Philbrick, 2006). The Thanksgiving story cannot be told without including the existence of Native Americans and their influence on the Separatists.

Children's authors largely did not distinguish the presence of various Native American tribes and the impact of disease on their diminishing population. To disregard the former contributes to the notion that North America was unused and therefore available; a significant portion of all trade books (n = 7; 29%) omitted the content.

Children reading The Pilgrims' First Thanksgiving by Ann McGovern (1993) would likely conclude that the land was indeed available according to statements like this: “What kind of land was this? There were no houses. No stores. No people to meet them. Only an empty, white, sandy beach with trees and bushes behind it” (n.p.). To include but significantly minimize the presence of Native Americans—as a sizable segment of the books did (n = 6; 25%)—enables young children to assume that North America was underused, if not entirely unused, and could be improved with European settlements. This minimization is illustrated in Nancy Skarmeas's (1999) The Story of Thanksgiving, which inserts Native Americans only after the Pilgrims' landing and their first winter, spring, and planting: “One day, three Native Americans came to visit. One named Squanto stayed to help the Pilgrims” (n.p.). The Native Americans' presence is thus misleadingly included. To explicitly detail the Native Americans' presence is both historically significant and tangible for young children, yet less than half of the books did so (n = 11; 46%). We report grade-level trends in Table 2.

The patterns illustrated in Table 2 demonstrate more historical inclusion in intermediate-level trade books. This pattern arguably indicates spiraling yet, when more fully contextualized, appears to be merely a simple (not substantial) improvement on the ahistorical narratives that populate the primary-level books. For content to be important enough to be spiraled, more than simple improvement is needed.

Diseases, such as small pox, decimated the Wampanoag, Pawtuxet, Pequot, and other local tribes. Native Americans' trade with and exposure to Europeans in the years prior...
### TABLE 2

**Trade books’ representation of Native Americans’ presence**

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to 1620 explains how and why the empty village welcomed the Pilgrim settlers. The children’s authors readily reported the Pilgrims’ misfortunes, yet most did not address the Native Americans’ calamities (n = 16; 67%). Such omission contributed further to the Native Americans’ marginalization within the trade books. An intermediate elementary student reading Catherine O’Neill Grace and Margaret Bruchac’s (2001) *1621: A New Look at Thanksgiving* would confront the pandemic: “The early European visitors to North America brought trade. But they also brought sickness. The Wampanoag people had no resistance to these new diseases” (p. 17). This excerpt is inclusive of details and age appropriate in prose; it illustrates the ease with which the content could have been conveyed even to primary-level learners. Most of the intermediate- and primary-level books, however, do not. We report grade-level patterns of this regrettable and frequent pattern of omission in Table 3.

Disease and the resultant devastation is a gloomy, but historically essential, element of the Thanksgiving story. When not detailed explicitly, the young reader will not likely question the propitious empty town and instead wrongly view it, as the Puritans did, as providential. Our data indicate that a significant portion of the trade books failed to include the Native Americans’ presence and demise. Loewen (2007) has convincingly argued that “the archetypes associated with Thanksgiving—God on our side, civilization wrested from wilderness...—continue to radiate from our history textbooks” (p. 88). Such archetypes manifest in trade books also.

### FOOD AND STARVATION

Every trade book in both age ranges incorporates explicit details about the meal served at the First Thanksgiving, as was expected. In the year prior to the famous potluck, the Pilgrims experienced hunger and starvation; they were woefully unprepared for the harsh winter and lacked the necessary supplies. Young readers would likely not grasp the intensity of starvation if reading the majority of these books. Grade-level findings are reported in Table 4.

When juxtaposed, one could conclude that complexity of content increased by intended grade level and that some

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<td>Primary elementary</td>
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貪婪發生。一個更合理的觀察是，中級水平的書更多地省略和模糊過度，導致僅有不到一半的書詳細地描述了飢餓（n=7; 58%）。省略和模糊過度有相同的效果：使讀者不瞭解情況。年輕學生會因只在一句話中缺少細節而無法理解飢餓。例如，“There wasn’t much to eat” (Newman-D’Amico, 2005, p. 3). 異進載的這段話，明確地表明了包括但無需過度細節化的内容。它意在為初級小學學生。許多中級水平的作者，即便省略或模糊過度了內容，也都保留了內容。例如，“That winter the Pilgrims had very little food to eat. They were always hungry and cold. Nearly all of them became sick, and half of them died” (Bartlett, 2001, n.p.). 異進載的這段話，明確地表明了包括細節的內容。對於初級和中級學生而言，這段詳細的描述都足以讓讀者理解情況的嚴重性。要向清楚明確，中級和學生都可掌握詳細的內容；

**CONFLICT AND FUTURE HISTORICAL PATHS**

歷史的衝突與未來的歷史道路

當King Philip's War永遠破壞了感恩節的風景後，各種歐洲人和美洲原住民之間的本地化衝突開始，這些衝突發生在當地的衝突和資源上。這是一種互補的趨勢，非原住民的人口與原住民人口的減少成正比。這些趨勢是感恩節之後的歷史結尾。這些內容在貿易書中很少被提及。考慮到讀者的年齡和敏感性，對於年級学生的內容可以合理地減弱或省略。中級學生接觸到的悲傷和不適當的衝突在他們看的電影和消費者中。歷史內容關於衝突和每一個群體的歷史道路，特別是在內容被螺旋式呈現的情況下。
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A small portion of the primary-level children's books (n = 2; 17%) explicitly includes conflict (Bruchac, 2007; Dalgleish, 1954/1988), whereas the vast majority (n = 10; 83%) disregards it entirely. A sizable portion (n = 7; 58%) of the intermediate-level trade books includes minimized content about conflict by noting, say, a peace treaty that lasted 50 years (Bartlett, 2001; Englart, 2007; Fink, 2011; George, 2001; Harness, 1995; Kamma, 2001; Sewall, 1996). Intermediate-level readers might not fully grasp the significance of minimized content when there is a dearth of detail. It's a Family Thanksgiving! A Celebration of an American Tradition for Children and Their Families by Debbie Fink (2011) is an illustrative example of included but significantly minimized content about conflict: "Sadly, peace between the neighbors lasted for only one generation" (p. 15). Whereas most of the intermediate-level trade books minimized the content, many (n = 4; 33%) disregarded this important part of the story (Gioia, 2007; Herman & Koffsky, 2005; Kessel, 2004; Waters, 2001). Just one intermediate-level trade book (8%) overtly noted the conflicts (Grace & Bruchac, 2001). Primary- and intermediate-level trade books' content, thus, was ineffectively spiraled, which would result in redundancy for the young readers.

The children's authors were seemingly unconcerned with the historical paths that each group would take. When not entirely disregarded, authors diminished the content to a meaningless afterthought. Only a small portion of the intermediate-level authors (n = 2; 8%) explicitly detailed the Pilgrims' future (Englar, 2007; Sewall, 1996); most of the primary- and intermediate-level authors (n = 19; 79%) omitted or significantly minimized the Pilgrims' future (n = 3). Similarly, only a single intermediate-level author explicitly detailed the Native Americans' fate (Englar, 2007), as most either omitted (n = 20; 83%) or egregiously minimized (n = 3) their fate. A young reader could not grasp the historical implications of omitted or minimized content; further, the content is ineffectively spiraled.

**Discussion**

Elementary students read to comprehend if not guided to do otherwise; active scrutiny is a developed skill. If one were to read these trade books as children naturally do, one would surmise that the Pilgrims arrived in the New World seeking religious freedom and surmounted both hunger and cold to lay the foundation for the United States and that the Native Americans arrived at the world's most famous potluck and disappeared soon after its completion. Elementary students have the capacity and deserve to learn in age-appropriate ways about the Wampanoags (and other native tribes) and Puritans. Young learners should not be exposed to gratuitous details of King Philip's War, nor should they learn subsequent centuries' genocidal trends; yet, nothing is gained from repeated readings of sanitized content beyond students' boredom and apathy. Young readers do not understand the sheer growth of European colonies when reading "As the years go by, more people from England come to America. The little town of Plymouth gets bigger and bigger" (Hayward, 1990, p. 46). Likewise, these readers do not adequately grasp the impending war when reading celebratory claims like "This treaty is kept for 54 years!" (Hayward, 1990, p. 36). These sterile examples of minimized content illustrate one trade book's historical misrepresentation of events after the First Thanksgiving. The examples, however, are anomalous when one considers that the vast majority of the books entirely omitted the historical content. Appreciably minimized and omitted content generate the same result: unawareness. The victims and violence are each disregarded with prose like "America's growth unfortunately also led to the Native people's loss of land and way of life" (Herman & Koffsky, 2005, p. 23); yet, most of the authors did not even recognize Native Americans' loss of land, let alone their loss of livelihood and loss of life. Educators would not accept the Holocaust's reduction to "During the late 1930s and early 1940s, bad things happened to European Jews," yet such prose is accepted in the repeated readings under different titles for escalating grade levels of the myth of the First Thanksgiving.

Historical analogies are problematic—Pilgrims should not be equated with the Nazis—yet disregarding historical corollaries is similarly problematic. To address these concerns, we do not prescribe certain books, nor do we direct their removal. We instead encourage four interdependent steps for curricular enrichment to both historicize the tale and meet the rigorous expectations of state and national initiatives. First, select trade books based on age-appropriate vocabulary, engaging prose, and other meaningful considerations; teachers know their students and grade level best. Second, historically scrutinize the selected trade book(s); our model
(see the Appendix) can help distinguish myth from history and identify omitted or minimized content. Third, supplement the selected trade books with germane primary sources that address problematic areas identified in the previous step; students learn and refine their historical understandings through interpretation of primary sources and juxtaposition to trade books. Finally, provide time and activities that encourage students to intentionally clarify, reorganize, and then demonstrate their understandings. We illustrate the latter two steps, as the first two are not in need of modeling.

Primary sources are accessible and free for classroom use from the Library of Congress and other digital repositories, such as Caleb Johnson's website Mayflower History (http://mayflowerhistory.com/primary-sources-and-

FIGURE 1

Village of Secotan, a 1619 engraving by Theodor de Bry (1528–1598)

Note. This is an Algonquian village on the Pamlico River estuary showing Native structures, agriculture, and spiritual life. From the Library of Congress Rare Book and Special Collections Division, Washington, DC; retrieved from http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2001695723.

books). Educators can select informational texts that are relevant to the aforementioned historical misrepresentations. When selected, such content contradicts—or, more precisely, complicates—the recurrent narrative that has been popularized in children's trade books and entrenched within the collective consciousness of the American public. The following are intended to be illustrative of the possibilities within the Library of Congress's archives (http://www.loc.gov). Native Americans' presence and land use are evident in an engraving by Theodor de Bry (see Figure 1).

The colony's mercantile interests, royal support, and hegemony over the land are illustrated on the colony's original seal (see Figure 2). A young child viewing the image will see a Native American in a peaceful position with his arrow pointing down. The image will evoke questions from students who are curious about whether Native Americans actually sought Europeans to "Come over and help us" or if that was a paternalist plea to elicit Europeans' interest in resettlement. The teacher can complicate and guide students' discussions by noting that King Charles I both granted the seal and stood to gain financially from a colony stabilized by large migration. Elementary students can likely grasp the paternalism, and misrepresentation, within Native Americans drawn to exclaim, "Come over and help us."

FIGURE 2

The Massachusetts Bay Colony's original seal

Note. The seal was granted by King Charles I in 1629 and contains an Indian holding a downward-pointed arrow, indicating peace, with the words "COME OVER AND HELP US," representing the joint missionary and commercial interests of the king, the Separatists/Pilgrims, adventurers, and investors. From "The History of the Arms and Great Seal of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts," n.d., retrieved from http://www.sec.state.ma.us/pre/presb/sealhis.htm.
FIGURE 3
The Figure of the Indians’ Fort or Palizado in New England and the Manner of the Destroying It by Captayne Underhill and Captayne Mason

Note. This is the Pequot village that was attacked and destroyed in 1637. From the Library of Congress Rare Book and Special Collections Division, Washington, DC; retrieved from http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2001695745.

Similarly, a young reader could independently grasp that peace was discontinuous when reading the title of Figure 3.

Church, town, and court records are readily available, along with some relevant letters and journal entries. The text-based primary sources must be condensed for length and modified for language. The teacher, while maintaining the document’s historicity, can convert its length, prose, and syntax for children. These primary sources can be purposefully integrated to fill the various lacunae within children’s literature (Bickford & Rich, 2014a, 2014b; Tschida et al., 2014). Students, though, should also be guided to actively integrate the new content and reorganize their understandings. Through integration and cognitive reorganization, students actively refine their historical understandings.

Primary elementary students can develop and demonstrate a sense of historical thinking through involvement in timeline construction, which is based on students’ individual and group interpretation and sequential organization of primary sources. Students first view, analyze, and inquire about primary sources that the teacher previously selected according to their rich potential to evoke understandings that are nonexistent in traditional tales of the First Thanksgiving. During subsequent small-group and whole-class discussions, the teacher guides students to chronologically arrange the sources and write (or share verbally) their reflections on the arrangement. In doing so, students actively assemble a more complex, complicated understanding of the myth. In essence, the primary elementary students are exploring historical elements that are absent in the narratives they previously read.

We encourage intermediate elementary students—who have experienced the antiquarian myth previously—to both refine and demonstrate their newly generated historical understandings through narrative revision of a historically misrepresentative book intended for primary students. In narrative revision, students synthesize understandings garnered from previously examined primary sources and integrate them within a below-grade trade book’s story line. Narrative revision is a form of critical and historical writing (Gregg & Greene, 2010; Schwartz, 2009); it engages young students in historical thinking and encompasses the cognitive tasks associated with the Common Core’s Reading Standards for Informational Texts and Writing Standards (Bickford, 2013b; Nokes, 2011). In essence, the intermediate elementary students are creating the inclusive narrative that they deserve, but were not provided, as primary elementary students.

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## Content Analysis Tool for Thanksgiving-Based Literature

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Author's name, publication date, book title, and publisher</th>
<th>2. For (about) what age/grade is this book intended?</th>
<th>3. What is the book's genre?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a. Primary elementary (Grades K–2)</td>
<td>a. Fiction: Historical fiction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b. Intermediate elementary (Grades 3–5)</td>
<td>b. Nonfiction: Narrative nonfiction, expository, and biography</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4. Who are the main characters? Describe the main characters' demography.</th>
<th>5. Which pre-1620 historical events/issues are mentioned? Describe in detail.</th>
<th>6. What 1620 and beyond historical events and issues are mentioned? Describe in detail.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Name, age, and gender</td>
<td>a. English royalty's religious persecution of Puritans/Separatists: Explicitly detailed, included but minimized, or omitted</td>
<td>a. Meal: Explicitly detailed, included but minimized, or omitted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Ethnicity/race/religious affiliation</td>
<td>b. Puritans'/Separatists' decades-long relocation in Holland: Explicitly detailed, included but minimized, or omitted</td>
<td>b. Starvation: Explicitly detailed, included but minimized, or omitted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. European: Pilgrims, Purtans, Separatists, Leideners, European settlers, or something else</td>
<td>c. English royalty's interest in settlements and/or competition with other European countries for settlements: Explicitly detailed, included but minimized, or omitted</td>
<td>c. Disease: Explicitly detailed, included but minimized, or omitted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii. North American: Indian, Native American, Wampanoag, Pokanoket, or something else</td>
<td>d. Financiers' investment in voyage and settlement: Explicitly detailed, included but minimized, or omitted</td>
<td>d. Presence of Native Americans at time of Pilgrims landing: Explicitly detailed, included but minimized, or omitted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. What occupations or roles are represented?</td>
<td>e. Conflict: Explicitly detailed, included but minimized, or omitted</td>
<td>e. Conflict: Explicitly detailed, included but minimized, or omitted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Who is given speaking lines?</td>
<td>f. The historical path the European settlers would take: Explicitly detailed, included but minimized, or omitted</td>
<td>f. The historical path the European settlers would take: Explicitly detailed, included but minimized, or omitted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Anything else of relevance</td>
<td>g. The historical path the native cultures would take: Explicitly detailed, included but minimized, or omitted</td>
<td>g. The historical path the native cultures would take: Explicitly detailed, included but minimized, or omitted</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| 7. How did the narrative end? | 8. Were any primary sources incorporated? If so, were they located in the Foreword, narrative, and/or Afterword? | 9. Are any parts of the book problematic, implausible, or historically inaccurate? |
References
Maxwell, J. (2010). Using numbers in qualitative research. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 16(6), 475-482.
References cont.


Children’s Literature Cited

**PRIMARY ELEMENTARY BOOKS**


**INTERMEDIATE ELEMENTARY BOOKS**


