

ONCE UPON AN ENCOUNTER: A CONTENT ANALYSIS OF SELECTED CHILDREN'S
LITERATURE PORTRAYING THE ENCOUNTER OF CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS AND
THE TAINO PEOPLE

By

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To Scott, Bridgette, Brian and Chase

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	page
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.....	4
LIST OF TABLES.....	9
LIST OF FIGURES.....	10
ABSTRACT	11
CHAPTER	
1 INTRODUCTION.....	13
Theoretical Research.....	16
Myth Verses History.....	17
Research Questions.....	25
Terminology.....	27
2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM.....	29
The Power of Children’s Literature.....	31
Muticultural Education/Literature.....	33
Crossing Borders With Multicultural Literature.....	34
Resistance to Multicultural Literature.....	41
Critical Literacy Theory.....	43
Critical Multiculturalism Theory.....	47
Critical Multiculturalism in Children’s Literature.....	49
Native Americans in Children’s Literature.....	52
Accuracy, Authenticity, and Stereotypes in Books.....	52
The First Thanksgiving.....	56
Illuminating History and Culture in Children’s Literature.....	62
The Tainos: The People Who Greeted Columbus.....	65
Ideals and Values.....	68
Agriculture and Housing.....	69
Decline of Population.....	70
Myth of Extinction.....	72
Descriptive Information.....	73
Genres Within Hisotry in Children’s Literature.....	75
Historical Fiction.....	76
Biography.....	79
Informational Picture Books.....	81
Illustrations in Informational Picture Books.....	83
Conclusion.....	85

3	METHODOLOGY.....	87
	Research Questions.....	89
	Definition of Content Analysis.....	91
	Rationale for Using Content Analysis.....	94
	Generation of Sample for Analysis.....	95
	Limitations.....	98
	Design of the Research Instrument.....	99
	Procedures for Data Collection.....	100
	Reliability.....	101
	Validity.....	102
	Examination Instrument.....	102
	Bibliographic Data.....	103
	Analysis of Content Relating to the Taino People.....	105
	Historical Events as Complex.....	106
	Appreciation for Diversity/Illuminating the Human Experience.....	106
	Interaction.....	106
	Cultural considerations	107
	Degree of Critical Thought.....	107
	Implications for the Classroom.....	108
	Survey.....	108
	Rubric.....	110
	Analyses of Books.....	122
4	CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS.....	123
	Columbus in the Schools.....	123
	History Textbooks and the Encounter.....	124
	Who Was Christopher Columbus?.....	127
	Columbus as a Youth.....	128
	Columbus' Proposition.....	129
	The First Voyage.....	130
	The Second Voyage.....	132
	The Thrid Voyage.....	134
	The Fourth Voyage.....	135
	The Final Days.....	136
	Unmasking Columbus.....	137
	Where Did the Story of the Columbus Encounter in Literature Begin?.....	139
	1493--1750.....	141
	1750--1800.....	143
	1800--1892.....	143
	1892--1900.....	144
	1900--Present.....	146
	Related Research in Children's Literature and Columbus.....	146
	Columbus's Image Related to the Mainstream Cultural Perception.....	150

5	RESPONSES AND ANALYSES.....	154
	Survey Responses.....	154
	Qualitative Responses.....	159
	Teachers.....	160
	Media Specialists.....	161
	Book Analyses.....	163
	Excellent Rating.....	163
	Good Rating.....	168
	Poor Rating.....	217
6	IMPLICATIONS AND DISCUSSION.....	332
	Introduction.....	332
	Results of Content Analysis of Functions of Multicultural Literature.....	333
	Functions of Quality Multicultural Literature and History Education.....	349
	Discussion of Rubric Analysis.....	353
	Critical Literacy.....	353
	Critical Multiculturalism.....	354
7	RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS.....	365
	Recommended Books, Taken From Study Sample.....	365
	Recommended Books, Found Outside of the Study Sample.....	367
	Conclusion.....	370
APPENDIX		
A	HISTORICAL TIMELINE OF THE ENOUNTER OF COLUMBUS AND THE TAINO PEOPLE.....	378
B	STUDY SAMPLE.....	383
C	EXAMINATION INSTRUMENT.....	385
D	RUBRIC.....	388
	LIST OF REFERENCES.....	399
	BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.....	415

LIST OF TABLES

<u>Table</u>		<u>page</u>
5-1	List of books with excellent rating.....	328
5-2	List of books with good rating.....	329
5-3	List of books with poor rating.....	329
6-1	Books containing bibliographies or further reading.....	359
B-1	List of books in study sample.....	382

LIST OF FIGURES

<u>Figure</u>		<u>page</u>
6-1	Taino identification results.....	358
6-2	Evidence of Taino culture	358
6-3	Percentage of Taino depiction, along three dimensions	359
6-4	Percentage of general interaction between the Taino and Spanish explorers.....	360
6-5	Adler's <i>A Picture Book of Christopher Columbus</i>	360
6-6	D'Aulaire's <i>Columbus</i>	361
6-7	Postgate's <i>Columbus</i>	361
6-8	Monkman's <i>The Coyote Columbus Story</i>	362
6-9	Yolen's <i>Encounter</i>	362
6-10	Yolen's <i>Encounter (2)</i>	362
6-11	Teacher's Favorites.....	363
6-12	Taino cultural mention by publication date.....	364

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Teachers strive to create an environment for children that is all-embracing because they know that when children feel accepted they will become happy, healthy, and confident members of society. This spirit of inclusiveness should permeate not only the social dynamic in the classroom but the teaching materials as well. Children's books that are endowed with social justice themes and multicultural issues provide a much richer reading experience than texts with homogenous characters and unchallenging stories. The depictions of one group that would benefit from this approach is the Taino people. To many people the Taino name remains foreign and obscure. Despite being of central importance to the story of Christopher Columbus's voyages readers know them simply as the "Indians" or "Natives" that Columbus encountered. Children that have learned of Christopher Columbus and his travels know little of these people, their culture, or the impact that Columbus had on their way of life.

This research, informed and guided by critical literacy and critical multicultural theories, has been designed to gauge the extent to which literature addressed the Taino people and their role in history. A survey was sent to teachers and librarians from around the country to collect the titles of books recently shared with students to honor Columbus Day. This collection

represents the data sample for this study. Once the data were collected, a content analysis was conducted using a unique rubric developed specifically for this research. The sample of books was evaluated based on a rubric that contained five criteria. This criteria assessed if a comprehensive inclusion of the Taino people were present in books about Columbus's voyages. Analyses revealed that teachers continue to rely on older books and those that do not provide information about the Taino people within the story. As these books were reviewed, the data revealed that the books being used in classrooms today are not indicative of quality books that serve to appropriately represent a people to whom history impacted in monumental levels. The research yielded a list of recommended books so that teachers and librarians can select stories that include the Taino people as part of this history in a more comprehensive manner.

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

Many of us grew up with the seemingly innocent rhyme, “In fourteen hundred and ninety-two, Columbus sailed the ocean blue.” I don’t remember when I first learned the phrase, but I do remember my children coming home from school and rehearsing this proclamation in the month of October. When my son immediately followed with the question, “Mom, at school the teacher said that Columbus discovered America—but weren’t the American Indian people already there?”—I knew that I wanted to forge a deeper look into the resources surrounding this phenomenal event. Since the 19th century teachers have embraced heroes in history, and Columbus has been at the forefront of this recognition. Yet much understanding of Columbus remains stagnant beyond the original refrain (Peterson, 1998). Researchers surmise that the very first encounter of Christopher Columbus is usually presented through a picture book, because it is as children that we first learn of the Columbus story (Bigelow & Peterson, 1996; Yolen, 1992). Most teachers have, in some way—whether through science, social studies, or reading—included the explorations of Christopher Columbus as part of the school curriculum (Morrow, 1992). Because the Christopher Columbus story has become such an integral part of education, philosophical questions and stirring discussions regarding the “true” event surrounding Columbus have been raised through a process of re-examination and historical assessment of Columbus, man or myth (Morrow, 1992).

Meltzer (1992) posited that learning about history essentially helps young people to develop a sense of shared humanity. It helps them to understand their world and the world outside their personal borders. Traditionally, history books have been written from the perspective of those who have survived over the centuries and throughout the world such that readers learn about the adversities, victories, and visions of the mainstream society but not of

vanquished or minority groups (Encisco, Jenkins, Rogers, Tyson, Marshall, Robinson, Wissman, Price-Dennis, Core, Morss, Cordova, & Youngsteadt-Parish, 2000). Today, historical children's literature has become more realistic, bringing with it some insight into the darker side of some events (Singleton, 1995). More and more, children are being presented with previously untold stories that begin to fill the gaps in the mainstream versions of the past (Enciso, 2000). As this attempt to be more inclusive in various cultural representations in history lessons for children comes into fruition, a focus on researching, writing, and teaching American Indian history within the literary canon becomes important. However, research into indigenous populations may prove difficult without substantiating documentation or first-hand accounts of their lives. This lack may, in turn, feed concerns of biased reporting and may ultimately result in the presentation of selective information.

Bias in children's literature does not necessarily come from a single book, but instead from the restrictive nature of *all* literary materials available to children (Zeece, 1997). That is, rather than being exposed to the perspectives of multiple groups, children are typically exposed to one particular perspective, group experience, or outlook—and the outlook is often Euro-American in nature. This restrictive phenomenon is sometimes referred to as a bias of omission or exclusivity (Sawyer & Comer, 1991). In the case of the Columbus encounter in historical literature, the information conveyed to children has catapulted the European point of view; what has traditionally been excluded is the Native American perspective, in particular, that of the Taino people, who Columbus encountered when he arrived in the Americas. According to Donald Fixico (1996), “the conquerors write the history” (p. 30). Thus, Fixico believes that Native American history has mainly been presented from a White perspective:

As a discipline, history is more subjective than some other disciplines in its interpretation and analysis of research. Because of this precarious situation, historians need carefully to consider the moral ethics and professional responsibilities inherent in teaching and writing about Native American history. On the other side of this issue, some American Indians feel that the writing of American Indian history, mostly by non-Indians, is merely another example of the exploitative and unfair treatment of Indian people. For at least a century, scholars, writers, and historians have neglected Native Americans in writing the history of America... To write a history of the Anglo-American experience is not wrong, but to claim that it represents the entire history of the American experience is a gross mistake. (p. 30)

Underscoring the depth of imbalance, Hale (1991) pointed out that while more than 30,000 manuscripts had been published at that time about American Indians, more than 90% of that literature was written by non-Native authors. With this in mind, historical literature should offer a better balance of the tragic and the triumphant, and the iniquitous within the heroics. Books that provide an anti-biased, intercultural perspective provide young readers with the opportunity to construct critical and thought-provoking ideas about cultural similarities and differences (Zeece, 1998). For the past 500 years Columbus has remained a controversial topic in the subject of history. His arrival in the Americas warrants deep contemplation on the subsequent events that took place on the Caribbean lands as he arrived and met the Taino people. However, so often, the stories reflecting Columbus' arrival—as presented in, for example, my own education and the education of my children—have been less than desirable and lacking attention to alternative perspectives. This unfortunate reality has inspired me to design the present research study, in which I investigated how educators were currently teaching this historical event.

A survey was given to teachers and librarians across the country, asking them to name the books they share with their students. Once the data were collected, it was organized in order to analyze responses and compare attributes with other award-winning titles discussing the same event. The analysis examined how the books used by respondents depicted the interactions of

the Taino people with Columbus, how the Taino people were portrayed in the books, and if, among these books, there were quality books that offered varied perspectives on the arrival of Spanish explorers to the Americas and the impact of those trips on the Taino peoples.

Depending on the purpose of the author and the author's experiences with Native American culture, particularly the Taino people, it is imperative that with critical lenses we examine books that tell a story that includes multiple perspectives involving people and events, as well as the not-so-popular dealings often hidden in history. Giving false or partial truth to children can be perceived as pernicious to their growth as readers and a global member of society (Lamme & Fu, 2001). If the education system gives students the impression that the rich history of the indigenous people in "American" history is insignificant or filled with black holes, students might take away the message that current Native American issues are not important. It is my hope that the results from this research will better inform teachers, librarians, parents, and students on who the indigenous people were at the time of arrival of the Spanish explorers as presented in children's literature, the role this group played in the experience of Spanish explorers and settlers in the Americas, and their consequential, almost disappearing, legacy. The research has also produced a list of book titles that suggest a more balanced approach to the Columbus story while also providing a stronger voice to the historically silenced Taino people that can be shared globally.

Theoretical Research

Since the 15th century the story of Columbus and his encounter with the Americas continues to be published in both fiction and nonfiction books for children. Over time the telling of this historical event has changed based on the resources utilized by the authors and illustrators. These resources can include information translated from the personal log of Columbus himself,

the translation of the diary of Bartolomé de las Casas (appointed by royalty to document the Taino people), or even more contemporary research efforts conducted by Columbus historian Manuel da Silva Rosa, who believes that the real Columbus differed greatly from the Columbus we have known over the past 500 years. As a result, the story of Columbus' arrival to San Salvador in 1492 becomes in a sense mythologized as the data evolve and are manipulated by new findings or the discovery of old resources. Although historians traditionally attempt to find evidence of the cultural beliefs, social practices, political structures, and economic systems of the past, in the case of Columbus' arrival to the West, it is often difficult to separate myth from reality.

Myth Versus History

If we distinguish history from myth exclusively on the basis of facts, we will, however, run into conceptual obscurity over what is a fact and, more significantly, what is not. White (1991) recounted that for a good historian the past is, as the cliché goes, “another country.” People from the past operate in a different context than we do in the present; they often live by other rules, values, and logics. Those lessons of the past address the issues of change and processes; consequently, we cannot proclaim common and valid rules about our present situation from this past. According to White (1991),

Myth, for all its attention to the past...denies ‘history’ itself. Myth refuses to see the past as fundamentally different from the present. Myth rips events out of context and drains them of their historicity. How a cowboy acts in myth is how an American male should act regardless of time or place. A man has to do what a man has to do. Myths thus are antihistory, for history above all depends on context (p. 616).

Implicit in White's statement is the idea that history is supposed to be about truth. What is truth, though? According to Ryan (2000), truth is defined as “actual fact, conformity to reality, verifiable, indisputable fact, genuine, actual existence, freedom from deceit. Truth is momentary

and it is eternal” (§ 4). Truth is information gathered from primary source materials and studied within the context of its own time and participants. Historical truth is founded from those who seek pure fact, not revisionism or popular myth. However, as White (1991) valuably noted, over time and in different contexts people begin to accept and assimilate myths, they respond to myths, and the myths become the basis for actions that actually shape history. Many historical events have been manipulated and revised, incorporating fact with fiction in telling the truth of the event. Ryan (2000) indicated, “The purpose of such storytelling has often been to assist people and nations in defining themselves and all too often to support glory, worth and importance of self being for towns, citizens and places” (§ 6). As the story of Columbus encounters with the Taino people is retold over time, the danger of revisionist storytelling enters. When additional resources are discovered and published, we learn that Columbus had a darker side to him and that the interactions between Columbus and the Taino people were not as simple and benevolent as presented in some books. It is claimed that many historians excluded Native Americans from textbooks for reasons of justifying past actions of America’s heroes, racial bigotry, or “white guilt” (Fixico, 1996). However, as Fixico explained, by “ignoring the dark episodes of the destruction of Indians and their cultures, historians in effect denied that these ever happened” (p. 30). When reviewing books that share this history with our children, it is thus important to consider whether these dark episodes have been acknowledged. It is difficult to determine the accuracy or authenticity of this topic due to the lack of historical evidence and representations other than a Euro-centric perspective. However, by analyzing the manner in which the Taino people are presented in the books shared in classrooms today, this research informs educators of the titles of books that offer a more balanced retelling of the Columbus event and similarly highlights those titles that may be less desirable. This information provides

educators with the ability to select new books for the classroom and ultimately debunk some of the myths surrounding the event, specifically myths regarding the Taino people. West, Weaver, and Rowland (1992) agree with the idea that a balanced approach has more utility:

Many accounts of the history of our own country omit the perspectives of women and people of color. If we want students to become aware of the excluded stories, we must seek out the information that has been traditionally omitted. Children cannot think critically about stories they've never been told (p. 262).

When researching history in general, varieties of theoretical perspectives such as critical theory, anthropology, sociology, history, literary criticism, feminism, and gender studies are needed to pull in the cultural factor that exists when studying the past. Cultural studies require drawing from a variety of fields in order to produce the knowledge needed for a particular task (Nelson, Treichler, & Grossberg, 1992). As a result to engage critical, social, and political issues there is a need to reach beyond the traditional boundaries of study. Accordingly, when analyzing children's books that deal with the topic of Columbus it is necessary to draw upon the work of Native and non-Native scholars in the traditional fields of history, the work of Native Americans in education and children's literature, as well as the theoretical framework of critical literacy and critical multiculturalism.

Critical pedagogy is a theoretical framework that examines schools and society both within a historical context and as part of an existing social and political structure that is distinguished by a dominant global view (McLaren, 1998). Within the context of critical pedagogy, critical literacy is born. Critical literacy assists students and teachers in critically analyzing texts and illustrations for an author's point of view, intended audience, and elements of inclusion, stereotypes, or bias (Creighton, 1997). According to Creighton (1997), "Critical literacy theory encourages teachers to uncover and openly discuss any underlying assumptions

that may be made in the process of working with students and texts at any grade level” (p. 440). By sharing literature that offers alternative perspectives, educators will be able to open doors for children to see another way of life, another perspective, and, in a sense, another world.

In recent years, sharing literature has undergone several changes in school classrooms. Teachers are not only aiming to provide more diverse methodologies and meaningful interactions toward the literature experience, but they are also attempting to support an environment that promotes learning experiences, with the goal of leading to more personal and equitable intellectual growth. Critical educators recognize that they cannot often alter students’ circumstances or environments. However, they can act as agents of change through critically examining the context of meaning and the sociopolitical messages found in literature for children by questioning the “status quo” (Ramirez & Gallardo, 2001). By enhancing the development of new subject knowledge and language and literacy skills, students start to expand learning strategies to suit their goals and objectives, hopefully leading to an increase in self-understanding. A critical literacy approach encourages students to question the texts they are reading and to apply their knowledge toward newly constructed or reconstructed values or ideals as they communicate through language and literature. Moreover, the need to critically address a specific understanding of where power and domination originate as identified in children’s literature will also be employed by including the critical multiculturalism theoretical approach.

Critical multicultural theory concerns itself with issues of justice and social change and their relation to the world (Kincheloe & Steinberg, 1997). Although this theoretical style is fairly new, the perspective it offers is truly representative of an egalitarian approach and is a powerful tool, which helps make learning a part of the learner’s struggle for social justice (Giroux, 1997). Yenika-Agbaw (1997) stated that from a critical multicultural perspective, authors are socialized

to believe in certain ideologies of power that are formed by the signs they use. These signs form meanings gathered by students from the stories they read. In addition to this perspective, critical multiculturalism incorporates the contexts of race, class, gender, and history into a meaningful text as a way to better one's life. This critical approach can be conceived by creating multiple perspectives of what already exists, what is possible, (Yenika-Agbaw, 1997), and the use of texts to "make sense of one's life and the world in a particular context" (Shannon, 1995, p. 103).

As critical theory is concerned with how domination takes place and the way human relations are shaped, critical multiculturalists also wish to promote an individual's self-consciousness as a social being (Kincheloe & McLaren, 1994). When studying the Taino population who lived in San Salvador at the time of Columbus' arrival there, one can easily see how the lives of the Taino people changed in terms of their socio-economic class, role, religious beliefs, and self-image as they were shaped by European domination of social, environmental, and cultural change. Nonetheless, to envision this event through critical multicultural lenses students must also be informed of the darker side that plagues this history and the need to uncover some of the horrid conditions the Native people endured during the reign of the Spanish that is not always a part of the school curriculum.

Briffault's (1552/1992) translation of de las Casas' *The Devastation of the Indies: A Brief Account* brings to light the atrocities brought on to the Native people. The book offers a firsthand account of Europe's earliest colonization of the "Americas" from the perspective of a participant. De las Casas' participation began as a soldier and inhabitant of the "new world." Revolted by the cruelties he witnessed being inflicted on the Taino peoples he became the first early modern era's advocate and defender of Native American rights (Briffault, 1552/1992). This book is the result of his assertions and observations. Since it was not the type of literature

the Spanish found to be supportive of their settlement it was banned and heavily criticized and did not remain a parochial story of the Spaniards nor the Tainos. However, it was translated into every major European language where it provided “one of the ideological foundations of English, French, and Dutch attempts to break the Iberian monopoly on American colonization” (Briffault, p. 2).

Today, de las Casas’ work is not often referenced as a primary source in many history textbooks or trade books, yet it contains valuable, although subjective, insight into the negative treatment of the Tainos that took place during the landing of the Spanish. Therefore, by analyzing children’s literature about this historical event, the story could uncover the stature of inequality the indigenous people experienced that many believe to be hidden or omitted within these stories written for children. De las Casas’ work challenges the status quo by offering another perspective and highlights the devastation the Taino population endured during this time. For example, during the first 40 years the Spanish endeavored to conquer the Caribbean inhabitants, it is stated that the Spanish slayed more than 12 million men, women, and children, leaving approximately only 200 Taino survivors (Briffault, 1552/1992). As translated, de las Casas explained,

Their reasons for killing and destroying such an infinite number of souls is that the Christians have an ultimate aim, which is to acquire gold, and to swell themselves with riches in a very brief time and thus rise to a high estate disproportionate to their merits (p. 31).

He went on to say,

Were I to recount the vile acts committed here, the exterminations, the massacres, the cruelties, the violence and sinfulness against God and the King of Spain [toward the Tainos], I would write a very big book, but this will have to wait for another time, God willing” (p. 1).

Certainly it is understood that many factual events in history are not found to be appropriate for certain age levels; nonetheless, accuracy—both positive and negative aspects of a topic—is essential (Meltzer, 1994) in order to grow well-rounded, global citizens. If history is presented erroneously, the potential for children to carry with them inaccurate knowledge or negative stereotypes about indigenous people through several more years of schooling exists. Thus, by employing critical theory to analyze literature regarding this topic, the potential to change student perspectives is facilitated by acts of self-reflection and the manner in which more accurate viewpoints are formed.

The human race provides many gifts that, when shared, offer an opportunity for us to learn and grow from each other. It has become paramount that educators and parents commit themselves to becoming democratic members of society who seek to develop and share the vast experiences, traditions, and extraordinary cultures of the world with our children, cultures that provide a unique insights into alternative perspectives that can ultimately provide the means to reach a higher level of critical thought. In turn, our children will have an opportunity to grow into democratic members of society themselves and to carry on the work of promoting the value and significance of all the world's many peoples. Although the present research focuses on one aspect of educating our children to be democratic members of society—providing them with literature that represents a multicultural perspective—we can also become more cognizant of how we present history to children in other realms of our culture, such as holidays and cultural celebrations. For example, warranted Columbus Day traditions are seen across the country every October with federal holidays, local school holidays, and numerous plays and tales of Columbus' "discovery" of Western land. However, the once-a-year celebration of Columbus' discovery can also serve as a reminder of the daily struggle of Native American children regarding issues of

self-identity, self-dignity, and oppression and as an opportunity to acknowledge the tragedies thrust upon Native Americans as a result of Columbus' expedition to the West. Though the task is challenging, we must find a way to honor the innovation and new ways of life that emerged from Columbus' expedition to the Americas while nonetheless acknowledging the terrible consequences of his foray into the region. I have personally witnessed parades on October 12th with groups asking for recognition of the genocidal act that they believe happened in the years following 1492. They see Columbus as a murderer and as a man who kidnapped the Taino people, forced them into slavery, stripped them of their land, raped their women, and cut off their hands if they did not meet their quota of gold. On the other hand, there are Italian American groups who hail Columbus as a hero. They believe him to be a man of honor and innovation, who opened the doorways of history and jump-started life in new and extraordinary ways. Although these perspectives are separated by a great divide, as a democratic society it is our obligation to find a way to acknowledge them both.

The Civil Rights Movement in the 1960's was a platform from which change in our system of equity came to life. Issues once neglected were brought to the forefront. As a result of the sociopolitical ambiance, a renewed study of various ethnic groups, bilingual education, and multicultural education emerged. Even today paradigmatic shifts begin to appear as a result of the acquisition of resources that historians begin to uncover that retell history in new and gripping ways. Through children's literature we are exposed to many enlightening and powerful messages that disperse a plethora of culturally motivated inquiries and historically compelling stories that tell the history of where we have been, where we are, and where we wish to be. Separated by our uniqueness, our differing viewpoints of history, and even at times the division

of geographical borders, we can nonetheless come together and refer to literature to serve as both the change agent and connecting bridge linking humankind and humanity.

The present research is conducted in the spirit of inquiry related to quality improvement and the employment of social justice in literature for children with a heavy emphasis in critical multicultural research (Barrera & Cortes, 1997; Bishop, 1994; Cai, 1997; Harris, 1993; Larrick, 1965; Reimer, 1992). This research contributes to the literature by considering the trends and complexities that research and education offer, along with the possible adoption of discriminating stances that can be implied through would-be inaccurate information being disseminated through children's media, specifically, literature.

Research Questions

In order to assess whether the story of the Taino people found in the history of Christopher Columbus' arrival to the West, as told in children's literature, advances the attainment of fair, diverse, and alternative perspectives, the research used several questions (outlined in the next paragraph) as guidelines throughout a content analysis. The blending of two theoretical approaches was employed to create the frame of questioning for this research. These questions infuse the beliefs of both the *functions of multicultural literature approach* by Sims Bishop (1997), as well the 1988 Bradley Commission report (2000, revised 2nd edition) on history education standards. Sims Bishop's school of thought is specific to literature that she believes to be a powerful component of a multicultural education curriculum, which is ultimately the underlying purpose to help make society a more equitable one. The Bradley Commission on History in Schools was created in response to widespread concern over the inadequacy, both in quantity and quality, of the history taught in American classrooms (1988). The purpose of this action was twofold. The first goal was to explore the conditions that contribute to, or impede,

the effective teaching of history in American schools, K-12. The second goal was to make recommendations on the curricular role of history and how it may improve the teaching of history as the core of social studies in the schools. In order to achieve these goals, a series of questions must be answered. These questions became the basis of this research and are presented in two sections. The first section asks unique questions that combines Sims Bishop's functions of multicultural literature and the Bradley Commission views on history education. The inquiries look specifically at the knowledge, history, and critical inquiry of the stories selected by teachers and librarians across the country. The second section answers questions related to the quality of the book. In order to determine quality, evaluation criteria were developed. This criteria asked questions pertaining to the historical milestones, cultural transmissions, fair treatment of the Tainos, and an insight into the Taino relationships and interactions with Columbus and his men. The criteria was created into a rubric and applied to each book selected by the teachers and librarians who participated in the survey. By combining these two goals, a more comprehensive approach to critically evaluating the content of how the Taino people were portrayed in the Columbus stories are demonstrated by the following list of research questions.

Section One

1. Does the story provide substantive knowledge and information on the Taino people who Columbus encountered upon his arrival to the West?
2. Does the story demonstrate the causes and outcomes of historical events as usually complex and void of simplistic answers and explanations?
3. Does the story critically question the status quo and offer varying perspectives?
4. Does the story carefully approach history by avoiding analogies that do not project the truth and distinguish between fact and assumption?
5. Does the story promote or develop an appreciation for diversity through history?
6. Does the story provide enjoyment and illuminate the human experience?

7. What possible influences are brought forward from the author, illustrator, or publisher?
8. If the Taino people are included, do the illustrations reflect Taino culture?
9. What implications in the elementary classroom exist as a result of this research?

Section Two

1. Does the book provide a comprehensive record of the Christopher Columbus story to include the encounter with the Taino?
2. Does the book provide sufficient insight into the lifestyle-cultural and sociological heritage of the indigenous Taino people?
3. To what extent does the book depart from the historical record and what impact does that departure have on the reading and learning experience?
4. To what extent does the book provide insight into Taino interactions or relationships with Columbus and the Spanish Settlers and what impact does that have on the reading and learning experience?

Terminology

The following is a list of terms in alphabetical order that are presented within this dissertation, along with their definition and the manner in which they were used. In some cases, an example of a term's use is also provided.

Authentic biography conveys factual accounts of a person's life and rarely includes dialogue.

Biographical fiction consists of fictionalized accounts of a person's life, liberally laced with anecdotes or events from which there is little historical documentation.

Fictionalized biography uses narrative text and includes sound evidence to guide the story, but the author may be liberal in the use of describing events or creating conversations.

Multicultural literature - In the broadest terms, "Multiculturalism is a set of beliefs based on the importance of seeing the world from different cultural frames of reference and on

recognizing and valuing the rich array of cultures within a nation and within the global community” (Parkay & Stanford, 2004, p. 244).

Native American refers to the indigenous cultural group that inhabited (and continues to inhabit) North America prior to the European exploration of the continent. The terms *American Indian* and *indigenous people* are used interchangeably (depending on individual preference).

Picture book refers to a book in which the text and illustrations combine to tell a story (Horning, 1997). Picture books are read aloud to children, or by children, as they view the illustrations.

CHAPTER 2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

During a lesson on Columbus Day a student eagerly exclaims, “Miss Sabis, those Brown people were stolen from their homes by bad people, just like we were!” While reading Jane Yolen’s children’s book *Encounter* (1992) to a former class of mine, one student instantly makes a personal connection to the images and story of a Taino child, stolen from his home with the intent to be sold into slavery. This statement was made by a 6-year-old, African American boy from a lower socioeconomic background in a first-grade elementary class. The young child linked the horrific past of African slavery in America, to the often untold story of Native people sold into Spanish slavery by Columbus and his men. This was not an exercise of intentional critical thought. It was an emotion released directly from the heart.

On the contrary, a few years later while giving a class presentation to my fellow doctoral students on critical thought, I had provided each student with a copy of Yolen’s *Encounter*, along with several other types of books about Columbus, for their critical review. The assignment was to read each story and then compare and contrast the books and identify how these books portrayed an event in history with varying perspectives. After reading Yolen’s book, one student hesitantly asked, “Can you explain this situation about the six Native people who were captured and forced to Spain as slaves? I have never heard this before. This can’t be true.” After I reassured her that it was true, we both sat there in disbelief—she could not believe her parents or teachers never shared this event with her years before, in elementary school; Her disbelief made me consider how many more people out there shared the same lack of information.

American history has many splendid and important stories. Within these stories is the influence to divulge knowledge, and as Sir Frances Bacon once claimed, “Knowledge is power.” Stories of history, both written and oral, retell who we were as a human race, where we have

been, and where we are today. Yet have we, as Americans, been told truthful accounts of our past and the influential figures who made history through such significant means as the stories told to us as a child in children's literature?

History is taught to our children in school through various media, such as textbooks, films, movies, toys, the World Wide Web, young adult novels, and children's trade books. Using state standards to provide a framework of teachable topics, teachers provide our youth with a vision of the past—stories of heroes, heroines, or special events that take us to a moment in time long ago. These visions are meant to teach the children about life as it was during crucial moments and about the historical figures, such as Christopher Columbus, behind those memorable events. The inevitable questions in the classroom arise: Are they real? Is it factual? Is it authentic?

Quite often, children are presented with sanitized and uncontroversial historical figures and stories, which on the surface may seem innocuous. However, when one considers that these potentially inaccurate stories can form the basis of students' initial understanding of history, accuracy becomes paramount. As students continue through each grade level they are faced with two alternatives. They receive information that is incongruent with the stories previously told to them, or the myths of the characters or events within the story are perpetuated until the stories are no longer questioned for their veracity.

It is believed that the very first encounter of Christopher Columbus is usually presented through a picture book, because it is as children that we first learn of the Columbus story (Bigelow & Peterson, 1996; Yolen, 1992). Years thereafter, the historic figure of Columbus makes an appearance in our culture through various other means, such as in videos, movies, filmstrips, plays, and textbooks. The purpose of this dissertation is to analyze children's picture

books most often identified and shared in the elementary classroom and to identify the stories that advance the attainment of fair, diverse, and accurate representation of the Taino people in the historical encounter with Christopher Columbus. A content analysis was conducted on a list of books featuring the story or history of Christopher Columbus generated from a survey given to teachers and librarians across the country. This analysis allows for the demonstration of the need for accuracy and authenticity in the presentation of historical figures and the historical claims they stake in today's literary canon.

The Power of Children's Literature

A child leans forward onto her knees, attention keenly fixed on the person sharing the story, eyes filled with wonder and imagination: This is an image of the ultimate childhood experience. Whether a child is sitting in a longhouse listening to elders, around a campsite at dusk, or on a rug in a school classroom, the message of the experience is the same: Children love a good story.

In general terms, literature has been viewed as “the imaginative shaping of life and thought into the forms and structures of language” (Huck, Hepler, Hickman, & Kiefer, 2005, p. 3). In particular terms, children's literature has been defined as “the collection of books and book-based media that are read to and by children (Temple, Martinez, Yokota, & Naylor, 2002, p. 7). More specifically, children's literature is defined as high-quality trade books for youth aging from birth to adolescence, addressing topics of relevance and interest to children of those ages, through prose and poetry, fiction and nonfiction (Tomlinson & Lynch-Brown, 2005).

Children's literature is unique in that, most often, children do not write children's literature—unlike the case of other literature, which is written for adults by adults. Rather, children's literature is written for children by adults, a group other than themselves (Lesnik-

Oberstein, 1996). Furthermore, children are not the major buyers of children's literature; public and school libraries are the major purchasers of these books (Horning, 1997), and the field continues to expand. Since the new millennium there have been more than 180,000 children's titles in print (Children's Books in Print, 2000), more than 8,000 new children's titles published annually in the United States (Bowker Annual: Library and Book Trade Almanac; Bogart, 2000), and thousands of more children's books published worldwide (Tomlinson & Lynch-Brown, 2005), all with varying degrees of personal and academic fulfillment.

As such, literature for children can be separated into two intellectual distinctions, literature for personal gain versus academic gain or rather, reading for enjoyment versus reading for attainment of knowledge. This notion supports the transactional reader experience developed by Rosenblatt (1978). Rosenblatt illustrated a useful distinction between two opposing modes of experiencing a text—the “efferent” and the “aesthetic.” When responding from the efferent stance, readers are motivated to acquire information; readers' attention is centered primarily on residual information *after* the reading—the information to be acquired, the logical solution to a problem, the actions to be carried out. Conversely, when readers are responding in the aesthetic stance, their own unique lived-through experience or engagement with a text is primary.

Whether for academic or personal gain, these two values benefit the child and are said to be appropriate parts of the educational experience. Tomlinson and Lynch-Brown (2005) asserted that the academic value of literature benefits children in areas of reading, writing, content area subjects, and art appreciation. In cases of the personal value of literature, children experience enjoyment, imagination and inspiration, a vicarious experience, understanding and empathy, moral reasoning, literary and artistic preferences, and of importance to this study, heritage. Stories that are handed down from one generation to another unite us to our past, to the roots of

specific cultures, national heritage, and the overall human condition. These stories are based on actual events in the past that help young people to gain a greater appreciation for what history is and for the people, both ordinary and extraordinary, who made it happen.

Multicultural Education/Literature

While there are varying definitions of *multicultural education*, the common focus of all these definitions relates to the inclusion of the people of various ethnic and racial backgrounds (Grant & Sleeter, 1993) and the goals and objectives multicultural education brings to the educational arena. Multicultural education as defined by Gay (1994) includes the “policies, programs, and practices employed in schools to celebrate cultural diversity” (p. 3). Nieto (2000) provided a broader definition that represents all forms of diversity found in society. In particular, Nieto argued that multicultural education “challenges and rejects racism and other forms of discrimination in schools and society and accepts and affirms the pluralism (ethnic, racial, linguistic, religious, economic, and gender, among others) that students, their communities, and teachers reflect” (p. 305). Among these definitions, and many others that are circulating in the field, the term *multicultural education* should serve more as a guide for teachers and be regarded less as a magic potion that will cure related educational problems.

A major goal of multicultural education is to provide all students with the skills, attitudes, and knowledge needed to help them function as productive members of society (Banks, 1998). Multicultural education can provide positive results if properly utilized and implemented in the educational system. One exceptional scholar who has influenced the field to conceptualize multicultural education and bring it directly to the student is James Banks, one of the current contemporary authorities on multicultural teaching.

Banks (1991) demonstrated the debate over multicultural education and illustrated how differing ideas about the construction of knowledge are really at the root of the debate between multiculturalists and Western traditionalists. He defined multicultural education as “an idea that all students, regardless of the group to which they belong, such as those related to gender, ethnicity, race, culture, social class, religion, or exceptionality, should experience educational equality in the schools” (Banks, 1993, p. 23). The objective is not to just teach about other groups or other countries—as Banks claims this to be the simplest dimension of multicultural education—but one must also demonstrate the higher levels of inclusion in order to teach students about knowledge construction or to think critically about their personal views and become accustomed to the idea that there are many lifestyles, languages, cultures, and perspectives beyond mainstream society (Carithers, 1999).

According to Bennett (1990), multicultural education recognizes outright that we live in a racist society with a history of White ethnocentrism. This history has greatly impacted our society and, in turn, has affected and dictated the curricula taught in our schools. Multicultural literature is one viable way in which the tenets of multicultural education can be effectively fostered in schools’ curricula, exposing students and others to the diverse population existing in the United States today.

Crossing Borders with Multicultural Literature

Sealy (1984) contended that any educational experience should be one of celebration and sensitivity to cultural diversity, to foster an educated awareness to cultural customs and values, promote communication with people from other countries, and create experiences involving other cultures. Through literature, readers explore lands and cultural mores that they would

otherwise not experience (Lowery & Sabis-Burns, 2007). Multicultural literature can provide this authentic learning opportunity through real-life experiences and cross-cultural connections.

According to Tomlinson and Lynch-Brown (2005), the term *multicultural literature* refers to trade books, regardless of genre, that have a main character who is a person or member of a racial, religious, or language micro-culture other than the dominant Euro-American one. In the broadest terms, “Multiculturalism is a set of beliefs based on the importance of seeing the world from different cultural frames of reference and on recognizing and valuing the rich array of cultures within a nation and within the global community” (Parkay & Stanford, 2004, p. 244). Sims Bishop (1997) posited that the definition of multicultural literature should be comprehensive and inclusive, incorporating “books that reflect the racial, ethnic, and social diversity that is characteristic of our pluralistic society and of the world” (p. 3). Grant and Ladson-Billings (1997) defined multicultural literature as “a category of literature that reflects the diverse life experiences, traditions, histories, values, world views, and perspectives of the diverse cultural groups that make up society” (p. 185). Grant and Ladson-Billings (1997) stated that multicultural literature is one of the “foundational subject areas of multicultural education” (p. xii) because it provides a platform from which students can jump into other areas of their lives through the power of story.

Proponents argue that quality multicultural literature that meets the highest literary standards ultimately helps all children learn about themselves and others different from them in today’s increasingly diverse society (Sims Bishop, 1997). Sims Bishop (1997) suggested that multicultural literature can serve at least five functions. It can (a) provide knowledge and information, (b) change the way children look at the world by offering varying perspectives, (c) promote or develop an appreciation for diversity, (d) give rise to critical inquiry, and (e) provide

enjoyment and illuminate human experience. Taking these functions into consideration, we can see that multicultural literature plays an important role in acclimating readers to the lives and mores of people across all cultures. Readers are able to live vicariously through literary representations (Lowery & Sabis-Burns, 2007). Thus, when students encounter texts that feature characters with whom they can connect, they can see how others are like them and how literature can play a role in their lives. Norton (2003) contended that multicultural literature also affords students the opportunity to see themselves positively portrayed in books and to gain an understanding of differing beliefs and value systems while also developing social sensitivities to the needs of others. For example, Sims (1982) researched responses of an African American child to books featuring an impressive character from that same ethnic background and found that “books have the power to promote favorable attitudes and foster positive behaviors on the part of their readers” (p. 21). On the other hand, when students do not encounter characters like themselves (Hefflin & Barksdale-Ladd, 2001), or are exposed to stories that do not provide multiple perspectives on historical references (Fox & Short, 2004), literature is likely to be more frustrating rather than pleasurable.

Notably, this frustration can be evident at a younger age than one might expect. Children are very much aware of issues of oppression at an age younger than we may realize. Students do not come to school as “blank slates” (Derman-Sparks, 1993). As early as 6 months, infants have the ability to notice skin color differences (Katz & Kofkin, 1997). By 2 years of age, children begin to notice and question the differences and similarities among people (Derman-Sparks, 1993). Katz and Kofkin (1997) also suggested that children begin at a young age to formulate their own ideas to help explain the diversity they are seeing and hearing. Children’s attitudes toward ethnicity are also influenced in the preschool years through caretakers’ attitudes

(Carithers, 1999). Negative stereotypes of people begin to be absorbed by age three and a half. Many children enter first grade having spent their early years in a monocultural environment that mimics the attitudes and beliefs of their community (Heath, 1983). These are crucial years in development when the promotion of a positive self-concept is essential, along with activities that demonstrate the similarities and differences of all children's lives.

When educators fail to recognize these differences, the students can come away with the perception that differences are not appreciated or are deemed as a negative attribute (McMahon, Saunders, & Bardwell, 1996). Opportunities for children to connect to groups both similar and dissimilar to themselves are essential if we expect them to accept the similarities and differences of others (Duren, 2000). In addition to the portrayal of diverse groups that can come to life in children's stories through words and pictures, children themselves, as they enter the classroom, can bring new life experiences and points of view to the educational experience (Genishi & Dyson, 1994). This process can take place if each child is afforded the chance to be perceived as a unique individual with something special to contribute to the experience of others (Carithers, 1996).

For many students, the first exposure to others who are different from them takes place in school. What do we make, then, of schools that lack cultural diversity, that wrap students in a sort of "ethnic encapsulation" (Banks, 1994)? *Ethnic encapsulation* refers to the cultural deprivation that result from limited awareness of any culture other than one's own. In such cases, children's perceptions of people different from themselves will often be formed from a mirage of stereotypes available through cartoons, videogames, movies, TV shows, computer games, and other readily available media (McPhee, 1997). Yet this marginal and superficial interaction of young children and the larger society does not represent an accurate portrayal of others' true

identities. Charles (1996) supported this notion and has noted, in particular, that the omissions, misinformation, and distortion of Native American experiences in films, television, and popular books have the ultimate effect of dehumanizing Native American people. Schools cannot afford to allow students to continue to live in ethnic encapsulation.

Addressing this issue of ethnic encapsulation becomes paramount as we look at the literature used by teachers to teach the history of Christopher Columbus and his encounter with the Taino people. From the Disney movie “Pocahontas” to “The First Thanksgiving,” the Native people depicted often appear exotic, savage-like, or threatening (Reese, 1998), such that the true history of the people and their rich cultural heritage is neglected, in favor of a focus on the impact of Euro-American influences instead. As Vandergrift (1990) affirmed, one of the first ways children make sense of what it means to be human occurs through meeting characters in stories. As children ponder and explore the diverse lives of these characters, they make connections with their own lives and the world around them. This exposure to literature can become a shared experience, allowing students to respond to their own perspective and individual backgrounds before looking at others. As they learn about themselves and others around them, they see differences and similarities and learn to appreciate a more global perspective.

When students encounter texts that feature characters with whom they can connect, they can see how others are like them and how literature can play a role in their lives (Ramirez & Ramirez, 1994). If students can feel connected to books, not only will they be more apt to obtain the intrinsic motivation to increase the amount of reading they do, but they will also begin to feel more accepted as strong and unique members of society and to become less vulnerable to negative stereotyping and feelings of oppression. A pivotal study that was completed by Sims

demonstrates the various levels of multicultural literature within a specific minority group and how the books evoke certain emotional responses.

In 1982, Sims' *Shadow and Substance: Afro-American Experience in Contemporary Children's Literature* analyzed contemporary realistic fiction about Afro-American (Black) individuals and developed a typology by which to categorize the books. As a result of the study, Sims found three descriptors that demonstrate differing cultural representation in multiethnic books that include people of Afro-American descent. These descriptors include *social conscience books*, *melting pot books*, and *culturally conscious books*. According to Sims, social conscience books are about Afro-Americans but appear to be written for a mainstream audience (White individuals). That is, they seem intended to encourage non-Afro-Americans to develop empathy, sympathy, and tolerance for Afro-American children and the issues or problems Afro-Americans face. These books are about conflict; they explore prejudice, discrimination, and efforts to change oppressive aspects of society. Sims characterized them to have little literary value, with predictable and contrived plots, pervasive use of typical characters and stereotypes, and key characters that represent undeveloped clichés.

Melting pot books are those written for both Black and White readers. An underlying assumption in these books reflects to the reader that non-mainstream children are no different than mainstream children with the exception of skin color. Physical attributes are emphasized while uniqueness and individuality are disregarded. A predominant theme is that "people are people" with universal needs and wants. They provide positive images of Afro-American children and their families and avoid dour issues like drugs and poverty. They provide a view of the world that encompasses the racially integrated, just, and harmonious society envisioned by Martin Luther King, Jr. Sims found more positive literary values in these books; however, she

was also critical of them because their success was reliant on a denial of the Black experience as different from that of the White experience. The characters thrived due to the ambiance of assimilation and the fact that they had adopted American values to the extent that their cultural individuality as a minority group was invisible.

The third category of multiethnic books, according to Sims (1982), is culturally conscious books. This category encompasses books that are written primarily, but not exclusively, for Afro-American readers. These are books that attempt to reflect and illuminate both the distinctiveness and the universal humanness of the Afro-American experience. Typically written from the Afro-American perspective, the books echo the social and cultural traditions associated with growing up Black in the United States. They distinguish and celebrate the individuality of being Black and American.

These three categories of multiethnic books are used in the present study to better understand the degree to which the covered children's literature depicts (or does not depict) the humanness of the Taino people and their experience as Native Americans in the story of Columbus' encounter with the Western world. Specifically, the books are analyzed based on which category the story most appropriately fits, and how the text provides the reader the opportunity to reflect and illuminate both the distinctiveness and the universal perspectives of this event. By determining which multiethnic approach the books follow, this study allows differing cultural representations of the Native Americans Columbus encountered to be addressed.

In addition to Sims' (1982) work, another vital study includes one that was published during the Civil Rights Movement by Nancy Larrick in 1965, entitled, *The All-White World of Children's Books*. Former president to the International Reading Association, Dr. Larrick was

inspired to conduct this study when a 5-year-old Black girl asked why all the children were White in the books she read. Her question came more than 20 years after Charlemae Rollins, a woman whose lifelong campaign to end the stereotyped portrayal of Blacks in children's books, and others had begun a campaign for more positive examples of Black individuals and Black culture in books for children. As such, Sims' work garnered significant attention that had a noteworthy effect on the publishing industry (Horning & Kruse, 1991). As a result, there has been a gradual increase in the number of books that represent minority groups in ways that do not omit, marginalize, oppress, stereotype, or distort the lives and/or culture of these groups.

Many scholars have emphasized the importance of incorporating multicultural literature in schools' curricula (e.g., Harris, 1993; Norton, 2001; Sims, 1982; Sims Bishop, 1997). While there has been a rise in the publication of multicultural literature (Harris, 1994), many of these books are not readily available in many places (Hill, 1998). Many schools still do not expose their students to the rich array of books that represent the diversity of society. Equally problematic, many books regarded as multicultural on library shelves may be outdated, and some cultural groups in the United States are still not well represented in children's books (Hill, 1998). By reviewing and analyzing children's books for elementary students regarding the history of Christopher Columbus, this study yields current data on how well the books used today include the Native perspective and help assess the accuracy and authenticity of the information being shared. This knowledge could contribute to efforts to expand the literary canon and could possibly result in social change and added discourse to the field of children's literature.

Resistance to Multicultural Literature

The goals of multicultural education and multicultural literature are not universally supported by all. In *Losing Our Language: How Multicultural Classroom Instruction Is*

Undermining Our Children's Ability to Read, Write, and Reason, Stostky (1999) argued that those who embrace multiculturalism and who advocate for the use of children's literature, particularly literature by and about ethnic minorities, are to blame for what some perceive to be a decline in the literacy and language skills of young children. She contended that multiculturalists are sacrificing academics and the study of classics in American literature in favor of political and social agendas. Additionally, in *The Disuniting of America* (1992), Schlesinger claimed that the presence of multicultural education in public schools is weakening the bond that embraces us as a nation of individuals and contended that if this weakening is not overturned, separatist tendencies will result in the division, resegregation, and tribalization of American life. Schlesinger further characterized multicultural education as an ideology that will lead to the destruction of Western civilization in the United States (Harris, 1994). On the contrary, Ramsey and Derman-Sparks (1992) suggested that those who oppose multicultural education are people who feel privileged, entitled, and selfishly empowered and do not want to surrender their self-proclaimed power to others. Others feel there is a sense of uncertainty connected with the unknown consequences of a deeper reverence for diversity across cultures and sexual orientation. During a dialog or discussion of a multicultural piece of literature, many new and unfamiliar feelings can arise. Cai (1998) noted, "multiculturalism is about diversity and inclusion, but what is more important, it is also about power structures and struggle" (p. 313). As beneficiaries of Euro-American privilege, students who identify themselves as monocultural may resent an experience that they perceive as "being at the other side of the pointed finger" (Kruse, 2001). Defensiveness, guilt, dividing prejudice, accounts of negative behavior on the part of the minority, or even threats of reverse racism can occur as a result (Dilg, 1995). Conversely, being a member in a diverse society where realities can become too threatening,

empathy is not always the answer (Kruse, 2001). Kruse also noted that “empathy may give way to increased ethnocentrism and further retreat into ethnic encapsulation” (p. 2). In other words, keeping these obstacles in mind can help the cultural literary experience be informative and respectful, especially when specific minority cultures, such as Native Americans, are involved.

Critical Literacy Theory

In recent years, teachers have seen several changes and approaches in the way literature is shared. Teachers not only continue to seek more diverse methodologies toward the literature experiences of children but also look to foster an environment that promotes learning experiences leading to more personal and equitable growth. Critical educators recognize that students’ circumstances or environment cannot often be changed. However, both educators and the students themselves can act as agents of change by critically examining the context of meaning found in literature for children by questioning the “status quo” (Ramirez & Gallardo, 2001). Garnering the development of new subject knowledge that is connected to language and literacy skills, students begin to take ownership of their learning, possibly leading to an increase in self- understanding and a sense of a belonging in a democratic society. A critical literacy approach encourages a questioning stance among students so that they can look deeper in the texts they are reading and can apply their knowledge toward a newly constructed, or reconstructed, value or ideal as they experience life through literature. In a global society attempting to bridge cultural understanding and literary theory, critical literacy brings its own demands and inherent power to teaching knowledge, ideology, and values through children’s books.

Critical pedagogy is a theoretical framework that examines schools and society both within a historical context and as part of an existing social and political structure that is

characterized by a dominant world group view (McLaren, 1998). It brings to the classroom awareness to the tiers of cultural systems, the power within those systems, and ways in which they impact people (Creighton, 1997). Within the context of critical pedagogy, critical literacy is born. Critical literacy extends critical pedagogy by helping people critically analyze texts and illustrations from an author's point of view, intended audience, and elements of inclusion or bias (Creighton, 1997). It encourages readers to take a position of inquiry and to work toward transferring themselves and their worlds.

Within these beliefs, critical literacy brings demanding expectations to educators and students. As Creighton noted, critical literacy theory is important because it “encourages teachers to uncover and openly discuss any underlying assumptions that may be made in the process of working with students and texts at any grade level” (p. 440). Many people believe that traditional schooling socializes children into the dominant ideology (McDaniel, 2004). Patrick Shannon (1995) contended, “[U.S.] schools in general and literacy programs in particular are often organized to promote a specific set of values—normal American values” (p. 15). With many of today's scripted literacy programs, students feel compelled to search for the “right” answer and dare not deviate from a canned interpretation of a text as defined by curriculum guides or computer reading programs. Additionally, children are subjected, and then are likely to succumb, to a habit of institutional beliefs overriding their own beliefs or opinions (Apol, 1998). Yet if we expose them to critical literacy—“the ability to use multiple texts, including all symbol systems and expressions of disparate points of view”—they will gain the ability “to make sense of one's life and the world in a particular context” (Shannon, 1995, p. 103). Once a deeper insight into a person's own ideological perspective is exposed through experiencing authentic text, critical literacy can then translate to multiple texts and different points of view. This can

only take place, though, if children are trained to “see” beyond the words right in front of them, which some believe is not the case today. We must consider the very real possibility suggested by Boutte (2002)—that children cannot, on their own, learn to identify and clarify ideological perspectives in books and then transform them to their daily lives. Instead, they need educators to guide them. Along with educators, the text becomes the facilitator of knowledge and assists children by assuming a sense of socialization that reflects all aspects of being human, to include hopes, fears, expectations, and demands (Apol, 1998). Thus, critical literacy supports socially constructed literature (Lowery, 2000) and aligns itself with the role of dialogue and activism.

Much of critical literacy is rooted in Paulo Freire’s seminal *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970/2000) and his approach for radical pedagogical transformation. Freire believed that people who were oppressed were not aware of this “condition.” As long as they remained unaware of the cause of their oppression, they would, according to Freire, “fatalistically ‘accept’ their exploitation” (p. 64). Thus, Freire recommended that oppressed groups could be liberated through the right education, one in which teachers encouraged students to question their worlds by using authentic dialogue and in which teachers spoke “with” rather than “for” the students. Such an approach was described by Freire as the “reflection and action upon the world in order to transform it” approach (p. 51). Although innovative, Freire’s approach was not meant to represent a set of methods for teachers to follow. Instead, Freire viewed these ideas as representative of a philosophy, in which hope would empower students and in which skill learning would lead students to a sense of self-agency, self sufficiency, and confident decision-making (McDaniel, 2004).

Critical theory allows a person to “challenge and question the status quo” (Kincheloe & McLaren, 1994, p. 138). Children’s literature functions as a theatre, where creating a just and

equal world through literary experiences can be performed to address issues of social justice and equality within our society. As language is not solely accepted as a neutral vehicle for communicating information (Gaber-Katz, 1996), critical literacy acknowledges a relationship between power and knowledge (Giroux & McLaren, 1994). In the relationship between power and knowledge, students must be taught how to stand apart from the text and identify the different values in a text to better understand their own. Apol (1998) posited, “Ultimately, critical perspectives on texts can lead students to critical perspectives on larger forces at work in society” (p. 37).

This acknowledgement provides us with the tools to foster an ability to seek alternative views and perspectives hidden within the meanings of text. It encourages teachers and students to be reflective by incorporating the use of language and text into the social reconstruction of one’s self. This process acts as a tool to discover, or rediscover, a different social or cultural construct within a text and to protect oneself from possible unconscious manipulation or persuasion. When paired with social representations of text, critical literacy can provide the framework needed to critique traditional beliefs and challenge us to view the written word through multicolored lenses. This becomes important as children guide themselves through literature and learn to reflect and celebrate those people who appear in the books they encounter.

Creighton’s (1997) underlying principles of critical literacy theory in reading can serve as the framework for suggested starting points for developing critical awareness. In line with Piagetian thought, Creighton posited that every reader brings to the text his or her own knowledge and personal beliefs about the world. What is formed is a reflection between the ideology brought from the text and the value system and encounters brought from the reader. Together these elements form an experience unique to the reader, a “voice that is heard to define

themselves as active participants in the world” (McLaren, 1994, p. 230). As Apol (1998) outlined, there are many techniques of inquiry in which children can make visible and identify their own beliefs, to be able to explore the relationships between author, reader, text, and the world. For example, students can try to identify the “lesson” to be learned by determining the text’s unspoken message. Students can ask how the story positions them as a reader. What does it assume about their beliefs? Think not only of what the text says but also of what it does not say. How might this text be read from another time or place? What patterns do the students see in the text? Which of the students’ own experiences, assumptions, or beliefs do they feel most strongly when they interact with this literature? How can an awareness of their own cultural background impact the way the students’ read this text? By inviting students to answer these questions, teachers can create the culture of inquiry necessary for students to educate themselves with accurate and authentic information. As relates to the present study, by using the critical literacy approach here, one can begin to dissect the story of Christopher Columbus and expose the manner in which this world-changing encounter addresses the Taino people and to what degree of accuracy it is portrayed in books for children. Children can then begin the dissection process and start to question the information bestowed upon them through story; they can use this information to transform their own knowledge when encountering the story of Columbus and the Taino people.

Critical Multiculturalism Theory

Critical multiculturalism, as Hade (1997) explained, is regarded as an injustice struggling toward social justice and change and justice. Yenika-Agbaw (1997) depicted the critical multicultural perspective as the understanding that authors are socialized to believe in certain ideologies of power that are formed by the signs they use. These signs form meanings that

readers gather from the stories they read. In addition to this perspective, critical multiculturalism incorporates the contexts of racism, classism, sexism, and history, in an effort to better one's life. This critical approach can be conceived by creating multiple perspectives of what already exists and what is possible (Yenika-Agbaw, 1997) and to use the texts to "make sense of one's life and to the world in a particular context" (Shannon, 1995, p. 103).

In the United States, there is a history of hesitation regarding learning other cultural perspectives. Yet with such diversity in our world, learning from other cultures is a necessity. In order for mainstream cultures to achieve interracial and intercultural understanding and rapport, people from these cultures must be willing to cross the borders into other parallel beliefs, values, and traditions (Cai, 2002). Cultural border crossing should not be viewed as a one-way street. Using a critical multicultural literature approach can help bridge children from the dominant cultural understanding to an understanding of the other cultures around them. As noted by Cai,

Historically, people of parallel culture backgrounds were required to 'melt' into the mainstream culture. They were forced to learn in school from the literature about the mainstream culture; for example, Native Americans were forced to learn the white man's culture, as portrayed in *Indian School: Teaching the White Man's Way* by Michael Cooper (1999). In fact, Native Americans know more about the mainstream culture than people of the mainstream culture know about their culture. (Cai, 2002, p. 119)

Part of the critical approach to educating (or reeducating) our youth, both Native and non-Native, revolves around deflating erroneous assumptions and offering a more realistic view of the history of our people through border crossing. For Native Americans, and all children, this awareness becomes critical because children must begin understanding and grow confident in applying and increasing their body of knowledge that is necessary for them to adapt to a rapidly changing world (Gilliand, 1999). Applying the knowledge and cultural understanding of their own people will assist them in finding their own place without the domineering persuasion of

historical inaccuracies that they are often taught in schools (Kincheloe & Steinberg, 1997) and, within the focus of this study, in literature.

Peter McLaren (1998) posited that today in Western countries the mainstream culture often denies the influence of other minority groups by soaking up contributions made by minority cultures and making them their own. Contributions from minorities are thus transformed and then either ignored or assumed to have emerged from the dominant culture, producing a society that is disease-ridden. For example, our own governing system and aspects of “democracy” within the U.S. government were imitated from the governing system of the Iroquois Nation. Yet when used in the school curricula, this fact is rarely, if ever, mentioned. In addition, women, who played a major role in the Iroquois manner of governing a true and pure democracy, were totally excluded from participating in the U.S. form of government, replaced by the “founding fathers” now taught in our schools today (Tehanetorens, 2000).

Critical multiculturalism concerns itself with issues of justice and social change and their relation to the world (Kincheloe & Steinberg, 1997). Although this theoretical style is fairly new, the perspective it offers is truly representative of an egalitarian approach and is a powerful tool to help make learning a part of the learner’s struggle for social justice (Giroux, 1997). Surely, with the academic concerns of the Native American today, a critical need for authentic perspective is necessary.

Critical Multiculturalism in Children’s Literature

Critical literacy, intertwined here as a platform of critical multiculturalism as it relates to literature, challenges the reader to look beyond the existing text to find the hidden messages within the written word (Lowery, 2000). As educators rise to the challenge of providing more accurate and authentic opportunities to learn of other cultures, the implementation of

supplemental sources of commercial trade books are proving to be extremely advantageous (Moore, 1999). Children's books that correctly portray the various cultures of our society have shown to inspire more critical thinking about the human condition, to generate emotion, to heighten social sensitivity, and to provide more accurate presentation of cultural nuances (Sanchez, 1999; Slapin, Seale, & Gonzales 1992).

Taking a look at American society today, we can see children ridiculing other cultures different from themselves and making it part of their conceptual framework of how society functions (Duren, 2000). A critical approach through multicultural literature provides Native children with opportunities for expanding their knowledge by not only learning about stereotypes and prejudices within themselves through books but also about different racial and ethnic groups outside their daily living circle (Duren, 2000). Likewise, a critical approach also affords mainstream children to be exposed to other people, traditions, and emotions.

Children learn about their own racial group, as well as other racial groups, through the involvement of the emotion, interaction, and desires they experience through literature. Through discussions and by reading literature, mainstream students are able to explore the less familiar while minority students are able to examine the world that is reflective of their own lived experiences (Clark, 1995). Duren (2000) recommended that the literature used to promote critical multiculturalism should be designed to increase students' awareness and appreciation of other people: to assist them in recognizing similarities and differences among groups of people; to show how we are connected to each other through needs, desires, or emotions; and to develop a clearer understanding of how social issues affect and focus on the lives of ordinary individuals. Critical multiculturalism in children's literature provides the tools for making connections that afford alternative views in learning for social change. To read for social change can involve

noticing material deprivation—often a by-product of oppression—and making connections among labor and poverty (Yenika-Agbaw, 1997). Making these connections provides an opportunity to “read the world” through multiple lenses and view American society in a variety of perspectives. Empowerment, breaking barriers for the struggle of democracy, promoting self-reflection, and individual consciousness as social change can be obtained (Kincheloe & Steinberg, 1997). Thus, resistance, perseverance, and understanding the power of differences within social justices in the literature presented to children are most meaningful in a critical multicultural approach.

To teach a curriculum in schools that foster a multicultural approach more than surface acknowledgement of differences and similarities is needed. It requires the opportunity to address how attitudes of race, class, and gender are historically constructed. Failure to address issues of racism, classism, and sexism reinforces the ideological concept that White, middle-class males are the cultural norm by which all other cultures are compared (Duren, 2000; Kincheloe & Steinberg, 1997). Children’s literature oftentimes offers significant opportunities for conversation and critical discussions about issues such as these. Furthermore, discussions help students understand the political implications of being White or being a minority as either relates to oppression and social justice. Conversations in the classroom about books with a Native style provide voice to the silent and gives accuracy to the misinformed. Children’s literature is a way for us to conceptualize the text and find ourselves in context of the experience of others (Duren, 2000).

In the 21st century, the multitude of cultures and diversity in existence require knowledge, skills, and awareness in order to participate in a pluralistic society. Unfortunately, various media can often overlook the important and detailed representations of Native Americans in history.

With over 500 recognized tribes across the United States alone, and over 250 different tribal languages spoken, the authentic and accurate accounts of the indigenous people of this “American” land is extraordinary. By researching how the Taino people of the Dominican Republic/Haiti survived hundreds of years of oppression as a result of the arrival of Christopher Columbus in 1492 and how they are represented in children’s literature, the present research paves the way for children to employ a critical multicultural perspective, at least regarding the telling of this portion of history. Through this multicultural experience, children can learn more about the infamous encounter while building their repertoire of critical inquiry skills and beginning to challenge the status quo in literature during their school years and beyond.

Native Americans in Children’s Literature

This dissertation centers on the analysis of children’s picture books that share the story and the history of Christopher Columbus and his encounter with Western civilization. Through this study, it is my wish to glean information about the accuracy and authenticity found within the selected literature and to discuss the implications of its content. In order to value children’s literature that reflects a U.S. history that includes Native people, it is important to garner information on the existing research of the ways Native Americans have been, and currently are, portrayed in books for children.

Accuracy, Authenticity, and Stereotypes in Books Featuring Native Americans

The U.S. Census Bureau (2005) data show that approximately 1.5% of the U.S. population report American Indian/Alaska Native ethnicity. In comparison to the total population, this figure represents approximately 4.1 million individual Native Americans and includes over 550 different tribal groups speaking over 250 tribal languages within the United States. Many Native people live on reservations, others in rural or urban areas. Within the

Native American experience is a broad range of unique (though connected) lifestyles. However, according to Roberts, Dean and Holland (2005), the majority of Americans know little about this diversity.

As educators rise to the challenge of teaching accurate content to their students about the diverse cultures spanning the American Indian experience, the reliance on text and literature becomes essential. There is empirical evidence that more multicultural representation is found in conventional textbooks and teaching materials today than in the past; however, the accuracy and depiction of Native people is highly questionable (Loewen, 2005). To supplement the classroom textbook, educators can seek a variety of commercial trade books that have been shown to inspire critical thinking about the human condition, to heighten social sensitivity, and to provide additional insight into cultural nuances (Sanchez, 1999; Slapin & Seale, 1992). Even with the increase in published literature regarding indigenous people, Harvey (1999) warned that while trade books may contain more well-written narratives, the need for accuracy in historical and contemporary perspectives and the challenging of stereotypes still greatly exists. Brophy (1999) accentuated the power of trade books that are historically and culturally accurate and urged educators to decipher accurate sources from those books that bear distortion, tokenism, omission, inaccuracy, inappropriate representation, lack of humanness, and negative stereotyping of indigenous people and their culture.

By definition, a stereotype is a “fixed image, idea, trait or convention, lacking in originality or individuality, most often negative” (Dowd, 1992, p. 220), which takes away the human qualities of individuals and promotes an unclear understanding of social realities (Verrall & McDowell, 1990). Native American culture is rich and deeply embedded in ancient traditions among its people. Their values, ideas, government, traditions, foods, clothing, music, art, and

recreation have been well documented over the past couple of centuries (Diamond & Moore, 1995). However, stereotypical images of young children in headdresses, passive girls in long, black braids, and the portrayal of Native people as savage beasts are reported in many children's books today (McMahon, Saunders, & Bardwell, 1996). Books with such presentations are deemed inaccurate and disrespectful and are said to deny the rich diversity among specific Native tribes (Lindsay, 2003; Reese, 1999; Stewart, 2002). As Norton (1990) specified, literature is identified as a key component to increasing cultural awareness. It must be carefully selected to accurately reflect customs and values of other Native cultures while heightening students' understanding of their beliefs and lifestyles. Furthermore, "using literature that gives inaccurate information can be more harmful than the failure to represent other cultures at all" (Hilliard, 1995, p. 729). As a result, the need to recognize the stereotypes that are often identified in books featuring Native American themes becomes essential.

The earliest stereotypes of Native Americans came from missionaries and explorers who portrayed Native people as uncivilized, superstitious, simplistic, perfect for conversion to Christianity, and dependent on the European influences. When the landing of Christopher Columbus took place and the European rivalries over land began in North America, Native Americans became known as "blood thirsty savages" greatly feared by their enemies (Reese, 1998). For the most part, children are influenced by these stereotypes of Native Americans, which lead them to believe that either Native Americans cease to exist after 1890 or that Native Americans are all exotic people who wear feathers and smoke peace pipes (Caldwell-Wood & Mitten, 1991; Reese, 1998). Additionally, Native Americans are stereotyped in many other ways, even in today's culture. During the month of November with reference to Pilgrims and Thanksgiving, teachers often have children make and wear multifeathered headdresses, a sacred

custom traditionally worn only by high-ranking members of the tribal community. There is also the stereotyped caricature of the Native American depicted as a sports mascot. In addition, children still play “cowboys and Indians,” often grunting the Hollywood created “Ugh,” which has been described by Mihesuah (2002) as “a nonsensical, verbal symbol of the quintessence of Indians” (p. 11). Furthermore, Dorris (1998) lamented, “It’s hard to take seriously, to empathize with, a group of people portrayed as speaking ungrammatical language, as dressing in Halloween costumes, as acting ‘wild,’ as being undependable in their promises of gifts” (p. 19). Because children’s books play an important role in shaping children’s perception of various cultures, books are more than just entertainment; they are vehicles that transfer cultural knowledge, awareness, and thought and bear the responsibility of upholding the truth of our nation’s past.

Howard (1991) posited that an authentic book contains a story that is set within the distinctiveness of characters and settings and reflects the universality of experience throughout the pages. The broad and the specific combine to create a story where “readers from the culture will know that it is true, will identify, and will be affirmed, and readers from another culture will feel that it is true, will identify, and learn something of value” (p. 92). If the story is not accurate or wrongly portrays a history or culture, Howard (1991) argued that children can not only walk away with inaccurate information, but this erroneous information can follow them throughout their schooling.

In the pages that follow, for the purpose of creating the contextual framework for this study, a detailed example is offered to demonstrate common portrayals of Native Americans in books that highlight a tradition and holiday celebrated every year across the country, Thanksgiving. This example is based on recorded historical facts and has been launched into story books and cartoon movies for children. This event and its critical response demonstrate the

controversial depiction of stories passed down to children and the potential pernicious effects they hold as the result of inaccurate and inauthentic information as seen through the eyes of the authors.

The First Thanksgiving

You may be familiar with this scene: The year is 1621. A first-grade class eagerly prepares for the November holiday. One half of the class makes pretend headdresses adorned with feathers made of colorful construction paper and the other half creates black top hats with a recognizable silver buckle on the front and white bonnets with yarn to secure them around their heads. During the reenactment of the first Thanksgiving that ensues soon after by the children, the “Pilgrims and the Indians” happily share in a feast of giving thanks by eating turkey, potatoes, popcorn, cranberry sauce, and pumpkin pie together (I remember this well, having portrayed the role of a “potato” in my own school play). As a former first-grade teacher, I ask the question, “What is wrong with this picture?” Did the Wampanoag really bring popcorn on the first Thanksgiving as some children’s books indicate? Or is it just a myth?

Behind every myth is the possibility of truth providing us with the opportunity to discover who we were, where we come from, and who we are today. Looking at the past and understanding where we come from as defined in myths help shape the knowledge we gained as children from the stories told to us. These stories provide a conceptual framework that guides us into adulthood and leaves us with certain (mis)conceptions of the people who inhabit the world. These same stories continue to be told in children’s literature while they provide and shape the values and beliefs of the new generation. The importance of historical accuracy and cultural authenticity becomes clear as these contexts contribute to the world views of our future leaders as individuals, as members of tribal and nontribal families, and as members of our communities.

Although this is not the complete story of Thanksgiving, it represents a typical, yet simple depiction of a historical event that is taught to children nationwide. This story is found in many children's books and is plagued with questionable content and omissions, is often presented from an ethnocentric European viewpoint, and lacks the point of view from the Native people impacted by the arrival of these colonists (Kerner, 2002).

The thumbnail sketch of the historical event of the first Thanksgiving as listed in *The American Tradition* textbook featured in James Loewen's book, *Lies My Teacher Told Me* (2005) goes like this:

After some exploring, the Pilgrims chose the land around Plymouth Harbor for their settlement. Unfortunately, they had arrived in December and were not prepared for the New England winter. However, they were aided by friendly Indians, who gave them food and showed them how to grow corn. When warm weather came, the colonists planted, fished, hunted, and prepared for themselves for the next winter. After harvesting their first crop, they and their Indian friends celebrated the first Thanksgiving. (p. 77)

Dow and Slapin (2006) highlighted other accounts that have been called into question:

The Pilgrims wanted their own religion so they left England to pursue a place to worship God in their own way (Gibbons, 1985—Broken Flute). During their first hard year, the Pilgrims found corn buried in the sand of Cape Cod... This important find gave the Pilgrims seeds to plant—and these became the seeds for survival (Barth, 1975). When Spring came, two men named Squanto and Samoset appeared and made friends with the surviving Pilgrims (Bartlett, 2001). Squanto was the Pilgrims' teacher and friend. He helped save their lives and made sure their little settlement survived in the rocky New England soil (Fink, 2000).

These recollections of a time back in the 19th century came about in stories of Thanksgiving from one paragraph of only 115 words in one letter written in 1621 about a harvest gathering in New England. This is the holiday we know today as Thanksgiving. According to Margaret Bruchac and Grace O'Neill (2001), many assumptions that are made today about Thanksgiving are based more on fiction than fact. Many Americans believe that the colonists who settled took over empty land from roving Native wanderers who had no fixed settlement. The true story of the first Thanksgiving has been difficult to solidify. No one knows when the

“first” Thanksgiving occurred. People have been giving thanks for as long as we have existed.

“Indigenous Nations all over the world have celebrations of the harvest that come from very old traditions; for Native peoples, thanksgiving comes not once a year, but every day, for all the gifts of life” (Dow & Slapin, 2006, p. 201).

Members of the Plimouth Plantation, a place found on the outskirts of the city of Plymouth, have engaged in historical research to find evidence. As Armstrong (2002) indicated, “everything historians know today [about Thanksgiving] basically is derived from two passages written by colonists,” one by Edward Winslow and the other by William Bradford (Armstrong, 2002). Edward Winslow’s account of the harvest mentions men being sent out “fowling” at the request of the Governor. King Massasoit and other Native people joined the 90 men, who for 3 days entertained and feasted on wild fowl and deer. This is recorded based on a one-time event and was not repeated in future encounters (Armstrong, 2002). Armstrong also noted that 20 years later, William Bradford wrote a book that provides a bit more insight as to what might have been on the “first” Thanksgiving table. The book contains food items popular during that time, such as duck or geese, lobsters, mussels, white and red grapes, black and red plums, and flint corn. However, the book was stolen by British looters during the Revolutionary War and was lost for the next 100 years, leaving little influence and limited perspective on the historical event.

To support the framework of this study, I reviewed picture books on Thanksgiving in order to compare how the Native people of this story were represented. The story was read in its entirety, and then reread with a critical multicultural lens that highlighted some contradicting claims that took place during this harvest event back in 1621. These picture books were located in the county public library and came up at the top of the search list when the term “Thanksgiving” was entered into the search criteria for a juvenile audience. The following is a

brief account of how the indigenous people are represented in books about Thanksgiving and meant to assist in building the conceptual framework for this research study.

One often-omitted perspective of Thanksgiving is that of the Native people. Very few books highlight the notion and historical meaning of the event from a Native viewpoint. For example, an excerpt taken from *The Story of Thanksgiving* written by Bartlett (2001) makes a claim that “In 1621 the Pilgrims became the first group of English colonists to hold a harvest celebration as the first Thanksgiving on American soil. Today we think of this celebration as the first Thanksgiving” (unpaginated). In truth, the indigenous people who lived on these lands hundreds of years before the English took claim celebrated a plethora of events, including but not limited to, celebrating a good crop, to signal the birth of a child, or to give thanks to the Creator. This story implies none of this existed prior to the English celebration. Later in the story the text tells how the Pilgrims wanted to celebrate their harvest. “They invited the Wampanoags to join them” (unpaginated). According to Bruchac and O’Neill’s (2001) research, no documentation exists that demonstrates that the English extended the invitation to the Wampanoag people. When Massasoit, the sachem (chief) of the Pokanoket village, decided to first visit the English village, it was not planned with the Pilgrims ahead of time. No one knows exactly why the sachem chose this time for his visit, but his visit coincided with the harvest feast that the English were already preparing.

The second example is written by Alice Dalgliesh and illustrated by Helen Sewell and titled, *The Thanksgiving Story*. Although the book was published in 1954, it is a Caldecott Honor book, complete with the silver medal on the cover and readily available for checkout from a variety of libraries throughout the county. Here is an excerpt from the book that describes the encounter with the Wampanoag people:

Everyone would have liked to go on shore to walk on the good, firm ground. The women could hardly wait to wash all the dirty clothes. But first some of the men went to see if it was safe. There would be Indians. The settlers had heard all kinds of stories about Indians. So the men carried their guns. They would not shoot except to protect themselves...Meanwhile other men went looking for corn. They had heard about it from others who had been to this new land. They would trade with the Indians for seed to plant...No corn—but small hills of sand. The men dug down into one and—there was a little old basket filled with corn! Now they had corn to plant. They found other baskets. These were big baskets, and it took two men to carry one. They filled their pockets with corn. Some day they would find the Indians and pay them for it. One day they did see some more Indians. These Indians were not friendly. They shot at the settlers with their bows & arrows. The men shot back with their guns. After the Indians had gone, the settlers picked up many arrows on the sand. (not paginated)

As Loewen (2005) added, “The true story of Thanksgiving reveals embarrassing facts” (p. 95).

This story advocates that stealing is acceptable. More importantly, the story gives the reader a feel that Native people were dangerous and violent. The indigenous people the colonists encountered were no more dangerous than the colonists themselves. Nowhere in the book does it offer any authentic or accurate story of the harvest time from the indigenous perspective.

Fortunately, there are efforts underway to more accurately tell the story of this famous event. Linda Coombs, associate director of the Wampanoag program at Plymouth Plantation, has emphasized that the act of thanksgiving was an everyday occurrence among the Wampanoag people. Specifically, she posited, “Every time anybody went hunting or fishing or picked a plant, they would offer a prayer or acknowledgment” (Armstrong, 2002, p. 14). Furthermore, “Thanksgiving” ceremonies were held year round. Harvest time was regarded as an important time to all tribal cultures in America (Kerner, 2002). One book that provides a Native perspective toward Thanksgiving is Jackie French’s, *Nickommoh!* (1999). This book celebrates the harvest of the Narragansett people during a feast called *Nickommoh*, meaning “give away” or “exchange,” a good look into Thanksgiving before the Pilgrims entered the scene. Bruchac and O’Neill’s *1621: A New Look at Thanksgiving* (2001) offers an honest look at this event and

provides generous information on the history, which is provided at the back of the book.

Another story told from the Native perspective of Thanksgiving is Jake Swamp's *Giving Thanks: A Native American Good Morning Message* (2003), whose story offers a message of thanks that originates with Native people of upstate New York and Canada and continues to be spoken at ceremonial gatherings held by the Iroquois, or Six Nations.

The ideological meaning American history has attributed to Thanksgiving is unclear and has been a controversial topic for some time. Some people celebrate it as a time for giving thanks to God and family, while others regard it as a time of reflection or a time to celebrate harvest. In contrast, others observe Thanksgiving as a day of mourning due to genocidal acts, land loss, and cultural decimation (Kerner, 2002). Whether the holiday originally began in 1589 with Don Juan de Onate's celebratory expedition feast or during the Civil War when Abraham Lincoln proclaimed it a national holiday in 1863—when the Union needed the patriotism that such an observance might provide to help unify the nation, Thanksgiving today is often celebrated with headdresses of construction paper feathers and white paper bonnets (Loewen, 2005). One must ask, "Is this the message we send in the books we use to teach this important time in history?" Many Americans are unaware of the continued existence of the Native Americans in historical accounts such as this one. Unquestioning acceptance of biased interpretation can affect the way we treat one another, even today (Bruchac & O'Neill, 2001). This example demonstrates a need to research the accuracy and authenticity of other monumental historical contributions taught in the classroom. Therefore, critically analyzing picture books that tell the story of Christopher Columbus will offer a clearer, more global, and more accurate view into important narratives that combine history and literature that influence the minds of our children, for perhaps, a lifetime.

Illuminating History and Culture in Children's Literature

According to Fox and Short (2004), every child reserves the right to see themselves positively and accurately portrayed in stories and to find truth based on their own experiences instead of negative stereotypes and misrepresentation. Yet literature involving multicultural characters or events written from a European American perspective tends to perpetuate the European American dominance within society (Lim & Ling, 1992). Accurate portrayals of history and authentic cultural values are thought to be the cornerstones of experiencing a good story. As children gain the knowledge to critically approach books that involve historical or cultural events, it is believed that children become able to challenge the status quo and seek more meaningful experiences as they learn about history and their culture or culture that is different than their own.

The study of American history by the youth of the United States has been a pendulum priority of the educational system for nearly 100 years (Ravitch, 1985; Sewall, 1988). Students in the past have been exposed to a variety of approaches teaching them about their country's history, oftentimes from the traditional Western canon taken from a history textbook (Loewen, 2005). The subject has often included rote memorization of names, dates, and events as the primary focus. However, in recent years this approach has come under scrutiny as the lack of student historical knowledge becomes known. The question is therefore raised, what exactly do we want our children to learn about our past and how do we teach it?

The place of history in the school curriculum continues to be supported by educational commissions addressed in 1988 by the 32-page Bradley Commission report (2000, revised 2nd Edition). The Bradley Commission on History in Schools was created in 1987 in response to widespread concern over the inadequacy, both in quantity and quality, of the history taught in

American classrooms. The commission maintains that studying history helps students to appreciate and recognize that they share many commonalities and differences with others by (a) understanding others they can better understand themselves; (b) to distinguish the difference between fact and assumption; (c) to recognize that the causes of historical events are usually complex; (d) to critically question simplistic answers and explanations that are void of alternative perspectives; (e) to carefully approach history and avoid analogies that do not project truth; (f) to be prepared for the unexpected and illogical to occur in human interaction; and (g) to clutch the power of ideas and character as revealed by a variety of people of diverse cultural backgrounds through history itself.

It is thought that children lack an experiential knowledge base (beyond their own personal history) from which to gather information for developing historical understandings (VanSledright & Brophy, 1992). As a result, children learn about the physical world through manipulated aspects of their environment. By contrast, most aspects of historical understanding lack this tangible aspect. As children attempt to acquire this historical knowledge, “the idea of a naïve conception (or misconception) takes on a new meaning: it refers to ideas that one has heard or imagined rather than ideas that have been developed through direct personal experience” (VanSledright & Brophy, 1992, p. 841). Children can only understand as much or as complex as their personal experiences will let them.

For children, learning history is a matter of reconstructing historical understandings that have been pieced together from unsystematically gathered bits of information. Searching for new and innovative ways to teach history, an expanding number of teachers in more recent years have turned to the use of literature, both historical fiction and other genres of children’s literature, to teach American history at all grade levels (Lamme, 1994). As students learn to

value other cultures through literature, they can also begin to critically examine historical events from the multiple perspectives of those involved in the event while also learning and respecting how people from varied ethnic groups, races, and genders interpret and value historical experiences.

Books or stories with historical settings can offer true to life glimpses of daily activities in the past. Teachers select stories that demonstrate important values of a time period and choose books that can strengthen children's self-image in addition to relating to a central goal of citizen education (Larkins, 1988). As children begin to develop a deeper, more critical understanding of the lives of other people, they can harbor a richer understanding of themselves and their heritage (Hefflin & Barksdale-Ladd, 2001). Looking at history through the critical lenses as an educator or researcher must do, children begin to question and challenge the status quo that depicts history from a mainstream-based perspective, especially when presented in text for children. As time marches on, so does the number of scholars who have reclaimed history from the distortions and omissions found in children's literature (Loewen, 2005).

It is thought to be difficult for the very young to make sense of history (Slapin & Seale, 2006)—even more so when a national holiday is celebrated honoring a man who has been recorded in history as a great explorer, a great discoverer, and a great conqueror, but at the same time perceived by some as an evil, greedy kidnapper—even murderer. According to Loewen (2005), as many stories “candy-coat” the past as a way of avoiding dealing with racism and other societal ailments found in the past (and reiterated in today's society), this particular story of Columbus can be perceived as pernicious when treated passively as we deal with racial problems on a constant basis, especially in the classroom. As a result, some may ask, “Should the truth be told?” Then we must consider the question and answer posed by Slapin and Seale:

Do we want the **whole** truth in a book for children? Maybe not. But how useful to their understanding of history is a story that ultimately blames the Taino for what happened to them at the hands of the Europeans? (p. 200).

With this in mind, we must turn to the textbooks and curriculum that teach this history to our children.

The Tainos: The People Who Greeted Columbus

The intent of this research is to critically analyze the representation of the Taino people upon Columbus' arrival in 1492 as seen in books for children. The importance of this research lies in the manner in which the Tainos are portrayed in the story and illustrations, both historically and accurately, and how this data can influence the way this global event is taught in our schools. Background knowledge of this indigenous tribe is needed before the reader is provided with literature that poses a critical perspective. Notably, few scholarly writings about the Taino people were published until the 1992 Quincentennial celebration of Columbus' encounter. However, in more recent times, additional information has become available about this Caribbean-linked tribe, through an increase in published books, technology capability, and peer-reviewed articles. As a result, a well-defined picture of whom the Taino people are, along with their demographics, agricultural habits, physical features, and their whereabouts in today's world can better assist in this research endeavor.

To begin, it is important to note that the information gathered on the people who greeted Columbus will always be somewhat incomplete as the documentation at the time was not recorded from an unbiased eye, nor safely kept over the past 500 years and beyond. Columbus' personal record, prepared as a report to his royal sponsors, has never been found. Fortunately, there were a few Spanish men who witnessed the unfair treatment to the Native people and who were able to document their observations. "Fortunately, those few who did see the Taino as other human beings rather than mere chattels have left us enough details on their way of life to make at

least some general statements possible,” asserted Granberry (2005, p. 128). Bartolomé de Las Casas, who arrived in Hispaniola in 1502, was the first priest ordained to the “New World” in 1510 and was the author of the most complete history of his day, which wasn’t completed until 1552. De las Casas’ personal accounts, along with a transcription of Columbus’ personal record (diario) that de las Casas completed, some records of the time existed. However, de las Casas’ transcription was made from a copy of the original that was created by an unnamed scribe, leaving the record of Columbus’ first voyage as a third-hand 16th-century manuscript (Keegan, 1992) that has been translated into modern languages by perhaps 20 different translators (Judge, 1986). Nevertheless, as Keegan (1992) noted, “The Spanish were not the best ethnographers, especially when they lacked firsthand knowledge of the subject about which they wrote” (p. 7). For example, their unfamiliarity with issues such as the matriarchal organizations or the choice of terms used when describing certain events caused them to develop inferences that lacked a critical eye when they selected only those events and descriptions that fit more conveniently into a theory regardless of contradicting information. Forte (2006) showed agreement by stating, “Beyond issues of intentional misrepresentation and selective accounting, Spanish texts are fraught with cultural biases that cloud the distinction between accuracy and invention” (p. 44). As such, the biases are compounded during multiple translations of archaic documents, which reinforce the need for researchers to be aware of the responsibility to interpret these texts within the social context of the time, not merely as objective accounts. With additional data being published on the Taino people more accurate information can be provided that enables us to better analyze texts and illustrations with a critical eye. With that said the following information has been gleaned from various scholarly sources and compiled into information that looks to provide a well-rounded picture of who the “Men of Good” were and continue to be today.

The Taino people of the Caribbean, speakers of an Arawak language of origin in the Guianas region of South America, were the first indigenous people to encounter Europeans. When Columbus landed on October 12, 1492, it was on the island of Guanahani in the Bahamas, just south of Cuba, Hispaniola, and Puerto Rico (Granberry, 2005). Once landed, he reclaimed the land as *San Salvador* in the name of Spain. However, Taino life began long before this famous encounter. Scholars believe that thousands of years ago modern human beings reached various parts of Europe, Africa, and Asia and moved across the Bering land bridge, Beringia, to North America (Tyler, 1988). Inevitably, it is speculated that there came a time when the glaciers melted, the waters of the Bering and Chukchi seas rose, and the Bering Strait became a permanent reality. As a result, the division of two worlds emerges, leaving the indigenous people to live in isolation from the inhabitants of Europe, Africa, and Asia.

The origins of the Tainos are traced to the river banks in Venezuela (Rouse, 1989a) as early as 2100 B.C. (Keegan, 1992). Approximately 800 B.C., they arrived in the Caribbean region (Bigelow, 1992) by means of the Lesser Antilles to Puerto Rico. About 2,000 years ago, Taino people migrating from South American's Orinoco River basin traveled to the Caribbean islands. Some may refer to the Taino people as Arawak. The name Arawak has been identified as a misnomer that resulted from people confusing the family language name with the name of an ethnic group (Rouse, 1987). The Arawaks were restricted to the lands around the Orinoco River and Trinidad (Keegan, 1992). At a more general level the languages spoken by the Tainos and Arawaks are a bit similar and classified as members of the Arawakan language family. Rouse (1987) suggested that the commonly used name Arawak be replaced with the Taino name when discussing native West Indians at contact. Taino was used by the Spanish to tell these people apart from the Island-Caribs (Keegan, 1992). In some children's books the name given to

the people with whom Columbus encountered is Arawak. According to this information, that is not the correct terminology to describe the Taino people.

Sometime between 600 and 1200 A.D. the Tainos first arrived in the Bahama region (Sokolow, 2003). The Classic Taino chiefdoms were observed around 1200 A.D. and thrived until the arrival of the Spanish in 1492 (Keegan, 1992). Living off the islands for over 1,500 years, the indigenous people developed dominant values of generosity, kindness, and gentle personalities (Barreiro, 1993). Although often referred to as “primitive” by Western scholars, the Taino culture was so intricate and multifaceted, they were able to feed millions of people while maintaining a spirituality that encompassed the respect of their animal and other natural food sources. As Barreiro (1990) explained, “The Tainos lived in the shadows of a diverse forest so biologically remarkable as to be almost unimaginable to us...their world would appear to us, as it did to the Spanish of the 15th century, as a tropical paradise” (p. 106). Yet this paradise did not remain as inviting upon the arrival of the Europeans.

Ideals and Values

For hundreds of years Europeans and Americans complained that Native “culture and traditions were childish, inflexible, and based on bizarre sacred narratives that lacked profundity and defied common sense” (Sokolow, 2003, p. 228). Yet, on the other hand, as Sokolow underscored, many humanists failed to pursue important questions about the “New World” that highlight how a society of millions was able to successfully:

- share widely accepted rules and justice without laws, courts, policies, and armies;
- function smoothly without a state;
- educate and train everyone broadly without formal schooling;
- respect manual labor;
- lack class conflict and exploitation;
- depend on a social compact rather than coercion;
- enable adults to have equal access to essential resources;
- enable adults to engage in a wide variety of daily tasks;

- produce few misfits or superfluous people;
- enable women to have important spiritual, economic, and political functions;
- allow people to have plenty of time for leisurely activities;
- manifest a strong sense of solidarity and purpose toward individuality;
- connect people spiritually to each other and to the natural world around them.

The perspective that this indigenous group believed in included the idea that Native peoples did not conserve the environment; the environment conserved them. This indigenous view of the world was compassionate, as it had the authority to nurture and fulfill its inhabitants, and as Sokolow (2003) asserted, “Reciprocity was the glue that bound their spiritual and social worlds together” (p. 230). This interrelationship with nature allowed them to sustain themselves through creative and complex living systems and great agricultural achievement.

Agriculture and Housing

The Taino were an agricultural people (Granberry, 2005). The Tainos enjoyed a serene way of life that modern anthropologists now call “ecosystemic.” In the wake of recent scientific research about the cost of high-impact technologies upon the natural environment, a culture such as the Taino, that could feed several million people without permanently damaging its surroundings, might command higher reverence and respect (Barreiro, 1990). Their primary staple crop was manioc, which was called *yuca* in Taino, used for making cassava bread. Various other fruit and vegetable crops such as maize, peanuts, sweet potatoes, squash, pineapples, papaya, beans, peppers, avocados, and other nonfood crops, such as tobacco, were raised for eating and ceremonial purpose. Using an intricate irrigation system to channel rain water, the Taino agriculture was remarkably productive. Their diet consisted of a mixed economy of root-crop horticulture and hunting-fishing-collecting (Sears & Sullivan, 1978). Such items include cultivated roots and tubers, terrestrial animals, marine fishes, and mollusks

(Keegan, 1986a). With such a plentiful diet, the Taino people thrived into a population of millions.

Decline of Population

The Taino population estimates vary greatly, from a few hundred thousand up to 8,000,000. However, Keegan (1992) posited that approximately 1 to 2 million would be a good estimation on the number of Tainos who lived in Hispaniola at the time of Columbus' arrival. There are many variables related to the decline in numbers of this indigenous group, but as Sokolow (2003) indicated, this cultural and demographic disaster is "unmatched" in global history. He asserted,

In our own brutal century, tyrannical governments have tried to destroy Jews, Armenians, and many other peoples. None of these slaughters, however, comes close in duration or intensity to the carnage that occurred in the New World. No comparable ethnic groups have lost as many people as the indigenous inhabitants of the Western Hemisphere. No other group has had such a great percentage of their people die over such an extended period of time. (p. 227)

Europeans were not able to treat indigenous peoples as equals due to their "savage" perception and "barbaric, brutal, completely lawlessness" nature (Briffault, 1992). As a result, the repeated and successful use of violence against the Taino became in a way routine. The horrible abuse suffered by the Taino people as documented in de Las Casas' (Briffault, 1992) journal. To offer additional insight, in Milton Meltzer's (1992) article, *Selective Forgetfulness: Christopher Columbus Reconsidered*, Meltzer extracted a translated quote from de las Casas' journal and reports that the Spaniards:

...made bets as to who would slit a man in two, or cut off his head at one blow or they opened up his bowels. They tore the babies from their mother's breast by their feet, and dashed their heads against the rocks... They spitted the bodies of other babes together with their mothers and all who were before them, on their swords. (p. 6)

When the Spanish sought more abuse on the Tainos, they would hang them from gallows, as de las Casas reported, “just high enough for their feet to nearly touch the ground, and by thirteens, in honor and reverence for our Redeemer and the twelve Apostles, they would put wood underneath and, with fire, they burned the Indians alive. (Meltzer, p. 6).

In addition to the horrific abuse they suffered, the Tainos were not immune to European diseases, notably smallpox, such that many of them perished in the mines and fields as they were overworked, were murdered in cruel put-downs of revolts, or committed suicide to escape the brutal and malicious newcomers of the islands. On Columbus’ second encounter with the Tainos, he began to require accolades from the Native people in Hispanola. Each “adult” over 14 years of age was expected to fill a hawk’s bell full of gold every 3 months. Those who made their quota were given copper tokens to wear around their necks. If Columbus decided little gold could be harvested, he required 25 lbs. of spun cotton. If this tribute was not observed, the Taino were either mutilated by having their hands cut off or much worse. Ramon Rivera, a member of the Jatibonicu Taino Tribal Nation, tells this account from the archives of his people (2001):

The Native people were forced to pay a stipend to the Spanish. This stipend consisted of food, gold, cotton, and forced sex with Native women. Columbus would casually note in his journals that young girls of the ages 9 to 10 were the most desired by his men. Failure to produce tribute to the Spanish brought swift and terrible punishment. Those that did not comply were given an attitude adjustment that consisted of removal of their nose, ear, hand or foot. Those that actively resisted were burned alive. The Native people were even forced to carry their oppressors, to spare the Spanish the drudgery of walking (¶ 9).

Columbus’ impact reduced Taino numbers from as many as 8 million in 1492 (Cook & Woodrow, 1971) to approximately 3 million in 1496 (Thatcher, 1904). By the time of Columbus’ departure, it is believed that only around 100,000 Tainos were left. His policies, however, remained, and as such by 1514 the Spanish census of the island revealed scarcely 22,000 Indians

were alive. In 1542, only 200 Tainos were recorded by de Las Casas (Hanke, 1947; de Madariaga, 1947). Today, many articles and books often cite that the Taino culture died long ago. It is often stated that the “Men of Good” became extinct as a result of genocide by Columbus and his followers (Denevan, 1976; Dobyns, 1983; Thornton, 1987). Today, high in the Guantanamo mountains, in Caridad de los Indios, a kinship community of approximately 600 people of Taino descent exist. The elder cacique, or chief, of this particular group, Panchito Ramirez has explained, “Although we have been here very long, few people know about us. Maybe that is why so many say Cuban Indians do not exist, but the truth is we do, and here we are” (Barreiro, 2003, p. 11).

Myth of Extinction

Twenty five years ago it was widely assumed that indigenous peoples were dying out; that they were either being physically extinguished by disease and the savage onslaughts of the modern world or that they were abandoning their indigenous identities and disappearing into the mainstream of the societies that surrounded them. This assumption was quite wrong.” –David Maybury-Lewis (1997)

It was on the land of Haiti, renamed by Columbus, where the myth of the Taino extinction began (Forte, 2006). Although the malicious treatment toward this indigenous group proved to be devastating to the overall population, the myth of extinction provided the perfect cover up for the Spanish Crown to conceal its inability to exert absolute control over the Native people. Additionally, as Forte noted, continuing the myth proved beneficial for those colonists who benefited from importing African people as slaves. Most prominently, it was to benefit the Dominican friars, led by de las Casas to abolish the *encomienda* system (the system to have the Spaniards teach the Tainos to live like Christians, and in return, the Taino worked for them), and replace it with a mission system. Over the centuries, this myth was retold in many ways

depending on the class or national interests at hand, left unquestioned for many years, until most recently as scholars begin to challenge the assumption.

It is important to note that when Columbus landed in 1492, life was not perfect among the existing population. Native societies had their share of greedy, violent, and uncooperative members (Sokolow, 2003); but if the Taino were human, they had still gained a wealth of knowledge over thousands of years that could have been tapped instead of destroyed through the devastating loss of life that occurred after Columbus' arrival. Most Christians, as Sokolow outlined, resisted the "New World"; as a result of this "denying or trying to obliterate the indigenous spiritual legacy, we have only succeeded in impoverishing many indigenous peoples and making it even more difficult for us to become wiser" (p. 234). The impact of European colonization on the Taino was destructive. It completely restructured the Native way of life and reduced their population to a shockingly large degree.

Descriptive Information

As mentioned earlier, Columbus kept his own record of observations on the Taino people. Columbus' diary describes many attributes that include references to their naked appearance the first time he encountered them, while also noting that none of them appeared to be older than 30 years old. The men went naked or covered their genitalia with cotton loincloths. Unmarried women wore headbands; wives wore short skirts, the length of which represented their rank (Rouse, 1992). Their hair was described as coarse, similar to that of a horse; they wore it down over their eyebrows, except for strands in the back that were left long, never cut. Jose Barreiro, a member of the Taino Nation of the Antilles, described his people as "a handsome people, with no need for clothing for warmth" (p. 106). Barrerio (1990) reported that the general physical appearance of the "Men of Good" was consistent with the appearance of

other Indians of the Americas. Rarely were they taller than 5 feet, 6 inches. Columbus described the Native inhabitants as follows:

Their foreheads and heads are very broad, more than any other race I have seen before. None of them are black, but they are the color of the Canary Islanders...The legs of all of them, without exception is very straight. They have no paunch, and they are very well built (Tyler, 1988, p. 39).

Both men and women painted their bodies with natural dyes made from the sources of earth and adorned themselves with shells and metals. Men and women chiefs often wore gold pieces in the ears and nose, or as pendants around the neck. Some even bore tattoos.

Columbus took a special interest in this goldwork of the Tainos as he believed it afforded him the chance to bring back wealth to repay the king and queen of Spain. The Native people would often mine small nuggets of gold in the local domain and then hammer them into small plates. The local artisans were also experienced woodworkers, potters, weavers of cotton, and carvers of wood, stone, bone, and shell. Although it is thought that many of the Native people had not developed any specific craft into a full-time occupation, their religious affiliation was a considerable part of their cultural mores.

As discovered by Father Ramon Pane, the Tainos' religion played a major part in their day to day lives. Pane, a man of faith, was commissioned by Columbus to study the religious practices prior to introducing Christianity. The practices centered on the worship of deities known as *Zemis*. The term *zemi* was applied not only to the deities themselves but also to items such as idols and fetishes representing them, which were created from the remains of ancestors or from natural items believed to be inhabited with powerful spirits. As many as 10 *zemis* could be had by each person, as it was believed the more you owned, the more powerful they were thought to be.

Regardless of these centuries-old practices, Columbus ignored the Tainos' loyalty to their indigenous spirits and beliefs and continued forcing the Christian faith onto them. According to de las Casas abstract Columbus described,

They ought to be good servants and of good mentality, for I see that they very soon say everything that is said to them. I believe that they would easily become Christians, because it seemed to me that they belonged to no creed" (Tyler, 1988, p. 39).

Exposed to deadly foreign diseases; unable to maintain their agricultural calendar; forced into Spanish social, economic, political, and religious systems; losing rights to land, free expression, and, in several cases, life itself, the Taino managed to survive by resorting to radical ways (Forte, 2006). As this extraordinary history turned into myths of extinction, the knowledge of Columbus began to endure skepticism about the reality of this man so adored by many as a heroic figure in history.

Genres Within History in Children's Literature

Literature that focuses on the past offers readers of all ages an opportunity to step back in time into the lifestyle and societal issues faced by those who lived before them. Historical characters reveal the human condition and expose the readers to the struggles and fears, hopes and dreams, experienced throughout history. When literature that reflects history is thoroughly researched, written, published, illustrated, and shared with an authentic voice, life in the past becomes much more than dates to remember. As visual media of all types become increasingly more sophisticated, the variety of genres (Enciso et al., 2000)—including historical fiction, biographical books, and informational trade books—that focus on historical people and events also rise and become more desirable for children. In the following pages, a review of literature is offered, outlining the common genres in historical literature for children where the Taino encounter most often exists (Baxley, 2005). This section defines the genre, states the criteria for

selection of quality books found within that genre, and discusses the value of that genre in the literary canon.

Historical Fiction

Historical fiction is defined in Sutherland, Monson, and Arbuthnot's *Children and Books* (1981) as "a story set in past time, a time about which the majority of the book's readers will have no direct knowledge" (p. 370). It is designed to set a story within the overview of an earlier era, at least 25 years or more (Savage, 2000; Sutherland, 1997), highlighting extraordinary events or historical figures or giving the reader a glimpse into what it was like to live "back then" (Karr, 2000) while also providing readers with that "lived-through experience" (Rosenblatt, 1978). It blends history and fiction as it blends entertainment and the acquisition of knowledge (Savage, 2000). Quality children's literature as a supplement to classroom instruction should be a primary goal for those who share literature with children. Exposing readers to the best books is as important as integrating literature itself (Moss, 2003) as each genre is unique and has distinctive considerations for quality assurance. Norton (1987) contended that:

Through the pages of historical fiction, the past becomes alive. It is not just states, accomplishments, and battles; it is people, famous and unknown, who lived during certain times and who through their actions and beliefs, influenced the course of history (p. 446).

Historical fiction, like all good fiction, has the potential to affect the lives of readers, which, in turn, affects the history we are creating today (Beck, Nelson-Faulkner, & Pierce, 2000). It has the power to take us to a place far away, yet return us a changed person, one who is more human (Huck, 1998). Because of this influence, the accuracy and authenticity associated with historical fiction must be considered when sharing information and stories of our past with children. In the words of well-known children's author Karen Hesse,

No one can recreate history with perfect authenticity. But an author can do a fairly accurate representation of the period or of an historical figure based on documentable

material. If the writer is creating historical fiction which is going to ultimately end up in the classroom as a supplement to curriculum, that writer is responsible for portraying that period as close to the facts as humanly possible. (as cited in Beck, Nelson-Faulkner, & Pierce, 2000, p. 548)

There are three subcategories of historical fiction that are commonly found in children's literature (Mitchell, 2003; Norton, 2003; Sutherland, 1997). *Fictionalized memoirs* refer to a historical fiction piece where the author used his or her own background and experiences to recount events in the past. *Fictionalized family history* represents stories that have been passed down through generation after generation before being put into book form, also referred to as *oral tradition*. *Fiction based on research* is the most common type of historical fiction (Savage, 2000), which harnesses research done by the author rather than depending on the author's personal life experiences when completing the work (Jacobs & Tunnell, 2004).

Historical fiction focuses on people and events of the past that represent the struggles, pain, triumphs, visions, and suffering as portrayed in the characters of the story and the condition and environments that surround them (Enciso et al., 2000; Huck, Kiefer, Helper, & Hickman, 2004). Historical fiction pushes readers to inquiry, historical empathy, and critical thought as it moves readers beyond rote memorization of numerous dates and events of the past, while also allowing the reader to be transported back in time to experience what life was like during a particular time long ago (Savage, 2000). When students encounter texts that feature characters with which they can connect, they can see how others are like them and how literature can play a role in their lives (Ramirez & Ramirez, 1994). Historical fiction allows students to reflect back on the prior events and places of the past that influence who they are today, how they fit into the world around them, and how, according to Huck et al., "we are all interconnected and interrelated (2004, p. 483) through story.

Although historical fiction has definite characteristics, the heart of the genre is in the title, *fiction*. It is necessary for historical fiction to be grounded in facts, but it isn't constrained by them. Telling a good story is still the essence of any historical fiction piece (Jacob & Tunnell, 2004). However, the author has the responsibility to present other criteria beyond the basic good plot. Criteria used to judge good historical fiction involve several components (Linguist, 2006): a well-told story that doesn't conflict with historical records; portrays characters realistically; presents authentic settings; artfully folds in historical facts; provides accurate information through illustrations; and avoids stereotypes and myths.

History told in a narrative and subjective form better mirrors the manner in which children relate to or explain themselves and understand their world (Freeman & Levstik, 1988). Freeman and Levstik continue by advocating that story also provides a safe haven for the exploration of the more intense examples of human behavior, both the desirable outcomes and the undesirable. As a result, children's comprehension is greater with high interest materials that can capture children's attention and better motivate them to read (Oliver, 1996). Developing a mature sense of historical understanding may entail that the reader view multiple perspectives of history that consist of interpretations that are subject to revision (Oliver, 1996). Authors of historical fiction can reconstruct their interpretations of the past by researching a variety of sources and providing author's notes and chronological timelines to indicate how they went about constructing their stories. If applicable, the illustrations and/or photos, according to Mitchell (2003), must "be [historically] accurate if the illustration is to contribute effectively to the story and its authenticity" (p. 283). The contents should convey information about the past that adds to, supports, and/or clarifies textual information (Temple et al., 2002).

As children read across historical literature they may discover that many events have multiple perspectives and many forms of representation (Encisco et al., 2000). The children feel history come alive in their hands and hearts. Consequently, readers become actively involved in the analysis of the author's choice of story and events and critical thought is often born.

Biography

Biography (from the Greek words *bios* meaning life, and *graphein* meaning write) is a genre of literature that is based on the written accounts of individual lives. While a biography may focus on a subject of fiction or nonfiction, the term is usually in reference to nonfiction. Biographies are written accounts of people whose words or actions have influenced the lives of others and are embedded in the time and culture of the subject's life (Horning, 1997). Biography and historical fiction create a natural bridge; while biography enriches understanding of specific individuals, historical fiction enriches the context for biographies from the same time period. Biographies can and should provide a way to personalize history, to discover the drive or inspiration behind some remarkable people and perhaps ignite interest in something new or different.

Savage (2000) identified three major subcategories of biographies: authentic biography, fictionalized biography, and biographical fiction. *Authentic biography* conveys factual accounts of a person's life and rarely includes dialogue (Huck et al., 2004). A *fictionalized biography* uses narrative text and includes sound evidence to guide the story, but the author may be liberal in the use of describing events or creating conversations (Savage, 2000, p. 236). The third subcategory, *biographical fiction*, consists of fictionalized accounts of a person's life "liberally laced with anecdotes or events from which there is little historical documentation" (Savage,

2000, p. 237). Although fiction, the author still maintains the responsibility for accurate information.

Good biography is accurate and authentic. There should be no glaring omissions from the person's life that would distort the reader's view or understanding of that person (Horning, 1997). "It is a judicious biographer who can "avoid blatant personal judgments and allow the actions and words of the subject [sic] to speak for themselves" (Jacob & Tunnell, 2004, p. 135). Biographers have the potential of bringing their own biases and beliefs about their subjects into their work, which can potentially taint the way the research is presented (Oliver, 1996). Being aware of the objectivity within a biography allows the reader a chance to come away with his or her own conclusions (Sutherland, 1997) and own conceptions of an event.

Through biographies, readers develop the concept of historical time, learn historical content, and can be exposed to, and possibly identify with, a person from the past. Over time biographies have become less restrictive, allowing for more controversial information to be written that may have been considered too damaging or even forbidden in the past. In addition, today's biographies also highlight more achievements from lesser known Americans and less from "the dead white males" (Norton, 2003).

"[With children's biographies] there is the growing recognition that white males were not the only members of the human race to lead exciting lives and to contribute to civilization, but that women and members of racial and ethnic minorities also have a rich heritage and have made significant contributions" (Sutherland, p. 422).

Contemporary biographies present a more balanced representation without getting into a character that is glorified into a "superhuman" persona (Oliver, 1996). The superhuman persona is a form of stereotyping and should be avoided at all costs (Jacobs & Tunnell, 2004). As previously noted, children from all backgrounds can take ownership or identify with someone

who serves as a role model when they see someone like themselves represented in books (Cai, 2002).

A well-written biography gives readers a scaffold from which they can gain knowledge and information. Naturally, the text and accompanying illustrations must accurately correspond with the facts and be free of author bias (Brown, 2000) for that to occur. As with historical fiction, biographers often provide the facts or sources that justify the authenticity of their research by means of authors' notes, footnotes, prefaces, and/or references. The facts presented in biographies should be reliable and verifiable (Huck et al., 2004) and should include information from original sources, such as diaries, journals, interviews, and archives representative of the subject's time period. A good biographer does not assume all readers come to the book with the appropriate background knowledge to comprehend the person or event told (Anderson, 2002). Many children approach biographies with curiosity and wonder. With this wonderment, children can be motivated by what they read, leaving them with the temptation to discover more about people and the human condition.

Informational Picture Books

Informational picture books are nonfiction texts that present factual knowledge about a subject (Bamford & Kristo, 2000). Their purpose is to inform, entertain, explain, and enlighten, as well as to encourage the reader to become genuinely interested in the given subject (Savage, 2000). Leal (1993) described informational picture books as texts that have the structural narrative elements of setting, theme, plot, and resolution, accompanied by the expository structures for the purpose of conveying information. If used correctly, informational picture books can fill the gap where primary grade readers may need additional written exposition by providing complicated concepts in a more comprehensive manner (Moss, 2003). Moss declares

several advantages to sharing nonfiction picture books as compared to textbooks. Informational picture books facilitate individualization of instruction by providing students with materials that more closely meet their reading levels for instructional purposes while also acquainting children with terms and concepts that are associated with a particular topic written in reader-friendly styles. The books provide in-depth information on various content-related topics and offer accurate, up-to-date information. Meltzer (1994) argued that accuracy—both positive and negative aspects of a topic—is essential in nonfiction literature. Once again, giving false or incomplete truth to children is detrimental to their growth as readers and citizens of the world (Lamme & Fu, 2001). Problems with informational picture books arise when the reader is not able to distinguish fact from fiction in the information being presented in the book (Moss, 2003). Like most nonfiction books, the authors often include text notes, afterwords, and acknowledgements of facts and primary sources to help children, with the support of their teachers, separate fiction from nonfiction.

Along the same lines, all writers of nonfiction need complete accounts of their topic and provide both positive and negative aspects of it (Lamme & Fu, 2001). When evaluating quality nonfiction material, one should examine several aspects regarding the accuracy of the text. For example, the copyright date is critical in that it helps assess accuracy. As time marches on, more and more areas in our life are subjected to debate, challenges, and criticism. Bamford and Kristo (1998) believe that if dated books are part of a classroom collection, teachers and students must determine the current status of the topic and discriminate how the topic has changed since the time of publication. Additionally, books, especially science books, rapidly become out-of-date such that teachers should also address with children that at the time a book was written, it could have been error-free, but as new facts have been discovered and new data uncovered, text in

recently published books can begin to contain some inaccuracies. In similar fashion, another facet to determining quality information picture books is to examine the author's credentials. The best nonfiction authors speak with authority about their topics (Moss, 2003). Some nonfiction authors are experts in the areas in which they write, but many are not. To ensure accuracy, the latter group of authors should consult experts in various fields and should acknowledge these experts somewhere within the book. Also important for teachers and students, as Lamme and Fu (2001) pointed out, is to carefully examine author notes, dedications, and reference sources in the book itself to determine the author's purpose, perspective, and sources. Publishing houses also deserve the same scrutiny. Much can be gained by conducting research on who is publishing more award-winning books and who is not. By identifying who is publishing quality books one can also direct the reader toward other topics with the intent of finding a higher number of quality books on that topic.

Illustrations in Informational Picture Books (Nonfiction)

According to Jacobs and Tunnell (2004), if authors write to captivate readers with informational picture books, there are five key elements that must be present: (a) attractive design that is eye-catching and visually stimulating; (b) compelling details, including quotations, anecdotes, and fun facts; (c) fascinating comparisons that create instant and powerful images; (d) unusual subjects or viewpoints that entice the readers to select the book; and (e) personalized content that seems to be written or designed just for that particular reader by taking a subject area and presenting it in an innovative way.

In the 1990's, illustrations became much more sophisticated, visually packed with information, and remarkably varied in format and content (Bamford & Kristo, 1998). Advances in high-speed presses, computer technology, and scanning devices now allow for accurate

reproduction of art, but at a lower cost (Horning, 1997). Photographs, maps, charts, diagrams, tables, and other visuals are essential to informational trade books because they reinforce authenticity and clarify meaning that may be foreign or difficult for the reader to understand (Temple et al., 2002). These visuals compliment the text and appear in close proximity to the text with clearly labeled headings but should not make the page seem overcrowded and confusing (Moss, 2003; Pike & Mumper, 2004). Further, informational picture books should contain elaborate pictures that offer both great appeal in illustrations and content (Lamme & Fu, 2001).

Just as writers use perspective, voice, and words, artists use line, shape, color, texture and value. These are known as the visual elements (Horning, 1997). The visual elements become a compelling part of the book. Lines are used for different effects, ranging from a sense of orderly action, to making a picture look still or static, to suggesting spontaneous action and excitement. Shapes can promote realism or abstraction; they can also be nonobjective. Texture appeals to our tactile sense and can promote a strong sensual feeling to the artwork. Color paints a picture in and of itself. Its hue can be light or dark, distinguishing the known or the unknown, happiness or sadness, fear or boldness. The composition of the artwork is thoroughly contemplated. The composition, or design principles, can give a sense of order by drawing certain reference points in a picture. Artists can create dominance by making more of something, making something larger, or making something brighter and can give something more value contrast.

When analyzing an illustration, readers benefits from questioning the elements and the principles of design as these aspects can add depth to the evaluation of the picture book (Horning, 1997). Some questions to consider involve asking: Does a certain type of line, color, or shape dominate? What effect does this have on your evaluation? Why did the artist want to

create a particular perception? Do the illustrations express particular emotions? Do they provide essential details that are not present in the text but add another dimension to the story? Do they clarify in such a manner that takes the story beyond its intention?

Using quality trade books to share history opens a window to multicultural considerations. Language patterns, religious beliefs, types of music, family relationships, social mores, attitudes values, and cultural traditions that are culturally authentic should be presented in trade books that highlight a historical event, whether told as fiction or nonfiction (Moss, 2003). Informational picture books, historical fiction, biographies, and textbooks in history curricula expose students to people and places around the world and from various time periods. Literature that focuses on the past offers readers a chance to return to time periods from long ago and to face the societal issues and experience the lifestyles of those before them. Historical characters reveal the human condition and expose the readers to the struggles and fears, hopes and dreams, experienced throughout history. When quality literature that reflects history is thoroughly researched, written, published, illustrated, and shared with an authentic voice, life in the past becomes much more real and memorable.

Conclusion

Sharing literature that incorporates a critical multicultural perspective requires the integration of addressing the issues of justice and social change and the connections to the developing self-identity within the way we learn to see ourselves in relation to the world (Kincheloe & Steinberg, 1997). In the words of Momaday (1966),

Children have a great sense of the power and beauty of words than have the rest of us in general, and if that is so, it is because there occurs, or reoccurs, in the mind of every child something like the recollection of all human experience (p. 43).

Children learn what is given to them and take that knowledge and transform it into power for self-change, self-actualization, and an ability to “read the world.”

Children learn from the old stories and new books that authentically include Native Americans in present day as well as in the past (Trafzer, 1992). With this exposure and perspective, both Native and non-Native children can set their minds thinking in new and diverse ways. Hopefully, they will build a foundation that refuses social inequality and the suffering that accompanies it within the schooling process. In addition, students from the mainstream culture will be enlightened as well and will learn how to border cross to other parallel cultures. As Kincheloe and Steinberg (1997) stated, understanding “difference” empowers the oppressed. Children’s literature that tells the story of the encounter of Columbus and the Taino people is simply a tool to help reach this goal of empowering the oppressed. The present study provides an opportunity to critically analyze trade books and the contextual connections they bring, both historically and in contemporary times, hopefully leading to a heightened awareness and knowledge base that includes the Native voice.

CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY

The primary function this study serves is working toward the attainment of fair, diverse, and accurate representation of the indigenous people in the historical telling of Christopher Columbus' encounter with the Western world in children's books. The major focus of this descriptive study is the ability to identify children's literature that offers a critical perspective on this event, which includes insight into the Taino culture and representation. Such knowledge will ultimately help children learn the important role the Taino people played in this global occasion while offering the opportunity for children to learn a side of history that is often omitted or presented in a manner that may stain the child's knowledge with misconception and negative stereotyping.

An evaluation of selected picture books that discuss the arrival of Columbus and his encounter with the indigenous people who lived on the land upon his arrival was conducted using a unique examination instrument specifically designed for this project. The instrument required the evaluator to pose a variety of critical questions that focused on the relationship Columbus had with the Native people of the islands he encountered upon his arrival to the "New World." These interactions were documented, reviewed, and grouped into themes. Based on these themes, generalizations as to the accuracy and authenticity of the encounters as documented in historical research, as well as the impact on the audience to which these books are often shared, were analyzed, and are disclosed. The second part of this research project offers survey data on the titles that the participating schools indicated using when teaching the topic of Columbus and his encounter. Specifically, this data revealed the books shared most often in an anonymous sampling of teachers and media specialists across the country, utilizing a database of schools with both high and low density of American Indian/Alaska Native students and non-

Native students as well. The participants were asked questions about teaching the topic of Columbus in schools and about which trade books are shared. The disclosed titles were compared to the previously reviewed books and a list of those titles that offered the best (and worst) critical perspective on the topic was generated.

Children's picture books represent a multifaceted form of communication involving text and pictures. Content analysis is a means of examining both the text and the illustrations found within this form. Busha and Harter (1980) supported this research technique as a sound way of evaluating content in literature:

The selection and analysis of information, situations, characters, or elements in a communication can indicate pertinent features such as comprehensiveness of coverage or the intentions, biases, prejudices, and oversights of authors, publishers, creators, or other persons responsible for the content of materials (p. 171).

Within this context, especially with the representation of history in books for children, if inaccurate, the books can potentially lead to oppressive, misinformed, and a perniciously stereotyped view of history and the people it involves on a global basis. In this exploratory research study, the method of content analysis, which employs both qualitative and quantitative descriptive statistics, was utilized to study which picture books accurately and authentically tell the story of Christopher Columbus and his encounter with the Taino people upon his arrival in the Western world.

This chapter offers information regarding the rationale for using content analysis, the research questions, and the procedures for coding the content analysis; the validity and reliability are also described, and limitations of the study are stated. This research study used the method of content analysis, which consists of conducting a general search for picture books on Christopher Columbus or Columbus Day in various databases from 1980 forward. This date was

chosen as it was after the Civil Rights Movement in the 1960's and 1970's, which was near the end of its initial phase. During this time, our country experienced social change, related to labor, socialism, civil liberties, peace, racial justice, urban reform, welfare rights, and women's rights. As children's literature reflects society, it was thought that the year 1980 would be an appropriate place to begin the search for books that spoke of Columbus and the encounter of the indigenous people in a more critically aware manner. Hence, the book sample is limited to books published in 1980 and beyond.

Since this is a study specifically of those children's books that tell a story of Christopher Columbus read most likely in elementary schools, book lists were generated from various databases that house a large number of children's books. Once the book list was generated, all available picture books were obtained, read, and evaluated to determine universal characteristics found within the history of Columbus and the Tainos. The data were collected, reviewed, and analyzed for trends in the books that could possibly be deemed as inaccurate or inauthentic and ultimately inappropriate for use in the classroom.

Research Questions

To assess whether the story of Christopher Columbus and his encounter with the Taino people is presented truthfully, accurately, and respectfully in books for children the following questions were used as guidelines throughout the study:

Section One

1. Does the book provide substantive knowledge and information on the Taino people who Columbus encountered upon his arrival to the West?
 - a. What is the topic of this book when telling the Columbus story?
 - b. Are the Native people included in the book? In what way are they visible in the book?

- c. Does the book specify the name of the Taino people? If not, what term is used?
- 2. Does the book demonstrate the causes and outcomes of historical events as usually complex and void of simplistic answers and explanations?
 - a. Does the book offer an ending that explains the status of the Taino people after “the Encounter?”
 - b. If so, is this explanation void of biased interpretation?
 - c. Does the book deal with controversial issues? i.e. Is there divergence from a positive storyline (genocide, slavery, mistreatment, forced labor, negative descriptions of Europeans)
- 3. Does the book critically question the status quo and offer varying perspectives?
 - a. Is the story told from alternative viewpoints? If so, in what manner?
 - b. Does the story provide “new” information that could change the perception of the Taino people?
- 4. Does this book carefully approach history by avoiding analogies that do not project the truth and distinguish between fact and assumption?
 - a. What primary resources are referenced in the book?
 - b. If so, do the primary resources include current theories based on more recent research?
- 5. Does the book promote or develop an appreciation for diversity through history?
 - a. Does the book treat the Tainos in a positive manner?
 - b. Are cultural considerations for the Taino present in the storyline? If so, in what manner?
- 6. Does the book provide enjoyment and illuminate the human experience?
 - a. How often are there interactions with Columbus and the Tainos?
 - b. What is the topic of interaction among Columbus and the Tainos?
 - c. Is tokenism present in the book?

- d. Are the behavior patterns of the Taino presented as primitive or oversimplified?
7. Do the illustrations reflect Taino culture?
 - a. Are the illustrations of the Taino people drawn realistically with attention to individuality?
 - b. Is data that was used to create the illustrations offered in the book?
 - c. Is tokenism present in the illustrations?
8. What possible influences are brought forward from the author, illustrator, or publisher?
9. What implications in the elementary classroom exist as a result of this research?

Section Two

1. Does the book provide a comprehensive record of the Christopher Columbus story to include the encounter with the Taino?
2. Does the book provide sufficient insight into the lifestyle-cultural and sociological heritage of the indigenous Taino people?
3. To what extent does the book depart from the historical record and what impact does that departure have on the reading and learning experience?
4. To what extent does the book provide insight into Taino interactions or relationships with Columbus and the Spanish Settlers and what impact does that have on the reading and learning experience?

Definition of Content Analysis

Content analysis, as defined by Berelson (1952), is a form of unobtrusive descriptive research that is used as a “technique for the objective, systematic, and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication” (p. 18). Additionally, Short (1995) reported that one of the largest categories of research in children’s literature is the research method of content analysis. She posited that content analysis research has a tendency to employ qualitative methods to “critically examine issues within a broader context instead of simply counting the

number of occurrences of a particular element” (p. 14). By joining these two thoughts together, content analysis is a systematic way of collecting information that can describe characteristics of the object under study that may be variable over time, context, and audience while also making critical inferences to answer questions that can provide valuable cultural and historical insights over time.

As Berelson (1952) contended, a unit of analysis can be selected to determine the size of what is to be coded and offers four suggestions for recording the following units:

- 1) Word. The smallest unit generally used in content analysis, which may be used in phrases as well as the use of singular words.
- 2) Theme. The second smallest unit of measure in content analysis. The sentence may be simple, but it reflects the subject matter at hand.
- 3) Character. Includes fictional or historical characters found in narrative. The item in which the character is used must be read in its entirety prior to any coding decisions are made.
- 4) Item. This unit is considered as the whole natural unit and used most frequently. It may be a movie, a book, story, or any form of communication as a whole.

This research project will use the item, children’s books, as well as themes as they are presented and recorded for the unit of measure in this content analysis.

Historians and literary critics have often implemented content analysis to analyze historical documents and literary works. This type of analysis is also often used to study the content of newspapers, periodicals, films, and books, although it is “lesser-used in qualitative research” (Merriam, 1998, p. 159). Using techniques for reducing texts to a unit-by-variable matrix, content analysis can produce a matrix by applying a set of codes to a set of qualitative

data, assuming that the code of interest has already been discovered and described (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). Generally, as Patton (2002) affirmed, content analysis uses qualitative data reduction and sense-making efforts that take a column of qualitative materials and attempt to identify core consistencies and meanings. This analysis is designed to permit the researcher to make inferences regarding the content of the medium that is being studied (Vandergrift, 1990). It is the research method “designed to obtain useful objective and qualitative information from text in a replicable manner” (Reyhner, 1986). For the present study, qualitative data were generated based on a content analysis of children’s books. Each book was read as a piece of literature and as a vessel that offered meaning by utilizing a specific medium focused on presenting cultural information to children.

Content analysis can be used for a variety of purposes. One important use is the generation of culture indicators that point to the state of beliefs, values, ideologies, or other culture systems (Rosengren, 1981; Weber, 1985). Content analysis may also be employed to reflect cultural patterns of groups, institutions, or societies; disclose the focus of individual, group, institutional, or societal attention; and describe trends in the content (Carney, 1979; Handel, 1950; Weber, 1985).

To draw a distinction from other data-generating and analysis techniques, Weber (1985) noted that content analysis has several advantages:

1. Content analytic procedures operate directly upon text or transcripts of human communications.
2. The best content analytic studies utilize both qualitative and quantitative operations on texts. Thus, content analysis methodology combines what are usually thought to be adversative modes of analysis.
3. Culture indicators can be used to access quantitatively the relationships among economic, social, political, and cultural change (1985, p. 10).

Short (1995) highlighted that as a method of research the use of content analysis to study children's literature is increasing. When searched with the keyword criteria *children, literature,* and *content analysis,* the ERIC database generated 82 studies of children's literature that used content analysis as the methodology of research from 1980 to 1989. The number rose from 1990 to 1999, in which 103 studies were documented. In the new millennium, there are already 37 documented studies that implement content analysis methodology to date. Items of review include studies that researched how women are portrayed in children's literature, how Native Americans are represented in books for early childhood, and also the portrayal of individuals with disabilities, to name a few.

Advantages of content analyses include valuable cultural and historical insights over time. The present study looked not only at the trends of the retelling of the story of Christopher Columbus and his interactions with the Taino but also at the historical research on how the story came into being in children's literature. Applying the historical background to the content analysis of trend and patterns in cultural portrayals of the Europeans and Native Americans within this historical setting employs the use of both qualitative and quantitative research to provide a historical context in which these stories were told or continue to be told today.

Among its disadvantages, content analysis often disregards the context in which the book was published (Reese, 2001). In this case, it is important to interpret the texts by considering the historical timeframe in which they were written and published.

Rationale for Using Content Analysis

Children's literature, like all literature, is a complex form of communication. Content analysis provides a way for the examination of both the text and illustration in children's literature and has been used in different content studies of children's literature over the years.

Additionally, Busha and Harter (1980) posited content analysis as a sound approach in research of children's literature, noting

The selection and analysis of information, situations, characters, or elements in a communication can indicate pertinent features such as comprehensiveness of coverage or the intentions, biases, prejudices, and oversights of authors, publishers, creators, or other persons responsible for the content of materials (p. 171).

Content analysis, therefore, appears to be an appropriate choice of a research method to analyze the content of communication in children's literature and holds the promise of providing objective and systematic information about Christopher Columbus and the Taino people as presented in children's books.

Generation of Sample for Analysis

Content analysis is a multistage process. Once the researcher identifies a research hypothesis, various phases follow. First, the sample is identified. Second, search criteria are determined. Next, data are collected, and, lastly, the data are analyzed. This research aimed to analyze picture books teaching the history of Christopher Columbus and to assess what role the Native Americans played in the depiction of that encounter. Gathering information from a sample of a population to describe unique characteristics within a population can be accomplished through surveys (Wallen & Fraenkel, 2001). Information is collected from a sample based on answers to carefully composed questions. These answers constitute the data to be analyzed. According to Wallen and Fraenkel, by obtaining an ample amount of information within a particular group, the researcher is able to generalize the findings to the larger population if the sample surveyed was randomly selected from that group. With that in mind, a survey instrument was developed with the intent to collect book titles from teachers and librarians on the Columbus encounter. Most commonly, researchers who utilize the survey method for data collection often extract the responses from their survey, analyze that data, and then draw

conclusions based on the findings. For this research project, the survey instrument was nothing more than a vehicle to collect the book titles from teachers and librarians across the country. As a result, the collected list of titles became the sample size with which the content analysis was conducted. The series of questions published in the survey can be found in Appendix C. In this survey, there were a number of extraneous questions in addition to the request for book titles, which the researcher plans to analyze at a later date. Once the instrument was complete and an approval of the research plan from the University of Florida's Institutional Review Board was secured, the survey was published in the form of an online survey.

Utilizing the resources of the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Elementary and Secondary Education Formula Grant database within the Office of Indian Education, an e-mail list was compiled. This e-mail list represented over 1,275 schools and school districts across 39 states that have as few as .05% population of Native American students to as large as 100% Native population. This list was thought to provide a means of sampling those local educational agencies that are likely to have a more vested interest in the representation of Native Americans in history and to increase the likelihood of analyzing books with alternative perspectives that contain a heightened sensitivity from an indigenous perspective. Embedded in the e-mail were two different links, one for teachers and one for librarians. Although some questions differed within the two surveys, the question requesting titles that are shared in the school or classroom when teaching about Columbus was the same for both teachers and librarians. The e-mail was sent to the 1,275 entities approximately 1 week after Columbus Day, 2008. In addition to this e-mail list, listservs from organizations such as the American Library Association, the American Association of School Librarians, the Children's Literature: Criticism and Theory listserv, and the Association of Library Service to Children were utilized to request volunteers to participate

in the survey. An online posting that included a description of the study and the solicitation of participation was published on the same day. These organizations were included for their large networks that include children's and youth librarians, teachers, children's literature experts, publishers, education and library school faculty members, and other adults dedicated to creating a better future for children through literature. All prospective respondents were given an explanation of the purpose of the study, instructions on how to complete the survey, and a link to the survey. Respondents were provided a link directly to the survey, which was entered into an online data collection program, SurveyMonkey. All survey responses were submitted to SurveyMonkey and subsequently downloaded into an Excel file, which housed the titles in alphabetical order. These titles were reviewed for verification, duplication, and age appropriateness with regard to the limitations of this study. A total of 298 responses were tallied, with 189 responses from teachers and 89 responses from librarians. Within the 189 responses from the teachers, 31 respondents provided a total of 67 titles. Within the 89 librarian respondents, 36 provided a total of 115 book titles. Once the data were adjusted to remove duplicate titles, screened for book type (such as the removal of history textbooks), and verified to meet the reader age limitations of the study, the sample size included 48 nonduplicated books.

Copies of the books were obtained through various bookstores and libraries. Using popular and professional children's literature databases such as the Children's Literature Comprehensive Database (CLCD), Booksinprint.com, the Kirkus Reviews, the Horn Book, the Horn Book Guide, and the Database for Award-Winning Children's Literature, information was gathered on the collected book titles and reviewed for information on the author, publisher, illustrator, multiple book reviews, and award-winning books that are more likely to be found in school classrooms and library. A list of award winners can be found within the study sample and

in Chapter 6 of this paper. These award-winning books can provide the framework for determining higher quality books and were used as a comparison tool to other non-award-winning books within the established sample. Both award-winning and non-award-winning books will be used for the content analysis.

Limitations

This study is not conceived as a comprehensive study as it only evaluates the books that are taken from the responses of the K-6th-grade teachers and librarians who participated in the national survey. The study has its limitations because it does not necessarily address a large number of current publications on the story of Columbus. Since the book sample was compiled from the list of titles provided by the teachers and librarians, the books that are shared with students could be dated. This can be a limiting factor as it will not offer educators with a sampling of more recent storylines that could incorporate a more varied perspective.

Another limitation is the age of the reader with which the book is intended. This study collected titles that are appropriate for kindergarten through 6th-grade readers. Since it is believed that the story of Columbus is first introduced to very young readers, it is important to see what books are shared within the curriculum today by the teachers and librarians themselves. Although the survey asked the respondent to provide the purpose for which they shared the book (such as to meet history standards or to show alternative perspectives), there were not enough data to draw a conclusion from this information.

Children's books that portray the history of Christopher Columbus and the Taino people were included according to the following criteria:

1. The titles were generated from a nationwide survey and compiled based on the responses from teachers and media specialists who share the story of Columbus through literature at their school.

2. The literature includes the genres of both fiction and nonfiction books appropriate for grades K-6.
3. Genre is not be limited.
4. Books are limited to ones found in the United States and Canada.

Design of the Research Instrument

Once a list of books was generated, the books were critically reviewed for fair, diverse, and informative representations of the Taino people in the historical telling of Christopher Columbus' encounter with the Western world in children's books. Given that there are no studies that research the specific topic of the encounter among Columbus and the Tainos from this approach, there were no examination instruments available to meet the needs of this research project. As a result, a unique review instrument was created. However, there are studies that do content analyses and their approaches were considered when creating the review instrument.

By reviewing several peer-reviewed journal articles and books on the encounter—such as “*Rethinking Columbus: The Next 500 Years*” (Bigelow, 1991) and “Listening to Children Think Critically about Christopher Columbus” (Henning, Snow-Cerono, Reed & Warner, 2006)—numerous questions and topics of interest emerged and were reviewed for common themes. When evaluating children's literature, it is a common practice to combine certain characteristics or stereotypes into criterion categories as a result of their similarities to each other. For example, one reviewer may consider “squaw” a derogatory term, while a different reviewer will deem the phrase “Indian Princess” as a different derogatory term. They are two different words, but the common theme among them is the use of inappropriate terminology, which becomes the criterion in the examination instrument. The criterion created as a result of reviewing the articles and books on the encounter include the following: (a) varied perspectives; (b) critical stances on

Columbus; (c) interactions between the Europeans and the indigenous people in the story; (d) influence of the author, publisher, illustrator; (e) cultural considerations in the storyline; and (f) characterization of the Taino people in the story.

This instrument contains qualitative criterion that requires a more open-ended questioning technique. With the use of this instrument, the reviewer was able to look deeply into the text and illustrations and uncover possible hidden meanings, challenging perspectives, and other pertinent information that the criterion required the reviewer to address. During the development of the instrument, several changes had to be made in order for the instrument to be able to collect the appropriate data with the appropriate supporting evidence. After offering the instrument to experienced children's literature experts for their critique, it was apparent that the questions being proposed did not align well with the research questions this study aimed to offer. As a result, the instrument was revised into a table format that would allow the reviewer to address each statement and a space to provide comments and page numbers to support them; the table format also enabled the reviewer to more easily glean the data and synthesize participant responses into answers that addressed the research questions of this project. The revised instrument is included in Appendix C and is titled, *Examination Instrument of Children's Books Referencing Christopher Columbus and the Taino people*.

Procedures for Data Collection

The following procedures were used to prepare the book list for review and analysis. First, each book was purchased and logged into a database system (see Appendix B) for an annotated list of books reviewed for this study). Second, information about the author, publisher, and illustrator of the book was researched, read, and documented. Third, general information about the book, including the title, the name of the author, illustrator, publisher, the date of

publication, genre, which database, and literary distinctions were collected and documented. Next, the book was read from cover to cover while notes were simultaneously taken to answer the examination instrument. Then, after data were gathered from several stories, the information was reviewed to see whether there was a need to revise the original evaluation criteria document. If so, the books were reevaluated using the revised data collection instrument. If not, the data collected through the instrument were compiled into themes and categories according to the evaluation criteria and analyzed based on the nature of the research problem and the research questions to be answered.

Reliability

Reliability in content analysis refers to the constancy of procedures used in research where the results can be found to be consistent. There are three ways in which reliability can be used in content analysis: independent reviewers can code the data individually and then calculate the reliability; a second reviewer can take a random sampling of the data coded by the initial reviewer and compare it to their collected data; or the second reviewer can spot check the reliability calculations of the first. Another factor in reliability revolves around the training of the reviewer prior to the text analysis (Tao, Montgomery, & Pickle, 1997; Weber, 1990). Inter-reviewer reliability is the degree to which an assessment yields similar results for the same individual at the same time with more than one reviewer.

In this research, inter-reviewer reliability was assessed by having the researcher and one other reviewer apply the examination instrument to the same 48 picture books. The individual reviewer was trained at one setting by the researcher and received the same training information. The reviewer was knowledgeable about children's literature and critical literacy and had prior knowledge of the critical analysis of children's book prior to the training.

The reviewer was given 48 different books along with 48 copies of the examination instrument. The reviewer then reviewed the books using the designated instrument. By the end of the review session one copy of examination notes had been generated for each book by the reviewer.

Validity

In research, validity refers to the level of confidence one has that a process actually represents what it intends to represent. Internal validity refers to the equivalent of the researcher's subtopics or units of analysis to its supported use in previous studies. To ensure internal validity in this study, the researcher used subtopics gleaned from professional journal articles and books on the topic of Columbus, the Taino people, and their encounters in 1492.

Examination Instrument

It is assumed that literature that is deemed to be high in quality will provide some sort of a function, a purpose to which it can be used to provide children with knowledge and information about the topics they read in trade books. With this knowledge and information, children can be introduced to different perspectives on historical events, and they will have an informed knowledge base from which to critique stereotypical representations of people, specifically Native American people, in their textbooks, literature, television programs, videos, and movies. As stated in chapter 2, Sims Bishop (1994) identified five functions of quality multicultural literature, that is, to:

- provide knowledge or information;
- expand how students view the world by offering varying perspectives;
- promote or develop an appreciation for diversity;
- give rise to critical inquiry;
- illuminate human experience.

As such, the examination instrument contains criteria based around these questions in addition to other topics derived by the review of literature from several peer-reviewed journal articles and books that critically examine the historical event of Christopher Columbus and his encounter with the Taino people. The following detailed statements and questions were gleaned from the information presented and grouped into themed categories that ultimately became the evaluation criteria. The instrument may be viewed in Appendix C.

The beginning part of the instrument provides for the collection of bibliographic data and focuses on what possible influences are brought forward from the author, illustrator, or publisher; Question 1 explores whether the story provides any substantive knowledge about the Taino people; Question 2 demonstrates that historical events are complex and void of simplistic answers and explanations; Question 3 offers the analysis that encompasses the manner in which the story gives rise to critical inquiry. Question 4 involves evaluating whether the story distinguishes between fact and assumption; Question Five provides the analysis of content examples that may promote or develop an appreciation for diversity; Question Six asks whether the story illuminates the human experience and offers an enjoyable experience in this worldwide event; and Question Seven takes a look at the illustrations and pictures found within the study sample to determine if bias exists. Question Eight poses the question if authors, illustrators or publishers influence the published in any manner. The final question, Question Nine determines possible implications of this research and how it may impact the students to whom these books are read.

Bibliographic Data

Bibliographic data encompass the documentation of the “source of the message.” The data include general information such as title, genre, author, illustrator, name of publisher, and

any literary awards the books or authors received. As mentioned in Chapter 2, some scholars believe that authors that write from an insider's perspective offer more insight and accurate information in contrast to those who are outside the cultural, racial, or ethnic circle that is being written. As a result, research on the author and/or illustrator was conducted to see whether the author or illustrator had the qualifications and experiences to justify their story. The values, ethics, and perspectives of the author, illustrator, and publisher are vital in the overall presence of the story. Questions concerning attitudes, perspectives, prejudices, and qualifications impact how the "message" will be disseminated when read to or by a child.

Within the comprehensiveness of the book, there lie additional requirements of the author and illustrator. For example, the text should be free from generalizations; it should contain a significant amount of facts, the author should make a clear distinction of fact from theory; and anthropomorphism (the use of animals in place of people) should be avoided. Illustrations should complement, support, or extend the text rather than bedazzle the reader with flashy illustrations that do not link to the text. The illustrations or photographs should be free of stereotypes and tokenism and should offer a wide variety of diverse perspectives. Once again, the author should provide evidence for where the content of the book was derived. This documentation can be found within the bibliographic information, author's note, endnotes, footnotes, or any other means by which the author documents his or her sources. It is a good idea to examine the sources, check for the publication date for out of date material, and assess whether the sources originated from more respected sources such as peer-reviewed journals or another reliable source of information.

Several resources were reviewed to collect author/illustrator/publisher information. The qualifications of the author should be noted somewhere in the book. If the book does not provide

the credentials that would reveal the author as an expert or as someone qualified to write the story, some kind of notation should be included that the information in the book has been reviewed by a content area specialist. Accuracy is also determined by the publication date. Since the 1980's various documentation and research has been published on the Taino people. With more information available to authors and illustrators, it is expected that the books that were written after this time contain this information. With outdated books, as some are listed in this study, the access to the information is limited and could explain the omissions of certain facts in the story.

These sources include the Google search engine, publishing Web sites, author/illustrator Web sites, BooksinPrint.com, the CLCD Database, and any peer-reviewed journal that contains the relative information. These same resources were reviewed for any literary awards as well. Literary awards typically ensure the life of the book in both the consumer and institutional markets and indicate that the book will continue to reign on the bookshelves for sale (Horning, 1997).

Analysis of Content Relating to the Taino People

Although the main literary elements are presented in the previous section, this section allows for the analysis of specific narrative data as it relates to the Native Americans and their involvement in the story. A single event or statement will not generate a conclusion that can be viewed as problematic by the reviewer. Therefore, several statements are considered on a cumulative basis to present an analysis as the overall appraisal on how the Tainos are portrayed in Columbus' story. The appraisal requires reviewing how the author addresses the issues of assimilation of the Tainos to the Spanish-imposed culture, resistance to this change, trust among

the Tainos toward Columbus, any sort of rejection of Taino culture that may be present, or representation of the Taino as helpless or not important in the story.

Historical Events as Complex

As Columbus Day is acknowledged in today's calendar, many schools, banks, and local, state, and federal government entities take the day off in celebration of this historical event. This popular event provides reason for the need to examine books for children that offer factual historical information based on this American holiday and the person from whom the holiday is directed (Columbus). Teachers share books that offer factual information to their students about this topic, and children reference these books when compiling data for research projects.

However, this topic is unique in the scope of research because the facts and data surrounding the topic are somewhat controversial due to the bias in the original documentation of the Taino and the disappearance of these documents. This sometimes controversial topic demonstrates the complexity of a single historical event. Whose voice is heard? Is the explanation void of biased interpretation? These are a just a couple of the questions one might engage in discussing with students due to the potential simplistic portrayal of this monumental event.

Appreciation for Diversity/Illuminating the Human Experience

Interactions. How the characters of the story are represented is important. However, critically viewing the interactions, both interpersonal and intrapersonal, is crucial to understanding the manner in which the Taino people are presented in this event. The research instrument examined the topics of interaction, as well as the questions of what situation or event occurred that resulted in the communication, was the communication welcomed, and were the experiences favorable or unfavorable and why. The exchanges of the Taino with Columbus and his men are an integral part of the true telling of the European encounter to the Western world

and should be scrutinized carefully for other communicative means. This section takes a look at how the story may offer the reader the opportunity to see another perspective. It will also determine how often this perspective is given in children's books and what degree the Taino people are represented in books being shared in today's classroom.

Cultural considerations. Cultural considerations go beyond accuracy, authenticity, or interaction. They include guiding principles, attitudes, behaviors, and problems of the story from a cultural lens. They ask, does the content look at both the similarities and unique differences and contributions to society between the cultural groups? Does the book deal with controversial issues? What about racial conflict? Is there terminology that may be determined as inappropriate, prejudiced, or disorienting? Is there anything in the reading that helps explain how the Tainos responded to the arrival of Columbus or his "encomiendo system?"

Sharing children's literature about topics of long ago can be enlightening and enjoyable. As a result, children's literature in the classroom can motivate students to engage in language learning and the chance to absorb literacy in a natural context. As Nodelman (1992) eluded, the more children read stories, the more they begin to interpret books based on their personal and unique background knowledge and begin to make their personal ideas and opinions more transparent to others. This section attempts to identify to what degree the pieces of literature under review offer such an opportunity.

Degree of Critical Thought

The reviewer was asked to state what questions might be left after experiencing a particular story. Was the story so complete that nothing was left to be questioned, or did the story take a shallow approach and not offer challenges to the status quo? The reviewer

performed research to assess whether the story aimed to foster an environment that promoted learning experiences, leading to more personal and equitable growth.

Implications for the Classroom

This particular section is prepared to analyze the above referenced data and find common themes which will offer highlights to those areas that may affect the teacher, librarian, parent, and, most importantly, the student, when depicting the encounter of Christopher Columbus and the people he encountered in his Western voyages. This section looks to draw attention to other areas where additional research may be needed and to highlight what consequent steps might be taken to address the issues found within the literature that was analyzed.

Survey

As alluded to earlier, this portion of the research was designed by the researcher to investigate the books teachers and media specialists share in their classrooms and libraries on the topic of Columbus and his arrival in the Americas by asking them to participate in an online survey. The answers to the following questions were examined by the researcher and both the quantitative and qualitative analyses are offered in the following chapter.

Media Specialists:

1. Do you serve children in grades K-6 at your school or library?
2. How many years have you been serving as a Media Specialist?
3. Are you familiar with Christopher Columbus and his encounter with the western world in 1492?
4. Do you know the name of the people to whom Columbus encountered upon his arrival to the western world in 1492?
5. Is Columbus Day recognized at your school or library? If yes, in what manner?
6. List the top 10 trade books most often checked out of the library about Columbus or Columbus Day at your school or library. You need only to include title and author.

7. Do you read or share any books with children on the Columbus event during library time?
8. If your answer to Question #8 is yes, are the book titles different than those titles previously listed? If so, please list the additional titles.
9. Based on the titles you provided, do you feel these stories offer varying perspectives on the story of Columbus and the people he encountered? Please explain.
10. Do you feel that American Indian/Alaska Native children could benefit when reading these titles? Please explain.
11. If you use trade books to teach about the Columbus encounter event, please fill in the following: (you may also upload a simple lesson plan if it is easier)
 - a. Book Title:
 - b. Author & Illustrator:
 - c. Lesson Objective:
 - d. Instruction;
 - e. Activities:
 - f. Time spent on lesson
12. Are there any other comments you would like to make about this topic?

Teachers:

1. Do you teach in grade K-6? If so, what grade do you teach?
2. How many years have you been teaching in total?
3. Are you familiar with Christopher Columbus and his encounter with the western world in 1492?
4. Do you know the name of the people to whom Columbus encountered upon his arrival to the western world in 1492?
5. Is Columbus Day recognized at your school? If so, in what manner?
6. Is it required in the curriculum to teach about Columbus Day or Columbus himself? If no, do you teach any relevant lessons on the subject?
7. Do you share or bring in trade books about Columbus or Columbus Day to your classroom?
8. List the last 5 trade books you shared with your students to teach about Columbus or Columbus Day. You need only to include title and author.

9. Based on the titles you provided, do you feel these stories offer varying perspectives on the story of Columbus and the people he encountered? Please explain.
10. Do you feel that American Indian/Alaska Native children could benefit when reading these titles? Please explain.
11. If you use trade books to teach about the Columbus event, please fill in the following: (you may also upload a simple lesson plan if it is easier)
 - a. Book Title:
 - b. Author & Illustrator:
 - c. Lesson Objective:
 - d. Instruction;
 - e. Activities:
 - f. Time spent on lesson
12. Are there any other comments you would like to make about this topic?

Rubric

As educators, we have an obligation to teach our children about history in its most comprehensive form. To teach this kind of comprehensive history, educators must reflect critically on the past and expose students to historical people and events in books in a manner that ensures that the historical events, settings, and people are represented most accurately, authentically, and appropriately. In large part, it is easier for educators to share the story of Columbus' encounter with the Americas from the European vantage point rather than from the Taino vantage point, due to the availability of primary data and documents providing insight into the European perspective, such as Columbus' personal log, his son's translation of his father's log, and the documentation of other European voices that are available for researchers and anthropologists to collect and report. In the case of the Taino people, it is different. Primary resources regarding their history are less obtainable because the Taino did not engage in a written language; as such, no written documentation of their perspective on the encounter with Columbus exists. Much of the Taino history comes, instead, from observations made by

Europeans and thus inherently offers a Eurocentric perspective. Researchers today, however, have been able to collect data from around the world, to begin to piece together the story of the Taino, and to publish much more information on their history and cultural existence.

Using these “new” data, researchers can begin to develop a picture of who the Taino were back in the days of Columbus and to assert a clearer picture of the roles they played in this global event. As the Columbus discovery story is told in children’s literature, the role of the Taino people should be included with these rich and informative details. After the arrival of Columbus, the life of the Taino people changed exponentially, and the portrayal of these events should be reflected in quality books shared with children.

Defining quality books can be much more complex than one may think. Quality books can be interpreted on many different levels. Temple, Martinez, Yokota, and Naylor (2002) described quality children’s literature as those works that include how the literature evolved, its readability, marketing, and audience appeal. Although this is a very general approach, when selecting excellent books regarding specific cultural groups or historical events, the need for more specifics becomes important. Drawing upon Temple et al.’s work and the works of Huck, Hepler, Hickman, and Kiefer’s (2000), Cullinan and Galda’s (1994), and Tomlinson and Lynch-Brown (2005) guidelines for evaluating children’s picture books were created and compiled to present a more specific approach to determine the level of quality in a book. These criteria include the following characteristics:

1. Books should include memorable, well-portrayed characters.
2. Books should present a plot that provides interesting events in an understandable sequence. These plots should be clear and direct, yet complex enough to capture the reader’s attention.
3. Books should contain well-crafted language that is concrete, vivid, and reflective of the mood of the story.

4. Books should contain worthy and truthful themes. Further, the illustrator's work should be just as captivating and enhance the meaning and tone of the text.

Hefflin and Barksdale-Ladd (2001) took these criteria a step further and developed specific characteristics most appropriate for African American children's literature. Building upon Sims Bishop (1997) and Banks's (1991) work, Hefflin and Barksdale-Ladd developed a list of characteristics that focus on specific aspects of the children's literature that feature a certain ethnicity and cultural group. These characteristics include:

1. Books should include characters that are well developed and portrayed in authentic, realistic contexts.
2. Books should use language that is authentic and realistic, particularly dialogue that correctly portrays African American dialect appropriate to the character.
3. Books should incorporate illustrations that portray African American and other characters and settings authentically and realistically.
4. Books should present accurate information.

For the present research, it is proposed that the characteristics for determining a quality book about history and diverse cultural groups, such as Native Americans, go deeper than the previous lists. To determine a "quality" book for the purpose of this research, a specific rubric was developed. Not only does this rubric include the basic characteristics set by other researchers, it also contains data related to historical milestones, cultural transmission, fictionalized treatment, relationships and interactions, and literary distinctions. According to Elizabeth Noll (2003), providing readers with factual information should be the first priority for all authors and illustrators. Noll also contended that in some children's literature, the presence (or lack) of many Native American cultures are excluded that accuracy is next to impossible to determine. Therefore, the author or illustrator's lack of recognition of unique tribal cultures is

reflected. One manner in which history and culture can be accurately addressed in literature is by first documenting the factual milestones within the historical event being presented.

The historical milestones section of this research asks the question: *Does the book provide a comprehensive record of the Christopher Columbus story to include the encounter with the Taino?* Perhaps the clearest distinction of whether or not the book is comprehensive is an accurate identification of the voyages that Columbus took. If a book addresses those voyages, then it is expected that an accurate history will follow. In some cases, the exact voyages are not identified in the story, but events related to each voyage are presented. Therefore, we can say that the voyages were addressed (and delivered) by virtue of the events that are depicted. This section looks to answer how well the book addressed the historical milestones by providing a comprehensive and accurate retelling to the best of its ability.

During his lifetime, Columbus participated in a total of four voyages to the Americas. During these voyages, specific encounters with the Taino people occurred. For example, during initial contact, the Tainos were most often seen in the story when Columbus made landfall in San Salvador for the first time. Other encounters include Columbus when he kidnapped some Taino people and forced them to show the way to the other islands in search of gold or when he kidnapped several Taino members and shipped them back to Spain to be sold into slavery because he was fearful that he would not have enough riches to pay back the Spanish royalty as promised. There were also instances in which the Taino people welcomed Columbus and his men and offered a hospitable environment during that initial voyage. However, this amicable relationship did not last.

The second voyage contained three major historical milestones. These milestones included the instance at La Navidad, the encomiando system, and the removal of hundreds of

natives to sell as slaves in Spain. La Navidad, the place where the Taino helped Columbus and his men reclaim the wreckage of one of Columbus' boats after it crashed onto the reef, was quite an important milestone. Not having room in the remaining boats, approximately 40 men were left behind to tend to the new settlement until Columbus' return. During the following year, the Spanish colonists grew more demanding and began to mistreat the Taino by raping their women and forcing labor upon them. The Tainos responded by killing the remaining colonists. This becomes an important milestone to discuss in books because the destruction of La Navidad was not an unprovoked attack; it was, instead, the result of extreme maltreatment of the Tainos and the need to defend their lives and freedom. There are stories that tell of this event but only mention the Tainos as killing the Spanish without the complete explanation as to why this happened. Another event that happened during this second voyage involved the encomiando system that was put into place by Columbus. The encomiando system was intended to look after the welfare of the Native people, as well as to educate and teach them about God. Yet, it forced the Tainos to assimilate into European culture and to provide large amounts of labor for the colonists. Another milestone during this voyage included the large number of slaves that were taken to Spain despite the request from Spanish Royalty to remain friendly with the Native people.

The third voyage of Columbus contained events surrounding the increased dissension among the Tainos against the settlers as well as the dissension among the settlers with Columbus. This was also a time when the settlers increased efforts to force the Tainos into Christianity. The fourth and final voyage of Columbus included a well known milestone of the famous lunar eclipse. The scarcity of food and water became a larger problem for the colonists at this time. The Tainos were very familiar with the concept of supply and demand, and they soon

began to refuse to participate in the colonist's plight for survival, leaving the colonists to find their own means of survival. As the relationships deteriorated, Columbus used his power of persuasion and devised a desperate trick at the Tainos' expense. Columbus knew there was a lunar eclipse coming and called a meeting of the Taino leaders to meet with him the day before the eclipse was scheduled to arrive. He told the Tainos that his men were Christian and their God punished the evil and rewarded the good. Columbus warned the Tainos that God was displeased with them, and he would surely show his displeasure by displaying some sort of sign. The "sign" came as the lunar eclipse. As the land darkened, the Tainos became fearful and resounded to once again assist Columbus and his men and provide supplies as much as possible. This trickery against the Taino people worked and from that time forward, the Taino were diligent in providing for the colonists as needed. In addition to noting whether this event was included in the story, it is important to note if the Tainos were presented as ignorant or unintelligent rather than naïve and entrusting to Columbus.

These events that took place during Columbus' voyages require a sensitive and complete explanation that provides both the European and Taino perspectives in order to convey a comprehensive and accurate retelling in books for children. Therefore, it is those children's books where the presence (or absence) of these specific historical milestones is examined to determine the extent to which all of the important historical events are covered. By making that determination, we can weight the book appropriately as to its value in teaching the historical event. Questions surrounding these historical milestones within the rubric are as follows:

First Voyage Questions:

1. Does the author include factual information on the initial encounter of the Tainos and Columbus and his men? Is this milestone accurately depicted?

2. Does the author include information on how the Tainos were used to find gold? Is this milestone accurately depicted?
3. Does the author include information on how the Tainos were kidnapped and taken back to Spain and sold into slavery? Is this milestone accurately depicted?
4. If the milestones were included, are illustrations provided on the event? If yes, are they accurate?

Second Voyage Questions

5. Does the author include factual information on this encounter of the Tainos and Columbus and his men?
6. Does the author include factual information on the upheaval at La Navidad? Is this milestone accurately depicted?
7. Does the author or illustrator include factual information on the encomiando system put into place by Columbus? Is this milestone accurately depicted?
8. Does the author reference the implementation of the encomiando system -- using Tainos to ensure the colonists a large labor supply? Is this milestone accurately depicted?
9. If the milestones were included, are illustrations provided on the event? If yes, are they accurate?

Third Voyage Questions

10. Does the author include factual information on this encounter of the Tainos and Columbus and his men?
11. Does the author reference information on the kidnapping of a large number of Tainos and their return to Spain as slaves? Is this milestone accurately depicted?
12. Does the author reference the increase in dissension among the Native people and the continued efforts of the settlers to convert them by force into Christianity? Is this milestone accurately depicted?
13. If the milestones were included, are illustrations provided on the event? If yes, are they accurate?

Fourth Voyage Questions

14. Does the author include factual information on this encounter of the Tainos and Columbus and his men?
15. Does the author reference information on the lunar eclipse event where Columbus tricked the Tainos into believing that God would punish them for not assisting the colonists? Is this milestone accurately depicted?
16. If the milestones were included, are illustrations provided on the event? If yes, are they accurate?

As children develop historical understanding, they begin to reconstruct the meaning of history not by interpreting the event itself but rather by interpreting information derived from a range of different sources to establish historical evidence (Fertig, 2005). Most of the history children know has been learned informally, that is, outside of school from family members, friends, movies, television, toys, games, and fictional accounts of the past (Levstik & Barton, 1996). However, as children enter school and are exposed to more formal means of learning history, it is the storytelling encounter with these histories that are reflected in children's books when children begin to empathize with people of different times and places as they make a link between the past and their present and learn to develop a heightened sensitivity and the understanding of others with different backgrounds and stories (Lamme, 1994). Therefore, when teaching historical events, it is important to share multiple perspectives from all parties involved. Incorporating multiple perspectives from different cultural groups should require a certain level of inquiry that includes information that considers cultural transmissions.

Cultural transmissions look to include specific information about the groups involved in the story, with a specific focus on the nondominant members of society. These characteristics involve asking questions about both the text and illustrations, which can include: *Does the book provide sufficient insight into the lifestyle-cultural and sociological heritage of the indigenous Taino people?* Perhaps the most important question that is asked for each text is the following:

Are the Taino people correctly identified by name? As the title “Indian” is so generic as to include any number of different peoples, it is not likely that a text that identifies the Taino as such will follow up with a plethora of information that is specific to Taino culture. Using information gleaned from Chapter 2, a list of Taino characteristics was compiled and used to answer these questions. Once it was established that the Taino were correctly identified, then a determination was made as to how much of their culture had been included and how accurate the relationships and interactions with the Spanish settlers were documented. Questions surrounding these cultural transmissions within the rubric are as follows:

Cultural Transmissions Questions

1. Does the book correctly identify the "Indians" as Taino?
2. Specific Cultural Transmissions
3. How many instances of accurate information about Taino culture and/or beliefs does the author include?
4. How many accurate graphic depictions of Taino ideals are included in the book?
5. How many instances of accurate information about Taino ideals does the author include?
6. How many accurate graphic depictions of Taino religious beliefs prior to Columbus are included in the book?
7. How many instances of accurate information about Taino religious beliefs prior to Columbus does the author include?
8. How many accurate graphic depictions of Taino agriculture are included in the book?
9. How many instances of accurate information about Taino agriculture does the author include?
10. How many accurate graphic depictions of Taino physical attributes are included in the book?
11. How many accurate descriptions/mentions of Taino physical attributes does the author include?

12. How many accurate graphic depictions of Taino artisanship are included in the book?
13. How many accurate descriptions/mentions of Taino artisanship does the author include?
14. How many inaccurate or misleading graphic depictions are included in the book?
15. How many accurate graphic depictions of Taino culture and/or beliefs are included in the book?

The third section of the rubric is called Fictionalized Treatment. This section asks the question: *To what extent does the book depart from the historical record and what impact does that departure have on the reading and learning experience?* While there are notable exceptions, many children's books are designed to be compelling to young readers while at the same time deliver information deemed important by educators. Personification and point-of-view narration from historical figures long deceased are just a couple of examples that writers use as devices to make the story more interesting. Sometimes, however, such devices are used to the detriment of the learning experience. When an author includes stereotypical information of a people that is not consistent with the historical record simply for entertainment value or even out of ignorance, the author does a disservice to young readers. The end result potentially becomes a perpetuation of an inaccurate and marginalizing mythology that impacts the entire learning community.

Questions surrounding this fictionalized treatment within the rubric are as follows:

Fictionalized Treatment Questions:

1. Does the story depart from the historical record?
2. Does this departure mislead or detract from the historical record?
3. Is the departure a device used by the author (i.e., intentional)?
4. Does the departure enhance the learning experience (i.e., is it used to convey accurate information)?

5. Does the departure enhance the reading experience (i.e., does the departure make the story more imaginative and perhaps more enjoyable to read)?

The next section of the rubric looks specifically at the relationships and interactions of the Taino people with Columbus and his men and is titled Taino Interactions. It asks the question: *To what extent does the book provide insight into Taino interactions or relationships with Columbus and the Spanish Settlers and what impact does that have on the reading and learning experience?* The importance of this section revolves around the manner in which the Taino social dynamics are portrayed in the story. Simply including the Taino name or dropping a Taino person into an event is not sufficient to get a book listed as high quality. Those books that highlight the Tainos as being self-sufficient and that reflect the Taino fight and struggle to maintain freedom, their own identity, and mere survival is a more realistic way to include them in this historical retelling. By including this information, authors provide the reader with a unique learning opportunity into how the Tainos reacted towards Columbus and how the Taino responded to the horrid acts of the Spanish settlers. Questions surrounding these Taino interactions and relationships within the rubric are as follows:

Taino Interactions and Relationships Questions

1. Does the author or illustrator portray the Tainos as independent and not as helpless victims?
2. Does the author or illustrator portray the Taino as rejecting Columbus' malicious treatment?
3. Does the author or illustrator portray the Tainos as rejecting or refusing European culture?
4. Does the author or illustrator portray the Tainos as self-sufficient, not needing Columbus and his men in order to survive?
5. Does the author or illustrator portray the Tainos as having conflicts with Columbus and his men?

The final section of the rubric addresses any literary distinctions. It asks the question: *Does this book offer any specific information to assist in determining its worthiness by the author, illustrator, publisher, or any literary awards?* The values, ethics, and perspectives of the author, illustrator, and publisher are vital in the overall presence of the story. Questions concerning attitudes, perspectives, prejudices, and qualifications impact how the “message” will be disseminated when read to or by a child. The intent of this portion specifically looks at the author and illustrator perspective. The author and illustrator are researched to see if their ethnicity or experiences garner them the expertise to write about such information without specific insight into the events. It searches to see if the author or illustrator consulted experts in the field of history or Native American studies to assist them in the creation of the book. It also seeks to determine whether the evaluation of specific criteria is appropriate and of high ranking for the genre in which the book was written.

Using these criteria and the criteria from the previously listed studies, a rubric was constructed to take an in-depth look at how the Tainos were represented in the books selected by teachers and librarians and to assess whether these books qualify as quality books to share about Christopher Columbus and the Taino encounter in 1492. It is important to note that while all of these story elements may not be found in every good book about the Columbus and Taino encounter, the more elements the story contains, the more inclusive of both European and Taino perspectives it may be. The rubric includes both features and supporting questions to evaluate the quality of books on this topic in children’s literature. The complete rubric can be found in Appendix D.

Analysis of Books

Appendix B provides a complete listing of the books that make up the sample of this research. The book title, author, publication date, publisher information, and the number of times it was referenced in the survey are defined within the chart. The analyses of these books can be found in Chapter 5 of this research.

CHAPTER 4 CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS

Columbus in the Schools

Educational experiences become more meaningful for all students as they are taught to maintain their cultural integrity (Ladson-Billings, 1995). Teachers can provide this meaningful experience for their students through a myriad of opportunities involving literature, as long as the stories reflect multiple perspectives and are culturally accurate and authentic, especially where history is involved. Although textbook companies have enhanced their history books with a bit more multiculturalism (Lamme, Astengo, Lowery, & Masla, 2002), it is up to the teacher to increase the attention of their students to the issues of diversity (Levstik & Barton, 2001). On the other hand, Easterly (2000) posited that as the classrooms of today are becoming increasingly diverse, the history textbooks continue to be dominated by White males. Again, Easterly stated that teachers need to choose literature that provides a fuller picture highlighting the contributions of all people to the pages of history.

Dudley-Marling (2004) suggested that “books provide children with insights into power and sociopolitical issues while also serving to challenge the dominant, monocultural perspective that characterizes most schooling” (2004, p. 21). Virtually every book reflects a set of values and beliefs. In choosing books for classroom use, teachers inevitably select certain perspectives for presentation (Taxel, 1981). The books featuring “heroes,” “heroines,” and unique events indicative of American history provide opportunities for readers to become emotionally involved with the characters as a way of identifying who they are or where they come from (Singh, 2003).

By reading stories that provide multiple perspectives of moments from our past, in addition to training teachers to be reflective in their book selection, children can learn more about history and receive a more balanced view of America long ago. Lamme, Astengo,

Lowery, et al. (2002) supported this notion that “certain stories make excellent vehicles to help teachers and future teachers upgrade their own education about [African American] history and help children learn about an aspect of their nation’s history that in the past has been superficially taught” (p. 64). The teacher needs to be able to discern what concept or content will be most effective for comprehension and how it is relevant to the students’ experience (Rodriguez, 2000). When teaching about Columbus, to what lengths, if any, does the teacher consider the background of Native American students in her classroom when selecting books to supplement or guide the lesson? If teachers employ the words of James Banks, Donna Norton, Geneva Gay, and Rudine Sims and provide alternative multicultural perspectives to the mainstream viewpoints often highlighted in children’s stories of our past, it begs the question, can both Native and non-Native students benefit when learning about this historical figure and the holiday that highlights his accomplishments? Many books feature characters or events that exhibit a variety of important facts and skills and can transfer positive character traits to students (Bjerk, 2005). Authors and illustrators provide us with stories about individuals who have made a difference in the world. These efforts often result in a lasting legacy and a famous name (Johnson & Giorgis, 2002). But what happens when the story of the “hero” in the spotlight is not all that it appears to be?

History Textbooks and the Encounter

The Columbus-Taino encounter is not only introduced through the stories portrayed in literature for children, but it is also told in school textbooks as well. It is important to address this issue as history textbooks are often mandated by many school districts and used as the backbone for the social studies curriculum. By reviewing how the encounter is highlighted in school textbooks, we can gain insight into how trade books can supplement, or reinforce, the messages sent through textbooks, or possibly contradict the content. Clement conducted a study

in 1997 involving 20 social studies textbooks used in elementary and middle school classes in the Washington, D.C., metro area. She specifically analyzed how Native Americans were represented in these history textbooks over a timeframe that spanned 25 years. Her research questions sought to answer whether or not the influence of a more multicultural world including indigenous people had penetrated America's history books (and ultimately the classrooms). One focus of this study was to see how the Native experience in the Columbus encounter was documented. Overall, her findings concluded that the content of American history textbooks was *generally* factual but that some information that focused on the Columbus encounter was conveniently omitted and that the manipulations of the unomitted content in essence "cheats students out of truthful history" (p. 166). Similarly, in 1996 Juhel also examined the treatment of Native Americans in history, except his focus was in high school U.S. history textbooks. By generating a sampling of textbooks used in American History courses across the state of New York, Juhel analyzed not only how the textbooks portrayed historical events and the degree of inclusion of the Native Americans but also offered areas of supplemental resources that could fill the voids he uncovered through his analysis. Generally speaking, Juhel found an abundant number of instances with a disproportionate amount of coverage in textbooks offering a Native American perspective, especially in the pre-Columbian era, the absence of Native oral traditions and stories as they were often deemed to be "unreliable," and omissions in illustrations that perpetuate the invisible "vanishing American" myth. These studies emphasize how school curriculum is guided by the textbooks they adopt and use in the classroom to teach history, more specifically, the Columbus and Taino encounter. With an extraordinary amount of imperfections in the history curriculum, the student is left with a lack of truth, accuracy, and exposure to the true Native voice.

According to Clement (1997) and Juhel (1996) there is a dearth of Native American history typically presented in the school curriculum,

Native peoples are placed into American history as required to tell the white story. As a result, we learn that the buffalo disappeared but do not learn how successfully the calculated outcomes rendered Native Americans dependent on the U.S. government for their very survival (Starnes, 2006, p. 388).

Starnes (2006) also argued that the Columbus story typically found in textbooks is historically inaccurate and highlights the many excuses given for not adjusting that history:

[T]he story of [Columbus] continues to be presented in schools in virtually the same ways they have been [sic] for generations. And efforts to present them in historically accurate or even complex ways can raise the cry of ‘revisionist history’ or be labeled as simply ‘politically correct.’ As a result, we are ill prepared to teach or understand the impact of the history lived by the generations of Native peoples. Nor can we understand that historical experiences form a legitimate basis for many Native Americans’ attitudes toward schools and schooling, curriculum and materials, white teachers, and white control over their schools. (p. 388)

Without being regulatory, children’s literature can inspire readers to change their personal attitudes and behaviors in addition to viewing a situation in an alternative perspective.

Children’s author Fritz (1985) posited,

For all its gaps, all its limitations, all its unavoidable subjectivity, history is the story of human activity and surely must be one of the best sources to study our behavior, to understand ourselves, to help us shape the future (p. 30).

Like Fritz, Singleton (1995) encouraged the use of children’s literature as a vehicle for developing historical understandings. She suggested that young students may have difficulty envisioning the past as happening any other way and argued that quality literature provides a window of perspectives that can help students begin developing a sense of the context in which historical events occurred. As the history of Columbus and the Native Americans he encountered in picture books are analyzed, we can look at the veracity of the text and its historical contributions and glean this data to share within the discourse of children’s literature, history, and its influence on the literary canon.

Who Was Christopher Columbus?

Since the 19th century, teachers have embraced heroes in history, and Columbus has been at the forefront of this recognition. Most teachers have in some way included the explorations of Christopher Columbus as part of the school curriculum, whether it be through science, social studies, or reading (Morrow, 1992). It is believed that the very first encounter of Christopher Columbus is usually presented through a picture book, because it is as children that we first learn of the Columbus story (Bigelow & Peterson, 1996; Yolen, 1992). Unfortunately, many Columbus stories told through picture books don't portray an accurate or complete picture. Giving false or partial truth to children may have a pernicious effect on the growth of the reader as an individual and a global member of society (Lamme & Fu, 2001). Interestingly, conflicting information found in various trade books is thought to positively influence a child's curiosity, attention, and interest (Tunnell, 1992). As a result, philosophical questions and stirring discussions based on the accuracy of Columbus should be raised through the process of re-examination and historical assessment of Columbus (Morrow, 1992).

There are typically two mixed and opposing reactions to Columbus. Some grant him "hero" status as the person responsible for westward expansion and eternalize his encounter with the New World as one of the single most important events of history. Others believe he is responsible for the genocide of a human race and believe that his encounter represents the beginning of the end for a native people. To give a well-rounded picture of this historical encounter, this research review will first address the common aspects of Columbus' life: his youth, his voyages—including the encounter with the Taino people—and his death. Only these aspects will be addressed as these are the most frequent events shared in children's literature. Following Columbus, this review will also address the history of the Taino people, including a

snapshot view of their culture and traditions, followed by a description of the historical encounter with Columbus through the lens of the indigenous people, a perspective not often included in children's books (Taxel, 1991). The final portion of this section will offer a unique insight into the contradictory world of Christopher Columbus, an insight that is not often provided, if at all, in children's literature. One interesting aspect of this literature review is that this topic is over 500 years old. Scholars and researchers from both schools of thought on Columbus (hero vs. murderer) have attempted to record history based on the available data. Therefore this review includes research material containing research bias from each of the two perspectives.

Columbus as a Youth

A clear picture of Columbus' early background does not currently exist (Bingham, 1991). Beginning with Washington Irving's *The Life and Voyages of Christopher Columbus: Together With the Voyages of His Companions* (1856), research documents that Christopher Columbus (in Italian, *Cristoforo Colombo*; in Spanish, *Cristóbal Colón*; 1451-1506) was reported to have been born in Genoa, Italy. Parish registers, city records, and notarized contracts for marriage settlements, wills, and property sales reveal that the date of Columbus' birth might have been sometime between August 25 and October 31, 1451 reportedly in the city of Genoa, Italy. However, these claims are contradicted as unverified. Similarly, Manuel da Silva Rosa contended that the whereabouts of Columbus' birth are questionable based on unconfirmed documentation.

Columbus' father was said to be a wool weaver, and it is believed that as a young man, Columbus entered this trade as well, buying and selling cloth and other merchandise across Europe, the Mediterranean, and the northern African coast. Aside from agriculture, textile

manufacturing and marketing was the largest sector of the regional economy at this time. Although many resources claim Columbus to have been a simple weaver, his occupation was more lucrative and prestigious than that of a simple weaver. It was part of an important and cosmopolitan economic activity of the time. Through these dealings, the profit that Columbus gained allowed for his travels beyond the Mediterranean and into the ports of Portugal, England, the Maderia Islands, and northern Spain (Nader, 1989).

Information about the beginning of Columbus' nautical career is uncertain, but he may have sailed as a commercial agent in his youth in the busy port of the independent city-state of Genoa (Lunenfeld, 1992). In 1476 he sailed with a fleet destined for England. Legend has it that pirates attacked the group off the coast of Portugal, where Columbus' ship was sunk, but he swam to shore and took refuge in Lisbon. Settling there, where his brother Bartholomew Columbus was working as a cartographer, Columbus married dona Felipa Monis de Perestrello sometime before 1485. Some say she was a daughter of the first proprietary captain of the island of Porto Santo in the Madeiros; others say she was the daughter of the governor. As a result of this marriage, Columbus was able to secure some rights to Portuguese citizenship, which allowed him to engage in Portugal's new trade in merchandise and slaves in trading posts on the coast of Africa (Nader, 1989). The couple had a son, Diego Columbus. Over time, Columbus gained years of experience as a wool trader and a participant in the Portuguese sea trade with Africa, which eventually shaped his ambitions to seek further exploration.

Columbus' Proposition

Based on information acquired during his travels and on his experience of reading charts and maps, Columbus believed that the earth was composed mostly of land and was 25% smaller than was previously thought. Based on these faulty beliefs, he decided that Asia could be

accessed quickly by sailing west. In 1484 he submitted his theories to John II, King of Portugal, imploring him to finance a westward journey crossing the Atlantic Ocean. A royal maritime commission rejected his petition because of his perceived erroneous miscalculations and because Portuguese ships were already rounding Africa.

Resistant to rejection, Columbus moved to Spain, where he secured an introduction, in 1486, to Isabella I, Queen of Castile, who became somewhat intrigued with his idea. About this time, Columbus, then a widower, met Beatriz Enriquez, who became his mistress and the mother of his second son, Ferdinand Columbus. In Spain, as in Portugal, a royal commission rejected his plan. Through his determination, though, Columbus continued to request support, and in April 1492 his persistence was rewarded: Ferdinand V, King of Castile, and Queen Isabella agreed to sponsor the expedition. There exists a myth that Isabella I financed this voyage by pawning her jewels which is still today considered a myth. This myth obscures a darker story of how Columbus financed his trip. The Spanish monarch agreed to finance this voyage, but only on the condition that Columbus would repay this investment with profit by bringing back gold, spices, and other tribute from Asia. This critical need to acquire the ability to repay his debt became the focus and the frantic tone of Columbus' expeditions and frenetic attempt to find and steal anything of value as he raced from one Caribbean island to the next.

The First Voyage

On August 3, 1492 about 40 men, including Columbus, sailed on the vessel the *Santa María*. Between 40-60 other sailors were on the other two vessels that accompanied them, the *Pinta* and the *Niña*. Seventy days after leaving Spain, Columbus landed on Watling's Island (San Salvador, as Columbus named it), or Guanahani, as it was known to the Native people who inhabited the land upon Columbus' arrival. The first act of Columbus after arriving on shore was

to take possession of this new land in the name of the Spanish throne and enforce a European bureaucratic order and intellectual formation over a region that did not practice these particular customs.

Great care was taken to mention in a report by Fray Bartolomé (an official sent with Columbus to serve as Doctrinero) that a royal benchmark had been brought ashore and that a ceremony had been performed “in presence of all,” including presumably members of the indigenous population who had been sighted before Columbus even made his way ashore (Tyler, 1988). Columbus’ claim of the land in the name of the Spanish throne was documented and witnessed on a parchment for later use, if need be, in case someone objected to the ceremony or its ultimate purpose. This parchment was notarized, sealed, and returned to Spain to stand as an official symbol that the land encountered by Columbus had been claimed. As such, the first contact between European and non-European worlds was not accomplished through the amalgamation of two very different cultures. Rather, in the absence of common traditions and customs, the process was carried out through a decidedly European prism.

The people who Columbus encountered were named Taino, as that is what they called themselves; the Taino people belonged to a larger family of indigenous people with related languages called Arawak (Barreiro, 1998). In his journals Columbus noted the peacefulness and generosity of the Native people he encountered (Zinn, 2003). He named them *Indios*, which means in Spanish, *Children of Good*. Yet he also recorded a passage explaining that he had the means to conquer and subjugate the entirety of these people with only a small army (Rivera, 2001). Zinn (2003) revealed that in a letter Columbus wrote to one of his Spanish patrons that the Taino people are simplistic and honest people and exceedingly give liberally all that they have. Columbus also mentions they would make “fine servants,” and with so few of them it

would be easy to subjugate them and do as they wish. Columbus' fleet eventually set sail again, in larger pursuit of China. Believing he was in the vicinity of Japan, Columbus traveled to Fortune Island, Cuba, and then to the Dominican Republic, which he named Española.

During his journeys Columbus ran his flagship, the Santa Maria, aground on the island of Haiti on Christmas Eve in 1492. The Taino people helped rescue Columbus and his men and helped salvage the shipwrecked Santa Maria. The Taino people assisted Columbus to dismantle the wrecked flagship and erect a fort with the salvaged debris. The settlement was named La Navidad. Leaving 40 men behind on the island of Española (or Hispaniola as it is also known), Columbus headed home on January 16, 1493 (Olsen & Bourne, 1906). When Columbus left Española he kidnapped 25 of the Taino people and later sold the 7 or 8 survivors into slavery upon the return voyage to Spain. The *Niña*, with Columbus at the helm, and the *Pinta* began their journey back to Spain in January 1493. Columbus arrived in Palos, Spain, after tumultuous weather drove them off course. He was enthusiastically received by the Spanish monarchs, who kept their word and honored him with all that he demanded.

The Second Voyage

Columbus' second voyage to the Americas began on September 25, 1493, with a fleet of 17 ships and approximately 1,200 colonists aboard. Included in this group were the Queen's physician, Dr. Diego Alvarez Chanca; his younger brother Diego; Juan de la Cosa, who created the first map that showed America; and Juan Ponce de León, who would be the first European to explore Florida (Olsen & Bourne, 1906). The fleet approached the islands of Dominica and Martinique on November 3, 1493 and explored Antigua, St. Croix, Puerto Rico, and other islands before landing at Hispaniola to La Navidad to find the occupying force left by the first voyage all dead. According to the account of Guacanagari, the local chief who had befriended Columbus

on the first voyage, Columbus's men began to mistreat the Taino. When Columbus returned (to the island of Isabella) on September 29, he found that serious dissension had developed among the colonists, many of whom were already en route to Spain to file their grievances. The initial friendliness of the Tainos had been replaced with defensive acts of violence due to the brutality of the Europeans on the Taino people. After the attempts of conquest and enslavement of the Taino people by Columbus and his men, Columbus began to feel the resistance. His descriptions of the indigenous people became less complementary, and the events thereafter are often held from textbooks and other teaching material (Loewen, 2005).

Another notable event that transpired during this voyage is the implementation of the *encomi*endo system. At the start of the system, the Spaniards thought that the Indians were incapable of living a Christian life and that they needed guidance to indoctrinate themselves in the Catholic faith (Himmerich & Valencia, 1991). The major aim of the *encomienda* was to look after the welfare of the Native people, as well as to educate and teach them about God. It was ordered that the *Encomenderos*—the Spaniards assigned to the Native people—were not allowed to mistreat the Indians in any way, but at the same time, the Indians were to be assimilated into the European way of life (Simpson, 1966). Additionally, the Tainos were expected to work and be compensated for their efforts (Himmerich & Valencia, 1991). However, what the *encomienda* actually accomplished was to ensure the colonists a large labor supply by forcing the Native people to produce food and supplies (Simpson, 1966).

So great were the cruelties suffered by the Native people at the hands of Columbus and his men that the Taino people began to act out against them. In the beginning the resistance was rather passive; they refused to plant food for the Spanish. Later, they would abandon towns near the Spanish settlements (Loewen, 2005). The whole populations of some villages would, upon

the arrival of Spanish soldiers, throw themselves from cliffs, shoot one another with arrows, hang themselves, kill their children with their own hands, or take cassava poison to avoid the oppressive servitude under the Spanish tyranny. Others abandoned their cultivated fields and homes to hide in the forested hills where many thousands starved to death (Rivera, 2001) or were hunted by dogs and killed. When the authorities in Spain gained knowledge of the conflict, Columbus was summoned home, reaching Cadiz on June 11, 1496 (Olsen & Bourne, 1906).

After he failed to contact the emperor of China, the traders of India or the merchants of Japan, Columbus knew he still needed to find a way to repay his debt to the Spanish monarch upon his return. Since he was not successful at finding adequate amounts of gold, he decided to pay for his voyage in the one important commodity he had found in ample supply - human lives. Despite the request from Spanish Royalty to remain friendly with the native people, Columbus seized hundreds of Taino people from the island of Hispaniola, and forced them onto his ships and sent them to Spain (Loewen, 2005; Rivera, 2001). On board Columbus' slave ships, hundreds died; the sailors tossed the Indian bodies into the Atlantic. Once they arrived in Seville, the Tainos were sold as slaves in 1495 (Lunenfeld, 1992).

The Third Voyage

Columbus spent the next 2 years at home trying to improve his reputation while also pushing for additional funding for his third voyage. Columbus left Spain on May 30, 1498, with a fleet of supply ships headed for Hispaniola—ships whose goal was to explore the possibility of landmass south of it. Eventually Columbus reached an island with three mountains and called it Trinidad on August 1, 1498. Next he headed toward the South American mainland at the Paria Peninsula in Venezuela on August 5, prior to arriving at the colony on Hispaniola.

Upon his arrival in the region, Columbus discovered that many of the settlers had died, most of the survivors had syphilis, and the local leaders were engaged in a virtual civil war with the native people for control of the settlement. Later, arriving at Santo Domingo on August 31, Columbus discovered the settlers were fighting against his brother, Diego. He conciliated the rebels and intensified efforts to convert the Tainos to Christianity, although ineffective in the attempt (Lunenfeld, 1992). He also expanded the colony's operations for gold mining. Meanwhile, his enemies in Spain had convinced the monarchs that Hispaniola should have a new governor. In September 1499, a newly appointed administrator, Francisco de Bobadilla, arrived from Spain and investigated the situation for a few months before placing Columbus and his brother in chains and shipping them home, where they arrived in November of 1500 (Olsen & Bourne, 1906).

The Fourth Voyage

According to Olsen and Bourne (1906), Columbus found himself attempting to clear his name and succeeded. He was permitted by Ferdinand and Isabella to make one more voyage, with the understanding that he was prohibited from stopping at the colony on Hispaniola. In a fleet of four worn-out vessels and accompanied by his teenage son Ferdinand (who would be his father's first biographer), they left Cadiz, Spain on May 9, 1502 and reached Martinique on June 15. With a hurricane closing in, Columbus sailed to the forbidden Hispaniola on June 29 to secure shelter. In a message to Governor Ovando requesting permission to enter the port for safety, Columbus also advised him to prohibit any ships to depart for Spain due to the severity of the storm. Ovando refused to allow Columbus and his fleet to enter the port, and he did not take the Admiral's advice. Columbus was forced to take refuge in a small harbor nearby and managed to weather the storm, but of the 28 ships that Ovando ordered to sea, only 4 survived

the storm; over 500 people were killed. For the next 10 months Columbus explored the eastern side of the isthmus along Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, and Panama, before heading back toward the Caribbean islands the following May.

In the following months, Columbus struggled to maintain order among the Taino and the colonists. The scarcity of food and water became a larger problem for the colonists. The Tainos were very familiar with the concept of supply and demand, and they soon began to refuse to participate in the colonist's plight for survival leaving the colonists to find their own means of survival. As the relationships deteriorated, Columbus used his power of persuasion and devised a desperate trick to pull at the Tainos' expense. Columbus had a keen sense of astrology and knew there was a lunar eclipse coming and called a meeting of the Taino leaders to meet with him the day before the eclipse was scheduled to arrive. He told the Tainos that his men were Christian and their God punished the evil and rewarded the good. Columbus warned the Tainos that God was displeased with them, and he would surely show his displeasure by displaying some sort of sign. The "sign" came as the lunar eclipse. As the land darkened the Tainos became fearful and resounded to once again assist Columbus and his men and provide supplies as much as possible. This trickery against the Taino people worked and from that time forward the Taino were diligent in providing for the colonists as needed.

The Final Days

Upon his return to Spain after his fourth and final voyage Columbus was 53 years old and in poor health (Cavendish, 2006). Columbus lived most of his final 18 months suffering in pain from what was originally thought to be gout. He lived unhappily in Valladolid, comfortably off and cared for by his family. His patrons, King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella, had doubts about his mental stability and had no intention of giving him any official position, which Columbus

had often requested. Columbus became increasingly disturbed regarding the lack of money, recognition, and prerogatives that had been promised to him (Cavendish, 2006). Just shy of his 55th birthday on May 20, 1506, with his sons Diego and Ferdinand and his brother Diego by his side, Columbus died. Following his death, the body of Columbus underwent excarnation—the flesh was removed so that only his bones remained. He was buried in Seville, Spain. In 1574, his remains were exhumed and taken to Santo Domingo in the Caribbean, where he remained until the island was ceded to the French in the 1790s. He was then moved again to Havana, Cuba. After the Spanish-American war of 1898 and Spain’s loss to Cuba, the remains of Columbus were returned to Spain, and once again, buried in the Seville Cathedral. However, it is not known in certainty if the bones that remain in Spain are those of Columbus or of his brother, Diego.

Unmasking Columbus

Manuel da Silva Rosa is a distinguished Columbus historian who provided me with many contradicting viewpoints of the “real” Christopher Columbus. Through personal e-mail correspondence, Rosa offered me valuable insight and revealed new meaning into the complex identity and hidden secrets of Columbus. Rosa’s (2006) book, *Unmasking Columbus: Lies, Spies, Cover-ups and Conspiracy*, co-authored by Eric Steele, a high school teacher, does not argue the known facts surrounding Columbus’ voyages to the West. Instead, the authors have attempted to offer a paradigm shift by uncovering footnotes and “nuggets of truth” that provide new evidence and calculations from which to view the actions of this man. Based on this new information, a new theory is presented that provides research-based claims that Columbus was a Portuguese double agent working for King John II, who employed Columbus to distract Spain

from the monopoly of the gold trade of Africa and the on-the-cusp ocean route around Africa to India.

In Rosa's e-mail he stated directly,

Dear Donna Burns,

I can tell you right off that what children are taught is not accurate. Historians have made Cristoval Colon (Columbus as you know him) into a dunce who did not know how to navigate and could not tell he had not reached India. In fact, Colon knew quite well what he was doing and he did not err in his sailings. He did exactly what he set out to do. He set out to convince Spain India was a short distance west and he convinced them. But he knew before he sailed on the first voyage that he was not heading to India for he had already been in Canada in February 1477. All of this [sic] last years were spent fooling Spain in order to protect the real India for Portugal. Spain was tricked. It is all very clear in his letters and other documents.

As for the discovery of the Tainos, Columbus was neither lost nor in fear for he knew exactly where he was going and who he would find there...He was planning to eventually establish a new kingdom and rule there as a king, however, as is the case with most things, the plan began to fail because Columbus could not control the Spanish colonists who were only there for greed and did all they could to make his plan fail.

Unfortunately our book has yet to find a US publisher; nobody wants to hear the real story. They wish to keep teaching this fairy tale that Columbus sailed into an unknown sea and believed he was lost for 33 days...It is the fact that he lied intentionally and that his history was mainly written by outsiders that has caused all the confusion we now have. Hopefully by year's end we will have a match of Colon's DNA to his real family and I doubt it will be one from Genoa.

Regards,

Manuel da Silva Rosa

Although Rosa's focus is on Columbus (or Colon), it is important to note that the controversy that surrounds this recently discovered evidence reinforces the need for a critical approach to uncover a more accurate relationship of the Taino people he encountered. The following information (presented as bullet points) is taken from Rosa's research (translated from Spanish; Rosa & Steele, 2006) and is provided with the intent to demonstrate the alleged

fallacies that exist in this historically global event, that even today, dominates children's literature.

- Christopher Columbus was not the given name of the man who navigated to the New World. Various translations, his chosen name was Cristoval Colon or Colom, and his given name is unknown.
- Columbus was deeply connected to Portugal's King John II's inner circle through marriage long before any important actions. The family members of Columbus' wife, Filipa Moniz Perestrelo, all were part of the court of King John II and of the king's household, including the king's mistress and bodyguard. Many of them were grandchildren and other descendants of the Kings of Spain, France, and Portugal – a connection that we only discovered just a few years ago.
- The Italian named Cristoforo Colombo (Christopher Columbus), long presumed to be the legendary explorer, was only a poor woolcarder in Genoa as claimed by every historian. He lacked the noble station required to marry nobility, as the explorer Colon did long before his historic voyage.
- There is no uncontested evidence that the explorer knew how to speak Italian, or had any substantial connection to that country.
- The explorer's cryptic signature, "XpoFERENS Colon" as we decipher it, indicates that he was a member of the super-secretive Templar Military Order of Christ, which had a stronghold in Portugal at the time leading up to his voyage. As a member, like his father-in-law and brothers-in-law, he was dedicated to ridding the world of Muslims, who had occupied his country several centuries before.
- Though history tells us that the explorer felt angry and betrayed when King John II of Portugal refused to fund his trip, Columbus continuously colluded with Portugal after the supposed rejection. His efforts took Spain's focus away from Portugal's coveted eastern sea route to India, with its promises of gold, spices, and other riches. Columbus continued to communicate with the King of Portugal during his voyages; he continuously lied to the Kings of Spain, helped the Portuguese, and navigated with secret sun charts commissioned by the Portuguese king.
- Columbus' descendants continued to lie and hide the truth from the Kings of Spain with the help of their well-connected relatives.

Where Did the Story of the Columbus Encounter in Literature Begin?

This dissertation centers on the analysis of children's books that recite the history of Christopher Columbus and his encounter with the indigenous people in the Americas who existed and thrived before his invasion. While formulating the research questions for this study I

came to the realization that a historical reference of the story about Columbus was needed to support and provide a framework for the analysis. Thus, a review of literature was conducted to determine when the story began, who told these stories, evidence of consistency among the stories, and the key authors behind them. Answering these questions offers an opportunity to unveil the birth of this event as recorded in the secondary sources that were ultimately used to write the event in books for children.

Samuel Morison's (1942) *Admiral of the Ocean Sea*, and Benjamin Keen's (1959) *The Life of Christopher Columbus by his son Ferdinand* were researched; they provided useful historical references that reflected the significance and development of the stories told about Columbus and his encounters. These sources, among others, aimed toward primary historical sources, notably *The Life and Voyages of Columbus* (1856) by Washington Irving.

According to Merriam-Webster's dictionary (11th ed.), history can be defined as a branch of knowledge that records and explains past events. So stated, there are many ways to interpret history. Different assumptions can lead to different methods of interpreting text and vice versa. For instance, as history textbook studies have shown, omissions, narrowed perspectives, and the lack of historical accuracy in textbooks (Juhel, 1996) can influence what is gleaned from these books and can leave the reader with inaccurate meaning and erroneous information (Loewen, 2005). Meaning is shaped as the result of a transaction between an individual reader and a text at a particular moment in time (Platzner & Vandergrift, 2006; Rosenblatt, 1978). A reader both brings meaning to and takes meaning from this transaction; hence, there will be many possible interpretations of any text or illustration (Rosenblatt, 1978), leading to an interpretive analysis. For the purpose of this study, the view that the historian is one who connects a person to historical understanding through interpretive analysis was adopted (Efland, 1990). The

following sections outline how the documents of the Columbus encounter filtered their way into the texts shared by children.

1493–1750

As history indicates, when Columbus, also referenced as Cristobal Colon, returned to Spain in 1493, he reported to the royal court in Barcelona, and imparted his original log of the first voyage to the Sovereigns. Queen Isabella ordered the log to be copied, resulting in the so-called *Barcelona Copy*. The original has not been seen since, but the *Barcelona Copy* was returned to Columbus prior to his second voyage and remained in his possession until his death in 1506. It then passed into the hands of his heirs, but it too was lost sometime after 1554 (Pickering, 2003).

According to Pickering (2003), before that time, much of the contents of the *Barcelona Copy* were disaggregated by de las Casas into the document now known as the *Diario*. De las Casas was a friend of the Columbus family and spent many years compiling a history of the Spanish in the “New World.” It is speculated that de las Casas made the *Diario* as an aid in the recording of Columbus’ voyage. The document was rediscovered in 1795 by Ferdinand de Navarrete and was first published in 1825. It remains our primary historical record of the first voyage of Columbus, in addition to Columbus’ own journal.

The writings of de las Casas became available to the colonists through British anti-Spanish propaganda and Dutch travel literature (Cross, 1995). In 1620, the Dutch translated portions of de las Casas’ work, making Columbus a symbol for national independence and religious emancipation. The Reverend Samuel Purchas, a clerical promoter of English expansion, wrote about Columbus’ claim to the “New World” as justified (Sale, 1990) and promoted Columbus’ encounter as an opportunity for European invasion.

Christopher Columbus already had been embraced as a symbol of liberation and progress by North Americans during the era of the Colonial period (West & Kling, 1989). For example, the “New World” began to take on a more spiritual meaning to the people of colonial New England. As a result, they began to incorporate important rudiments of self-awareness and world-consciousness into their beliefs. Early on the colonists developed values, identity, purpose, expectations, and especially hope from Christian views of the end of humankind (Cross, 1995). One of the earliest examples of this is a book published in 1697, by a chief justice in Boston, Samuel Sewall. He wrote a book entitled, *Phaenomena quaedam Apocalyptica ad aspectum Novi Orbis configurata* [*Some Few Lines Towards a Description of the New Heaven as It Makes (Seems) to Those Who Stand Upon the New Earth*]. The “New Earth” he speaks of is, of course, the “New World” and its struggling colonies of New England (Pickering, 2000). Using Reverend Purchas’s previous writings of Columbus, Sewall applied Puritan philosophy to late-17th-century mayhem, which included political upheavals and witchcraft. With the assistance of various researchers he had recruited, Sewall managed to publish two pamphlets describing the “New World” as the “center of a heavenly metropolis” (Cross, 1995, p. 18) and portrayed Columbus as an American icon. This became an early attempt to shape “truth” into a “story.”

The story of Christopher Columbus was slow to surface in the United States. From 1600 to 1750 A.D. Columbus was an insignificant figure to the colonist who occupied the North during this time. Due to the anti-Catholic, anti-Spanish prejudices of North American colonists, and to the fact that Columbus landed far south, the English deemed his initial encounter as inconsequential by the time they occupied the northeastern region (Cross, 1995).

1750–1800

After 1750, a Scottish clergyman by the name of William Robertson compiled a text on American history that came to influence writers for over two generations in the United States. With this text, Robertson set the precedent for beginning the history of the United States in Europe, as a continuation of the centuries-old quest for greater economical development and new commercial routes and markets (Phillips & Phillips, 1991). Relying heavily on the biography from Columbus' son, Ferdinand, and de las Casas' *Diario*, Robertson presented a Columbus who was “devout, curious, courageous, modest, persistent, and steadfast—in short, the perfect hero” (Phillips & Phillips, 1991, p. 27). Robertson's colonial image of Columbus in this form ceased being European; he became the first American.

The representation of Columbus became further Anglo-Saxonized by poets of the new nation, trained in the British literary tradition (Cross, 1995). For example, *America*—a poem written in 1769 by Alexander Martin—fashioned a mythological connection between the colonists, Great Britain, North America, and Columbus. The spirit and image of Columbus continued to be represented in America. In 1784, King's College in New York changed its name to Columbia (Dor Nel, 1991), and a plethora of cities and towns, poems, and songs continued to bear the name, Columbus.

1800–1892

During this timeframe, the public became more interested in stories of Columbus. As a result, Washington Irving, a former U.S. diplomat in Spain, wrote the book, *The Life and Voyages of Columbus*, which was published in London in 1828, and later in New York. This three-volume biography of Columbus was a huge success, later being reprinted 39 times in English and 51 editions in other languages before Irving's death in 1859 (Handlin, 1993; Phillips

& Phillips, 1991). Irving's story was greatly influenced by a collection of documents compiled by the Spanish historian Martin Fernandez de Navarrete.

Over 35 years Navarrete had gathered together three volumes of material on the early Spanish voyages of exploration; the first volume dealt primarily with Columbus. It was Navarrete who later discovered de las Casas' missing copy of the journal of the first voyage. Soon, news of Navarrete's work became well known in Madrid. It was then that American Ambassador to Spain, Alexander Everett, approached Washington Irving, whom he had met earlier in France, and requested that Irving translate Navarrete's work. Irving, fraught with financial concerns, agreed (Handlin, 1993; Sale, 1990).

Irving searched the Navarrete collection thoroughly. Although known to be a methodical researcher and having cited over 150 sources, his 340,000-word manuscript was "freely embellished with invented details, imaginary conversations and internal monologues" (Cross, 1995, p. 21). Irving wanted to tell a story about the man, Columbus, rather than recite historical material. He created a captivating, human character, more interesting as a legend than in real life. His story featured many myths that had circulated about Columbus: his youth as a pirate, mistreatment by the Portuguese and Spanish courts, and Queen Isabella's generosity in offering to pawn her jewels (Cross, 1995). Phillips and Phillips (1993) contended that although Irving used Navarrete's documents to provide evidence of certain points, he preserved the heroic representation of Columbus that became the icon of American historiography.

1892–1900

America at this time was entering its fourth centenary of Columbus' encounter and was changing into a country with a surplus of ethnicities, traditions, and beliefs. Washington Irving's story was often criticized for creating a fantasized portrayal of the historical figure, but the story

continued to thrive in popular culture, being rewritten into plays, poems, songs, monuments, and children's books. As the birth of the 20th century emerged, it brought various new perspectives as to the story of Columbus and his impact on American history. As Cross (1995) stated, "The Columbus of 1892 went 'ethnic'" (p. 23).

In 1892 Columbus began to be criticized by those in the field of religion and academia who thought him an unsuitable hero. A clergyman by the name of Edward Everett Hale went across the literary traditions and voiced his theory that America in 1492 was a "blank page" and an undiscovered paradise (Cross, 1995). Responding to Hale's claim, Charles Francis Adams, Jr., delivered a colorful address to the Massachusetts Historical Society. He claimed Columbus to be more of an obstinate man, a far cry from the bold reference made by others in the past. Adams referenced Irving's work to be "the vein of platitudinous moralizing which runs through the book [and] makes it difficult for a writer of the present day to take it seriously" (Adams, 1892, as cited in Handlin, 1993, p. 91).

As Adams continued his controversial claims, a man by the name of Justin Winsor penned a notable biography about Christopher Columbus in 1892. Winsor's intention was to reveal the "truth" about who Columbus was and the myths that surrounded him. Phillips and Phillips (1991) have contended that this could be the most influential American scholarly contribution of the 20th century. Winsor's lucid portrayal of Columbus remains a reliable resource even into the new millennium. Winsor was one of the first to look beyond the status quo and publish the not-so-glamorous side of Columbus that focused on his spirit that made him a pivotal historical figure. He reported Columbus' greed for fame and fortune, his misrepresentations of his discoveries across the ocean, and his maladministration in the Indies (Phillips & Phillips, 1991). Winsor's views wounded the standard heroic depiction of Columbus,

yet a large portion of the American public refused to admit the slightest imperfection in its heroes. As a result, the book failed to replace Irving's; yet it began a movement to critically revisit the myths of Columbus and to share the story from different cultural perspectives. Many books were published that rebutted Winsor's portrayal of Columbus. Others simply ignored the critics and wrote more contemporary versions of the traditional Columbus story, using Irving's work as its foundation.

1900–Present

In today's literary world children's literature featuring Christopher Columbus continues to be disseminated to hundreds of thousands of children, bringing with it, for all the good and bad, the story of this famous explorer and his encounter with the Americas. Various perspectives of this historical figure seep into the school curriculum through the literature that is shared by teachers and their students as the data in subsequent chapters will reveal. Some stories highlight the accomplishments of Columbus as Peter Sis's (1992) book does in *Follow the Dream*, while others begin to tell a story from a revisionist approach with respect to America's indigenous population, such as Jane Yolen's book, *Encounter* (1992). There are dozens of other such stories circulating around the world. The story of Columbus in books represents history in various perspectives and beliefs. As the world becomes more diverse the stories of our past, and how they influence our future, become monumental. A review of research highlights several studies conducted on Columbus in literature; however, the focus on the indigenous people he encountered are not highly visible, indicating a great need for this research project.

Related Research in Children's Literature and Columbus

In William Bigelow's article, "Once Upon a Genocide: Christopher Columbus in Children's Literature" (1992), Bigelow reviewed eight children's biographies and compared the

books with a primary source and historical record; he then analyzed how these accounts might influence young readers. He found that several themes within the books centered on religion, curiosity, and adventure. In his article, Bigelow questioned why the reviewed stories did not ask students to critically question Columbus and his actions. He proposed, “As most children’s first exposure to ‘foreign policy,’ the Columbus myth helps condition young people to accept the unequal distributions of power in the world” (p. 51) and also that “the books condition young people to reject the right of the oppressed to rebel” (p. 53). Bigelow implored that it is time that a more accurate tale of Columbus be included in the literary canon, or not to include it at all. He invited students to question the injustices infiltrated in text as it might lead them to also question the injustices found in society itself. Although Bigelow’s study highlights the critical multicultural theory within the books, it does not demonstrate how the stories could be revised, rewritten, or retold in a manner that includes more indigenous perspectives.

Similarly, Taxel (1991) reviewed a small number of books for children that tell the Columbus story in his article, “The Politics of Children’s Literature: Reflections on Multiculturalism and Christopher Columbus.” The copyright dates of his selections range from 1955 through 1992, and the genres of the books include biographies and historical fiction. While referencing some of the titles also reviewed by Bigelow, Taxel claimed the importance of narratives such as history and literature are not published as authentic multicultural material and are revised based on “the people in charge” (p. 30). He examined the books on Christopher Columbus to demonstrate that with several important exceptions, the romantic and mythic conception of Columbus as a great adventurer is still revealed and that the catastrophic impact on the Native people upon his arrival is omitted. He pronounced, “Native Americans are all but invisible from the pages of most books...the continued silencing of the Native American

viewpoint, I argued, both reflects and serves to perpetuate their continued powerlessness” (p. 30). Taxel’s study concluded with a plea to writers, editors, publishers, and academic and critical establishments to publish more books for children that encompass and include the Native American voice within its story. Taxel’s research begins to address the areas where a Taino presence is noticeably lacking, but it does not go into great detail, nor does it include more up-to-date publications as the study is now quite dated.

Similar to Bigelow and Taxel, Meltzer (1992) believed that within the Columbus story, popular myths often found in children’s books, textbooks, and trade books, should compare the accuracy of these events to historical documents drawn from logs, diaries, journals, speeches, and other media forms. However, he took a step further and began to really question what events took place and what the Spaniards did to the Native people and their land. He took time to research primary sources such as de las Casas’ journal and quoted a journal written by Cuneo, an adventurer in the fleet of the second voyage. Meltzer asserted that after reading many stories on Columbus’ arrival too many books that tell the events of Columbus’ life do not have much to do with the historical record. He believes it is harmful to omit the experiences with the Taino people and that by omitting such information to young readers we miseducate them on how international affairs are really shaped. In the article Meltzer explains that more recent children’s books stress Columbus’ deep faith in God and his desire to convert “heathens” to Christianity as a main motive of the voyages; however as Meltzer performed his research, he found that the real motive for Columbus was gold. Meltzer summarized his arguments by stating that there is a need “for young people, as well as adults, to see the man in all his dimensions” (p. 9). Meltzer’s research most closely parallels the research in this study; however, my research analyzes specific titles being shared in today’s classrooms.

Susan Gardner, a professor of Native North American Indian Literatures at the University of North Carolina, Charlotte, demonstrated her discontent with Columbus's stagnant representation in a study reviewing several biographies for children in her article, "My first rhetoric of domination: The Columbian encounter in children's biographies" (1991). Gardner reviewed thirty-six U.S. children's biographies on Columbus and found that although more recent books were published, each version of Columbus represented a surface manifestation of "a shared, collective, Columbian *ur-text*" (p. 278). Like these predictable texts, the illustrations that accompanied them were formulaic as well: Columbus planting the flag on a land that did not belong to him while timid-looking Tainos looked on, or a wreck of the *Santa Maria* off La Navidad. The research concluded with Gardner pleading to contemporary writers, including Native American writers, to continue to tell "their side of the story" that reflect an accurate diverse retelling of history. In his article, "Discovering Columbus: A profile of the Explorer in Children's Literature" (1992), S. R. Morrow examined the characteristics, attributes, personality, and accomplishments attributed to Columbus in children's literature. The 50 or so trade books he reviewed fell between a reading level for third to sixth graders, and publishing dates ranged from 1955 to 1992. Morrow examined and explored the image of Columbus presented in children's books and claimed that his research provided educators an opportunity to accurately redefine the accomplishments and legacies of Columbus during the Age of Exploration through the process of re-examination and historical assessment.

In Morrow's (1992) research, 10 themes were found that depict Columbus in a variety of ways. These themes include titles such as "Columbus as Sailor," "Columbus as a Man of Scientific Reasoning," "Columbus as a Leader," "Columbus as a Patriot," "Columbus as a Child," "Columbus as a Conqueror," and "Columbus as a Legend." The study related the well-

known events within these characteristics but did so in a shallow manner by only providing brief examples from the text that would support the theme. Morrow provided a list of books at the end of the article but never discussed individual titles and did not specify implications for the classroom. He did, however, pose the need for a balanced and realistic portrayal of Columbus in the social studies curriculum and appealed to teachers to integrate learning instruction with controversial issues appropriate to the students who will study Columbus.

Within the research efforts mentioned, the authors examined children's books that tell the history of an explorer who changed the course of history in the Western Hemisphere. The researchers inspected a handful of both trade books and textbooks published between 1955 and 1992 and described how the story portrays Columbus. Although the collective findings indicate the strong need for more "accurate" and multicultural perspectives for this event in literature for children, no other marked study has been done since. The purpose of my research is to revisit the trade books on a larger, more encompassing scale and to analyze and interpret the books using a content analysis approach. Using critical literacy and critical multiculturalism theories, the research examines the extent to which the field embraces the encounter of Columbus and the Taino people from the picture book of Columbus to present literature and to what degree these stories reflect an indigenous voice.

Columbus's Image Related to the Mainstream Cultural Perception

The history of Christopher Columbus in America can be seen as pervasive at times, yet the reality that exists beyond the perpetual myth is often lost in an amorous treatment of patriotism. Christopher Columbus, as a hero and symbol of America, is an important figure in what has been conceived as the American myth. Through time, his status is not representative of his own accomplishments, but rather of a society who often refuses to see "another side of the

story” other than the perceived hero he has become. But in the reality of the twenty-first century, Columbus’s reputation has not survived the scrutiny of history, yet the story as portrayed in books for children have not changed in the last sixty years (Gardner, 1991).

Gardner (1991) presented research that highlighted problematic areas in which Columbus was portrayed in biographies for children. Among the findings she presented several examples of hagiography in the manner in which Columbus was portrayed. The rhetoric of domination is described within books about Columbus that mainstream audiences may not recognize or understand. These themes include parenthetical admissions, deceptive and implying causality, euphemism, and omission. Parenthetical admissions are most unusual as they often mention facts about Columbus that are usually tarnishing. Jean Fritz in her 1980 book, *Where Do You Think You’re Going, Christopher Columbus?* used this technique to expose Columbus’s shortcomings. For example, when Columbus is unable to locate gold on the land, he reasoned that “African explorers were always sending Africans back to Spanish slave markets... Besides, the natives were all heathens. It wasn’t as if he were selling Christians into slavery. (In fact, there was not a single Christian native in all of Hispaniola. The converting had gone as badly as the goldmining)” (p. 55). The use of the parenthetical can attribute to countertext while also giving the reader information on the reality of the topic that many books do not offer.

Another example of Columbus and his mainstream perception is implied causality. Gardner offered, “Columbus “took” with him several men in service, six captive Indians, a few caged parrots, some items he had collected, and a small sample of gold” (Levinson, 1990, p. 56). This action reflects conspiring to make the native people into items of trade, wares, or things, often found in many books about his voyages. The next area of rhetoric in domination comes from euphemism. For instance, “Then Columbus did some cruel things. He sent island people to

Spain as slaves. He made others look for gold. If they didn't find enough, he punished them" (Greene, 1989, p. 33): more accurately, the punishment was cutting their hands and letting them bleed to death. As Gardner affords, the Taino rejection and resistance to Columbus's mistreatment is simply transformed into behavior deserving of nothing more than a hand slap. This can be seen in several instances across books about Columbus. The last area where Gardner identifies Columbus's domination in books is through omission. A common example of this is Columbus's heavy involvement in the slave trade. This topic is not mentioned in many books when discussing his subsequent voyages to the west, however, books continue to portray him as a hero regardless of this information.

. According to Manuel de Rosa, we know less about this man as time passes and more discoveries are made than we did twenty years ago. But has this changed the perception that the mainstream population has carried over the last 500 years? Columbus never actually stepped on North American soil, nor did he open the first European opportunity for trade as the Scandinavian Vikings already were here in the eleventh century, and others before that time. Contrary to popular legend, Columbus did not prove the earth was round either; educated people have known this for centuries. Nevertheless, Columbus continues to be in the spotlight and molded into a part of a secular mythology for schoolchildren today.

As the story of Columbus' encounter with the Taino people is retold over time, the danger of revisionist storytelling enters. When additional resources are discovered and published, we learn that Columbus had a darker side to him and that the interactions between Columbus and the Taino people were not as simple and benevolent as presented in some books. As the topic of Columbus becomes more adversarial, some questions that may begin to be asked may include:

- Why is our childhood memory of Columbus so hazy and positive?
- Why were we never taught what he actually did to those smiling, friendly Indians pictured in the books we read as children?
- Why didn't we learn about the torture, the mutilation, the rapes, the slaves, the obsession in Columbus's quest for gold?

With more information appearing in anthropological journals exposing some of the long accepted myths it remains a mystery as to why our children are still reading and being taught with books that perpetuate the old myth.

CHAPTER 5 RESPONSES AND ANALYSES

Survey Responses

The survey instrument used for this study was designed to poll educators and education professionals on the different types of books on Christopher Columbus and Columbus Day that are presently being used in their schools and libraries. The responses to these questions serve the valuable purpose in creating a database of Christopher Columbus books that may be studied and analyzed to determine their veracity and utility in schools. Additional questions were asked that, while not integral to the development of a study database, are important in gauging the level of experience of respondents and the extent to which they and their schools use Christopher Columbus books.

Two separate surveys are utilized to garner responses regarding the different texts on Christopher Columbus that are used in school libraries and classrooms. One survey is designed for teachers who are subject to established curricula. Another survey is designed for media specialists who may be subject to the same school curriculum but who also may have dissimilar work environments and duties. The majority of the questions in both surveys are comparable; however, there are some that are tailored to account for these differences.

Accordingly, as the survey populations are different their response rates are different as well. The survey delivered to teachers resulted in 189 responses while the survey for media specialists had 89 responses. The number of responses varies from question to question for both surveys with no single question being answered by the overall total number of respondents. Although the total number of responses is insufficient for the application of predictive or correlational statistical tests they do provide a plethora of qualitative data from which a valid

database may be constructed. Additionally, responses to the following questions provide insight to the characteristics of the population from which the database is derived.

Question: Do you teach a grade within K-6th at your school/Do you serve children in grades K-6 at your school or library? Respondents from the “Teacher” survey that answered this question were almost evenly split with 51.9% answering “yes” and 48.1% answering “no”. Results from the “Media Specialist” provided a marked contrast. Of 52 respondents 80.2% (42) indicated that they worked at a K through 6th grade school while 19.2% stated that they did not.

Question: How many years have you been teaching overall/How many years have you been serving as a Media Specialist? Responses to question 2, “How many years have you been teaching overall?” indicated that the majority of “Teacher” respondents had over a decade of teaching experience. At 57.9%, those individuals that selected “10+ years” represented the largest block of the sample population. Individuals with 5-10 years teaching experience were 21.1% of the sample while 16.5% of the respondents had 1-5 years. Only 6 respondents, or 4.5% of the sample that responded to this question, had less than a year’s experience in teaching.

Media specialists had somewhat comparable levels of experience. Twenty-four respondents, or 47.1% of this sample, stated that they had more than 10 years experience as a media specialist. There were 10 respondents (19.6%) with 5-10 years experience and 16 with 1-5 years of experience. Only one respondent indicated that they had less than a year’s experience as a media specialist.

Question: Are you familiar with Christopher Columbus and his encounter with the western world in 1492? According to teacher responses to this question all of the respondents

knew of Christopher Columbus and his voyages. All but one of the media respondents indicated that they were not familiar with Christopher Columbus and his voyages.

Question: Do you know the name of the people whom Columbus encountered upon his arrival to the western world in 1492? When teachers were asked this question 38 respondents, or 20.1% of the sample, gave the correct answer of Taino or Arawak. Six percent of respondents gave “Native Americans” as an answer while the remaining 74% either did not answer or indicated that they did not know. Media specialists had somewhat higher levels of correct responses with this question. Twenty-four respondents, or 27% of the sample population gave the correct answer of Taino or Arawak. Three respondents answered with “Indian” while only one gave “Native American” as an answer.

Question: Is Columbus Day recognized at your school or library? At 56.4%, a slim majority of teachers indicated that Columbus Day was not recognized at their school or library while 43.6% stated that it was. Those that answered that Columbus Day was recognized went on to provide qualitative responses on the nature of that recognition. Answers ranged from “Announced over loud speaker” and “No fanfare, just a note on our calendar” to “It is acknowledged, but teachers are encouraged to present from the perspective of the Native people and to teach that Columbus couldn't have "discovered" an already inhabited land.”

Closely mirroring teacher’s responses, 54.4% of the media specialist answers stated that Columbus Day was not recognized with 45.1% indicating that it was. Responses on how the day was celebrated ranged from, “Day off from school” to “In South Dakota, it is not recognized as Columbus Day, but rather as Native American Day. We celebrate the Lakota culture on that day with speakers, demonstrations of traditional dance and a book sale of Native books by Native authors.”

Question: Is it required in the curriculum to teach about Columbus Day or

Columbus himself? An overwhelming majority of Teacher respondents indicated that it was not. Of the 131 responses to this question 105, or 80.2%, answered “no” while only 26, or 19.8% of responses indicated that it was a curriculum requirement. Among those that answered “no”, 49 respondents indicated that they still include instruction on Christopher Columbus. Of particular note is the following response, “Because history disseminates that indigenous people were a part of Columbus' "discovery of the New World," I find it important to share my tribe's cultural heritage. When people hear our Creation Story, enlightenment may happen about native society BEFORE Columbus; i.e. our beliefs aka "religion," our connection to the Earth and all other creatures, our laws that mandate our respect and thanks to our fellow creatures and beings. Our nations really did have what we considered "civilized" societies here in the Western states. The Creator made Mother Earth and the Animal People who became the teachers of the Human People (us of the Plateau Native American culture). Our laws have always been good conduct, respect for others and taking care of our environment. In today's native liveways of strong assimilation, it is difficult to bring our native children back into their heritage. But we must do so for the good health of our societies and our Mother Earth. This is what we teach to non-natives about our people who have lived here, in what is now known as the United States, for over twelve thousand years. All cultures working together can heal our Mother Earth, her air, waters and lands by living the Creator's laws handed down to my people when this world was made.”

The population of media specialists was not asked this question.

Question: Do you share or bring in trade books about Columbus or Columbus Day to your classroom? Only 30 teachers, or 22.9% of the sample, indicated that they did while 77.1%, or 101 respondents, stated that they did not. The follow-on question to this question asks

“If the answer to this question is yes, please list the top 5 trade books most often shared with your students about Columbus or Columbus Day at your school or library.” The responses to this question constitute the database of children’s books on Christopher Columbus or Columbus Day that is analyzed as part of this study. Media specialists were not asked this particular question. The following question that is tailored to their work environment and duties was given instead.

Question: Do you read or share any books with children on the Columbus event during library time? There were 50 valid media specialist responses to this question. Of these, 76% stated that they did not read or share any books with children on the Columbus event during library time. Twelve respondents, or 24% of the sample, indicated that they did. Media specialists were also asked if the Columbus books that were checked out at their library offered varying perspectives on the story of Columbus and the people he encountered. Of the 30 responses received for this question 16 indicated that the books did not provide different perspectives on the Christopher Columbus story while 14 stated that some books did. Books that media specialists listed as being checked out or shared were combined with the teacher’s list of Columbus books to constitute the database for this study.

Question: Based on the titles you provided, do you feel these stories offer varying perspectives on the story of Columbus and the people he encountered? Teachers that indicated that they bring books on Christopher Columbus to their classrooms were asked to further assess the books they selected. They were asked if they believed that the stories offered “varying perspectives on the story of Columbus and the people he encountered”. Responses to this question range from “No, They are all very vague; do not have a lot of detail” to “Yes. The various perspectives of indigenous peoples from 1492 to the present are discussed.” One

response is particularly comprehensive: “yes...I work with home school students, so these books are used by a wide range of ages: *Morning Girl* (1999) imagines the perspective of the Native people, *In 1492* (1991) is a simple children's book that plays up the glory of his achievements, *Westward with Columbus* (1991) provides a scientific, nautical perspective and includes some detail about the cruelty towards Native people, *Columbus* (1955) by the D'Aulaires is a good text to use for bias and to check the accuracy of the facts presented, since it seems quite Euro-centric and dismissive of Native peoples. It is important to note that of those individuals that bring Columbus books in for their students 45% believed that their chosen texts did not offer varying perspectives. When asked if they felt that American Indian or Alaska Native children could benefit when reading these titles only 17% of the respondents answered in the affirmative. Many of the remaining 83% felt that the books would be of value in the sense that all literature is of value if it leads a child to read more.

Sixteen media specialists indicated that the books that they have in their library would be of some benefit to American Indian/Alaska Native children. Ten respondents, however, stated that their books would not be of use in this regard. One media specialist wrote, “because very little is told about the "Native American" side, just mainly about Columbus.”

Qualitative Responses

Although this study was not specifically designed to collect and report individual perspectives on Christopher Columbus children’s literature respondents were given the opportunity to provide comments and feedback. While not all teachers and media specialists took advantage of this opportunity those that did were able to provide to varying extents articulate and thoughtful comments, which are included.

Teachers

There were many responses among teachers that spoke to the need of revamping the manner in which Columbus Day is celebrated in the schools. Some teachers voiced the opinion that teachers should become more aware of Native American perspectives that surround Columbus Day. Some believed that teachers must educate themselves on the myths surrounding the event that continue exist in the classroom. The comments that follow speak to the importance of critical pedagogy and a need for more balanced books on the topic.

“I think Columbus Day is overrated and unless taught from both perspectives, it is useless for our limited classroom time.”

“Why AREN'T there more historically accurate children's books available regarding Columbus's arrival? Celebrating Columbus's day is horribly politically incorrect, as well.”

“I think it is important to engage Native children in discussions about tribal history for them to understand what theirs and other tribes have endured in order to collaboratively design solutions to modern encounters with non-native peoples.”

“Elementary teachers, in particular, need to educate themselves about the American Indian, indigenous people's views of Columbus Day (and THANKSGIVING) and incorporate this viewpoint in their lessons - I have not yet found a trade book with an indigenous viewpoint that gets most of the history 'correct'. Even Jane Yolen's *Encounter* is pretty skewed toward European thinking.”

In addition to emphasizing an indigenous perspective on the event, one teacher found value in the research being done and shared their thoughts accordingly,

“This is a wonderful thing to research, and hopefully your efforts will result in a new exposure to the impact experienced by Native Americans on the 'invasion' of Europeans in their lands.”

Others felt it somewhat insulting to directly address the needs of one particular race or cultural group over another as the following comment demonstrates,

“It is an insult to me when people of distinct cultural groups think that teachers are insensitive to our students’ backgrounds. I teach with the same love for each child and their particular culture and beliefs. We need to spend more time looking at our similarities. We are all shades of brown with a commonality that overrides our differences. Yes, it is imperative for students to learn that our country has made grievous, unjust acts against different groups--as has every other cultural group of people throughout history across the world. None of our ancestors are lily-white nor have reason to feel justified or superior. Our country is full enough of hatred and tribal mentalities and we don't need to stoke that fire. What we need to do is love and accept more and look at the past less. We are Americans now. We need to focus on that and let the lessons of history keep us from returning to the hatred, prejudice and tribal mentality of our past. By the way, I have Cherokee blood along with German and English. My children are 1/2 Greek and I have a bi-racial grandson. I love the colors of my family and I am proud of the colors and backgrounds of my country.”

Whether it is due to limited time schedules or the lack of quality books that share the information, the teacher voices resonated that change is needed,

“I have seen far too many teachers present the view that Columbus "discovered America," and present a one-sided view of history, the Euro-American-centric view. I think that this can give the impression to native students that they are not valued. It needs to change.”

“I applaud your efforts to make a positive change in respect of indigenous perspectives regarding one of America's most coveted myths in the foundation of their justification to dispossess indigenous peoples of their lands, rights, and even humanity.”

Teachers are one of the most influential agents in the educational system. Apart from their expertise and book choice it is the local Media Specialists, or Librarians, who also have a keen insight into how books influence children on topics of the present and the past.

Media Specialists

Media Specialists exude great power in the ability to control what books are offered to students and what books are denied. They interact with students in a much higher volume within

the day than a single teacher. Therefore, their knowledge and expertise in children's literature is important when it comes to book selection. As the following comments demonstrate, truth carries a lot of weight in determining which books are sought after when sharing the Columbus event.

“It is important to help children realize that Columbus did not "discover" America. There were already civilizations that had been living on the continents of North and South America for thousands of years.”

“I believe we've gotten the idea across to our teaching staff about Columbus not being named the man who discovered America, but as an explorer. With our young population, preschool, age 3 through first grade, age 7 very little time if any was spent on Columbus. We are now working towards the correct approach to Thanksgiving, a holiday the teachers do spend time discussing in their classrooms. The educational assistant in our library is a proud mix of Native American and European family backgrounds. This by far is the best way to project the correct teachings to our students.”

“I have not spent time on Columbus because of my own bias - I view him alongside Hitler for the genocide he perpetuated. I have not found the book that fits my time frame that brings a balance about this topic. I recently read the book *Encounter* by Jane Yolen. It attempts to tell the Native view but it still lacks authenticity and I usually like the author's work.”

While accuracy is paramount, media specialists also believe that promoting a more positive and contemporary connection with Native American people is important.

“I wish we had a K-2 book that told the Native side of the story. I have yet to find one I consider authoritative.”

“As a librarian, it is a challenge to find materials that express the views of the First Peoples in any given region. I always look for authors that are Native Americans as an important factor in purchasing.”

“The elementary schools in our district are making an effort to be culturally aware of negative character casting of Native Americans. The schools are bringing Native speakers to give the history of their particular peoples in connection with the history of our area.”

Both teachers and media specialists emphasize the need for a more accurate and balanced story of Columbus's encounter with the Taino people. Rich in thought and detail, these responses warrant a closer look at educator's beliefs regarding Columbus and the people he encountered in 1492 and beyond if additional research is desired.

Book Analyses

As mentioned in Chapter 3, a rubric was developed with criteria that highlighted various aspects of the encounters between Columbus and the Taino people. These criteria included information based on historical milestones documented on Columbus's voyages, any opportunities of cultural transmissions gleaned from the books, any instances of fictionalized treatment or departure from historical record, any identifiable interactions or relationships between the Taino and Columbus and his men provided in the books, and finally, any literary distinctions connected to the books. It is important to note that while all of these story elements may not be found in every good book about the Columbus and Taino encounter, the more elements the story contains, the more inclusive of both European and Taino perspectives it may be. The following analyses are based on the evaluation of "excellent," "good," or "bad" books.

Excellent Rating

An "excellent" rated book translates to books that meet most or all of the criteria under the "excellent" column. These criteria in the "excellent" category include identifying at least three to four historical events within the first voyage, and other events in subsequent voyages if discussed in the book. Cultural transmissions include identifying the Taino people by name. At least two Taino beliefs and ideals are revealed in the story. The story identifies Taino religious beliefs, agriculture, and/or artisanship in some manner. Physical attributes of the Taino are described and accurate. Illustrations representing any of the cultural identities are accurate and

realistic, and the author and illustrator are successful for providing two unique perspectives to the story. The book does not depart from, or departs very little from historical record as documented in available primary sources. The story does not mislead or detract from the historical record in any manner. If the book does depart from historical record, the departure is intentional and enhances the potential reading and learning experience of the reader. The author and illustrator provide strong instances where the Taino are presented as self-sufficient. An example of this would include the Taino being portrayed as independent and not needing Columbus and his men to survive. The author and illustrator reflect the Tainos as staying true to their culture and wanting to reject to European culture being forced upon them. The Tainos are depicted in text and illustrations (if applicable) as having conflict with Columbus and his men and are not shown as weak or submissive to malicious treatment from the Spanish settlers. The book includes four or more of these criteria: The book provides the appropriate criteria for the specific genre in which the book was written. The book indicated a Native American or Native American expert was consulted for this publication. The author included source notes for the historical event. This story received an award of excellence of some type. The illustrator provided source notes. If only photographs were provided, there was a combination of photos that reflected both the European and Native American influence. The following book was rated as “excellent” (see Table 5-1).

Landau, E. (2001). *Columbus Day: Celebrating a famous explorer*. Berkeley Heights, NJ: Enslow Publishers, Inc.

In this 2001 book, Elaine Landau gently challenged the myths and assumptions about Columbus, acknowledging his mistreatment of Native Americans. She began with the birth of Columbus in Italy and continued by placing the period of discovery and exploration in the Americas in a historical context. Additionally, the author presented varied perspectives about

the Columbus Day holiday as well as its history and diverse celebrations. Landau is a highly acclaimed author of over 300 nonfiction books. She has written on such subjects as earth science, the supernatural, planets, dinosaurs, ancient civilizations, ecology, and a broad range of contemporary issues. Within the book, there was a table of contents, a list of words to know, a craft project, an index, a list for further reading, and Internet addresses to learn more about Columbus Day. The book was listed in the *Notable Social Studies Trade Books for Young People* from the National Council for the Social Studies in 2002. It was intended for an audience within the ages of 5 and 9.

Question #1: Does the book provide a comprehensive record of the Christopher Columbus story to include the encounter with the Taino? The first 3 chapters of this book covered Columbus' life and his quest for funding for his voyages. Beginning in Chapter 4, the Taino people were included several times. In fact, Landau provided information on the Taino in only the third sentence on the page, which stated, "The native people there were farmers. They grew their own food and wove cloth. They lived in peaceful villages" (p. 27). Although the text did not explicitly state that Columbus was seeking gold, it did explain how Columbus "forced some of the Indians onto his ship to serve as guides" (p. 29). The book also alluded to Columbus kidnapping Taino people and sending them back to Spain with the reference, "He also hopes to bring them back to Spain to impress the king and queen" (p. 29). Landau proceeded to explain to the readers how the Taino people assisted Columbus and his men. For example, she noted, "The Indians helped the visitors. They gave Columbus and his men food. They offered the men shelter and showed them the island. But their kindness was not returned" (p. 27). Landau continued to explain that if the Taino people did not obey the settlers, they faced terrible consequences:

In time, Columbus and his men mistreated the Indians. They made them work long hours and gave them little food. If the Indians disobeyed, they were harshly punished. Many died from the lack of food and the cruel treatment they received. Some Indians died of diseases the Europeans brought with them. Columbus had also brought Christianity to the Indians. He thought that this made up for what the Indians lost, but he was wrong. (p. 29)

Question #2: Does the book provide sufficient insight into the lifestyle-cultural and sociological heritage of the indigenous Taino people? This book provided a brief amount of insight into the lifestyle, cultural, and sociological heritage of the Taino people. Even though the Tainos were not specified by name, the author offered examples of who the Taino were and what they were like. Within Chapter 4, Landau provided the reader with some cultural information about the Taino. For example, the text mentioned that the Tainos grew their own food, wove cloth, and lived in peaceful villages. Their kind and gentle nature at the beginning of the encounter was demonstrated, as highlighted in the previous section. Unfortunately, the illustrations provided in the book were the common archived drawings and paintings that many other Columbus books include. The reader is not able to glean any additional information from these illustrations to complement Landau's text and the attention the author gave to the Taino in this story.

Question #3: To what extent does the book depart from the historical record and what impact does that departure have on the reading and learning experience? With its title of *Columbus Day: Celebrating a Famous Explorer*, one would expect the author to focus on the historical background of the holiday and how it was created and is celebrated throughout the country and beyond. The author did indeed achieve this focus and, in the process, it appears that she did not depart from the historical record, other than omitting the subsequent voyages that Columbus made over his lifetime. It is commendable that she included the details regarding the Tainos and their experiences within this context.

Question #4: To what extent does the book provide insight into Taino interactions or relationships with Columbus and the Spanish Settlers and what impact does that have on the reading and learning experience? The interactions among the Tainos and Columbus and his men were present in the book but brief. In a mild sense, it could be said that the Tainos were portrayed in a “helpless victim” manner, as Landau explained the hardships they endured from the Spanish settlers but never provided information on how they fought back or rejected the unfair treatment. Landau attempted to provide a more balanced retelling of this story by offering an insight into these relationships and interactions, which gives the reader a much more rich and fulfilling reading and learning experience.

Quality rating. This book was rated as an average of *excellent*, as measured against the criteria of the rubric. The historical milestone section met several of the milestones within the first voyage, which can be labeled as *excellent*. The cultural transmission section was *good*, as Landau provided some insight into Taino culture by mentioning that the Tainos grew their own food, wove cloth, and lived in peaceful villages—although she never mentioned the Taino by their correct name, nor did she provide any physical descriptions, agricultural details, religious information or complemented any illustrations. The fictionalized treatment section was graded as *excellent* as the book contained little departure from the historical record. The Taino interaction section was labeled as *poor* because although instances of involvement between Columbus and the Taino were depicted, not enough information was offered to demonstrate how the Taino rejected the Spanish mistreatment or to show how they fervently fought against Columbus and his men. Overall, the book had commendable qualities as Landau provided somewhat of a voice for the Tainos in this story, a voice that many other books do not offer.

Because the intent of this book was to share how Columbus Day was created and celebrated, it contained a more balanced depiction of the Taino people and should be shared as such.

Good Rating

Under the “good” rating the book identifies the Taino people by name or from Arawak decent. At least one Taino belief or ideal is revealed in the story. Taino agriculture, religious beliefs or artisanship is mentioned in some manner. Physical attributes are offered but not in detail. The illustrations portraying these criteria are mostly accurate and realistic. The author and illustrator try to offer both the Native and European perspective in the story and the book somewhat departs from historical record, but is done so in a manner that does not jeopardize the identity of the Taino people. The story generally does not detract or mislead from the historical record and the detraction from the historical record does not impact the potential learning or reading experience of the reader. The author and illustrator generally portray the Taino as self-sufficient with some omissions while also demonstrating at least one example of the Taino rejecting the Spanish maltreatment. The Tainos are generally identified as having conflict with Columbus and his men and are not portrayed as weak and willing to accept the imposed European way of life. In addition, the book includes three or more of these criteria: The book provides the appropriate criteria for the specific genre in which the book was written. The book indicated a Native American or Native American expert was consulted for this publication. The author included source notes for the historical event. This story received an award of excellence of some type. The illustrator provided source notes. If only photographs were provided, there was a combination of photos that reflected both the European and Native American influence. The following books rated “good” under the evaluation criteria (see Table 5-2):

Kneib, M. (2003). *Christopher Columbus: Master Italian navigator in the court of Spain*. New York, NY: The Rosen Publishing Group.

This 2003 authentic biography, geared toward children aged 4-8, told the story of Columbus and described his lifelong interest in the seas and his voyages to the West. It was written by a non-Native author, Martha Kneib, who is a previously published author of books for children and young adults. Kneib uses her own name to write nonfiction and the name of *Marella Sands* to write fantasy/science fiction. The work of Kneib (who has a master's degree in anthropology) focuses on cultures of the world and historical atlases within the United States. Within this present book, she provides bibliographic references, an index, and photo credits about the author, as well as "for further reading," "for more information," glossary, and chronology sections. Using only archived photographs and paintings, the book did not have an illustrator. This book has not received any literary awards.

Question #1: Does the book provide a comprehensive record of the Christopher Columbus story to include the encounter with the Taino? The book provided a comprehensive record of the Columbus story in that it documented five of the eight historical milestones. The events therein were generally discussed fairly and with caution. However, there were several instances in which the author could have clarified Columbus' mistreatment or explained the reasoning behind the reactions given. Another downside to this book was the omission of slavery and any discussion of how the Tainos were subjected to such atrocities. The author had a tendency to present serious situations using light language that dances around a difficult topic rather than calls it out, but she also made clear attempts to offer some Taino perspective. For instance, "To keep from working, some of the Spanish were kidnapping natives as slaves, so the once friendly Tainos were learning to distrust the settlers" (p. 77). To the book's credit, Columbus' first voyage was covered a bit more in depth than most, but the lack of

accuracy still presented problems. For example, the author presented Columbus' quest for gold and how he forced the Tainos to lead him to it. However, in the book it was presented as, "Columbus, in his eagerness to convert these strange people to Christianity, decided to take six of the natives with him so that he could teach them to speak Spanish and be good Catholics" (p. 56) and then later mentioned, "Columbus reboarded with his crew and a few natives, and kept his fleet moving" (p. 58). The Taino were forced to accompany Columbus so they could help navigate to other islands to find gold. The words are a bit soft and could have approached this with much more sensitivity as Columbus just did not decide "to take" the Tainos. Kneib mentioned that when Columbus traveled back to Spain he brought back "as proof of his discovery: parrots, spices, plants, gold trinkets, and several natives. The naked Indians, their bodies painted in many colors, impressed everyone" (p. 65). Once again, the Tainos are grouped like objects with no explanation and no mention of Columbus' intent to send the Tainos into a life of slavery.

The portion of the book on Columbus' second voyage was informative and provided the reader with rich insight into a more realistic retelling of history. For example, when the author described the incidents at La Navidad, she approached the topic by using words such as "speculated," "most likely," and "probably," which had the effect of acknowledging that the veracity of this particular recounting of the events—a recounting that conformed to the historical record to the best of its ability—was not 100% certain. Another commendable aspect of this section regards the author's frequent presentation of the Taino perspective, as exemplified in the following text: "Some natives might be friendly, but not all of them were eager to befriend foreigners" (p. 72). This statement acknowledged that the Tainos had apprehension regarding the Spaniards and did not enter into the events lightly as oftentimes is portrayed. More insight into

the Taino perspective was offered on page 77, which stated, “the once friendly Tainos were learning to distrust the settlers” given that “To keep from working, some of the Spanish were kidnapping natives as slaves.” This quote worked well to provide a realistic depiction of the Tainos, who were not easily manipulated as some other books convey.

The third voyage in this book did not address the Tainos in any way. It focused on Columbus and his growing dissension regarding his lack of ability to lead on land. Similarly, the depiction of the fourth and final Columbus voyage largely dealt with Columbus’ limited authority and his stay in Jamaica. The book did reference the Taino as becoming less and less willing to assist him, by noting, “The natives, once friendly, became unwilling to deal with Columbus and his men” (p. 87). Here, the author missed an opportunity to clarify why the Tainos felt this way or to give insight into the hardships the Tainos endured at the hands of the Spanish, which would have caused this feeling of “unfriendliness.” Although the encomiando was not mentioned by name, the book referenced it with,

The remaining natives were forced to pay the Spanish tribute (tax) in gold. However, thousands of natives did not have the gold to pay their tribute, and instead abandoned their homes and fled before Spanish dogs and horses. Many killed themselves, while others were taken to Spain. (p. 78)

The story ended with the fourth voyage when the author proceeded to explain Columbus’s trick using the prediction of the lunar eclipse to scare the Taino into continuing to find and serve food and search for gold for he and his crew.

Question #2: Does the book provide sufficient insight into the lifestyle-cultural and sociological heritage of the indigenous Taino people? In the 112 pages of this book, Kneib provided some rich insight into the culture of the Taino people. The book could have included more information on the Taino way of life and religious beliefs, but overall it addressed enough information to give readers a rich learning experience. Unlike many of the other children’s

books on Columbus, this book introduced the Tainos by their real name and used it throughout the book. There were two examples of Taino physical attributes, in which the text described the Tainos as naked and having painted bodies. In addition, the author provided insight into the craftsmanship of the Tainos, describing the sticks with sharp fish teeth and small plugs of gold jewelry the Tainos made. Several items of Taino agriculture were also presented, such as maize, tobacco, tomatoes, sweet potatoes, and tropical fruits. The fact that the Taino cultivated cotton was mentioned as well. A problematic area of the author's presentation of the agricultural heritage of the Taino can be seen in the caption of the archived photograph of tomatoes included in this section, which read, "Tomatoes were among the exotic plants that Columbus brought with him from the New World, but the natives he returned with impressed the Spanish the most" (p. 58). Once again, the Tainos were rendered as objects, and the author failed to depict them as humans who were kidnapped and forced into slavery.

Question #3: To what extent does the book depart from the historical record and what impact does that departure have on the reading and learning experience? The main area in which this book departed from the historical record was in its omission of the Tainos' enslavement. It did mention that Columbus "took" some natives but never referred to it as enslavement and did not give any detail as to why and what the Taino people were doing in Spain. Other than that, for the most part, the book displayed rich information—some balanced, some biased—but it generally approached the topic with an accurate depiction through its more comprehensive coverage and inclusion of events that occurred during the four voyages. This could provide the reader with a more well-rounded insight into history and a better understanding of the clash of the two cultures involved in the story.

Question #4: To what extent does the book provide insight into Taino interactions or relationships with Columbus and the Spanish Settlers and what impact does that have on the reading and learning experience? The author offered some examples of interaction between the Taino people and Columbus and his men. These interactions were treated somewhat lightly and could have been supported with a few more details or examples of the Tainos' reactions to Columbus' mistreatment, but, in general, the reader should be able to walk away with a sense that the Taino were kind and generous people. It would have been more favorable to see the Tainos with additional complexity. The author did provide statements such as, "The Tainos...who had been friendly," which offered insight into ideals and social characteristics of the Men of Good. She then later wrote, "The natives, once friendly, became unwilling to deal with Columbus and his men" (p. 87) but did not provide a clear explanation as to what caused this change of behavior. There were instances when the author noted that the Tainos were displeased with the behavior of Columbus' men. During the instance of the lunar eclipse, it was clear that the Tainos revolted by refusing to assist Columbus and his men during the final voyage until Columbus' manipulation successfully tricked them into providing food and labor until Columbus' rescue. This depiction did not oversimplify the event as it demonstrated the Taino's rejection to Columbus's ill-intended tricks.

Quality rating. The book, which did not receive any literary distinctions, received an overall rating of *good*. Kneib offered fairly accurate information through the book's depiction of the five historical milestone examples, spanning Columbus' four voyages. The cultural transmissions provided the reader with some insight into the Tainos' agricultural system, their physical attributes were briefly mentioned, and the author attempted to offer more than a European perspective. Unfortunately, no information on any Taino cultural traditions, practices,

or ideals were revealed here. The score would have been higher if the author had depicted the Tainos' enslavement by the Spanish and how the Tainos suffered immensely and experienced a large decline in population at the hands of the Spanish. Another area where the book could have been more comprehensive regarded the interactions and relationships between the Taino and the Spanish. These interactions were presented mainly using more general terms such as “friendly” and “unfriendly,” rather than providing examples of the Taino rejecting European mistreatment or depicting the Taino as more self-sufficient, not just “learning to distrust the settlers” (p. 77).

Ganeri, A. (2001). *The story of Columbus*. New York, NY: DK Publishing, Inc.

This 2001 picture book, meant for ages 4-8, provided readers with a brief look at Columbus' four journeys west, from a European perspective. The book was written by Anita Ganeri, who was born in Calcutta, India, but then immigrated to Europe with her family. She has written over 100 books on various topics, with her most notable work being *Horrible Geography*, which is designed to get children interested in the subject of geography by concentrating on the trivial, unusual, gory, or unpleasant. This is the only Columbus book she has written. The illustrations in the book consisted of a mix of the illustrator's paintings and archived photos. They were presented in a way that may confuse a reader because some of the archived photos were quite dated, while there were also more contemporary pictures embedded as well. Although the author offered an index and “exploration facts,” there were no notes as to where she obtained her information. She did acknowledge drawing on a reading consultant (Dr. Linda Gambrell) but did not mention seeking consultation regarding the topic of Columbus, Native Americans, or anthropology. This book has not received any literary distinctions.

Question #1: Does the book provide a comprehensive record of the Christopher Columbus story to include the encounter with the Taino? In this 32-page journey of

Columbus' life, from birth to death, the author provided enough information, even if simplistic, to give a young reader some insight into what role the Tainos played in Columbus' exploration of the Americas. During each voyage, the author mentioned the Taino people (using the terms "local people," "island people," "Indians," and even "Taino"). For example, on page 21, the author mentioned the people Columbus encountered on his first voyage, along with a drawing of three generic Native men sitting next to the water. The text stated, "Island People: Columbus called the island people 'Indians' because he believed he had arrived in the Indies." Although the mentions of the Taino tended to be quite brief, the author did incorporate an indigenous flavor to the story by continually acknowledging the Taino people.

As the book progressed, the author also acknowledged the mistreatment of the Taino people. For example, the author explained what Columbus found when he returned to La Navidad (although this correct terminology was not used), noting, "Columbus sailed to Hispaniola. But the sailors who had stayed behind on the island were dead. They had been cruel to the Tainos, and the Tainos had fought back" (p. 24). Ganeri accurately addressed this issue in terms that would be easy for a child to understand the Tainos' justification for fighting back. Also contributing to the book's comprehensive nature, for Columbus' third voyage, the author briefly mentioned the sign of increased dissension growing among the Tainos and the other settlers: "During his third trip, Columbus treated the local people like slaves and argued with his own people" (p. 26). This quite simplified version did not offer a rich depiction of the story. Although the book was comprehensive in many regards, it failed to inform readers of the important issue of the enslavement of the Taino people or their coercion to collect gold for the Spanish. The book described Columbus' quest to "win more riches for Spain" (p. 24) but did not acknowledge how the Taino were forced to participate in this process. Thus, the book was weak

in terms of portraying the Spaniards' abuse of the Tainos and depicting Columbus' greedy nature, while it nonetheless offered insight into the Tainos' role in Columbus' exploration and potentially encouraged the reader to ask more questions.

Question #2: Does the book provide sufficient insight into the lifestyle-cultural and sociological heritage of the indigenous Taino people? Surprisingly, in its limited number of pages and text, the book did offer a brief insight into the Taino culture. First, the book referenced the Taino people by the correct term throughout the book. The book also reflected the Taino as friendly and kind upon their first encounter with Columbus. There were only two references to Taino physical characteristics, which was located in one illustration with two Taino men shown helping two settlers when the *Santa Maria* sank near La Navidad. Although the book incorrectly referred to this place as Hispaniola, it accurately depicted the Taino men with little clothing, brown skin, and long hair (but, erroneously, without bangs). In the back of the book, the author provided one instance of Taino artisanship in the "exploration facts" section, noting, "The Taino people carved long canoes which they used for traveling among the Caribbean islands, and for fishing. Some canoes could carry 100 people" (p. 32). The illustration provided with this text, however, was not as accurate. The small picture reflected three Taino men standing up in a canoe, who look more like Sumo wrestlers from Japan with their cloths wrapped around their genitals and their hair tied up in a knot on the top of their head. The book referenced this illustration as an archived photo from a place called The Art Archive, revealing that the illustration may not represent a true Taino depiction and may thus mislead the reader regarding the Tainos' actual appearance.

Question #3: To what extent does the book depart from the historical record and what impact does that departure have on the reading and learning experience? There were

a couple of instances in which the author departed from the historical record. One instance involved her reference to Hispaniola. That is, the author described the place where the *Santa Maria* crashed as being Hispaniola when in fact; it was outside La Navidad, what historians consider to be the first European settlement in the West. It was later named Hispaniola but that detail had not yet been presented to the reader. One other instance of inaccuracy involved a reference that the book made when Columbus first landed. In particular, the book stated, “He thought they had reached a new part of the Indies. But this was not true. The island was in the Caribbean Sea, near America. Columbus never admitted his mistake” (p. 21). In reality, even up until his death, it is believed that Columbus did not find a new route to the Indies. There is no reason to believe that the author intended to mislead the reader with these two inaccuracies, but nevertheless, these errors could impact the learning experience of the reader and should be corrected.

Question #4: To what extent does the book provide insight into Taino interactions or relationships with Columbus and the Spanish Settlers and what impact does that have on the reading and learning experience?

Within the 32 pages of this book, there were several interactions demonstrated between the Tainos and Columbus and his men. On page 22, the author described how the Taino people were “kind and helped the [Columbus’] crew,” thus acknowledging the Tainos’ role in aiding the Spanish. The accompanying illustration showed two Taino men assisting two of Columbus’s men with no exaggerations. As stated previously, the book also briefly referred to the more negative interactions between Columbus and the Taino, by describing the way in which the Taino fought back against the cruel treatment demonstrated by the Spanish settlers, noting, “They [the sailors] had been cruel to the Tainos, and the Tainos fought back” (p. 24). In

addition, the author alluded to the Tainos' mistreatment by Columbus on page 26 when she stated, "During his third trip, Columbus treated the local people like slaves and argued with his own people." During the fourth voyage the author stated, "They [Columbus and his crew] traded with the local people, who gave them food to survive" (p. 28). So although the statements were brief, the text acknowledged the conflict-ridden interactions between the Tainos and Columbus and showed how the Taino were not passive but instead stood up to Columbus and his men by rejecting their malicious treatment. If Ganeri had elaborated on these interactions and relationships, the book would be even stronger. This book has the potential to provide a reader with an average reading and learning experience through its consistent mention of Taino interactions and participation in history.

Quality rating. The quality rating for this book, which did not receive any literary distinctions, was *good*. Regarding the historical milestone criterion, the book only offered one instance of Taino involvement per voyage; however, regarding the cultural transmissions criterion, the book provided a few opportunities for readers to know the Taino people by name and to learn about their culture. The author generally included examples of the interactions and relationships between the Taino and Columbus and his men. As such, the book only addresses approximately half of the needed criteria to make it a *good* book on the rating scale.

Copeland, P. (2008). *The story of Christopher Columbus*. Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, Inc.

The Story of Christopher Columbus, a coloring book biographical journey of Columbus' first voyage to America in 1492, is a republication of Peter Copeland's *Columbus Discovers America Coloring Book*, originally published by Dover Publications in 1988. Copeland (1927-2007) became proficient as an artist while drawing military vehicles, aircraft, and ships during his stint in military service. He was best known for *Discovering America*, a series of children's

historical coloring books. This coloring book version of history, which was intended for readers aged 9-12 and received no literary distinctions, began with a well-written introduction.

Copeland offered an overview of Columbus' voyage, even mentioning pre-Columbian explorers such as Leif Eriksson and Marco Polo, and ended with, "It was Columbus, sailing much further south, who began the spectacular story of European discovery, exploitation and settlement in the Western Hemisphere" (inside cover).

Question #1: Does the book provide a comprehensive record of the Christopher Columbus story to include the encounter with the Taino? This book provided a comprehensive record of Columbus' first voyage only. Copeland addressed all three historical milestones that pertained to this voyage and included rich information in the captions of his illustrations. He attempted to offer a balanced perspective; for instance, he conveyed both Columbus' excitement at finding land and the Tainos' excitement over seeing strange ships from another place. Copeland accurately portrayed the events of the first voyage, including the forcible transport of some Tainos to Spain. He stated, "After exploring San Salvador, the Spaniards seized several of the islanders and took them along by force when they sailed away. The Spaniards demanded that the captives guide the ships to a nearby island where they had heard gold might be found" (p. 29).

He later provided another example of how Columbus had seized some Tainos and taken them back to Spain, stating, "At the end of April, Columbus was received with honor by the monarchs at the alcazar, where the court saw the assembled workers, including captive Indians, that the admiral had brought home to Spain from the New World" (p. 44). Copeland's attempt to craft a balanced account might not have been successful here: The illustration for this particular portion reflected the Tainos inaccurately as wearing feather-laden capes with leaves tied around

their knees and a colorful headpiece of some sort. They all looked alike, without any distinguishing features.

Although the book gave a comprehensive historical record of Columbus' first voyage, it failed to sufficiently discuss later voyages. The book explained the wreckage of the *Santa Maria* at the end of the first voyage but did not address what happened when Columbus returned to La Navidad. The second, third, and fourth voyages were all mentioned within one sentence at the end of the book: "He [Columbus] was to make three more trips to the New World before his death in 1506" (p. 45). Therefore, no further historical milestones were mentioned in this story.

Question #2: Does the book provide sufficient insight into the lifestyle-cultural and sociological heritage of the indigenous Taino people? Copeland's book provided readers with many examples of cultural transmissions. Although Copeland did not call the Tainos by name, he did refer to them correctly as being from the Arawak nation (p. 27). He also provided a faithful cultural portrait: For example, in the book, Columbus described the Tainos as being "gentle, friendly, and trusting people" (p. 27). This accurately reflects how primary resources also described the Taino people during their first encounter with Columbus and his crew. Copeland also offered information about Taino agriculture. On page 28, he stated, "The Spanish sailors were to learn many things from the Indians. They were amazed to discover the Indians smoking cigars made of rolled tobacco leaves. They inserted them into their noses, lighted them and inhaled the smoke." The illustration depicted the Tainos smoking the tobacco, similar to a large cigar. The Taino men in this illustration were shown accurately as wearing little clothing and as having long hair with short bangs. On page 27, an illustration depicted Taino men, a woman, and children all shown with accurate clothing and hairstyles as well. This picture also

correctly portrayed typical Taino houses: circular buildings covered with woven straw and palm leaves, with poles providing the primary support.

Question #3: To what extent does the book depart from the historical record and what impact does that departure have on the reading and learning experience? There were moments in the story when the author departed from the historical record by omitting certain pieces of information. For example, Copeland did not offer any information on the subsequent voyages that Columbus made, and, as a result, the reader does not learn the full extent of Columbus' exploitation of the Taino people, only the abuses related to the first voyage. Other information relative to his subsequent voyages includes additional interactions and relationships between the two cultural groups which are inevitably left out. Consequently, the reader does not experience the full picture of the role the Taino played in Columbus's encounter with the West, nor does it offer a true depiction of the extent of mistreatment the Tainos faced during this time. This omission can steer a reader to a potentially biased understanding of this history.

Question #4: To what extent does the book provide insight into Taino interactions or relationships with Columbus and the Spanish Settlers and what impact does that have on the reading and learning experience? Overall, Copeland provided a balanced depiction of the Tainos' interactions with Columbus Within the first voyage only. He described several civil interactions between the Tainos and Columbus, such as when the *Santa Maria* wrecked on what was to be named La Navidad and the Taino people helped Columbus salvage whatever could be brought ashore. The author did not discuss only positive interactions between the Tainos and Columbus, however; he also provided more negative examples, such as the illustration on page 29, which showed the Tainos in conflict with the Spaniards such as the Spaniards forcing the Taino on board the ship but they were resisting. In this illustration, the Spaniards have captured

Taino men and demanded that the Tainos guide the Spanish ships in search of gold. As previously stated, an abbreviated look into history does not provide a clear opportunity for the reader to truly understand the extent to which these voyages impacted the people Columbus encountered.

Quality rating. The quality rating of this book is *good*, on the basis of four out of the five listed criteria from the rubric. Although only Columbus' first voyage was mentioned in this book, Copeland provided three events within this milestone. He did not mention the Tainos by name, but he did refer to them as being of the Arawak nation. Because of omitted information, the book departed in some places from the historical record. However, the author generally portrayed the Tainos as self-sufficient, and he described at least one instance when they resisted mistreatment by Columbus or his men. The book included no notes indicating where the author obtained his information and received no literary distinctions.

West, D., & Gaff, J. (2005). *Christopher Columbus: The life of a master navigator and explorer*. New York: Rosen Publishing Group.

Christopher Columbus: The Life of a Master Navigator and Explorer is an innovative graphic depiction of the historical events surrounding the story of Columbus and his four voyages to the Americas, intended for readers aged 9-12. Within this book, which received no literary distinctions, West and Gaff provided the readers with a table of contents, a "who's who" of characters found in the story, a map highlighting the routes taken for the four voyages, an appendix of information about other explorers and sailors, a glossary, a "For Further Reading" section, an index, and listed Web sites. Using a cartoon format, with computer-aided illustrations by Ross Watton, the authors attempted to provide readers with an in-depth look at the exploratory voyages that took place from 1492 through 1504.

Question #1: Does the book provide a comprehensive record of the Christopher Columbus story to include the encounter with the Taino? This book provided a comprehensive record of Columbus' four voyages and included the Taino voice within them all. However, the voice was weak, and the approach was not balanced. The book often described the Taino attacks without giving a reason for them. Without providing a reason it perpetuates the "savage" stereotype of the Taino people. It showed a dominant European interest in the way it addressed the forced labor, kidnapping, and enslavement of the Tainos by Columbus and his men.

In their depiction of the first voyage, West and Gaff demonstrated Columbus' insatiable thirst for gold by their reference to his interest in the gold pieces local people wore in their nose, and how the Spanish used sign language with these Natives to learn more about the islands to the west. One caption read, "I gave the order to set sail again. We captured a few Tainos to guide us and to train as interpreters" (p. 21). Although the book continued to trace Columbus' steps toward gold, its description of the Tainos' involvement was not accurate. West and Gaff showed the Tainos as willing participants and did not demonstrate the forced nature of their "mandated volunteering."

Also in the discussion of the first voyage, the book mentioned in two places that Columbus captured some Taino people to take back to Spain: "We took some of the natives we had captured with us" (p. 24), and then, toward the end of the chapter, when Columbus presented himself to the king and queen of Spain on his return, "I showed them the gold and other treasures I had found and the natives I had captured" (p. 27). In this illustration, one of the Taino men was shown bowing down to the royal members, whereas another was holding his hands together in a praying position. As the Tainos were taken to Spain by force, it seems doubtful that they would

have been willing to extend prayerful hands and pay respect to the king and queen; therefore, this constitutes a rather large presumption by the illustrator. Given these simplistic interpretations of a rather negative experience, the authors did not provide enough emotional realism or truth in this telling.

In discussing the second voyage, the authors mentioned the upheaval at the fort La Navidad: “We reached our fort, La Navidad, at the end of November. They’re all dead! He says some Tainos did it. They were led by a Chieftain called Caonabo” (p. 28). The book stated that Columbus built another settlement nearby (Isabela) but that, over time, the men began to complain to Columbus about the Tainos starting to fight back: “I ordered my men to hunt down the Tainos. Around 1500 Tainos were captured and taken back to Spain for sale as slaves” (p. 29). These events were historically correct.

The account of the third voyage told the story of Columbus’ third attempt to improve the Hispaniola settlement. The text related the troubles Columbus faced, but the only reference to the Tainos during this voyage was made on page 31: “I managed to restore peace for a while. I promised each rebel a plot of land and Tainos slaves to work it.” The accompanying illustration showed four Taino men planting crops, with a Spanish settler standing by them holding a whip.

In discussing the fourth voyage, the authors described Columbus’ encounter with a different tribe of Native islanders in Central America, the Caribs. In the illustrations, these Natives looked very similar to the Taino people; the book seemed to lump all Native peoples together rather than conveying the many differences among them. The book mentioned an unfriendly encounter with more than “100 natives carrying spears” (p. 36); however, it is not known exactly who these islanders were. Also in the discussion of the fourth voyage, the book related that Columbus built another settlement named Santa Maria de Belen. In this section, the

Native people were not called by their tribal name, but the authors take a Eurocentric view by seeing the Natives as warlike rather than as defending their land and homes.

Later in the book, Columbus said, “The Indians are attacking!! Set the dogs on them. The battle lasted 3 hours but my settlers won in the end” (p. 39). The illustrations showed the settlers stabbing a Native man in the side and a dog attacking another male islander. The authors correctly identified the increased dissent among the Taino people and the settlers: “They [rebel settlers] took ten canoes and tried to row to Hispaniola. When they failed, they took out their anger on the natives” (p. 41). The book then described the lunar eclipse trick that Columbus played on the Taino people to make them afraid and obedient, so they would keep providing food and labor to the settlers. The story ended with Columbus’ last voyage home and his death in 1506.

Question #2: Does the book provide sufficient insight into the lifestyle-cultural and sociological heritage of the indigenous Taino people? Any cartoon representation of a historical event carries the risk of seeming like a fictionalized, one-dimensional account. The authors were able to demonstrate to the reader that the Tainos did have a distinct lifestyle and culture such as seeing the hammocks, the dugout canoes, and the gold ornaments that some wore, but it was difficult to determine a quality representation of who the Tainos were as people through the illustrations as the illustrator did not give individual Tainos any unique physical attributes, as he did for the Spanish settlers. The Tainos always looked alike. The Taino name was used throughout the book, but the authors made one important error. They stated that when the Spanish landed, they were the ones to name the Taino people: “We named the natives the Tainos. To show our friendship, we gave them beads and other trinkets” (p. 21). This is not

accurate. Columbus did not name the Taino people, other than to give all Natives the title “Indians.”

The book did, however, correctly describe the friendly nature of the Taino and made mention of Taino government: “I met a Taino king called Guacanagari and invited him on board” (p. 23). The authors referenced the hammocks that the Taino introduced and offered several examples of how gold was part of their culture; the gold ornaments the Tainos wore were addressed both in the text and in the illustrations. One of the pictures showed pineapples among the goods Columbus brought back to Spain. From this, one could correctly infer that pineapples were part of the Taino diet. As far as physical characteristics, the illustrations showed the Tainos accurately, with little clothing and olive-brown skin; however, no other physical attributes were reported.

Question #3: To what extent does the book depart from the historical record and what impact does that departure have on the reading and learning experience? The book made some departures from the historical record in terms of incorrect information and some omissions. However, the degree of departure was minimal enough not to affect the reading and learning experience. This does not mean that the book completely and correctly portrayed the Tainos’ role in Columbus’ voyages, but the extent of the departure does not hinder the reader’s experience as with some of the other books discussed. For example, the authors could have included information about the horrific conditions the Taino people endured on the way to Spain or the forced labor of the encomiando system implemented by Columbus. This would have enriched the story and provided more accuracy to the treatment of these voyages.

Question #4: To what extent does the book provide insight into Taino interactions or relationships with Columbus and the Spanish Settlers and what impact does that have on

the reading and learning experience? This story described significantly more interactions and relationships between the Taino people and the Spanish settlers than many of the other books discussed in this paper. As a result, the reader is offered a fairly rich learning experience and can gain a reasonable degree of insight into who the Taino people were and the roles they played in the four voyages. In this book, the Tainos were sometimes represented as independent and other times appeared as helpless victims in fear of Columbus. Although the emotional reactions were purely fictional, they would have been better received if the authors had portrayed Columbus' men as fearful of the Tainos in certain instances as well. During the second, third, and fourth voyages, the Tainos were shown rejecting or refusing European influence, fighting back against the settlers several times throughout the story. Conflicts between the Spanish and the Tainos were a part of the plot in all four voyages. This is considered positive; the book portrayed the Tainos accurately as complex and spirited, rather than as meek and compliant with the Spanish settlers.

Quality rating. The quality of this book, which received no literary distinctions, is rated as *good* on the basis of the criteria within the rubric. The four voyages were covered thoroughly and in detail. The book also offered specific insight into the Taino culture and way of life by the inclusion of references to their correct tribal affiliation, artisanship, government, and, to some degree, physical appearance. Watton's computer-aided illustrations provided verve and color, but the over simplistic nature of the pictures did not allow for the emotional richness that is possible in the comic-book format. This left the reader with some stereotyped, misrepresented, and omitted information on the Taino people and failed to convey the degree of destruction they suffered as a result of these voyages. The book did not depart from the historical record in a manner that would greatly affect the story, and, given the authors' comprehensive source notes,

the book scored higher than many. In short, the book scored *poor* with respect to literary distinctions but *good* in terms of historical milestones, cultural transmissions, fictionalized treatment, and Taino interactions and relationships. This leaves the book with an overall rating of *good*.

Ventura, P. (1991). *In 1492: The year of the New World*. New York, NY: G.P. Putnam's Sons.

This 1991 book was told through the stories of various children on a journey through Europe and the Americas, offering descriptions of both worlds at the time of Columbus' initial voyage. Each section introduced a character in a different city or tribe and described his (or, occasionally, her) daily life and concerns. Two small maps appeared in each section, one showing the area as it was 500 years ago and the other as it is today. Piero Ventura is an Italian writer and illustrator of several children's books and served as this book's author/illustrator as well. This particular book was translated into English by Arnoldo Mondadori and was written in consultation with Giovanna Spadini, another Italian children's author. Ventura never explained where he obtained his information nor did he note what his reasons were for consulting others for this production; however, in the book he included a myriad of information such as a table of contents, an index, a brief epilogue explaining what life is now like 500 years after Columbus, several timelines (including important dates in European history and important dates in Italian Renaissance Art), and important voyages of discovery after 1492. The book was a nominee for the Children's Crown Award, 1992-1993, and it made the list for *Adventuring with Books* (1993, 10th ed.).

Question #1: Does the book provide a comprehensive record of the Christopher Columbus story to include the encounter with the Taino? Due to the unique organization of this book, there were three separate places in which the Taino encounter was documented. In the

book's first section, entitled "The Ships and the Voyages," the text acknowledged Columbus' initial contact with the Taino people during his first voyage, noting, "Columbus gives the name San Salvador to the little island inhabited by peaceful, naked people" (p. 51). Interestingly, although the author knew the name of the Taino people (as shown in the description that followed this section), he chose to write "peaceful, naked people" instead of the Taino name. This represented a lost opportunity to humanize the Taino and move beyond stereotypes. The text also mentioned that the "natives" pointed Columbus further south to look for gold, but it neglected any mention of how Columbus forced the Tainos to participate in his mission. The events surrounding the building of the La Navidad settlement is also mentioned as the author has included the statement, "with the help of the natives from the nearby shore the crew manages to salvage some supplies" (p. 51). Upon Columbus' return to Spain, the text stated, "they [Spanish Royalty] cannot hide their excitement when Columbus shows them the natives he has brought back with him—living proof of his accomplishment, as well as souls to be saved by the Christian faith" (p. 52). The text did not mention how the Tainos were forced to Spain nor did it describe the hardships they endured during the voyage back, nor did it mention how they were to be sold into slavery upon arrival. Overall, the text referred to three of the historical milestones listed within the first voyage, but it did so in a manner that was Eurocentric and oversimplified without including the harsh details of what really occurred. The book neglected to provide any information on the subsequent voyages and the milestones met during that time period.

Within the second section of the book, entitled "The New World," the author explained how Columbus did not know he did not reach the Indies. He proceeded to reference the Tainos as meek and inexperienced, stating,

He [Columbus] is convinced he is in the Indies, and thus calls the natives indios ("Indians" in Spanish), and he finds them so meek that he tells the Spanish monarchs

“These people are quite inexperienced in handling weapons, and it would only take fifty men to subjugate them all and do whatever one wanted with them. (p. 53)

The book offered no further comments to temper or question this Eurocentric viewpoint from the text. The last section of the book, entitled “The Tainos,” offered a fictionalized portrayal of what might have happened from the eyes of a young Taino girl as Columbus arrived on the island where she lived. However, there were no more references to the historical milestones within this section.

Question #2: Does the book provide sufficient insight into the lifestyle-cultural and sociological heritage of the indigenous Taino people? Within the third section of the book, the author provided one of the most comprehensive views of the Taino people found in the analyzed books. The Tainos were referred to by name and were described in many different contexts. The Taino were referred to as peace-loving people. Their agricultural practices were described, and the book included a description of how the Taino burned their land and harvested corn, beans, and pumpkins across the forest landscape. The text explained how the Tainos lived in a multifaceted environment while also managing to feed many people. It described the huts they lived in, the hammocks they built, and the canoes they made. Sculpting, pottery, woodwork, and weaving plant fibers were listed as part of the artisanship of the Tainos. In addition, the system of government was referenced when the role of the cacique, or tribal chief, was described. Owing to these many descriptions—from Taino agriculture to government—the book sufficiently addressed the lifestyle-cultural and sociological heritage of the Tainos.

Question #3: To what extent does the book depart from the historical record and what impact does that departure have on the reading and learning experience? There were several issues that impacted the manner in which the author provided information on the Taino. To begin, the section on Columbus’ voyage did not provide the reader with an unbiased view of

the event. Ventura did not acknowledge the harsh realities of the indigenous population and the horrid treatment they endured at the hands of Columbus and his men. Furthermore, in this section, the author referred to the Tainos as meek and inexperienced; yet, in the section dedicated to the Taino people, he did not provide an alternative viewpoint or counter this accusation. Because this book represented a fictionalized version of the Columbus story, there were loosely stated events and interactions. Although Ventura attempted to provide the reader with a child's-eye view of the landing of Columbus, this attempt was done in a way that omitted important information, which could lead to a shallow or misguided learning experience. For instance, Ventura mentioned the massacre at La Navidad when the settlers fought back against the settlers, but did not state what happened while Columbus was gone and did not describe the mistreatment the Taino people endured until Columbus' return. Nor did Ventura offer information on the subsequent voyages in which the relationship between the Taino people and the Spanish settlers became rampant with dysfunction and demise, except for a short paragraph at the end.

Question #4: To what extent does the book provide insight into Taino interactions or relationships with Columbus and the Spanish Settlers and what impact does that have on the reading and learning experience? The interactions between Columbus and the Taino people were of little mention in this book. Within the first 2 sections, Ventura never mentioned the Taino by name. When he did write of them, Ventura described them as meek and inexperienced, yet never demonstrated these behaviors with examples of interactions in the text. The "Taino" section did provide insight into whom the Tainos were but still did not offer a complete or comprehensive look at the relationships between the Tainos and Columbus and his men. As a result, the reader is exposed to a disjointed and inaccurate storyline.

Quality rating. This book was rated as *good with discussion*, based on the average responses to the rubric. The historical milestones were rated *good* due to the three references within the first voyage. However, the book did not go into detail about any subsequent voyages until the end of the book, where the text became disjointed and brief. This book scored *excellent* in the cultural transmission section due to the numerous amounts of cultural information the author provided to the reader. The criteria of fictionalized treatment and Taino interactions were both rated *poor* as the author did not provide solid examples of interactions among the two groups, nor did he offer a comprehensive or complete telling of the event, one that did not omit many important areas such as slavery, forced labor, and kidnapping of the Taino. A redeeming characteristic of the book in terms of staying true to the historical record was the brief epilogue, “Five Hundred Years Later,” in which Ventura described, via an elegy from a Native chief named “Eagle Wing,” the tragic fate of the Native peoples of North, Central, and South America—although, admittedly, brief and lacking in information on the Native chief, other than his name. Many pieces of information irrelevant to the Columbus story were provided in the book, such as a list of important dates in Italian Renaissance Art and important dates in European history, which tended to detract from the clarity of this story. Although Ventura had researched a great deal of information about the Taino he did not put all of this information to good use, as seen by the lack of information on the Taino in the description of the initial encounter. This lack was such that the reader was left with a biased depiction of the Tainos as nothing more than meek and inexperienced. The book was interesting yet very fragmented, owing to the breadth of material covered.

Dyson, J. (1991). *Westward with Columbus*. New York, NY: Scholastic.

The book, *Westward With Columbus*, included very little information about the author, John Dyson. It is apparent, however, that Dyson at least considers accurate and comprehensive storytelling an important part of children's literature. This may be assumed by virtue of the fact that the book, written in 1991, was filled with important information on both Columbus and the Taino Indians Columbus met when he first arrived in America. The book was presented in a novel way that is likely to attract and maintain the attention of young readers. The story that Dyson told here wasn't strictly about Columbus and his four voyages but also represented a modern-day effort to replicate Columbus' discovery. Dyson, Spanish Historian Dr. Luis Coin, and a group of Spanish University students successfully retraced Columbus' initial voyage much in the same way Columbus did—in a wooden ship with only wind to carry them. This present-day story was included with the story of Columbus, and the combination rendered the telling much more contemporary and perhaps more relevant to readers.

Question #1: Does the book provide a comprehensive record of the Christopher Columbus story to include the encounter with the Taino? The book provided a comprehensive record but with limitations that are seen in other Christopher Columbus stories. Like many other children's books on Columbus, this book centered on Columbus' biography, his efforts to gain financial backing for his trip, and his first voyage. The author did not provide great detail regarding the following three voyages as they, presumably, represented a part of the story that the author did not wish to tell. Ordinarily, this might have detracted from the value of the book, but the author made up for the loss by providing an additional chapter after the initial story had ended in order to cover the essential information related to the other voyages. Commendably, when the author described Columbus' encounter with the Taino on his first voyage, he provided some detail of their reaction to Columbus, thus imbuing them with

humanity. In particular, the author described the Taino as being timid and fearful when Columbus and his men landed on the beach as the text explained how the Taino people approached cautiously and then become more comfortable with the explorer's presence when they were offered bright beads. Of particular note is the mention of Columbus "eyeing the small gold ornaments" that the Tainos wore. Columbus' pursuit of gold played a large role in the relationship between the Taino and the explorers, yet it is not often mentioned in children's books about Columbus. With this simple phrasing, Dyson's book not only acknowledged Columbus' pursuit of gold but gave insight into a possible darker side to this pursuit.

Question #2: Does the book provide sufficient insight into the lifestyle-cultural and sociological heritage of the indigenous Taino people? The author provided many examples of Taino lifestyle and culture in both the text of the book and in the included illustrations. For example, when Dyson wrote of the first meeting with the Taino, he described the golden ornaments that they used as decoration. He also wrote of the maize or corn that the Taino ate and gave an example of their tobacco use, including the unique practice of inhaling tobacco smoke through their noses. Other foods mentioned were plantains, bananas, and pineapples. For most of the book, the author identified the Taino simply as "natives." In the final chapter of the book, however, he correctly identified them as Taino Indians.

A description of hamacas (beds made of woven string) was also included, lending insight into part of the Taino culture. The author did not provide a description of the physical characteristics of the Taino other than to mention that they were adorned with gold. There were illustrations, however, that depicted the Taino as clad in only loin cloths with short hair in front and longish hair in back, which was consistent with the historical record. Still, there were other images that could possibly be misleading to young readers or, at least, require some additional

explanation that was not included in the text. The author portrayed the Taino as a helpful and gentle people. Notably, descriptions of the Taino throughout the first voyage were positive without being quaint or condescending. For example, the story of the Taino's effort in helping salvage the *Santa Maria* will likely lead the reader to view them as having some affinity or possibly a sense of responsibility for the welfare of the explorers. This was further demonstrated when the author wrote of how the boy Pedro was given a hammock. In the final chapter of the book, the author specifically described the Taino as a "gentle race."

Question #3: To what extent does the book depart from the historical record and what impact does that departure have on the reading and learning experience? Dyson's telling of the voyages of Columbus departed from the historical record by design (explanation to follow) yet managed not to detract from what is believed to be the truth of Columbus' exploits or interactions with the Taino people. This departure occurred in the form of the fictional character Pedro, a cabin boy who traveled with Columbus on the first voyage. The majority of the story was, in fact, told by Pedro, while the final chapter, which provided details on the remaining three voyages, was told by an unidentified narrator. This device of adding an additional character and telling the story from his point of view enhanced both the overall learning experience and reading enjoyment of the book. In particular, making that fictional character a young boy may serve to engage younger readers who will likely be able to identify with him. Once readers find themselves identifying with the character, they will be able to retain more of the historical parts of the story, such that this fictional device lends its value in learning.

Question #4: To what extent does the book provide insight into Taino interactions or relationships with Columbus and the Spanish Settlers and what impact does that have on the reading and learning experience? The author's telling of the first voyage was rich with

stories of the interactions between the Taino and Columbus and his men. The Taino were shown to be gentle and helpful. According to the text, they provided the explorers with sustenance and assisted with the salvaging of the *Santa Maria*. While the author did not paint the Taino as rejecting the European culture, he did include the massacre that took place at La Navidad. This event could be construed as a strong rejection of European culture but was more likely a depiction of the common sense reaction to maltreatment and torture. While the author did not explicitly portray the Taino as self-sufficient, he did point out that the Taino introduced the explorers to the food that they ate in the Americas, which would likely lead a reader to see them more as “host” than the more subservient role of servant that the explorers ultimately forced them into.

Quality rating. Through thoughtful analysis and adherence to the assessment criteria of the rubric, this book was classified as *good*. The author provided comprehensive historical milestones regarding Columbus and the Taino during the first and second voyages yet did fail to further describe the plight of the Taino during the third and last voyage. Some of the illustrated depictions of the Taino were accurate and consistent with the historical record. It is important to note, however, that the works of art representing certain events involving the Taino were decidedly inauthentic. Consistent with publishing practices, it seems likely that this art selection was not made by the author but rather the publisher, who may lack sensitivity to the need for appropriate illustrations.

The text, as a device for cultural transmission, bordered between *good* and *excellent*. The Taino people were described as gentle and helpful, which may be considered as two of their cultural “ideals”. In addition, the author discussed the Taino’s tobacco use, the gold ornaments they wore, and the *hamacas* [hammocks] they made for sleeping. The Taino diet was also

included to illustrate the novelty of the new food the Spanish explorers encountered, yet the author did not go into any detail regarding any other Taino practice regarding agriculture.

The book did depart from the historical record by using the fictional cabin boy, Pedro, to narrate, but this device was an intended departure and not one rooted in inaccuracy or embellishment simply to make the story more interesting. Pedro's observations allowed the author to describe the first voyage and explore the different aspects of the Taino lifestyle without resorting to a more academic delivery that might be of less interest to young readers. By creating a younger character, the author has increased the likelihood that his audience will identify with the cabin boy and enjoy the story. The author's depiction of the Taino did not portray them in the kind of subservient role that might be assumed to exist (erroneously) by the fact of their enslavement. In fact, given that the Taino were shown assisting with the wreck of the *Santa Maria* and providing sustenance to the Spanish explorers, readers may construe that Columbus and his men were more in need than the Taino people.

Liestman, V. (1991). *Columbus Day*. Minneapolis, MN: Carolrhoda Books.

Christopher Columbus (1991), written by Vicki Liestman and illustrated by Rick Hanson for readers aged 4 through 8, is a story that summarized Columbus' adventures and provided the reader with background information on how Columbus Day was started. There are no literary distinctions for this book; however, the author noted in the front that she consulted with Dr. Jean O'Brien from the University of Minnesota, who is a scholar in Native American History.

Question #1: Does the book provide a comprehensive record of the Christopher Columbus story to include the encounter with the Taino? Although discussion of the Taino was brief, Liestman presented the Taino people by their correct tribal name and accurately indicated the land where Columbus arrived as the island of *Guanahani*. The book indicated that

the Taino did not speak Spanish and that they were unaware that Columbus had taken their land away from them. Another milestone addressed in this book was Columbus' quest for gold. On page 28, the text stated, "When Columbus left the island, he made some of the Taino go with him. He wanted them to help him find gold." This was accurately depicted in the book. Also mentioned was the wreck of the *Santa Maria* on the newly formed La Navidad settlement. The book correctly identified the Taino as helping the Spaniards salvage the wreck. When Columbus returned back to Spain, Liestman added, "Columbus brought many things back to Spain to show Queen Isabella and King Ferdinand...And he brought them six young Indian men" (p. 34). Although this event was included, the book did not state why Columbus did this or the consequences of enslavement that the Taino faced as a result. The second voyage began with the return of Columbus to La Navidad. The text accurately indicated that the settlement had been burned to the ground. Columbus had inquired about what happened and was told by the Taino, "the Spaniards had done awful things to some of the other Indians on the island. So those Indians had killed the Spaniards. After that, things got worse and worse" (p. 37). The book also alluded to Columbus' lack of ability to find enough gold and how he instead forced many Taino people back to Spain as slaves:

He [Columbus] looked for something else to send. All around him were Indians. He decided to send Indians instead of gold. Columbus loaded five hundred people onto ships. He took them away from their homes. He took them away from their families. He sent them to Spain. (p. 38)

What was interesting about this book is that it went a step further, describing what happened to the Taino people who were left behind, noting,

The Indians who were left behind were not any luckier. The Spaniards made them slaves, too. Then the Spaniards killed many of the slaves. The Spaniards killed some of the slaves because they could not do the work. And they killed some of them for no reason at all. (p. 41)

This is a topic many authors avoid, and it is refreshing that Liestman provided a more accurate picture than most.

Question #2: Does the book provide sufficient insight into the lifestyle-cultural and sociological heritage of the indigenous Taino people? Liestman gave readers a brief insight into the lifestyle and culture of the Tainos. In the text, references were made as to the lack of clothing the Tainos wore, that some had painted their faces, and some had gold ornaments hanging from their noses. As stated earlier, the Taino were called by their correct tribal name as well. The illustrations were not as promising. The Tainos were depicted as looking identical to each other, while Columbus and his men were distinguished by various hairstyles, body type, facial hair, and clothing. The Tainos' hair was shown with bangs, which is correct, but it was cut in a short style, which does not match the descriptions from the primary sources. There were some women who were shown wearing toga-like dresses, which, again, is not accurate according to primary sources. The Taino women usually wore skirts, with the length being dependent upon their rank in their society. No mention of their diet, artisanship, religious practices, or beliefs and ideals were provided.

Question #3: To what extent does the book depart from the historical record and what impact does that departure have on the reading and learning experience? The book only addressed the first voyage without any mention of any subsequent voyages. This could leave the reader with incomplete information about the breadth and depth of Columbus' travel and the impact it had on the Taino people. Even so, the book offered a more comprehensive and balanced look at what transpired in 1492 than many other books that addressed the same topic.

Question #4: To what extent does the book provide insight into Taino interactions or relationships with Columbus and the Spanish Settlers and what impact does that have on

the reading and learning experience? The interactions between Columbus and the Taino were noticeable throughout the milestones that were included in the book. The book provided a more realistic picture of the conditions that the Taino people endured through the mistreatment of Columbus. An area where the author could have improved would be to not only explain the events or consequences to which Columbus subjected the Taino, but to also portray the Taino as more independent of Columbus, less submissive, and more passionate in refusing or rejecting the European influence that was forced into their lives.

Quality rating. Although this book received no literary distinctions, its quality rating was *good* based on the five criteria in the rubric. The book scored *excellent* in the number of milestones it addressed within the book and scored *good* in cultural transmission and fictionalized treatment. The book could have included more information on the physical characteristics of the Taino and could have included more accurate illustrations of the Taino. If more interactions depicted in the book had shown the Taino rejecting the European mistreatment, the book would have scored better in the Interaction section. Although Liestman consulted a Native American history scholar, there were no other literary distinctions or source notes provided, leaving a score of *poor* in this area. Like many other Columbus books, the text debunked the myth that Columbus “discovered” America. However, Liestman’s revisionist version moved the story a step further to include the enslavement, the killing, the forced labor, and the hardships endured by the Tainos after Columbus landed on their land. The book ended with the suggestion that we make Columbus Day a holiday for remembering not only Columbus, but also his mistreatment of the Indian and a “day to remember that when we explore, we must be good to the life we meet along the way” (p. 52).

Markle, S. (2008). *Animals Columbus saw*. New York, NY: Chronicle Books, Inc.

Sandra Markle is described as an award-winning author of children's books and developer of science specials for CNN and PBS. She is credited with awards such as the Children's Book Council's *List of Outstanding Science Trade Books for Children*, the International Reading Association's Young Adults Choice Award, the Society of School Librarians' International Book Award for Language Arts K-6, the Parent's Guide to Children's Media Nonfiction Award, The Bank Street College of Education's Best Children's Books of the Year Award, and Nick Jr. magazine's Best Books of the Year Award. Markle's book *Animals Christopher Columbus Saw* is one of 80 non-fiction books the author has written. The text, which is intended for 9-12-year-olds, combined the story of Columbus with a categorical description of all the animals he encountered during his first voyage. The novelty of this approach in teaching both history and zoology garnered a Children's and Young Adult Bloggers Literary Award nomination for Best Non-Fiction Book for 2008.

Question #1: Does the book provide a comprehensive record of the Christopher Columbus story to include the encounter with the Taino? This book did provide, more or less, a comprehensive record of the story of Columbus that included the Taino encounter. Like many children's books on the subject, this text concentrated mainly on the first voyage that Columbus made. The author mentioned that Columbus made three more voyages but did not go into any detail of the events that took place during those voyages. When depicting the first meeting between the Taino and Columbus, the author struck a careful balance in which Columbus was not demonized or portrayed in an overly negative light (through the author's choice of adjectives) but at the same time, the narrative was arranged in such a way that led the

reader to understand that Columbus and his men were not the benign explorers that other stories have made them out to be.

To meet one of the historical milestones Markle explained how Columbus ordered six of the “natives” to be captured. Unfortunately, the author did not go into further detail regarding this initial enslavement of the Taino or their presentation at the Spanish court. However, this event was presented in an illustration that was created specifically for the book. Unlike many other depictions of this event, the Taino in this illustration were not shown as smiling, willing participants. Instead, the nature of the artwork rendered the Taino expressionless. While open to interpretation it could be said even that the Taino appeared downcast. The author continued presenting a comprehensive history to include the Taino people by providing a description of the sinking of the *Santa Maria* that acknowledged the assistance given by the Taino in salvaging the wreckage. The author also included the construction of the La Navidad settlement, although she unfortunately did not go into any detail regarding the mistreatment of the Taino and their subsequent rebellion against the Spanish settlers. These omissions did not represent an oversight but were rather due to the fact that the story was written to describe the initial voyage of Columbus. As the author did not continue the story past Columbus’ first return to Spain, it is understandable that the later details were not included. Considering the frank addition of what may be construed as unsavory information regarding Columbus and his men, it is likely that the massacre at La Navidad would have been included if the author had chosen to cover all of Columbus’ voyages.

Question #2: Does the book provide sufficient insight into the lifestyle-cultural and sociological heritage of the indigenous Taino people? The book did not provide much specific detail about the culture and lifestyle of the Taino. It is possible, however, to learn about some

elements of the Taino lifestyle through a careful examination of the story. For example, the author described the Taino as chasing after Columbus and his men in dugout canoes. Though only mentioned in passing, this small detail was sufficient in conveying that this canoe was one way in which the Taino traveled. The Taino were also described as wanting to trade spears tipped with fish bones. This additional detail could lead readers to understand that fishing was one of the Taino's methods of subsistence. Markle also included elements of Taino culture in both the text and the illustrations, including the Taino diet, hairstyle, grass huts, and canoes. The text also described how the Taino ate lizards and iguanas. Further, the text explained that lizard bones were found at a Taino village and Columbus himself wrote of eating Iguana who's meat was "white and tasty" (p. 31). These details of Taino culture are supplemented in the illustrations. For example, the Taino were depicted as wearing their hair short in front and long in back, which is consistent with the historical record, and accurate images of their grass huts were also displayed (pp. 25-26).

Question #3: To what extent does the book depart from the historical record and what impact does that departure have on the reading and learning experience? For the most part, the author adhered to the historical record regarding the encounters between the Spanish explorers, including Columbus, and the Taino. The author did take some license with her suppositions on the fauna that were seen by the explorers. As the book was designed to not only provide information on the first of Columbus' voyage but also to educate readers on different varieties of wildlife, this license seems acceptable and even imperative to meet the aims of the story. Commendably, Markle wrote in such a way as to be clear when the information she provided was not definitive. For example, the use of "good chance" when Markle explained, "There's a good chance that a few cockroaches stowed away in the ship's food and supplies" (p.

17) underscored that the information provided was not certain. In addition, the animal sightings Markle listed as fact are qualified by citing the source, which is likely to give readers more confidence that the story is factual (p. 23). For example, she explained, “*Columbus wrote in his journal* [italics added] that he saw a whale spouting.” Through careful wording, Markle set a tone of veracity on her part regarding what is and is not known about the voyage. As a result, this book rendered a more comprehensive picture of the events that transpired into a more meaningful reading and learning experience.

Question #4: To what extent does the book provide insight into Taino interactions or relationships with Columbus and the Spanish Settlers and what impact does that have on the reading and learning experience? The author depicted the interactions and relationships between the Spanish explorers and the Taino in a matter of fact way that may be somewhat confusing to young readers. For example, she wrote, “Columbus ordered his men to capture six of the natives. In his logbook he described them as strong, healthy, smart, and likely to be good slaves” (p. 27). No value statements followed these sentences, however, and the reader is left to wonder whether such activity was warranted or acceptable in that particular context. Although Markle should be given credit for not shying away from the more negative aspects of the Columbus-Taino interactions, it would have been entirely appropriate to inject a morality assessment in this case. Even young children are likely to understand that slavery is bad, and including such a pronouncement in this story would have served to confirm what Markle alluded to—that Columbus did not treat the Taino well. Markle appeared to tread carefully regarding the interactions between the Taino and the Spanish explorers. She did not paint the Taino as simple Natives who fall under the sway of more superior Europeans. Nor did she vilify the Spanish explorers for their mistreatment of the Taino. Markle instead opted for straight reporting of the

facts without creating heroes or villains of either group. While this approach may be construed as laudable due to its apparent lack of bias, there are certain accepted facts regarding the poor treatment of the Taino at the hands of the Spanish explorers that could have been included to better educate readers. Some of these facts were included in Markle's book but were presented in such a way that readers would be unable to discern how they should react. Potential questions arise such as, "Was it okay that the Taino were taken captive?" A young reader will not find the answer in Markle's writings. By strictly adhering to the facts in this instance, the author diminished a potential lesson that could have been learned.

Quality rating. According to the narrative rubric, Markle's *Animals Christopher Columbus Saw*, which received a literary distinction, was assessed as a *good* book for teaching about the Taino in relation to the story of Columbus. The author provided at least three historical milestones, including the first meeting between Columbus and the Taino and his subsequent interest in their gold. Markle also referenced the initial enslavement of the Taino, albeit a sparse mention, and the assistance of the Taino when the *Santa Maria* sank. As the story was intended to exhibit the wildlife seen during Columbus' first voyage to the Americas, attention to this detail was understandable. Markle skirted the line between fact and fiction when discussing the animals encountered during Columbus' travels. That is, she pointed out the kinds of wildlife that were likely to be present in the regions where Columbus sailed without specifically stating that Columbus did, in fact, see them.

Conrad, P. (1991). *Pedro's Journal: A voyage with Christopher Columbus*. New York, NY: Scholastic, Inc.

Pedro's Journal: A Voyage With Christopher Columbus (1991) by Pam Conrad, intended for an audience of 9-12 year olds, is a historical fiction piece about a cabin boy on the *Santa Maria*, who kept a diary recording his experiences when he sailed with Columbus on his first

voyage to the “New World” in 1492. Conrad has written many award-winning books for children, including the 1995 Newbery Award finalist, *Our House: Stories of Levittown*, before her death to breast cancer at a young age of 48. Within a heartfelt “Author’s Note” at the back of the book, Conrad explained,

The publication of this book will happen nearly 500 years after the actual events occurred...Since no one is left who was actually there, most of this knowledge is based on speculations, conjecture, theory and wild guesses. But I did feel a responsibility to base my guesses on what truths I could find...I must also make the admission that I am a storyteller, and I had no intention of teaching you anything...My ‘soul’ purpose here has been to sail through a brief period of history inside the mind and heart of a young boy.

Also within this note, Conrad listed the primary sources used to create this story. *Pedro’s Journal* was honored by making the National Council of Teachers of English’s *Adventuring With Books: A Booklist for Pre-K-Grade 6* (1993, 10th ed.).

Question #1: Does the book provide a comprehensive record of the Christopher Columbus story to include the encounter with the Taino? Although the first voyage was the only voyage mentioned in this book, the personal nature of the thoughts and writings of a young boy aboard the ship alongside of Columbus carried a more humanistic tone. This fictional story only referenced the first voyage of Columbus from 1492 to 1493. As a historical fiction piece, the author could add a more creative flavor to the story while also adhering to the criteria of the specified genre. Within this creativity, the book provided the reader with more personal details than most other stories. For example, the text explained that upon the first encounter between Columbus and the Taino people, out stepped “from the trees, beautiful, strong, naked people, with tanned skin and straight black hair” (p. 38). Pedro documented in his journal, “The natives think that we are angels from God. They swam out to us, wave, throw themselves in the sand, hold their hands and faces to the sky, and sing and call to us” (p. 40). This encounter did not reflect any blatant omissions, especially when the book referenced, “The six native men

Columbus has taken aboard are not very happy. One by one they are escaping, which I cannot help but say I am happy for” (p. 41). One may notice from this statement that the author placed a more 20th-century revisionist view of the event by departing from the historical record and adding that the Taino escaped in order to provide the reader with a more balanced perspective than many of the other books that are often shared in the classroom. However, with revisionist history one must be cautious that the revisions do not jeopardize the treatment of all parties involved in the story as this author rendered accomplished in this book. The text’s mention of Columbus’ search for gold was minimal, being mentioned only here and there in the story but not treated as a focal point which unfortunately omitted the milestone where Columbus forced the Taino to guide him to the other islands.

The wreck of the *Santa Maria* was described but did not include the manner in which the Taino people participated. Conrad did include how Columbus brought some Taino people on board the ship to be “converted” and sent to Spain, noting, “I would not laugh at my mother anymore. One day this past week our party had taken on ‘seven head of women, large and small, and three children” (p. 48), but it did not explain the nature of how the Taino were forced on board. The story ended before Columbus’ supposed parade where he displayed his goods and “findings” for the King and Queen took place. There were no other historical milestones recorded for this story.

Question #2: Does the book provide sufficient insight into the lifestyle-cultural and sociological heritage of the indigenous Taino people? There were several opportunities for a reader to garner many details about the Taino people. For example, several references to the Taino’s physical characteristics were made by the author, who stated that they were “beautiful, strong, naked people with tanned skin and straight black hair” (p. 38). Also, the author described

how “Some had boldly painted their bodies or their faces, some only their eyes, some their noses. They were so beautiful and gentle” (p. 38). She continued, “Close up, we could see how clear and gentle their eyes were, how broad and unusual their foreheads” (p. 39). These descriptions were more intimate than those usually used to portray the Taino and added a human touch to the story. Taino arts and crafts were described as well as their dugout canoes, cotton thread, and shell-tipped spears. The book’s illustrations also supported the text with realistic drawings that mirrored the author’s descriptions. There were illustrations of the hammocks they introduced and also a picture of a village where they lived. The Tainos were never mentioned by name, but only as “natives” throughout the story.

Question #3: To what extent does the book depart from the historical record and what impact does that departure have on the reading and learning experience? As a fictional piece of writing, the author has the right to depart from the historical record to a point. As this story was taken from the eyes of a young boy, many of the existing facts or claims we know today would not necessarily be known to a young boy on a ship. While dramatic incidents and many details of the Columbus story presented were based on fact, the development of these characters and events owed much to the author’s imagination. These departures from the historical record may enhance the reading and learning experience because they are told through the words of another child, to whom young readers may be able to relate.

Question #4: To what extent does the book provide insight into Taino interactions or relationships with Columbus and the Spanish Settlers and what impact does that have on the reading and learning experience? Personal interactions and relationships can be more easily seen in fictional work. The reader can gather various emotions and reactions from Pedro and how he dealt with the events that transpired in front of him. For example, Conrad attributed

feeling to the captured Taino by the references to their attempt to escape from Columbus's hold, "The six native men Columbus has taken aboard are not very happy. One by one they are escaping, which I cannot help but say I am happy for" (p. 41). The Taino were shown as rejecting Columbus' mistreatment and as refusing to accept the European chains of destruction here. This story could offer the reader a rich, aesthetic reading experience by pulling the reader into the story through the words of the young boy while also exposing the reader to history as the historical facts are cleverly embedded in the text.

Quality rating. The quality of this book was rated as *good* based on three out of the five criteria. The voyage was described using a very different approach—through the eyes of a young boy on board Columbus' boat. The first voyage was the only one mentioned in the story, but the author managed to include at least two events that were part of the voyage over to the Americas as well as to note the Tainos' role in these events. Although Conrad did not call the Tainos by their tribal name (she only referred to them as "natives"), this approach might have been used because the dialogue came from a (fictional) young boy who would not have know the Tainos by name. Intimate interactions and relationships were demonstrated in the text, which enhanced the Taino's presence in the story and thus generated a rating of *excellent* in this area. The book has received a literary distinction from the National Council of Teacher's of English, source notes were provided, and the story was written in a manner that accurately addressed its criteria within its genre. This book would be appropriate if read aloud or read by young readers. Yolen, J. (1992). *Encounter*. New York, NY: Harcourt Brace and Company.

Encounter (1992), a historical fiction story written by Jane Yolen and illustrated by David Shannon, is a book intended for ages 9-12 about a Taino Indian boy on the island of San Salvador who recounted the landing of Columbus and his men in 1492. Award-winning author

Jane Yolen has written approximately 280 books during her writing career, and David Shannon is also the author and illustrator of many highly praised books for children. This particular book has been associated with some literary distinctions: National Council of Teachers of English's *Adventuring with Books: A Booklist for Pre-K-Grade 6* (1993, 10th ed.), National Council of Teachers of English's *Kaleidoscope, A Multicultural Booklist for Grades K-8* (1994), California Department of Education's *Recommended Literature: Kindergarten through Grade Twelve* (2002), and the International Reading Association's California Teachers' Choices (1993). The book offered an author's note at the back that explained how Yolen used "historical record and the storyteller's imagination" to recreate a fictional account of how a young boy might have reacted and interacted with Columbus. The note referred to one of Columbus' translated logs but never mentioned which one. The illustrator also presented a note that stated that since there were no historical documents that tell this story, he faced many challenges in reproducing illustrations for this book. No other resources were provided.

Question #1: Does the book provide a comprehensive record of the Christopher Columbus story to include the encounter with the Taino? The book did provide a comprehensive record of the Columbus story to include the encounter with the Taino people, yet it did not provide a comprehensive account of the historical milestones known within this event. There were areas of the story that offered an appropriate picture of the events that transpired while also carrying the fictional tone. It is difficult to apply many of the same expectations with fiction because the author and illustrator have the right to use creative storytelling in its development of characters and plots. However, it is expected when a historical fiction piece is written that research is conducted to either represent a fictional character within an accurate historical setting or present a true historical figure with fictional secondary characters.

Following this format and applying the milestones, this book addressed some of the milestones, but not all of them, and not all accurately. Also, because the story was in a fictional format, how a child might have reacted to this event is unknown and difficult to evaluate but will be done in the most accurate way possible. For example, when the Taino child first saw Columbus, the premonition was presented to him in a dream. That is a fictional depiction and something that cannot be counted as right or wrong. The story did allude to the kidnapping of the Taino people back to Columbus' ship, but it was not clear whether this abduction was to look for gold or to be sent to Spain. The wreck of the *Santa Maria* and the creation of the La Navidad settlement were not included, and anything regarding other milestones was not offered because the story did not go beyond the first voyage.

Question #2: Does the book provide sufficient insight into the lifestyle-cultural and sociological heritage of the indigenous Taino people? Compared to other books that include the Taino people in this initial encounter, this book attempted to provide the reader with a more comprehensive depiction of the Taino and some of their cultural tendencies. The Taino were identified properly by their tribal affiliation. It could also be garnered from the book that the Taino ate fish, yams, and cassava bread. The book mentioned the Taino's tobacco use and creation of dug out canoes. Also, the author referenced the use of a "zemi" throughout the story. Zemís were the most prevalent object within the Taino society. It symbolized a variety of things, such as social status, political power, and fertility. Zemís could also have been used to represent deities worshipped by the Taino, including ancestors and the forces of nature. They were produced in different forms and sizes in wood, clay, stone, shell, and bone, and were kept in selected areas within the village and used in various ceremonies. It is not certain that a young boy would have had his own zemi as was depicted in this book, but as the book referenced it, it

can be counted as providing information specific to the Taino people. The illustrations provided some detail into the physical characteristics of the Taino by the way in which the illustrations depicted that the Taino wore short bangs in front and long hair in the back, had a larger forehead, and wore little clothing; accurately, only some of the members wore a small gold ornament in their nose. A reader who reads this book will attain an idea of what the Taino people could have looked like based on these descriptions.

Question #3: To what extent does the book depart from the historical record and what impact does that departure have on the reading and learning experience?

This book had many redeeming qualities that offered a reader with a unique perspective on the event. Yolen provided the basic information about the event with some added fictional details. However, the place where the book allowed for the most neglect was the next section on the interactions and assumed demise of the Taino people.

Question #4: To what extent does the book provide insight into Taino interactions or relationships with Columbus and the Spanish Settlers and what impact does that have on the reading and learning experience? One of the main problems with the book related to the interactions and relationships aspect of the story. This question was designed to assess interactions between the Taino and the Spanish but can also be applied to interactions among the Tainos themselves. For example, the manner in which the Taino child in the story was cast aside by the Taino adults when he was trying to warn them of his impending dream is not accurate. To explain why the boy is ignored, Yolen repeated “I was but a child.” Yet, this did not mirror the cultural tendencies of a Native society but instead perpetuated a Eurocentric approach as dreams often play a very important role in many Native communities. It is thus unlikely that a child with a dream would have been ignored as was shown in the book. As a result of this

encounter the Taino lost many things; they lost their culture, their land, and most of them, their life. It is believed that the author did not intend to offend, but with biased wording that was used it caused it to receive a lower rating of this book. When Yolen used the phrases, “we lost our land,” “We gave our souls,” “we took their speech,” “Our sons and daughters became their sons and daughters,” or “That is why I, an old man now, dream no more dreams” (p. 31), the Taino are presented as helpless victims. The Tainos were shown as weak and as not rejecting European culture but embracing it. The Tainos endured horrid situations but still managed to survive, barely, after the European invasion. One other example of a heavily Eurocentric perspective in the book was the last sentence: “May it be a warning to all the children and all the people in every land” (p. 31) while an image of an old man is shown disappearing into the ocean. This can be seen as a defeatist attitude and one in which some Native people could be offended.

Quality rating. The quality rating of this book was *good* based on all five areas of the rubric. It is commendable that a non-Native author and illustrator attempted to provide readers with a unique perspective of an age-old story. However, it would be hoped that the publisher and the author-illustrator team would have actively consulted people who have a keen insight into Native American history or some other relative profession before publishing this book to verify the accuracy of the information provided. The inclusion of the historical milestones were average, and the manner in which the cultural transmissions were approached was *excellent*; however, the fictionalized and unbalanced wording explaining the cause of the demise of the Taino people kept the book from being scored as *excellent*.

King, T. (1992). *A Coyote Columbus story*. Berkeley, CA: Douglas & McIntyre.

A Coyote Columbus Story (1992), written by Thomas King and illustrated by William Kent Monkman, is a retelling of the Columbus story from a Native point of view for ages 9-12.

Coyote, the trickster, creates the world and all the creatures in it. But when Columbus lands he is not impressed by the wealth of the moose, turtles, and beavers and instead wants the human beings so he can take them back to Spain to sell. Author King is of Cherokee and Greek descent and is a noted writer. Monkman is of Swampy Cree and English-Irish descent and is a filmmaker and visual artist whose paintings have been shown in galleries across North America. Author source notes were not offered in this book, but since it is a work of fiction and also included elements of traditional literature and fantasy, it is not expected that this story would carry much of that information. There is a brief mention of how the main character, Coyote, is a trickster (which is common in many Native legends) in the story, but no other information was provided on why the author included her in the story in this capacity other than the purpose to add humor. The book was a Governor General's Literary Awards Finalist in 1992 by Children's Literature (for illustration) in Canada.

Question #1: Does the book provide a comprehensive record of the Christopher Columbus story to include the encounter with the Taino? In this story the Tainos are represented by the human beings, the only "normal" looking characters within the story. They are shown being forced to Spain and sold into slavery. This is the only milestone addressed in the evaluation. For example, on page 18 the text stated, "I'll bet these are Indians. And he looks at his friends. I'll bet we can sell these Indians. Yes, says his friend, that's a good idea. We could sell Indians." Overall, this cannot be considered a comprehensive record of the Columbus story and his encounter with the Taino people as it did not address other instances throughout the first voyage within the story.

Question #2: Does the book provide sufficient insight into the lifestyle-cultural and sociological heritage of the indigenous Taino people? Due to some creative writing and

illustrating, the reader may find it difficult to garner an accurate picture of how the lifestyle and sociological heritage of the Taino people are portrayed in this book. For instance, on page 12, there was a full illustration with one of Columbus' men holding a machine gun while Columbus was shown, in full clown attire, standing in a canoe with a set of golf clubs and suitcases, which are obviously fictionalized. The author never addressed the Taino by their name, which is somewhat surprising given that this version is supposed to be from a Native perspective. Nowhere else did the story address any cultural activity of the Taino. The depictions were more centered on the manner in which the Taino were treated than offering the reader with information on their lifestyle.

Question #3: To what extent does the book depart from the historical record and what impact does that departure have on the reading and learning experience? Most of this book departed from the historical record as it was a fictional story with traditional literature qualities while also containing some embedded fantasy as well. By reading this book, the reader was not given a realistic picture of what truly happened. Its elements of comedy and color distracted from the historical references. If evaluated by criteria of fiction alone, the book can be described as entertaining due to its creativity, but it could still be somewhat confusing to the reader by the manner in which the author and illustrator fantasized this historical event.

Question #4: To what extent does the book provide insight into Taino interactions or relationships with Columbus and the Spanish Settlers and what impact does that have on the reading and learning experience? The interactions between Columbus and the Taino were unlike any other depiction in this study. Columbus' greed was clearly displayed while the Tainos were also clearly shown refusing to accept the European mistreatment. Conflicts were visible in both the text and the illustrations. For example, on page 21, there was an illustration

showing one of Columbus' boats returning to Spain with several Taino people trying to escape from the boat as Columbus is seen above them holding a flag with a dollar sign on it. The next page shows Spanish people in the middle of town at an auction bidding on the Taino, who are boarded up in the background with a sign across reading "Imported." The message is clear to an adult, but children will likely need lengthy discussion to convey the author's message of this unique perspective.

Quality rating. The quality rating of this book is *good* based on the criteria of the rubric. This book comes highly recommended by the experts in the field of Native Americans in children's literature. However, as a researcher, this book cannot be given a higher rating than *good* due to its confusing nature and overly symbolic portrayals of history. For example, many children are not aware of the Coyote figure in Native American legends, nor would they be privy to the background of the Coyote as a god-like figure, one who creates everything. The symbolism surrounding Columbus and his men could be insulting to some. On the other hand, so many books that have been published about this topic only show a stereotypical depiction of the Tainos, so it is understandable why the Native community would want to see their side of the story told as well. The book provided one of the most unique stories retelling history by its embedded historical references such as the accurate interactions and relationships between the Taino and Columbus.

Poor Rating

In addition to the inclusion of events within the voyage the book is describing, the criteria which rates "poor" include books that identify the Tainos as "Indians" or "Native Americans" only. No Taino beliefs, ideals, religious beliefs, artisanship are mentioned. The Taino are described with little to no physical characteristics and are nondescript leaving the reader

wondering about who they were and what they were like. The illustrations were inaccurate or provided stereotypical images of Native Americans with no specific Taino cultural identity visible. The author and illustrator are not successful in providing both the European and Native perspective into the story. The book often departs from historical record that ultimately jeopardizes the portrayal of the Taino people in the story. The detraction misleads readers with inaccurate information and has a negative impact to the potential reading or learning experience of the reader. The author and illustrator portray the Taino as dependent upon Columbus and his men for survival often leaving the Tainos as submissive and not aggressive when threatened with mistreatment by the Spanish. The author and illustrator only offer the European perspective in the story and do not address cultural interactions of the Taino in any way. The book includes two or less of these criteria: The book provides the appropriate criteria for the specific genre in which the book was written. The book indicated a Native American or Native American expert was consulted for this publication. The author included source notes for the historical event. This story received an award of excellence of some type. The illustrator provided source notes. If only photographs were provided, there was a combination of photos that reflected both the European and Native American influence. The following books are rated “poor” based on the listed criteria (see Table 5-3).

Neal, H. E. (1981). *Before Columbus: Who discovered America?* New York, NY: Simon & Schultz.

This 1981 book written by ex-secret-service agent, Harry Edward Neal, who turned author after his retirement, was written for readers aged 9-12. *Before Columbus* presented several theories concerning the first discoverers of America, including the pre-Columbian voyages of exploration by the Irish, the Norsemen, the English, and others. The illustrations found in the book consist of archived photographs and maps that offer a distinctly European perspective. The

book did not offer a “for further reading” section or a list of resources that the author used to write his book. The source notes of the book acknowledged individuals such as a church member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, a local librarian, an anthropologist from Arizona State University, the Ambassador of China, and a life insurance agent. The book has not been given any literary awards.

Question #1: Does the book provide a comprehensive record of the Christopher Columbus story to include the encounter with the Taino? Although the purpose of this book, given its title, appears to have been to provide information on all historical accounts of the discovery of America, the first section of the story about Columbus nonetheless tells the story from only the European perspective. For example, the author portrayed the Taino as “excited and curious” as they watched Columbus take ownership of the island and described that “They bowed before Columbus as though he were a god” (p. 24). No documentation on the reaction of the Taino to Columbus exists such that the author’s depiction of the Tainos’ reaction represents a mere assumption that the Taino would have bowed before Columbus “as though he were a god” when strange men landed on their island. In addition, the author did not acknowledge that the Tainos helped Columbus sail to other islands to find gold. The author did mention that “Columbus forced some Indians aboard his ship to be carried back to Spain and the king and queen” (p. 24). However, Neal portrayed the captives much like the other objects that Columbus took back to Spain by the way the text simply listed them in a line of objects that Columbus brought back, possibly leaving the reader with the notion that the Tainos were unimportant. The only illustrations provided are archived photos of Columbus and his men taking ownership of the land with two nondescript Native people, one behind a tree and the other bowing to Columbus. The book also contained an archived image of the Spanish King and

Queen and a lithograph of the *Santa Maria*. It is understood that there were no official recordings of the Tainos during this time, but by only including old, archived photos such as these reinforces a Eurocentric approach to this topic. The book also falls short of providing a comprehensive record of the Columbus encounter because it did not depict the entirety of Columbus' four voyages. For example, the only topic of discussion of the second voyage occurred when Columbus landed on the island he named Santiago, which is now known as Jamaica. The author also briefly described another island Columbus visited, which was called Boriquem by its inhabitants, and is now known as Puerto Rico. There was no mention of the Taino people at all in this section, even though research shows Columbus would likely have encountered them during his travels. During the third voyage, the book described Columbus landing in Trinidad. No other mention of the voyage was provided. The book mentioned that Columbus sailed along the coast of Honduras during his last voyage, but no other information was provided.

Question #2: Does the book provide sufficient insight into the lifestyle-cultural and sociological heritage of the indigenous Taino people? Having only identified the Tainos as "Indians," the author did not provide sufficient evidence of Taino culture in his retelling of Columbus' four voyages. For example, the only description of the Tainos' physical characteristics appeared on page 24, where the author stated, "These people were dark in color and almost naked." Furthermore, no other information was given in this book regarding the lifestyle, culture, or religious beliefs of the Taino people. With that in mind, this book did not offer the reader an insight into whom the Taino people were at the time of the Columbus encounter.

Question #3: To what extent does the book depart from the historical record and what impact does that departure have on the reading and learning experience? Although this book did not depart from the European view regarding Columbus' actual voyages and where he landed, the lack of details provided (e.g., such as the way the settlers mistreated the Tainos at La Navidad) as well as the omission of certain information (e.g., such as the lack of information given on Columbus's subsequent voyages) did a disservice to the historical event. The reader was not able to glean information on the people Columbus encountered during these voyages because the author's presentation of the Columbus-Taino encounter was lackluster and void, rendering the Taino invisible or not worthy of mention. The effects of this insufficient description of the Taino may be to silently convey to the reader the acceptability of neglecting other cultural viewpoints.

Questions #4: To what extent does the book provide insight into Taino interactions or relationships with Columbus and the Spanish Settlers? In the book, only one mention of the interactions between the Taino people and Columbus was made: Neal described that Columbus forced some Taino people back to Spain only briefly. Yet, this incident is described in only a single sentence, such that the details of this interaction are omitted and the gravity of the event for the Taino people is lost. Aside from this insufficiently treated interaction, the author did not provide any other information on the historical milestones or cultural transmissions (such as those listed earlier in Chapter 2 of this research) of the Taino in this book, and no relationships or Taino interactions were described. Thus, this book did not provide insight for readers into the role that the Tainos may have played in this piece of history.

Quality rating. The quality of this book, which received no literary awards, was rated as *poor* based on all areas of the rubric. Issues of concern included that the book did not

acknowledge key historical milestones that included the Taino people, cultural transmissions between the Taino people and Columbus and his crew, or interactions between the Taino people and Columbus, except for a brief mention that Columbus forcibly took some Taino individuals back to Spain. The book also lacked descriptive information on the Tainos, referring to them only as “Indians.” Ultimately, by employing a Eurocentric perspective, perpetuated by the inclusion of stereotypical archived photographs of Columbus and the Native people, the book did nothing to contest or augment the traditional historical record, thus potentially misinforming the reader due to the large amount of omissions. As a result, the reader was unable to learn of the Taino facts surrounding the Columbus encounter and could be considered misinformed by this book. There were no awards associated with this book

Fritz, J. (1980). *Where do you think you're going Christopher Columbus?* New York, NY: G.P. Putnam's Sons.

This biographical account of Columbus, written in 1980 for ages 9-12, took the reader on a humorous journey through Columbus' four voyages, beginning in 1492 and ending with his death in 1506. The author, Jean Fritz, has extensive experience writing about history in children's literature. The illustrator has won awards for her previous work in fairy tales and historical stories in verse for children. The author provided clarifying notes at the back of the book but did not offer any information regarding where she collected her information for writing this book nor did she offer a "for further reading" section. The book was noted as a Utah Children's Book Award nominee in 1982 and as one of the Best Books in the Children's Catalog in 2001 and 2006.

Question 1: Does the book provide a comprehensive record of the Christopher Columbus story to include the encounter with the Taino? Fritz's story of Columbus represented a very comprehensive retelling of the four voyages. It offered accurate information

on the majority of the historical milestones involving the Taino people by including information on the kidnapping of Taino people back to Spain, the assistance the Taino gave when the Santa Maria went ashore, and the infatuation of Columbus's quest for gold to name a few. Fritz included some factual information on Columbus' initial encounter with the Tainos, such as her reference to the lack of clothing the Taino wore, "as naked, Columbus said, 'as their mothers bore them' which, of course, was pretty naked" (p. 31). The book described how Columbus was trying to find out the whereabouts of the gold worn by the Tainos and mentioned, "From natives whom he'd taken aboard at San Salvador and taught a little Spanish, he was told of an island where men had dogs' heads; another where they had only one eye" (p. 33). Fritz was accurate in saying that Columbus was very focused on finding gold around the islands, but an important omission still occurred in the book in that the text gave no indication that Columbus forced some Tainos to be his guide around the islands, stating simply, "Columbus, richly dressed and ornamented, led the parade on horseback. He was followed by six natives (Indians, they were called now) wearing aprons, gold nose plugs, beads, and bracelets" (p. 47). The text didn't explain how the Tainos got there and did not provide additional insight into the captivity of the Tainos. The two Native men shown in the illustration were portrayed as happy participants of the "parade", still naked carrying a spear and one walking a dog.

The story that Fritz told in this book was also comprehensive in that it acknowledged the egregious conduct of the Spaniards left behind by Columbus when he returned to Spain, as noted on page 51. When Columbus returned to the Americas on his second voyage, the text noted,

Columbus went to see his friend, the king [a Taino cacique]. What had happened? Tears ran down the king's cheeks. A fierce neighboring tribe had killed the Spaniards, he said. Why? Well, the Spaniards had behaved badly after the admiral left. They rampaged over the island, stealing from this fierce tribe and mistreating their women. The king said he'd tried to help the Spaniards, but the enemy had been too strong—3000 men, all angry.

In addition to acknowledging the inhumane conduct of the Spaniards toward the Taino people, this section also openly discussed that Columbus captured many of the Tainos into slavery to be sold back in Spain. The book described how Columbus was feeling pressure from his lack of finding gold and reverted to having “500 natives captured and placed on shipboard to be taken to Spain and sold as slaves” (p. 55-56). Fritz’s book also described the encomiando system Columbus put in place. Although Fritz did not name this system, she explained

that every native over fourteen was ordered to turn over one of his small bells filled with gold dust every three months...No matter how hard they [the Taino] worked, the natives couldn’t find that much gold...when they failed, they were punished (p. 56).

Although the book should be given credit for this acknowledgement, it’s unfortunate that the illustrations depicting this event presented the Taino in a caricature-like way, with the cacique (chief) dressed in a Speedo-type undergarment and a red, Santa-Claus-like coat.

Question 2: Does the book provide sufficient insight into the lifestyle-cultural and sociological heritage of the indigenous Taino people? Although the book unfortunately never referred to the Taino people by name (describing them simply as “natives” or once as “Indians”), this book still offered the reader many opportunities to learn about the Tainos. With 11 instances of Taino cultural representation in the book, the reader had an opportunity to acquire additional knowledge of the people Columbus encountered during his voyages west. The book also acknowledged specific information regarding lifestyle and culture from the Taino people such as referring to their agricultural practices, physical attributes as depicted in the illustrations and text, and the types of artisanship exhibited by the Tainos such as the gold ornaments worn by the Taino. The good nature of the Taino people was also portrayed, with Fritz describing the Tainos as “obliging” and “the friendliest he [Columbus] had met in all his travels” (p. 39). Fritz also gave a holistic portrayal of the Taino by depicting not just Taino men but also Taino women and

children. Furthermore, the Tainos' dress was described correctly, with the text portraying them as wearing little or no clothing upon the initial encounter and then later wearing European clothing given to them by Columbus and his men. Unfortunately, the text inaccurately depicted the Tainos as wearing a tuft of hair on the top of their heads instead of long with bangs. Details of Taino craftsmanship included a reference to a Taino mask that was made with ears, nose, and tongue of hammered gold and a Taino belt—four fingers wide—embroidered with red and white fish bones. Other cultural descriptions of the Taino in the book included a mention of the types of agriculture the Taino cultivated—tobacco and fruit—as well as a description of the Tainos' practice of sleeping in hammocks. To the book's credit, the Taino were shown bearing two different colors of brown skin, revealing variation among the Taino people rather than putting forth a simplified, stereotyped portrayal. Unfortunately, except for this variation in skin color, the Taino individuals in the illustrations looked identical to each other.

Question 3: To what extent does the book depart from the historical record and what impact does that departure have on the reading and learning experience? This version of Columbus' voyages to the Indies does not appear to have departed or detracted from the historical record. It was very comprehensive and offered a rich reading and learning experience through its thorough inclusion of many of the historical milestones and cultural transmissions. The only area of the book that departed from the historical record was the humorous spin the author added to the story's retelling. A problematic effect of this attempt at humor—which consisted of the use of silly thoughts or phrases to describe serious events and situations—was that the humorous tone sometimes made situations appear less authentic or credible, or eclipsing the gravity of the situation from the Taino perspective.

Question 4: To what extent does the book provide insight into Taino interactions or relationships with Columbus and the Spanish Settlers and what impact does that have on the reading and learning experience? This book provided a few examples of how the Taino interacted with Columbus. For example, it described how the Tainos had conflicts with Columbus and his men and depicted the Tainos rejecting mistreatment from them. In general, the Taino were portrayed as self-sufficient. The tribe was also referred to as “fierce” when they were trying to protect their women and members from the Spanish settlers’ wrongdoings. In addition, the book mentioned the attack by the Tainos in 1506 against Columbus during his fourth voyage, as well as the attack on the Spaniards at La Navidad. In a positive light, the author also offered a few accounts where the Taino fought back against the rising mistreatment from the Spanish settlers. One specific instance in which the author did the Tainos an injustice was to try and justify Columbus’ reasoning for kidnapping hundreds of Tainos back to Spain to sell into slavery. As noted earlier, the book stated,

So Columbus had 500 natives captured and placed on shipboard to be taken to Spain and sold as slaves. African explorers were always sending Africans back to Spanish slave markets...besides, the natives are all heathens. It wasn’t as if he were selling Christians into slavery. (p. 55-56)

Although the author appears to have been attempting to offer what Columbus might have been thinking at the time, the negative comment nonetheless can be considered quite insulting to some. The author could have provided a clarifying note here to avoid such an insult.

Quality rating. Based on the rating criteria for this study, this book, which received literary distinctions, was rated as *excellent*. First, Fritz addressed important historical milestones in each of the four voyages of Columbus. Second, several exchanges of cultural information from the Taino to the Spaniards were described, in terms of agriculture, artisanship, and physical attributes. Third, Fritz did not detract from the historical record, with the exception of her

humorous text. Lastly, the interactions with the Taino were depicted, and the book provided a more balanced approach than most books reviewed for this study. In spite of the book's *excellent* rating, it is important to note that the book did not refer to the Tainos by their tribal name, only as natives; nor did the author reference the kidnapping of several Taino people to Spain after the initial voyage.

Kaufman, M. (2004). *Christopher Columbus*. Mankato, MN: Capstone Press.

This informational book, intended for readers aged 4-8, provided an introduction to the life of Columbus.. Surprisingly, this book did not acknowledge the perspective of the Taino people, in spite of the book's recent publication in 2004, a time period in which information on the Taino experience would have been available to the author. Mervyn Kaufman appears to be a prolific writer in that he is credited with many different children's books (all of which are historical if not always specific to explorers), including children's book, *A World Explorer: Christopher Columbus*, from 1963. This book did not offer a "for further reading" section nor has it received any awards or other favorable literary distinctions.

Question 1: Does the book provide a comprehensive record of the Christopher Columbus story to include the encounter with the Taino? Beginning with Columbus' childhood, the text provided a simplistic retelling of Columbus' voyages west that ultimately did not provide a comprehensive record of the Columbus story. For example, Columbus' efforts to gather funding for his expedition were described, but the events of Columbus' first voyage were not completely presented; similarly, the events that took place once Columbus reached the end of his first voyage were covered only in brief. In particular, the text did not make it clear where and how the first encounter with the Taino people took place. In fact, the Taino, described by the author as "Indians," were lumped into a grouping of all the people Columbus encountered while

exploring many islands. It was noted that “almost” all of the people were kind and helpful without further elaboration, leaving the young reader to wonder about who was not kind and helpful and why. Furthermore, although the author wrote of the destruction of the *Santa Maria* and the subsequent creation of a fort, he did not acknowledge the Taino who assisted the Spanish in the building of the fort. Also of note, when the author referenced Columbus’ capture of the Taino people as slaves, he only presented a Eurocentric perspective. For example, he mentioned that Columbus believed that the “Indians” that he encountered would make good slaves. Then, when describing Columbus’ return to Spain, the author noted that Columbus brought the king and queen parrots and “Indians,” wording which had the effect of equating the Tainos with animals and negating their humanity. Furthermore, the author did not indicate whether the Tainos were brought to Spain under duress. In sum, the writing of these two events (i.e., the capture of the Tainos as slaves and the wreck of the *Santa Maria*) were done in a matter-of-fact manner with no judgment presented on whether or not the enslavement of the Taino was a positive or negative act. Lastly, with only two visual depictions of indigenous people in *Christopher Columbus*, the book did not adequately present the Taino aspect of the historical record. The first depiction—a painting that was taken from an unidentified historical picture archive—was meant to portray Columbus’ first encounter with “Indians”; however, it was an inaccurate depiction, with the Native Americans shown as having light pink-tinged skin with a somewhat European visage. The second depiction—a painting by Eugene Deveria and Roger Viollet—showed Columbus meeting with the King and Queen of Spain with Indians and many riches surrounding them. Although the picture presented the Taino as having darker skin than the previous image, the portrayal of their dress was problematic in this case in that it reflected a generic Indian fashion rather than what historical renderings show the Taino people as wearing.

Question 2: Does the book provide sufficient insight into the lifestyle-cultural and sociological heritage of the indigenous Taino people? This book has no redeeming value for teaching culture about the Taino or any other indigenous peoples that were encountered by Columbus due to the abundant omissions and lack of discussion of cultural transmission. The author mentioned that Columbus and his men traded European goods for gold with the “Indians”; however, he did not go into further detail on how the gold was obtained. The author further described the Tainos as being willing to do anything that Columbus asked, but is this an assumption of the author to portray the Taino as submissive or good-natured? There should be clarifying text to support this claim. The morality of Columbus’ actions was never discussed, even in terms that a young child could understand; instead, the overall sentiment presented was that such a large amount of omitted information on a historical event such as this one is acceptable or, at the very least, normal.

Question 3: To what extent does the book depart from the historical record and what impact does that departure have on the reading and learning experience? The author did not deviate from the historical record; however, many details were simplified or omitted from the text such as the lack of attention to the hardships endured by the Taino people or the absence of information regarding Taino lifestyle and culture. This text was apparently written with the assistance of an academic consultant, who could reasonably have been expected to provide accurate details regarding Columbus’ voyages, yet these details were not included. The author’s departure from the historical record through omission enhances neither the learning experience, nor the enjoyment of the story. The author chose to include only those details that he considered palatable by young readers. By doing so, however, he presented a work of literature that perpetuates the myth of a blameless Columbus.

Question 4: To what extent does the book provide insight into Taino interactions or relationships with Columbus and the Spanish Settlers and what impact does that have on the reading and learning experience? The author did not go into great detail regarding the interactions between the Taino people and Columbus and the Spanish settlers. In fact, there were only three sentences in the entire text that referenced the Indians that Columbus met. Within these statements Kaufman did not offer the reader a clear picture of how the Taino rejected any European influences, how they refused the mistreatment from the settlers, or how they handled the conflict that arose throughout the European invasion. The book also did not reflect the Tainos as an independent group of people or as being self-sufficient. As a result, the reader is not given a rich learning experience from this book.

Quality rating. The quality of this book, which received no literary distinctions, was classified as *poor*, for the following reasons. As just noted, the author's mentions of Columbus-Taino interactions were minimal, with only three listed (and the Taino were referred to only as "Indians"). Furthermore, the manner in which these interactions were presented led the reader to view Columbus in a positive light, even in reference to his enslavement of the Taino. Treatment of the Taino lifestyle-cultural and sociological heritage was also inadequate. There was no mention of the Taino culture, other than a single sentence explaining that the "Indians" traded gold for European goods. Also of note, the record of the Columbus history was not comprehensive. Although the book provided relatively adequate descriptions of the events leading up to Columbus' initial voyage, it covered the remaining three voyages in a single sentence. While the addition of even a single paragraph on Taino culture, or even the accurate use of their name, would have bolstered the value of this text, the author and the publisher appear to have made a decision to keep it simple.

Sandak, C. R. (1990). *Columbus Day*. New York: NY: Macmillan and Company.

This informational book, written in 1990 for readers aged 9-12, highlighted the life and voyages of Columbus while also discussing how Columbus Day was created and why it is a celebrated holiday today. Cass Sandak is a distinguished author, having penned close to 60 nonfiction children's books ranging in topics from former presidents and their families to holidays celebrated throughout the United States. The book included a section for further reading, an index, and a page of Columbus Day trivia; however, there was no mention of the sources from which the author obtained his information for this book. This book has not received any literary awards.

Question 1: Does the book provide a comprehensive record of the Christopher Columbus story to include the encounter with the Taino? Although the book offered information regarding all four of Columbus' voyages, the stories were written in a biased way that contained several omissions. For example, the book never referenced the enslavement of the Taino people and stated simply that Columbus brought on board "passengers...including several natives" (p. 34). This passenger status, rather than slave status, was exhibited elsewhere in text, in the following: "Columbus took several of the Caribs with him when he left San Salvador a few days later" (p. 33). Nothing was said about the force Columbus used to get the Taino aboard or about the reason he kidnapped the people from their homes. Also notable, the visual depiction of the Taino showed them grouped alongside the goods Columbus put on board, rendering them more object than human. Also problematic, the book referenced only two of the historical milestones of Columbus' voyages west—[the initial kidnapping of the Tainos to Spain in the first voyage and the reference to the lunar eclipse trick during the fourth voyage]—and even these

were abbreviated and sometimes inaccurate. For example, the first voyage in this book presented a simplified version of Columbus' first encounter with the Tainos. It mentioned that when Columbus and his men first landed on the ground, friendly natives greeted him but did not include the information regarding Columbus's obsession for gold and how he forced these Tainos to guide him to various islands in search of it. For the amount of research available, the brevity within the description of the first-voyage left the reader with an abbreviated version of history that was not addressed well. Additionally, the illustrations were archived photos that offered only a European perspective.

The presentation of Columbus' second voyage was also problematic in terms of conveying a comprehensive historical record. In particular, when portraying the La Navidad incident, the author presented only the Eurocentric perspective, by simply stating, "Many of the sailors had fought among themselves and killed each other. Some thought they might even have been murdered by unfriendly Indians" (p. 37). Importantly, the author made no mention of why the Taino people revolted against the Spaniards or the horrid conditions the Tainos endured in their company. Also notable, the author used different words to describe the fighting among the Spaniards versus the fighting between the Spaniards and the Tainos, describing the sailors as "killing each other" versus the "Indians" who may have "murdered" the sailors. Although "killing" does not have a positive connotation, "murdering" has a worse connotation, thus depicting the Taino in a lesser light than the Spaniards.

The third and fourth voyages of the book were also troublesome. Still, there was no mention of slavery, even though historical record shows how Columbus's lack of obtaining gold led him a massive gathering of hundreds of Taino people being taken away from their families and forced to go to Spain to be sold into slavery. The book's description of the fourth voyage,

which began by reporting the lunar eclipse incident in which Columbus and his men were “being held captive by the Indians” (p. 38), did not describe the known reason why the Tainos were at odds with Columbus and his men. The only illustration of the lunar eclipse incident found in the book was an archived drawing of the Taino people looking fearful of the lunar eclipse, thus giving the reader the impression that the Tainos were timid people or oversimplistic.

Question 2: Does the book provide sufficient insight into the lifestyle-cultural and sociological heritage of the indigenous Taino people? Sandak’s book provided some, but not sufficient, insight into the Taino heritage. To his credit, Sandak provided information on the Taino agricultural way of life, stating how Columbus found pumpkins, sweet potatoes, corn, tapioca plants, and tobacco. The artisanship of the Taino was also shown in part through Sandak’s description of the hammocks and canoes being crafted by the Taino. In addition, Sandak provided some insight into the people whom Columbus encountered by explaining that they were from a Carib Indian tribe, possibly Arawak. Sandak’s attempts at conveying the Taino heritage, while present, are not sufficient. First, Sandak did not refer to the tribe by their more specific name of Taino. He did mention that the Tainos were friendly people during the first voyage, but he never again mentioned anything more about their nature or anything about their ideals and religious beliefs. The only physical attribute offered here was the reference to the Tainos’ dark skin.. Lastly, there were no illustrations that provided insight into any cultural aspect of Taino life.

Question 3: To what extent does the book depart from the historical record and what impact does that departure have on the reading and learning experience? The book departed from the historical record through its lack of explanation of some of the historical events that took place. For example, in the depiction of La Navidad, the author did not include

the reasons that the Taino might have fought and killed the Spanish settlers. It was only stated that the settlers “mistreated” the Taino people when they actually raped the women, kidnapped young girls, and forced hard labor upon the other members of the tribe. In addition, the book did not mention the issue of the Tainos being kidnapped to Spain and sold into slavery. The author also neglected to state Columbus’ greed and forceful treatment of the Taino in his quest for gold, never mentioning how the Taino were punished if they did not turn over a certain quota of gold. Through these omissions, the book did not provide enough factual information for the book to be considered an unbiased story of Columbus. As a result, the reading and learning experience of this book was lackluster and not recommended.

Question 4: To what extent does the book provide insight into Taino interactions or relationships with Columbus and the Spanish Settlers and what impact does that have on the reading and learning experience? Because the author did not offer much insightful information on the Taino people, the number of examples of interactions or relationships could not be well documented. When they were mentioned, with the exception of the instance in which the Taino people helped salvage the wreck of the *Santa Maria* and the initial encounter of Columbus on Taino land, they were described in a manner that did not offer a balanced approach. For example, it was never mentioned how the Taino rejected Columbus’s mistreatment or refused their European influence of the settlers, nor did it demonstrate that the Taino people were self-sufficient people. Thus, this book had a distinguishable Eurocentric take on the events that occurred. Once again, with the small number of interactions or the erroneous portrayal of the relationships between the Spanish and the Tainos, the reader is left questioning who the Taino people were and what their actual involvement in Columbus’ exploration of the Americas was.

Quality rating. The quality of this book, which received no literary distinctions, was rated as *poor*. Even though the book addressed all four of Columbus' voyages, the information provided was scarce in regard to the Taino people, only noting how the Taino people assisted in gathering the wreckage of what was left of the *Santa Maria*. Also problematic, only two historical milestones were mentioned, and these were portrayed from a European perspective. One area where the book scored the highest was the inclusion of Taino culture. Regardless of scoring high in this area, the overall rating was brought down due to a large number of omissions and little information on the relationships and interactions between Columbus and the Taino people. Not only did the book fail to meet the minimum criteria, it fell short of several evaluation criteria as well. Finally, although there was a page of Columbus Day trivia, the author did not include the sources used to write this book.

Abnett, D. (2007). *Christopher Columbus and the voyage of 1492*. New York, NY: The Rosen Publishing Group.

This book, published in 2007, is a graphic novel for children aged 4-12. The author, Dan Abnett, has written a number of graphic novels and comic books but does not have a background in children's literature. Instead, his forte lies with stories of mutants and futuristic heroes. There were no additional resources offered nor were there any citations of sources used to obtain the information needed to write this book. There also were no literary distinctions associated with this title.

Question #1: Does the book provide a comprehensive record of the Christopher Columbus story to include the encounter with the Taino? The book offered a generalized telling of Columbus' first voyage, with a significant number of omissions regarding the more negative aspects of the story. The first voyage was discussed in some detail, but the remaining three voyages were simply alluded to in a single sentence on the final page of the book:

“Columbus returned to the islands three more times in the next 11 years” (p. 21). The author did not introduce the subject of the first encounter between Columbus and the Taino whatsoever. He simply introduced the Taino by writing, “The sailors traded simple objects with the natives” (p. 14) without referring to them by their accurate name. The author went on to describe a conversation in which Columbus was told that the “natives say there is even more gold to be found on the island” (p. 14) but failed to describe later events in which the Taino were made to provide the gold. The sinking of the *Santa Maria* and the subsequent construction of Fort La Navidad was described, but there was no mention of the Tainos assistance in salvaging wood and supplies from the wreck. Nor did the author refer to the Tainos’ help with the building of the fort. There was no mention of Taino mistreatment, and even the enslavement of the Taino for transport to Spain was presented in an abbreviated form that did not acknowledge the Tainos’ captivity. The author wrote only, “On January 4, 1493, Columbus set sail for Spain in the Nina. He could take only a few men with him. He took some of the native people with him, too” (p. 16).

Question #2: Does the book provide sufficient insight into the lifestyle-cultural and sociological heritage of the indigenous Taino people? The Taino people, identified only as “natives” in the book, were barely mentioned. A couple of sentences mentioned the Taino in connection with gold, yet these sentences did not go so far as to connect the precious metal to any part of the Taino culture or lifestyle. The author/illustrator’s visual rendering of the “Natives” that Columbus met did not match any historical description of the Taino. Unlike available descriptions of the Taino as having longish hair with cut bangs, the author depicted the Taino with shaved heads with little tufts of hair on top.

Question #3: To what extent does the book depart from the historical record and what impact does that departure have on the reading and learning experience? The book departed from the historical record in that many details of Columbus' first encounter were omitted. The contribution of the Taino, their mistreatment, and their retaliation were not alluded to in the book. Because the book was a graphic novel, the author took some license with the story. Mainly, Columbus was attributed with statements and conversations that were not part of the historical record, which was to be expected in this particular genre. Such a departure, however, could have been used to good advantage by introducing the Taino as a specific group with whom Columbus interacted rather than as an afterthought. Instead, the departure did not enhance the learning experience because many details were omitted, leaving more questions than answers. The departure did play a role in enhancing the enjoyment of the reading experience. By imagining statements and conversations and including them in the text, the author was able to portray Columbus in such a way that the readers could relate to him and the story. Because of the lack of important details, however, the enjoyment of the book was much like the enjoyment of any other comic book. It was interesting to look at and read but did not have value as a tool for learning.

Question #4: To what extent does the book provide insight into Taino interactions or relationships with Columbus and the Spanish Settlers and what impact does that have on the reading and learning experience? The book portrayed the Taino as simply bearers of interesting and useful information. For example, their value to Columbus and to the story was their possession of gold and their knowledge of where more gold could be found. The fact that the Taino were willing to trade could be misinterpreted that they were themselves interested in European culture. The sparse details on the interaction between the Spanish explorers and the

Taino, however, were such that any conclusions would represent conjecture. There were no clear examples of the Tainos reacting to mistreatment or demonstrating their self-sufficiency within this book. As a result, the reading and learning experiences would be stifled and unbalanced.

Quality rating. This book, which did not receive any literary distinctions, was rated as *poor* for a number of different reasons. Pertaining to the historical milestones criteria, the author gave some detail of Columbus' first voyage but devoted only a single sentence to the remaining three voyages. The Taino were not accurately identified and appeared only once in the entire text, which made the book a poor choice for cultural transmission. Furthermore, the author/illustrator provided images of the Taino that were generic, unidentifiable, and completely inaccurate. The story was fictionalized, in keeping with the genre, but the device only served to enhance the enjoyment of the reading experience without giving it any value for learning.

Adler, David. (1992). *A picture book of Christopher Columbus*. New York, NY: Holiday House.

David Adler is a world-renowned author of literally hundreds of children's books. This 1992 picture book, written for ages 5-9, is one of 26 picture books he has written on historic personages. Like the other picture books in his series, this book on Columbus was biographical and did not take great artistic license with the content. The story of Columbus was presented in a factual manner and did not make any claims that could not be supported by fact. As a result, the story presented was superficial and did not provide sufficient information for readers to fully grasp the impact that Columbus had on the indigenous people he encountered. Ultimately, the book presented an easily palatable tale that did not challenge the of the traditional Columbus tale told from the European perspective—an unfortunate reality given that his books are so widely read. This book did not receive any literary distinctions.

Question #1: Does the book provide a comprehensive record of the Christopher Columbus story to include the encounter with the Taino? The book did not provide a comprehensive record of the Columbus story to include the Taino people. The book identified the four voyages of Columbus but only described the first two. Those descriptions were simplistic and did not provide sufficient detail to explain all that took place in the actual voyages. For example, the author made mention of men left behind by Columbus and even provided an illustration of a fort, yet did not discuss the sinking of the *Santa Maria*. Similarly, the role of the Taino in helping with the salvage and construction of the fort were not mentioned. The text gave a distinctly European perspective when it described gifts from the Spanish to the Taino without acknowledging what the Taino gave the Spanish (e.g., threads of cotton, fruit, hammocks), on page 22: “Christopher Columbus gave the natives of the island red caps and glass bead necklaces.” As written, the reader is left to believe that Columbus was simply engaged in a friendly act of giving without any reciprocation. Furthermore, the author did not make any mention of Columbus’ efforts to obtain more gold from the Taino through coercion.

Another area where the book did not provide a comprehensive record was regarding the enslavement of the Tainos. Although Columbus’ return to Spain was noted in the text, the book did not go into detail regarding the forced enslavement of the Taino. As in so many of the other children’s books, the Taino were described much in the same way as the other goods that were brought before the King and Queen of Spain, with the author writing on page 24, “In March 1493 Christopher Columbus sailed back to Spain with gold trinkets, parrots, and a few Indians.” An area where the author did stay true to the historical record regarded the events at La Navidad, regarding which the author wrote, “Christopher found that the men who stayed behind after the first voyage had been cruel to the Indians. The Indians had killed them all” (p. 26). Considering

the plethora of children's books on Columbus that avoid any mention of wrongdoing by the Spanish explorers, the author is to be commended for including this piece of the Columbus story. There was some disparity, however, that might be misleading to young readers. In particular, the Spanish settlers were described as having been "cruel" to the Indians without providing any context. Their resultant death at the hands of the Taino might thus be construed as extreme or out of proportion without any further explanation of the type and degree of cruelty.

Question #2: Does the book provide sufficient insight into the lifestyle-cultural and sociological heritage of the indigenous Taino people? As there was little mention of the Taino in the book, it followed that their social and cultural characteristics were not addressed. Perhaps the only indication of the Taino culture resided in the only two illustrations of the Taino in the book. In these pictures, the Taino were accurately depicted as having long hair with short bangs. Also accurate was the use of ornamentation on the Tainos' arms and in their noses. Their manner of dress, however, was not depicted accurately. The Tainos were shown wearing Roman-style tunics, yet the men typically wore only little clothing at all while the women wore skirts with varying lengths depending on their status. The Taino were also shown wearing red, green, and blue feathers in a headdress. While this may have represented an attempt by the illustrators to show a more lively image of the Tainos, this image was problematic in that it was not consistent with the historical record.

Question #3: To what extent does the book depart from the historical record and what impact does that departure have on the reading and learning experience? The book departed from the historical record by virtue of the omission of essential elements of the Columbus story, such as how Columbus forced the Tainos to be his guide in search for gold, or how the Tainos assisted Columbus in salvaging the wreck of the *Santa Maria*. This departure

may have been due to constraints of book and page length and concerns for the sensibilities of young readers. Still, there was one explicit example of a departure from the historical record that cannot be justified by this reasoning. On page 24, there was a depiction of the Taino being presented to the King and Queen of Spain. In this scene, the Taino were shown as willing, smiling participants, while the reality was that the Taino were slaves that were brought to Spain against their will. As a result of reading this book, the reader should glean some information about Columbus's persistence to find funding to support his voyage and other details prior to his first voyage, but the information a reader could obtain about the Taino people is limited.

Question # 4: To what extent does the book provide insight into Taino interactions or relationships with Columbus and the Spanish Settlers and what impact does that have on the reading and learning experience? The interactions depicted between the Taino and Columbus were inaccurate in some cases in the book and in other cases were nonexistent. For example, when the author described Columbus as offering the Taino "red caps and glass bead necklaces," the author failed to mention that Columbus might have been motivated to give these gifts because he was very much interested in the gold jewelry that the Taino were wearing. This desire for gold has been documented in primary sources and played a large role in the relationship between Columbus and the Taino, yet it was never mentioned. Examples of interactions that should have been included but weren't related to the assistance that the Taino gave to the explorers when the *Santa Maria* sank, the building of La Navidad by the Taino and the explorers, and finally, the enslavement of the Taino population.

Quality rating. The quality of the book, which received no literary distinctions, was rated as *poor*. The author went into some detail of the first voyage yet glossed over the second voyage. Similarly, he only mentioned the last two voyages at the conclusion of the book. Of the

many historical milestones that could have been discussed, the author only included a few. Those milestones that were included did not provide important information, such as the correct naming of the Taino Indians or the fact that they assisted in the building of La Navidad. The author is to be commended for reporting that the Spanish settlers were “cruel” to the Taino; however, he could have expanded on the nature of that cruelty so that younger readers could understand what drove the Taino to kill the settlers. The culture of the Taino people was not transmitted to the reader through this book. Nowhere could the reader gain an insight as to the social life of the indigenous people Columbus encountered. The reader was not informed as to how the Taino people survived or engaged in recreation. In fact, the reader was not even told that this group of Native people was called “Taino.” In the illustration on page 24, the Taino who were forced to accompany Columbus were shown wearing robes and adorned with feathered headdresses. This manner of dress was not part of the Taino culture and represents more of an amalgamation of what Western audiences, or in this case Western illustrators, expect to see Indians wearing.

Weinberger, K. A. (2001). *Let's read about...Christopher Columbus*. New York, NY: Scholastic, Inc.

This 2001 book presented a simple biography of Columbus as an Italian explorer who became the first European to discover the West Indies in four historic voyages sponsored by the Spanish monarchy. Written for children aged 4-8, this book was created by a rather well-published children's book author, Kimberly Weinberger. The illustrations by Cornelius Van Wright and Ying Hua Hu brought to life the simplistic historical retelling featured in the book. This dynamic interracial couple has illustrated many children's books that speak to diversity and cultural transmissions. They believe it is important for children to see different cultures presented in a humane way in which children can connect and identify with the book and in which

stereotypes and cartoon characters cannot take over. This picture book biography contained no source notes, only a brief sentence: “The editors would like to thank Keith Pickering for his expertise.” There are no literary distinctions for this book.

Question #1: Does the book provide a comprehensive record of the Christopher Columbus story to include the encounter with the Taino? The book did not provide a comprehensive record of the Columbus story. First, the Tainos were not included in the historical milestones. Furthermore, none of the Taino interactions were included in the book, such as the enslavement, kidnapping, or forced labor of the Tainos by Columbus and his men. Also of note, only Columbus’ first voyage was fully covered; the subsequent voyages were mentioned but not covered in any detail. When summing up Columbus’ voyages, the author simply stated, “Today we know that Columbus made a mistake. He did not find a path to the Indies. He found the New World. Of course it was not new to the people who lived there” (p. 27-28). Unfortunately, instead of providing follow-up information after this text, the author simply ended the book with the European perspective of, “Columbus never did find all the gold he wanted. But we remember him as a brave sailor. And we honor him for his mistake!” (p. 29). The near genocide that followed for the Taino people after this event was so catastrophic that one can only assume that the Native American population would not honor Columbus for this “mistake.” Such a statement shows a biased approach to a more Eurocentric retelling of history, neglecting the Taino perspective within the historical milestones. Although the book did not offer a comprehensive story of Columbus, the illustrations did supplement the text in a manner that provided some insight into who the Tainos were. For example, the expressions on the face of the Tainos as Columbus claimed their land for Spain was not one of excitement, but rather one of uncertainty.

Question #2: Does the book provide sufficient insight into the lifestyle-cultural and sociological heritage of the indigenous Taino people? The text offered only a small amount of information on the Taino people, but it did address some cultural information and physical characteristics, mainly through the illustrations. By way of the text, the author stated that Columbus was greeted by friendly people and welcomed them “to their land” (p. 23). In addition, the Tainos were shown offering items to Columbus, which reinforced their friendliness at the event. On page 23, the text also stated, “Columbus called the natives ‘Indians.’ He gave them small bells that jingled. They gave him fruit, thread, and parrots.” This reference to fruit and cotton demonstrated an abbreviated insight into the Tainos’ agricultural background. As far as the Tainos’ physical characteristics, the text did not share much; however, the illustrations were once again effective. In particular, there were beautiful watercolor paintings of the Taino in this book. The color of their skin looked realistic and the manner in which their hair was kept was accurate according to primary sources. The overall portrayal of the Taino was flattering as far as the illustrations are concerned. Both Native and non-Native children could feel accepted by the manner in which the illustrations reflected these indigenous people; however, the omissions in all four categories in the text have caused this book to have a lower score.

Question #3: To what extent does the book depart from the historical record and what impact does that departure have on the reading and learning experience? The book departed from the historical record through the vast amount of omissions. The text neglected to mention any negative instances against the Taino throughout the book. Even though the book was geared for a younger audience, the author could have (as some other authors have been able to do) included these vital pieces of history. Without mention of these negative acts against the Taino people, the book would have to be considered as misleading to readers. Although the

author likely did not intend to mislead the reader, the reader was nonetheless guided toward thinking it was acceptable for Columbus to take land away from others by the way the author explained how “we” still honor him based on “his mistake.”

Question #4: To what extent does the book provide insight into Taino interactions or relationships with Columbus and the Spanish Settlers and what impact does that have on the reading and learning experience? The author and illustrator depicted the Tainos to a small degree as independent as they traded items with Columbus. As noted earlier, on p. 23, the author noted, “They [the Tainos] gave him [Columbus] fruit, thread, and parrots.” [which showed interactions and reciprocation of traded goods]. Nevertheless, the lack of interactions with the Tainos in the book and the omissions of facts like the enslavement, kidnapping, or forced labor of the Tainos by Columbus and his men did not make this book a quality reading or learning experience. This is an area where the author could have expanded, particularly given the theoretical extra space in this 29-page picture book, a genre that usually carries a standard 32 pages. The reading and learning experience of the reader is abbreviated by the stated omissions, but informative based on the illustrations that accompanied the text.

Quality rating. This book, which received no literary distinctions, was rated as *poor*. The author only provided a minimal amount of information on the first voyage of Columbus. As a result, there were several omissions in the area of historical milestones. Also notable, the book had many omissions regarding cultural transmissions from the Taino and interactions between the Spanish and the Taino people. The author never mentioned the Tainos by name, only as “Indians” or “natives.” Thus, despite the readily available information in these areas, the book did not provide the reader with a balanced portrayal of this historical event. The illustrations

represented a much more rewarding and educational part of this book. Nonetheless, the illustrations alone cannot carry the book toward being rated *excellent*.

Dodson Wade, M. (2003). *Christopher Columbus*. New York, NY: Children's Press.

This 2003 book, written for ages 4-8, offered a brief look at the life of Columbus and his initial voyage to find a new route to the Indies. The book's author, Mary Dodson Wade, is a former teacher and school librarian who is also the author of a multitude of historical and biographical books for students of many ages, from kindergarten through high school. There was no illustrator for this book as the book used archived photographs for its visual presentation. The author provided an index, "Words You Know" section, and photo credits but did not provide any sources regarding where she obtained her information. This book has not received any literary distinctions.

Question #1: Does the book provide a comprehensive record of the Christopher Columbus story to include the encounter with the Taino? Although the Tainos were mentioned by name, the way the author presented them would not be considered comprehensive nor of quality. A majority of the book focused on what happened prior to Columbus' first voyage, leaving the second, third, and fourth voyages to be wrapped up into one sentence. As this book was a biography geared for a younger audience, it is understandable why the author did not go into depth on issues within each voyage. Nevertheless, when the author stated, "Columbus sailed back to Spain, he took six Tainos to show the king and queen. He also brought parrots, corn, and chili peppers" (p. 24), the Taino were rendered as objects rather than people, as has been seen in many of the other analyzed books. This approach might cause Native American children to feel ashamed or diminished, while endorsing values of domination rather than multiculturalism to non-Native children. Due to the fact that voyages two, three, and four were

all combined into one sentence, there was no explanation or information offered toward any of the historical milestones. Due to the large amount of omissions, this book was unable to offer a rich learning experience.

Question #2: Does the book provide sufficient insight into the lifestyle-cultural and sociological heritage of the indigenous Taino people? This book did not provide the reader with accurate images or information about the Taino people or the role they played in the historical encounter. The only cultural transmission offered in this book was the use of the correct name of the Taino people. Otherwise, the book's depiction of the Taino people was brief and objectified, with no mention of Taino artisanship, agricultural practices or social traditions. Furthermore, the author chose archived photographs for this book, which offered only stereotypical images taken from an outdated European perspective. For example, on page 23 the illustration contained an often used painting of the Tainos presenting the king and queen with gifts of parrots and gold, dressed in colorful cloaks and various headdresses without the appearance of dissension or fear. Because these photos were old and could be considered above the age level of the readers, this could also cause confusion with some children. Therefore, a more balanced (while still age-appropriate) representation of the Taino people would have been much more valuable and useful.

Question #3: To what extent does the book depart from the historical record and what impact does that departure have on the reading and learning experience? This book provided an extremely simplified version of Columbus' first voyage, with more information provided on extraneous topics, such as Marco Polo and his travels. The author could have instead provided additional information on the Tainos and on Columbus' voyages overall. Depending on the teacher or librarians' purpose for sharing this book, the reading and learning

experience could center on other information such as other famous explorers, and not about the historical event surrounding Columbus's arrival to the west and his relationship with the people he encountered.

Question #4: To what extent does the book provide insight into Taino interactions or relationships with Columbus and the Spanish Settlers and what impact does that have on the reading and learning experience? As mentioned previously, this book only briefly mentioned the Taino people. The interactions and relationships of the Taino with Columbus and the Spanish settlers were not provided. Therefore, the book provided no insight regarding such interactions. As a result, the reader is left with an incomplete or inaccurate depiction of who the Taino people were in this event.

Quality rating. The quality of this book, which received no literary distinctions, was rated as *poor*. Only the first voyage was mentioned, and the author provided extraneous background on items that could have been omitted in favor of providing a more comprehensive version of the Columbus story. That is, the author could have used this space to offer more insight into the subsequent voyages of Columbus and provided information on the historical milestones in which the Taino people were included. As a result of the limited information provided, the reader is not able to experience a rich or intimate look into the events that transpired from 1492 and after.

Marzollo, J. (1991). *In 1492*. New York, NY: Scholastic, Inc.

This book, written for ages 4-8, was a light-hearted rhyming picture book telling of Columbus' first voyage to the West. The 1991 book was written by Jean Marzollo and illustrated by Steve Bjorkman. Marzollo is a Blue Ribbon Author, having written over 100 books for children—preschoolers through young adults. She is well-known for her “I Spy”

books today. She grew up in Manchester, Connecticut, and graduated from the University of Connecticut and Harvard Graduate School of Education. She is a former teacher, who later spent time working in educational publishing. Steve Bjorkman has been an illustrator for over 25 years and has published more than 70 children's books. Neither has a demonstrated strong multicultural background. This particular book was part of *Adventuring With Books: A Booklist for Pre-K-Grade 6* (NCTE, 1993, 10th ed.) and the *Children's Catalog* (H.W. Wilson, 2001, 18th ed.). For this book, the author provided a "Background Facts about Christopher Columbus" section on the opening page but did not provide any other source notes indicating where she obtained her information.

Question #1: Does the book provide a comprehensive record of the Christopher Columbus story to include the encounter with the Taino? This book presented Columbus' arrival to the West and his encounter with the Taino using the most basic approach, perhaps in part because of limits garnered by using a rhyming pattern to recount a historical event. The author did mention, "Columbus sailed on to find some gold/To bring back home, as he'd been told" (p. 23). However, the book did not give additional information on how the Taino played a major role in this event. Discussion of Columbus' additional voyages was very brief and described only in the following text: "He made the trip again and again/Trading for gold to bring back to Spain" (p. 25). As a result, this book scored very low in the historical milestone section; the information provided was over simplistic and was not conducive to understanding the historical event in a more comprehensive manner.

Question #2: Does the book provide sufficient insight into the lifestyle-cultural and sociological heritage of the indigenous Taino people? This book did not provide sufficient insight into the lifestyle-cultural and sociological heritage of the Taino people. It did offer hints

of information regarding the people Columbus encountered, such as the author naming them the “Arawaks” (this was not the correct term, but it was the language region where the Tainos were located at the time of the encounter). Due to the limiting rhyming genre, some may find the lines in the text to be a rather tasteless understatement of the manner in which Columbus exploited the Tainos. For example, page 20 of the text read, “The Arawak natives were very nice;/ They gave the sailors food and spice.” Some, however, may find that these lines depict the good nature of the Tainos and refer to it as an accurate piece of information. The accompanying illustrations depicted all of the characters with large noses, and the Tainos as gender-less characters. Also problematic, the illustrator did not give the Tainos unique personal characteristics as he did for Columbus and his men. Instead, each Taino member looked exactly alike, diminishing their individuality and thus humanity. However, the illustrator did give the Taino a realistic skin color and bangs on their forehead. The book’s younger audience does not seem to justify the book’s omissions and inaccuracies given that there are many other books within the same age bracket that manage to address this historical event with more sensitivity and in a more comprehensive manner.

Question #3: To what extent does the book depart from the historical record and what impact does that departure have on the reading and learning experience? The book departed from the historical record by its omissions and lack of explanation of the historical events that took place. The omissions that occurred in this particular retelling of the Columbus story were numerous. For instance, the subsequent voyages were not mentioned except to say that Columbus “made the trip again and again.” Therefore, the reader was not provided with an accurate and comprehensive picture of what truly happened in 1492 but was only offered stereotypical characters through oversimplified word choices. As a result, the departure from

historical reality did not enhance the learning experience of the reader as it did not convey accurate information.

Question #4: To what extent does the book provide insight into Taino interactions or relationships with Columbus and the Spanish Settlers and what impact does that have on the reading and learning experience?

The book only mentioned interactions between the Tainos and Columbus in two places. The first instance covered in the text related to when the Tainos assisted Columbus and his men and gave them “food and spice.” The second instance in the text related to when Columbus was looking for gold and traded it with an assumed Taino member. Other than that, no other interactions between the Taino and Columbus were mentioned in the book. Due to this limited representation, the reading and learning experience could be brief and inconclusive.

Quality rating. The quality of this book, which received no literary distinctions, was rated as *poor*. This light, humorous rhyming of the events that transpired in 1492—though perhaps intended to be entertaining to a young audience—is likely to leave the reader with an inaccurate picture of what truly transpired during this monumental occasion. The book was not comprehensive, only barely discussing the first voyage of Columbus. The accompanying illustrations were biased and not reflective of what we know about the Taino people. Although they were addressed as the Arawaks, the author did not provide sufficient evidence of their role or involvement in the Columbus event. As a result, large omissions were evident and detracted from the reader’s learning experience.

Greene, C. (1989). *Columbus and Frankie the cat*. Chicago, IL: Children’s Press.

This 1989 book, written for ages 4-8, offered a lyrical and rhyming version of the story of Columbus and his first voyage to the West with his friend, Frankie the cat. The book is a song

picture book to the tune of “My Bonnie Lies Over the Ocean.” The author, Carol Greene, is a published adapter and an author of children’s books, having published more than 140 books for children. She has degrees in English Literature and Musicology and has worked in international exchange programs as an editor and a teacher. The illustrator, Tom Dunnington, divides his time between book illustration and wildlife painting. This former U.S. Marine has been a regular contributor to *Highlights for Children* and has illustrated many books and filmstrips on literary, educational, and wildlife themes. Other than the music score and words from the book printed in lyric form, no other source notes were offered within the book. This book has not received any literary awards or distinctions.

Question #1: Does the book provide a comprehensive record of the Christopher Columbus story to include the encounter with the Taino? This version of the historical event in 1492 did not offer a comprehensive record of Columbus’ voyage to find a new route to the Indies. Instead it provided a whimsical, rhyming portrayal of Columbus landing in San Salvador. Unfortunately, this book was riddled with historical inaccuracies and commentary from a talking cat telling Columbus how to conduct himself in his explorations. From the minute Columbus landed, the words began, “They landed the very next morning/And Frankie leaped nimbly ashore. ‘This isn’t Japan,’ he reported. ‘I think you found San Salvador.’ ‘Yo ho! Ho ho! Stop frowning, Columbus, and smile, and smile. Yo ho! We’ll go/And chat with the natives a while” (p. 12). This representation was factually incorrect because Columbus did not know he landed in San Salvador, believing, instead, that he had landed in the Indies. Greene also did not include information on how the Tainos were used to find gold, but she did mention that the reason Columbus was there was to find gold for the queen of Spain. “Yo ho! Achoo! The queen said get plenty of gold, of gold. Achoo! Achoo! All I’ve got is birds and a cold” (p. 17). Brief

references to the *Santa Maria* wrecking off the coast and the dreadful weather Columbus encountered on the way back to Spain offered the reader a bit of historical information, but the rest of the Columbus story was buried under rhymes that often did not make sense and did not offer the reader any insight into the events that transpired in history.

Questions #2: Does the book provide sufficient insight into the lifestyle-cultural and sociological heritage of the indigenous Taino people? Perhaps due, in part, to the humorous presentation of this event, the book did not provide sufficient insight into the cultural lifestyle of the Tainos, nor did it offer information that might lead the reader to a better understanding of who the Taino people were in 1492. The book only made mention of “natives” in two places (e.g., “And chat with the natives a while”), and there were no instances of actual Taino culture made within this book—that is, no mentions of agriculture, ideals, religious beliefs, or artisanship. There was one illustration in which two Taino men were offering parrots to Columbus. They stood holding a parrot on one hand as each wore a grass skirt and a colored headband across their foreheads. To say the least, with the exorbitant amount of missing information, this book did not offer sufficient and accurate evidence of the role the Tainos played in this event.

Question #3: To what extent does the book depart from the historical record and what impact does that departure have on the reading and learning experience? The book departed from the historical record through its omissions and lack of explanation of the historical events that took place. Because this was a fictionalized version of Columbus’ first voyage, it is fair to say that Greene intentionally detracted from the historical record, although her reasons for doing so are unclear. The author’s depiction of Columbus taking orders from a talking cat, although likely employed to engage young readers, may have the unintended effect as Columbus

is rendered submissive which is an inaccurate depiction. Given the book's excessive number of omissions and inaccurate information, the book could be considered more misleading even if entertaining for readers.

Question #4: To what extent does the book provide insight into Taino interactions or relationships with Columbus and the Spanish Settlers and what impact does that have on the reading and learning experience? The only interaction the book eluded to occurring between Columbus and the Tainos appeared on page 13, in which the featured illustration showed two Taino men offering parrots to Columbus and Frankie kindly refusing them, "Before long they started to barter. Columbus got parrots galore. He bowed and said, 'Goodness! How pretty!' But Frankie said, 'Thank you. No more.'" This passage demonstrated the Tainos' willingness to trade with Columbus, but it is unclear why the illustration showed the cat refusing the parrots. The text did not provide any information on the social dynamics of Columbus and the Taino people such that readers would be unable to glean insight into the interactions between Columbus and the Taino people.

Quality rating. The quality rating for this book, which received no literary distinctions, was rated as *poor* based on all five of the criteria in the rubric. The book only mentioned one of the voyages, with a minimal amount of information provided on the Taino people. The author and illustrator only offered the European perspective in the book and did not address cultural interactions of the Taino in any way: no Taino beliefs, ideals, religious beliefs, or artisanship were mentioned. The physical characteristics of the Taino were not conveyed, leaving the reader wondering about who they were and what they were like. The book often departed from the historical record, which ultimately diminished the portrayal of the Taino people in the story and misled readers through omission.

Schaefer, L. M. (2002). *Christopher Columbus*. Mankato, MN: Capstone Press.

This 2002 book, written by Lola Schaefer for young readers as part of the “First Biographies” series, had simple text and photographs that told the story of Columbus as an Italian explorer who sailed to America in 1492. Designed for the beginning reader (ages 4-8), this biography relayed facts about Columbus in large font and presented many archived illustrations along with a progressive timeline. It also contained a table of contents, glossary, bibliography, index, and related Web sites section. Schaefer is an author of children’s books and a national writing consultant. The book’s consulting editor was Saunders-Smith, with its content editor being Beverly McMillan from The Mariner’s Museum in Virginia. There are no literary distinctions associated with this book.

Question #1: Does the book provide a comprehensive record of the Christopher Columbus story to include the encounter with the Taino? In this abbreviated account of the life and first voyage of Columbus, the Taino people were not mentioned anywhere in the book; therefore, the book did not provide a comprehensive record of the Taino people and their role in the 1492 encounter. Schaefer provided background information on Columbus’ youth and his yearning to sail westward in search of another route to the Indies. She explained how Columbus obtained funding for the trip from the queen of Spain and described the three boats the queen gave to him for his voyage. The text read, “In 1492, Christopher and his crew sailed west from Spain. They landed on an island in the Americas after 71 days. Christopher thought they had landed in Asia. He made four trips to these islands” (p. 19). The next page stated that Columbus never knew he did not make it to Asia and then abruptly ended with the mentioning of his death in 1506. Although Schaefer referenced four voyages, no additional information was provided that could demonstrate the Tainos involvement within any of the listed historical milestones.

Question #2: Does the book provide sufficient insight into the lifestyle-cultural and sociological heritage of the indigenous Taino people? As Schaefer never mentioned the people Columbus encountered during his voyages, the book did not provide sufficient insight into the lifestyle, cultural, or sociological heritage of the Taino people.

Question #3: To what extent does the book depart from the historical record and what impact does that departure have on the reading and learning experience? The book departed from the historical record by the omissions and lack of explanation of the historical events that took place as part of Columbus' voyages west. Schaefer and her consultants made the decision to not include the Taino people within this portrayal of Columbus' voyage to the Americas. This departure from the historical record keeps young readers from knowing that the Taino people existed, perpetuating their nonexistence from a heavily Eurocentric perspective. As the book stands, readers cannot glean accurate information about the explorations made by Columbus due to these omissions.

Question #4: To what extent does the book provide insight into Taino interactions or relationships with Columbus and the Spanish Settlers and what impact does that have on the reading and learning experience? As this book did not include any interactions from or with the Taino people, the reading and learning experience is impacted by a large amount of misinformation. Given the 26-page length of the book, it is surprising that Schaefer did not give the reader any information about the people Columbus encountered and the events that transpired during his voyages. By not including this information, the myth of the Taino extinction could be perpetuated. As the book omitted the relationships and important interactions between the Taino and Columbus the reading and learning experience would be limited and not as meaningful as it could be.

Quality rating. The quality rating for this book, which received no literary distinctions, was *poor* based on all five of the rubric criteria. Even though Schaefer included information on the premier voyage of Columbus, not one event involving the Taino was mentioned. As a result of this omitted information, the historical milestones, cultural transmissions, fictionalized treatment, and the interactions and relationships with the Taino people could not be addressed, leaving the reader void of the historical truth behind this famous event. As the book was published in 2002, the author could have easily included much more discussion and information on the Taino people based on the availability of information from primary sources.

Greene, C. (1989). *Christopher Columbus: A great explorer*. Chicago: Children's Press.

In *Christopher Columbus: A Great Explorer*, Carol Greene once again provided a story about the 15th-century Italian seaman and navigator who unknowingly discovered a new continent while looking for a Western route to India. Greene is an author of children's books. She has degrees in English literature and musicology and has worked in international exchange programs, as an editor, and as a teacher. She has published more than 140 books for children. In this book, intended for readers aged 4-8, Greene offered a table of contents, a list of important dates, an index, and a list of photo credits but no bibliography or other supporting evidence for her information. There were no listed literary distinctions for this publication.

Question #1: Does the book provide a comprehensive record of the Christopher Columbus story to include the encounter with the Taino? Overall, this book told a very basic story of Columbus and his four voyages West. Accordingly, it did not contain enough comprehensive material about the Taino people and the role they played in history. Greene provided the basic facts of Columbus' first voyage but did not offer enough factual information where the Tainos were concerned. Her abbreviated statements (e.g., "It was a hard trip. But they

made it” (p. 28) or “Up and down the coast of Central American he sailed. No passage. So he looked for gold” (p. 40) and stereotypical word choices (e.g., she described the Tainos as the “island people,” p. 28) did not provide the reader with factual information about the Tainos’ role in the events.

The first two chapters of this book brought to light some background information about whom Columbus was and the basic story of how he acquired money from the queen to make his voyage West. The discussion of his first voyage began in Chapter 3. The story’s flow was somewhat hindered by the short, abrupt sentences. For example, Greene described Columbus’ first encounter with the Tainos as follows:

It was a little island. Columbus knew that it was not Japan. He called it San Salvador. Island people came to see the ships. Their feet did not look like umbrellas. But they wore no clothes. They thought the sailors’ clothes were strange. (p. 23)

The reference to the Tainos’ feet not looking like umbrellas is unclear; moreover, Greene’s word choices did not provide the reader with a very clear picture of the events that transpired that day, nor did the book offer insight into the Taino people Columbus encountered. For instance, Greene continued, ““Where is Japan?” asked Columbus. The island people didn’t know. So off sailed the ships. They found more islands. They saw strange things, such as sea cows” (pp. 24-25). The only accurate reference to this historical milestone in this voyage was when Columbus returned to Spain. Greene wrote, “He rode a horse to the palace. He brought parrots, plants and shells, six island people, and a little bit of gold” (p. 28). But again, the author objectified the Tainos by addressing the act of kidnapping in just a few simplified words.

Throughout the text, the author mentioned many times the Spaniards’ quest for gold but never explained what role the Tainos played in the endeavor. Greene did mention, however, that Columbus “sent men out to find the king—and gold. All they found were huts and more naked

people” (p. 26). This approach depicted the Tainos in an oversimplified, primitive manner, whereas the author could have described them at more length. The discussion of the voyage ended with a short description of the crash of the *Santa Maria* and a fort the Spanish built from the wreckage, without mention of the assistance provided to them by the Taino people. Greene also erroneously named the first settlement Hispaniola when it was, in fact, La Navidad.

The book stated that when Columbus and his men returned to La Navidad, “instead, they found a burned-down fort. The 39 men were dead. So Columbus went to another part of Hispaniola. ‘Find gold!’ he told his men. But they got sick—and mad” (p. 31). Greene did not give the cause of the men’s death, and the accompanying illustrations were archived lithographs or drawings that did not help explain the event. Greene did, however, begin to paint a darker vision of Columbus when she wrote,

He [Columbus] sailed to Cuba. He found more islands. But when he got back, he found sick, angry men. Then Columbus did some cruel things. He sent island people to Spain as slaves. He made others look for gold. If they didn’t find enough, he punished them. (p. 33)

Although her discussion was brief, Greene did provide the reader with some information on the harsh treatment the Taino endured and slightly addressed the issue of forced labor. In the description of the third and fourth voyages, the Tainos were never mentioned, nor were any significant events in which they participated. The story ended with the death of Columbus and the words of Greene: “He didn’t find Japan. He didn’t find China. He found a whole New World. But Christopher Columbus never knew that” (p. 45). This statement that Columbus found a “New World” might leave a reader believing that the land Columbus encountered had never been seen before, whereas, in reality, it had already been explored. Moreover, the Taino culture had sustained millions of people on those islands for hundreds of years prior to the arrival of the Spanish.

Question #2: Does the book provide sufficient insight into the lifestyle-cultural and sociological heritage of the indigenous Taino people? This version of the voyages of Columbus did not provide sufficient insight into the lifestyle, cultural, and sociological heritage of the Taino people. Within the 46 pages of this book, the only cultural transmission the reader could glean was a brief reference to what Columbus traded with the Tainos during his initial encounter: “They gave the sailors thread, spears, and parrots. The sailors gave them beads, caps, and bells” (p. 24). The story referred to the Tainos as “island people” and not by their name. The illustrations all had a strongly Eurocentric perspective. For example, one of the lithographs was captioned, “Drawing shows Columbus trading with the island people” (p. 24), and showed two men in a boat offering some item to a group of naked people, who were fleeing in what appeared to be a fearful manner. It appears the illustrations were arbitrarily placed throughout the book as oftentimes the illustration did not compliment the text. Additionally, the drawings and paintings present a more Eurocentric influence as there were no drawings or paintings from the Taino people back in the day. It would have been admirable if the author noted the unbalanced approach due to this issue. For instance, on page 17, a black-and-white photograph was captioned, “The cabin Columbus lived in aboard the Santa Maria. At left is his sword. The flag of Spain in on his desk.” Another example is when the text read, “He sent island people to Spain as slaves” (p. 33) which is a true statement; however, the illustration that accompanied this text was one again, an archived lithograph of Columbus and his men on a boat with what appeared to be naked women turning the other way while the caption read, “Indians flee in fear of Columbus” (p. 33). There were no cameras back in those days, so this cannot be a picture of Columbus’ cabin on the *Santa Maria*, which was destroyed in the wreck at La Navidad.

Question #3: To what extent does the book depart from the historical record and what impact does that departure have on the reading and learning experience? The book departed from the historical record by its many omissions and its failure to explain the historical events that took place. Given the confusion of simple facts such as the name of the first settlement (incorrectly given as Hispaniola), the often-omitted information on the Taino people throughout the book, the oversimplified views of the Taino people, the simplistic words and phrases, and the lack of details and explanations, the reader is not provided with a clear picture of the events that transpired. As a result, the reading and learning experience is not as rich and informative as it could be.

Question #4: To what extent does the book provide insight into Taino interactions or relationships with Columbus and the Spanish Settlers and what impact does that have on the reading and learning experience? The book presented some interactions between Columbus and the Taino people, but in such an abbreviated form that it was not clear what relationship the Taino maintained with Columbus and his men. The book failed to provide comprehensive information on how the Tainos reacted to Columbus in many instances, such as the issue of forced labor, the assistance of the Tainos when the *Santa Maria* crashed, or how the Tainos rejected the mistreatment of the settlers. This depiction could negatively impact the reading and learning experience of the reader because the Taino people appear unimportant, young readers may not grasp the magnitude of their role in events, and may come away with the impression that Native people are primitive and easily dismissed.

Quality rating. The quality rating of this book, which received no literary distinctions, is listed as *poor* in all five criteria of the rubric. Even though all four voyages were mentioned in this story, Greene did not provide enough accurate information with regard to the historical

milestones, especially where the Tainos were concerned. Other than what the Tainos traded with Columbus (thread, spears, and parrots), the text and illustrations offered no knowledge of the Taino with regards to physical characteristics, ideals, or agricultural practices, or any other lifestyle or cultural traditions. Because of the large number of omissions and the abbreviated information, the story did not score high in the areas of fictionalized treatment or Taino interactions and relationships. If the author had used a more readable format, had chosen wording that was less short and blunt, and had paid more attention to the Taino people, the book would have been better suited for a true historical look at an event with such global relevance.

DeVillier, C. (2001). *Christopher Columbus*. Edina, MN: ABDO Publishing.

Christopher Columbus is a simplistic biography of the explorer's early life and explorations, intended for readers aged 4-9. It earned no literary distinctions. Christy DeVillier is a published author and an editor of children's books, including several biographies from the First Biographies series. This First Biography began with Columbus' youth but focused primarily on his first voyage, making only brief mention of his later explorations. The book featured a mélange of illustrations, including photographs, historical drawings, and cartoons (no illustrator was given credit, although Jane Halbert was named as the graphic designer). Although there were extra pages of information that included a table of contents, a list of important dates, important words (which are not clarified in the main text), an index, and a list of web sites about Columbus, no information was given as to where the author obtained her information for writing this book.

Question #1: Does the book provide a comprehensive record of the Christopher Columbus story to include the encounter with the Taino? This book does not provide a comprehensive record of Columbus and his encounters with the Taino people during the four

voyages. Only one voyage was explicitly mentioned, and, likewise, brief information was given about only one historical milestone. This was a very simplistic version of Columbus' first voyage. Although the author never mentioned that Columbus forced the Taino people to look for gold or took them from their homeland to be sold into slavery, she did write, "In 1492, Christopher Columbus returned to Spain. He brought gifts to King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella. He brought back six islanders, parrots, and gold" (p. 24). These words were accompanied by an archived picture that appears often in works on Columbus, showing Columbus on one knee, with Taino men of different colors in the background holding spears and parrots and wearing feathers or some type of head covering. This archived illustration is once again used and extends the argument of an unbalanced approach using only Eurocentric depictions of history. No other mention of the Taino was made in the book.

The second, third, and fourth voyages were mentioned only briefly in the text. The account of the second voyage read, "In September 1493, Christopher Columbus sailed back to Hispaniola. This time, he had a fleet of 17 ships. Columbus brought supplies to make a Spanish settlement on the island" (p. 26). The third and fourth voyages were summarized in two sentences: "Columbus sailed across the Atlantic two more times. He found South America on his third voyage. This is why we say Christopher Columbus discovered America" (p. 27). No mention was made of any encounters with the Taino people, nor did the author provide the reader with any details of the subsequent voyages.

Question #2: Does the book provide sufficient insight into the lifestyle-cultural and sociological heritage of the indigenous Taino people? The book did not provide sufficient insight into the culture of the Tainos, giving only a few pieces of information about the identification and cultural insight of the Tainos. First, the author correctly named the Taino

people within the text: “Columbus and his crew found people living on San Salvador. They welcomed Columbus and his men. The islanders called themselves the Taino. Taino means ‘good people’” (p. 21). The book did mention that the Tainos welcomed Columbus, which could inform a careful reader of the Tainos’ good nature. The other pieces of cultural information came from two illustrations. The first was an archived painting of two Native men standing next to each other, both wearing a skirt-like garment and with feathers protruding from their head. There is no indication that this illustration was meant to represent the Taino people, as the caption did not identify the men as Tainos. The second illustration was the previously mentioned painting of Columbus presenting the Native men to the Spanish king and queen on bended knee. Both pictures could be considered confusing to a child, especially when contrasted with the book’s oversimplified cartoons. By weaving both contemporary cartoons with archived lithographs or paintings the two offer completely different depictions which may indicate to a child that the book is not addressing the same people or not offering a more accurate retelling of history.

Question #3: To what extent does the book depart from the historical record and what impact does that departure have on the reading and learning experience? The book departed from historical record by the numerous omissions and the lack of explanation of the historical events. It only provided basic information about the first voyage and summarized the other three voyages in just two sentences. In addition, the book neglected to mention any involvement with the Taino people other than the initial greeting when Columbus made landfall. Given the large amount of information that was not provided by the author, the reader learns an incomplete, abbreviated version of the Columbus story.

Question #4: To what extent does the book provide insight into Taino interactions or relationships with Columbus and the Spanish Settlers and what impact does that have on the reading and learning experience? The book described only two interactions with the Tainos: when Columbus landed in San Salvador and was greeted by the Taino people, and when Columbus brought six Natives to the Spanish king and queen. As a result, this book could leave the reader with the impression that the Taino people were not important to the events. This perpetuates the problem of misrepresentation that is inherent to children’s retellings of the Columbus story.

Quality rating. This book, which earned no literary distinctions, is given a quality rating of *poor* on the basis of all five criteria. It only briefly touched on Columbus’ first voyage, summing up the other three voyages in two short sentences. The information about the first voyage was oversimplified and filled with omissions. Only one brief reference to the six Natives that Columbus “brought back for the king and queen” speaks to the horrible conditions the Tainos faced after 1492. Moreover, the reference objectified the Taino rather than telling about the event. The book could have included much richer information and told a more comprehensive story of Columbus and his interactions and relationships with the Taino across all four voyages. Key words were highlighted but undefined in the main text—readers must consult the appended Important Words list.

Richards, D. F. (1978). *Christopher Columbus . . . who sailed on!* Eglin, IL: Child’s World.

Christopher Columbus . . . Who Sailed On! written by Dorothy Fay Richards and illustrated by John Nelson, related for children aged 4-8 the basic attempts of Columbus to find a shorter route to the Indies. The author did not provide any information on the sources she used

to write this book, nor did she include additional resources for a reader like most nonfiction works do. The book has been awarded no literary distinctions.

Question #1: Does the book provide a comprehensive record of the Christopher Columbus story to include the encounter with the Taino? The book did not provide a comprehensive record of Columbus' encounters with the Taino people. In fact, it barely addressed what happened once Columbus reached the Americas, instead offering a peek into what might have happened on board the ship during Columbus' first voyage and the interactions between Columbus and his crew. In addition to the book's insufficient historical coverage, the illustrations were not interesting. The watercolor paintings were done solely in shades of blue and were nothing more than bland; they would not be much help to a reader trying to visualize the text, nor are they likely to catch the eye of a child scanning the library bookshelves.

The first 27 of the book's 31 pages described Columbus' attempt to secure funds from the Spanish royalty and what might have happened on board during his first voyage west. The reader can still learn from the book, such as the number and names of the ships sailed by Columbus and his crew and how the crew encountered the Sargasso Sea (which was described as "a place where weeds covered the water," p. 22) during the first voyage. The crew's simplistic dialogue and Columbus's repetitive response to their complaints ("Sail on!") detracted from the historical meaning of the event. The story ended with Columbus and his men kneeling and thanking God for leading them safely to "this place" (p. 28). The author stated,

Columbus had found a new, unknown part of the world. The place was beautiful. The people who lived there were very kind to him. Columbus thought he had come to India. So he called the people, "Indians." But he was wrong. He had really come to the part of the world where we now live. (p. 28)

This text appeared to contradict itself; on one hand, it stated that Columbus had come to an unknown part of the world, but on the other hand, there were people already living there, so it

really was not unknown. This contradiction seems to reveal the Eurocentric assumption that a land was unknown if the Europeans had not discovered it, regardless of any indigenous peoples living there.

Question #2: Does the book provide sufficient insight into the lifestyle-cultural and sociological heritage of the indigenous Taino people? The only piece of information about the Taino any reader could glean from this book is the fact that the people (only named as “Indians”) Columbus encountered when he landed in 1492 were friendly and kind. The book’s focus was primarily on the voyage itself, not on the events after Columbus made landfall or the impact the Spanish had on the island’s existing population and on the world.

Question #3: To what extent does the book depart from the historical record and what impact does that departure have on the reading and learning experience? The book adhered to the historical record in its basic facts and reflected the general information about the events leading up to Columbus’ first voyage. However, because the author skimmed over a large part of history, excluding information on both the Taino and what happened once Columbus reached land, the reader is not given enough information to adequately learn about the story of the Taino found within the voyages of Columbus. As a result of the numerous omissions, the book was not a good reference, as it might leave the reader with questions or possible misconceptions about the Taino people.

Question #4: To what extent does the book provide insight into Taino interactions or relationships with Columbus and the Spanish Settlers and what impact does that have on the reading and learning experience? Unfortunately, this book reflected the limited cultural understanding of the time in which it was written. It included no interactions or relationships with the Taino people. The book only described the interactions between Columbus and his

men, portraying a strictly Eurocentric perspective. Simply stated, the book did not provide enough factual information on the relationships between the Spanish and the Taino people. As the book neglects the Tainos rejecting European influences and did not portray the Tainos as self-sufficient, the learning experience is shallow and not as comprehensive as a book that contained more information on the relationships that existed between the Taino and Columbus and his men.

Quality rating. The rating of this book, which received no literary distinctions, is *poor* in all five areas of the rubric. Only one voyage was discussed, from a very biased perspective. The author only identified the Tainos once within the story, referring to them as “Indians” and offering no insight into their culture or ways of living. The numerous omissions of important facts have a negative impact on the potential reading and learning experience of the reader. The uninteresting illustrations and the lackluster text leave this book on the “less desirable” list.

Carpenter, E. (1992). *Young Christopher Columbus: Discoverer of new worlds*. New York: Troll Associates.

This book is a generic and simple retelling of Columbus’ first voyage and how it opened the door for European exploration, intended for aged 4-8. The book earned no literary distinctions. The author provided no source notes or other information on how he gathered his information for this book.

Question #1: Does the book provide a comprehensive record of the Christopher Columbus story to include the encounter with the Taino? This book did not provide a comprehensive record of Columbus’ story and his encounter with the Taino people. The author and illustrator neglected to offer the reader any information regarding historical milestones, other than the following statement about when Columbus first landed, thinking he had reached the Indies: “So when the island’s people came to meet him, Columbus named them Indians. But he

was really on San Salvador, near Florida” (p. 23). Florida is nowhere near where Columbus first landed. The book even glossed over the fact that Columbus kidnapped some Taino people to take back to Spain: “Columbus explored many islands. He met friendly natives and found gold and other gifts to bring back to the king and queen of Spain” (p. 24). Students who read this book do not learn the truth of what happened to the Tainos, and they are also given a rose-colored interpretation of history.

The illustrations, with their cartoonish figures and smiling faces, were clearly made with a young audience in mind. However, they failed to give readers a realistic picture of who the Tainos were and their importance to history: The Natives were portrayed as having ponytails with multicolored feathers protruding, wearing dangling earrings in each ear, and carrying spears. Their skin color was the same as that of Columbus.

Question #2: Does the book provide sufficient insight into the lifestyle-cultural and sociological heritage of the indigenous Taino people? Unfortunately, the book gave very little insight into the Taino culture, presenting only a shallow overview of the events that transpired from 1492 on. Other than a single picture of a treasure chest with a gold crown, pearls, and bracelets, no cultural specifics were provided, nor did the book convey the Tainos’ multifaceted way of life. It did not address the Tainos at all other than the brief mention of Columbus thinking he had met “Indians.”

Question #3: To what extent does the book depart from the historical record and what impact does that departure have on the reading and learning experience? The book departed from historical record by the omissions and lack of explanation of the historical events. It presented a simplistic version of history that only scratched the surface of this complex event. The illustrations of smiling faces and hands held out in a welcoming fashion can mislead the

reader to think that the Spanish had only positive, friendly relations with the Taino. The book did not allude to the difficulties faced by the indigenous populations during this time and after. Given the lack of information, the reader is given an incomplete lesson on who Columbus was and what happened during his explorations. Even for younger children, a more complete version of history could have been crafted to include this information in an age-appropriate manner.

Question #4: To what extent does the book provide insight into Taino interactions or relationships with Columbus and the Spanish Settlers and what impact does that have on the reading and learning experience? Because of the excessive amount of omitted information, this book does not give the reader a quality lesson on the interactions between the Taino and Columbus. It did not mention the people Columbus encountered, what they were like, what they ate, where they lived, or even what they looked like. It oversimplified the event, leaving a void for those students seeking objective information on the events surrounding 1492.

Quality rating. The quality of this book, which earned no literary distinctions, is rated as *poor* in all five areas of the rubric. The one-dimensional approach the author took does not provide the reader with comprehensive information on Columbus' four voyages. The historical milestones were basically ignored, and, as a result, the book failed to address the culture of the Tainos and their interactions with the Spanish. As this book was published around the quincentennial celebration of Columbus' first voyage, one might expect it to contain more facts rather than a romanticized version of history. The author and illustrator did not research this topic in sufficient depth and managed to omit many important events altogether. As a result, the book was oversimplified and not representative of the quality that should be shared in today's classroom.

Showers, P. (1965). *Columbus Day*. New York, NY: Thomas Y. Crowell Co.

The author, Paul Showers, has written over 25 books over his career, including those in the “Let’s-Read-and-Find-Out Science” series. A former Army staff sergeant in World War II, Showers worked on the *New York Herald Tribune*, and for 30 years, the *Sunday New York Times*. The book’s illustrator, Ed Emberley, has written and illustrated around 80 books for children, 20 of which are still in print: 13 are drawing books and 7 are picture books. Dubbed “the new world’s first festival,” this 1965 book, *Columbus Day*, intended for an audience aged 5-9 years old, covered the story of Columbus’ years of apprenticeship, his first voyage west, and the moment of discovery. It also highlighted how people across the United States celebrate this holiday. No source notes, further reading, or bibliography listing where the author obtained his information were offered.

Question #1: Does the book provide a comprehensive record of the Christopher Columbus story to include the encounter with the Taino? This book did not offer a comprehensive record of Columbus’ voyages nor did it provide insight into the various historical milestones surrounding this event. The only milestone the book presented was Columbus’ first voyage and the initial encounter he had with the Taino. The story began with Columbus’ youth and his interests in sailing and then went into the quest to find funding for his voyage and the preparation of the crew and boats to sail. It reflected the hostility of the crew toward Columbus prior to landing, and it mentioned Columbus’ discovery of land. The only record of the Taino people described in the book occurred in the following passage, when Columbus came ashore the first time:

He [Columbus] found people there who had dark skins like the people of the Indies. He called them Indians and they have been called Indians ever since...He found more islands with more dark-skinned people. On one of the islands they brought him gold. Then he

was sure he had reached the Indies. He sailed back to Spain, taking some of the Indians with him to prove what he had found. (p. 25-26)

This passage represents the sole mention regarding Columbus' encounter with the Taino people, such that much information on the Taino-Columbus encounter was not included. Although the text acknowledged that Columbus removed some Tainos from their home to bring back to Spain, the event was worded in a fashion that could leave readers feeling that it was acceptable for Columbus to remove the Taino people to justify his trip to the Spanish Royalty. The remaining voyages were only described briefly, as, "After that Columbus made three more voyages west across the ocean. On each trip he found more islands and each time he was sure he would find China" (p. 28). Thus, the author did not elaborate on the subsequent voyages or any other relationships with the Taino people Columbus encountered during these trips.

Question #2: Does the book provide sufficient insight into the lifestyle-cultural and sociological heritage of the indigenous Taino people? The only visible Taino cultural component covered within the text of this book was the fact that gold existed on the land on which the Taino lived. In particular, the text related that one of the "dark-skinned" people gave Columbus gold. In terms of its illustrations, the book did depict one aspect of Taino culture with a cartoonish character, meant to be a Native, demonstrating the use of what appeared to be a hammock to two of Columbus' men. Unfortunately, this visual depiction of Taino culture was not mentioned in the text. The author went on to describe that ever since Columbus named the Taino people "Indians," that is what they have been called ever since. The author's use of the term "dark-skinned" people to describe physical characteristics of the Taino, in the absence of any other descriptors, was stereotypical and can be interpreted as a negative depiction of the Taino. Also notable, the cartoonish representation of one Taino person showed a profile resembling that of a monkey—a long, flat nose; a dropped jaw; and no upper lip—thus

dehumanizing the Taino. Still, the hair appeared somewhat correct, and the person was shown with little clothing, a banded marking on his arm, and beads dangling from his neck which lends some authenticity to the rendering. No other insight into the lifestyle, culture, or sociological heritage of the Taino can be gleaned from this book.

Question #3: To what extent does the book depart from the historical record and what impact does that departure have on the reading and learning experience? The omissions and assumptions surrounding Columbus' interactions with the Taino are numerous and imposing in this book. The reader is left with a Eurocentric perspective on why and how Columbus Day is celebrated around the United States, which is supported by the statement from the book, "But no matter how people say his name, everyone honors Columbus on his special holiday in October. It is a day set aside to remember him—the brave man who would not give up" (p. 34). Understanding that this book was published in 1965, the explanation about how and why Columbus Day was celebrated presumably reflected the sign of the times as civil right movements just began to enter into the realm of reality during this time. However, since it is identified as a book used in the classroom today, it brings about some serious concerns as children are exposed to old, outdated versions of this age-old story. It impacts the quality learning experience of the reader because of the inaccurate, negatively stereotyped information it offers, which has the potential to reinforce the discriminating tone from the past into the present classroom.

Question #4: To what extent does the book provide insight into Taino interactions or relationships with Columbus and the Spanish Settlers and what impact does that have on the reading and learning experience? The book did not provide ample insight into the interactions and relationships between the Taino people and Columbus and his men. Only two

interactions were described in the book: the Taino people bringing Columbus gold and, as shown in the previously mentioned illustration, the Taino teaching the Spanish men how to use a canoe. None of the other documented interactions between the Taino and Columbus were discussed (e.g., the Taino aiding the Spanish in building a fort at La Navidad, the Taino being forced to find gold for the Spanish, etc). These omissions' impact on the reading and learning experience is quite high. Because the text did not include the many interactions that occurred between the Taino and Columbus, the reader is forced to rely on the book's scant reference to the Taino as a "dark-skinned" people to formulate an understanding of them.

Quality rating. The quality of this book was rated as *poor* in all five areas of the rubric. As the author only indulged in Columbus' first voyage and summed up the rest of Columbus' explorations in one sentence, the information that a child could learn about the Taino people was practically nonexistent. Furthermore, the discriminating references to "dark-skinned" people, which reduces them to a single-dimensional color, can perpetuate racial discrimination among the students who read this book. The detraction from the historical record through numerous omissions and biased perspective also added to the low rating of this book. Due to the fact that this book was over 30 years old, the stereotypical and erroneous manner in which non-European characters (the Tainos, in this case) were depicted was not a surprise. However, the fact that this book is currently being shared to tell the story of Columbus is of a greater concern than the omissions and historical blunders.

Alter, J. (2003). *Christopher Columbus*. Chanhassen, MN: A Child's World.

This 2003 book by Judy Alter took the reader on a trip back in time by introducing the life of Columbus, his accomplishments, and the four voyages on which he traveled before his death. This award-winning author has written a series about many "second-tiered" Texans (i.e.,

those not as well known as others), for use in Texas public schools. There were no illustrations in this book, except for archived drawings and paintings, which are often used in other texts when telling this story. Alter did provide a table of contents, index, glossary, suggestions for further reading, however, and also some places and Web sites to visit. No awards were listed for this book.

Question #1: Does the book provide a comprehensive record of the Christopher Columbus story to include the encounter with the Taino? Although this book took the reader through Columbus' four voyages, the portrayal of the Taino people was not depicted as accurately as possible, given current sources on the Taino. There were some redeeming aspects provided by the author, which included references to Columbus having taken Taino prisoners to enslave them in Spain. However, overall, the book used a one-dimensional approach that conveyed the European perspective and left out the perspective of the Taino people, through the book's inaccuracies and omissions. The first chapter briefly recapped Columbus' first voyage. It told of Columbus' landing where he thought the East Indies to be, a place where "Dark-skinned native people came forward to greet him" (p. 9). The text continued to describe the people, noting, "They were probably peaceful Native American people known as the Taino. Columbus called them 'Indians' and he claimed their land for Spain" (p. 9). The next chapter described Columbus' youth, followed by a third chapter titled, "The Great Hero." This chapter, which retold the first voyage and explained the events when Columbus began to look for gold ("He took a few Taino Indians with him as guides," p. 19) was problematic in that it could be interpreted as conveying that the Tainos went willingly with Columbus when they were actually forced to participate. As for the issue of Taino enslavement, Alter stated that "Columbus filled his ships with exotic birds, herb, spices—and a few prisoners" (p. 20), thus acknowledging the

Taino imprisonment. However, when Columbus returned to Spain, the text did not mention the prisoners; readers only see them in an illustration (one that is often used) showing two exotic types of people (presumably Taino) offering gifts to the Spanish Royalty. Thus, the book presented the Taino enslavement only superficially. The book did mention the violence at La Navidad between the Taino and the Spanish settlers, but it never described the role the Tainos played in helping Columbus salvage the wreck of the *Santa Maria*. As a result, the information about the first voyage was shallow and cannot be described as accurate.

In the telling of Columbus' second voyage, Alter inaccurately depicted this milestone. In Alter's version of the story, when Columbus returned for his men left on La Navidad (Alter stated that there were 20 men left behind when in fact there were 39), Alter explained, "he [Columbus] found that many of the men left behind had died of sickness, and the Native Americans had killed the others when they asked for food" (p. 21-22). In reality, the Taino people had retaliated against the settlers due to the raping, forced labor, and murdering of their people, but Alter did not make mention of this fact. As a result, the reader is thus unable to see the killings as a natural response to the cruel and unjust acts perpetrated against the Taino by the settlers. The illustration that supplemented this text was an undocumented, archived drawing of a group of Native people fighting back with spears, but the author paired the illustration with a caption that read, "This drawing shows the Native Americans killing the Spanish settler of La Navidad." Alter did mention, however, that Columbus sent the Taino people back as slaves, which is accurate according to primary sources. The third voyage referenced how Columbus' brother had imprisoned many Taino people but focused more on the disorder that existed in Hispaniola than the King and Queen's dissatisfaction upon hearing of the cruelty against the "Native Americans." There was no mention of the increased amount of slave labor or the

implementation of the encomiando system during this time. The fourth voyage ended with no mention of the Taino people or any other tribe Columbus may have encountered.

Question #2: Does the book provide sufficient insight into the lifestyle-cultural and sociological heritage of the indigenous Taino people? Although Alter provided information about the Taino people by correctly describing them by their tribal affiliation, overall, this book did not provide a sufficient amount of information for a reader to learn about the lifestyle, cultural, and sociological heritage of the people whom Columbus encountered during his voyages to the Americas. The only cultural indicator offered in the text of the book was that of how the Taino people shared tobacco with the Spanish settlers. No other cultural indicators were discussed in the text. As for the illustrations, one could glean some information on the Taino culture here, such as some examples of the artisanship, but because the illustrations were archived drawings and paintings, they differed greatly from one another, potentially confusing the reader. A reader could be confused by seeing one picture portraying Columbus in one way, then seeing another picture of Columbus looking like a completely different person. As there are no known official pictures of Columbus or the Taino, it would be helpful for the author to note the discrepancies. These illustrations also reflected a Eurocentric perspective, having been created by Europeans due to the unavailability of authentic Taino representations.

Question #3: To what extent does the book depart from the historical record and what impact does that departure have on the reading and learning experience? Due to the omissions and inaccurate information within this book, a well-rounded reading and learning experience is threatened. Such omissions included the lack of detail of events in the four voyages or a more comprehensive look at the cultural transmissions the book could have offered. Alter provided some inaccurate information and also offered a biased look at these events

through mainstream lenses by the statements that were made (or not made) regarding the Taino involvement. These departures from the historical record clouded the quality of this story.

Given that the book was published as recently as 2003, the book could have contained more accurate and abundant information that would have enhanced the reader's knowledge of who the Taino were in this event.

Question #4: To what extent does the book provide insight into Taino interactions or relationships with Columbus and the Spanish Settlers and what impact does that have on the reading and learning experience? The book's depiction of interactions and relationships between the Taino and Columbus and his crew was superficial. There were opportunities where Alter could have provided a more thorough explanation of Taino retaliation on such events like La Navidad or offered an additional sentence explaining how Columbus displayed the Taino people like objects while he presented them to the King and Queen. As such, the Tainos were not depicted as a self-reliant group of people. They were, however, demonstrated on a basic level as rejecting the Spanish mistreatment, but the author did not provide enough information for the reader to understand the extent of the punishment the Taino endured when they refused the settlers' demands. As a result, the interactions and relationships between the two groups of people were depicted in only a superficial manner, minimizing the potential for the reader to gain knowledge surrounding this encounter and clash of cultures.

Quality rating. The quality of this book was rated as *poor* in all five areas in the rubric. Although the author addressed all four voyages of Columbus, she only provided minimal coverage and it appeared biased at that. The illustrations were derived mainly from paintings and drawings not intended for publication in this book. The author is commended by the manner the book left young historians with the thought that while Columbus was not as noble as legend

would have it, his voyages to the Americas did change the world. However, due to numerous omissions and biased reporting, this book did not score high enough to be considered one that should be shared in the classroom.

Gleiter, J. & Thompson, K. (1995). *Christopher Columbus*. Austin, TX: Raintree Steck-Vaughn.

Christopher Columbus (1995) is a fictional biography written by Jan Gleiter and Kathleen Thompson and illustrated by Rick Whipple. Gleiter is the author of the award-winning *Lie Down with Dogs* and is senior editor with the McGraw-Hill Publishing firm. Thompson is a published adapter, author, editor, and photographer of children's books. Whipple is an internationally published illustrator and has created art for a number of books for young readers, many in the area of historical themes and biographies. This book, intended for ages 9-12, shared the events around Columbus and his travels west. While on Columbus' fourth and final voyage, Columbus tells his son, Fernando, about the first time he set sail and encountered a new land while searching for a new route to the Indies. The only source notes provided in this book is a list of key dates of Columbus' voyages in the back of the book. There are no literary distinctions associated with this book.

Question #1: Does the book provide a comprehensive record of the Christopher Columbus story to include the encounter with the Taino? This book did not provide a comprehensive record of the Columbus story. It discussed Columbus' first voyage and alluded to some information on his fourth voyage but did not provide information on Columbus' second or third voyage, thus not addressing historical milestones during that time period. Similarly, the Taino were not treated in a comprehensive way. For example, during the initial encounter between Columbus and the Taino, the text only referenced the Taino people by stating, "We went onto the shore...The people who lived there met us and gave us gifts. I named the place

San Salvador” (p. 25). Later, on page 28, Gleiter and Thompson mentioned the wreck of the *Santa Maria* but did not mention the assistance given by the Tainos to Columbus’ men and did not describe what Columbus found when he returned to La Navidad. On page 31, the only other textual reference to the Taino is made: “He [Columbus] was in fights with those people called ‘Indians.’ We call these first peoples Native Americans.” That is where the story ended; there was no mention of the other historical milestones. Small but notable, the text also contained some misleading information regarding the historical events of Columbus’ fourth voyage. In particular, crew members were depicted as threatening Columbus’ youngest son, Fernando, to tell his father to “watch out” as they were angry because they had not embarked on land at one point. Yet, this depiction is misleading because by the fourth voyage, many Europeans were sailing with Columbus and knew the time it took to sail west as it had been done three times before by Columbus. Due to the fragmented organization of the story and the lack of information regarding the historical milestones, this book did not provide the reader with a comprehensive record of what occurred with the Taino people during his encounter.

Question #2: Does the book provide sufficient insight into the lifestyle-cultural and sociological heritage of the indigenous Taino people? This book did not provide sufficient insight into the lifestyle and culture of the Taino people. The omitted details of the encounters and events surrounding Columbus’ voyages did not garner the opportunity to learn or gather cultural information about the people who greeted Columbus. The book never identified the Taino by name, other than a brief reference as “Native Americans” and “Indians.” The only other cultural information on the Taino might have been found in an illustration that showed a group of Native people (presumably, Taino), but the illustration did not match reality as all six men looked exactly alike and had feathers protruding from each of their heads. It is customary

for the cacique (or chief) to identify himself through the wearing of feathers; however, it is not likely that all the men would adorn themselves in this manner. The three women illustrated were also depicted identically; they were shown as having long black hair and each had their hands offering gifts to Columbus. In contrast, the European characters were defined much more realistically than the Taino, on the opposite page, with Columbus and his men painted individually with different features and characteristics.

Question #3: To what extent does the book depart from the historical record and what impact does that departure have on the reading and learning experience? As the book was created in a narrative format using dialogue to take the reader back in time, the conversations were fictional. Although it is not implausible that certain conversations took place, this format still did not paint a complete picture of the events that transpired during these monumental occasions. The second and third voyages were omitted altogether, along with details from the first and fourth voyages. The reader's learning experience is limited as they were not exposed to any Taino references which would have enriched the value of the book.

Question #4: To what extent does the book provide insight into Taino interactions or relationships with Columbus and the Spanish Settlers and what impact does that have on the reading and learning experience? This book did not provide enough information on the interactions or relationships between Columbus and the Taino people to be considered a comprehensive retelling of this historical event. There were no examples of the actual conflicts that occurred between Columbus and the Taino, other than a mention of the fight that Columbus had with the "Indians" on the last page of the book. This mention was problematic because it did not describe any of the circumstances that spurred the Taino to engage in this fight. The illustrations did not supplement the text in any of these areas.

Quality rating. The quality of this book was rated as *poor* in all areas of the rubric. The book was void of the complexities and controversial issues surrounding the Columbus history. To the publisher's credit, the book's color illustrations and easy-to-read formats might make these volumes useful for early readers, but in terms of portraying the encounter of Columbus with the Taino people, this book can only offer a one-sided story from a European perspective, with its scant information on the Taino people.

Sis, P. (1991). *Follow the dream*. New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf.

In pursuit of his dream, Columbus embarked on a journey with his crew to break down the wall that stood between Spain and what he believed to be a new route to China. As a result, he encountered a new world for Europe. Czechoslovakian author, Peter Sis, employed the same wall metaphor to emphasize Columbus' pushing back boundaries as he did when he left his home country. This biographical story, *Follow the Dream* (1991), presented a simplistic story of Columbus' first journey west. Sis offered a personal "Note to the Reader" section, which explained how he obtained and read many books and studied maps in order to write this book. The book concluded with a short narrative about Sis as an author and once again disclosed some of the primary sources he referenced. This book has won several literary recognitions, including the ABC Children's Booksellers Choices Award Winner for Non-Fiction in 1992 and a mention in the *Annual Best Children's Science Book List* in 1991 in the "Science Books and Films" category.

Question #1: Does the book provide a comprehensive record of the Christopher Columbus story to include the encounter with the Taino? Although the book provided readers with a unique perspective from an author who is not from the United States, Sis's version of Columbus' journey to find a new route to China did not include information about the people

he encountered or the conflicts that existed during these voyages. This simplified view of Columbus' first voyage described his youth and his desire to become an explorer and set the stage for the trip that occurred in 1492 but neglected to mention the Taino people altogether. The book was told through simple text accompanied by extraordinary illustrations, but the book did not meet any of the historical milestones set for this analysis. No other voyage was mentioned in the book, and no disclosure of the complexities surrounding Columbus' exploration of the Americas, particularly in relation to the Taino, was offered.

Question #2: Does the book provide sufficient insight into the lifestyle-cultural and sociological heritage of the indigenous Taino people? Due to the fact that Sis never mentioned the people whom Columbus encountered, the book was unable to provide sufficient insight into the lifestyle and cultural history of the Taino people. There was one illustration at the back of the book that showed Columbus standing in front of a group of what appears to be naked people (presumably, the Taino) with their hands held outward as if they were worshipping the man who stood before them. A shadow extended downward from Columbus, reminiscent of a man on a pedestal. On the following page, Columbus' statue is shown, in fact, high on a pedestal overlooking the town, with a group of young people (again, presumably of Taino background) gathered around him admiring what they see before them. Unfortunately, these depictions gave no insight into the true cultural and sociological heritage of the Taino, showing them only as subservient to Columbus. Other than these depictions, no other cultural information can be gleaned from this book.

Question #3: To what extent does the book depart from the historical record and what impact does that departure have on the reading and learning experience? This book omitted a vast amount of information surrounding Columbus' journey and his encounters with

anyone outside his immediate followers, including the Taino people altogether. Another area in which the book departed from the historical record related to the information the book gave regarding Queen Isabella using her jewels to fund Columbus' trip. This information cannot be factually verified and thus should not be included in the Columbus story. Due to these large numbers of omissions, the reader is not exposed to a balanced view of a true biography about Columbus and the atrocities left behind in the wake of his travels.

Question #4: To what extent does the book provide insight into Taino interactions or relationships with Columbus and the Spanish Settlers and what impact does that have on the reading and learning experience? There were no examples of interactions or relationships between Columbus and the Taino people given in this book.

Quality rating. The quality of this book is rated as *poor* in all areas of the rubric. Though the book contained fascinating illustrations that would attract readers of any age, the text nonetheless might mislead the reader into a romanticized view of a very complex event in history. Sis covered the birth of Columbus through Columbus' efforts to obtain support to make his trip west. The text alluded to the unsettled interactions between the crew and Columbus but never mentioned one instance or historical milestone involving the Taino people. In addition, there were no cultural transmissions and no Taino interactions included anywhere in the story, which would have garnered this book with a higher quality score. The vast number of omissions in this book did not provide the opportunity for a truthful account of history to be told.

Gardeski, M. C. (2001). *Columbus Day*. New York, NY: Children's Press.

This introductory informational book by Christine Mia Gardeski offered the young reader (ages 4-8) insight into the history, meaning, and customs of Columbus Day. Gardeski, a former elementary school teacher, has published other nonfiction pieces. Two consultants were listed in

this book—Nanci Vargus, EdD (Primary Multiage Teacher), and Katharine Kane (Reading Specialist)—although it was not clear what purpose the two consultants served on this story. Gardeski provided an index and photo credits, but no other sources were cited, nor were there any literary distinctions listed for this book.

Question #1: Does the book provide a comprehensive record of the Christopher Columbus story to include the encounter with the Taino? The only voyage this book addressed was Columbus’ first voyage west. The rest of the events that followed were not included. In addition, the book only briefly referenced the Native people Columbus encountered, stating, on page 19, “Columbus called the people he met ‘Indians,’” and later, on page 23, “The people Columbus called ‘Indians’ were really Native Americans. They lived in America long before Columbus arrived.” To the author’s credit, this text acknowledged that the land Columbus encountered was not “new” land and that there were already people living on it. Yet no other information on the Taino was provided and no other historical milestones were addressed.

Question #2: Does the book provide sufficient insight into the lifestyle-cultural and sociological heritage of the indigenous Taino people? This book did not provide a sufficient amount of insight into the Taino people or the role they played in Columbus’ explorations, as no information about the Taino was given other than the “Indian” and “Native Americans” name acknowledgement previously mentioned. With information on the Taino people being available at the time of this book’s publication, 2001, it was surprising that this book did not refer to the Tainos by name or provide insight into their culture.

Question #3: To what extent does the book depart from the historical record and what impact does that departure have on the reading and learning experience? The

information provided in the book did not detract from the historical record, but the text failed to include many essential parts of the Christopher Columbus story. For example, the author could have included more information about the Taino and their role in this history. With these omissions, the reader is not able to glean rich information about the historical content surrounding this event, leaving the reader with a short and abbreviated retelling of a famous person in history and the holiday recognition he received as a result of his actions.

Question #4: To what extent does the book provide insight into Taino interactions or relationships with Columbus and the Spanish Settlers and what impact does that have on the reading and learning experience? The book reflected the initial encounter with the Taino people and Columbus but referenced only the name Columbus gave to them (“Indians”). There were two illustrations that included the Taino people (or what can be presumed to represent the Taino people). The first of these illustrations, an often referenced archived drawing, was found on page 19 and depicted Columbus and a group of Native people. The Native people were depicted as presenting Columbus with gifts and holding out their hands in a welcoming fashion. The other illustration contained an archived drawing of a group of Native people, with a very different physical appearance than the previously illustrated Native people, planting corn and harvesting; however, the Native people are not shown interacting with Columbus. The two pictures might confuse a child as they depicted two very different groups of people in terms of physical appearance. The lack of information surrounding the interaction and relationships between the Taino and Columbus did not offer a quality representation of the events that surrounded Columbus’ exploration of the Americas.

Quality rating. The quality of this book was rated as *poor* in four out of the five listed criteria in the rubric. Given that only one voyage was presented, the book was scored low on the

amount of information provided to the reader from an overall, comprehensive format. There was only one historical milestone depicted (when Columbus landed, he found “Indians” on the land). Due to this lack of information, the amount of cultural transmissions were also few as the only way a reader could obtain information in this area would be to reference the old, archived drawings of indigenous people that were not related or accurate. The one criterion that was scored as *good* was in the fictionalized treatment section. The story presented in the book generally did not detract from the historical record, but the fact that there were many omitted instances that were not addressed in the story, the book was scored lower overall because the book did not expose the reader to a more accurate picture of the events that transpired during this time. Furthermore, with the lack of depicted interactions among Columbus and the Taino people, there was no information provided to meet this criterion either.

D’Aulaire, I. & D’Aulaire, E. (1955/1987). *Columbus*. Sandwich, MA: Beautiful Feet Books.

Columbus (1955/1983), biographical fiction written and illustrated by Ingrid and Edgar Parin D’Aulaire, offered an interesting view of the life of a Genoese weaver’s son who sought to prove the world was round, studied mapmaking in Portugal, waited long years for financial and material support from Queen Isabella of Spain, and finally made four voyages to the New World. Ingrid and Edgar Parin D’Aulaire were writers and illustrators of children’s books who first collaborated in 1931 with their book, *The Magic Rug*. Using their research and travel experiences as inspiration, the husband and wife team produced 27 picture books for children. They received various awards for their work including the 1932 Newbery Award and the 1940 Caldecott Award. For this book, however, there were no literary distinctions. No resources were cited for the writing of this book.

Question #1: Does the book provide a comprehensive record of the Christopher

Columbus story to include the encounter with the Taino? This book provided information on the initial encounter between Columbus and the Taino; however, the portrayal was not factual and contained some phrases that some may consider being racist, as shown here:

Then he fell to his knees with all his men and thanked the Lord for having brought them safely to this island...All he could see were naked, red-skinned savages. They threw themselves to the ground and worshiped Columbus and his bearded men. (p. 34)

The reference to the Taino people as “red-skinned savages” reflects the sign of the times in 1955 when the book was originally published. However, the book here was reprinted in 1987 and still contained that reference in the text. The information regarding how Columbus forced some Tainos to be his guide as he searched other islands for gold contained some inaccuracies. For example, in this story, the Tainos were consulted for the whereabouts of gold, but there was no mention of the mistreatment they endured during Columbus’ quest, with the text stating, “Columbus asked the Indians in sign language from where this gold came. They pointed to the southwest. Then Columbus and his men hurried back to their ships and sailed on the way the Indians had pointed” (p. 37).

Another milestone that was mentioned in the first voyage was the instance at La Navidad. This event was described within the text and the Tainos were correctly mentioned here to have helped Columbus: “the Santa Maria broke to pieces. Indians came paddling out to help the white gods who were in distress, and they brought ashore everything from the wreck” (p. 38). Still, the text omitted important information when describing Columbus’ return back to Spain and his visit with the King and Queen. In particular, the book explained, “He [Columbus] took along with him samples of all he had found on his voyage...[he] had even brought along some Indians to show. They shivered and froze in the brisk air of Spain” (p. 40). Although it is not documented

that the Taino people froze back in Spain, there is documentation that the Taino people were not only shown to the king and queen but were also offered to be sold as slaves; yet, the book omitted this important information.

Within the second voyage and the return to La Navidad, the authors, commendably, acknowledged the Taino mistreatment by the Spanish, noting, There [at La Navidad] he [Columbus] left some of his men to watch over the gold mines and over Haiti...But the men he left behind were greedy and cruel. The Indians soon understood that these were no gods but heartless men who cared only for gold. (p. 38)

Also within the second voyage, the book stated that the Queen had commanded that the Tainos were “to be treated kindly and only gently converted to Christianity. When Columbus reminded his men of this, they refused to obey and began to plot against him” (p. 44). It is true that the Queen expressed the desire that the Tainos be converted to Christianity, but it is not known whether Columbus acted in the Queen’s interest and “gently” tried to convert them. In the third voyage, no mention of the Tainos was given. Similarly, there were no references to the encomiando system or the increased demand for Taino slaves. However, in the fourth voyage, the D’Aulaires accurately described the instance on Jamaica when Columbus and his men were stranded and food became sparse. As the book explained, they relied on the Taino to gather their food and water, “But before long they [Tainos] were all worn out feeding the hungry sailors, who ate as much in one meal as they themselves ate in a week...they [the Tainos] refused to bring the white men any more food” (p. 50). The book continued with Columbus’ trickery and the “premeditated prediction” of the lunar eclipse to trick the Taino into thinking Columbus possessed special or “divine” authority.

Question #2: Does the book provide sufficient insight into the lifestyle-cultural and sociological heritage of the indigenous Taino people? Although there was a Taino presence in the book, the manner in which the authors portrayed them rendered the Taino inferior to

Columbus and his men. The D'Aulaires used color references throughout the book, which could be seen as adding a racist tone to the book, such as "white gods" to depict Columbus and his men and then "red-skinned savages" to describe the Taino, and mentioned that the Taino "did not have yellow skin and slanting eyes" (p.34). It was surprising, and somewhat disconcerting, to find that such references were not removed from the book's 1987 reprinting or corrected with more appropriate terminology. As such, the text in its present form necessitates the need for additional instruction and clarification regarding such possibly racist characterizations.

As for Taino culture, a reader could glean from this book that the Tainos ate tropical fruits, although the mention of the Taino eating "strange foods" portrayed the Taino as alien and provided no additional cultural insight. No details regarding physical characteristics were given in the text, although the illustrations gave some depictions of the Taino appearance. Unfortunately, these illustrations portrayed the Tainos as looking gender-less and identical to each other. Furthermore, the gold ornament of unknown shape shown covering the entire area around the nose for the depicted Taino people was inaccurate. It is known that the Tainos wore small pieces of gold, but usually it was only the cacique that did so to identify his rank, not every member of the tribe as the illustration shows. The book spoke of the Taino as being friendly on more than one occasion in the beginning and correctly stated how the natives began to anger, over time, in response to the forced labor. The Tainos were never addressed by their tribal affiliation and were instead referred to as "Indians," "red-skinned savages," "gentle heathens," and "innocent Indians." Again, these titles could be conceived as discriminating and inappropriate for today's reader.

Question #3: To what extent does the book depart from the historical record and what impact does that departure have on the reading and learning experience?

Interestingly, the book provided the reader with a number of historical references that spanned Columbus' four voyages. It did not depart from historical fact until the authors imbedded fictionalized accounts of the Tainos worshiping the settlers and portrayed only Columbus' men as acting inappropriately but not Columbus himself. The manner in which this story was told was reflective of an unbalanced, Eurocentric voice that would not put this book on the "most-wanted" list.

Question #4: To what extent does the book provide insight into Taino interactions or relationships with Columbus and the Spanish Settlers and what impact does that have on the reading and learning experience? Out of the seven instances in which Columbus or his men were interacting with the Tainos, only two times were the Tainos depicted as the victim of mistreatment, and at no time was the mistreatment described as originating come Columbus. It was documented in de las Casa's diary (1992) how Columbus was cruel to the Taino people in unfathomable ways. In addition, the Tainos were never depicted as rejecting European culture, but they were shown as having conflicts with Columbus and the settlers. Understanding this is a picture book for children; the information could have been stated in a more balanced manner offering a truer picture of the events that transpired the included events.

Quality rating. This book's quality was rated as *poor* based on four out of the five criteria in the rubric. As Columbus' early life still remains somewhat of a mystery to historians, this book offered a degree of fiction as it described details of Columbus' youth that were not pronounced in the primary sources researched for this study. The one redeeming aspect of this book is the fact that all four voyages were discussed and described. However, the manner in which these voyages were described was problematic. In discriminating tones and words, the authors never once portrayed Columbus in a negative light, with all the bad deeds being

conducted by his men. Columbus and his men were referred to as “gods” over six times in the book, sometimes as “white gods” and sometimes just as “gods.” This biased depiction could leave a reader with an unfair view of who Columbus really was, by conveying that the acts he bestowed upon the people he encountered during his voyages were proper and deserving. This book was referred to three times by teachers and librarians, which could be representative of a large number of teachers who are currently sharing this book with students today. Yet, if students are exposed to words such as “red-skinned savages” or “gentle heathens,” then the reading and learning experiences gleaned from this book will be false, misrepresenting, and discriminating.

Krensky, S. (1991). *Christopher Columbus*. New York, NY: Random House.

Christopher Columbus (1991) portrayed a simple account of Columbus’ first voyage to the Americas for readers aged 4 through 8. The text was easy to read and provided readers with a common story about Columbus, beginning with the day his boats sailed west in 1492. The author, Stephen Krensky, is an award-winning author, having published over 100 books; the illustrator has illustrated for authors including Eric Carle and Alice Schertle. This particular book was not a recipient of any literary distinctions, nor did the author provide any source notes or other resources within the book.

Question #1: Does the book provide a comprehensive record of the Christopher Columbus story to include the encounter with the Taino? This book only described Columbus’ first voyage in 1492. Within this story, the author referenced three out of three historical milestones listed in the rubric for the first voyage: how the Tainos were forced to help Columbus find gold, how Columbus forced some Taino people back to Spain, and a brief mention of the wreck of the *Santa Maria*. Although this sounds promising, the manner in which

the milestones were addressed was abbreviated and/or inaccurate. According to primary sources, at the point when Columbus landed in the Caribbean, he forced Taino people onto his boats to be his guide and to make them show Columbus the way. Yet, the manner in which the book referenced this event is as follows: “Columbus sails further west to look for gold. He visits other islands. He meets more Indians. Most are helpful and friendly...But where is the gold?” (p. 36). The text did not include the manner in which the Tainos were made to participate in Columbus’ quest for gold and did not convey the deeper role that the Taino actually played in assisting Columbus. In addition, the reference to most of the Tainos being “helpful and friendly” was not explained or put in context. It is not clear why the author chose to say “most” here. The other milestone reference was the instance in which Columbus took the Tainos and forced them back to Spain. The author correctly referenced the event as, “Columbus has also forced six Indians to come with him” (p.41), but the text was immediately followed with “People in Spain have never seen Indians” (p. 41), which could be misinterpreted as a justification for taking people away without their consent. The final milestone referring to the wreck of the *Santa Maria* provided the reader with nothing more than “The ship is wrecked! Columbus moves to the Nina. But there is not enough room for everyone on the tiny ship. Many sailors must stay behind on the island” (p. 39). There were no statements of how the Taino assisted him in this event, which is an omission and could be considered inaccurate as such.

Question #2: Does the book provide sufficient insight into the lifestyle-cultural and sociological heritage of the indigenous Taino people? The author included some rich information about the lifestyle of the Taino people. Although he never mentioned them by their correct name (only as “Indians”), Krensky alluded to the artisanship of the Taino through his reference to the gold ornaments they wore, the “soft cloth” they traded with Columbus, the

canoes they built, and the hammocks they made. The text briefly spoke about the Tainos' "mostly friendly" nature. Their diet was described to include corn, potatoes, peanuts, papayas, and avocados. However, the illustrations were not as complimentary as the text. Due to the poor reproduction of the colors in the illustrations, the Taino people had hair color that looked blue; their skin color, at least, appeared more realistic than their hair. The illustrations showed the Taino people wearing a gold ring in their noses, their ears, and around their necks. The Taino were depicted as looking identical, with no unique characteristics, which may impress upon the reader that the Tainos simplistic and lacking individual traits.

Question #3: To what extent does the book depart from the historical record and what impact does that departure have on the reading and learning experience? Once again, the book departed from the historical record by the inaccurate claims and omissions noted in the previous section. It was clear that the author attempted to provide the reader with some inside information on the Taino people, but the brevity of the content and the vagueness of his portrayals did not offer a rich reading or learning experience.

Question #4: To what extent does the book provide insight into Taino interactions or relationships with Columbus and the Spanish Settlers and what impact does that have on the reading and learning experience? In this book, there were four documented interactions between the Taino and Columbus: one was when Columbus first arrived on Oct. 12, 1492; the next was when Columbus traded items with the Taino; the third was when Columbus "asked" the Tainos about where to find gold; and, lastly, one was when Columbus forced them to Spain. At first glance, one might think this helps the book meet the criterion of a *good* book by the number of times the Taino were included; however, the brief manner in which these interactions were treated and the omissions within the interactions render the book's presentation as unbalanced.

For example, the book did not depict the major role that the Tainos played in Columbus' quest for gold. In addition, the text completely omitted the role that the Taino played in assisting the Spanish after the wreck of the *Santa Maria*.

Quality rating. The overall quality rating of this book, which received no literary distinctions, was *poor* based on three out of the five criteria. There were instances of Taino interaction, but they were brief in nature and did not offer the reader with a wholesome view of what really transpired between Columbus and the people he encountered. Another area of neglect by the book involved the manner in which the Taino were shown as passively accepting of the mistreatment from Columbus. The book did not address the conflicts that were so deeply embedded within the relationships and interactions between Columbus, his men, and the Taino. A reader may be able to gain from this book an insight into the lifestyle of the Taino from the crafts, food, and trade discussed, but Krensky adds little that is new to the growing body of books about Columbus.

Kurtz, J. (2007). *What Columbus found: It was orange and it was round*. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster's Children's Publishing.

What Columbus Found: It Was Orange and It Was Round (2007) was written by Jane Kurtz and illustrated by Paige Billin-Frye. This book described how in 1492 Columbus sailed from Spain to the Americas. The rhyming text of this book explained how, once there, Columbus discovered many new things, especially pumpkins—which he introduced into the European culture. Kurtz is an award-winning author, having written over 25 books for children and young adults, and Billin-Frye is an illustrator for children's books, textbooks, and magazines, who lives in Washington, DC. The simple text and ready-to-read format is intended for audiences aged 4-8. There were no source notes provided or other resources listed, nor were there any literary distinctions for this book.

Question #1: Does the book provide a comprehensive record of the Christopher Columbus story to include the encounter with the Taino? Kurtz's aim in this book appeared to be two-fold: the story provided the reader with a simplified version of Columbus' first journey westward toward the Americas, and it offered information on how pumpkins were first introduced to Europe as a result of this voyage. Looking specifically at Columbus' voyage section, the text explained how Columbus obtained funding for this voyage and sailed to what he thought was India. The acknowledgement of the Taino during Columbus' encounter with the "New World" is limited at best. The text read, "He planned to land in India, but when he bumped ashore, he saw the people growing things he had not seen before" (p. 11). Although the reference to the "people" Columbus saw was not specific, the reader could tell, through the illustrations, that the text was referring to the Native people who lived on the land. One illustration showed a child with three adult men in a vine-filled garden. The Tainos all looked exactly alike, with smiles on their faces and wearing nothing but a grass-like skirt and having black hair that hung down to their shoulders. These depictions differed from the illustrations in many other Christopher Columbus books as these characters were given identifiable characteristics, such as differing hair colors, hairstyles, or facial hair (i.e., men with beards).

Question #2: Does the book provide sufficient insight into the lifestyle-cultural and sociological heritage of the indigenous Taino people? Since this retelling of Columbus' voyage was oversimplified, the only cultural or lifestyle information a child could glean from the book with regard to the Taino people would be that the people Columbus encountered grew pumpkins.

Question #3: To what extent does the book depart from the historical record and what impact does that departure have on the reading and learning experience? This book

departed from the historical record by the numerous omissions it contained. For example, there were no statements about the three boats secured for the voyages and there were no examples of any conflict during these voyages. It was also not clear when the author stated, “he saw the people growing things” that the “people” referenced were the settlers or the Taino. Thus, it seemed the rhyming approach limited the words the author could use and ultimately limited the story that could be told. Regarding the other subject in the story, the pumpkin, without the author providing any source notes, it is hard to assess whether this section was accurate. The reading and learning experience appears to be extremely limited in this book as a result of this version of history.

Question #4: To what extent does the book provide insight into Taino interactions or relationships with Columbus and the Spanish Settlers and what impact does that have on the reading and learning experience? Other than the mention of Columbus finding people growing something he had not seen before, no information was provided regarding any conflicts or relationships between Columbus and the indigenous people he encountered.

Quality rating. The quality rating for this book, which received no literary distinctions, was designated as *poor* according to all five areas of the rubric. Kurtz did not mention any specific events regarding the Taino except for seeing people growing something that Columbus had never seen before. The book provided no other factual information of an interaction between Columbus and the Taino. There were no instances in which cultural transmissions could be identified. The Taino daily life to include work, play, or family was not addressed. Consideration of these omissions leads to the conclusion that the book departs from the historical record. This departure doesn’t simply enhance the enjoyment of the reading experience but detracts from learning in that readers are not exposed to heretofore unknown facts about the

Taino. Overall, because of its limited text and oversimplified illustrations, this book would not be considered one to share with children regarding the historical events on Columbus and the Taino people.

Dodson Wade, M. (2007). *Christopher Columbus: Famous explorer*. Mankato, MN: Capstone Press.

In graphic novel format, *Christopher Columbus: Famous Explorer* (2007) is the story of Columbus and his four journeys to find a new route to the Indies meant for readers aged 9 through 12. Mary Dodson Wade is the author of a multitude of historical and biographical books for students of many ages, from kindergarten through high school. Rod Whigham's 20-year career as a professional illustrator and commercial artist includes 14 years creating comic books for industry giants Marvel and D.C. Comics. Charles Barnett III is currently working with Capstone Books in creating comic-style history books like this one. Although there were no literary distinctions associated with this book, it did provide the reader with the primary sources used to write the text, in addition to a table of contents, a glossary, Internet sites, a "for further reading" section, a bibliography, an index, and some other interesting facts about Columbus not covered in the story.

Question #1: Does the book provide a comprehensive record of the Christopher Columbus story to include the encounter with the Taino? Within the four voyages, Wade provided rich insight, with mostly accurate information, into the Columbus-related events that included the Taino people. As stated in the beginning of the book, any specific information that was gleaned from the listed primary sources was shared in a separate box with each panel. This represented the informational aspect of the book. The dialogue from the cartoon characters (shown in dialogue "bubbles") was fictional. Since both aspects were included in the book, they will be evaluated as such. The factual piece briefly touched on Columbus' arrival with the

reference, “The next morning, Columbus and his crew landed on the island. Taino Indians, who lived on the island, brought gifts to the sailors” (p. 12). This reference concurred with what is listed in the primary sources.

The next milestone, when Columbus forced many Taino people to help search for gold on the other islands, was not accurately portrayed. For example, Wade described how Columbus wanted to find gold but never mentioned forcing the Tainos to participate. The next event continued by addressing the wreckage of the *Santa Maria*; however, it never mentioned how the Tainos voluntarily assisted Columbus and his men with this endeavor. In a dialogue bubble Wade did elude to Columbus kidnapping Taino people, stating, “You may have gold [talking to another boat captain], but these Indians are more valuable. They prove I’ve discovered the Indies” (p. 13).” The “Indians” were pictured two pages later, wearing loincloths with their hair in ponytails, standing in front of the king and queen of Spain. No other explanation was given.

The book’s telling of the second voyage provided more accurate information. It referenced when Columbus went back to La Navidad to find the men who were left behind, noting, “The voyage to Hispaniola [which was really La Navidad] went quickly. But when they landed, they found a gruesome sight” (p. 17). The dialogue supporting this statement occurred between a Taino man and Columbus, as follows:

Columbus: “The fort is empty. Is no one alive?”

Taino: “The sailors stole our food and took our women.”

Columbus: “Then they deserve their fate.”

This dialogue demonstrated an unusual depiction of Columbus taking the side of the Taino, which is not often done and is commendable. This voyage also referenced the manner in which Columbus forced labor upon the Taino to look for gold, with the text indicating that “Columbus became desperate to send gold to Spain. He ordered the Taino people to start bringing him gold.

But most had none to give” (p. 18). The book also referenced how Columbus took more Taino people back as slaves: “Along with the Taino slaves and tropical goods, Columbus also sent an urgent plea for help” (p. 18). The third voyage offered no evidence of Taino interaction; however, the fourth voyage included the part of the historical record in which Columbus tricked the Taino to continue to serve Columbus and his men, at the lunar eclipse event when the Taino were tired of being forced to collect food for the Spanish.

Question #2: Does the book provide sufficient insight into the lifestyle-cultural and sociological heritage of the indigenous Taino people? Even though the author provided rich information regarding Columbus’ voyages, this book did not offer much insight into the lifestyle and cultural traditions or social information on the Taino people. When describing how Columbus landed for the first time in 1492 and encountered the Native people, Wade appropriately referenced the Native as Taino. However, the corresponding dialogue to this caption had Columbus stating: “Nothing looks the way it should. These people are very poor” (p. 12). This perspective could be considered Eurocentric as the Taino—who lived in a complex multifaceted governmental, agricultural, and social world—would not have been considered “poor” within the context of their own environment. The book made no references to cultural beliefs, ideals, agricultural practices or diet, religious beliefs, or the Tainos’ friendly ways. The illustrations offered depictions of the Taino that showed large, muscular men with their hair pulled back in a ponytail, looking identical to each other. They were shown in loincloths, however, which is accurate. Still, the illustrations did not include any features that would characterize them as individual people.

Question #3: To what extent does the book depart from the historical record and what impact does that departure have on the reading and learning experience? The source

used in the writing of this book was an older text written by Columbus's son, Fernando. Fernando, in turn, used his father's diary as a source for his own book. Fernando's perspective on the events included in his father's diary included some bias, which has had an effect on the accuracy of the story. For example, some parts of the Columbus story were omitted, such as the Tainos being forced to guide Columbus toward gold and their involvement in aiding the Spanish deal with the *Santa Maria* wreck. Overall, this book provided adequate information about the events that occurred during this time period but did not provide a rich learning experience from a Native perspective as the details of the Taino culture were almost nonexistent.

Question #4: To what extent does the book provide insight into Taino interactions or relationships with Columbus and the Spanish Settlers and what impact does that have on the reading and learning experience? Many of the events were supplemented with the kind of dialogue bubbles common to the cartoon format. These dialogue bubbles supplemented the regular text with more interactions with Columbus and his men and the Taino people; however, the regular text depicted only generic information. Wade did not portray the Tainos as rejecting European influence or culture, they were not shown as independent, and they were not shown rejecting Columbus' harsh treatment. In fact, they were mainly emotionless in this book. By not indicating any of the conflicts or harsh treatment the Taino endured from the Spanish during these voyages, the book did not expose readers to a realistic retelling of this history.

Quality rating. The quality rating of this book, which has not received any literary distinctions, was *poor* according to three out of the five criteria. The coverage of all four voyages was informative and did include the Taino people and the events. Even though the book referenced the Taino by the correct tribal affiliation, the lack of details regarding the roles played by the Taino and the lack of Columbus-Taino interactions displayed in this book left much to be

desired. Without having provided the reader with rich information on cultural lifestyles or relationships between the two cultures, the book did not offer insight into a realistic picture of history. For children to appreciate diversity, they first need adequate information to form a critical opinion. If they are not provided a balanced view of history, as was the case in this book, they will be likely to carry with them a biased interpretation throughout their schooling and possibly into adulthood. Books such as this one should not be shared if the intent is to provide the reader with a balanced interaction with history.

DeKay, J. (1996). *Meet Christopher Columbus*. New York, NY: Random House.

This easy-to-read chapter book told the story of Columbus and his first voyage to the West and his return to Spain. The book was written by James T. DeKay and illustrated by John Edens and was originally published in 1969. The book has republished in 1996. The author has written some books for children but did not receive any distinctive awards or honors for this book. There were no source notes or other references offered in the text. This book, geared toward children 9-12, is considered to be a biographical story of Columbus, but also contained some apparent fictionalized text as well.

Question #1: Does the book provide a comprehensive record of the Christopher Columbus story to include the encounter with the Taino? Like many other books about Columbus' voyages, the first half spoke to Columbus' search for funding between Spain and Portugal. However, in the last half of this book, DeKay described the events within the first voyage and Columbus' return home. DeKay referred to Columbus' initial encounter with the Tainos, mentioned Columbus' desire to find gold on the other islands, the upheaval at La Navidad, and the return home to Spain with the Taino people to be sold into slavery upon

Columbus' return. Although DeKay referenced many historical milestones within the book, the manner in which the Taino people were portrayed was shallow.

When Columbus landed on what he named San Salvador, he referenced the Taino in the following way: "The sailors could see people on the island. The people wore no clothes. They came down to the beach to see the ships" (p. 37). A few sentences later DeKay stated, "Columbus could see that they [the Taino] were a friendly, happy people. They had no swords or knives or guns" (p. 38). DeKay's description of the people already living on the island was thus nondescript and void of details, but he did state their friendly nature correctly. The fact that the Native people carried no guns or knives could be associated with why the author stated they were friendly, but that is not clear. The next milestone was the journey to search for gold and how Columbus forced some Taino onto the boat to make them his guide to the other island. DeKay referenced that event as, "they [the Tainos] made signs to show him there were other islands nearby. Columbus took six Indians back to the ships and set sail" (p. 40). The words of the author— "Columbus took six Indians"—did not clearly convey that he forced the Taino people on board so it cannot be considered a valid depiction of the event. The next milestone depicted was the wreck at La Navidad. DeKay explained how the *Santa Maria* ran aground but never described the assistance that was given from the Tainos during this event. The only mention of the Taino being swept away from their land and families was in one sentence when Columbus was faced with Portugal's king on his return home to Spain. The event was depicted as follows: "Columbus took some gold. He took some Indians he had brought back. He went to see the king" (p. 57). Once again, the word choice of the author did not portray the fact that Columbus forced these people from their home and onto the boat. That is, simply "bringing back" people is not the same as kidnapping them. The story continued with Columbus preparing

his processional of goods for the king and queen of Spain. The Tainos were mentioned here: “Columbus took six Indians and some servants...The Indians were dressed in bright colors. They carried parrots in wooden cages...the servants carried the gold” (p. 62). Again, Columbus “took” the Taino people, which is not the same as forcing them to Spain. It is also not clear who the servants were. Were they Taino people as well? As several milestones were addressed in this section, the book scored a *good* rating in meeting the criteria in the rubric, but it must be stated that the manner in which the book included the Taino people was inadequate.

Question #2: Does the book provide sufficient insight into the lifestyle-cultural and sociological heritage of the indigenous Taino people? This book did not provide sufficient insight into the culture or lifestyle of the Taino people. DeKay’s descriptions were inaccurate, biased in their description, or omitted. As stated earlier, DeKay eluded to the Tainos as being friendly and happy. According to primary sources, this is a correct depiction of their ideals and way of life. However, the author continued by explaining, “Their skin was painted bright colors” (p. 38). It was noted that the Tainos did wear certain markings or tattoos on their bodies, but nothing was referenced regarding them having brightly painted skin. This fictionalized portrayal incorrectly described the Tainos’ physical characteristics, possibly leaving an impression that they covered their bodies in bright paint, which is not correct. DeKay continued, “Some of them wore little gold rings in their nose” (p. 38). This is correct, given that only some of the higher ranking Tainos wore the gold ornaments. The only other cultural transmission that could be gleaned from this book is when the Taino introduced Columbus’ men to tobacco: “The Indians in Cuba did a very funny thing. They rolled leaves into a tube. They called the tube a ‘tobacco.’ They put one end of the tobacco in their noses...Columbus thought this was very strange” (p. 41).

This is also a clear example of a Eurocentric perspective in the manner in which Columbus thinks this “is very strange” according to non-Taino standards.

Question #3: To what extent does the book depart from the historical record and what impact does that departure have on the reading and learning experience? The book departed from the historical record by the omissions and lack of explanation of the historical events that took place. The fact that DeKay used ambiguous language to explain some very important details of the story in which the Tainos were concerned raised a red flag.

Fictionalizing a catastrophic event that involved the Taino people after Columbus’ landing did not provide the reader with an accurate or rich reading and learning experience. Since the author chose to mention the milestone but neglected to give an accurate picture of what really happened, one might consider the book misleading and one that should not be shared with children.

Question #4: To what extent does the book provide insight into Taino interactions or relationships with Columbus and the Spanish Settlers and what impact does that have on the reading and learning experience? The interactions and relationships depicted in this book were shallow and nondescript. No conflicts were relayed in this story. A reader could not tell how the Tainos rejected the mistreatment of Columbus because the mistreatment was never a part of the story. When the Tainos were included, the author chose vague words such as “took” or “brought back” when in fact the Tainos were kidnapped and forced. This book painted a picture of the Taino as submissive or passive, which is not accurate. The Taino were self-sufficient and fought hard against the malicious treatment of Columbus and the settlers that followed.

Quality rating. The quality rating of this book was *poor* based on four of the five criteria. The book recapped the first voyage of Columbus and his return to Spain. Within the

voyage, several milestones were addressed, but they were done so in a manner that misrepresented the Taino people. Through poor word choice and omitted information, this book did not provide the reader with a clear and accurate picture of what took place during this voyage. The reader could not see any lifestyle or cultural depictions, nor could the reader see how the Taino and Columbus interacted. Because of these omissions, the reader may walk away with a biased view of the Taino as submissive or passive people who had no conflicts, while Columbus took the Taino's land away and sold them into slavery.

Dalgliesh, A. (1955). *The Columbus story*. New York, NY: Charles Scribner's Sons.

The Columbus Story (1955) by Alice Dalgliesh is the oldest book that is being shared in the classroom today. Written for ages 9-12, this book explained the events in the life of Columbus, including his efforts to obtain ships and money to sail to the West, his first voyage, and his discovery of the Americas. The author is a former school teacher and Children's Literature instructor and winner of two Newbery Awards. Dalgliesh has also written more than 40 books for and about children. Leo Politi, the illustrator, has captured some of Los Angeles' most charming places with his two dozen children's books and countless artworks over his lifetime. He was a winner of a Caldecott Medal for his book, *The Mission Bell*. Although brief, the author provided source notes indicating the use of two primary sources for this book. This book has not received any literary distinctions.

Question #1: Does the book provide a comprehensive record of the Christopher Columbus story to include the encounter with the Taino? Knowing this book was published back in 1955, it was expected that potential problematic comments would arise. With its limited information on the actual voyages and the events that occurred, this book did not provide a comprehensive record of the Columbus story to include the Taino people. The initial encounter

of Columbus and the Taino in this book was as expected: stereotypical and divisive. Dalglish stated,

Now both the island people and the men on the ships saw strange things for the first time. The brown island people saw three big “canoes” with white sails...And here were men with strange light-colored skins...Here were brown men with no cloths at all. (p. 15-16)

The author inserted color in place of humanistic characteristics through the use of “brown men” and “light-colored” people references. The author did not include information on how the Taino people were forced to find gold. She did, however, explain how the *Santa Maria* wrecked ashore and that Columbus had to leave men behind at La Navidad, stating, “The Indians helped, and even the chief of the island came to watch. When he saw what had happened he was sad” (p. 21). There is no proof that the chief came to watch the retrieval of the boat or was sad about the process. The Taino people were not mentioned again until page 25 when Columbus returned to Spain, “Then he [Columbus] went to the King and Queen to tell them of the lands he had found. He took with him some Indians he had brought on the ship.” The text told the reader that some Taino people returned with Columbus, but it did not explain the truth of how this happened or how the Taino people were mistreated in the event. The other three voyages were mentioned on page 29: “The Admiral sailed four times and came back four times.” No other information on the subsequent voyages was given; therefore, no additional milestones were covered.

Question #2: Does the book provide sufficient insight into the lifestyle-cultural and sociological heritage of the indigenous Taino people? Other than short, stereotyped phrases and comments, this book did not provide sufficient insight into who the Taino people were. The Taino people were described many ways in this book, but not as Taino people. That is, the author used “island people,” “brown island people,” “brown people,” and “Indians” to describe the Taino. Dalglish explained other physical characteristics to be, “Their bodies were painted

red and other bright colors” (p. 18), and it was mentioned that they wore no clothes. In reality, the Taino people wore tattoos but did not cover their bodies in paint, and contrary to the text, they did wear light clothing depending on their rank, but they were not entirely all naked. It was mentioned that the Taino had canoes and brought gifts of cotton and that the Taino were friendly and gentle. The illustrations portrayed average pictures of Columbus and his men in the correct proportion, but when the Taino people were shown, they were strangely stretched long and thin, with a feather protruding from their forehead. They appeared gender-less and identical to each other.

Question #3: To what extent does the book depart from the historical record and what impact does that departure have on the reading and learning experience? The book departed from the historical record by the omissions and lack of explanation of the historical events that took place. Unfortunately, there were instances in which Dalgliesh fictionalized areas within the text to negative effect. For instance, when La Navidad was created, the book referred to Columbus inviting the chief to dinner on board the *Nina*. The author noted, “The Indian chief wore, very proudly, a shirt and gloves Columbus had given him” (p. 23). There have been no known instances explaining that a Taino chief wore one of Columbus’ shirts, and that he wore it “proudly” was an assumption of the writer. The author omitted several events, such as forcing the Tainos to look for gold, forcing them to return to Spain against their will, and enslaving them, to name a few. This resulted in an unbalanced learning experience and a misrepresentation of the Taino people for children who come into contact with this story.

Question #4: To what extent does the book provide insight into Taino interactions or relationships with Columbus and the Spanish Settlers and what impact does that have on the reading and learning experience? The interactions in this book were assuming and

inaccurate. There were no examples of conflict between the two cultural groups. As a matter of fact, Dalgliesh painted a very rosy picture of the relationships between the two groups, with her description of a Taino chief proudly wearing one of Columbus' shirts and her depiction of how the Taino people spent much time rowing out to the boats to trade with the sailors. These representations only give the reader a false and misleading experience that did not highlight the events or attempt to portray reality.

Quality rating. The quality rating for this book, which received no literary distinctions, was *poor* in all areas of the criteria. As this book was written in 1955, there weren't any expectations that it would be rated highly. The description of the Taino as "brown skin people" was the start of inaccurate and conceivably racist representations of the Taino in this book. The fact that educators who responded to the survey submitted this selection as a book that they currently use is disconcerting as there are many other more realistic and more accurate depictions of this historical event readily available. The book used a superficial approach in presenting the historical milestones and did not provide rich detail of the culture or lifestyle of the Taino whatsoever. These omissions and misrepresentations make this one of the books that should never be used in the classroom.

Roop, P., & Roop, C. (1990). *I, Columbus: My journal, 1493-93*. New York, NY: Walker and Co.

I, Columbus: My Journal 1492-93 (1990), written by Peter and Connie Roop, is a translation of the log that Columbus kept while journeying to the West and back in 1492. Together, the Roops have written 100 children's books, ranging from historical fiction to nonfiction. Both teachers at one point, they have been awarded with the Laura Ingalls Wilder Award, among other recognitions. This particular book has been awarded the *Adventuring with Books: A Booklist for Pre-K-Grade 6* (1993, 10th ed.) from the National Council of Teachers of

English and the Teachers' Choices award, in 1991, from the International Reading Association. There was an acknowledgement page listed that included the source used to write this book, along with an epilogue of events that transpired after Columbus returned.

Question #1: Does the book provide a comprehensive record of the Christopher Columbus story to include the encounter with the Taino? Since this book is in diary format, the entries are meant to reflect Columbus' interpretations and thoughts. As such, the book projected an unbalanced view of the events that included the Taino people. The journal only followed Columbus' first voyage. Within this voyage, Columbus mentioned the first encounter and his thoughts on converting the Tainos into Christians:

I want the natives to develop a friendly attitude toward us because I know they are people who can be converted to our Holy Faith more by love than by force. I think they can easily be made Christians, for they seem to have no religion. (p. 31)

This depiction is accurate according to many sources. It was clear Columbus intended to convert the Tainos into Christians, but that was not the only goal he had in mind and, yet, the text didn't give insight into these other goals. There was also mention of Columbus taking some Taino on board on page 36: "It would be well to take some of these people, in order that they might learn our language and we might learn what there is in this country." However, given the manner in which this statement was made, it seemed that the Taino brought themselves on board Columbus' ship willingly and that it was only after that time that Columbus ordered them to be held. The book also described how Columbus ordered his men to "bring" seven women and three children on board. One of the husbands of the women and the children's father asked Columbus if he could go, too. This was interpreted in the book as a compliment to Columbus—"It pleased me greatly. All the people on board now are consoled" (p. 37)—when, in fact, the father was likely boarding to protect his own family. These issues were addressed in such a

Eurocentric manner that the book had the potential to misinform the reader and perpetuate an already common fallacy that Columbus meant no harm to the people he encountered.

Question #2: Does the book provide sufficient insight into the lifestyle-cultural and sociological heritage of the indigenous Taino people? Throughout the book, there were delicately placed pieces of information on the Taino people. For instance, the author referenced the Taino as a friendly people—ignorant, but friendly: “They are a friendly people who bear no arms except for small spears...I showed one my sword, and through ignorance he grabbed it by the blade and cut himself” (p. 31). The book also mentioned that the Tainos wore small pieces of gold, they traded using small balls of cotton thread, and constructed long canoes. Columbus described the Tainos as, “All the people I have seen so far resemble each other. They have the same language and customs” (p. 33). They are only referred to as “natives,” not by their tribal name. However, the author included the fact that the Tainos called the island where Columbus landed *Guanahani*, which is correct. These depictions portrayed once again a Eurocentric perspective, one that did not agree with a more inclusive approach to history as critical literacy advocates.

Question #3: To what extent does the book depart from the historical record and what impact does that departure have on the reading and learning experience? The book departed from the historical record by the omissions and lack of explanation of the historical events that took place. At the beginning of the book, the Roops provided a brief introduction lauding Columbus as “the finest sailor of his time” (a debatable statement); what was not offered was how the authors picked and chose their entries. This log, once transcribed, was very large. The Roops neglected to describe the manner in which they selected their text. As this approach was obviously unbalanced, one might think it would behoove the authors to have offered other

amplifying notes in order to present a more balanced picture. As the text stands, the Tainos were left unjustly described and portrayed incorrectly.

Question 4: To what extent does the book provide insight into Taino interactions or relationships with Columbus and the Spanish Settlers and what impact does that have on the reading and learning experience? The Roops demonstrated that Columbus interacted with the Taino people but did not take a realistic approach in doing so. The instance in which the father asked Columbus if he could come aboard with the other Taino people could have been more realistically portrayed as a father desperate to keep his family safe. In the book, Columbus illustrated the Taino's good nature but neglected to state their potential to be easily exploited, a fact that should have been addressed. The Taino were portrayed as submissive and as agreeing to do what Columbus told them. The book did not reflect conflict, except in the area in which the sailors demonstrated discontent with Columbus and his leadership skills. The Tainos were not depicted as rejecting or refusing European culture nor did the book show them rejecting Columbus' malicious treatment. As a result, readers could walk away with a skewed view of the Taino people and a misunderstanding of the role they played in this event.

Quality rating. Although this book received a couple of literary distinctions, the quality rating of this book was *poor* according to four of the five evaluative criteria. The Roops did offer a couple of events, described in the first voyage, but due to the biased perspective, the book scored low in the other areas. Reprinting a diary of a controversial man and subject can only lead to more controversy. The translation of Columbus' journal is lucid—but due to inaccurate and unbalanced reporting, the book remains misleading. Since the book was printed in 1990, the authors had enough information available to them to inform readers about both sides of the Columbus story; yet, the authors neglected to do so. Through this neglect, the stereotype of

submissive and passive Indians that Columbus found on the island presented in this book perpetuates the existing inaccurate understanding that many students carry throughout their education.

Goodnough, D. (1979). *Christopher Columbus*. New York, NY: Troll Associates.

Christopher Columbus (1979), written by David Goodnough and illustrated by Burt Dodson, is a biography of the 15th-century Italian seaman and navigator who encountered a new continent while looking for a western route to India. Goodnough has authored over 20 books for children while Dodson is a painter, teacher, author, and illustrator, who has illustrated over 80 books for children. There were no source notes provided in the book or any additional information or resources, nor did the book have any literary distinctions associated with it.

Question #1: Does the book provide a comprehensive record of the Christopher Columbus story to include the encounter with the Taino? Out of 47 pages, the first 33 were devoted to Columbus' youth and journey to find funding for his voyages. The author did not include factual information on the initial encounter between the Tainos and Columbus. The book stated that Columbus landed and stayed "for only a few days" before the "people who lived on the island" (p. 36) appeared. The book stated that when they appeared, they brought gifts for the strangers. This is hard to believe because the primary sources reference the Tainos being on land when they first came ashore. The text was correct in saying that "They [the Tainos] were a gentle and peaceful people" (p. 36). The text shared Columbus' wish to return to Spain with something of value, and how Columbus set sail in quest for gold. It did not, however, mention how he forced the Taino people on the boat to be his guide in his search, but the next page referred to "Indian guides" directing Columbus south. The book continued by informing the reader about the islands Columbus explored and how every time he landed, there were "friendly

Indians.” Furthermore, “Everywhere Columbus landed, he found the same thing—friendly and cooperative people” (p. 39). The milestone involving the wreck at La Navidad was also depicted inaccurately at the expense of the Tainos. “They [Columbus’ men] were tired from the farewell celebration the Indians had given them” (p. 40) but never mentioned the Taino helping the men salvage their ship: “They [Columbus’ men] happily set about building a fort out of the Santa Maria’s timbers and plankings” (p. 40). The book concluded with Columbus returning to Spain but never mentioned how he kidnapped many Taino people and brought them to Spain to be displayed and eventually sold into slavery. The remaining three voyages were summed up in one sentence, without any reference to the relationships or interactions with the Taino people.

Question #2: Does the book provide sufficient insight into the lifestyle-cultural and sociological heritage of the indigenous Taino people? One fact that this book portrayed correctly was that the Taino people were peaceful and friendly. Because Goodnough did not provide a comprehensive view of the people he called “Indians,” the reader is left with virtually no information on who the Taino people were or anything about their culture or lifestyle. There were no mentions of physical characteristics, religious beliefs, agricultural references, or any other information on their artisanship. They were referred to as “Indians” only. The book’s illustrations were presented in a monotone sepia color of which there was only one illustration representing the Tainos. Here, the Taino were shown as darker skinned, with hair in ponytails and a cloth covering their genitals. This illustration was not stereotypical or presented in a cartoonish manner.

Question #3: To what extent does the book depart from the historical record and what impact does that departure have on the reading and learning experience? The book departed from the historical record by the omissions and lack of explanation of the historical

events that took place. Goodnough chose to take a very “user-friendly” approach to this story. He did not expose Columbus’ greed for gold or his intent to exploit the Taino people for the good of Spain. Instead, the author avoided controversial topics altogether. He depicted the Tainos as gentle and friendly but did so in a way that seemed unrealistic. Given that the book was geared toward an audience of 9-12-year-olds, the author could have given a more realistic retelling of history. Instead, the reader is left with an unbalanced, inaccurate picture of what truly happened in 1492.

Question #4: To what extent does the book provide insight into Taino interactions or relationships with Columbus and the Spanish Settlers and what impact does that have on the reading and learning experience? There were several instances of interaction between Columbus and the Taino, but they dealt with only two issues. The first one was when Columbus landed ashore for the first time. The second example was when Columbus encountered the Taino in his search for gold on the other islands. They were shown as friendly people, but Goodnough did not give them depth or demonstrate the conflicts that existed between the two groups. As a result, the Tainos did not appear independent or as rejecting the European culture that was being imposed on them. Similarly, they were not shown as reacting to the malicious treatment by the Spanish because both the author and illustrator avoided the topics altogether.

Quality rating. The quality rating of this book, which received no literary distinctions, was *poor* in all five areas of the evaluative criteria. As the book was published in 1979, it is unsurprising that it contains some stereotypical images or references to the event. Furthermore, Goodnough does a disservice to his readers by not describing the conflicts or controversies that existed between Columbus and the Taino. The picture he painted was a rosy one, filled with friendliness and happiness. It is surprising that this book was even referenced as one teachers or

librarians use in today's classroom. This is a good example of how candy-coating history can misrepresent people, even with the best intentions.

Twist, C. (1994). *Christopher Columbus: Discovery of the Americas*. Austin, TX: Raintree Steck-Vaughn Publishers.

Christopher Columbus: Discovery of the Americas (1994) written by Clint Twist, is a nonfiction, comprehensive encyclopedia intended for readers 9-12 years of age that introduced the background, voyages, discoveries, and historical significance of Columbus and the events that transpired as a result of his voyage west as well as described other influences that affected the Spanish rule before and during Columbus' first voyage. These included references to India, the unification of Spain, the types of transportation available, and the tools used to navigate the seas. The illustrations in this book are photographs of actual artifacts or archived drawings and paintings. A thorough list of acknowledgements was provided, along with a table of contents, a glossary, a "further reading" section, and an index. No other sources were cited, nor were there any literary distinctions associated with this book.

Question #1: Does the book provide a comprehensive record of the Christopher Columbus story to include the encounter with the Taino? This section did not do justice to providing a comprehensive and balanced approach to history. The book was filled with errors and weighted comments throughout that did not offer the kind of balanced or critical look one expects from a nonfiction piece. All four voyages were covered in this book. The first voyage did include a brief representation of the initial encounter between Columbus and the Taino, with the text noting, "The native inhabitants of the island were friendly, but not very helpful. Using body language, they indicated that their gold ornaments came from the next island" (p. 17). This passage did not provide an inclusive picture of what happened with the Taino people other than telling the reader that they were "not very helpful." The text continued, "Columbus's ships were

greeted by a large group of natives, many of whom happily handed over pieces of gold” (p. 18). The Taino people did not know who, or what, Columbus and his men were at first. Yet, this passage made it appear as if the Natives, without any hesitation, began their relationship with Columbus by automatically giving him their gold. They may not have been as quick as the author depicted in handing over their goods immediately following their first sight of these unfamiliar people. Unlike the other reviewed versions of the Columbus story in this analysis, this text added a hostile element to the Spanish’ first encounter with the Taino. “The sailors had gone ashore to pick fruit when they were attacked by about 50 natives armed with clubs and bows and arrows. They managed to chase the natives away before anyone was killed” (p. 18). The author did not provide an explanation for these attacks, nor did he support the purpose for stating this information. The text continued with the reference to Columbus’ return to Spain, noting, “He also brought a handful of native captives from the Caribbean Islands as living proof of his achievements” (p. 19). Not once did the author consider the manner in which the Taino were treated nor the horrid conditions they endured as a result of this event. Overall, the book vaguely included three milestones but did so in a manner that would not accurately explain to the readers the impact that these events had on the Taino people.

The book’s coverage of the second voyage described Columbus’ return to La Navidad, in which Columbus found the settlement burned to the ground. It was described as, “The sailors at La Navidad had become too greedy. They had demanded that the natives deliver more gold than they could obtain. They had also begun kidnapping natives and making them work as slaves” (p. 21). This began to reveal to the reader the mistreatment the Taino endured, although it mentioned how the Taino killed the settlers without acknowledging how the settlers killed the Taino, too—only that they kidnapped and forced them into slavery. Thus, this did not represent

an accurate depiction of this event. Later in the section, Twist mentioned Columbus kidnapping 500 Tainos to send back to Spain as slaves, but he followed the comment with, “During the winter of 1495-96, the natives started a violent rebellion which was only quelled with difficulty” (p. 22). The text portrayed that the “natives” were becoming too much of a threat and had to be dealt with, stating, “The local natives had also become a serious threat to the settlement’s survival.” This attempt to justify the slavery of the Taino is clearly discriminating. Next, the book introduced the third voyage, which contained no references to the Native people. During the fourth voyage, the text stated that the settlers lived a miserable existence, “surrounded by hostile natives” (p. 23), but neglected to state how the settlers had forced labor upon the Taino to gather food, gold, and any thing else that the Spaniards desired.

Question #2: Does the book provide sufficient insight into the lifestyle-cultural and sociological heritage of the indigenous Taino people? This book did not provide sufficient insight into the lifestyle and cultural traditions of the Taino people in this story of Columbus. The text did mention that the Taino wore tiny gold pieces and discussed certain gold masks that the Taino people crafted, which were brought back to Spain. The photographs of artifacts or drawings did not portray anything regarding the Taino people. There were pictures of islands, European tools, archived drawings of Columbus, and maps highlighting Columbus’ voyage. No other textual or visual references were made to the physical characteristics, religious practices, agricultural traditions, or any other cultural information regarding the Taino.

Question #3: To what extent does the book depart from the historical record and what impact does that departure have on the reading and learning experience? The book departed from historical record by the omissions and lack of explanation of the historical events that took place. The book is filled with a skewed and Eurocentric presentation of history by the

manner in which Twist did not appropriately present history in an accurate fashion. The author did not include many instances where Columbus could be presented in a derogatory manner. For example, the subheading, “Triumphant Return” did not reflect the fate of the Taino people, or when the text read, “The local natives had also become a serious threat to the settlement’s survival. Only a very few, who had become Christians, continued to see the Europeans as friends” (p. 22). This quote was taken from the information about the second voyage. It appears that Twist believed that friendship, if any, between the Taino and the settlers was due to whether or not they accepted Christianity, which can be considered a Eurocentric perspective. Many of the milestones were not addressed, the reader was not offered an explanation of events when Twist stated the violent reaction of the Taino to the mistreatment of Columbus and his men, and Twist did not provide a fair depiction of history when he attempted to justify the horrid acts of Columbus and his men. Although the book offered interesting photographs of real artifacts and relics related to this event, the biased approach would not garner a reader a rich or balanced learning experience.

Question #4: To what extent does the book provide insight into Taino interactions or relationships with Columbus and the Spanish Settlers and what impact does that have on the reading and learning experience? The interactions provided in this book were nonexistent; the interrelationships were one-sided and unbalanced. To the book’s credit, as it was presented in an encyclopedia-type manner, it was not organized in a format conducive to demonstrating personal interactions between two groups of people; however, the author could have eluded to some of the information in a manner that was reflective of both the Spanish and the Taino people. As this book did not include any references to the Taino rejecting European influence

nor did not paint the Tainos as self-sufficient or not reliant on Columbus to survive, the reading and learning experience is less than desirable.

Quality rating. The quality rating for this book was *poor* based on all areas of the criteria. This Eurocentric approach to the voyages of Columbus was unbalanced and sometimes borderline insulting. Although all four voyages were described, the text did not include enough information on the events to give a comprehensive history that included the Taino. The text referenced the malicious treatment toward the Taino on La Navidad by explaining how the settlers kidnapped their women, but it was the Taino who killed in retaliation. The author neglected to mention that it was also the settlers who killed many of the Taino as well. Instances such as this may upset the reader who has any background on the topic due to its biased and insensitive portrayal and omission of the Native perspective. Readers unfamiliar with the topic may be misled. The book's redeeming qualities do not go far beyond the interesting photographs of artifacts and items used during this time in history.

Postgate, O., & Linnell, N. (1992). *Columbus: The triumphant failure*. New York, NY: Franklin Watts.

Columbus, The Triumphant Failure (1992), written and illustrated by Oliver Postgate and Naomi Linnell and geared toward a 9-12-year-old audience, offered a light-hearted look at Columbus' voyages west and the adventures he had while seeking a new route to India while representing Spain. Postgate—an Englishman, cousin to actress Angela Lansbury, author and creator of a myriad of films for children's television—teamed up with his partner and historian, Naomi Linnell, to reveal the story of a man who tried to do one thing, failed, and inadvertently encountered something far greater. No sources notes were provided for the reader or any other resources mentioned in this book. This book has not received any literary distinctions.

Question #1: Does the book provide a comprehensive record of the Christopher Columbus story to include the encounter with the Taino? The very first milestone when Columbus encountered the Taino was represented in the book as follows: “Columbus knelt to thank God for their safe arrival and claimed the island for Spain—all under the astonished eyes of a crowd of gentle, stark naked savages” (p. 17). The text continued, “The sheer nakedness of these ‘Indians’ appalled the Spaniards, and they were amazed at their complete lack of hostility” (p. 18). Within these two sentences alone, a reader could interpret this to mean the people with whom Columbus encountered were savage-like, but also gentle at the same time.

The next milestone revealed in the book is when the *Santa Maria* wrecked and La Navidad was formed. In a correct description, the text stated that the Taino people assisted in salvaging the wreckage and that “The naked king comforted the tearful admiral and brought him gifts of the yellow metal he loved so much” (p. 19). The illustration to this text showed (presumably) a Taino cacique wearing a decorated patch over his genitals, holding a chunk of gold, and from a kneeling position hugging a crying Columbus. The text made no mention of Columbus kidnapping the Tainos or forcing them aboard the ship back to Spain. However, the illustration depicted three Taino people being “shown” to the king. These three Taino bore scantily clad bathing suits and wore feathered-type tiaras which were an unrealistic depiction of the people who were stripped of their freedom and dignity as the illustration *did not* present. At this point in the story it was not clear how the Tainos got to Spain or what the intent of them being presented in bathing suits to the king was. This could potentially be quite confusing to a young reader. The book’s discussion of the second voyage explained that when Columbus returned to La Navidad, he found it burnt to the ground. The passage described, “They [Columbus and his men] found the cacique Guacanagari who explained that the Spaniards had

rampaged through the island like conquerors and had been wiped out by another, less peaceful, cacique called Caonabo” (p. 22). The book managed to address several milestones that occurred during this particular timeframe. It also provided information on how Columbus stole the Taino people from their home in an effort to send what Columbus referred to as “goods and services” in lieu of the gold he had yet to find, noting, “Columbus shipped a cargo of slaves to Spain” (p. 25).

The third voyage did not mention any interactions with the local Natives, but the fourth voyage described one milestone relevant to this study. It explained how the Tainos grew weary of feeding the “greedy visitors” while stranded in Jamaica and how Columbus fooled them with his prediction of the lunar eclipse. This tricked the Taino into finding food for them once again without incident.

Question #2: Does the book provide sufficient insight into the lifestyle-cultural and sociological heritage of the indigenous Taino people? The text did provide a solid historical record for what took place for all four voyages. The writers did not oversimplify the descriptions and the reader is delivered the entire story. The blame for the events mentioned within this version did not appear to be placed specifically on Columbus, but rather on Columbus’s men. Throughout this book, Postgate and Linnell provide insight into many events that included the Taino people. But on many occasions the information was presented in a manner that could invite doubt through unrealistic illustrations and statements. The illustrations were not realistic, presenting the Taino in cartoon figures. The clothing was not accurate, nor was any other cultural or lifestyle images or text provided that would enhance the reader’s understanding of who the Tainos were and what they represented.

Question #3: To what extent does the book depart from the historical record and what impact does that departure have on the reading and learning experience? Through simple references such as “savages,” to inaccurate bikini outfits, to omitted information about kidnapping Tainos and the magnitude of suffering they endured, there were many instances of departure from the historical record in this book. These departures from the historical record could at best provide the reader with a stereotypical and biased understanding of who the Taino were and greatly reduce the quality of a reading and learning experience.

Question #4: To what extent does the book provide insight into Taino interactions or relationships with Columbus and the Spanish Settlers and what impact does that have on the reading and learning experience? Even though Postgate and Linnell demonstrated interaction between the Spanish and the Taino people in the text, these interactions were presented from a heavily Eurocentric perspective filled with biased statements and inaccurate information. The Tainos were never shown rejecting the Spanish mistreatment; in fact, one of the Taino caciques was shown in hand cuffs grinning from ear to ear. One can only assume that the Taino did not really react in that manner to the horrible mistreatment they endured at the hands of the settlers. Although colorful, the illustrations did not treat the serious events of slavery, forced labor, and as some may view, near genocide, appropriately in this version of story. As a result, the reading and learning experiences could leave a child to doubt or not take seriously the events as they were truly happened over 500 years ago.

Quality rating. The quality rating of this book was rated as *poor* based on four of the five areas of the rubric. To begin, the term “savages” to describe Native Americans is a term used back in the 1950’s before civil rights were enacted. As far as the illustrations are concerned, in one particular picture the Taino are wearing bikinis which may be considered

horribly misleading. Not only are the garments they wore historically inaccurate, but also it is not appropriate in a storybook as it perpetuates sexual stereotypes and could be considered in poor taste. At the time of this book's publication, sufficient research was available to aid the author in accurately depicting this historical event to include the perspective of the Taino people. It then begs the question, "Why didn't the authors do their research to provide a more truthful story of such an extraordinary event?"

Maestro, B. & Maestro, G. (1991). *The discovery of the Americas*. New York, NY: Scholastic.

In *The Discovery of the Americas*, authors Betsy and Giulio Maestro presented a book that discussed both hypothetical and historical voyages of discovery to America by the Phoenicians, Saint Brendan of Ireland, the Vikings, and such later European navigators as Columbus, Cabot, and Magellan. The authors and illustrators of this book are no strangers to education or art. They are well known in the publishing field for their nonfiction and have collaborated on more than 100 books since 1975. Betsy holds degrees in early childhood education and counseling and is a former elementary school teacher. Giulio is an artist by trade and has illustrated more than 100 and 25 books for young readers. The book offered a nice array of supplemental material, including a table of dates, a listing of people from the ancient and early Americas, and a list of other interesting explorers of our time. This book has received several literary distinctions, including *Adventuring with Books: A Booklist for Pre-K-Grade 6* (1993, 10th ed.) from the National Council of Teachers of English, *Children's Catalog* (2001, 18th ed.) by H.W. Wilson, *Children's Catalog* (2006, 19th ed.) by H.W. Wilson, *Kirkus Book Review Stars* (1991), and a Notable Children's Books distinction (1992) from the Association for Library Service to Children.

The purpose of this book was to share with readers the various explorations from Europe and all land to the west. As the book did not reference Columbus and his encounter with the Caribbean islands, it did not address the specifics of Columbus' voyage(s) in the degree of detail needed to conduct this analysis. As a result, the book will be included in the book sample but not within the overall discussion.

The remaining books from the book sample, *Christopher Columbus and the first voyages to the New World* (1991) by Stephen Dodge, *Explorers who got lost* (1992) by Diane Sanseverere-Dreher, and *Morning Girl* (1992) by Michael Dorris, were not reviewed using this rubric as the audience age intended for these books exceeded the elementary aged population that was sought for this research.

Once the data were gathered the books were then grouped by common findings among all three rating categories. There were several overall themes that were identified as follows:

1. Christopher Columbus as the hero.
2. The Taino people collapsed into a single "Indian" group (people were not identified).
3. Christopher Columbus story consisting of a single voyage.
4. The illustrations perpetuated the Eurocentric perspective.

Much of the controversy surrounding Columbus is the manner in which he is "celebrated." There are federal, state, and local holidays acknowledging him as a great hero. Numerous cities, streets, museums, and statues are collectively placed around the world to honor him. On the contrary, there are also many people who believe Columbus to be the cause of the genocidal events and demise of the indigenous populations that occurred as a result of Columbus's first voyage in 1492. Due to these dichotomous views it is hoped that the books being shared in today's classroom offer a dual perspective on Columbus. However, in this sample, it is apparent that many of these books take on the "Columbus as hero attitude." In

books such as Twist's *Christopher Columbus: Discovery of the Americas* the title alone gives the reader a clue that the "discovery" of San Salvador was accomplished by Columbus himself, when in fact it is documented that others came to this land before him. D'Aulaire's *Columbus* also falls into this category by the way the book highlights Columbus as "god-like" and the people he encountered bowed before him in honor. *I, Columbus: My Journal, 1493-93* (1990) written by the Roops did not provide the reader with the notion that Columbus was not a hero in the eyes of many. The story ended with the death of Columbus and the words of Greene: "He didn't find Japan. He didn't find China. He found a whole New World. But Christopher Columbus never knew that" (p. 45). This statement that Columbus found a "New World" might leave a reader believing that the land Columbus encountered had never been seen before in her (1989) *Christopher Columbus: A Great Explorer*.

An additional theme that ran through the data was how many of the authors combined all Indigenous people into one term "Indians" or "Native Americans." As listed earlier, the expectation is that more authors would include specific names of the tribes that Columbus encountered as the information and documentation is much more prevalent, especially in the new millennium. But it is not clear why the Taino people were not listed by their tribal affiliation. Several of the books such as Gleitner and Thompson's (1996) *Christopher Columbus*, Peter Sis's (1991) *Follow the Dream, Christopher Columbus* (1991) by Stephen Krensky, D'Aulaire's *Columbus* (1995), Twist's *Christopher Columbus* (1995) and Adler's *A Picturebook of Christopher Columbus* (1992) omitted this important fact. By not providing the reader this information it perpetuates the notion that the people Columbus encountered are not important.

The historical event of Columbus encountering the islands west of Europe is no small matter. It did, after all, open up a whole new trade route between the Caribbean, Europe, and the

rest of the world. However, what was interesting to find among so many of the books in this sample are abbreviated versions of history. For most of the books in this study the authors concentrated solely on Columbus's first journey. In order to truly understand the scope of this event it is important to note there was interaction between the Taino and others throughout all of the voyages Columbus made. When this information is omitted, the opportunity for a more biased interpretation of the event emerges. The instance at the city of La Navidad when Columbus returned to find his men dead due to the retaliation of the Taino for the horrible acts they endured from the Spanish, or the *encomi*endo system where forced labor was instilled upon the Tainos while the Spanish forced Christianity onto them, or the massive slave trade that occurred beginning with the second voyage, are examples of the complexities that were born as a result of the additional travels of Columbus. Why, then, do authors only address the first voyage? Books written by Goodnough, Richards, Kaufman, Abnett, Adler, Greene, Sandak, Showers, and many more in this sample, only address the primary voyage in their books. It is understandable that the books for the younger children do not need to be heavily saturated with complex information and imagery, but there is an expectation that an author can gently offer the reader the correct information without total omissions. This particular theme of omission was most prevalent among the books analyzed.

The final theme that runs thorough the collection of books in this study addresses a reliance on stock images of historical artwork that include paintings, lithographs, and drawings. It is clear no cameras were available during the time of Columbus so the manner in which the events were recorded over time includes media such as these. However, these images do not necessarily reflect a non-stereotypical view of the Taino. In fact, the images are heavily depicted with a European perspective because it was the Europeans who painted these images. So even

when the text may be endowed with some authenticity, these images serve to perpetuate the negative mythology that surrounds the events of Columbus's voyages west. Including these images may be one way that publishers are able to cut costs so as not to use original artwork. However, in using these images publishers detract from the value of the book as a source of accurate storytelling regarding this important event in history. Books written by Knieb, Landau, Twist, Sandak, DeVillier, and Ganeri to name a few included these archived drawings, sometimes mixing them in with cartoon characters of Columbus or the Taino which can unnecessarily complicate matters for the reader.

Table 5-1. List of books with excellent rating.

Book Title	Author	Pub. Date	Publisher	Publisher Location	Times Listed
<i>Columbus Day: Celebrating a Famous Explorer</i>	Elaine Landau	2001	Enslow Publishers	Berkeley Heights, NJ	2

Table 5-2. List of books with good rating.

Book Title	Author	Pub. Date	Publisher	Publisher Location	Times Listed
<i>Encounter</i>	Jane Yolen	1992	Harcourt Brace & Company	San Diego, CA	14
<i>A Coyote Columbus Story</i>	Thomas King	1992	Douglas & McIntyre	Toronto, Canada	2
<i>Pedro's Journal: A Voyage With Christopher Columbus</i>	Pam Conrad	1991	Scholastic, Inc	New York, NY	2
<i>Animals Christopher Columbus Saw</i>	Sandra Markle	2008	Chronicle Books	San Francisco, CA	1
<i>Westward with Columbus</i>	John Dyson	1991	Scholastic, Inc	New York, NY	2
<i>Columbus Day</i>	Vicki Liestman	1991	Carolrhoda Books	Minneapolis, MN	1
<i>Christopher Columbus: The life of a master navigator and explorer</i>	David West & Jackie Gaff	2005	Rosen Publishing	New York, NY	1
<i>I Can Read About Christopher Columbus</i>	Peter Copeland	1988	Dover Publications	Mineola, NY	1

Table 5-3. Continued

Book Title	Author	Pub. Date	Publisher	Times Listed	
<i>Christopher Columbus: Master Italian Navigator in the court of Spain</i>	Martha Knieb Anita Ganeri	2003	The Rosen Publishing Group. Dorling Kinderskey	York, NY New York, NY	1 2
<i>Story of Columbus 1492: the year of the new word</i>	Piero Ventura	1991	G.P. Putnam's Sons	New York, NY	1

Table 5-3. List of books with “poor” rating

Book Title	Author	Pub. Date	Publisher	Times Listed	
<i>The Columbus story</i>	Alice Dalgliesh Ingri and Edgar Parin D'Aulaire	1955	Charles Scribners Sons	Chicago, IL	1
<i>Columbus</i>	D'Aulaire	1955	Beautiful Feet Books	Sandwich, MA	3
<i>Columbus</i>	Paul Showers Betsy and Giulio Maestro	1965	Fitzhenry & Whiteside Ltd.	New York, NY	1
<i>The Discovery of the Americas</i>	Giulio Maestro	1991	Scholastic	New York, NY	1
<i>Christopher Columbus...who sailed on</i>	Dorothy Richards	1978	The Children's World	Elgin, IL	1
<i>Christopher Columbus Where do you think you are going, Christopher Columbus</i>	David Goodnough Jean Fritz	1979 1980	Troll Associates G.P. Putnam's Sons	Mahwah, NJ New York, NY	1 12
<i>Before Columbus: Who Discovered America?</i>	Harry Edward Neal	1981	Simon & Schuster	New York, NY	1
<i>Christopher Columbus, a Great Explorer</i>	Carol Greene	1989	Children's Press	Chicago, IL	1
<i>I, Columbus, My Journal 1492-3</i>	Peter & Connie Roop	1990	Walker & Co	New York, NY	1
<i>Columbus Day</i>	Cass Sandak	1990	Crestwood House	New York, NY	1

Table 5-3. Continued

Book Title	Author	Pub. Date	Publisher	Times Listed	
<i>Christopher Columbus</i>	Stephen Krensky	1991	Random House, NY NY	New York, NY	6
<i>A Picture Book of Christopher Columbus</i>	David A. Adler	1991	Holiday House Book	New York, NY	13
<i>Christopher Columbus and the first voyages to the New World</i>	Stephen C. Dodge	1991	Chelsea House Publishers	New York, NY	2
<i>In 1492</i>	Jean Marzzolo	1991	Scholastic, Inc	New York, NY	6
<i>Columbus</i>	Oliver Postgate	1991	Kingfisher Books	New York, NY	1
<i>Explorers who got lost</i>	Diane Sansevere-		Tom Doherty Associates	New York, NY	
<i>Young Christopher Columbus Discoverer of New Worlds</i>	Dreher	1992	Book	NY	1
<i>Christopher Columbus: The Discovery of the Americas</i>	Eric Carpenter	1992	Troll Associates	Mahwah, NJ	4
<i>Christopher Columbus</i>	Clint Twist		Raintree Steck-Vaughn Publishers	Austin, TX	1
<i>Christopher Columbus</i>	Jan Geiter & Kathleen Thompson	1995	Raintree-Steck-Vaughn Publisher	Milwaukee, WI	2
<i>Morning Girl</i>	Michael Dorris	1999	Hyperion	New York, NY	4
<i>Meet Christopher Columbus</i>	Jim DeKay	1996	Random House	New York, NY	1
<i>Columbus Day</i>	Christina Mia Gardeski	2001	Childrens' Press ABDO	New York, NY	2
<i>Christopher Columbus Let's Read About</i>	Christy DeVillier	2001	Publishing Co	Edina, MN	1
<i>Christopher Columbus</i>	Kimberly Weinberger	2001	Scholastic, Inc	New York, NY	1
<i>Christopher Columbus</i>	Lola Schaefer	2002	Capstone Press Alfred A.	Mankato, MN	4
<i>Follow the Dream</i>	Peter Sis	2003	Knopf	New York, NY	4
<i>Christopher Columbus</i>	Mary Dodson Wade	2003	Children's Press	New York, NY	2

Table 5-3. Continued

Book Title	Author	Pub. Date	Publisher		Times Listed
<i>Christopher Columbus: Explorer</i>	Judy Alter Mervyn Kaufman	2003	The Child's World	Chanhassen, MN	1
<i>Christopher Columbus and the voyage of 1492</i>	Dan Abnett	2004	Capstone Press PowerKids press	Mankato, MN New York, NY	1
<i>Christopher Columbus: Famous Explorer</i>	Mary Dodson Wade	2007	Capstone Press Aladdin Paperbacks	Mankato, MN New York, NY	2
<i>What Columbus Found</i>	Jane Kurtz	2007			1

CHAPTER 6 IMPLICATIONS AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to offer the analyses of books that tell the story of Christopher Columbus and his voyages west and to identify how the Taino people whom he encountered are represented. This information will be presented in three parts. The first part of this study was taken from a combination of Bishop's (1997) functions for quality multicultural literature and the standards for history education as commissioned in the Bradley Report in 2000. Using critical literacy and critical multicultural theories to provide the framework of this study, this research focused on the manner in which books about Columbus provided readers with a comprehensive and inclusive depiction of the Taino people within the story. Using the data generated from this study and applying it to Bishop's functions of multicultural literature, a synopsis of how well the books served these functions provided the basic foundation for more in-depth analyses. The next part of this research is the information collected from the survey that was used to generate the book sample. This information covers the responses from teachers and media specialists from across the country and their insights into sharing books around Columbus Day or the Columbus historical theme. The final section in the analysis and discussion chapter assessed each book in the collected database (book sample) on Christopher Columbus. While this analysis is qualitative in nature, it is done according to a formatted rubric designed specifically for this research to examine the following five components: historical milestones, cultural transmissions, fictionalized treatment, Taino interactions, and literary distinctions. In its comprehensive form it is hoped that this rubric can not only provide insight into the quality of books that include a native representation in the story of Columbus, but also garner the attention

of further research that can utilize the rubric in ways that can span other topics involving indigenous populations in books for children.

Every October when Columbus Day arrives and the stores advertise their sales, the parades are put in place, and the holiday from school is celebrated, these events all serve to honor this day with respect and remembrance of a man noted for his extraordinary explorations. However, for Native Americans this day can be a time of mourning—a time to reflect on a history that was and never will be again. With such a controversial topic, it is important to read and share how the arrival of Columbus and his men are reflected in children’s literature and to assess whether the books that are being shared in today’s classroom on Columbus’ encounter provide appropriate messages and create a positive sense of self-representation toward the children who encounter this story.

A list of the books that were most recently shared this past Columbus Day 2008 in many classrooms was collected by surveying teachers and librarians from around the country. The survey link was posted in personal emails, listserv announcements, and newsletters across the country by utilizing listservs and contacts through various national organizations. The survey was kept anonymous while the voluntary participants were asked to provide the titles and authors of the books they shared with the students about Columbus and his encounter. After duplicated books, nontrade books, history textbooks, and books that were geared toward a junior high and high school level were removed, the sample was created. The complete list of book titles that were collected can be found in Appendix B.

Results of Content Analysis of Functions of Multicultural Literature

Several trends were discerned in the data regarding the selection of books teachers and librarians use to share information about Columbus. Using the framework of the evaluation

instrument, the findings will be shared according to the corresponding section of the instrument and supported with examples and charts as available.

The framework of the analysis is based on questions that combined Bishop's (1997) functions of quality multicultural literature with standards of history education. These questions became the vehicle for which information gleaned from storybooks were placed and analyzed. The first section gathered bibliographic data of the book, which included title, author, illustrator, genre, literary distinctions, source notes, copyright date, and other pertinent information. The publication dates of the collected book titles range from 1955 to 2007.

Question 1 (Q1). The first question specifically assessed whether the story provided any substantive knowledge about the Taino people. It was used to discern whether the story included information such as their tribal affiliation and whether the story highlighted examples of cultural content. The most common topics chronicled in this question were based on Columbus as a person, his four voyages to the Americas, and the aftermath of his discoveries. There was one book, Kurtz's (2007) *What Columbus Found*, that looked at the pumpkins Columbus discovered; while another book, Markle's (2008) *Animals Columbus Saw*, described the animals with which Columbus came into contact. Yolen's (1992) *Encounter* was unique in that it told the story of the arrival of Columbus from the perspective of a native Taino child. The basic story paralleled the common story of Columbus arriving on land, looking for gold, and returning to Spain; however, in this book the event was unveiled from a less known vantage point, one of naivety and innocence. The story went into detail when the child was stolen from his home and forced to the boat back to Spain. It described his fears and yearning to escape. The illustrations were striking and impressionable. Some stories began with Columbus' encounter with the Americas while others chronicled Columbus' life and ended with his discovery or death. In all but two of

the books, the indigenous people were mentioned within the content of the story, in varying degrees. These two books never mentioned Tainos, natives, or indigenous people.

Given the more current publication dates for the books recorded by the survey, one would expect the Tainos to be mentioned more often than not at all. Yet Schaefer's (2002) *Christopher Columbus* and Sis's (1992) *Follow the Dream* never mentioned the Tainos. In Sis's book there was one illustration where Columbus was on the beach and it appears that some indigenous people were surrounding him by the way they were dressed, but no written acknowledgement or explanation was offered. A separate analysis was conducted to distinguish whether the stories specified the Taino tribal name or whether the books chose to use the common Columbus-made name, "Indian." This question was analyzed in two ways: one documented whether the book acknowledged the presence of the Tainos; the other assessed whether the Taino tribal affiliation was given. As Figure 6-1 shows, only 38% of the book sample specifically mentioned the Taino people in the story—in spite of the fact that there have been primary resource documents that have identified the Tainos in the Columbus encounter for many years (see Loven, 1935).

There are over 550 tribal groups within the United States alone. This statistic does not take into account other indigenous groups around the world. Tribal affiliation specifically identifies a certain group of people. When a Taino is listed as "Indian" or "Native American" this label does not indicate the region from which this individual resides or the clan to which he or she belongs; nor does it provide valuable insight into the traditional dress, the oral storytelling, or even the given craft that is specific to that group of people. A similar analogy would be to respond to the question of, "What football team do you like?" with an answer of, "That one NFL team." The label of "Indian" does not acknowledge the individuality of indigenous people. The Tainos were a specific group of people who endured extreme hardships upon the arrival of

Spanish settlers. To not acknowledge the Tainos' experiences in the Columbus encounter is to fall short of providing a quality multicultural literature and history. Question 1, in addition to assessing whether the Taino people were mentioned in the stories, also examined whether the stories went further than acknowledgement and provided information on Taino culture.

Question 2 (Q2). The second question examined whether the story was told in a way that conveyed an understanding that most historical events are usually complex and should be treated in a way that is void of simplistic answers or explanations. Keeping this in mind, data were collected based on the manner in which the story dealt with controversial issues or divergence from a positive storyline, such as the inclusion of genocide, slavery, mistreatment, forced labor, kidnapping, and even negative description of Europeans. The plethora of Christopher Columbus books referenced by respondents was relatively simplistic and did not go into great detail regarding some of the more esoteric aspects of the story. To provide a comprehensive analysis of the complexity, or lack thereof, of the story, the research examined a number of variables.

To gauge the extent to which a story was brought to its historical conclusion (i.e., the outcome and impact of Christopher Columbus' discovery), the research examined each text to discern the ultimate fate of the Taino Indians. While some texts, such as Pelta's *Discovering Christopher Columbus* (1991) and *Christopher Columbus* by Kent (1991), described the long-term impact that diseases had on the Taino population, most of the books surveyed conveyed what could be termed a fairy-tale ending. For example, Greene's (1989) *Christopher Columbus: A Great Explorer* concluded with, "He didn't find Japan. He didn't find China. He found a whole New World. But Christopher Columbus never knew that" (p. 32), with nary a mention of the Taino Indians. In Sanserver-Dreher's (1992) *Explorers Who Got Lost*, the controversial

topics were included but somewhat glossed over. The Taino, while presented, were not shown alongside elements of their culture, which would have helped readers to relate to them as real historical figures. Nor were they portrayed as being important to the Christopher Columbus story. The illustrations of the Taino further diminished their role in the story as they were drawn as caricature and not lifelike. Likewise, in Adler's (1991) *Christopher Columbus: Great Explorer*, though the author is a prolific writer on persons and events of note, this work is surprisingly lacking of important segments of the Christopher Columbus story. While the text did address the trouble that the Spanish explorers encountered when they first settled (e.g., inability to settle in La Navidad), the description of the problems faced was not accompanied with explanations of why the problems occurred (e.g., due to the maltreatment towards the Taino). This lack could prove confusing for younger readers.

Question 3 (Q3). This question asked, does the story critically question the status quo and offer varying perspectives? As mentioned earlier, critical literacy assists students and teachers to critically analyze texts and illustrations for an author's point of view, intended audience, and elements of inclusion, stereotypes, or bias (Creighton, 1997). In this section of the instrument the focus was on what perspectives were being brought forward and did the story offer information that someone had not previously considered. One of the ways that this question can be answered is to look specifically at what is *not* stated in the text. In particular, the research assessed which perspective was used to write the book—a native perspective or a European perspective. Yolen's *Encounter* (1992) was told from the perspective of young Taino children, one of the few instances where the nondominant perspective was brought forward in the selected stories. Another example is King's *The Coyote Columbus Story* (1992), which used colorful illustrations and interesting text to give the reader the arrival of the Spaniards from a

native perspective (although the Tainos were not mentioned). Likewise, in Landau's (2001) *Columbus Day: Celebrating a Famous Explorer*, the book did a favorable job of telling the story with an unbiased point of view. There were instances where the author glossed over some of the controversial events but she at least clearly acknowledged and demonstrated the mistreatment that the Tainos faced at the hands of Christopher Columbus and his men. The text was successful in presenting both a European and Native American perspective.

Approximately 98% of the books in the study sample were told from a European perspective. As mentioned earlier, children's literature reflects mainstream society, but as we also know children from all backgrounds deserve the opportunity to be seen in books as well and to hear their side of the story. Because of the high number of the books that teachers and librarians use portray the European perspective, rather than the Taino, this finding merits further discussion.

Another aspect of this question assesses whether the story provides information on Taino culture. The Tainos are so rich in their traditions that the information could resonate in several areas of the curriculum. In Figure 6-2, it is noted that approximately 42% of the books surveyed described Taino culture to some degree. In particular, the stories discussed aspects of culture such as food items, trading items, traditional dress (or lack of), transportation, cultural festivities, agricultural practices, or community hierarchy. Pintura's *1492: The Year of the New World* (1991) provided a multitude of information on Taino culture with over eight paragraphs dedicated to the Taino way of life. For example, the story stated, "For many years the Tainos lived peacefully on the multitude of scattered islands. They became skillful at carving stone, making not only axes and mortars needed to cut plants and grind corn, but also sculpture. They were skilled at weaving plant fibers—although clothes were practically unnecessary in the warm

climate—and knew how to intertwine rope to make hammocks” (p. 56). Although not as extensive, Twist’s (1994) *Christopher Columbus: The Discovery of the Americas* discussed in a meaningful way the technology, agriculture, and architecture seen in Taino living.

Question 4 (Q4). This question assessed, does this story carefully approach history by avoiding analogies that do not project the truth and distinguish between fact and assumption? To avoid analogies that do not project “truth” and to distinguish between fact and assumption, resources should be cited within a book. “Truth” is not easily identified, especially when documentation appears skewed toward a perspective that is reflective of dominant members of society. In the case of Columbus’ encounter in 1492, several primary sources have emerged over the years. These resources include Washington Irving’s 1856 book *The Life and Voyages of Christopher Columbus*, Justin Winsor’s penned notable biography about Christopher Columbus in 1892, Samuel Morison’s *Admiral of the Ocean Sea* in 1942, and many other translations to include the controversial Manuel da Silva Rosa’s story debunking many of the theories previously presented.

Of the entire study population only six selected texts included a bibliography (see Table 4-1). Kent’s (1991) *Christopher Columbus* cited seven sources to include *The Journal of Christopher Columbus* (translated by Jane, 1960) and *The Life of the Admiral Christopher Columbus by His Son Ferdinand* (translated by Keen, 1959). Of particular note is Kent’s referencing of *In the Wake of Columbus: Islands and Controversy* by De Vorse and Parker (1985). This academic tome is one of many scholarly works that casts a critical eye on the accepted version of Christopher Columbus’ voyages.

Stephen Dodge’s (1991) *Christopher Columbus and the First Voyages to the New World* included a section for further reading; however, it was not indicated whether the author used the

included texts as sources for his book. Like the aforementioned text, Dodge's book also listed *The Life of the Admiral Christopher Columbus by His Son Ferdinand*.

The inclusion of a bibliography or recommended/further reading section serves to assure both readers and educators that the basis of the information contained in the stories is factually sound. In the case of the Christopher Columbus stories the bibliography demonstrates that the author has endeavored to include not only the generally accepted version of events but also information on the Taino Indians, which may not be included in books with little or no citations.

Question 5 (Q5). This question identified the manner in which there was evidence of appreciation for diversity through historical versions in the selected Columbus stories. This is where alternative viewpoints are not only sought; examples that reflect whether the Tainos were treated in a positive manner are documented. Through the data collected in Question 1, this section looks to see if the story offers the reader an experience of cultural celebration. It seeks to not only provide efferent information but to share it with the reader in a way that is positive and enlightening.

There are many ways a book can touch the life of its reader. Living in the 21st century and with a focus on celebrating difference and solidifying sameness, books that speak of marginalized, often silenced, voices have a duty to represent information or characters in a manner that instills respect. When a book is centered within the narrative of the dominant perspective, it serves to promote one historical and contemporary view of the world at the expense of its "disenfranchised narratives" (Weil, 1998). Question 5 investigated whether the Taino people were represented in a positive manner. A "positive" manner could include non-derogatory comments, taking into consideration that cultures act differently, asking ourselves if the people being represented are done so in a contemporary viewpoint, not just historically (this

becomes especially important in literature that feature Native Americans). Landau's *Columbus Day: Celebrating a Famous Explorer* (2001) and Ganeri's *Story of Columbus* (2001) are good examples of books that present information, regardless of whether it is negative, in a respectful manner. For example, Landau's *Columbus Day* stated

In time, Columbus and his men mistreated the Indians. They made them work long hours and gave them little food. If the Indians disobeyed they were harshly punished. Many died from lack of food and the cruel treatment they received. Some Indians died of diseases the Europeans brought with them. Columbus had also brought Christianity to the Indians. He thought that this made up for what the Indians lost but he was wrong (p. 28-29).

Even the topic of conversation is negative, by just acknowledging that there were two sides to the story offers the reader a chance to digest the material and make assessments based on their own interpretations and experiences. On the other hand, D'Aulaire's (1955/1983) *Columbus* referenced the Tainos as *naked, red-skinned savages* and *gentle heathens*, while Postgate's (1991) *Columbus* referred to them as *gentle, naked savages*. One might ask if a child of native descent were to hear or read this information, what the child's reaction might be. Although the original publication date is prior to the intense onset of the Civil Rights Movement, but the fact that the book was reprinted in 1983 without changing the descriptions. Postgate's more recent book, *Columbus* (1991) presents the same outdated information.

Question 6 (Q6). As Sims Bishop (1992) argued, "literature reflects human life and children need to see themselves reflected in that humanity" (p. 43). Literature is not only a tool of knowledge or a written work; it also contains mysteries, wonderment, joy, sadness, and any other emotion that is part of the human experience. Although enjoyment and emotions are difficult to research as each person harbors a different feeling based on one's own unique experiences, this portion of the research seeks to identify how well each of the stories illuminated the interaction of the characters, in this instance, the Tainos. In Dyson's (1991) *Westward With*

Columbus, the text offers a unique perspective, one that appears to be used in order to capture and maintain a child's attention. This story discussed Christopher Columbus' secret journal and generally did not gloss over too many details of the Taino Indians. On the other hand, Copeland's (1989) *I Can Read About Christopher Columbus* might be argued to have more utility as a coloring book than a method of presenting accurate information on Christopher Columbus. Most events were glossed over in the story and the overall sentiment expressed was that Christopher Columbus was a hero and great explorer. Similarly, Greene's (1989) *Christopher Columbus, A Great Explorer* was highly simplistic and did not adequately or accurately identify the Taino Indians, choosing instead to call them "island people."

While "enjoyment" is a transitory and highly subjective concept it can be argued that the inclusion of complex characterizations and storylines that are not one-dimensional create a much richer reading experience. To estimate the "richness" of the reading experience of the collected titles, the research examined a composite measure of variables. These include the prevalence or absence of interaction between the explorers and indigenous peoples, the nature of those interactions, and the level of complexity of those with whom the interaction is made.

To estimate the complexity of the depiction of the Taino people their characterization is examined along three dimensions: oversimplified, primitive, and respectful. Oversimplification is conceptualized as the description of a people as being devoid of human emotion, personality, or motivation. In the case of oversimplification, the presentation of this group serves more as a background feature and not as an integral component of the story. A designation of "primitive" is meant to illustrate the portrayal of the Taino as lacking sophistication as defined by Western or European standards. This label is typically applied according to a description of the Taino's lack of dress or liberal use of bodily ornamentation. Finally, a description is considered "respectful"

when the Taino occupies a central, or at least equal, position with the Spanish explorers in the story.

Textual analysis indicated that of the books sampled, 54% provided oversimplified descriptions of the Taino people while 23% included primitive depictions. Only 23% of the books examined included descriptions of the Taino people that could be defined as respectful. It is also important to note that each of these variables were not completely exclusive. A small percentage of books used both oversimplified and primitive depictions of the Taino. An even smaller percentage provided descriptions that were both oversimplified and respectful. As an example, the portrayal of the Taino was oversimplified in Ganeri's (2001) *Story of Columbus*, but in a somewhat more positive manner. The facts of the relationship between Christopher Columbus' men and the Taino were laid out in just a few short sentences.

Recurrent themes in the selected texts indicate the following interactions between the Spanish explorers and the Taino they encounter: first meeting or arrival, interactions related to gold, trading, travel to Spain, La Navidad, positive interaction, and unspecified interaction. As Figure 6-4 indicates, the "arrival" interaction represented 29% of the Columbus-Taino interactions noted by the books. The arrival interaction is identified as Christopher Columbus' initial encounter with the Taino. The "gold" interaction refers to all gold-seeking behavior exhibited by the Spanish explorers. This includes questioning the Tainos as to the location of gold to forcing the Tainos to lead the Spanish to it. The "trading" interaction refers to general trading activity and does not specifically relate to the exchange of goods for the gold the Taino had in their possession. The "travel to Spain" interaction is included as a value-free designation, as there were both negative and positive depictions of this interaction. The "La Navidad" interaction includes the fighting between the Spaniards and the Taino but also refers to

colocation and habitation. Positive interactions include general helping and welcoming behavior, while “unspecified interaction” refers to instances where the author simply stated that the explorers “met” the Taino.

The overall sample size in this study was insufficient to determine statistical significance in the correlation between the complexity of characters and the number and nature of interactions. It is possible, however, to qualitatively establish which books would provide a more multicultural reading experience by examining whether the aforementioned interactions are present and, if so, whether the characters involved are multifaceted or simply included to satisfy a preexisting unimaginative rubric. In Krensky’s (1991) *Christopher Columbus*, the story did not depict the Taino or “Indians” in a negative manner; however, the text also did not include any controversial topics. Therefore, this book, unlike newer books (or books with newer resources) may not offer a true account of the Columbus event.

Question 7 (Q7). As stated earlier, it is thought that the story of Columbus is first experienced in a school setting through children’s literature (Yolen, 1992). With that type of audience, the type of book most prevalent would be one that contains pictures, paintings, drawings, or whatever visual medium is enjoyed by children. With that in mind, this section evaluates the illustrations within the selected books and documents in terms of how the Tainos are represented in the artwork. Do the illustrations realistically portray the Tainos with attention to individuality? Is tokenism present in the story within the illustrations? Answers to these types of questions are in this section.

When reviewing the list of books that teachers and librarians share today, one needs also to review how the characters and members of society are seen and represented. Since a vast majority of the books centered around Columbus and his voyages, the expectation is that the

Tainos would be represented somewhere in the story. Many of the books that did mention the Tainos provided various depictions of them as illustrations. We know from de Las Casas' documentations that the Taino men went naked or covered their genitalia with cotton loincloths while unmarried women wore headbands; wives wore short skirts, the length of which would represent their rank (Rouse, 1992). Their hair was described as coarse, similar to that of a horse; they wore it down over their eyebrows, except for strands in the back that were left long, never cut.

Barrerio (1990) reported that the general physical appearance of the "Men of Good" was consistent with the appearance of other Indians of the Americas. Rarely were they taller than five feet, six inches. Taken from de las Casas' abstract made from a copy of Columbus' original journal, Columbus described the native inhabitants as follows:

Their foreheads and heads are very broad, more than any other race I have seen before. None of them are black, but they are the color of the Canary Islanders... The legs of all of them, without exception is very straight. They have no paunch, and they are very well built. (Tyler, 1988, p. 39).

Both men and women painted their bodies with natural dyes made from the sources of earth and adorned themselves with shells and metals. Men and women chiefs often wore gold pieces in the ears and nose, or as pendants around the neck. Some even bore tattoos.

In addition to the physical features, it is also important to keep in mind the manner in which the Tainos are portrayed emotionally. Are they depicted as acting different than would be expected under the conditions given? Are the illustrations respectful in that the Tainos are not shown as happy or excited to have been stolen from their land and families to be sold into Spanish slavery? Are the illustrations respectful by depicting the Tainos as people and not as objects?

In Adler's (1992) *A Picture Book of Christopher Columbus*, illustrated by John and Alexandra Wallner, the pictures defined the Tainos as possibly happy and eager to offer the King and Queen the objects that Columbus has presented. One picture in the story, shown in Figure 6-5, could be perceived as objectifying the Tainos, who are shown alongside of other objects Columbus brought back to Spain (much as the text lists the "Indians" among the objects brought back by Columbus).

As shown in Figure 6-7, the illustrations in D'Aulaire's (1955/1983) *Columbus* showed no attention to individuality. Each person is depicted exactly the same. The Taino appear to be either "bowing down" or trying to please the settlers, possibly portraying inferiority or succumbing to the difficulties they faced during this time. In addition, the nose ornaments were presented in a way that may confuse a child because they appear exaggerated.

The illustration in Postgate's (1991) *Columbus* (see Figure 6-7) is interesting in how the illustrator portrayed the male and female Tainos in scantily clad bikinis. Illustrated by Linnell, much imagination and unbridled freedom was utilized when depicting Columbus' return to Spain with the Taino people in tow. An important question that might be asked in this instance is whether a child from native descent would feel comfortable seeing this picture as a representation of an indigenous population. The illustrations in King's *A Coyote Columbus Story* (1992; illustrated by Kent Monkman [Cree]; see Figure 6-8), Columbus and his men were not portrayed as the favorable ones in this story. The Tainos were depicted as contemporary characters while the Spaniards were portrayed as clowns and strange beings. This is unique in that both the author and illustrator are native. There would be some discussion needed with this portrayal of Columbus as misconceptions could occur in this instance as well.

The picture of Columbus (see Figure 6-9), taken from Yolen's (1992) *Encounter* (illustrated by Shannon), depicted a negative image of Columbus that could be perceived as pernicious or misleading. Columbus has been documented to be a gold-greedy man. As such, the illustrator may have tried to demonstrate this to the reader. However, since we need to approach illustrations with respect, authenticity, and accuracy, one might ask what kind of follow-up discussion this illustration might require.

The picture in Figure 6-10, also from Yolen's (1992), *Encounter*, contains many messages that may be difficult to see at first. By looking at the older gentleman's legs and feet you will notice a fading of the body into the sea. This image of the character's fading body might be understood as representing the larger fading of the Tainos and their culture. The text that is placed on this page, as Mendoza (2003) pointed out, is in passive tense (Islands *were* colonized, languages and lifestyles *were* changed) as if "there were no agents of the destruction. As if those things just kind of—happened" (p. 198). This picture could carry with it heavy weight on the blame and shame on the Tainos for their apparent demise.

Question 8 (Q8). As the author, illustrator, and publisher each have an interest in the book, it is important to note whether any influences are brought forward. Researching the background of each team member it highlights any personal interest stories and any background influences that can guide the reader to a certain outcome. Understanding who these people are and where they come from can provide significant insight into the message being sent through the text and illustrations. If an author or illustrator is of Native American background, does that give him or her a unique perspective into how the historical event is told? Maybe, but this research is not about the "inside vs. outside" argument. It is simply used to uncover any information that may embellish the message given to the reader.

Each author and illustrator brings to the table a wide range of knowledge, experience, and voice. It is impossible in this research endeavor to peruse each author and illustrator's life and exceptions and take that into account when reviewing this list of books that highlight the historical event of the Columbus encounter. As the data indicate, the majority of the books that are shared around Columbus Day in October are written and illustrated by European Americans. However, there were three instances in which Native American authors and illustrators played a part and told a story from their perspective. These books included King's (Cherokee, 1992) *A Coyote Columbus Story* (illustrated by Monkmen [Cree]) and Dorris's (Modoc, 1999) *Morning Girl*. Both of these stories contained rich insight into the indigenous culture through the viewpoint of young people. The strength in family values can be easily seen in *Morning Girl*, while King's witty *Coyote* and the comedic tone in both the text and the pictures in this story may have the reader either laughing or quite confused. Each book had a different style, but both books allowed for the sensitivity of feelings and instilled a sense of pride in the Tainos and their role in this global event. Looking briefly into the life of Michael Dorris, he was the first unmarried man to adopt a child in the United States in 1971. He was married to famous native author Louise Erdrich until his suicide in 1997. Thomas King, on the other hand, served as a faculty member of the University of Minnesota's American Indian Studies Department. King is currently an English professor at the University of Guelph and lives in Guelph, Ontario. He is also the creator of *The Dead Dog Cafe Comedy Hour*, a CBC Radio One series. As evidence shows, each person comes from a very different background, and the story is told through their eyes and is reflected in the tone of both historical fiction stories. Authors and illustrators that present their personal cultural depictions can validate those cultures and communicate to all children a strong, positive message of a diverse society.

This study was designed to examine the extent to which the Taino people—their history and culture—was adequately represented in the story of Christopher Columbus and his encounter with the Americas. To determine the level of understanding of educators on what are considered recommended books, the research examined those titles taken from a voluntary survey given to the teachers and librarians across the country that asked them to share the titles of the books currently being shared in the classrooms regarding Columbus. The books were then analyzed by using the framework of Bishop's (1997) functions of multicultural literature and the Bradley Commission's (2000) standards of history education. Based on the findings described in Chapter Four of this research study, recommendations can be more readily made in order to correct this potential deficiency of quality books that adequately represent the Tainos in such a worldwide event taught within the school classroom. Once completed, there was an in-depth analysis conducted on all books listed within the book sample. Through the application of critical literacy and critical multicultural theories, an overall summary of the book analyses follows.

Functions of Quality Multicultural Literature and History Education

The purpose of the study was not to demonize Columbus or the settlers that followed. Instead, the study specifically sought out what stories and books teachers and librarians of today's kindergarten through sixth-grade classrooms incorporate into learning about Columbus and the history in its wake. Within these stories, analyses outlining various representations of the Taino people were conducted.

The beginning analyses focused on whether or not the book provided substantive knowledge and information on the Taino people and also determined if the causes and outcomes of this event were demonstrated as complex and void of simplistic explanations by the referenced resources provided in the book. The results indicated that 6 out of every 10 books, the Taino

tribe were never mentioned. It has been documented that the Taino people were the ones who welcomed Columbus. The children's books neglect to mention only knowing that the Taino were Indians (if they were mentioned at all). Interpretations such as these have the potential to promote the idea of the "significant us" and the "insignificant others" that as plagued the revisionistically corrupted contemporary life and history (Weil, 1998). Publishers must employ the practice of requiring appropriate names and cultural groups within text so that all people can be represented in a fair and appropriate manner.

If a topic that involves the study of people is going to be taught in schools, the teacher must know the history of the topic from the perspective of the people under study. The books used need to distinguish information between facts and assumptions. In the analysis, one aspect of the collected research focused on the number of books that documented primary research or recommended further reading to support the claims within the text and illustrations. 17% of the listed books included a bibliography or further recommended reading sources. It is especially important that nonfiction books offer some reference to the sources of information used to write the books. By not including sources, authors do not provide teachers and children with verification as to whether the story is true; children may become confused as to whether the story is fact or simply made up for "enjoyment" purposes.

Using critical literacy and critical multicultural theories, the research raised questions about whether the story challenged the status quo and deflated erroneous assumptions found in history and offered a more realistic view of the past. The study discerned which perspective was most common in the stories and whether any new information was shared that could change the perception of the Taino people. Only 3 out of the 48 books came from a non-white perspective. When a curriculum is centered within a narrative of the dominant viewpoint, it serves to

highlight one view of the world at the expense of another marginalized group of people (Weil, 1998). Such a curriculum is disingenuous and leaves children to internalize unchallenged cultural myths that they absorb and carry throughout their school days. Teachers should be educated to examine where a story originates and what viewpoints are being represented. Included in the research data is a factor regarding whether the story provides enjoyment and illuminates the human experience. Noting the number of interactions the Tainos had with the Spanish settlers can indicate the abundance of relations, or lack of. Seventy-seven percent of the books in this study oversimplified the Tainos and demonstrated them as primitive; this reality has the potential to demonstrate them as not capable of managing a life on their own or indicating that they were dependent on Columbus and his men, with a resignation of Taino identity and values. Sokolow (2003) states that many humanists failed to ask the question of how a society of millions was able to successfully share widely accepted rules and a sense of justice without laws, courts, policies, and armies or state. The perspective that this indigenous group believed in included the idea that native peoples did not conserve the environment; the environment conserved them. This indigenous view of the world was compassionate, as it had the authority to nurture and fulfill its inhabitants. It is therefore misleading when books misrepresent the complexity of a people that thrived for hundreds of years before European influence came into the picture. In DeKay's (1968) *Meet Christopher Columbus* the author attempted to include some research-based information on the Taino, yet much of the information was ambiguous or somewhat biased. There was very little controversy included in the story and even less of the Taino culture. Of particular note is the following: "The Indians were surprised by the bravery of Columbus' men. They dropped their bows and ran away" (p. 32). These passages strongly demonstrate a Eurocentric bias. In the illustrations the Spanish soldiers are depicted as brave

warriors while the Indians are shown to be somewhat cowardly by dropping their weapons and fleeing.

A fair and updated retelling of the Columbus story is of extraordinary importance to U.S. culture and education. Inclusion of the Taino people as meaningful actors in this story can only enhance its value as a cultural landmark and tool for learning. When educators choose books that supplement or enhance their curriculum, or they just share a book for the sake of enjoyment, they should review and critically analyze the book. If time does not allow they should not use the book. Looking at the results from the content analysis reveals that many teachers share books on the telling of Christopher Columbus story that are outdated. Most frequently used and most often cited is Yolen's (1992) *Encounter*, with a response rate of 14 teachers and librarians choosing this book (see Figure 6-11). This particular text was published in 1992, and while the text is a strong favorite there has been a great deal of discussion and debate on what constitutes a quality telling of the encounter with the Americas. Adler's *A Picture Book of Christopher Columbus* (1992) and Fritz's (1980) *Where Do You Think You Are Going Christopher Columbus* are by far the most widely used books in this sample. Looking at the dates they were published indicates a reliance on older texts. This poses a potential problem with Adler's book as it has a tendency to objectify the Tainos and portray them as unimportant by the lack of information explaining their involvement in the story. Similarly, Fritz's provided good insight into events with easy-to-follow text (controversial) but could have done it in a way that didn't portray Tainos as oversimplified or could have included notes to explain the text.

Proceeding in chronological order the remaining books go as far back as 1955 (D'Aulaire), followed by the works of Krensky (1991), Sis (1991), Carpenter (1992), and Dorris (1992). A search of the Children's Literature Comprehensive Database found 150 book titles

published since 1992 that included Christopher Columbus. Teachers have no excuse to keep using old books with outdated information. .

Another statistical analysis looked at the number of books that mention Taino people. A chart (see Figure 6-12) indicates that most of the books published during the 1992 Quincenntennial did not mention Taino people. Alarmingly from 2001-2005 the books that did not contain the Taino culture outnumbered the books that did mention culture by almost 2 to 1. One would expect newer books to include more mention of the Taino culture, but that would not appear to be the case. It appears obvious that a Eurocentric perspective is still guiding the literature published on this historical event and that indigenous populations are not seeing themselves represented in a manner that fosters diversity.

Discussion of the Rubric Analysis

Critical Literacy

Presently the status quo regarding the Taino in children's literature is that they do not exist. Christopher Columbus was, and remains, the focal point in any telling of the story of the European discovery of what become known as the Americas. The Taino, as well as other indigenous peoples that met the European explorers, were relegated to supporting roles in the saga. Landau's *Columbus Day*, the only book to receive a rating of "excellent" according to this study's rubric, challenges the status quo and brings the experiences of the Taino in relation to the "Discovery" event to the forefront. While the exploits and efforts of Columbus and his men are reported much like most other children's books on the subject, important details regarding the Taino are given equal billing which serve to elevate their status in the story.

Landau's book provides a distinctive global, rather than Eurocentric, perspective on the story of Christopher Columbus and his initial voyage. The voyage and the events that lead up to

it are appropriately treated as significant events. The importance of these events is obvious to a western audience but would less likely be so to an indigenous people who were ignorant of the need for their “discovery”. Recognizing the plethora of stories and perspectives that could be told within the broader context of this discovery, Landau positions readers as part of a global audience.

The writing style that Landau uses is not “first person” and does not lend itself to interpreting the story as coming from a European or Taino character. Even so, Landau gives a much-needed voice to the Taino in relating events and impacts that are sparsely told in most Children’s literature. Readers learn that Columbus did not simply discover a new land but encountered a people whose lives were subsequently changed for the worst. Landau shows that the Taino’s existence did not come into being upon discovery but was part of an older, larger and thriving environment.

The language that Landau uses to tell the story of Christopher Columbus and the Taino is neither accusatory nor apparently biased. However, Landau does not shy away from making value statements that are supported by fact. The harsh treatment of the Taino is a matter of historical record and is discussed by Landau in the book. Her description of how the Taino are mistreated is not watered down but is age appropriate for the intended reading audience. While the Taino are not shown to be empowered neither are they shown as a pliant group wholly dependent on the Spanish settlers for their subsistence. In fact, it is the converse that is accurate and included in the story.

Critical Multiculturalism

From a critical multicultural perspective, Landau’s book serves to adequately represent all significant points of view and ways of life. Readers are treated to both a historical European

outlook and lifestyle while including a new and perhaps more interesting Taino cultural environment. Where other books on Christopher Columbus barely mention the Taino, Landau provides a great deal of information on the Taino lifestyle.

Perhaps the only criticism that can be made of Landau and her book is that it fails to explicitly mention the Taino by name. That is not to say that they are not adequately and respectfully included in the story. The events that are detailed more than sufficiently discuss the plight of this indigenous group and the impact the Spanish explorers had on their well-being. Where many other books fail to describe the interactions with the Taino, Landau gives them a voice and allows them to speak out on the injustices that were inflicted upon them.

This book, in addition to presenting the Taino as equal in importance to Columbus and his men, serves as an example for other texts that include marginalized peoples in their stories. Native American children, or any minority child for that matter, will appreciate that a group that they may be more likely to identify with is viewed as significant and worthy of mention. While students from the larger Caucasian ethnic group are able to feel a sense of pride at the accomplishment of a famous ancestor like Christopher Columbus, native children are made to feel left out. Landau, by virtue of her comprehensive storytelling, is able to draw them in to the fold.

The collection of books assessed as “good” have redeeming qualities and are endowed with the capacity to challenge the status quo regarding the depiction of the Taino and their role in the Christopher Columbus’s voyages. The books, as a whole, may tend toward a Eurocentric perspective but such lapses may serve as fodder for discussion in the classroom. This is, of course, contingent on educators understanding the inadequacies of the texts. As with any other subject that is approached in the classroom, it is the responsibility of the educator to ensure that

students are receiving accurate information. While the lone “excellent” book identified in this study has sufficient information to provide a more complete account of the of Columbus’s interactions with the Taino, books in the “Good” category likely require additional study by educators to provide their students with a comprehensive story.

Collectively, the “good” books may serve to whet the appetite of students interested in the various cultures that are presented. These include not only Taino culture but also Carib and even a “seafaring” culture that may prove to be just as exotic and of interest to students as either native or European culture. Comparable to the limited historical milestones found in the collection of “good” books, the cultural references are limited as well. One text may describe the dietary staples of the Taino while neglecting to mention the types of abodes the Taino occupy. Another may provide an accurate description of the Taino propensity towards altruism yet fail to address any negative aspects of their culture. While these lapses may be construed as shortcomings they also can be considered as opportunities for cultural exploration.

Although these texts miss the mark in certain areas and instances the fact that the Taino are included as part of the story makes the books worthwhile. Mentions of a distinct cultural group separate from the European one that is so prevalent in many other books on Christopher Columbus are these books saving grace. Their inclusion marks a trend where marginalized people find representation in traditionally one-sided presentations of history. Students that come from such marginalized groups as native Americans like the Taino should find some solace that their stories are being told, albeit still briefly.

Unfortunately, the collection of books assessed as “poor” is quite large in number and comparable in size to those that is assessed as “Good.” This collection presents no challenge whatsoever to the status quo and serves to perpetuate negative stereotypes and myths that have

no place in an academic setting. While the authors of the “poor” books do not necessarily present a ‘racist’ perspective, their versions of the Christopher Columbus story is highly ethnocentric. The stories that they tell are likely to be offensive to not only native groups but any individual that has preexisting knowledge of the role the Taino played in Columbus’s voyages. The voices of the Taino in these texts are not heard and their depictions are those of a simple, unsophisticated race whose subjugation and enslavement are warranted. While some of these books were published decades ago others were written more recently which is disconcerting given the amount of research and study that has been done on this historical event in the interim.

The “poor” books have no utility in preserving or transmitting the culture of the indigenous Taino people. While some texts offer lessons on oppression and domination that serve to teach students of marginalized groups of people how to empower themselves through knowledge of the past, these books have no such value. In fact it could be said that these books hold the potential for doing more harm than good. Many classrooms are filled with students from a myriad of cultures and ethnic backgrounds that are seeking to connect, maintain, or even find relevance, in their own cultural background. Reading books such as these is not likely to bolster their self-worth as their roots are not European. As the “heroes” in these books are not individuals that these students could identify with it is also not likely that they would be interested in reading the stories at all.

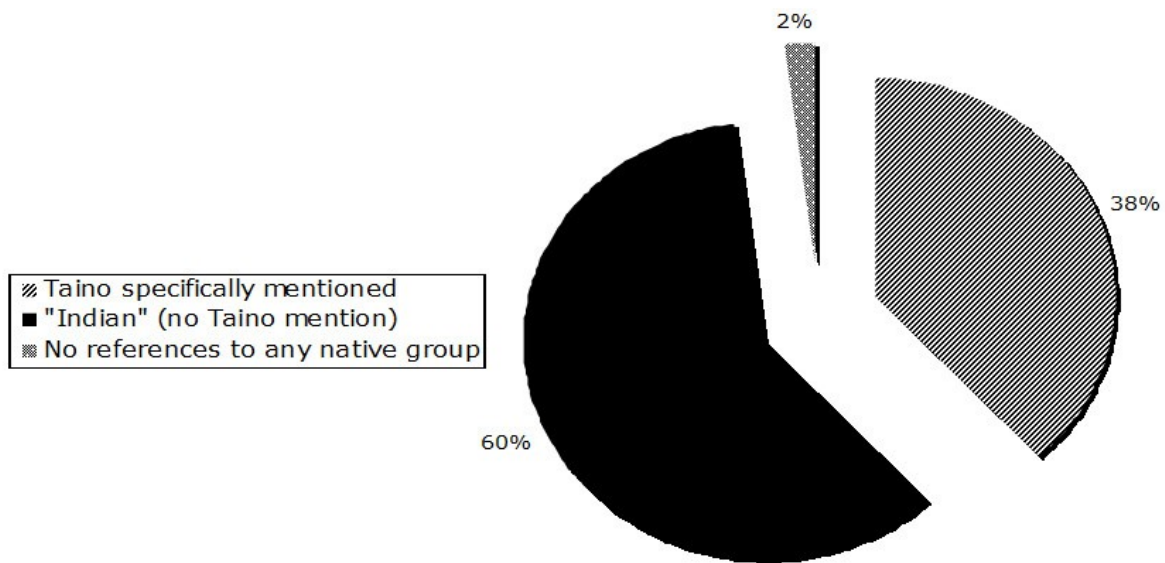


Figure 6-1. Taino identification results.

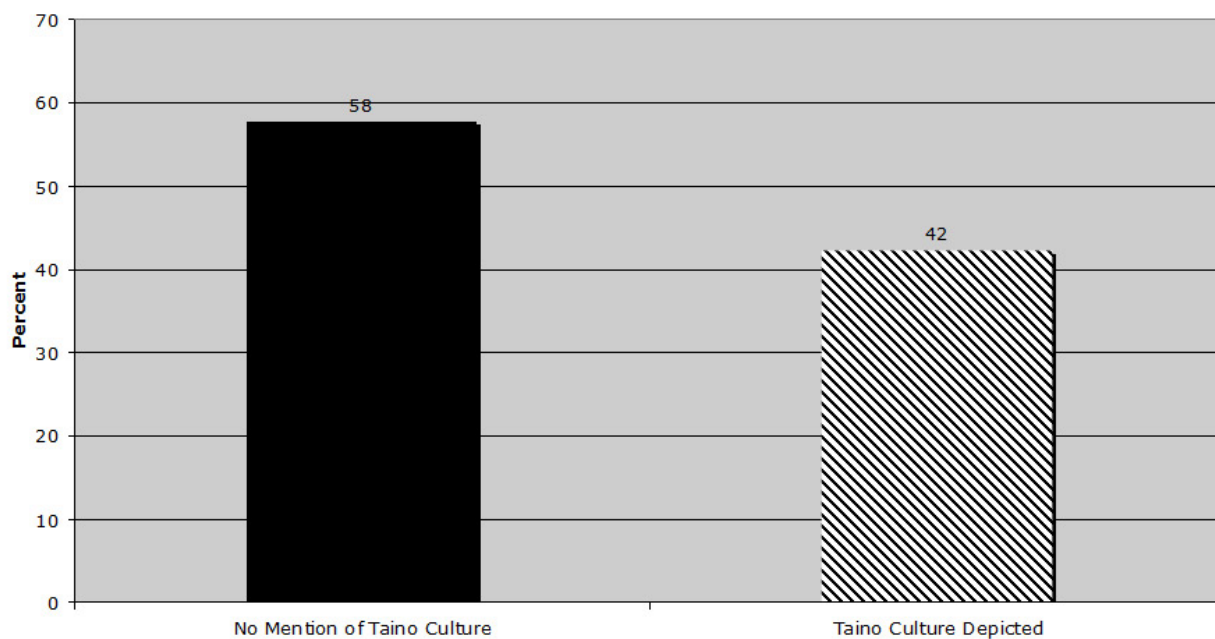


Figure 6-2. Evidence of Taino culture.

Table 6-1. Books containing bibliographies or further reading.

Title (Author)	Genre	Age Level	Taino culture included?
<i>Christopher Columbus</i> (Kent)	Informational	9-12	yes
<i>Christopher Columbus and the First Voyages to the New World</i> (Dodge)	Informational	12+	yes
<i>Christopher Columbus: The Discovery of the Americas</i> (Twist)	Informational	9-12	yes
<i>Explorers Who Got Lost</i> (Sansevere-Dreher)	Fictionalized biography	10-12	no
<i>I, Columbus, My Journal 1492-3</i> (Roop)	Informational-diary	8-10	yes

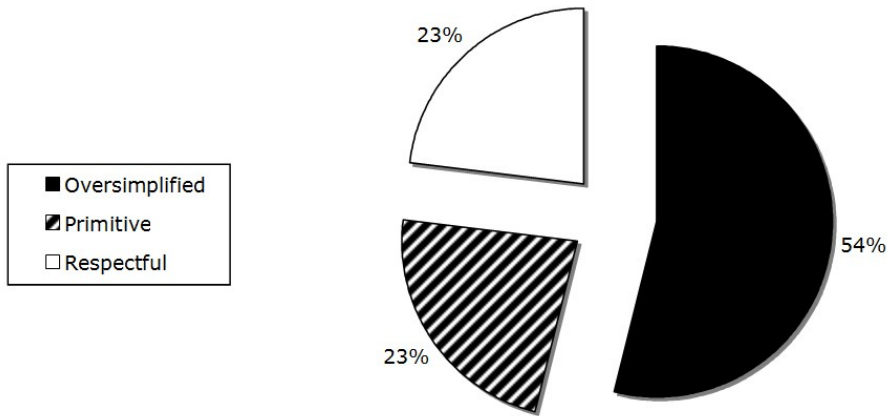


Figure 6-3. Percentage of Taino depiction along three dimensions.

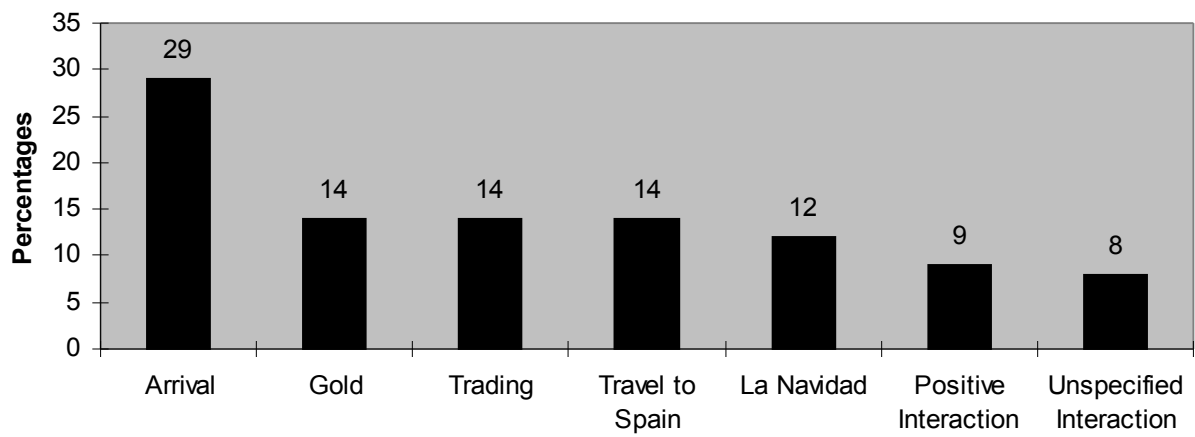


Figure 6-4. Percentage of general interaction between the Taino and Spanish explorers.



Figure 6-5. Adler's *A Picture Book of Christopher Columbus*.



Figure 6-6. D'Aulaire's *Columbus*.

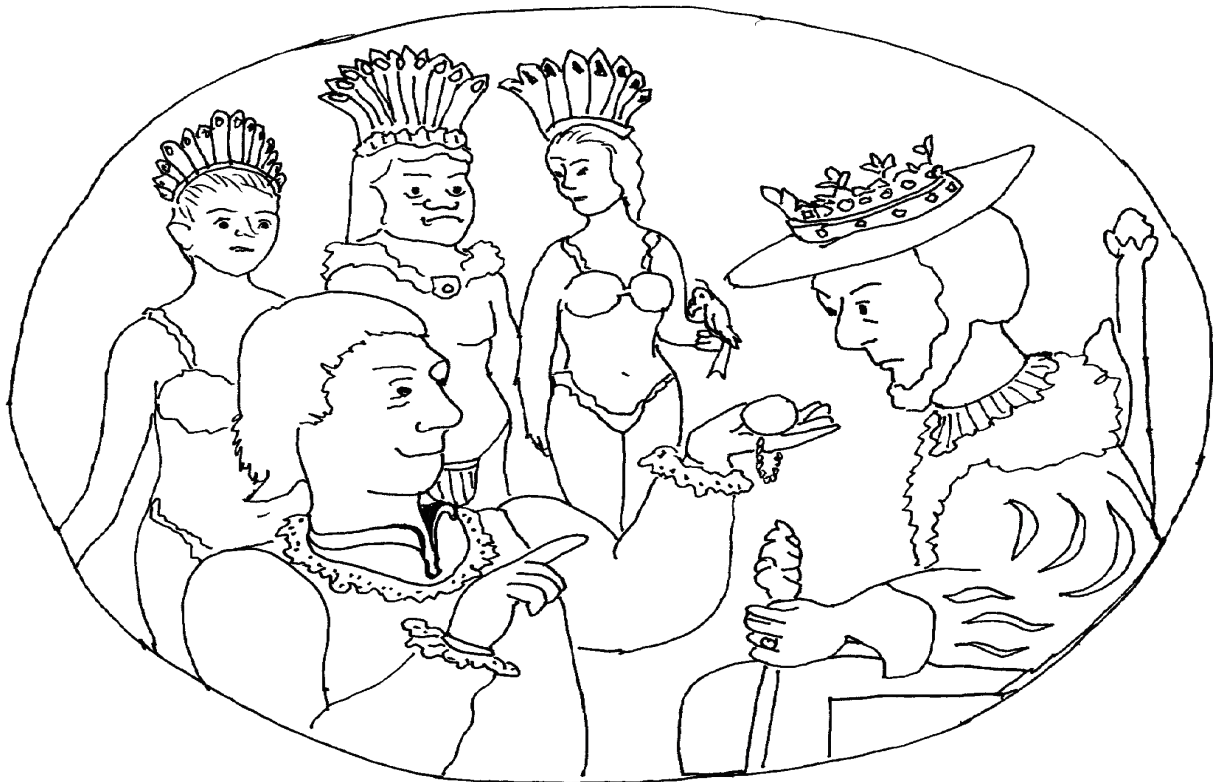


Figure 6-7. Postgate's *Columbus*.



Figure 6-8. Monkman's *A Coyote Columbus Story*.

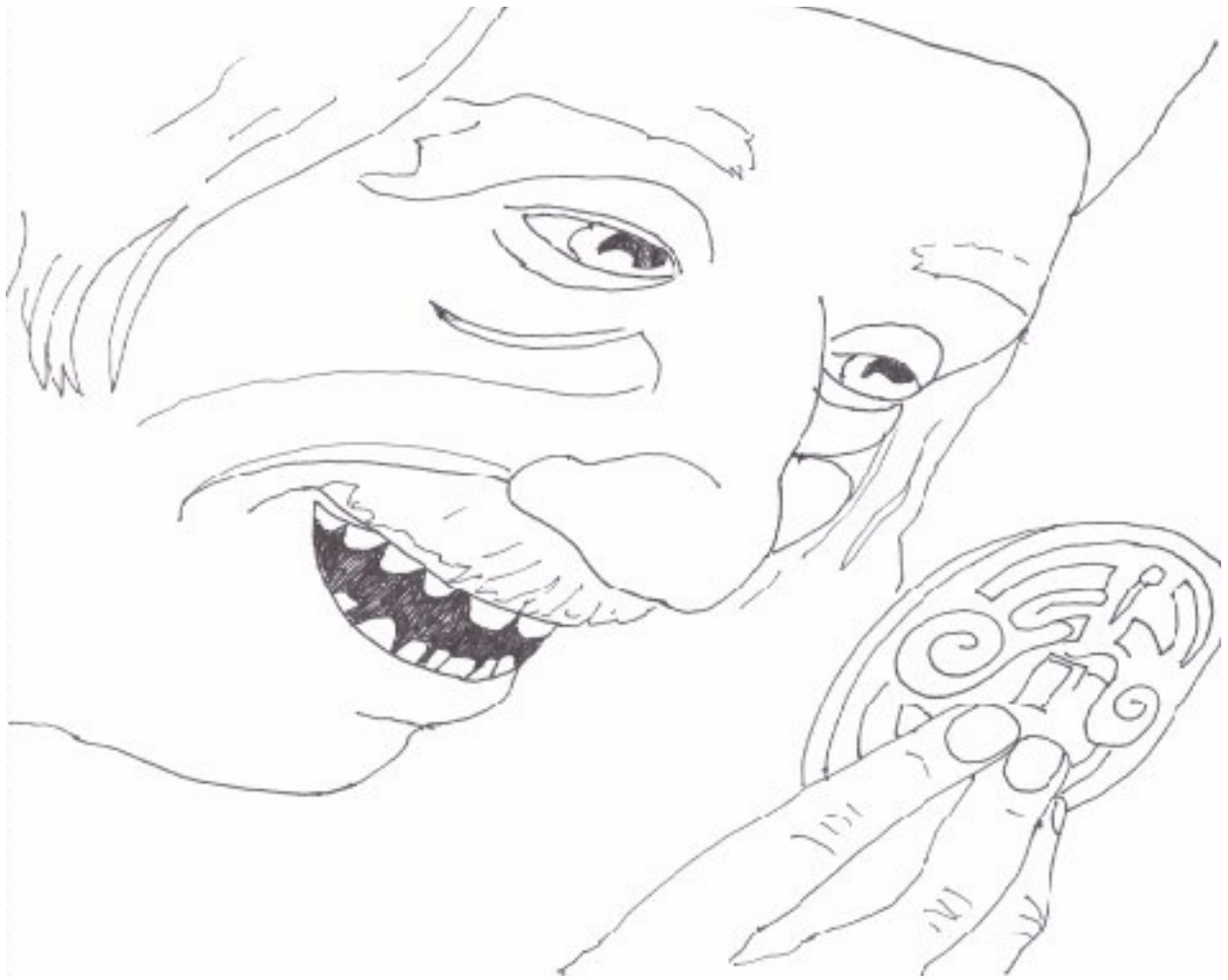


Figure 6-9. Yolen's *Encounter*



Figure 6-10. Yolen's *Encounter*.

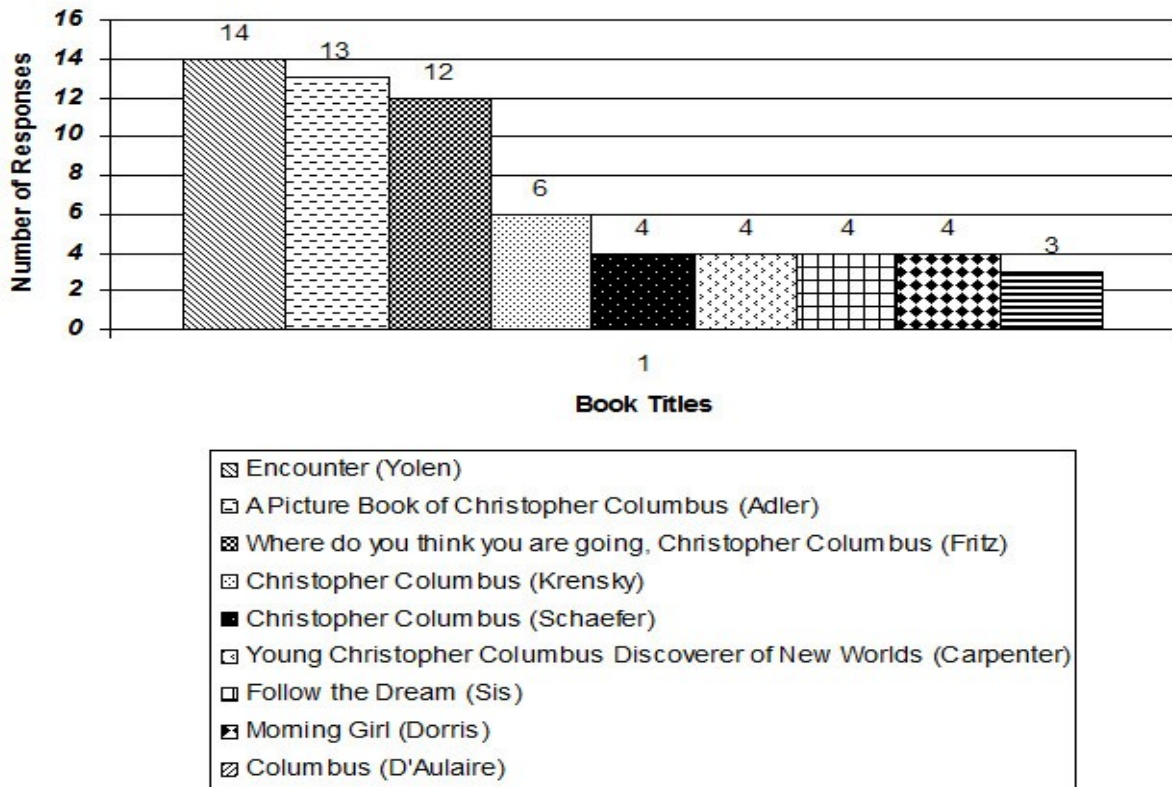


Figure 6-11. Teacher's Favorites.

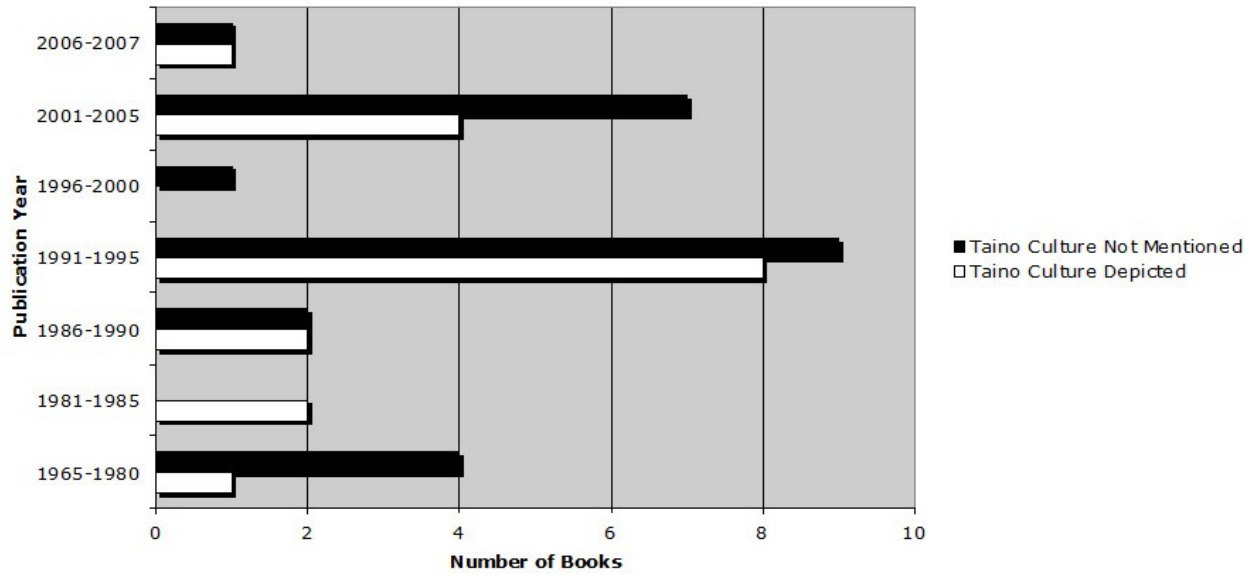


Figure 6-12. Taino cultural mention by publication date.

CHAPTER 7 RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

As previously mentioned in the analyses section, the following texts have been identified as high-quality children's literature fully capable of providing a comprehensive and informative account of Christopher Columbus and his encounter with the Taino people. These recommendations are divided between those texts that were listed in the study sample and books that were not listed yet have been well-reviewed and are well-regarded in the literature community.

Recommended Books, Taken From Study Sample

King, T. (1992). *A Coyote Columbus Story*. Toronto, Canada: Groundwood Books.

In this picture book the author and illustrator demonstrated that the Native people have, and have had, a rich and dynamic culture prior to 1492. The Native people were portrayed as more human than Columbus and his men. This is because the Natives didn't view their own dress (or lack of) as exotic; rather they viewed the "intruders" as the exotic ones, as illustrated by the bright-colored skin and clown-like dress of the Spanish. Coyote is a Native symbol that operates differently from culture to culture—he or she is often referred to as trickster. Coyote's presence depicted a Native view within the story and was used to humiliate Columbus and aggravate the Native people in the story. Although the author did not mention conquest or the atrocities that happened, the story was still told from a Native perspective, one that is not often heard in this manner. This book is recommended, with discussion.

Liestman, V. (1991). *Columbus Day*. Minneapolis, MN: Carolrhoda Books.

This book did a good job offering an alternative perspective, although brief, as encapsulated in the following excerpt:

Each year we remember the good things about Columbus. But there is something many people forget. We forget about the people Columbus called Indians. We forget about the awful way the Native Americans were treated. We forget about the people who died. October 12th can be a day to tell the whole story of the voyage that changed the world. It can be a day to remember the Native Americans (p. 52).

This book gave the reader comments to remember and to contemplate even after the story was over. This book is recommended, with discussion.

Yolen, J. (1992). *Encounter*. San Diego, CA: Voyager Books.

This unique book, which is told from a Taino child's perspective, offers a chance to see and discuss many surrounding issues that are part of the historical event. This book received the most acknowledgements and deserves a more thorough explanation as such. With striking illustrations it provides the reader with an opportunity to experience the historical event from outside familiar walls. The story poses questions and comments from a child's viewpoint while also exposing the reader to cultural considerations from a Native view. It is important to note, though, as highlighted by Mendoza (2003), that there are some troublesome areas where the book might not be considered as Native-friendly as intended (e.g., "...the Taino child had a dream but the elders didn't listen to her").

Dreams are important to Native culture. When a child has a dream, especially a strong dream, the elders in the community would never "push away" the child. His dream would be discussed and respected. In addition, the story had a tone of "We brought it on ourselves" or "if only my people had listened," giving the impression that the Tainos were wrong to not willingly accept European culture into their existing one. Another area of concern is the language.

According to Mendoza (2003),

"took," "carried away," "carted back," are not the words I would choose if it had happened to me [my child had been kidnapped], and it is safe to say they do not represent the young Tainos' perspective on being ripped from their families and everything they knew (p. 198)

Mendoza also noted, “Both author and illustrator use passive voice to describe the years after the events in *Encounter*. Islands were colonized; religions, languages and lifestyles were changed, artifacts were melted and burned, as if there were no agents of the destruction” (p. 198). The narrator or survivor of the story, and even the children today, understand the meaning of colonization. It means conquest, which in turn means home invasion, rape, torture, kidnapping, enslavement, destruction of religious artifacts, murder, and even mass murder. Passiveness creates a vision of blaming the Tainos, which is one we cannot afford to pass down to our children once again. *Encounter* questions the Columbus myth of courage and critiques the actions that followed in 1492; however, nowhere is there evidence of resistance, only the appearance that the Taino “readily acquiesced” (p. 198). This book is recommended, with discussion.

Recommended Books, Found Outside of the Study Sample

Jacobs, F. (1991). *The Tainos: The people who welcomed Columbus*. New York, NY: G.P.Putnam’s Sons

A unique account of the origins, migrations, culture, and tragic demise of the Taino people from the place where Columbus first landed in 1492 was shared in this historical telling. As often documented, the interactions between the Tainos and the Spanish settlers were amiable in the beginning but soon deteriorated, largely due to the inept and heavy-handed administration of Columbus and his men. Although the book contains a small but noticeable Eurocentric flare, Jacobs’ book was well-documented, readable, and important for its contribution to understanding the full significance of the early encounters between the “old world” and the “new world.” This book is highly recommended.

Literary Distinctions:

- *Bulletin Blue Ribbons*, 1992; Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books;
- *Kaleidoscope, A Multicultural Booklist for Grades K-8*, 1994; National Council of Teachers of English;
- *Notable Children's Trade Books in the Field of the Social Studies*, 1992; National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS).

Szumski, B. (1993). *Christopher Columbus: Recognizing Stereotypes*. New York, NY: G.P. Putnam's Sons

The story of Christopher Columbus' first encounter with Western civilization was presented in this book from multiple viewpoints and served to make readers aware of stereotypes and, most importantly, to engage readers in critical-thinking exercises. The thought-provoking questions and suggested activities provided much information and many resources for teachers to conduct meaningful discussions surrounding this often controversial topic (Opposing Viewpoints Juniors series). This book is highly recommended.

Freedman, R. (2007). *Who was first? Discovering the Americas* New York, NY: Clarion Books

Freedman began the book by presenting Columbus and his four voyages conducted to the Caribbean Islands. The opening chapter defined Columbus in unique ways that not only helped him come to life but also highlighted his work in a balanced approach to ideologies of the time. Freedman included the Taino people and through the text helped to uncover elements of the sometimes disguised past explorations of the Western front. This book is highly recommended.

Literary Distinctions:

- *Best Books*, 2007; School Library Journal;
- *Best Children's Books of the Year*, 2008; Bank Street College of Education;
- *Best Children's Books*, 2007 Kirkus;
- *Booklist Book Review Stars*, 2007;
- *Choices*, 2008; Cooperative Children's Book Center.
- *Editors' Choice*, 2007; Booklist;
- *Horn Book Fanfare*, 2007;

- *Kirkus Book Review Stars*, 2007;
- *Middle and Junior High School Library Catalog*, Ninth Edition Supplement 2008;
- *Notable Children's Books*, 2008; ALSC American Library Association;
- *School Library Journal Book Review Stars*, 2007; Cahners;
- *SLJ Best Books*, 2007; Cahners.

Aveni, A. (2005). *The First Americans: The story of where they came from and who they became*. New York, NY: Scholastic.

Beginning 20,000 years ago with Asians migrating into the Americas, the author discussed six vast and unique cultures that developed during this time. Shelter, clothing, religion, gender roles, and recreation were described for several tribes in each region. The positive features of this book are that it appears to be free from bias, it acknowledges the many contributions of Native peoples to current culture, it names historical figures, and it corrects longstanding ideas that Native Americans were simple or primitive people. One potentially problematic area is that the author attempted to toggle between past and present tenses throughout the book as a way that might engage young readers; this approach could prove confusing for some. No source notes were provided. The archaeoastronomist author is not Native, although the illustrator is; the book has not been endorsed by any tribe or Native American organization. Although the book is not perfect as it sugarcoated some of the atrocities that occurred, it offered a unique and comprehensive insight into the Taino people, in a fresh and innovative manner.

Literary Distinctions:

- *Teachers' Choices*, 2006; International Reading Association;
- *Spur Award Winner*, 2006; Juvenile Nonfiction.

Conclusion

Christopher Columbus was not an "American." He was not born in America nor was he raised here. Even so he has become a symbol of innovation and exploration and heroism in the

United States because of what can only be rightly termed extraordinary feats of discovery. The tendency for American writers and historians to venerate Columbus as a hero can be attributed to a Western cultural predisposition to champion those who transcend average accomplishments. While holding such personages as Columbus up for admiration the more unsavory characteristics of his personality or exploits are downplayed so as not to detract from an interesting story.

Although Americans are prone to idolize a champion they admire, there is something that is valued even higher than accomplishment and that is honesty. While the story of Columbus has become ingrained in the cultural psyche as a tale of success, the reality of the events that are depicted cannot withstand careful and critical scrutiny nor should it. Children are instructed to demonstrate integrity and honesty both in and outside the classroom. Holding educators, authors, and historians to that standard, especially with regard to those products that are intended for a child's use, should be a commonsense notion.

This research has demonstrated that the history of this group of people is still not reaching a wide audience among young readers. Educators continue to rely on outdated texts and simplistic stories to educate their classes on events related to Columbus and his voyages to the Americas. One possible reason is that the lack of published books that include a comprehensive approach for younger children is just not available. This is an area where publishers need to focus to provide quality literature that offers the alternative perspective we seek for our children. Looking at current publishing trends, it is apparent that additional books containing the Taino people are trickling down into a few books for older children, but they have not reached younger audiences through the picture book genre. Publishers should seek native writers and illustrators to create these books. With more books by native writers available, teachers will then be able to offer children a well-rounded view of the history of our nation.

Another issue to address is to ask why so many “poor” books are adopted in the classroom. As demonstrated in the data, some books that poorly represent the Taino or other indigenous populations can be more harmful than helpful. Teachers and librarians need education about the impact of their book selections about Indian populations. If the books appear in public and school libraries teachers will have more access to good books. Alerting librarians, through the American Library Association, about the issues involved in selecting books with accurate and balanced historical representation would help alleviate the problem. Teachers, too, need education on the importance of selecting quality multicultural literature to share with students.

Any experienced researcher understands the importance of reflection in the data gathering and analyzing process. As reflection is bestowed on this particular research project, a few items come into the forefront that represents improvements that could be made if this research were to be expanded. To encourage the wider publication and dissemination of worthy reading materials regarding Columbus and the Taino we must not only justify the value of such texts but also conduct research on how such books can be the most effective in the classroom. Research efforts such as elementary and middle-school focus groups would serve to engage young readers and illicit their input on which stories are most enjoyable and illuminating for them.

Additional research looking at gender issues within the history of Columbus and his voyages would be helpful. For instance, Queen Isabella played a rather significant role in Columbus’s voyages. Her influence is attributed to the success of his first voyage; yet, she is often glossed over with mythical representations of peddling her jewels and her mild mannered ways. Other women in the story include Columbus’s first wife, one of Portuguese royalty who

bore his first son, and then the mistress who bore his second son out of wedlock. These women played important roles in the story, but many times they are only mentioned in passing. From another perspective involving the issue of gender, it can be stated that the Columbus story is basically a story about men. The books reflect the men who traveled with Columbus; usually the Taino men are the only ones illustrated or brought forth in the text; or that the books often represent Columbus and his relationships with his sons. As the times accurately reflect a stronger male influence during the fifteenth century, it would behoove some authors and publishers to consider including the voice of the women who were also a part of this history.

Another area that would make this research stronger is an analyses of the books which include the topic of reader age. The age of the audience has a great impact on the information that is provided in a book, especially on a topic of controversy as Columbus and his historical voyages. Therefore by exploring and evaluating books by age range and researching the approach, illustrations, and topics of inclusion could prove interesting in understanding what material is covered and the manner in which it is conveyed to children.

Additionally, disaggregating the other data collected within the survey for this research could serve as another avenue for additional analyses. Feedback from American Indian teachers would be apt, considering the subject matter, and would provide information of great utility to authors, educators, historians, and other professionals involved in the publishing of children's books related to Columbus' encounter with the Taino and other indigenous people. Due to IRB limitations, the ethnic background of the participants were not collected. It is recommended that this information be included in further research to determine which book titles were selected by Native American teachers and librarians and which were selected by non-Native teachers and librarians and conduct an analysis based on book selection. Other research efforts could include

reader-response studies with Native American student populations. Using a version of the rubric that was created for this research, selected Native American teachers and librarians can evaluate the books found in their library and then opt to let Native American students review and respond, both aesthetically and efferently, to the evaluated books for a Native student perspective.

As a result of this research further implications require an active pursuit in promoting a more balanced approach to this topic. It is a message that should be shared not only in the academic arena, which include classrooms and libraries that serve pre-kindergarten through high school students, but also with the general public. Columbus Day is not a holiday that is only observed in the classroom, it is celebrated nationwide (and beyond). With such national attention, it is believed that a one-stop online shop, possibly called “The Taino Project,” which contains appropriate, accurate, and comprehensive information that can be offered to those who wish to know more about the people Columbus encountered. This clearinghouse of sorts could contain various links highlighting quality curriculum and lesson plans that include studies of the Taino people; a list of recommended books that offer multiple perspectives of the events that occurred after Columbus’ 1492 voyages; there could be links to alternative websites that debunk the Columbus myth; a link to recent research on the topic (such as this study); and also access to web links that communicate with contemporary Taino people today. This comprehensive portal of information can offer easy access to information that provides critical insight into the event that has impacted our history in a global fashion.

With the passing of the Civil Rights era there is an expectation that society has moved in a direction where the rights and the lives and the culture of a minority people are given value. Therefore it is surprising that the state of Christopher Columbus books remain at least biased in favor of a Eurocentric perspective, and at most racist against the Taino, a people who are viewed

as inferior. An important question to voice is, “Why aren’t more books that provide a balanced approach to this topic being published?” One possible explanation is that of the proverbial inside versus outside author argument. Many people believe that a writer must be of a certain culture in order to be qualified to write about that culture. Others believe that you do not have to be of that culture to write about it in books for children. My belief is that one does not have to be of the specific culture in order to write about it *as long as the proper research is conducted prior to writing*. This research can be defined by primary sources, research from peer-reviewed journals, the use of consultants from the culture being represented in the story, or a combination of these efforts. One pitfall that can occur if proper research is not conducted is represented in the reviews of Jane Yolen’s 1992 book, *Encounter*. Although it is assumed she did not mean to impose her Eurocentric perspective into the mouth of an elderly Taino man in her story of Columbus and his first encounter with the Taino people, she unfortunately sprinkled words representative of a “helpless victim” in her story. For example, Susan Wilde, a children’s literature reviewer for the Children’s Literature Comprehensive Database online wrote,

“Yolen may believe that she envisioned life through the eyes of a Taino boy, but the feelings she attributes to him run counter to Taino society. To explain why the boy is ignored, she repeats five or six times, “I was but a child.” This makes the story gain power, but it is based on a European, not an Indian model of society. Indian society is built on mutual respect. Yolen’s word choices are another slap in the face. She talks of how the Indians “gave” their souls, or “took” European words, as if the victims were to blame. *Encounter* may have been well-intentioned, but I wonder why it wasn’t reviewed before publication by an organization familiar with the culture, such as OYATE. The book is an overly-sentimental, off-kilter story and one more betrayal to Native people. Its half-truths make it more insidious than books that have obvious misrepresentations.”

It is also my belief the backlash she has sustained over the years is one reason many authors may not chose to write about marginalized groups for fear of the same outcome.

Another potential reason for a lack of balanced books on Columbus and the Taino could be the business practices and models of the publishing houses for children's literature. Like any other business, a publishing house is a profit-generating enterprise. Therefore publishing houses are less likely to engage in any kind of activity that will have an impact on their bottom line. As the generally accepted view about Columbus and his voyages to the Americas is typically one that portrays him as a benign hero, publishers are less likely to present a differing view that may not be welcomed by consumers. The Eurocentric perspective of Columbus is one that has typically sold well and been widely accepted by the teaching community in general. One example of this is the book written by Manuel Rosa, *Unmasking Columbus: Lies, spies, cover-ups and conspiracy* (2006), who has been unable to publish his book in the United States. This is presumably because the information that is presented in his book debunks the myths surrounding Columbus that is most widely accepted in today's interpretation of the historical event.

Change is not likely to originate from the publishing houses nor will it likely come from the classroom. The selection of Columbus books in the Eurocentric form that is widely available today will continue due to the mythical figure that Columbus has become. Hillman (1974) wrote, "These basic tales channel fantasy. Platonists long ago and Jung more recently printed out the therapeutic value of the great myths for bringing order to the chaotic, fragmented aspect of fantasy" (p. 10). Columbus as myth presents an uncomplicated and easily understandable character through which the tale of the European discovery of the Americas can be told. The Taino, as well as the other indigenous groups encountered by the Spanish explorers, remain a poorly-defined group by virtue of the lack of information available in mainstream media. The Taino therefore are ill-suited for use as recognizable identifiers for this important point in history. Unfortunately, this lack perpetuates the iconic stature of Columbus as the beacon for

this story at the expense of the equally relevant Taino. Hillman further stated, “The main body of biblical and classical tales direct fantasy into organized, deeply life-giving psychological patterns; these stories present the archetypal modes of experiencing” (p. 10). In other words, for adults, perpetuating myths represents a need to understand the unknown or the inexperienced. It is one way to put order and sequence into the chaotic and irrational. In a way it is a calming device for adults who lose touch with their imaginative side of adult life. The need to “re-story” through fantasy means to restructure the accepted and challenge the status quo.

“Re-storying” those adults who are “stuck” in time with the old and biased knowledge of history carries over into the present as demonstrated in this research. As a Native American I understand the importance of proper representation of marginalized voices. As a child my mother was taught to go “unnoticed” and to walk at least ten steps behind the White person in front of her. I have been incorrectly identified as Mexican and treated as a second class citizen when speaking Spanish in a grocery store. I have taught in a school on the east side of town—across the tracks, where many considered it “dangerous” to go merely for its close vicinity to subsidized housing. People do not deserve to be marginalized or treated unfairly.

This research aims to expose the unjust representation of a people who have, for years, been deemed extinct due to the lack of education. Today our children are being told a history through children’s books that is filled with omissions and misrepresentation. The books being shared in classrooms and libraries, for the most part, minimize, and therefore excuse, what Columbus and his enterprise did to the Taino people and imply that the deed is essentially over and done with. Beverly Slapin, a friend and representative of the OYATE organization (non-profit Native American book clearinghouse) offered this insight while screening material on Columbus and shared it with me in a personal email, “European colonialism (in general) and

Columbus (in particular) not only “sought wealth,” they laid scourge to the land and raped, murdered and mutilated thousands of people. And it was the beginning of an ongoing process that disrupted and continues to disrupt the balance of indigenous land, culture and community.” To many, Columbus is not a hero.

Not only are children and educators deserving of a comprehensive history of Columbus’ voyages and discoveries, but the indigenous people whom he encountered merit one as well. By including people such as the Taino, who continue to strive to maintain their identity and cultural traditions, educators are ensuring that the Tainos’ legacy will not be forgotten. Even more, by ensuring that the Taino people take their proper place in history it is demonstrated to young readers that there is value in championing not only the heroes of the world but the marginalized peoples that suffer in their wake.

APPENDIX A
HISTORICAL TIMELINE OF THE ENCOUNTER OF COLUMBUS AND
THE TAINO PEOPLE

Approximately 13,000 B.C.: First known human beings live in the Caribbean.

Approximately 800 B.C.: The people who call themselves Taino, or “men of good,” arrive in the region. With great care for the earth, the Tainos are able to feed millions of people. No one in a community goes hungry. They play sports and recite poetry. They are great inventors and travel from island to island. One Spanish priest reported that he never saw two Tainos fighting. There are frequent skirmishes between Tainos and Caribs on nearby islands, but these threaten neither civilization.

1451: Columbus is born possibly in the Italian port city, Genoa. At the time of this birth, there may be as many as 70 to 100 million people living in what will one day be called the Americas. They are of many nationalities, speaking perhaps 2,000 different languages.

1453: Constantinople (now Istanbul) falls to the Ottoman Turks who make it the capital of their empire. For European merchants, trade with Asia becomes more difficult.

1455: Christian Castile [Spain] begins attacks on Granada in Andalusia, the last province under Arab/Islamic rule in Spain. The Arabs (called “Moors” by European Christians) had ruled the Iberian peninsula for eight centuries.

1471: About this time, Columbus first goes to sea on a Genoese ship.

1483: Under King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella, the Inquisition intensifies in the Christian-reconquered areas of Spain. The Inquisition aims at rooting out Muslims and Jews who had converted to Christianity but whose conversion the Inquisition seems insincere. Before it is over, three centuries later, thousands will die, with an estimated three million people driven to exile.

1484: Columbus first presents his idea to the king of Portugal for reaching the Indies by sailing west. The plan is rejected, not because the king’s advisors do not believe the world is round, but because they think Columbus’s estimate of the distance is way too small.

1486: Columbus first proposes a western voyage to Queen Isabella, whose advisors postpone any recommendation.

1488: Columbus appeals again to the king. At the same time, Bartolome Dias claims Africa can be rounded by sea to get to the Indies. This eliminates Portugal’s interest in looking for a westward route.

1490: Queen Isabella’s advisors urge the queen to reject Columbus’s proposal. But Isabella keeps Columbus on the royal payroll, offering him hope his proposal will eventually be granted.

Jan. 2, 1492: The Arab rulers and their court surrender in Granada. According to the surrender agreement, the inhabitants of Muslim Spain have until the beginning of 1495 to decide between living under Christian rule or exile. Those who choose to stay begin to feel the threat of the Inquisition immediately, and in 1498 official inquisitors come, and forced conversions to Christianity begin.

March 30, 1492: Ferdinand and Isabella order all Jews to leave Spain.

April, 1492: Ferdinand and Isabella agree to Columbus’s westward voyage to the Indies. They also agree to his demands: 10% of all wealth returned to Spain, the title of Admiral of the Ocean Sea, governor and viceroy of all the territory he discovers. All these titles are to be inherited by his heirs.

Aug. 2, 1492: Deadline for Jews to leave Spain. Between 120,000 and 150,000 are forced out, able to take only what they can carry. They must leave all their gold, silver, jewels, and money for the King and Queen.

Aug. 3, 1492: Columbus departs from Palos instead of the port of Cadiz, which is filled with ships taking some 8,000 Jews into exile.

Oct. 12, 1492: Juan Rodriguez Bermejo, a sailor on the *Pinta*, shouts, "Land, Land!" Columbus later claims he first spotted land and this will collect the lifetime pension promised. The ships arrive at the island, Guanahani, which Columbus claims for Ferdinand and Isabella. Columbus received presents from the people he encounters and gives them some red caps, glass beads, and many other items. He quickly asks the natives where he can find gold.

Oct. 14: Columbus begins to entertain the idea of turning the natives into slaves.

Nov. 12: Columbus kidnaps 10 Tainos.

Nov. 17: Two of the natives escape.

Dec. 9: Columbus sails into the harbor of the island the Taino people call Hayti. Columbus names it Espanola.

Oct./Nov./Dec.: Columbus's moves are determined by where he thinks he can find gold. Through December, little gold is to be found.

Dec. 25: Columbus's ship, the Santa Maria, hits rocks of Espanola. He is forced to abandon it. The Taino cacique, Guacanagari, weeps when he hears of the shipwreck. Tainos help unload the ship.

Dec. 26: Realizing he will have to leave men behind, Columbus orders a fort and tower to be built. He writes that it is necessary to make the Indians realize they must serve Spain's King and Queen. The place is named La Navidad.

Jan. 2, 1493: Columbus prepares to leave Hayti. He leaves behind 29 men and orders them to continue the quest for gold.

Jan, 13: First reported skirmish between Spaniards and Indians: After landing on an island to trade for bows, Columbus writes that many Indians prepares to assault the Christians. He believes they are Carib people, who Columbus thought were cannibals (although no evidence was offered).

Feb. 15: Columbus returns with relatively little of value. In a letter written aboard ship, Columbus lies, saying that on Espanola, a plethora of spices and gold exists.

Mid-April: Columbus welcomes by Ferdinand and Isabella. They begin planning his second voyage. Of the six Indians brought to Spain, one would stay and die in two years. The others would leave with Columbus for Espanola and three would die en route.

May 28, 1493: The king and queen confirm that Columbus, his sons and his heirs will be Admiral and Viceroy and Governor of the islands and mainland discovered for all time.

Approx. Sept./Oct. 1493: The men left behind at La Navidad brutally mistreat the Tainos. They steal, take slaves and rape women. In response, the Taino cacique, Caonabo, kills all the Spaniards on the island.

Sept. 25, 1493: Columbus's second voyage begins. His fleet includes 17 ships and between 1200 and 1500 men (no women). Pressure is high got Columbus to make good on his promises. At least some of the money to finance the voyage comes from wealth taken away from the Spanish Jews.

Nov. 3, 1493: Columbus lands on Dominica. On Guadeloupe, his men go ashore looting and destroying whatever they can, according to Columbus's son, Fernando. They capture 12 Taino girls.

Mid-Nov.: Columbus's crew trap a small group of Caribs in a harbor at what is not St. Croix. In defense, the Indians shoot arrows at the Spaniards, killing one and wounding one. The Indians are caught, and one is horribly mutilated, then killed, by the Spaniards.

Nov. 28: Columbus finds the fort at La Navidad burned.

Early Feb. 1494: Columbus sends 12 of the 17 ships back to Spain for supplies. Several dozens Indian slaves are taken aboard. He justifies this by writing that they are cannibals and thus slavery will more readily better the welfare of their souls. Columbus recommends to the king and queen that supplies needed in the Indies could be paid for slaves and that slave shipments could be taxed to raise money for Spain. Spanish priest Bartolome de las Casas later writes that claims of cannibalism are used to justify the slaughter committed against the Indians everyday.

Feb./March: In Isabella, Spaniards are dying of disease, and there is less food everyday. Columbus uses violence against Spaniards who disobey his orders to work. Any Spaniard found hiding gold is whipped. Colonist Michele de Cuneo documented that some had their ears and nose slit. Many blame Columbus for their problems. Demoralized, many Spaniards want to leave.

Late March/early April: Columbus is told that Indians are leaving their villages and that the cacique, Caonabo, is preparing to attack the fort at Isabella. Las Casas writes that Columbus ordered Alonso de Hojeda to lead a group of Spaniards to the fort of Santo Tomas to display how powerful the Spaniards can be.

April 9, 1494: Hojeda takes 400 men inland, captures a cacique and some relatives, accuses one of theft and has his ears publicly cut off. When Hojeda returns to Isabella with these and other prisoners, Columbus orders a crier to announce their public decapitation.

April 24, 1494: Columbus leaves Isabella to seek the mainland of the Indies.

Spring, 1494: Columbus explores the coast of Jamaica. Andres Bernaldes, accompanying Columbus, writes of the islands extreme beauty. Columbus sets loose a vicious dog against the Indians.

June 12, 1494: Columbus, off the coast of Cuba, believes he has reached the mainland. The next day he begins to return to Espanola.

Sept. 14: Columbus reaches the southern coast of Espanola. Instead of returning to Isabella, Columbus heads to Puerto Rico to raid for Carib slaves. However, he becomes ill and his officers return the ships to Isabella.

Nov. 1494: Returning to Spain, mutineers against Columbus complain to the king and queen. They say there is no gold and that the enterprise is a joke.

Feb. 1495: Columbus must be desperate to prove that his "enterprise" can be profitable. He rounds up 1600 Tainos. Some 550 of them are chained and taken to ships to be sent to Spain as slaves.

1495: Columbus establishes a tribute system. Every Taino, 14 or older, is required to fill a hawk's bell full of gold every three months. Those who complete the task are given copper tokens to wear around their necks. Where Columbus decides there is little gold, 25 pounds of spun cotton is required. The Spaniards cut the hands off those who do not comply; they are left to bleed to death. Columbus will soon replace the tribute system with outright slavery, though the Queen will rule that Indians forced to work must be paid wages. It is called the encomienda system, in which the colonists are simply granted land and numbers of Tainos.

March 24, 1495: Columbus, and his brothers, Diego and Bartolome, who had arrived earlier, send an armed force to the mountains to put down Taino resistance to Spanish brutality.

The force included 200 soldiers in full armor, 20 vicious dogs and 20 mounted cavalry. The Spaniards confront the large number of Tainos in a valley 10 miles south of Isabella and attacked them.

Oct. 1495: Responding to reports of Columbus's misrule, the king and queen send an investigator to Espanola.

March, 1496: Columbus departs for Spain. Two ships make the journey. On them, Columbus forces 30 Taino prisoners, including the cacique Coanabo, who led the first resistance to Spanish rule in Espanola. It takes 3 months to make the voyage. Coanabo dies en route; no one knows how many others also die. Columbus arrives and awaits an answer from the king and queen to his request for a third voyage.

July, 1496: Ferdinand and Isabella agree to see Columbus. He sets out for Burgos with his Taino slaves. Columbus promises to locate the mainland so that it will come under Spanish rather than Portuguese control. The king and queen will not agree to Columbus's plan for almost two years.

May 30, 1498: Columbus's third voyage begins. Three ships lead directly for Espanola, another three, with Columbus, travel further south.

July 31, 1498: Columbus sails past and names Trinidad. He saw what is today Venezuela, but didn't realize that it was the mainland.

Mid-Aug., 1498: Columbus lands in Espanola. The admiral finds Spanish colonists in rebellion against his brother's rule. He backs down and offers amnesty to anyone who will return to Spain or will accept free land.

1500: By now the Spaniards have established at least several forts in Espanola and at least 340 gallows.

Aug. 1500: The king and queen, upset over the negative reports of Columbus's bad government, though not his mistreatment of the Tainos, send a commissioner to take charge in Espanola. The commissioner arrives amid another uprising against the Columbus brothers. He arrests them and in October sent them to Spain for trial.

Late Oct.: Columbus arrives in Cadiz in chains. A few months later, he presents his case to the king and queen. He demands he be reinstated as governor. He will make one more voyage but will never regain his power.

May 20, 1506: Columbus dies in Valladolid, Spain.

1542: Bartolome de las Casas writes that a mere 200 Tainos still live in Espanola. One scholar recently estimated that perhaps more than 3 million Tainos lived there when Columbus first arrived.

Compiled by Bill Bigelow. Sources include:

Cecil Jan e The Journal of Columbus; Benjamin Keen, ed. The life of the Admiral Christopher Columbus: His Enterprise; Milton Meltzer, Columbus and the World around Him: Samuel Eliot Morison Admiral of the Ocean Sea; Kirkpatrick Sale, Conquest of Paradise; The Arab World and Islamic Resource and School Services.

APPENDIX B
STUDY SAMPLE

Table B-1. List of books in study sample.

Book Title	Author	Pub. Date	Publisher	Times Listed
<i>The Columbus story</i>	Alice Dalgliesh Ingri and Edgar Parin	1955	Charles Scribners Sons	Chicago, IL 1
<i>Columbus</i>	D'Aulaire	1955	Beautiful Feet Books	Sandwich, MA 3
<i>Columbus</i>	Paul Showers	1965	Fitzhenry & Whiteside Ltd.	New York, NY 1
<i>The Discovery of the Americas Christopher Columbus...who sailed on</i>	Betsy and Giulio Maestro	1991	Scholastic	New York, NY 1
<i>Christopher Columbus Where do you think you are going, Christopher Columbus</i>	Dorothy Richards	1978	The Children's World	Elgin, IL 1
<i>Christopher Columbus Where do you think you are going, Christopher Columbus</i>	David Goodnough	1979	Troll Associates	Mahwah, NJ 1
<i>Before Columbus: Who Discovered America?</i>	Jean Fritz	1980	G.P. Putnam's Sons	New York, NY 12
<i>I Can Read About Christopher Columbus</i>	Harry Edward Neal	1981	Simon & Schuster	New York, NY 1
<i>Christopher Columbus, a Great Explorer</i>	Peter Copeland	1988	Dover Publications	Mineola, NY 1
<i>I, Columbus, My Journal 1492-3</i>	Carol Greene Peter & Connie Roop	1989	Children's Press	Chicago, IL New York, NY 1
<i>Columbus Day</i>	Cass Sandak	1990	Walker & Co	New York, NY 1
<i>Christopher Columbus Westward with Columbus</i>	Stephen Krensky	1991	Crestwood House Random House, NY NY	New York, NY 6
<i>A Picture Book of Christopher Columbus Pedro's Journal: A Voyage With Christopher Columbus</i>	John Dyson	1991	Scholastic, Inc	New York, NY 2
	David A. Adler	1991	Holiday House Book	New York, NY 13
	Pam Conrad	1991	Scholastic, Inc	New York, NY 2

Table B-1. Continued.

Book Title	Author	Pub. Date	Publisher		Times Listed
<i>Christopher Columbus and the first voyages to the New World</i>	Stephen C. Dodge	1991	Chelsea House Publishers	New York, NY	2
<i>Columbus Day</i>	Vicki Liestman	1991	Carolrhoda Books	Minneapolis, MN	1
<i>In 1492</i>	Jean Marzzolo	1991	Scholastic, Inc	New York, NY	6
<i>Columbus</i>	Oliver Postgate & Naomi Linnell	1991	Kingfisher Books	New York, NY	1
<i>1492: the year of the new word</i>	Piero Ventura	1991	G.P. Putnam's Sons	New York, NY	1
<i>Explorers who got lost</i>	Diane Sanseverese-Dreher	1992	Tom Doherty Associates Book	New York, NY	1
<i>Young Christopher Columbus Discoverer of New Worlds</i>	Eric Carpenter	1992	Troll Associates	Mahwah, NJ	4
<i>Encounter</i>	Jane Yolen	1992	Harcourt Brace & Company	San Diego, CA	14
<i>A Coyote Columbus Story</i>	Thomas King	1992	Douglas & McIntyre	Toronto, Canada	2
<i>Christopher Columbus: The Discovery of the Americas</i>	Clint Twist	1994	Raintree Steck-Vaughn Publishers	Austin, TX	1
<i>Christopher Columbus</i>	Jan Geiter & Kathleen Thompson	1995	Raintree-Steck-Vaughn Publisher	Milwaukee, WI	2
<i>Morning Girl</i>	Michael Dorris	1999	Hyperion	New York, NY	4
<i>Christopher Columbus: Master Italian Navigator in the court of Spain</i>	Martha Knieb	2003	The Rosen Publishing Group.	York, NY	1
<i>Meet Christopher Columbus</i>	Jim DeKay	1996	Random House	New York, NY	1
<i>Columbus Day</i>	Christina Mia Gardeski	2001	Children's Press	New York, NY	2
<i>Columbus Day: Celebrating a Famous Explorer</i>	Elaine Landau	2001	Enslow Publishers	Berkeley Heights, NJ	2

Table B-1. Continued.

Book Title	Author	Pub. Date	Publisher	Times Listed
<i>Christopher Columbus Let's Read About Christopher Columbus</i>	Christy DeVillier Kimberly	2001	ABDO Publishing Co	1
<i>Christopher Columbus</i>	Weinberger	2001	Scholastic, Inc	1
<i>Christopher Columbus</i>	Lola Schaefer	2002	Capstone Press	4
<i>Follow the Dream</i>	Peter Sis	2003	Alfred A. Knopf	4
<i>Christopher Columbus</i>	Mary Dodson			
<i>Christopher Columbus: Explorer</i>	Wade	2003	Children's Press	2
<i>Christopher Columbus: Explorer</i>	Judy Alter	2003	The Child's World	1
<i>Christopher Columbus: Explorer</i>	Mervyn Kaufman	2004	Capstone Press	1
<i>Christopher Columbus: The life of a master navigator and explorer</i>	David West & Jackie Gaff	2005	Rosen Publishing	1
<i>Christopher Columbus and the voyage of 1492</i>	Dan Abnett	2007	PowerKids press	1
<i>Christopher Columbus: Famous Explorer</i>	Mary Dodson			
<i>Christopher Columbus: Famous Explorer</i>	Wade	2007	Capstone Press	2
<i>What Columbus Found</i>	Jane Kurtz	2007	Aladdin Paperbacks	1
<i>Animals Christopher Columbus Saw</i>	Sandra Markle	2008	Chronicle Books	1

APPENDIX C
EXAMINATION INSTRUMENT

BIBLIOGRAPHIC DATA

Title: _____ Author/Editor/Compiler: _____

Publisher: _____ Illustrator: _____ Date of Publication: _____

Literary Distinctions: _____

GENRE:

_____ Historical Fiction _____ Biographical _____ Biographical fiction _____ Fictionalized biography _____ Authentic Biography _____ Informational
Other: _____ Author/Illustrator/Source notes: _____ Yes _____ No

Credentials of Author: _____

Credentials of Illustrator: _____

Notes about Publisher: _____

QUESTION ONE: Does the story provide substantive knowledge and information on the Taino people who Columbus encountered upon his arrival to the west?

- a. What is the topic of this book when telling the Columbus story?
- b. Are the Native people included in the story? In what way are they visible in the story?
- c. Does the story specify the name of the Taino people? If not, what term is used?

QUESTION TWO: Does the story demonstrate the causes and outcomes of historical events as usually complex and void of simplistic answers and explanations?

- d. Does the story offer an ending that explains the status of the Taino people after “the Encounter?”
- e. If so, is this explanation void of biased interpretation?

Does the story deals with controversial issues? Is there divergence from a positive story line (genocide, slavery, mistreatment, forced labor,

negative description of Europeans)

QUESTION THREE: Does the story critically question the status quo and offer varying perspectives?

- a. Is the story told from alternative viewpoints? If so, in what manner?
 - b. Does the story provide “new” information that could change the perception of the Taino people?
 - c. Are there examples in the story that help explain how the Tainos responded to the arrival of Columbus?
-

QUESTION FOUR: Does this story carefully approach history by avoiding analogies that do not project the truth and distinguish between fact and assumption?

- a. What primary resources are referenced in the book?
 - b. If so, do the primary resources include current theories based on more recent research?
-

QUESTION FIVE: Does the story promote or develop an appreciation for diversity through history?

- a. Does the story treat the Tainos in a positive manner? If so, how? If not, in what way could this be improved?
 - b. Are cultural considerations for the Taino present in the storyline? If so, in what manner?
-

QUESTION SIX: Does the story provide enjoyment and illuminate the human experience?

- g. How often are there interactions with Columbus and the Tainos?
- h. What is the topic of interaction among Columbus and the Tainos?
- i. Is tokenism present in the story?

j. Are the behavior patterns of the Taino presented as primitive or oversimplified?

QUESTION SEVEN: Do the illustrations reflect Taino culture?

- a. Are the illustrations of the Taino people drawn realistically with attention to individuality?
 - b. Is data that was used to create the illustrations offered in the book?
 - c. Is tokenism present in the illustrations?
-

QUESTION EIGHT: What possible influences are brought forward from the author, illustrator, or publisher?

QUESTION NINE: What implications in the elementary classroom exist as a result of this research?

Terminology

Authentic biography conveys factual accounts of a person's life and rarely includes dialogue.

Fictionalized biography uses narrative text and includes sound evidence to guide the story, but the author may be liberal in the use of describing events or creating conversations.

Biographical fiction, consists of fictionalized accounts of a person's life liberally laced with anecdotes or events from which there is little historical documentation

APPENDIX D
RUBRIC

The following is the rubric created for this research and applied to the books in this sample. Each book was evaluated based on addressing each criterion and then scored against the rating scale of *poor, good, or excellent*.

Criteria and qualities	Poor			
Historical Milestones	<u>1st voyage</u> : Author only mentions one or two of the events with the Taino, or none at all. If mentioned the information is mostly opinion-based and not supported by fact. The illustrations (if applicable) contain stereotypical images.	<u>2nd voyage</u> : Author only mentions (or not) one of the events with the Taino with no supporting detail. If mentioned, the information is mostly opinion-based and not supported by fact. The illustrations (if applicable) contain stereotypical images.	<u>3rd voyage</u> : Author only mentions (or not) brief encounters with the Taino with no supporting detail. If mentioned, the information is mostly opinion-based and not supported by fact. The illustrations (if applicable) contain stereotypical images.	<u>4th voyage</u> : Author only mentions (or not) brief encounters with the Taino with no supporting detail. If mentioned, the information is mostly opinion-based and not supported by fact. The illustrations (if applicable) contain stereotypical images.
Cultural Transmissions	The book identifies the Tainos as Indians or Native Americans only. No Taino beliefs, ideals, religious beliefs, artisanship are mentioned. The Taino are described in little to no physical characteristics and nondescriptive leaving the reader wondering about who they were and what they were like. The illustrations were inaccurate or provided stereotypical images of Native Americans with no specific Taino cultural identity visible. The author and illustrator are not successful in providing both the European and Native perspective into the story.			
Fictionalized Treatment	The book often departs from historical record that ultimately jeopardizes the portrayal of the Taino people in the story. The detraction misleads readers with inaccurate information. The detraction from historical record has a negative impact to the potential learning or reading experience of the reader			
Taino Interactions	The author and illustrator portray the Taino as dependent upon Columbus and his men for survival. The Tainos are shown as submissive and not aggressive when threatened with mistreatment by the Spanish. The Taino people are not portrayed as having any conflict with Columbus during his voyages west. The author and illustrator only offer the European perspective in the story and do not address cultural interactions of the Taino in any way.			
Literary Distinctions	The book includes two or less of these criteria: The book provides the appropriate criteria for the specific genre in which the book was written. The book indicated a Native American or Native American expert was consulted for this publication. The author included source notes for the historical event. This story received an award of excellence of some type. The illustrator provided source notes. If only photographs were provided, there was a combination of photos that reflected both the European and Native American influence.			

Criteria and qualities	Good			
Historical Milestones	<u>1st voyage:</u> Author includes three events with the Taino with some supporting details. The information is mostly accurate best to our knowledge. The illustrations (if applicable) are mostly realistic.	2nd voyage: Author includes two events with the Taino with some supporting details. The information is mostly accurate to the best of our knowledge. The illustrations (if applicable) are mostly realistic.	<u>3rd voyage:</u> Author includes the one main event with the Taino with some supporting detail. The information is mostly accurate to the best of our knowledge. The illustrations (if applicable) are mostly accurate.	<u>4th voyage:</u> Author includes the one main event with Taino with some supporting. The information is accurate to the best of our knowledge. The illustrations (if applicable) are accurate.
Cultural Transmissions	The book identifies the Taino people by name or from Arawak decent. At least one Taino belief or ideal is revealed in the story. Taino agriculture, religious beliefs or artisanship is mentioned in some manner. Physical attributes are offered but not in detail. The illustrations portraying these criteria are mostly accurate and realistic. The author and illustrator try to offer both the Native and European perspective in the story.			
Fictionalized Treatment	The book somewhat departs from historical record, but is done so in a manner that does not jeopardize the identity of the Taino people. The story generally does not detract from or mislead from the historical record. The detraction from the historical record does not impact the potential learning or reading experience of the reader.			
Taino Interactions	The author and illustrator generally portray the Taino as self-sufficient with some omissions. The author and illustrator demonstrate at least one example of the Taino rejecting the Spanish maltreatment. The Tainos are generally identified as having conflict with Columbus and his men and are not portrayed as weak and willing to accept the imposed European way of life.			
Literary Distinctions	The book includes three or more of these criteria: The book provides the appropriate criteria for the specific genre in which the book was written. The book indicated a Native American or Native American expert was consulted for this publication. The author included source notes for the historical event. This story received an award of excellence of some type. The illustrator provided source notes. If only photographs were provided, there was a combination of photos that reflected both the European and Native American influence.			

Criteria and qualities	Excellent			
Historical Milestones	<u>1st voyage</u> : Author includes three to four events with the Taino with supporting details. The information is accurate best to our knowledge. The illustrations (if applicable) are realistic.	<u>2nd voyage</u> : Author includes three events with Taino with supporting details. The information is accurate to the best of our knowledge. The illustrations (if applicable) are realistic.	<u>3rd voyage</u> : Author includes the one main event with Taino with supporting details. The information is accurate to the best of our knowledge. The illustrations (if applicable) are accurate.	<u>4th voyage</u> : Author includes the one main event with Taino with supporting details. The information is accurate to the best of our knowledge. The illustrations (if applicable) are accurate.
Cultural Transmissions	The book identifies the Taino people by name. At least two Taino beliefs and ideals are revealed in the story. The story identifies Taino religious beliefs, agriculture, and/or artisanship in some manner. Physical attributes of the Taino are described and accurate. Illustrations representing any of the cultural identities are accurate and realistic. The author and illustrator are successful for providing two unique perspectives to the story.			
Fictionalized Treatment	The book does not depart from, or departs very little from historical record as documented in available primary sources. The story does not mislead or detract from the historical record in any manner. If the book does depart from historical record, the departure is intentional and enhances the potential reading and learning experience of the reader.			
Taino Interactions	The author and illustrator provide strong instances where the Taino are presented as self-sufficient. An example of this would include the Taino being portrayed as independent and not needing Columbus and his men to survive. The author and illustrator reflect the Tainos as staying true to their culture and wanting to reject to European culture being forced upon them. The Tainos are depicted in text and illustrations (if applicable) as having conflict with Columbus and his men and are not shown as weak or submissive to malicious treatment from the Spanish settlers.			
Literary Distinctions	The book includes four or more of these criteria: The book provides the appropriate criteria for the specific genre in which the book was written. The book indicated a Native American or Native American expert was consulted for this publication. The author included source notes for the historical event. This story received an award of excellence of some type. The illustrator provided source notes. If only photographs were provided, there was a combination of photos that reflected both the European and Native American influence.			

LITERARY DISTINCTIONS

Part One: Bibliographic Data

Title:

Author: _____

Editor: _____

Compiler: _____

Publisher: _____

Illustrator: _____

Genre:

Historical Fiction: 1

Nonfiction: _____

Biographical: 2

Biographical fiction: 3

Fictionalized biography: 4

Authentic biography: 5

Informational: 6

Other: 7

Year: _____

Pub Date: _____

Reader Age: _____

Author Cred: _____

Illustrator Cred: _____

Publisher Notes:

Author source notes:
HISTORICAL MILESTONES

OVERALL MILESTONES		Yes	No
RESEARCH QUESTION	Does the book provide a comprehensive record of the Christopher Columbus story to include the encounter with the Taino?	_____	_____
	Of the four voyages included in the telling of the Christopher Columbus story, how many are explicitly identified in the book.	_____	
	Of the four voyages included in the telling of the Christopher Columbus story, how many are included by virtue of the events that took place during each?	_____	
	Of the following historical milestones (include all identified milestones here) how many are included in the book?	_____	
SPECIFIC MILESTONES		Yes	No
1st voyage	Does the author include factual information on the initial encounter of the Tainos and Columbus and his men?	_____	_____
	Does the author include information on how the Tainos were used to find gold?	_____	_____
	Is this milestone accurately depicted?	_____	_____
	Does the author include information on how the Tainos were kidnapped and taken back to Spain and sold into slavery?	_____	_____

	Is this milestone accurately depicted?	_____	_____
	If the milestones were included, are illustrations provided on the event? If yes, are they accurate?	_____	_____
2nd voyage	Does the author include factual information on this encounter of the Tainos and Columbus and his men?	_____	_____
	Does the author include factual information on the upheaval at La Navidad?	_____	_____
	Is this milestone accurately depicted?	_____	_____
	Does the author reference the implementation of the encomienda system -- using Tainos to ensure the colonists a large labor supply?	_____	_____
	Is this milestone accurately depicted?	_____	_____
	If the milestones were included, are illustrations provided on the event? If yes, are they accurate?	_____	_____
3rd voyage	Does the author include factual information on this encounter of the Tainos and Columbus and his men?	_____	_____
	Does the author reference information on the kidnapping of a large number of Tainos and their return to Spain as slaves?	_____	_____
	Is this milestone accurately depicted?	_____	_____
	Does the author reference the increase in distention among the native people and the continued efforts of the settlers to convert them by force into Christianity?	_____	_____
	Is this milestone accurately depicted?	_____	_____
	If the milestones were included, are illustrations provided on the event? If yes, are they accurate?	_____	_____

4th voyage

Does the author include factual information on this encounter of the Tainos and Columbus and his men?

Does the author reference information on the lunar eclipse event where Columbus tricked the Tainos into believing that God would punish them for not assisting the colonists?

Is this milestone accurately depicted?

If the milestones were included, are illustrations provided on the event? If yes, are they accurate?

CULTURAL TRANSMISSIONS

RESEARCH QUESTION	_____	_____
	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Does the book provide sufficient insight into the lifestyle-cultural and sociological heritage of the indigenous Taino people?	_____	_____
Does the book correctly identify the "Indians" as Taino?	_____	_____
How many instances of accurate information about Taino culture and/or beliefs does the author include?	_____	_____
How many instances of accurate information about Taino ideals does the author include?	_____	_____
How many instances of accurate information about Taino religious beliefs prior to Columbus does the author include?	_____	_____
How many instances of accurate information about Taino agriculture does the author include?	_____	_____
How many accurate descriptions/mentions of Taino physical attributes does the author include?	_____	_____
How many accurate descriptions/mentions of Taino artisanship does the author include?	_____	_____
How many accurate graphic depictions of Taino culture and/or beliefs are included in the book?	_____	_____
How many accurate graphic depictions of Taino ideals are included in the book?	_____	_____

How many accurate graphic depictions of Taino religious beliefs prior to Columbus are included in the book?

How many accurate graphic depictions of Taino agriculture are included in the book?

How many accurate graphic depictions of Taino artisanship are included in the book?

How many accurate graphic depictions of of Taino physical attributes are included in the book?

How many inaccurate or misleading graphic depictions included in the book?

FICTIONALIZED TREATMENT

RESEARCH QUESTION To what extent does the book depart from the historical record and what impact does that departure have on the reading and learning experience?

Does the story depart from the historical record?

Does this departure mislead or detract from the historical record?

Is the departure a device used by the author (i.e. intentional)?

Does the departure enhance the learning experience (i.e. is it used to convey accurate information).

Does the departure enhance the reading experience (i.e. does the departure make the story more imaginative and perhaps more enjoyable to read).

TAINO INTERACTIONS & RELATIONSHIPS

RESEARCH QUESTION	To what extent does the book provide insight into Taino interactions or relationships with Columbus and the Spanish Settlers and what impact does that have on the reading and learning experience?	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	Example
		Does the author or illustrator portray the Tainos as independent and not as helpless victims?	_____	_____
Does the author or illustrator portray the Tainos as rejecting or refusing European culture?	_____	_____		
Does the author or illustrator portray the Tainos as having conflicts with Columbus and his men?	_____	_____		
Does the author or illustrator portray the Taino as rejecting Columbus's malicious treatment?	_____	_____		
Does the author or illustrator portray the Tainos as self-sufficient, not needing Columbus and his men in order to survive?	_____	_____		

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