FLOWERS FOR THE BOY
RESEARCH COMPONENT

PART I: ABSTRACT

In contemporary western society, many people give little thought to the systems that have brought together their cocoa products. The chain that links the consumer to the grower involves much more than just the chocolate. But much of it takes place out of the sight of the consumer.

PART II: PROJECT NARRATIVE

Originality. Flowers for the Boy is original because of irony and post-modernism, as it is a children's book on child labour. While child labour is a complex and serious global issue that can be difficult for young people to grasp, we address it in a straightforward manner and use language that is suitable for a younger audience.

Objective. Our objective for Flowers for the Boy is to design a learning experience for children in western society about child labour and globalization. Our targeted age group is between eight and twelve because we want to build a foundation of this global issue in their minds early on to set a deep impression on the harsh reality that happens to children on the other side of the world. Even though the readers have not experienced life as a child labourer, they can try to identify and relate to the child in the story as both are living out their childhood and have their own challenges, hopes, and dreams. We hope readers will enjoy the story and illustrations, but more importantly, it will leave an imprint on them. And as children are exposed to this issue when young, they are more likely to inspire change and make a difference in the world.

Conceptual Approach. We approach this project with the maturity and perspective of both a child and an educator. As a child, we want to understand how we learn, in what circumstances do we want to learn, and how we can apply what we have learned into our lives. And as an educator, we want to explore effective teaching methods to engage and stimulate a child's mind to help them understand and enjoy what they learn.

Issues. Within child labour and globalization, we concentrate on the cause and and effect of child labour, the role of the cocoa production industry, and western

consumerist society. Our story captures a child's point of view as a child labourer in Cote d'Ivoire, a country in West Africa. The causes of child labour include debt bondage, excess population, lack of education and freedom, poverty, and unemployment due to limited job opportunities in the country. The effects of child labour on children include the deprivation of a proper childhood, becoming mentally and emotionally mature too fast, and the physical dangers on a child's body. Our story addresses a serious issue that expresses a degree of sadness, which might be difficult for young readers to comprehend. Therefore, in our story, the child is hopeful of the future; even though in reality, the child has a dim future.

Approach. The medium of our project is in the form of a book. To engage the readers, the book contains both text and images. The text is in the form of a short narrative, and the images consist of detailed illustrations. According to Marshall McLuhan's (1994) theory, our children's book is both a hot and cool medium. The illustrations are considered to be a hot medium as it extends the sense of vision in high definition. Because an illustration is well filled with visual information, it requires a low participation of the user because the reader does not need to work as hard to fill in much of the details. On the other hand, the text is considered to be a cool medium as it requires an active participation of the user. This is because a piece of text contains a lot of information that needs to be filled in by the reader in order to decode the meaning of the reading (McLuhan, 1994). Thus, the combination of both hot and cool media is to enhance the reader's experience and to effectively communicate our message.

Genre. The genre of our book can be categorized under the literature genre of fiction; or more specifically, semi-fiction. Semi-fiction is fiction that utilizes many aspects seen in non- fiction, such as a person that presents a subject as fact. In our case, it is a fictional story that is based on a true story and facts. This type of genre is appropriate for our children's book because it is an easier and direct way to communicate to the readers, yet just as educational for parents and teachers.

Vision. Our vision for the final project is that our educational children's book will give the readers a better awareness and understanding of child labour. And with a change in perspective, readers are able to change their consumerist behaviour and purchase

Fairtrade products. As well, we hope the awareness of one child can spread to another child, who can spread within a small community. And similar to a chain-like reaction, the knowledge and power of one community can initiate awareness within larger communities.

PART III: PROCESS

Week 1: Exploration and Research. We explore ideas and conduct in-depth research on child labour and globalization. We do research specifically on the cocoa system, cocoa production industry, economics, effects on children, how to write a children's book (language, tone, and visual style that appeals to a child in western society), and the specific memes associated with child labour (consumerism, disparities between rich and poor). After we gather sufficient information to knowledge ourselves on these topics, we combine our research into a pool of facts.

Week 2-3: Write Book. We brainstorm and discuss potential ideas for a story. Once we establish a strong concept, we begin to construct and write our narrative.

Week 4-5: Design Book. With the story completed, we create a storyboard that outlines all the scenes in the narrative. This helps us to identify important events in the story for us to illustrate. Once we select the scenes, we create hand-drawn sketches. Once satisfied with the drawings, they are brought into illustrator in which we polish them into detailed illustrations. Along with the illustrations, we have to design a book jacket cover and the book layout.

Week 6: Edit Book and Paperwork. To self-publish our book, our team is required to fill out paperwork for copyright and an International Standard Book Number. To register for the copyright of our book, we pay the $50 application fee, fill out an online application form, and submit it to the Canadian Intellectual Property Office (CIPO). It takes three business days for CIPO to process our submission. If everything on the application is correct, CIPO mails out the registration certificate. Once we receive the certificate, we file the document in a safe place as it is proof that we are the creator and owner of the work. To get an International Standard Book Number (ISBN), we contact the Library and Archives Canada and request an ISBN for our book. This is free of charge.

Week 7: Final Proofing. The book needs to be in its final version for it to print, so we continue to revise, edit, and proofread our writing.

Week 8: Plan Distribution. To determine the number of books we print, we announce our book to potential venues and plan our distribution. We plan to contact children hospitals, children stores, elementary schools, public libraries, and local bookstores to see if they want to purchase our children's book. As well, this book is available for purchase online.

Week 9: Print Book. We plan to contact several printing houses in Vancouver and choose one that satisfies our needs, which is for the prints to be of high quality and at a reasonable price. Hence, we ask for an estimate based on the number of pages, number of books, paper type, binding material, and cover type (hard or soft). If the printing company meet our demands, we send them our book. After we receive the proof of our book, we make further edits and return the proof and discuss any problems or changes with our printing company. After the proof is approved and submitted, we receive our prints.

Week 10: Distribute Book. We plan to distribute our children's book to our purchasers.

REFERENCES

McLuhan, M. (1994). Understanding Media: extensions of man. Cambridge: The MIT Press.