

**A bear of very little brain:
Positive psychology themes in the stories of
Winnie the Pooh**

by

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DECLARATION

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‘A bear of very little brain: Positive psychology themes in the stories of Winnie the Pooh’

I declare that the above dissertation is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

SIGNATURE

DATE

ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to discover to what extent and in what way Peterson and Seligman's (2004) twenty-four character strengths are present in *Winnie the Pooh* storybooks, and how they are depicted. Character strengths are a well-known theory in positive psychology and the analysis of children's literature is a respected genre. A qualitative examination of the text was conducted using content and thematic analyses to extract examples of the strengths. The exemplars were coded and recoded before being subjected to a peer and supervisor review. The excerpts indicated that all strengths are depicted in the text, but Pooh is the only character to exhibit them all. A discussion of the findings revealed that no single strength could be deemed more prominent as they are intrinsically interconnected. It is recommended that the findings be reworked into a training manual for guardians to foster character strengths in young children.

KEYWORDS

Character strengths; children's literature; content analysis; courage; humanity; justice; positive psychology; qualitative; resilience; transcendence; temperance; thematic analysis; values in action; virtues; well-being; Winnie the Pooh; wisdom

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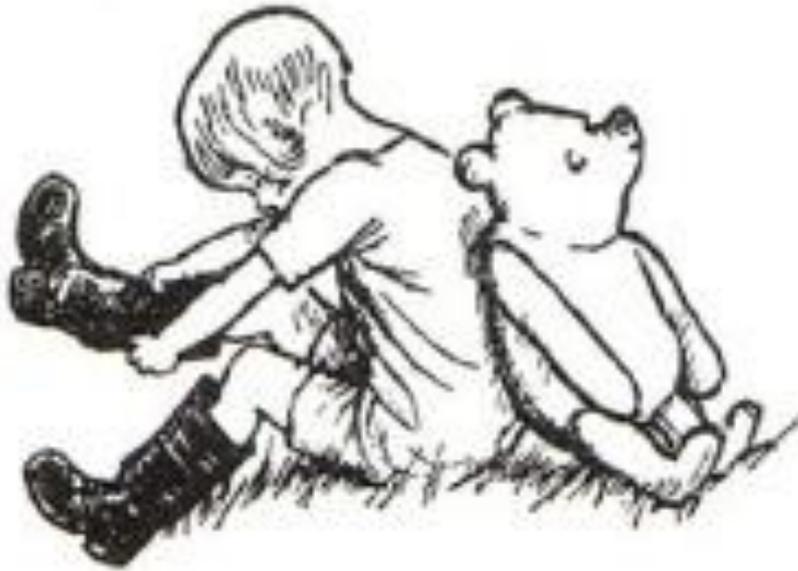
Finally, I would like to acknowledge my husband Nicholas without whom no journey is worth undertaking. *Your heart is my heart.*

DEDICATION

To my precious Sofia

Thank you for teaching me every day that even the impossible is possible through persistence and hope

xxx



So they went off together.

But wherever they go, and whatever happens to them on the way,

in that enchanted place on the top of the Forest

a little boy and his Bear will always be playing.

Milne (2007, p. 176)

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ADHD	Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
APA	American Psychological Association
DSM-5	Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 5th Edition
GAD	Generalised Anxiety Disorder
MDD	Major Depressive Disorder
SOC	Sense of Coherence
UNISA	University of South Africa
VIA-IS	Values in Action Inventory of Strengths

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

... when you are a Bear of Very Little Brain, and you Think of Things, you find sometimes that a Thing which seemed very Thingish inside you is quite different when it gets out into the open and has other people looking at it.

Milne (2007, p. 99)

Winnie the Pooh books are popular children's stories which have enthralled generations of young readers. Known for their gentle humour and surprising insight into the human condition, the books have piqued the interest of scholars from various disciplines. In this study the classic books are examined from a rather modern perspective; that of the character strength classification developed by Peterson and Seligman (2004) in positive psychology. The authors proposed the model as a guideline to achieve well-being.

Pooh is astonishingly eloquent and humorous when he explains how one's existence consists of a complex system of 'Things'. It influences how humans feel about themselves and how they are perceived by others. Aristotle called it 'the four humours' (Coetzee & Viviers, 2007), Freud identified it as the 'subconscious mind' (Strümpfer, 2005), and positive psychologists termed it 'character strengths' (Strümpfer, 1995). It encompasses the search for what it takes to optimise human functioning within their theoretical frame of reference. The dissertation wishes to use the science of positive psychology as a toolbox, and children's literature, specifically *Winnie the Pooh*, as building blocks to illustrate these strengths.

AIM AND RATIONALE

The aim of this study is to discover to what extent and in what ways positive psychologists Peterson and Seligman's (2004) classification system of twenty-four character strengths are present in *Winnie the Pooh* series of books, and how are they depicted.

Pooh and his friends have been used to illustrate various theories or philosophies, such as explaining mental disorders in *Tigger on the couch* (James, 2008), exploring Taoism in the *Tao of Pooh* (Hoff, 2002), and describing the power of positive thinking in a collection of quotations from Milne's stories, called *Positively Pooh: Timeless wisdom from Pooh* (2008). It is only recently that psychological studies of *Winnie the Pooh* shifted from psychopathology to positive psychology.

This study endeavours to achieve a similar analysis by describing character strengths as they relate to *Winnie the Pooh*. The primary purpose is to establish if there are examples of positive psychology in the form of strengths in the characters occupying the Hundred Acre Wood and to encourage discussion.

For this broad objective a qualitative research design was chosen, using content and thematic analyses to extract the relevant examples from the two books. These were coded and re-coded according to Peterson and Seligman's (2004) model of twenty-four character strengths and six virtues. This meant that although a majority of the study relied on a deductive approach, an inductive strategy revealed certain patterns and avoided the discarding of insight when they did not fit the theoretical framework.

The secondary goal is to promote future research into strength-based interventions using this dissertation in a community-oriented way. It is not the objective to argue that a 'Bear of Little Brain' will magically make suffering and poverty disappear, but rather that his stories could help children and adults alike understand the complex strengths they depict.

SELF-REFLEXIVE NOTE

The motivation for this project was twofold. The first was to find a way to promote positive psychology's character strengths in South African children between the ages of two and six to endorse resilience and well-being.

While working at a counselling centre in Cape Town, it was noticed that younger children reacted positively when listening to *Winnie the Pooh* stories. Although they were mistrustful and reserved, the Pooh stories relaxed and excited them.

This small measure of success made it clear that the choice of medium to illustrate and encourage positive character strengths lies in the characters found in popular children's literature.

However, it soon became evident that to reach that future goal, it would be necessary to identify a positive psychological framework as a guideline for implementing children's literature as a vehicle. Peterson and Seligman's (2004) classification of twenty-four character strengths supplied the framework within which to explore the *Winnie the Pooh* stories.

Secondly, the classification system is an enormous and complicated body of work, which is not readily accessible to readers outside the field of psychology. It could perhaps be beneficial to combine the science of positive psychology with the simplicity of *Winnie the Pooh* stories to find examples of positive psychology in the form of strengths in the characters inhabiting the Hundred Acre Wood.

CHAPTER OUTLINE OF THE STUDY

Chapter Two: Literature review: Positive psychology

In Chapter Two the study explores theories of positive psychology, and character strengths and virtues in particular. It also takes a brief look at concepts by earlier psychologists Aaron Antonovsky (1923–1994), William James (1842–1910), and Carl Rogers (1902–1987), which were the inspiration behind many of these new ideas. Finally, it takes a look at Peterson and Seligman's (2004) twenty-four character strength and virtue handbook that outlines the theoretical foundation of the dissertation and those researchers who applied or criticised the framework.

Chapter Three: Literature review: Children's literature, specifically *Winnie the Pooh*

This chapter reviews and provides the reason for the choice of the *Winnie the Pooh* collection. It illustrates the popularity of the series and delves into the motives of the author of these endearing tales. The chapter also explores the role of children's books, especially *Winnie the Pooh*, in explaining or discussing social and psychological perspectives.

Chapter Four: Method

The two books *Winnie the Pooh* and *The House at Pooh Corner* were systematically scrutinised to extract useful examples of Peterson and Seligman's (2004) twenty-four character strengths. A qualitative research design was chosen because it allowed for richer interpretation (Durrheim, 2006; Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). A combination of content and thematic analyses, using both inductive and deductive examinations, yielded 251 examples. This process is explained in step-by-step detail in this chapter and the findings represented in Appendix B with the raw data.

Chapter Five: Analysis of findings and discussion

In this chapter the findings and their significance are discussed. The content analysis portion of the investigation yielded 251 extracts categorised according to their virtues. A brief review of the distribution throughout the two books is given and the characters involved in the strengths. The examples are then discussed in greater detail under the headings of the strengths under which they fall. The focus was on the depth of the analysis rather than the breadth.

Chapter Six: Conclusion

The final chapter provides a summary of the findings, the conclusion, and limitations of the research, and points out recommendations for future study. The findings showed how all the strengths were interconnected, thus the conclusion was that no strength was more important than another, even if some were more prominent in the text. Their true value lies in how they individually and collectively support and encourage a utopian existence similar to that of the Hundred Acre Wood.

CONCLUSION

The positive psychology arena is filled with an array of research that strives to define or quantify happiness, or establish what characteristics lead to an individual's happiness and well-being. This dissertation focuses on the character strength and virtue classification (Peterson & Seligman, 2004) as it incorporates a large volume of positive psychology-related research.

Many researchers have used children's literature as a medium to highlight their theories in a different perspective in order to promote understanding and further investigation. *Winnie the Pooh* was chosen for its longevity and popularity as well as its prior inclusion in explaining principles of psychology and philosophy. This study aims to add to the information that already exists around the usefulness of children's literature. Another contribution will be to broaden the perspective that storybooks have continued relevance, therefore positive psychological principles could relate to children's literature.

Perhaps the ideas explored will result in investigating the feasibility of using the stories and characters in a manner that could bolster psychological well-being and resilience in young children. If *Winnie the Pooh* does indeed contain positive psychological themes, it could be an easily understandable and familiar method in which to convey these constructive principles to a large audience.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW: POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY

We believe that character strengths are the bedrock of the human condition and that strength-congruent activity represents an important route to the psychological good life.

Peterson & Seligman (2004, p. 12)

INTRODUCTION

This literature review presents a short overview of some theories and developments in the realm of positive psychology and the strength theory in relation to well-being, happiness, and resilience. It discusses Peterson and Seligman's (2004) classification of character strengths and virtues in detail as it forms the basis of the analysis of the literature texts.

Positive psychology is a term used by a group of psychologists with similar research interests, and stands apart from the so-called pop psychology associated with self-help books (Baumgardner & Crothers, 2010). It is striving to take its place in the social science discipline using rigorous research methods and validated theory to support its claims (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Positive psychology studies emotion and character traits from a positive and resilience-endorsing perspective to understand the human experience (Seligman, Steen, Park, & Peterson, 2005).

This chapter will discuss positive psychology and show how once the movement gained traction, strength theory became a topic of interest.

THE POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY MOVEMENT

Pre-dating 1998, little empirical research explored the role of positive emotions and of strengths in prevention and treatment: ‘Empirically, positive psychology is about where clinical research was in the early 1970s’ (Duckworth, Steen, & Seligman, 2005, p. 634). In his article ‘Positive Psychology’s Two Cultures’, Steven Bacon (2005) emphatically declared that organised positive psychology did not exist twenty years ago.

This situation changed when Martin Seligman became president of the American Psychological Association in 1998 (Bacon, 2005). He believed psychology had placed too much emphasis on pathology and not enough on positive consequences that can develop out of negative experiences (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). He invited researchers to change their focus and started a new movement called positive psychology (Seligman, 1999), although Maslow had already used the phrase ‘positive psychology’ in 1954 (Duckworth et al., 2005; Strümpfer, 2005). The journal *American Psychologist* devoted an entire special edition to this developing sub-discipline (Bacon, 2005), and soon thereafter positive psychologists launched their own publication, *The Journal of Positive Psychology*.

Research revealed that within 15 years (1998–2013) interest in positive psychology had increased by 86% (Rusk & Waters, 2013). It also determined a need to adopt a consolidated understanding of well-being, because terms were being used interchangeably (Maddi, 2006).

Positive psychologists emphasise redefining the concept ‘well-being’ where it is no longer considered to be the absence of illness or dysfunction, but rather a distinct state of being with its own traits (Coetzee & Viviers, 2007; Gable & Haidt, 2005; Seligman et al., 2005; Wissing & Van Eeden, 2002). Linley, Joseph, Harrington and Wood, (2006), and Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi (2000) tried to find a multi-faceted definition of positive psychology: which defines what it is; what it means at different levels; and the conditions and processes that contribute to the optimal functioning of people, groups and institutions. This has led to some psychologists championing the so-called *Manual of the Sanities*.

THE STUDY OF STRENGTHS

Like many ideologies in psychology, strength theory did not have a linear source of origin. Several researchers explored and reviewed this paradigm before the start of the positive psychology movement, dating as far back as the days of Aristotle, Socrates, and Plato (Duckworth et al., 2005). Strümpfer (2005) investigated the role of strengths such as spirituality, vitality, love, hope, curiosity, whereas Jung (McNulty & Fincham, 2012) and Rogers (Corey, 2009) explored strengths relating to forgiveness, fairness, love, kindness, and self-regulation (Waterman, 2013). Maslow argued that the process by which people became self-actualised was a state of being in which they had complete access to the full assortment of their talents and strengths (Duckworth et al., 2005).

The medical sociologist Antonovsky (1996) did not investigate terms simply related to well-being, but rather a foundation that he referred to as the salutogenic model. Salutogenesis, as he explained it, was the origin of health – strength that promoted well-being, prevented illness, and alleviated or rehabilitated disorder, as well as maintained or enhanced health. His theory involved a sense of coherence (SOC) that regulated how comprehensible, manageable, and meaningful an individual perceived the world, and in turn determined the responses and reactions to life events (Antonovsky, 1996). A strong SOC featured resilience, because people recognised difficulties as comprehensible and meaningful in the sense that they were motivated to cope and manage. Antonovsky suggested that more research was required.

Those strengths associated with well-being have become scientifically cumbersome concepts because researchers relied on their own definitions and classifications (Barnard, 1994; Buss, 2000; Collicutt & Gray, 2012; Duckworth et al, 2005; Frederickson, 2004; Gallagher & Lopez, 2007; Hogan & Kaiser, 2005; Hone, Jarden & Schofield, 2014; Holahan & Moos, 1990; Seligman et al., 2005; Smith, Tooley, Christopher & Kay, 2010; Strümpfer, 2006; Wissing & Van Eeden, 2002).

Researchers like Diener (2000) campaigned for national indices of these subjective strengths that would promote well-being, and highlighted a need to track their effectiveness on ‘happiness’ over long periods and large populations.

In general, the evidence suggests that character strengths are tools that promote optimal functioning, even in the realm of unfavourable conditions (Shoshani & Aviv, 2012), but there was a fundamental difficulty in formulating classifications, because positive emotions are multi-faceted. As Wissing and Van Eeden (2002) pointed out, they were not only diffuse in character, but also too complicated to measure accurately.

After consideration of research showing several possible categorisations, the researcher chose Peterson and Seligman's (2004) classification of six virtues and twenty-four character strengths. It was the most inclusive classification system and contained factors that other researchers only reviewed in isolation. In addition, many of the researchers mentioned in the review served either as senior researchers or as advisers in formulating this *Manual of the Sanities or Character Strengths and Virtues: A Handbook and Classification* (Peterson & Seligman, 2004).

CHARACTER STRENGTHS AND VIRTUES

This classification system provided a legitimate way of referring to measureable strengths that made psychological well-being possible (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). The fifty-five researchers first used a literature review of historical documents exploring virtues, morals, and strengths from a largely consolidated version of previous studies and research. The extensive list was afterwards refined at several positive psychology conferences. It was important to ensure that all six virtues were universal across cultures and histories, both from a Western and Eastern perspective (Dahlsgaard, Peterson, & Seligman, 2005). This fact was important to this study as South Africa is a multicultural nation.

On the first level they decided to use Dahlsgaard's six core virtues: humanity, wisdom, courage, justice, transcendence, and temperance (Dahlsgaard et al., 2005). All six virtues must be present for a person to be considered of good character (Peterson & Seligman, 2004).

The second level comprised twenty-four character strengths or positive traits as the psychological ingredients that would outline these virtues. The third level included situational themes where behaviour or habits would manifest into strength. For example, empathetic behaviour combined with a positive outlook and a tendency towards inclusiveness will develop into kindness (Peterson & Seligman, 2004, pp. 20–23).

This body of work, *Character Strengths and Virtue: A Handbook and Classification* (Peterson & Seligman, 2004), was created as an alternative to pathology's *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM-5) (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). From the literature reviewed, the twenty-four character strengths provided the broadest theoretical groundwork for analysing the narratives.

APPLICABILITY AND CRITICISM

Character strengths and virtues have been extensively researched (Hone et al., 2014; Linkins, Niemiec, Gillham, & Mayerson, 2014; Peterson & Seligman, 2004; Proctor, Tsukayama, Wood, Maltby, Eades, & Linley, 2011; Proyer, Gander, Wellenzoh, & Ruch, 2013; Seligman, Steen, Park & Peterson, 2005; Young, Kashdan & Macatee, 2015). The researchers concluded that strength-based interventions had a positive effect on life satisfaction, and increased happiness and well-being. It was also established that a blanket approach involving all twenty-four strengths yielded greater success.

In an attempt to measure character strengths, the Values in Action Inventory of Strengths (VIA-IS) was developed (Peterson & Seligman, 2004) and used in several studies internationally (Khumalo, Wissing, & Temane, 2008; McGrath, 2015; Park, Peterson & Seligman, 2006). The findings showed that the most common strengths were kindness, fairness, honesty, gratitude, and judgement.

The lowest were spirituality, prudence, modesty, and self-regulation. Geographic context played no role, except in Africa (Khumalo et al., 2008) where spirituality was one of the higher-ranking strengths. Despite this difference the study recognised that the VIA-IS was acceptably dependable within an African framework.

As with any academic discipline, positive psychology, and particularly the character strength and virtue classification, was not without criticism (Dahlsgaard et al., 2005; Ehrenreich, 2010; Greenberg, 2010; Huebner & Hills, 2011; Lazarus, 2003; Miller & Nickerson, 2013; Peterson, Ruch, Beermann, Park & Seligman, 2007; Proctor et al., 2011).

The main objection was the lack of research that covered the effects on individuals over cross-sectional periods, the tendency to separate emotions into either positive or negative poles, and the reliance on self-report questionnaires in the VIA-IS to measure outcomes.

Researchers McGrath (2014) and Park et al. (2006) shared some of these concerns but concluded that the VIA-IS allowed for discrepancies because of an individual's delusional view of self, or moral obligation to answer questions in a certain way.

The effectiveness of intervention programmes based on character strengths on children and adolescents was also called into question (Miller & Nickerson, 2013; Peterson & Seligman, 2004; Proctor et al., 2011; Shoshani & Aviv, 2012). The consensus was that young children needed to be tested extensively, as certain strengths are only measurable in later years of their development.

Critics of Peterson and Seligman's (2004) character strength and virtue classification system offered no feasible or tested alternative. Although Peterson and Seligman (2004) acknowledged at the end of their handbook that their virtue classification system might not hold up to further empirical inquiry, this paper only employed the virtue categories as a convenient grouping for the twenty-four strengths.

As the development of a new system was outside the scope of this study, the dissertation continued to use the cataloguing of the twenty-four character strengths, combining definitions of several researchers.

**CLARITY ON THE CATEGORIES OF VIRTUE AND CHARACTER
STRENGTH**

As these six virtues and twenty-four character strengths are used to dissect the *Winnie the Pooh* stories, the concepts need to be discussed in detail. The discussion will follow the categorisation illustrated in Table 2.1 below.

Table 2.1: Twenty-four character strengths according to their virtue grouping

VIRTUES	Humanity	Wisdom/ knowledge	Courage	Justice	Transcendence	Temperance
STRENGTHS	Social intelligence	Perspective	Persistence	Citizenship	Gratitude	Self-regulation
	Kindness	Open-mindedness	Vitality	Leadership	Appreciation of beauty	Humility or modesty
	Love	Creativity	Bravery	Fairness	Hope	Prudence
		Curiosity	Integrity		Humour	Forgiveness or mercy
		Love of learning			Spirituality	

THE VIRTUE OF HUMANITY

The strengths that feature in this virtue are social intelligence, kindness, and love. These are interpersonal strengths, which emphasise the tendency among people to nurture, care, and form bonds. This virtue promotes altruistic pro-social behaviour (Peterson & Seligman, 2004).

Social intelligence as strength of the virtue of humanity

Social intelligence defines a person who is skilled in understanding, interpreting, and experiencing emotions. This ability is not limited to the person's own emotions, but the emotions of others (Peterson & Seligman, 2004; Wood, Linley, Maltby, Kashdan & Hurling, 2010).

Kindness as strength of the virtue of humanity

Kindness entails the conviction that other people are worth attention. There is no expectation of gain or reciprocity, and it goes beyond principle-based respect of humanity (Peterson & Seligman, 2004).

Love as strength of the virtue of humanity

For this study Peterson and Seligman's (2004) definition of love as a cognitive, behavioural, and emotional stance toward others was used (p.132). Love plays an important role in promoting psychological and physical health – people who love reap all kinds of social benefits (Peterson et al., 2007).

THE VIRTUE OF WISDOM

The strengths that feature in this virtue are perspective, open-mindedness, creativity, curiosity, and love of learning. These cognitive strengths involve gaining and applying knowledge. It goes beyond learning, but includes integration and balance of information through experience (Bacon, 2005; Peterson & Seligman, 2004).

Perspective as strength of the virtue of wisdom

Perspective is often referred to as wisdom, but Peterson and Seligman (2004) argue that wisdom is regarded too often as a virtue, and therefore they prefer the term 'perspective' in relation to character strengths. Perspective determines how individuals view the world around them.

Open-mindedness as strength of the virtue of wisdom

Open-mindedness is the ability to search actively for conflicting evidence against favoured beliefs and goals, evaluate it, and then change opinions, as well as behaviours accordingly (Peterson & Seligman, 2004).

Creativity as strength of the virtue of wisdom

Creativity is not restricted to traditional artistic efforts. It is creative when the idea or behaviour is original and makes a positive contribution to the individual (Bacon, 2005; Peterson & Seligman, 2004).

Curiosity as strength of the virtue of wisdom

Curiosity is cultivated through the emotional excitement of exploring, which improves well-being (Gallagher & Lopez, 2007). It is important to human survival, as the need to explore increases learning opportunities and allows for more intellectual solutions (Peterson et al., 2007).

Love of learning as strength of the virtue of wisdom

Love of learning encompasses the positive feelings people experience during the process of acquiring new skills or knowledge (Peterson & Seligman, 2004).

THE VIRTUE OF COURAGE

The strengths that feature in this virtue are persistence, vitality, bravery, and integrity. These emotional strengths necessitate restraint to accomplish goals in the face of obstacles (Dahlsgaard et al., 2005). The emphasis in this virtue is not the lack of difficulty, but rather the determination to overcome adversity.

Persistence as strength of the virtue of courage

Persistence is continual goal-directed behaviour, despite hindrances, complications, and dissuasion. Persistent people are usually successful and resilient in the face of setbacks (Peterson et al., 2007). Time spent is not a sufficient indication of persistence because an enjoyable or easy task does not require strength of character to maintain (Peterson & Seligman, 2004).

Vitality as strength of the virtue of courage

Peterson and Seligman (2004) define vitality at two levels. 'Somatic' equates to fine physical health, and psychologically it refers to the subjective feeling of energy. Vitality is uplifting and positive, as some energy may be arduous and negative.

Bravery as strength of the virtue of courage

Bravery is not the absence of fear; it is voluntary action in spite of it for the sake of the common good. This fear could relate to real or perceived danger, or a supposed loss of popularity (Peterson & Seligman, 2004).

Integrity as strength of the virtue of courage

People are true to themselves, authentic, and honest about their intentions. They take responsibility for their feelings and behaviours (Peterson & Seligman, 2004).

THE VIRTUE OF JUSTICE

The strengths that feature in this virtue are citizenship, leadership, and fairness. All three strengths depend on people's links within a community. The virtue of justice cannot exist in isolation as these civic strengths lay the groundwork for a healthy community and society (Shoshani & Aviv, 2012).

Citizenship as strength of the virtue of justice

Good citizenship requires a sense of obligation towards the common good that extends beyond self-interest. It includes society, political parties, social responsibility, teamwork, and loyalty (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000).

Leadership as strength of the virtue of justice

Leadership is a personal quality that demonstrates an assimilation of cognitive and temperament characteristics to direct and motivate others towards collective action (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). Good leadership promotes the well-being of incumbents through effective teamwork and organisation, whereas poor leadership often leads to a decline in quality of life (Hogan & Kaiser, 2005).

Fairness as strength of the virtue of justice

Fairness calls for an individual to respond to all people in the same way without bias, issues, value systems, or social relations. A person with fairness will be sensitive to social injustice, skilled in compassion and experienced in finding unbiased arrangements (Peterson & Seligman, 2004).

THE VIRTUE OF TRANSCENDENCE

The strengths that feature in this virtue are gratitude, appreciation of beauty, hope, humour or playfulness, and spirituality. The strengths are associated with the larger universe (Shoshani & Aviv, 2012). They go beyond human knowledge, include the search for meaning, and encourage a connection to a higher purpose (Peterson & Seligman, 2004; Strümpfer, 2005).

Gratitude as strength of the virtue of transcendence

Gratitude is the capacity to feel a sense of thankfulness towards a person, object or situation, and the disposition to act in accordance to the sensation of goodwill (Peterson & Seligman, 2004; Seligman et. al., 2005).

Appreciation of beauty and excellence as strength of the virtue of transcendence

This means the capacity to find, recognise, and take pleasure in beauty and excellence in physical and social worlds to the extent that it is awe-inspiring (Miller & Nickerson, 2007; Peterson & Seligman, 2004).

Hope as strength of the virtue of transcendence

Hope is the emotionally positive outlook and expectation about the future (Peterson & Seligman, 2004; Wissing & Van Eeden, 2002).

Humour or playfulness as strength of the virtue of transcendence

Humour is the ability to make people smile, or see the upside of an unfortunate situation (Peterson & Seligman, 2004; Strümpfer, 2006).

Spirituality as strength of the virtue of transcendence

Spirituality encompasses more than religiousness, because it describes an outlook about the universe as a non-physical dimension of life, and the way it makes sense of it (Collicut & Gray, 2012; Peterson & Seligman, 2004).

THE VIRTUE OF TEMPERANCE

The strengths that feature in this virtue are self-regulation, humility/modesty, prudence, and forgiveness/mercy. These strengths prevent excess and put emphasis on moderation (Peterson & Seligman, 2004; Shoshani & Aviv, 2012).

Self-regulation as strength of the virtue of temperance

Self-regulation is the capacity to exert control over reactions to achieve goals that are set to a certain benchmark. Ideals, moral restrictions, norms, or expectations form the foundation (Peterson & Seligman, 2004).

Humility or modesty as strength of the virtue of temperance

Humility and modesty relate to a humble view of self and extend to include external factors such as how individuals behave and socially interact, and the image they project (Peterson & Seligman, 2004; Tangney, 2002).

Prudence as strength of the virtue of temperance

Prudent individuals have a far-sighted position on the future, are skilled at resisting impulses, have everyday thinking that is practical, and the ability to harmonise multiple goals, without being manipulative or overly cautious in all spheres of life. Prudence requires a person to sustain long-term goals often at the expense of short-term pleasures (Kristjánsson, 2010; Peterson & Seligman, 2004).

Forgiveness or mercy as strength of the virtue of temperance

Forgiveness is a strength that many people understand according to their specific belief system. It is a specialised form of mercy, and encompasses kindness, compassion, and leniency towards offenders, subordinates, and people in distress. Psychologists consider it to be the most difficult strength to apply consistently (Miller & Nickerson, 2013; Peterson & Seligman, 2004).

CONCLUSION

The review confirmed that Peterson and Seligman's (2004) *Character Strengths and Virtue Handbook and Classification* are not the only research that explored psychological well-being in terms of strength. Psychologists both in and outside the field of positive psychology investigated the importance of character strengths to the facilitation of resilience and well-being, although several researchers questioned the experimental soundness of these findings.

The conclusion was that it is the most comprehensive list of strengths available and that international scrutiny proved it to be a credible classification system. This study did not seek to test the validity of these theories or create a new taxonomy. It was merely looking for a vehicle to discover illustrative examples within the familiar *Winnie the Pooh* texts. In the next chapter the link between psychology and children's literature, in particular *Winnie the Pooh*, is discussed.

CHAPTER 3

LITERATURE REVIEW: SOCIAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES ON *WINNIE THE POOH* AND CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

*And the cows are almost cooing,
And the turtle-doves are mooing,
Which is why a Pooh is poohing
In the sun.*

Milne (2007, p. 79)

INTRODUCTION

The goal of this chapter is to explain why Winnie the Pooh was selected for the study without arguing that it is the only narrative worthy of exploration. It will sketch the background of the creator of *Winnie the Pooh*, how the stories and franchise originated, and present social and psychological perspectives in relation to children's literature in general, as well as how the Pooh stories have been examined before.

Winnie the Pooh has been described as a true classic (Hobb cited in Knudsen, p. 25). The story was published for the first time around 90 years ago. Millions of copies have been sold with translations into more than 50 languages (Hornik, 2011), including Afrikaans, Yiddish and Czech. The Latin version appeared on the *New York Bestsellers List* (Stanger, 1987) in 1961. Chapter Three hopes to illustrate to the reader exactly why this bear, with ears full of fluff (Milne, 2007, p. 108) and his friends are still cherished.

According to Hunt (as cited in Knudsen, 2012, p. 14) the popularity of Pooh is perhaps because all characters have adult responsibilities as well as being part of childlike activities. In a different perspective, Bright (2010) argued that the value of *Winnie the Pooh* lies in the fact that the Hundred Acre Wood is an Arcadian fantasy free of the restrictions imposed by adults.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The author of the original *Winnie the Pooh* stories, Alan Alexander Milne (1882–1956), served as a signalling officer for Britain’s Fourth Royal Warwickshire Regiment during World War I. The horrors of the war inspired him to write positive and joyful stories of days when life was simpler (Moynihan, 1973). Many factors contributed to his creation of *Winnie the Pooh*, most prominent being a desire to write for the naïve wonder inside adults such as himself as a means of escape (Bright, 2010; Hornik, 2011). In his autobiography *It’s Too Late Now* (1939), Milne dedicated a considerable part to his fascination with his ‘own beginnings’ and his need to write positive tales for adults that would enable them to break away from reality (Hunt as cited in Knudsen, 2012, p. 25).

Milne started his writing career at the University of Cambridge’s magazine *Granta*, becoming assistant editor for *Punch* at the age of 24. After World War 1, he resigned and wrote children’s stories. He wrote *Winnie the Pooh* in 1926 and *The House at Pooh Corner* two years later, both illustrated by E.H. Shepard (1879–1976), a co-worker at *Punch* magazine (Milne, 2014).

There are ten stories in each of the two books, taking place in a beautiful forest called the Hundred Acre Wood. His son Christopher (1920–1996), who is often regarded as the inspiration behind the character Christopher Robin, explained in his autobiography (Milne, 2014) that the family spent many holidays in the Ashdown Forest in Sussex. He suggested that the forest was a symbol of happier times to his father and thus the perfect setting and doorway for the storybooks (Milne, 2014).

The premise of the storybooks is that toys belonging to Christopher come to life in the magical and tranquil forest. Although the characters experience exciting adventures together, they are also constantly caring and nurturing one another, working towards a compassionate community (Stanger, 1987). The stories involve different characters, but without exception, they all include a character named Winnie the Pooh. Appendix A contains a summary of all twenty stories.

INTRODUCING THE CHARACTERS OF *WINNIE THE POOH*

Winnie the Pooh is also known as Pooh or Edward bear. In the introduction to *Winnie the Pooh*, Milne explains how the name came about: Pooh was the name of a swan Christopher Robin once had, ‘or the swan had Christopher Robin, I don’t know which, when we said goodbye we took the name with us, we didn’t think the swan would want it anymore’ (Milne, 2006, p. i).

The name Winnie comes from a black bear cub, Winnipeg, who had been a mascot for the Canadian Army Veterinary Corps (CAVC) during World War 1. Before deploying to France, her owner left her at the London Zoo. It was there that Milne and his son met Winnie, as she was affectionately known, and she inspired their imaginations (Shushkewich, 2004).

‘Well, when Edward Bear said that he would like an exciting name... Christopher Robin said at once... that he was Winnie the Pooh. And he was’ (Milne, 2006, p. ii). Pooh bear from the storybooks lives in the Hundred Acre Wood, loves honey and condensed milk and spends his days playing and helping his many friends. Pooh is a bear ‘of Very Little Brain’ (Milne, 2007, p. 99) yet is often the hero in the plot. The other main characters are briefly described in Table 3.1 on the next page.

Table 3.1: Summary of the characters that feature in the narratives of Winnie the Pooh

Name	Resemblance	Description
POOH	Bear	He is the hero of most of the stories and overly fond of honey and condensed milk. He is loving and loyal to all in the forest, but not generally regarded as intelligent.
PIGLET	Pig	He enjoys spending time with his friends, smelling the flowers and having wonderful adventures in spite of being cautious.
CHRISTOPHER ROBIN	Human boy	Although he does not appear physically in every story, he is present by implication. The narrator tells the stories to him and the reader.
EEYORE	Donkey	He is mostly portrayed as a pessimist, but is capable of love and kindness towards the other animals, and they in turn are fond of him.
RABBIT	Rabbit	Rabbit enjoys taking command of situations, frequently resulting in disastrous outcomes. He is confident and intelligent.
OWL	Owl	Owl is long-winded and regularly overestimates his intellectual abilities.
KANGA	Kangaroo	She is the only female character and Roo's mother. She is depicted as kind and nurturing with a level of strictness.
ROO	Joey	Kanga's young son is lively, curious, and rather impulsive.
TIGGER	Tiger	Tigger is like Roo, playful and impulsive, but at times exhibits traits of caution. He is confident.

PSYCHOLOGY AND CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

This section highlights the successful use of children's literature to explain or explore psychological constructs (Chamberlain & Sigler, 1994). It also underlines how children's storybooks can be dissected to extract positive lessons applicable to both children and adults in a similar way to what this study aims to achieve. This literature review served as a guideline.

A review showed that children's literature is about more than fictitious entertainment (Freeman, Feeney & Moravcik, 2011). Children's books reveal much about the period in which they were written, and act as a mirror of the social norms of the time (Holt, 2010; Moynihan, 1973).

Children's literature has often been used in the field of social science, particularly psychology, to rationalise or emphasise complex principles (Lenzer, 2001). It has formed the basis of many psychological investigations, such as Freud's analysis of the fairy tales of the Brothers Grimm (Kidd, 2011), couple's therapy (Kortman & Eckstein, 2004), female empowerment courses (Chamberlain & Sigler, 1994), and to parody adult behaviour (Moynihan, 1973). Elbert (2008) explained how children's books could influence a child's orientation towards gender, political alignment, socioeconomic views, and attitude towards modern technology, whereas Levine (2007) surveyed the possible psychological contributions in Porter's *Pollyanna*.

Children's literature has also been used in classroom settings to address topics in mathematics (Casey, Kersh & Young, 2004), social sciences (Bolton-Gary, 2013; Freeman, 2014; Hannibal, Vasiliev & Lin, 2002; Moynihan, 1973; Peyton & Jalongo, 2008) and physical education (Molenda & Bhavnagri, 2009; Penny, 2014).

The motivation behind this strategy is that a familiar and non-threatening subject matter promotes confidence and stimulates curiosity to explore new knowledge, which is true for children and adults alike (Salvadori, 2002). This approach requires a solid match between theory and narrative (Hansen & Zambo, 2005), and should be interesting enough to encourage discussion. Saracho and Spodek (2010) established that fiction containing animal characters with human characteristics and a sense of humour is most popular in capturing the attention of both children and adults. Hansen and Zambo (2005) and Zanderer (1987) supported this finding and this is especially applicable to this study as *Winnie the Pooh* fulfils these criteria.

PSYCHOLOGY AND WINNIE THE POOH

In the past, *Winnie the Pooh* has been investigated from a psychological perspective. Hoff (2002) used the stories in relation to positive psychology and specifically the study of strengths in his works *Tao of Pooh* and *Te of Piglet*. He clarified the basics of Taoism as a lifestyle that promoted the protection of life against disease and psychological stress by working in harmony with everyday circumstances ‘... changing what others may perceive as negative into something positive’ (p. 18).

Hoff (2002) described Pooh as having qualities such as perspective (p. 24), a sense of humour (p. 18), and love of learning (p. 49), which are also strengths referred to in strength theory (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000; Strümpfer, 2005). Pooh is an example of what Taoists call the uncarved block or P’u (Hoff, 2002, p. 22), a person who is capable of ‘... appreciating, learning from, and working with whatever happens in everyday life.’ (p. 17). This trait bears a resemblance to the research done by Isen and Baron (as cited in Strümpfer, 2006, p. 147) on positive feelings generated by mundane occurrences and their promotion of cognitive flexibility and good health.

In *Te of Piglet*, Hoff (2002) explained that Te in Taoism is a special characteristic, a ‘... virtue in action’ (p. 200) that entails an individual who is spiritually strong. Such a person comes across as serene, gentle, happy, and emotionally in tune with others. This is a reflection of Peterson and Seligman’s (2004) classification of the strengths of social intelligence and spirituality as seen in Chapter Two. According to Hoff (2002), this intrinsic worth comes from a humble inner nature, of which the holder is often unaware. In *Winnie the Pooh*, he attributes the Te to Piglet.

Hoff (2002) stated that Piglet is the only character in the storybooks to show any meaningful personal growth. He does not deny his limitations of size, but rather uses it to the benefit of others. In doing so, he displays Taoist power which is labelled as ‘... gentle like flowing water ... humble and generous ... and mysterious’ (p. 218). However, this personal growth is only obvious when Milne’s work is considered in its entirety. In the first collection of tales, Piglet is projected as cowardly and he often overcomes his fear by accident. In his last appearance in the second collection, he finally proves to be brave.

Other researchers agreed that the texts of *Winnie the Pooh* might be suitable to explain or investigate some psychological constructs. Hosty (1992) suggested the value in exploring *Winnie the Pooh* from a variety of disciplines, ‘... with a text of this nature, there is a great deal of scope for other perspectives’ (p. 758). In his article ‘Cognitive therapy and Winnie-the-Pooh’, he gave preliminary examples of how the stories drew attention to key features of cognitive therapy, even though the storybooks predated the theory of cognitive therapy by fifty years. This reinforced the notion of *Winnie the Pooh*’s applicability as well as possibilities.

In addition, Stanger (1987) confirmed *Winnie the Pooh*’s influence on children and adults alike and explored these ideas in his article ‘Winnie the Pooh through a Feminist Lens’. He felt that although *Winnie the Pooh* predominantly features male characters whereas Kanga (the only female) is poorly portrayed, the storybooks are still popular among both male and female readers. Stanger (1987) attributed this to the fact that the leading male characters Pooh, Piglet, and Christopher Robin have an ‘... androgynous quality that makes [them so] ... attractive ... to female readers of different ages’ (p. 41).

These characters also champion feminine virtues such as nurturing, love, kindness, and ‘building a community’, which are customarily not respected in male dominant texts (p. 46). This thought is supported by Moynihan (1973) who said that although the characters in *Winnie the Pooh* influence situations as they occur to suit their own expectations, they work towards mutually respectful but self-contained individuals in the Hundred Acre Wood (p. 170).

Moynihan (1973) also argued that each character within the story carries its own life lesson. Eeyore is self-absorbed, Owl is over intellectualising, and Kanga is a spoof on motherhood (pp. 167–168). Pooh is bumbling and admits to being so, but in the end his generous spirit leads him in the right direction. Sinsheimer (1971) explained it better through his description of Pooh as ‘... warm-hearted, generally compassionate, and on occasion possessed of innate common sense and uncommon perception ...’ (p. 40).

These articles featured themes of love, kindness, and citizenship in *Winnie the Pooh*, which echoed some of Peterson and Seligman’s (2004) character strengths that form the foundation of this dissertation.

These were again discussed in Kortman and Eckstein's (2004) work. To help families and couples therapeutically understand one another better, they devised four personality descriptions based on the Array Interactional Model, using the *Winnie the Pooh* characters Pooh, Rabbit, Tigger and Eeyore. They drew attention to the positive and negative attributes of these personality descriptions. Their theory was that respect between family members would be fostered if people could see their loved ones for their strengths and weaknesses without assigning judgement (Kortman & Eckstein, 2004).

This focus on the positive and negative end of scales relate to what Peterson and Seligman (2004) say about character strengths not having a set magnitude. Some people are more adept at certain strengths than others, and some might lack certain strengths altogether.

Hoff (2002) drew on *Winnie the Pooh* to illustrate the philosophy behind Taoism, whereas Williams (2001) employed Pooh to explain various psychological theories. He looked to Jung, Freud, Gestalt psychology, and behavioural therapy to demonstrate how Pooh helps his friends in the Hundred Acre Wood.

Williams' narratives so closely mimicked the style of Milne that his tongue-in-cheek satire *Pooh and the Psychologists* (2001) proved rather persuasive, even though in the original text Pooh never provided psychological help to his friends. According to Williams, Pooh managed to help Christopher Robin deal with his fear of bears, advised Kanga on parenting, and addressed Eeyore's depression.

Williams, however, was not the only author to use the text as a means to demonstrate mental disorders by using the inhabitants of the Hundred Acre Wood as examples. Researchers such as James (2008), Knudsen (2012), and Shea, Gordon, Hawkins, Kawchuk and Smith (2000) employed *Winnie the Pooh* characters to display the manifestation of neurosis or mental disorders.

All three studies diagnosed Pooh as a narcissistic oral dependent, Piglet with Generalised Anxiety Disorder (GAD), Tigger with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Eeyore with Major Depressive Disorder (MDD) and Rabbit as having an authoritarian personality.

In a different perspective to the above studies, Crews (2001) did not promote the idea of using popular texts to illustrate philosophical or psychological ideas. His bestseller *Pooh Perplex* (1963) and its sequel *Postmodern Pooh* (2001) were parody warnings against this phenomenon. Crews teased his academic peers, the Freudians, Marxists, New Critics and Neo-Aristotelians (Marronnez, 2001) for ‘... applying their critical acumen to the adventures of that deceptively simpleminded teddy bear ... dredging up their hidden layers of meaning for the enlightenment of the hitherto unsuspecting reader’ (p. 40).

As evident from the overview, psychological studies of *Winnie the Pooh* have tended to focus on psychopathology instead of predominantly positive aspects. Only recently has there been an emphasis on positive psychology in the industry. Research on how it relates to children’s literature, specifically *Winnie the Pooh*, has continuing relevance. This study endeavoured to add to the existing body of information on psychological studies of children’s literature. It offers a detailed and systematic identification and analysis of strengths outlined in the *Manual of Sanities* as they relate to *Winnie the Pooh*. This has not been done before.

CONCLUSION

This literature review attempted to orientate the reader by briefly introducing the author and characters of *Winnie the Pooh*, and presenting examples of children’s literature, expressly *Winnie the Pooh*, in the field of social sciences and psychology. It was also the aim of this chapter to support the choice of text by illustrating that Winnie the Pooh and his friends defied Moynihan’s (1973) theory that most children’s literature mirrors attitudes of only the particular period of their existence or origin.

The popularity of the stories of *Winnie the Pooh* has outlived the Great Depression, World War II, the rise and fall of the Cold War, and the explosion of technology, which brought along space travels, the radio, television and the computer era. This ongoing familiarity with *Winnie the Pooh*, nearly a century after its first appearance, makes the franchise suitable to this study as it still resonates with children and adults of today. The next chapter focuses on the methodology of the study.

CHAPTER 4

METHOD

*Research is formalised curiosity.
It is poking and prying with purpose.*
Zora Neale Hurston (1991, p. 43)

INTRODUCTION

This study endeavoured to determine in which way and to what extent Peterson and Seligman's (2004) twenty-four character strengths and six virtues are present in the stories of *Winnie the Pooh* and *The House at Pooh Corner*.

The literature review in Chapter Two provided an in-depth discussion on positive traits as a guideline towards achieving psychological 'well-being' (Kristjánsson, 2010). Special attention was paid to Peterson and Seligman's (2004) classification system of character strengths and virtues. Several researchers explored the encompassing potential of harnessing character strengths to promote what is best within different people across a variety of settings. These strengths were chosen to form the theoretical basis of the dissertation, as they are unique, inclusive of other research, and multi-culturally applicable.

Chapter Three illustrated the social and psychological perspectives of *Winnie the Pooh*. Authors such as Hoff (2002), Kortman and Ekstein (2004), Moynihan (1973), and Stanger (1987) alluded to *Winnie the Pooh*'s positive content, particularly the strengths of love, kindness, and wisdom. This study intended to develop these ideas by dissecting and interpreting *Winnie the Pooh* and *The House at Pooh Corner*'s text through the lens of Peterson and Seligman's (2004) theory of character strengths and virtues.

It was decided to only investigate the two storybooks in the *Winnie the Pooh* series that were originally written by A. A. Milne. The two poetry collections *When We Were Very Young* and *Now We Are Six* were excluded, along with books or movies released by Disney. These exclusions were necessary in order to keep the study feasible.

The objective was not to develop a new positive framework, but rather to investigate the applicability against the existing framework, and to draw attention to theory-driven patterns of character strengths. The purpose of this chapter is to describe the research methodology relevant to the study. The choice of the research design, the motivation behind the data inclusion, the data analysis techniques, and issues such as credibility, trustworthiness, dependability, and ethical considerations are all discussed herein.

RESEARCH DESIGN

A qualitative research design was chosen because of the exploratory nature of the research question and the open-endedness of the data (Durrheim, 2006; Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). The texts of *Winnie the Pooh* and *The House at Pooh Corner* were scrutinised and dissected to identify illustrations of specific strengths.

All twenty-four strengths were explored, as opposed to focusing on signature strengths, as researchers concluded that a blanket approach including all strengths had a greater effect on ‘well-being’ than focusing on a select few.

It was decided to combine content and thematic analyses to accommodate such content-sensitive material (Hoepfl, 1997; Krippendorff, 1989). According to Elo and Kyngäs (2008), content analysis provides a useful method to draw credible deductions from data to represent the facts, whereas Attride-Stirling (2001) advocates the use of thematic analysis to discover relevant themes in a text.

Both methods offer the advantage of flexibility, although using them in tandem should lessen their disadvantages (Aronson, 1994; Attride-Stirling, 2001; Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). Content analysis provides the foundation for the initial exploration, whereas thematic analysis offers a formula for completing axial coding in which individual codes are combined to form more complex models of understanding (Hoepfl, 1997).

Unlike content analysis, thematic analysis is slightly more flexible in identifying a category. It does not need to be a specific word or phrase but could instead be identified by its relation to or description of a specific question or definition (Braun & Clark, 2006). The combination of the two methods will be discussed under data analysis.

DATA COLLECTION

Children's literature, as shown in Chapter Three, has provided a useful platform for philosophical as well as psychological exploration. Examples were Freud's investigation of the psychology behind the fairy tales of the Grimm brothers (Kidd, 2011), and Hoff (2002) using *Winnie the Pooh* as a vehicle to explain the philosophy behind Taoism. Although this study always intended to employ *Winnie the Pooh* because of its predominantly positive context, the following criteria were considered:

- The text must have been originally written in English to avoid information and meaning being lost in translation.
- The work under examination must provide a sufficient volume of stories with varying plots to gain adequate insight. Single stories would not suffice because various strengths only feature in specific scenarios.
- As dissertations are time-sensitive, the volume of work needed to be attainable. Only books that fit into the scope and time frame of a Master's dissertation were consulted, such as a series or the entire works of a single author.
- The work must still be relevant today, with 'staying power' and multigenerational appeal.
- The content needed to be of a mostly positive nature.

A. A. Milne's *Winnie the Pooh* and *The House at Pooh Corner* comprised all the above-mentioned criteria: the series is written in English; is suitable for all ages, genders and cultures; is admired ninety odd years later; has definite parameters; and the content is predominantly humoristic and optimistic, which suited the positive paradigm behind the theory of character strengths and virtues. The familiarity with the text offered an advantage of time as the first step of content analysis was immersion and this could happen quickly if a researcher was already familiar with the subject (Braun & Clark, 2006).

Once *Winnie the Pooh* had been selected, the issue of finding a balance between examining a wide enough range of text to obtain a full picture, and keeping it to a number that was probable for the allocated time frame remained (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). It was decided to scrutinise primary sources, particularly *Winnie the Pooh* and *The House at Pooh Corner*. These two books yielded twenty stories in total.

The Disney portrayals (including their storybooks, movies, television series, activity books, colouring books and recipe books) of Winnie the Pooh were not included. Many of the books were merely variations or duplications of the original Milne stories. *When We Were Very Young* (1924) and *Now We Are Six* (1927) were also excluded, even though they too were written by A. A. Milne. They did not strictly fall under the *Winnie the Pooh* series as they were a collection of children's poems, of which only a few refer to Winnie the Pooh.

DATA ANALYSES

There are two styles that could be adopted to perform content and thematic analyses (Braun & Clark, 2006); since qualitative research often has elements of deductive and inductive analysis, both methods were presented in this study. The majority of the study relied on a deductive approach, which meant previous knowledge was employed to deduce categories in the content (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008).

In this instance the framework that directed the coding process (Braun & Clark, 2006) was the twenty-four character strengths and six virtues listed in the research of Peterson and Seligman (2004).

The second form of analysis was inductive, when categories were discovered as the text was carefully reviewed, and patterns or repetitions became apparent (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). An inductive strategy avoided the discarding of insights when they did not fit the character strength moulds.

The description of the content and thematic analyses process may sound linear, but in practice it is more reliant on feedback loops, constantly having to circle back to enhance understanding or ensure that nothing was missed (Braun & Clark, 2006). Figure 4.1 (on the next page) illustrates how this study combined both methods, indicating which task was suggested by which method. It also demonstrates how the process was indeed not linear and where the feedback loops took place.

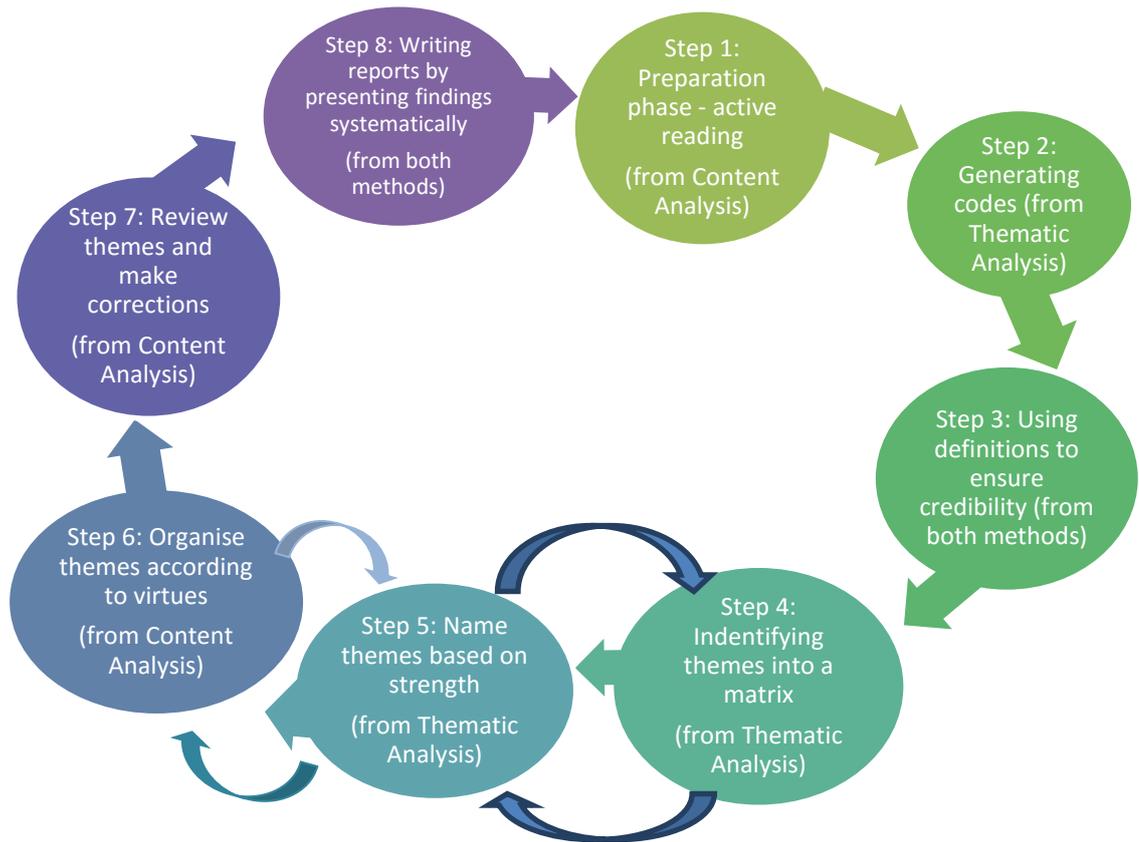


Figure 4.1: Data analysis process

The first step was to become familiar with the content and its meaning by repeatedly reviewing and reading the data (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). This was achieved by performing a task known as active reading (Braun & Clark, 2006). In this instance, two copies of each of the two books *Winnie the Pooh* and *The House at Pooh Corner* were acquired and carefully read several times.

One copy was used for continued examining and making notes for future reference or revision, the other utilised in Step 4.

The second step was the generating of codes or themes. As the codes in this study were theory driven (Braun & Clark, 2006), they were derived from the twenty-four character strengths listed in *Character Strengths and Virtues: A Handbook and Classification* (CSV) by Peterson and Seligman (2004). In order to qualify and identify these keywords, a summary of consensual definitions for each of the strengths was compiled (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). Content credibility required all categories to be conceptually grounded and therefore definitions were crucial (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008, p. 112).

Step 3 involved using the definitions from the *Character Strengths and Virtues Handbook* (Peterson & Seligman, 2004) to define the criteria used to identify the examples. Table 4.1 provides an example of how this was applied to the strengths under the virtue of humanity. The complete table can be seen in Appendix B.

Table 4.1: Criteria used to identify the character strengths present in the storybooks

Strength	Identifying Criteria
Social intelligence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accurate assessment of own feelings/motivations. • Accurate assessment or expectation of the feelings of others. • Ability to understand and use emotional information.
Kindness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taking a helpful and spontaneous attitude towards others. • No expectation of reward.
Love	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive cognitive and behavioural attitude towards another. • Can take many forms: familial/ friendship/ romantic.

Step 4 entailed searching for themes. The second copy was used to cut out excerpts in order to place them into a matrix. This was continually reviewed and adjusted to ensure each example was placed under the best possible category of character strength, based on the specific theoretic guidelines (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). For the sake of expediency, the coding process did not allow for cross-coding. All excerpts were treated as unique to their corresponding strengths. Where an excerpt could be considered applicable to more than one, preference was given to the more prominent example. Each passage was then placed into a systematic organisational system.

The combined text of twenty chapters yielded 251 extracts. The raw data in Appendix C was referenced according to the book in which they were found, the chapter and the page number. Book 1 referred to the book *Winnie the Pooh*, because it was the first book in the series under investigation. The second book under scrutiny *The House at Pooh Corner* was named Book 2. Chapters and page numbers corresponded to the chapters and page numbers of the books used for analysis, namely the 2006 publication of *Winnie the Pooh*, and the 2007 printing of *The House at Pooh Corner*.

Steps 5 and 6 consisted of naming and cataloguing of themes. This happened rather simultaneously. As previously mentioned, analysing narratives did not occur in a linear fashion (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008) and it was therefore necessary to repeat these procedures many times until both levels of coded text, as well as entire data sets were exhausted (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Once no further quotations could be found, the contents were reviewed and each extract cautiously considered if, according to the specific definition, it qualified to be categorised under the particular strength or required to be moved to another.

Step 7 was twofold and only followed after the research had been conducted. It consisted of a review by peers and the study's supervisors. The peer debriefing involved a small group of selected individuals asked to re-evaluate the data collected and the categories into which the information was divided. In the first session each participant re-examined the data and its classification independently. In the second meeting they discussed their findings together. Supervisors C. Saccaggi and M. Terre Blanche also reviewed each of the categories and provided additional assistance.

An interesting trend emerged during discussions: all disputed excerpts were moved between strengths within the same virtue category. An example of some of the changes is provided in Table 4.2 (below).

Table 4.2: Sample of the record of changes to placement of extract

EXTRACT	ORIGINALLY	MOVED TO
Book 1, Chapter 8, p. 112–113	Citizenship	Leadership
Book 1, Chapter 5, p. 52–53	Vitality	Persistence
Book 2, Chapter 2, p. 21	Gratitude	Hope
Book 2, Chapter 6, p. 95	Love	Social intelligence

The final step followed when the various extracts were placed into permanent categories and a report of the findings and an interpretation thereof were drawn up. During the writing phase the categories were written up systematically, grouping each extract according to the strength under which it was positioned.

TRUSTWORTHINESS OF DATA

A qualitative study's biggest limitation is objectivity. It is virtually impossible to eliminate researcher bias, but this study intends to uphold transparency in the methodology as well as the findings obtained, so that other researchers may review the work and reach their own conclusions. In a bid to address the issue of objectivity and credibility two accepted research methods were used. The first was the methodological triangulation (Anney, 2014) where a combination of content and thematic analysis was applied to assist in achieving a comprehensive result.

The second was to disclose the research findings afterwards to peer debriefing (Wester, 2011). The supervisors of the dissertation provided additional constructive feedback to safeguard and protect the quality of the information (Gerber, 2004). This form of review was an important step in shielding it from any possible personal bias in the analysis process.

The flexibility that content and thematic analysis provided was beneficial but was also a downfall. The lack of precise and exact instructions or 'right way of doing it' (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008, p. 113) depended largely on the interpretation and instinct of the researcher, which is fallible (Hoepfl, 1997).

As Braun and Clarke (2006, p. 94) explained, there are five consequences of which a researcher should be wary in conducting such an investigation: failure to actually analyse data; using data collection questions as themes as opposed to theory; weak themes that overlap too much, or are incoherent or inconsistent; mismatch between data and analytical claims; and mismatch between theory and analytical claims.

By following a deductive content analysis an attempt was made to avoid the first three difficulties: the codes and themes were derived from a strengths classification system that was exhaustive but still distinct from one another. The inductive analysis meant that no useful information was disregarded for the sake of predetermined codes.

To avoid open interpretation, the study adhered strictly to the definitions set forth and identifying criteria discussed earlier, as opposed to developing new ones that could have perhaps related better to the data under consideration. Peer debriefing and feedback from the supervisors after the research had been conducted prevented the final pitfall.

Trustworthiness (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008) was another principle to be protected. Attride-Stirling (2001) maintained that the analysis process must be discussed in detail. This study took care to disclose and explain every step taken during the research process (Shenton, 2004) to comply with the recommendation, and to facilitate a level of transferability.

To provide a comprehensive ‘thick description’ (Hellström, 2008), every aspect of the process, even the decision behind data inclusion, was discussed in this chapter. Although they did not typically fall under a thick description, the findings were also explained in detail in Chapter Five to ensure transparency.

Finally, another element concerning the quality of the research was dependability: whether the findings remained stable over time. There was more than a single way to achieve dependability (Anney, 2014), and aside from the peer review already discussed, this dissertation utilised a ‘code-re-code’ strategy. This process required the researcher to code the same data twice, an action that took place during the coding phase in Step 4, when the data was repeatedly coded.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

As the study necessitated input from participants as peer reviewers, ethical concerns such as informed consent, confidentiality, and non-exploitation (Jesani & Barai, 2003) were taken into account. With the details of the study clarified and their questions answered, each participant signed a consent form in private to encourage openness and honesty. A copy of the blank consent form is shown in Appendix D.

It was explained that they would be working as a group so their identity would be known to other members, but they would not be named in the study. They were also assured that their involvement was voluntary and if they no longer wished to participate, they could leave without rationalisation (Wassenaar, 2007). This procedure was approved by the Department of Psychology’s Ethics Committee at the University of South Africa.

In addition, there was concern regarding intellectual property, especially copyright infringement, which was catered for by adhering to the referencing guidelines of the American Psychologist Association (APA), as well as maintaining good research practices in data collection, analysis and reporting (Rosenthal, 1994). This pertained to the guidelines suggested by authors Elliot, Fischer and Rennie (1999) in terms of paying attention to accurate, appropriate and dependable methods and discussions, and presenting findings clearly and coherently.

Another ethical consideration when working with qualitative data is fair representation, a matter this study addressed by using both books in the *Winnie the Pooh* series that were written by A. A. Milne.

CONCLUSION

The objective of this chapter was to explain how the *Winnie the Pooh* series was chosen and to present a systematic explanation of the thematic and content analysis of the qualitative data. The process was kept as flexible as possible to encourage a rich collection and analysis of the text. The aim was to facilitate a blanket approach towards Peterson and Seligman's (2004) twenty-four character strengths according to their virtue grouping. The interpretation of the patterns that emerged will be analysed and discussed in the next chapter, Chapter Five.

CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

*Psychology is not just the study of weakness and damage,
it is also the study of strength and virtue. Treatment is not
just fixing what is broken, it is nurturing what is best within ourselves.*

Martin Seligman (1999, APA Annual Report)

INTRODUCTION

As discussed in Chapters Two, Three, and Four, Peterson and Seligman's (2004) classification of character strengths and virtues provided the framework to investigate the books *Winnie the Pooh* and *The House at Pooh Corner*. The aim of the research was to establish if there are character strengths present in the storybooks and how they are depicted.

The stories were scrutinised using a qualitative design. A combination of content and thematic analyses allowed for both inductive and deductive interpretations. In this chapter, the findings of the content analysis are put forward, followed by a more detailed qualitative description of the themes, and how these strengths and virtues manifested in the two books. Textual extracts are included to allow interaction with the texts and to demonstrate the level of interpretation.

CONTENT ANALYSIS OF CHARACTER STRENGTHS AND VIRTUES

The complete data set constituted two hundred and fifty-one examples illustrating the twenty-four character strengths. The findings are presented in Table 5.1 in the order of discussion.

For the purpose of this study the twenty-four character strengths were explored in the classification of their virtues. As illustrated in Table 5.1 (below) the virtues of wisdom and transcendence yielded the most examples, with the virtues of justice and temperance generating the least. This is not an accurate portrayal as it does not take into consideration that wisdom and transcendence have five strengths within their virtue whereas justice only has three. Once the average number of extracts per strength was calculated a different pattern emerged as seen in Figure 5.1 on the next page. The virtue of humanity became the most dominant in spite of comprising only three character strengths, but the virtue of transcendence demonstrated the least examples albeit five strengths.

HUMANITY	Social intelligence <i>17 examples</i>	Kindness <i>14 examples</i>	Love <i>13 examples</i>		
WISDOM	Perspective <i>20 examples</i>	Open-mindedness <i>13 examples</i>	Creativity <i>10 examples</i>	Curiosity <i>8 examples</i>	Love of learning <i>6 examples</i>
COURAGE	Vitality <i>11 examples</i>	Persistence <i>11 examples</i>	Bravery <i>10 examples</i>	Integrity <i>8 examples</i>	
JUSTICE	Citizenship <i>14 examples</i>	Leadership <i>10 examples</i>	Fairness <i>5 examples</i>		
TRANSCENDENCE	Gratitude <i>12 examples</i>	Appreciation of beauty or skills <i>11 examples</i>	Hope <i>8 examples</i>	Humour <i>8 examples</i>	Spirituality <i>7 examples</i>
TEMPERANCE	Self-regulation <i>9 examples</i>	Humility or modesty <i>8 examples</i>	Prudence <i>7 examples</i>	Forgiveness or mercy <i>5 examples</i>	

Table 5.1: Summary of excerpts by strength as they are grouped within their virtues

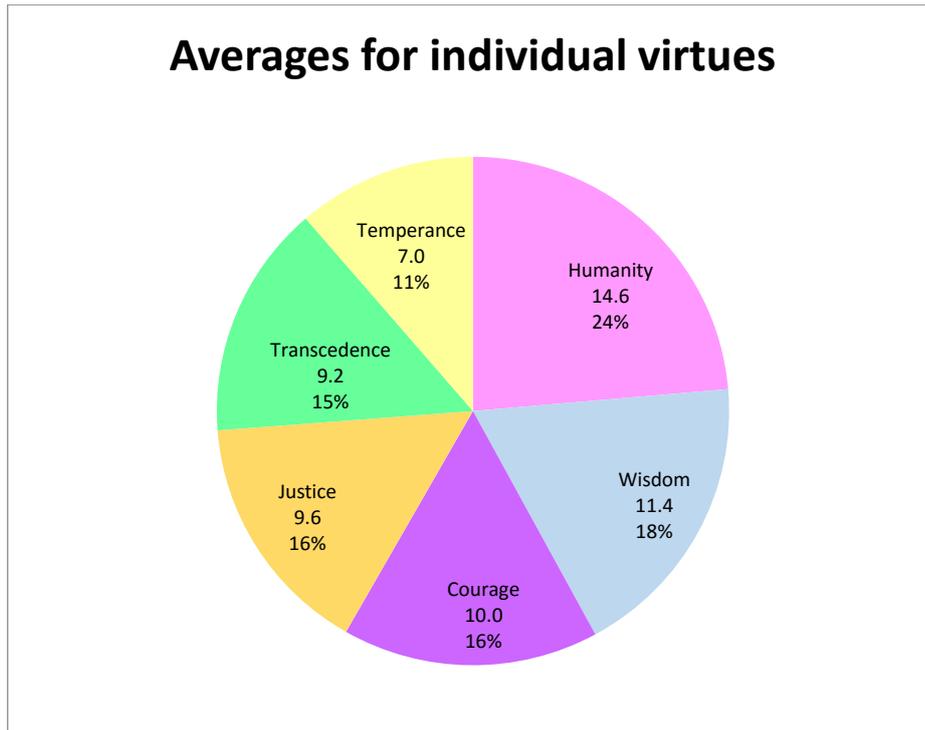


Figure 5.1: Pie chart of the overview of averages

All six virtues are present in both books, as seen in Figure 5.2 below. Humanity, courage, and transcendence remained evenly represented in the two storybooks. The slight discrepancy is explained by the fact that Book Two, *The House at Pooh Corner*, is 29 pages longer than Book One, *Winnie the Pooh*. It is interesting to note from Figure 5.2 that there was a spike in wisdom, but justice and temperance produced fewer examples in Book Two.

A possible explanation may be a change in the author's outlook in the second book. It has already been observed that he wrote these storybooks as a means of escapism (Hornik, 2011; Hunt as cited in Knudsen, 2012, p. 25; Moynihan, 1973), but in the second book he allows his characters a deeper exploration of childlike freedoms (Thwaite, 2014).

This clearly findings in an increase in the virtue wisdom's strength perspective. The author has shown that he favours nonconformity and avoids the restrictive adult responsibilities that predominantly feature in justice and temperance. This diagram affirms the decision to use the combination of the two books to present a complete overview.

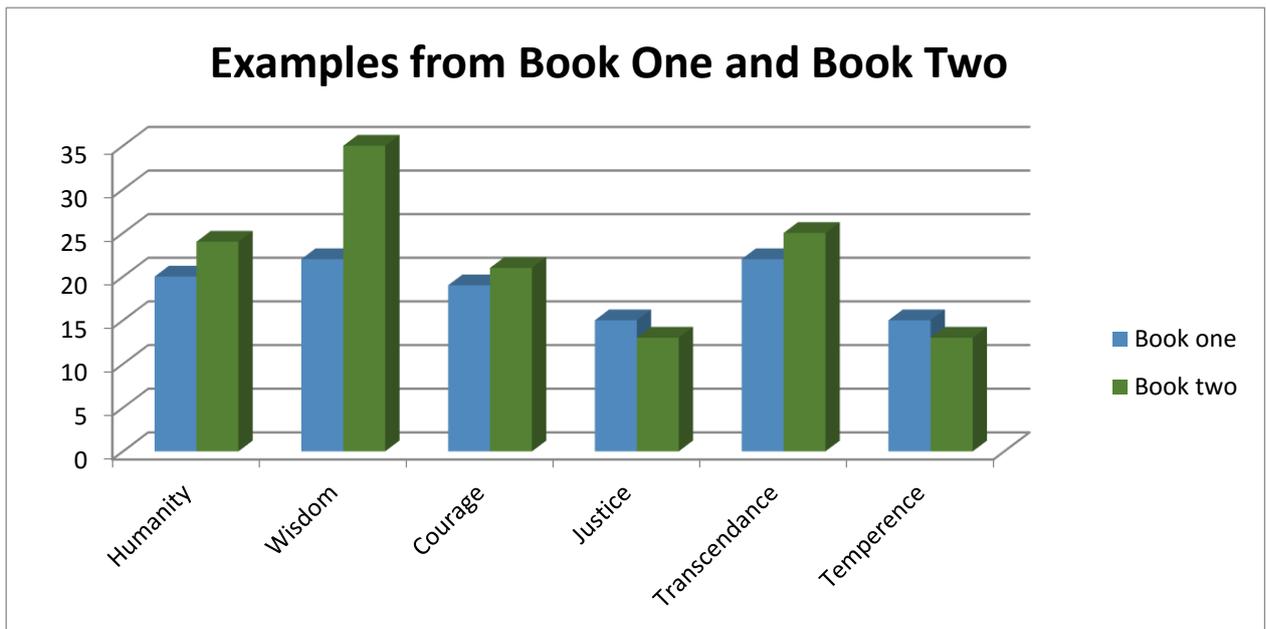


Figure 5.2: Examples from Book One, *Winnie the Pooh*, and Book Two, *The House at Pooh Corner*

The research project included an interpretation and evaluation of the role of the characters in the books to establish if the characters depict any of Peterson and Seligman's (2004) twenty-four character strengths.

Milne created nine main characters:

Deep in the Hundred Acre Wood, where Christopher Robin plays you'll find the enchanted neighbourhood of Christopher's childhood days. A donkey named Eeyore is his friend and Kanga and little Roo— and Tigger too. There's Rabbit and Piglet and there's Owl, but most of all Winnie the Pooh.

(Sherman & Sherman, The Disney Collection, 1991)

Table 5.2: Matrix of the relationship between the characters of the storybooks and character strengths

	Christopher								
	Pooh	Robin	Piglet	Rabbit	Eeyore	Tigger	Roo	Kanga	Owl
Social intelligence	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y	
Kindness	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y			Y	Y
Love	Y	Y	Y	Y			Y	Y	
Perspective	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Open- mindedness	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Creativity	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y				
Curiosity	Y	Y	Y			Y	Y		
Love of learning	Y	Y	Y				Y		
Vitality	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y	Y	Y	
Persistence	Y	Y	Y		Y	Y			Y
Bravery	Y		Y		Y				
Integrity	Y								Y
Citizenship	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Fairness	Y	Y		Y	Y			y	
Leadership	Y	Y		Y	Y	Y			Y
Gratitude	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y				
Appreciation of beauty or skills	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y			Y	
Hope	Y	Y				Y	Y		Y
Humour	Y		Y		Y			Y	
Spirituality	Y	Y	Y						
Self-regulation	Y		Y						
Humility/modesty	Y		Y						
Prudence	Y	Y	Y			Y			Y
Forgiveness/mercy	Y		Y	Y	Y			Y	

These characters and how they pertain to the twenty-four character strengths are outlined in Table 5.2. The table does not display the number of extracts by character.

As is obvious in Table 5.2, all the characters except baby Roo exhibit at least one or more of the strengths within all six of the virtues. This is congruent with Peterson and Seligman's (2004) suggestion about a virtuous character.

This does not mean that Roo is a bad individual. He is a joey and many strengths only develop with maturity (Miller & Nickerson, 2007; Proctor et al., 2011; Shoshani & Aviv, 2012).

Pooh is the ultimate main character and is therefore the only creature to portray all twenty-four strengths. His best friends Christopher Robin and Piglet are well presented in the extracts too, although they are not included in every story and are frequently just part of the narrative.

Piglet does not perform well in the strengths integrity, leadership, fairness, and hope. Christopher Robin lacks bravery, integrity, humour, self-regulation, humility or modesty, and forgiveness or mercy.

Kanga is seldom in the stories and yet she is present in all three strengths in the virtue of humanity alongside Pooh, Christopher Robin, and Piglet. She also plays a role in perspective, open-mindedness, vitality, citizenship, and fairness, appreciation of beauty or skills, humour, and forgiveness or mercy.

Similarly, Rabbit and Eeyore, who have been described as obnoxious and morose (James, 2008), exhibit all three strengths in the virtue of justice along with Pooh.

Based on prior involvement with the text, this study had expected the strength of love and kindness to be represented by all the characters. Instead, the findings revealed that citizenship and perspective are the only two strengths exhibited by all nine characters.

The content analysis confirmed that the virtue of humanity presented the most extracts, whereas the virtue of temperance was the least popular. The adult-like strengths in the virtues of transcendence and temperance generated fewer scenarios.

Forgiveness or mercy as part of the virtue temperance produced the lowest number of specific examples in spite of transcendence consisting of five strengths. Perception was the most prolific strength confirming twenty illustrations. This corroborates studies (McGrath, 2015; Park et al., 2006) that forgiveness or mercy does not qualify as a signature strength, and that perception usually features with a higher frequency.

The content analytical frequencies offer some idea of what strengths and virtues are present in the Pooh books, but a qualitative analysis is necessary to demonstrate how these strengths and virtues function in the storybooks. A detailed discussion of these findings follows.

THEMATIC ANALYSIS OF CHARACTER STRENGTHS AND VIRTUES

THE VIRTUE OF HUMANITY

The virtue of humanity describes pro-social behaviour such as a tendency to nurture, care about, and befriend others (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). These findings reflect research by McGrath (2015) and Park et al. (2006) that societies across different cultures place a high value on relationships between people. Pooh, Christopher Robin, Piglet, and Kanga display all three strengths.

Social intelligence as strength of the virtue of humanity

Social intelligence focuses on the awareness of one's own as well as other people's feelings and motives (Peterson & Seligman, 2004; Wood et al., 2010). In the storybooks neither Roo nor Owl portray this strength, but Pooh, who may be of 'Little Brain' (Milne, 2007, p. 99) is considerate and aware of how situations or behaviours may affect the feelings of others, and that is how he illustrates the strength. He asks Tigger not to be bouncy when he meets Piglet, because it will overwhelm him (Milne, 2007, p. 23).

Piglet, who is empathic, also excels at the ability to place himself in another person's shoes. When Eeyore is curt with Tigger at their first meeting, Piglet anticipates how unwelcome Tigger must feel, but he also realises that Eeyore does not mean anything by it, as 'he was *always* gloomy;' (Milne, 2007, p. 26).

The different levels of social intelligence are highlighted in the disparity between Piglet and Pooh. Pooh demonstrates psychological mindedness and is continuously aware of his own feelings and the reasons behind it. Piglet is not always in tune and therefore can sometimes overreact; like when he wants to run off and become a sailor (Milne, 2007, p. 50).

Social intelligence as character strength is richly experienced throughout both storybooks. In each of the examples in this strength the characters anticipate or understand the feelings of others. They set out to build and protect the self-worth of their fellow forest dwellers as opposed to bringing them down.

It is with exceptional craftsmanship that the author manages to show that even Eeyore with his prickly demeanour is capable of social intelligence: 'Remember that another time ... A Little Consideration, a little Thought for Others, makes all the difference' (Milne, 2006, pp. 109–110).

Kindness as strength of the virtue of humanity

The desire to perform a good deed without expectation is a feature of kindness (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). Compassion and concern are key characteristics and for Pooh this comes naturally.

When Eeyore is upset about losing his tail, 'Pooh felt that he ought to say something helpful about it, but didn't quite know what. So he decided to do something helpful instead' (Milne, 2006, p. 42). Pooh illustrates that kindness happens spontaneously, and that it can take on many forms, sometimes even simultaneously.

Although friends Christopher Robin and Piglet demonstrate the strength of kindness it is Kanga who deserves a mention. She is not a character that features often in the storybooks, but every time she is revealed she is being kind, whether it is taking care of her son Roo, looking after Piglet or Tigger's well-being, or helping Owl sort out his furniture after his tree blows over (Milne, 2007, pp. 30–31). Kindness, specifically the nurturance variety, comes naturally to Kanga.

Kindness is about spirit and attitude, which is an undertone through all the plots in the storybooks, even though individually not every character offered up an example. A good deed needs to be for the benefit of someone else and in most of the illustrations of kindness, the characters in the forest are not even aware that they are being kind; it is simply their instinctive reaction to a situation.

Love as strength of the virtue of humanity

Love is an emotional reaction of affection, protection, and passion between people (Peterson et al., 2007; Peterson & Seligman, 2004). Pooh is arguably the most lovable character in the books, but Peterson and Seligman (2004) maintain that being loved by all is not entirely a sign of this strength as it could be because of an ability to make people like you. Nevertheless, the special relationship between Pooh and his friends confirms that he is capable of giving love, which counts as strength.

Characters such as Kanga, Piglet, and Rabbit prove their love through sentimental reflections, but Christopher Robin displays a straightforward approach to love, ‘Oh, Bear!’ said Christopher Robin. ‘How I do love you!’ ‘So do I,’ said Pooh’ (Milne, 2006, p. 64).

As Peterson and Seligman (2004) explain, love is so complex that there is not a singular or correct way of conveying it. The unique bond between Milne's characters confirms there is no formula for love, as it is multi-faceted (Peterson et al., 2007), and can be between varying groups of people to varying degrees. Throughout the storybooks love is implied to be encouraging, uplifting, and given without the expectation of reward. It leads the reader to believe that traces of love are present in most of the stories.

Summary of the virtue of humanity

The abundance of plot lines involving displays of social intelligence, kindness, and love as part of the virtue of humanity, confirms Bright's (2010) supposition that the Hundred Acre Wood is a place without violence. This is the most prominent virtue in the storybooks, even though numerically it did not yield the highest number of extracts. These three separate yet indivisible strengths create an interconnected unit and are vital to the tales of the *Winnie the Pooh* series. Each story projects a design that favours nurturing and affection. Even Kanga who is not a major character, frequently displays all three strengths towards her son and the other residents. The presence of these strengths means that the Hundred Acre Wood is an idyllic place to live in.

THE VIRTUE OF WISDOM

The virtue includes cognitive strengths such as perception, open-mindedness, creativity, curiosity, and love of learning. These strengths help individuals garner practical knowledge (Peterson & Seligman, 2004), and provide them with tools to adapt to an evolving environment (Frederickson, 2004).

The stories convey the impression that Rabbit, Owl, Christopher Robin, and Eeyore are the intelligent and learned ones, whereas the extracts revealed that the most interesting insights with regards to wisdom come from those without formal learning or those assumed to have cognitive difficulties: Pooh, Piglet, Tigger, and Kanga (James, 2008; Williams 2001).

Perspective as strength of the virtue of wisdom

Psychologists often describe this strength as wisdom, but to avoid confusion with the virtue of wisdom, Peterson and Seligman (2004) prefer the term perspective. According to them it consists of the coordination of knowledge and experience deliberately used to improve well-being. It describes the ability to take stock of life in ways that make sense to themselves (p. 43). The author ascribed this strength to all nine main characters in the two storybooks.

During the analysis process of this study it became challenging to distinguish between perspective and open-mindedness, because many of the strengths are interrelated. Perspective, however, is about how a person makes sense of the world around them.

The most basic demonstration of this point is when the friends discuss Tigger's size. Piglet was under the impression that Tiggers are usually smaller, to which Tigger replies, 'Not the big ones,' (Milne, 2007, p. 23). These are differing opinions about something that remains stable. Tigger's mass stays the same, but it is the perspective regarding his size that changes. Pooh explains it best, 'But whatever his weight in pounds, shillings, and ounces, he always seems bigger because of his bounces' (Milne, 2007, p. 29).

The following extract is the definitive example of an unconventional perspective, and a humorous play on words. The author revels in using Pooh's naivety to portray how a certain level of wisdom is required to realise the true meaning of perspective:

'An Ambush', said Owl, 'is a sort of Surprise.' 'So is a gorse-bush sometimes,' said Pooh. 'If people jump out at you suddenly, that's an Ambush,' said Owl. Pooh, who now knew what an Ambush was, said that a gorse-bush had sprung at him suddenly one day when he fell off a tree, and he had taken six days to get all the prickles out of himself. 'We are not talking about gorse-bushes,' said Owl a little crossly. 'I am,' said Pooh.

(Milne, 2006, p. 108)

This scenario is humorous and verges on absurdity, but it also confirms that Pooh is confident in his own perspective of what an ambush is. The gorse-bush attacked him and thus qualifies as an ambush. Owl's perspective on the word ambush is closer to the human definition, but it does not mean that Pooh's perspective is wrong; it is different.

Both books yield examples that portray the subtleties of this strength and emphasise the idea that people have unusual viewpoints about the same situation. Thus people's perspective cannot be correct or incorrect; it is simply how they perceive the world. The ability to organise information in such a way that it becomes comprehensible is the foundation of a strong SOC as explained in Antonovsky's (1996) theory of strength discussed in Chapter Two. All nine characters in *Winnie the Pooh* would consequently be described as having a strong SOC and thus be considered resilient.

Open-mindedness as strength of the virtue of wisdom

Peterson and Seligman (2004) suggested that to be open-minded one needs to be able to observe situations from all stances and think carefully before drawing conclusions. People who are prejudiced are unable to perform this strength. Owl is the only character not displaying this strength.

Rabbit is a character that features both positively and negatively in this strength. He is initially narrow-minded in his thinking. He does not want Kanga and Roo to join the forest community and he wants to 'unbounce' Tigger. He is punished for this when he is worn down playing with Roo and getting lost in the forest.

In both instances he learns from his error in judgement and subsequently becomes great friends with Roo and Tigger. The scenes with Rabbit are significant because they exemplify the difference between people who are not open-minded at all, like Owl, as opposed to Rabbit who is open-minded, but lower on the continuum than Pooh. Pooh's open-mindedness makes him a pleasant character (Stanger, 1987), indicating how strengths can be inspiring and highly valued.

All the examples in this strength underline the importance of being open to new information. It broadens life-experiences and changes one's mind or behaviour. Tigger discovers a delicious breakfast (Milne, 2007, p. 33), Rabbit finds a new friend in Roo (Milne, 2006, p.98), and Eeyore mulls over conflicting information (Milne, 2007, p. 148).

Creativity as strength of the virtue of wisdom

For an idea or behaviour to be considered creative, it needs to seem original and it has to make a positive contribution to the individual's functioning (Bacon, 2005; Peterson & Seligman, 2004). Pooh is the best example of creativity as he is always making up songs or poetry.

The fact that he composes poems and songs is not enough to place him under this strength, but he projects the strength of creativity because he uses these creations in a functional way. He sings to help himself keep warm, remind him where he kept his stock of honey, motivate himself to keep climbing or to think out of the box, and ultimately save Piglet during the flood using an umbrella as a boat (Milne, 2006, p. 125).

Pooh is not the only creative character. Christopher Robin, Piglet, and Eeyore use songs, drawings, and poetry to achieve goals, thus proving that creativity is not an elitist talent. Rabbit's creativity manifests in the shape of plots and schemes; Piglet uses creative excuses to get out of dangerous situations; and Christopher Robin has novel solutions to practical problems.

Curiosity as strength of the virtue of wisdom

Curiosity means finding subjects and topics fascinating which leads to an investigation, which in turn leads to the discovery of new facts (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). Pooh and Piglet are often inquisitive and exploring. After the exciting North Pole expedition, Pooh is curious as to whether there are other poles and thus goes off on his own expedition. The reader never learns whether he finds other poles; the aim is to show that he is curious enough to start looking (Milne, 2006, p. 123).

Two key features of curiosity are that it often requires novelty-seeking behaviour and that it usually contributes to collection of information that can be consolidated into knowledge and finally wisdom. Tigger best illustrates these features during his search for breakfast (Milne, 2007, p. 30). He displays novelty-seeking behaviour in all of his extracts, but he also manages to make new friends, discover what he enjoys eating, and finds a place to live.

Each example demonstrates how curiosity leads to goal-oriented behaviour in the form of exploration, which fosters learning and growth. These findings are consistent with Peterson and Seligman's (2004) description of the strength of curiosity, to wit, that it fosters resilience in people because it teaches them to adapt to new situations.

Love of learning as strength of the virtue of wisdom

People who possess this strength display positive feelings either when mastering new skills, or building on existing skills (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). Pooh and his friends love to learn from Christopher Robin, the only one who attends school, and Pooh often proposes expeditions and adventures.

'As soon as he saw the Big Boots [of Christopher Robin], Pooh knew that an Adventure was going to happen, and he brushed the honey off his nose ... so as to look Ready for Anything' (Milne, 2006, p. 100).

Pooh has a love of learning, but also respect for those knowledgeable: 'And Pooh, his back against one of the sixty-something trees ... thought how wonderful it would be to have a Real Brain which could tell you things' (Milne, 2007, p. 172).

Piglet too displays a love of learning (Milne, 2006, p. i) and the capacity to retain the knowledge, whereas Roo demonstrates a love of learning without any evidence of whether he learns from his efforts (Milne, 2007, p. 58).

Regardless of the degree of learning that takes place, the extracts under this strength echoed the notion that a love of learning needs a positive and enthusiastic attitude. It calls for a challenge but it also projects the positive feelings the characters experienced while gaining these new skills.

Summary of the virtue of wisdom

Most extracts fall under this virtue, but unlike the virtue of humanity it is not the most prominent virtue. Its high representation is primarily because it consists of five strengths and that all nine characters are capable of the strength of perspective. The true psychological value of this virtue lies in anyone being capable of these strengths, regardless of intelligence or interests (Peterson & Seligman, 2004).

Previous authors interpreted Pooh and his friends negatively, but this study casts a new light on the dynamics between the characters. Pooh, a ‘Bear of Very Little Brain’ (Milne, 2006, p. 125) is adept at typifying all five strengths of wisdom, an energetic and active Tigger (James, 2008) is capable of a love of learning and curiosity, whereas a morose and negative character such as Eeyore (Knudsen, 2012) can be open-minded with fascinating positive outlooks on otherwise negative events. He describes the weather:

‘... it’s snowing still ... and freezing ... However ... we haven’t had an earthquake lately’ (Milne, 2007, p. 9), and on discovering his house is missing, ‘There!’ said Eeyore. ‘Not a stick of it left! Of course, I’ve still got all this snow to do what I like with. One mustn’t complain.’

(Milne, 2007, p. 12)

THE VIRTUE OF COURAGE

The psychological ingredients that define this virtue are persistence, vitality, bravery, and integrity. The strengths require goal-oriented behaviour despite obstacles such as fear, difficulty, or exhaustion (Dahlsgaard et al., 2005; Peterson & Seligman, 2004).

Vitality mainly features energetic characters such as Tigger and Roo, but bravery and persistence produced surprising findings. Piglet, who is typically considered to be anxious, qualified for bravery, and Pooh who is generally viewed as lazy, is capable of persistence. This is significant as it illustrates Peterson and Seligman's (2004) claim that people show strengths even when they are perceived to have weaknesses. People are more than just the sum of all their parts (Buckingham & Clifton, 2005).

Vitality as strength of the virtue of courage

Vitality as a strength refers to the energy and enthusiasm a person dedicates to their endeavours and daily existence. Peterson and Seligman (2004) argue that vitality has two levels; the one being physical health, and the other being psychological well-being.

It seems that Milne reserved this strength for the younger childlike characters Tigger, Roo and Christopher Robin. Tigger and Roo often depict enthusiasm and excitement. Roo in particular is always animated, even when he is in danger of happily falling into the river (Milne, 2006, p. 111), excitedly being stuck in a tree (Milne, 2007, p. 61), or eagerly jumping from a staggering height (Milne, 2007, p. 67). His cheerful approach helps him stay calm, and allows him to emerge from the ordeal unharmed.

Unlike Tigger and Roo, Christopher Robin, Piglet, and Pooh are reserved in their approach to energy, but they still live their lives vivaciously taking great joy in the simple things.

'When you wake up in the morning, Pooh,' said Piglet at last, 'what's the first thing you say to yourself?' 'What's for breakfast?' said Pooh. 'What do you say, Piglet?' 'I say, I wonder what's going to happen exciting to-day?' said Piglet. Pooh nodded thoughtfully. 'It's the same thing,' he said.

(Milne, 2006, p. 147)

The characters represented in this strength exude a positive zestful energy towards life, and they also appear to be in excellent physical health. They are walking, swimming, and climbing without any mention of illness. Vitality is one of the core characteristics of the storybooks because it encompasses physical fitness and positive feelings. All the characters participate wholeheartedly in everything they do, whether it is playing pick-up sticks or looking for Small, Rabbit's relation. These excerpts emphasise the importance of vitality in learning new skills, and overcoming unfortunate situations.

Persistence as strength of the virtue of courage

Persistence is the ability of a person to continue with a certain activity or goal regardless of obstacles or scenarios that threaten success. Peterson and Seligman (2004) insist that it is not time that determines persistence, but rather endurance in the face of difficulty. People often dedicate much time to pleasurable activities.

The distinction is brought home when Pooh decides to ask Owl where to find Eeyore's tail and he has to walk far

... down open slopes of gorse and heather, over rocky beds of streams, up steep banks of sandstone into the heather again; and so at last, tired and hungry, to the Hundred Acre Wood.

(Milne, 2006, p. 43)

It reveals persistence, not because Pooh has to walk far – he enjoys walking – but because he continues even though he is tired and hungry.

Most characters in the books exhibit traits of persistence, except Rabbit, Roo, and Kanga. However, Pooh is the most persistent. He likes to finish what he starts and does not give up even if a positive result is unlikely. He endures a long climb (Milne, 2006, p. 6) to steal honey, a branch breaks when he reaches the top and he falls to the bottom.

This does not deter him, 'He crawled out of the gorse-bush, brushed the prickles from his nose, and began to think again' (Milne, 2006, p. 7). Pooh never manages to steal the honey; no 'bad' acts are rewarded in the tales.

Persistence is not about succeeding, but about trying regardless of difficulty or possible failure. It requires a person to work towards an objective, despite misfortune. Pooh is the character who most often displays this quality.

Bravery as strength of the virtue of courage

In bravery the emphasis is on the ability to overcome fear; it does not imply the absence of fear as is often the popular viewpoint. It also means voluntary action despite fear for the sake of the common good. The fear could be real, a view of danger, or a fear of losing popularity (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). Pooh, Piglet and Eeyore display this strength in several of the plots.

Pooh is brave when he saves Piglet from the flood (Milne, 2006, p. 132), but Piglet is the best example of bravery in the tales. He is by nature a nervous character, but overcomes his fear of heights to save his friends from Owl's demolished house. He was so afraid that he does not even realise he was brave and so Pooh has to explain to him what bravery means:

'Oh!' said Piglet. 'Because I – I thought I did blinch a little'... 'You only blinched inside', said Pooh, 'and that's the bravest way for a Very Small Animal not to blinch that there is.' Piglet sighed with happiness, and began to think of himself. He was BRAVE'

(Milne, 2007, p. 150)

Upon seeing himself in a new braver light, Piglet is filled with happy confidence.

Bravery can also occur in ordinary scenarios in the form of difficult emotions (Peterson and Seligman, 2004). Milne shows how society values bravery by rewarding fearless characters, but also demonstrates subtly that it will only be understood by an adult in the following example: when Eeyore has to give Christopher Robin a letter in which all the animals in the forest say goodbye to him, 'Eeyore swished his tail from side to side, so as to encourage himself, and began.' (Milne, 2007, p. 167).

Integrity as strength of the virtue of courage

Integrity requires people to be true to themselves, honest about their intentions, and take responsibility for their actions (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). The stories confirm Pooh as the character with the most integrity. He provides examples of all the factors of Peterson and Seligman's (2004) definition of integrity. He describes himself in an authentic way, takes responsibility for his behaviour, and is aware of his emotions.

Pooh is honest about his abilities when he tells Owl about his spelling abilities. '... [M]y spelling is Wobbly. It's good spelling but it Wobbles, and the letters get in the wrong places. Would *you* write "A Happy Birthday" on it for me?' (Milne, 2006, p. 73).

Pooh mostly exhibits a genuineness, whereas Owl is deceitful. He cannot spell, but tricks Pooh into believing that he can and that he has written 'A Happy Birthday' on the jar that Pooh brought to him. This is a clear indication of the difference between someone with integrity and someone without, as Peterson and Seligman (2004) have said occurs in all strengths. Anyone is capable of a strength, but there are those who are completely devoid of it. This does not mean that Owl is not virtuous, only that he does not have the strength of integrity.

Summary of the virtue of courage

The emphasis in this virtue is not the lack of difficulty, but rather the determination to overcome adversity. It is not the absence of fear in bravery, obstacles in persistence, or fatigue in vitality, but rather the attempt at reaching goals regardless. In each of the strengths one or two characters stood out as being especially capable. Contrary to his perceived gluttonous nature Pooh projects fine examples of integrity and persistence (Knudsen, 2012), while Roo and Tigger illustrate vitality. Piglet provides excellent examples of bravery where one would not necessarily associate him with this strength. He is often portrayed as cowardly, and small in stature and physical strength, but throughout the storybooks, he proves himself to be 'BRAVE' (Milne, 2007, p. 150).

THE VIRTUE OF JUSTICE

Citizenship, fairness, and leadership are the strengths that form the foundation of this virtue. They are strengths that build communities, protect civil rights, and promote equality (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). These civic strengths lay the groundwork for a healthy community (Shoshani & Aviv, 2012).

Citizenship as strength of the virtue of justice

All nine characters qualify as good citizens, even though it is not the strength that yielded the most examples. The characters usually all feature within one example working together towards a common goal and therefore their good citizenship is shown through the contents of the narrative versus the number of extracts.

Winnie the Pooh stories are filled with examples of good citizenship, especially elements of social responsibility, loyalty, and teamwork.

Peterson and Seligman (2004) stated that citizenship relates to membership within a political community. Although politics do not feature in the conventional sense, the characters see themselves as part of a community that they consider sacred.

This happy desire to work towards a common objective adds to the peacefulness of the forest. Together they search for Small (Rabbit's relation) (Milne, 2007, p. 50), hunt for Eeyore's house that disappeared (p. 15), and lend Owl a hand to remove his furniture from his demolished home (p. 151). It takes teamwork from Christopher Robin, Rabbit, and all of Rabbit's relations to pull Pooh out of Rabbit's doorway (p.28).

The most interesting character in this strength is Rabbit. Rabbit is not the kindest or most nurturing of characters, but he has a strong sense of community and belonging, excels at teamwork (Milne, 2007, p. 73), and has a firm understanding of group dynamics (Milne, 2006, pp. 81–82). He embodies the notion that anyone is capable of exhibiting a particular strength without demonstrating any associated strengths.

For example, one would imagine that strength of good citizenship would also require strengths such as social intelligence or kindness, but Rabbit does not feature in those two strengths.

Citizenship requires a willingness to achieve a shared objective, but the characters in the *Winnie the Pooh* series take it a step further where they freely and excitedly participate.

Fairness as strength of the virtue of justice

Fairness suggests the capability to treat everyone in the same way. Personal bias, issues, value systems, or social relations should not play a role (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). Pooh, Christopher Robin, Rabbit, Eeyore, and Kanga exhibit this strength.

Christopher Robin depicts the most examples of this strength; he is committed to fairness and sensitive to injustice. Unlike Pooh and Rabbit, Christopher Robin makes a conscious decision to be fair, whereas the rest do it more instinctively.

'Tigger is all right, really,' said Piglet lazily. 'Of course he is,' said Christopher Robin. 'Everybody is really' said Pooh. 'That's what I think' said Pooh. 'But I don't suppose I'm right,' he said. 'Of course you are,' said Christopher Robin.

(Milne, 2007, p. 105).

Again, under this strength, there is an example in the text which features one character who is exhibiting fairness as opposed to a character that is not. In this instance it is Rabbit who demonstrates his ability for fairness when he allows Pooh to offer an idea even though he is known as a 'Bear of Very Little Brain' (Milne, 2006, p.125).

'I've got a sort of idea,' said Pooh at last, 'but I don't suppose it's a very good one.' 'I don't suppose it is either,' said Eeyore. 'Go on, Pooh' said Rabbit. 'Let's have it.'

(Milne, 2007, p. 95)

Fairness is an important facet to the plots of *Winnie the Pooh*. Not everyone is fair, as in the example of Eeyore being prejudiced towards Pooh, but the characters clearly rate fairness highly when Eeyore does not receive any support from them for his callous remark. It is their dedication to fairness which fosters their citizenship and conversely, offering support for the idea, that several strengths are interconnected.

Leadership as strength of the virtue of justice

Leadership means motivating a group to take part in activities that lead to a mutually beneficial goal (Peterson & Seligman, 2004).

Good leadership promotes well-being whereas poor leadership often causes hardships (Hogan & Kaiser, 2005). Although Pooh has his own extracts under this strength, it is Rabbit and Christopher Robin who are most predominant.

‘It was going to be one of Rabbit’s busy days ... It was just the day for Organising Something ... It was a Captainish sort of day ...’ (Milne, 2007, p. 71).

Both characters uphold a leadership style that promotes respect and welfare. Christopher Robin frequently directs activities towards success while maintaining positive relations.

Similarly, Rabbit always plays to the strengths within his group to achieve success in his plans. In fact, all the illustrations of leadership in *Winnie the Pooh* highlight the constructive elements of good leadership. The characters lead by positive example and attitude, not threat, manipulation, or violence. They operate within an environment of trust and respect.

Summary of the virtue of justice

The fictional forest portrays the community, the society where the friends have an awareness of natural justice. It requires them to work together to complete tasks, act honourably, and have a strong sense of citizenship. The characters of the Hundred Acre Wood can identify and feel a sense of obligation towards a greater good.

Peterson and Seligman (2004) explained that unlike the virtue of humanity's high value on relationships between individuals, the virtue of justice is universal. It affects everyone. The extracts related to these three strengths revealed that the strengths are interconnected, depending on interaction. Good leadership encourages citizenship that in turn is sustained by fairness. Therefore, although strengths are separate and unique, they are also inseparable.

THE VIRTUE OF TRANSCENDENCE

The strengths of the virtue of transcendence relate to a greater purpose or higher power (Shoshani & Aviv, 2012; Strümpfer, 2005). It makes sense of the world in an emotional way as opposed to strengths listed in the virtue of wisdom. It is also the virtue that was the hardest to recognise in the text. Firstly, because the definitions of these strengths in Peterson and Seligman (2004) depend on a reader's interpretation, and secondly, these strengths are not as explicitly stated in the texts, but rather, because of their intangible nature, implied.

Gratitude as strength of the virtue of transcendence

Gratitude is the ability to be thankful for a gift or prosperous event, and to notice, or acknowledge a positive incident (Seligman et al., 2005). People illustrate their joy or thankfulness in many ways. The extracts emphasise only three forms of gratitude.

First of all the characters are appreciative of their surroundings and one another, which is an example of gratitude for blessings in one's own life. Secondly, they use reciprocal behaviour to show gratitude or appreciation of others (Peterson & Seligman, 2004).

An example is when Christopher Robin organises a party to thank Pooh for saving Piglet from the flood (Milne, 2006, pp. 136-137). Finally, the most common method to express gratitude is by articulation (Proyer et al., 2013). There are multiple occurrences where the characters verbally thank one another for gifts or favours (Milne, 2006, p. 115; Milne 2007, p. 8, 79, and 158).

As depicted in the text, expressing gratitude is as uplifting to the character receiving as the character who is giving, and it also increases feelings of self-worth (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). This positive interaction has a lasting effect on happiness and well-being (Proyer et al., 2013), and it elevates gratitude to a level of strength as opposed to simple good manners.

Appreciation of beauty/skills as strength of the virtue of transcendence

The main feature of this strength is the ability to appreciate beauty in one's surroundings, or the skills of others. In the introduction of the first book, the author explains the difference between people who can appreciate beauty and those who cannot.

You can't be in London for long without going to the Zoo. There are some people who begin the Zoo at the beginning, called WAYIN, and walk as quickly as they can past every cage until they get to the one called WAYOUT, but the nicest people go straight to the animal they love and stay there.

(Milne, 2006, pp. i–ii).

Pooh most often illustrates an appreciation of beauty, but he also has a high regard for the special skills of his friends, which is another aspect of this strength. He makes up a song about Piglet's bravery and talks about Rabbit's ability to be considerate:

... said Pooh to himself. I like talking to Rabbit. He talks about sensible things. He doesn't use long, difficult words ... It's the nicest way of talking. Just for two

(Milne, 2007, p. 54)

There are extracts that demonstrate the capability of others with regard to this strength, but Pooh is the only character that embodies the full spirit of the strength. He experiences such an overpowering sense of awe that he is drawn to writing songs or poetry about the things he observes.

Hope as strength of the virtue of transcendence

Hope is an abstract concept and difficult to define (Peterson & Seligman, 2004), but it is having a positive expectation of the future and taking action to make this outcome possible (Wissing & Van Eeden, 2002). Pooh frequently illustrates this trait, but it could be argued that since things usually work out well for him in the end, these positive experiences make him confident in expecting future positive outcomes.

Regardless of why Pooh is so optimistic, his ability to hope is contagious and he often transfers this outlook to his friends. He inspires his friends by just being an example of hopefulness as opposed to being able to explain fully the idea of hope.

'What do you like doing best in the world, Pooh?' 'Well,' said Pooh, 'what I like best – 'and then he had to stop and think. Because although eating honey was a very good thing to do, there was a moment just before you began to (eat) it which was better than when you were, but he didn't know what it was called.

(Milne, 2007, pp. 168–169)

Humour and playfulness as strength of the virtue of transcendence

Humour is a subjective and unwieldy term to define, as it appears to mean different things to different people. For the purpose of this study it is described as the ability to make other people laugh and to see the funny or upside of a situation (Peterson & Seligman, 2004; Strümpfer, 2006). The storybooks contain both types of humour.

There is the capability of experiencing the lighter side of life when Kanga does not become overwrought by her son's apparent kidnapping, but instead has a remarkable trust in Christopher Robin's care of his toys and thus chooses to see the kidnapping as a prank and play along by teasing Piglet (Milne, 2006, p. 94). Her sense of humour not only gets her through the situation, but also provides the opportunity for Rabbit to get to know Roo and for their friendship to grow. This extract is possibly the best illustration of how character strengths are uplifting. If Kanga had overreacted, the situation could have turned out very differently from the serene and positive consequence in the book.

The second type of humour is when the author uses the narrator to play with words to make the reader laugh at the silliness of the English language, a common trend in children's literature in the nineteenth century. An example is Piglet's explanation for the Trespassers W sign, next to his house.

'Trespassers W ... was his grandfather's name ... it was short for Trespassers Will, which was short for Trespassers William. And his grandfather had had two names in case he lost one ...' (Milne, 2006, p. 30).

It is this subtle sense of humour that makes *Winnie the Pooh* enjoyable to read and provides escapism. This form of humour perhaps serves no other purpose than to entertain and relax, but those two qualities in themselves are necessary and healthy in the midst of the stressful challenges of everyday life.

Spirituality as strength of the virtue of transcendence

Spirituality surpasses religion in the traditional sense because it involves an innate understanding of a higher purpose, a belief in a non-physical dimension of life, a coherent meaning of the universe (Collicut & Gray, 2012; Peterson & Seligman, 2004). The characters in the forest explore the concept of an ultimate calmness or serenity that they refer to as nothingness, a notion similar to the state of mind people attempt to achieve through meditation.

This universe that the characters marvel at, and tranquillity of nothingness they enjoy is provided to them by the forest. This is the same forest the author considered to be a porthole to another dimension where adults and children could escape the harshness of reality. The forest is a metaphysical state of being

'... that enchanted place ... a little boy and his Bear will always be playing.' (Milne, 2007, p. 176). Therefore it becomes a doorway to both the characters and the readers to an idyllic and spiritual place, '... the Forest will always be there ... and anybody who is friendly with bears can find it' (Milne, 2007, p. i).

Summary of the virtue of transcendence

Finding examples for this virtue was complicated because the strengths are implied and form part of the undercurrent of the tales rather than offering implicit extracts. It therefore required some interpretation. The existence of the strengths within this virtue provides the platform on which other strengths are built. Kanga's sense of humour makes it easier for her to forgive Piglet and his co-conspirators for kidnapping her son; it is also undeniably linked to her innate kindness.

Pooh's ability to appreciate beauty is inherently linked to his propensity for creativity and his vitality. Christopher Robin's mature grasp of the concept of nothingness contributes in many ways to his unique perspective and open-mindedness. These examples illustrate how this virtue is the best demonstration of how all the strengths are intricately woven together like threads in an elaborate tapestry.

The text could probably have yielded even more examples of this virtue, but as transcendence is subjective, only the most apparent findings were included.

THE VIRTUE OF TEMPERANCE

The psychological ingredients that define the virtue are self-regulation, humility or modesty, prudence, and forgiveness/mercy. It contains strengths that promote moderation and prevent excess (Peterson & Seligman, 2004; Shoshani & Aviv, 2012). The strengths modesty or humility, and forgiveness or mercy, regulate emotions, specifically anger, and esteem, whereas self-regulation and prudence regulate behaviour and choice. Research by McGrath (2015) and Park et al., (2006) considered the strengths in this virtue difficult to achieve and therefore less frequently aspired to, than those under the virtue of humanity, which are popular among most people.

Self-regulation as strength of the virtue of temperance

Self-regulation presumes the control over physical and/or emotional behaviour and the choice to achieve a particular goal (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). Unlike examples of other strengths, the characters in *Winnie the Pooh* are ‘punished’ whenever they fail to ‘self-regulate’. Pooh and Piglet are the only characters capable of self-regulation, even if just to avoid punishment.

Pooh is a perfect example of self-regulation in spite of his love for honey. He is stuck in Rabbit’s doorway after gorging on honey and condensed milk, but after he practises self-regulation by not eating for a week, he is set free (Milne, 2006, pp. 24–25). When he exerts control over his hunger pangs to look for Eeyore’s tail, he is rewarded by finding the tail and being proclaimed a champion (Milne, 2006, pp. 46–48).

All the examples from the text in this strength act almost as a fable, showing what happens when you do not apply self-regulation, contrasted with the positive findings when you do. It illustrates simultaneously how morally valuable this strength is and how it contributes to positive living.

Humility or modesty as strength of the virtue of temperance

This strength relates to a humble or low focus on self, but includes social contact (Tangney, 2002). Piglet often portrays this strength, but Pooh exemplifies all the elements of this strength. Although he is humble, Pooh does not lack self-esteem (Milne, 2006, pp. 114–116). He has an accurate sense of his abilities, but acknowledges his shortcomings (Milne, 2006, p. 38), and also appreciates and recognises the numerous abilities of his friends.

This is an underlying theme that is carried through many of the strengths, such as social intelligence, perspective, appreciation of beauty and skills, and gratitude. Pooh is able to appreciate what makes other characters what they are. He is very aware, and if one looks at the definition and history behind the strength of humility (Peterson & Seligman, 2004) it could be argued that it is his humility that allows Pooh the capacity to value others.

Prudence as strength of the virtue of temperance

Prudence means to resist an impulse, to be practical but not manipulative, or excessively cautious, and to think of the long-term goal instead of the short-term pleasure (Kristjánsson, 2010).

This strength has a bad reputation because prudent people are sometimes called dull or tiresome (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). Like prudence, Piglet is also sometimes misunderstood as being timid or overly cautious when he instead presents the characteristics of a prudent person, which includes practical reasoning, critical thinking, and self-management (Hoff, 2002).

One example of this is when he questions Rabbit's plan of kidnapping Kanga's baby.

I am not frightened of Fierce Animals in the ordinary way, but it is well known that if One of the Fiercer Animals is Deprived of Its Young, it becomes as fierce as Two of the Fiercer Animals.

(Milne, 2006, p. 85)

Piglet weighs up the possible risks and is not keen to be associated with an unnecessarily perilous plan. The important distinction is that prudence is not about never taking risk; it is about not taking needless risk.

Piglet displays the most advanced sense of prudence as he is able to consider the consequences his actions may hold for himself, as well as the result it may have on others. This is something the others are not capable of. They only reveal self-interest. Tigger is not as skilled at prudence as Piglet, but he is worth mentioning because he proves that even with traits such as recklessness, one can still be capable of prudence (Milne, 2007, pp. 58—59).

Forgiveness or mercy as strength of the virtue of temperance

Forgiveness is a sophisticated form of mercy and encompasses kindness, compassion, and leniency toward transgressors, and psychologists consider it the most difficult strength to apply consistently (Miller & Nickerson, 2007; Peterson & Seligman, 2004).

Eeyore in particular is capable of this strength. Owl accidentally takes his tail and turns it into a doorbell (Milne, 2006, p. 48), but when Pooh returns it, Eeyore focuses on his gratitude. He does not bear a grudge and helps Owl to find a new home when the wind destroys his house.

There were not many examples of forgiveness or mercy in the text as the characters rarely do anything they need to apologise for, because they adhere to other strengths such as love, kindness, open-mindedness, fairness, and gratitude.

The examples that do exist prove how the characters forgive and accept each other spontaneously, without prompting or coercing, and they even demonstrate how you can be annoyed and still forgive without an apology (Milne, 2006, p. 26).

Summary of the virtue of temperance

The volume of extracts might not have been as abundant as those of other virtues, because the virtue of temperance is strongly associated with adult responsibilities, yet this virtue is an integral moral part of the text.

Characters who fail to apply these strengths of self-regulation and prudence are penalised. The strengths humility and modesty, and forgiveness and mercy portray how the friends accept each other's eccentricity without question or judgement.

This virtue highlights the importance of other strengths in relation to how a character behaves as a whole. As previously mentioned a person is more than just the sum of their parts, and it takes a combination of a variety of strengths to truly result in a virtuous person, a notion supported by the literature in Chapter Two (Wood et. al., 2010) that suggests that a blanket approach towards character strengths has a much stronger effect on well-being.

CONCLUSION

The findings showed that all twenty-four character strengths – and therefore all six virtues – were illustrated by at least five or more examples in the twenty stories under examination. The main character Winnie the Pooh, ‘the Bear of Very Little Brain’ (Milne, 2006, p. 125), is the only character to demonstrate all twenty-four strengths. The remaining eight characters illustrated a variety of strengths to varying degrees of proficiency, but they are all present in all six virtues.

The text not only yielded examples that acted as analogies for the strengths, it also highlighted several criteria provided by Peterson and Seligman (2004) regarding what constitutes a strength. Some concluding remarks follow in the next chapter.

Individually the strengths revealed a great deal about Pooh and his friends, but collectively, as they were grouped by virtue, they revealed more about the author.

The restrictive virtue of temperance and the existential virtue of transcendence were less frequently depicted in the storybooks as they are more associated with adult sensibility, yet they are part of the undercurrent message of the tales. As in the case of transcendence, they lay the foundation for other strengths such as kindness, forgiveness, and fairness, to succeed.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION AND FINAL THOUGHTS

... creative imagination is the essential element in the intellectual equipment of the true scientist, and ... fairy tales are the childhood stimulus of this quality.

Albert Einstein (as cited in Spitalny, 2015, p. 48)

INTRODUCTION

This dissertation strove to find examples of positive psychology's character strengths and virtues in action (Peterson and Seligman, 2004) in the texts of an old family favourite (Knudsen, 2012) *Winnie the Pooh*. With the technological explosion of the new century, children have limitless access to information, leaving them more erudite than previous generations, but simultaneously more vulnerable. This makes room for a new paradigm. We no longer seek to 'raise a brighter child' (Beck, 1999); we need to raise a 'happier' child.

The two books under scrutiny yielded examples of all twenty-four character strengths and virtues. Some findings were unexpected and surprising. Several characters exhibited strengths that were not anticipated before; some strengths were not as prominent as first expected, whereas others were more significant. This chapter will now discuss conclusions drawn from the findings, the limitations of the study and recommendations for further investigation.

FINAL THOUGHTS ON FINDINGS

A thorough review of the findings confirmed that all twenty-four character strengths are present in the storybooks, but to varying degrees. Perspective and social intelligence are integral to all the plotlines, but perspective and citizenship are the only strengths exhibited by all nine main characters. This observation does not mean that these are the most important strengths depicted in the stories.

Similarly, fairness, and forgiveness or mercy, only sporadically featured in the stories with self-regulation and humility and modesty being the only strengths represented by merely two characters, Piglet and Pooh. However, this again does not accurately reflect the significance of these strengths in the texts.

The initial research question was to investigate whether or not each character strength was present and to what extent. The findings have shown that the value in the research lies not in the fact that the strengths are present, but in what way these individual strengths are portrayed and how their presence contributes to the quality of living of the characters involved. When analysing the storybooks and the strengths they depict, it becomes impossible to select one as more important or prominent. All twenty-four character strengths are interconnected and woven into the plot lines so without the one strength you cannot have the other.

For example, the strengths of the virtue of humanity, social intelligence, love, and kindness not only support but also facilitate the presence of strengths such as fairness, forgiveness, gratitude, and hope. Kanga illustrates this because she is generally kind, loving and socially intelligent, but also able to forgive and treat everyone equally.

The holistic view of the role that character strengths play in the utopian undertone of the books seem to confirm the supposition of researchers reviewed in Chapter Two (Linkins et al., 2014; Peterson & Seligman, 2004; Proctor et al., 2011; Proyer et al., 2013; Seligman et al., 2005; Young et al., 2015) that there is greater significance in reviewing all the strengths, in whichever varying degree they may present themselves, as opposed to fixating on the presumed signature strengths.

This argument is further supported when an outline is presented of which character is most strongly associated with a particular strength. When observing signature strengths one would perhaps rightfully conclude that Piglet would be strongly associated with strengths such as self-regulation, prudence, and forgiveness because of his timid nature. This would, however, neglect his ability to demonstrate bravery when the situation arises. In normal life one is given more opportunities to display self-regulation and prudence than to show off one's courage. Therefore, even as Piglet is associated with other strengths, with him exhibiting almost all of them (second to Pooh), it is Piglet's bravery that allows for an exciting discussion. He has to overcome fear and a fearful nature, confirming what Peterson and Seligman (2004) propose about anyone being capable of having specific strengths.

Similarly, characters such as Christopher Robin and Eeyore who excelled at the strengths under the virtue of wisdom are also capable of emotional strengths such as spirituality and social intelligence. Someone kind like Kanga is capable of a wicked sense of humour, whereas a pragmatic character like Rabbit, who frequently displays the strength of leadership, can also be kind. Finally, the boisterous characters Tigger and Roo who are known for the strength of vitality are able to demonstrate the more mature strengths of prudence and love of learning respectively.

The character who is both the embodiment of the storybooks as well as the strengths is Winnie the Pooh. He illustrates to varying degrees all twenty-four character strengths and that is what makes him so loveable. He is a symbol of what people strive to be: genuinely comfortable with his own strengths and weaknesses, as well as being unconditionally accepting and lovingly supportive of the strengths and weaknesses of others. This again does not make him the most valuable individual for the discussion, because each character adds their unique understanding of what it means to be virtuous.

The stories provided a safe haven in which to discuss these twenty-four character strengths that form the building blocks of a virtuous person and ultimately an idealistic society, but it also raises several questions regarding well-being. These questions remain unanswered, but will be discussed in the limitation of the study as well as recommendations for further investigation.

LIMITATION OF STUDY

The qualitative nature of this research design meant that the investigation of the data and the interpretation of the findings are dependent on the perspective of the researcher. The researcher is extremely familiar with the storybooks and has thought often about their meaning, long before this research project started. When passionate about the potential of research, it allows for a rich analysis, but it also becomes difficult to retain an objective perspective. With this in mind every effort has been made to be transparent about the process of analysis and interpretation of the data collected in order for the readers to form their own opinion. The findings of the data have been reviewed and endorsed by Unisa's postgraduate degree process of supervision and peer review. It is the hope of the researcher that this study will prompt further discussion and encourage other researchers to explore their own views and investigations.

Another limitation is the choice of data. Firstly, was Winnie the Pooh a suitable choice as opposed to some of the other literature available, such as *Wind in the Willows*, *Pollyanna*, or *The Wizard of Oz*? The reasons for the choice of work have been substantiated repeatedly throughout the study, but no argument can compensate for the researcher's perspective of various works of fiction, as well as familiarity with other options available. Secondly, are the two books under scrutiny a thorough representation? It is my opinion that they are, because they represent all storybooks relating to Winnie the Pooh written by A. A. Milne originally, excluding his poetry. The link between his poems and Winnie the Pooh was mostly implied rather than implicitly stated and therefore is not pertinent.

One final possible limitation is the level of analysis. The research focused on how character strengths are presented in the two storybooks, but this type of deductive analysis could result in other possible interpretations being missed or ignored. This limitation was catered for by adopting a flexible combination of content and thematic analyses that allowed for both deductive and inductive reasoning, but again this limitation could prove to be beneficial if it promotes further research. It is for this reason that the direct quotations of some of the extracts are given in the findings chapter.

RECOMMENDATION AND PRACTICAL APPLICATION

This study did not simply look for examples of the ‘scientifically unwieldy’ (Duckworth et al., 2005. p. 635) term happiness, but rather the tools a person can use to become the best version of themselves. Now that these examples of character strengths and virtues have been extracted a future goal is to consolidate and manipulate these examples into ‘lessons’ that can help illustrate, explain, and teach children not only what the twenty-four character strengths are, but also how to apply them in various situations and by doing so hopefully foster resilience.

Researchers (Proctor et al., 2011; Shoshani & Aviv, 2012) found that a blanket approach to character strengths has positive personal, behavioural, and cognitive consequences for people in general, but especially children. In contrast, Laura Berk (2009), professor of childhood development concluded that children are more inclined to model their behaviour on a person or character with whom they are familiar.

A model who exhibits warmth as a character trait and someone who displays a level of consistency between language and action is especially useful. Zanderer (1987) takes this notion further by suggesting that through humanising animals greater learning opportunities are afforded to both children and guardians. It is for these reasons that the findings of this study would be suitable for deconstructing the examples into a programme for children between the ages of two and six.

Academically, there are avenues that could further be explored, not only by reviewing other children’s literature to see how strengths present in them with a possible correlation between the various works, but a deeper analysis of *Winnie Pooh* could also yield a new understanding of strengths. Several articles (James, 2008; Knudsen, 2012; Shea et. al., 2000) suggested the presence of mental illness amongst these characters, and it would be interesting to investigate whether the presence of the aforementioned strengths temper these disorders or even possibly compensate for them.

Would the application of strengths be beneficial in the treatment of pathology? As the discussion on vitality and wisdom with regard to Tigger in Chapter Five suggests, exercise and curiosity could perhaps help in the management of ADHD. How about Piglet's Generalised Anxiety Disorder or Eeyore's depression? Perhaps better understanding the relationship between prudence and bravery, and greater focus on gratitude and forgiveness could benefit those suffering from such ailments.

As seen in Chapter Three, children's literature is an innocent, flexible, and familiar tool for exploring complex ideologies and the boundaries of its potential is only limited by a researcher's imagination and dedication.

CONCLUSION

Kortman and Eckstein's (2004) words summed up the essence of this study: '[a] paradox is that in the innocence of children's stories come some of our most profound truths. Walt Disney created a 'magic kingdom' that can help us re-discover the joys of childhood ... *if you can dream it, you can do it*' (p. 67). During a discussion with a board member of the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund (Pratt, A, personal communication, December 15, 2015), an equivalent revelation was considered. Pratt said in her dealings with them, the unifying power behind the leadership styles of former president Nelson Mandela and Archbishop Desmond Tutu was their ability to put complex principles such as tolerance and acceptance into simple language, 'a rainbow nation' for all to understand.

The lessons learnt from analysing the character strengths as they are present in the storybooks of *Winnie the Pooh* echo what Peterson and Seligman (2004) said in their *Character strengths and virtues handbook*. Character strengths are morally valued and are uplifting to those who witness it, as illustrated by The Hundred Acre Wood's innocent and idyllic existence.

Some individuals can be completely devoid of a strength, such as Owl with regard to integrity, whereas others, like Pooh, can be a paragon of the strength. Similarly, anyone is capable of a strength; the timid can be brave, whereas the boisterous can be prudent. Therefore we cannot judge one strength as more important, or one person more special than another based on their strengths make-up. Strengths are complicated and interconnected and their true value and functionality lie in how they cooperate and support one another in a meaningful way and by doing so, produce the best versions of us.

It has been said that this study does not wish to argue that ‘a Bear of Little Brain’ can change the world, but there are guidelines to living a virtuous life in the plotlines of his tales and adopting these strengths into our everyday lives is the first step towards well-being. This research argues for a new version of the quote from the first chapter,

... when you are a Bear of Very Little Brain, and you Think of Things, you find sometimes that a Thing which seemed very Thingish inside you is quite different when it gets out into the open and has other people looking at it.

(Milne, 2007, p. 99)

The word *things* can be replaced by *strengths*. However they present inside of you, they are to be celebrated because anyone can possess them and they direct life in a positive way.

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APPENDIX A: SUMMARY OF STORIES

The book *Winnie the Pooh* (1926)

Chapter One – in which we are introduced to Winnie the Pooh and some bees

The narrator introduces Christopher Robin and Winnie the Pooh. Pooh discovers a beehive in the woods and tries to steal honey from the bees, because he is so fond of it. At his first attempt to scale the tree the branch breaks and he falls to the ground. With the help of Christopher Robin and a balloon he next attempts to float up to the hive pretending to be a rain cloud. By now the bees are suspicious of his behaviour. Pooh declares them the wrong sort of bees who would also make the wrong sort of honey and asks Christopher Robin to shoot the balloon so he can float down again.

Chapter Two – in which Pooh goes visiting and gets into a tight place

Pooh starts the morning with his usual Stoutness Exercises, breakfast, and then sets off to Rabbit's home. Rabbit offers him tea, honey, and condensed milk and Pooh naturally accepts and consumes all of it. As he tries to leave, he no longer fits through the door. Christopher Robin recommends that they starve Pooh until he is thin again to pass through the door. This takes a whole week and Rabbit and Christopher Robin read to him to make the time go by. Finally, it takes Christopher Robin, Rabbit and all of Rabbit's friends and relations to pull Pooh out of Rabbit's house.

Chapter Three – in which Pooh and Piglet go hunting and nearly catch a Woozle

When Piglet bumps into Pooh tracking paw marks in the snow he suspects a *Woozle* and joins in. While following the paw prints, Piglet tells Pooh about his grandfather, causing Pooh to wonder about grandfathers and could it be that they are tracking one right now. Pooh suddenly notices another set of tracks, then another row and yet another. Christopher Robin, sitting in a tree, laughingly explains that Pooh had twice followed his own footprints in the snow, and when Piglet joined, they made extra paw prints.

Chapter Four – in which Eeyore loses a tail and Pooh finds one

Pooh realises that Eeyore's tail is missing and he offers to help him find it. He immediately runs to Owl for help. Owl recommends that they write pamphlets to tell all the animals of Eeyore's plight. Owl shows Pooh the sign he wrote for the new bell-rope which he recently found in the forest. Pooh recognises it as Eeyore's tail and manages to return it.

Chapter Five – in which Piglet meets a Heffalump

Pooh and Piglet decide to trap a *Heffalump*. They dig a deep hole and place honey inside to lure him. During the night Pooh becomes peckish and rushes over to recover the honey, but falls into the hole. Once in the hole, he polishes off the honey jar and accidentally gets his head stuck in it. Piglet also wakes up during the night, decides to check on the trap, but as he approaches, he hears moaning. He creeps closer at the exact moment that a trapped Pooh gives a desperate growl, sending Piglet terrified and whimpering all the way to Christopher Robin's house. Christopher Robin inspects the trap and when Piglet learns that it had been Pooh in the hole, he runs home embarrassed and stays in bed all day.

Chapter Six – in which Eeyore has a birthday and gets two presents

Pooh discovers that no one remembered Eeyore's birthday. He races home to fetch a pot of honey as a gift and tells to Piglet to come up with his own gift. On his way back Pooh becomes hungry, eats the honey, washes the pot at the river and asks Owl to write 'Happy Birthday' on it as even an empty pot is better than no gift. Piglet tries to beat Pooh back to Eeyore so it would seem that Piglet remembered his birthday all by himself, but unfortunately he falls and pops the red balloon he wanted to give Eeyore. Eeyore still likes the idea of the gift as the balloon was the right size and his favourite colour. When Pooh arrives with his pot, an excited Eeyore puts the popped balloon into this useful pot.

Chapter Seven – in which Kanga and Baby Roo come to the Forest, and Piglet has a bath

Rabbit calls a meeting to discuss the very disturbing matter of two new animals arriving in the forest. He proposes to kidnap Roo, replace him with Piglet and then insist that Kanga leave the forest if she wants her baby back. Everything goes according to plan. On the way home Kanga realises a swop has been made, but decides to teach them all a lesson. She forces Piglet to have a bath and some medicine, which he finds unpleasant and runs back home. Rabbit becomes so fond of Roo after playing with him, that he no longer wants them to leave.

Chapter Eight – in which Christopher Robin leads an ‘expotition’ to the North Pole

Christopher Robin tells Pooh of their intended expedition to discover the North Pole, explaining that ‘it’s just a thing you discover’ (Milne, 2006, p. 101). With supplies picked up and the adventure explained, Christopher Robin, Pooh and all the friends set off on their search. As they are resting and eating, Roo falls into the river and Pooh grabs a long pole, holds it across the water for Roo to climb out. Christopher Robin afterwards exclaims that Pooh has just found the North Pole and so the expedition ends.

Chapter Nine – in which Piglet is entirely surrounded by water

Several days of rain have resulted in Piglet’s house being completely surrounded by water. Terrified he writes a note asking for help, which he places into a glass bottle and tosses into the water. It takes four days for Piglet’s letter to reach Pooh who cannot read, so he sets off to find Christopher Robin. Pooh concludes that if a bottle can float, then surely a pot can float and if he is attached to the pot then he will float as well. Finally he floats his way across the flood to Christopher Robin’s house. The two then use Christopher Robin’s umbrella as a rescue boat, which is large enough to carry all three of them back to safety.

Chapter Ten – in which Christopher Robin gives a Pooh Party, and we say good-bye

Christopher Robin is so proud of Pooh’s heroics in saving Piglet during the flood that he decides to celebrate Pooh’s bravery and cleverness. He also presents Pooh with a gift of pencils ‘... marked “HB” for helping Bear ...’ (Milne, 2006, p. 147).

The book *The House at Pooh Corner* (1928)

Chapter One – in which a house is built at Pooh Corner for Eeyore

While Piglet and Pooh are walking through the snow to visit Eeyore, Pooh begins to feel bad Eeyore does not have a home to live in. They decide to build Eeyore a house right where they are, a spot out of the wind and with a convenient pile of wood nearby for them to use. They promptly name the area Pooh's Corner. Meanwhile, Eeyore goes over to Christopher Robin for help, as someone has taken his house. In their search for Eeyore's missing home they find Piglet and Pooh busy with their project. The two had mistaken Eeyore's old house for a pile of sticks and were rebuilding his house. Eeyore is pleased with his new home.

Chapter Two – in which Tigger comes to the forest and has breakfast

Pooh wakes up with a shock and discovers a strange creature making a noise outside his door. The stranger introduces himself as Tigger. Pooh is very polite and invites Tigger to come inside and sleep on the floor. The next morning Pooh cannot find Tigger anything to eat. Eventually Kanga gives him some of Roo's Extract of Malt, which he loves and he ends up staying with her.

Chapter Three – in which a search is organised, and Piglet nearly meets the Heffalump

Rabbit is searching for Small and although Pooh is not sure who Small is, he agrees to join the search party. During this pursuit Pooh stumbles into a pit and realises that he has fallen on top of Piglet. Christopher Robin, who goes in search of Pooh, comes across them sitting in the hole. Not only are they thrilled that Christopher Robin is not a *Heffalump*, but Piglet also finds Small, who has been crawling on Pooh's back.

Chapter Four – in which it is shown that Tiggers don't climb trees

Roo and Tigger have a day of fun in the forest. Roo enquires whether Tiggers can climb trees and Tigger enjoys showing Roo how he can. The first ten feet of climbing goes well, but then Tigger freezes with fear. The two are stuck for a while until Pooh, Piglet, Christopher Robin and Eeyore find them.

The others each take a corner of Christopher Robin's cape and tell Roo and Tigger to jump. Roo, who is the first to jump, enjoys bouncing on the cape for some time before he finally stops and gets off. Tigger takes a little more convincing before he jumps, but he misses the cape and lands on Eeyore.

Chapter Five – in which Rabbit has a busy day, and we learn what Christopher Robin does in the mornings

Rabbit has found a notice outside of Christopher Robin's door that says: 'GON OUT BACKSON BISY BACKSON Christopher Robin' (Milne, 2008, p. 53). Not knowing who *Backson* is Rabbit asks Owl, Pooh, Eeyore and Piglet if they understand the message. Fortunately Eeyore ends the hysteria by telling everyone that Christopher Robin is at school to become educated. This is how everyone in the forest, except the 'backson' discovers what Christopher Robin does in the mornings.

Chapter Six – in which Pooh invents a new game

Pooh, Piglet, Roo and Rabbit are playing a game of Poohsticks when Eeyore comes floating down the river. Tigger has accidently pushed him into the river and he is now hoping for someone to save him. Pooh proposes they throw a heavy stone into the water to create a big enough wave to wash Eeyore out. As Pooh throws the stone, it becomes clear that it will hit Eeyore and send him straight to the bottom of the river. Luckily Eeyore dives out of the way and in doing so manages to save himself.

Chapter Seven – in which Tigger is unbounced

Rabbit plans to leave Tigger overnight in an unfamiliar part of the forest so that he will become a different, humble Tigger and learn not to be so bouncy. The plan goes awry in the end with Pooh, Piglet and Rabbit becoming lost. Piglet and Pooh eventually find their way out of the forest. It is Tigger who finally finds a humble, sorry Rabbit, to whom Tigger's bouncing has never looked more beautiful.

Chapter Eight – in which Piglet does a very grand thing

Pooh and Piglet decide to brave the strong winds in order to wish everyone a happy Thursday. They are sitting in Owl's lounge when there is a loud noise and Owl's tree house is blown over. Although scared, Piglet manages to climb through Owl's letter box which is now against the ceiling, and runs to Christopher Robin for help.

Chapter Nine – in which Eeyore finds the Wolery and Owl moves into it

Rabbit takes it on himself to rally the other animals in helping Owl find a new home. Eeyore announces that he has found Owl the perfect house and hurries over to show them all. Imagine Piglet's surprise when he realises it is his home being offered up, but luckily Pooh comes to the rescue and suggests that Piglet stay with him.

Chapter Ten – in which Christopher Robin and Pooh come to an enchanted place, and we leave them there

The entire forest is aflutter about Christopher Robin leaving. Rabbit calls a meeting at Eeyore's house where all the animals sign a poem written by Eeyore. Nervous and sad Eeyore just shoves the poem into Christopher Robin's hand and then leaves. When Christopher Robin finishes reading the poem, only Pooh is left on his doorstep. Feeling a little emotional he invites Pooh to a very special place. As they walk Christopher Robin tries to explain to Pooh that he will have to grow up now and he hopes that at least Pooh will return to their special place and keep up the tradition of doing 'nothing'. Pooh promises to do so and the book ends with '... wherever they go, and whatever happens to them on the way, in that enchanted place on the top of the Forest a little boy and his Bear will always be playing' (Milne, 2008, p. 176).

APPENDIX B: DEFINING CRITERIA

THE VIRTUE OF HUMANITY			
Strength	Identifying criteria	Keywords	Example
Social intelligence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment of own feelings or motives • Accurate assessment or anticipation of the feelings or emotions of others • Ability to understand and use emotional information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sympathy • Empathy • Understanding • Compassion • Consideration • Pity • Worry about 	<p>‘I suppose none of you are sitting on a thistle ... it doesn’t do them any good you know ... takes all the life out of them. Remember that another time ... a little consideration, a little thought for others, makes all the difference’ (Milne, 2006, pp. 109–110)</p>
Kindness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taking a helpful attitude towards others • No expectation of reward • Can act positively without prompting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helpfulness • Gentleness • Care • Kind-heartedness • Give • Donate 	<p>‘Kanga said very kindly, ‘well, look in my cupboard, Tigger dear, and see what you’d like.’ Because she knew at once that, however big Tigger seemed to be, he wanted as much kindness as Roo’ (Milne, 2007, pp. 30–31)</p>
Love	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive cognitive, emotional, and behavioural attitude towards another • Can take many forms, familial/ friendship/ romantic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relationships • Affection • Devotion • Adoration 	<p>‘Piglet sidled up to Pooh from behind. ‘Pooh!’ he whispered. ‘Yes, Piglet?’ ‘Nothing, said Piglet, taking Pooh’s paw. ‘I just wanted to be sure of you.’ (Milne, 2007, p. 118)</p>

THE VIRTUE OF WISDOM			
Strength	Identifying Criteria	Keywords	Example
Perspective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How an individual makes sense of the environment • Different views individuals can have regarding the same situation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wisdom • Knowledge • Thinking • Insight • Observation 	‘I thought Tiggers were smaller than that.’ ‘Not the big ones,’ said Tigger’ (Milne, 2007, p. 23)
Open-mindedness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open to conflicting information • Weigh up different information • Willing to change opinion in the face of conflicting facts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tolerance • Change of thought/opinion • Broad-mindedness 	‘Here is Edward Bear, coming downstairs now, bump, bump, bump, on the back of his head, [it] is, as far as he knows, the only way of coming downstairs, but sometimes he feels that there really is another way, if only he could stop bumping for a moment and think’ (Milne, 2006, p. 1)
Creativity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be a unique idea or approach • Must be adaptive or add value to functioning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Originality plus function • Imagination plus function • Ingenuity plus function • Inventiveness plus function 	‘If a bottle can float, then a jar can float and if a jar floats, I can sit on the top of it, if it’s a very big jar’ (Milne, 2006, p. 125)
Curiosity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal orientated behaviour towards new experiences • Questioning information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inquisitiveness • Interest • Novelty seeking • Wonder • Investigation 	‘Oh Pooh! Do you think it’s a – a – a woozle?’ [Squealed Piglet] ‘It may be,’ said Pooh. ‘Sometimes it is, and sometimes it isn’t. You never can tell with paw-marks’ (Milne, 2006, pp. 31–32)
Love of learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excitement towards learning new skills • Continuing learning, even during difficulty 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive feelings towards: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Education - Skills - Knowledge - Learning - Teaching 	‘Pooh, who had decided to be a Kanga, was still at the sandy place ... practising jumps’ (Milne, 2006, p. 95)

THE VIRTUE OF COURAGE			
Strength	Identifying Criteria	Keywords	Example
Persistence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be experiencing difficulty or hardship with task • Completing task regardless of above obstacles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determination • Persistence • Doggedness • Grit • Ambition 	‘ ... [tears] round the Forest making loud yapping noises’ while looking for Rabbit for a very long time (Milne, 2007, pp. 123–124)
Vitality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approach all activities with vigour • Positive attitude towards living 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy • Zest • Liveliness, • Vigour • Animation • Excitement • Enthusiasm 	‘When you wake up in the morning, Pooh,’ said Piglet at last, ‘what’s the first thing you say to yourself?’ ‘What’s for breakfast?’ said Pooh. ‘What do you say, Piglet?’ ‘I say, I wonder what’s going to happen exciting to-day?’ said Piglet. Pooh nodded thoughtfully. ‘It’s the same thing,’ he said’ (Milne, 2006, p. 147)
Bravery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being fearful or cautious of an action • Overcoming said fear and accomplishing action • Willingness to jeopardise personal well-being for the sake of the well-being of others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gallantry • Guts • Heroism • Nerve • Overcoming fear 	‘Oh!’ said Piglet. ‘Because I – I thought I did blinch a little’ ... ‘you only blinched inside’, said Pooh, ‘and that’s the bravest way for a Very Small Animal not to blinch that there is.’ Piglet sighed with happiness, and began to think of himself. He was BRAVE ...’ (Milne, 2007, p. 150)
Integrity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behaviour that is always consistent with values • Be honest about personal failures or shortcomings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Honesty • Honour • Reliability • Dependability • Sincerity 	‘[M]y spelling is wobbly. It’s good spelling but it wobbles, and the letters get in the wrong places. Would you write ‘A Happy Birthday’ on it for me?’ (Milne, 2006, p. 73)

THE VIRTUE OF JUSTICE

Strength	Identifying Criteria	Keywords	Example
Citizenship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group mentality • Can recognise common good above personal gain 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community • Society, group • Belonging • Law and order 	<p>‘Hush! said Kanga to Owl, while Roo said ‘Hush!’ several times to himself very quietly ... and ‘Hush!’ they said hastily to each other ... until it got to the last one of all’ (Milne, 2006, p. 107)</p>
Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desire to lead • Ability to organise • Harness group member’s strengths • Direct the group towards a collective positive goal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidance • Direction • Organisation • Administration 	<p>‘It was going to be one of Rabbit’s busy days ... It was just the day for organising something ... It was a Captainish sort of day’ (Milne, 2007, p. 71)</p>
Fairness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treating all people the same way • Rules apply to everyone to the same degree 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equality • Even-handedness • Neutrality 	<p>‘Tigger is all right, really,’ said Piglet lazily. ‘Of course he is,’ said Christopher Robin. ‘Everybody is really’ said Pooh. ‘That’s what I think’ said Pooh. ‘But I don’t suppose I’m right,’ he said. ‘Of course you are,’ said Christopher Robin’ (Milne, 2007, p. 105)</p>

THE VIRTUE OF TRANSCENDENCE			
Strength	Identifying Criteria	Keywords	Example
Gratitude	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to perceive an act or a token of kindness and being thankful • Propensity to not take blessings or gifts for granted 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘Thank you’ • Thanks • Thankfulness • Recognition of receiving • Acknowledgement of blessing 	‘Thank you, Christopher Robin. You are the only one who seems to understand about tails’ (Milne, 2006, p. 115)
Appreciation of beauty or skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to appreciate beauty in such a manner that it causes emotion • Ability to appreciate the skills in others to the point that it inspires awe 	Appreciation of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellence • Splendour • Exquisiteness • Magnificence • Brilliance • Superiority 	‘Oh gallant Piglet ... he struggled inch by inch through LETTERS ONLY, as I know, because I saw him go’ (Milne, 2007, p. 146)
Hope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confidence that hard work will lead to positive findings • Positive expectations about events, life and people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trust • Faith • Hopefulness • Optimism • Dream • Possibility • Expectation 	‘What do you like doing best in the world, Pooh?’ ‘Well,’ said Pooh, ‘what I like best-‘and then he had to stop and think. Because although eating honey was a very good thing to do, there was a moment just before you began to it which was better than when you were, but he didn’t know what it was called’ (Milne, 2007, pp. 168–169)
Humour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seeing the humorous side of situations • Bringing laughter or smiles to other people through humorous action 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wit • Comedy • Jest • Funniness • Absurdity 	‘It’s a very funny thought that, if bears were bees, they’d build their nests at the bottom of trees. And that being so (if the bees were bears), we shouldn’t have to climb up all these stairs’ (Milne, 2006, p. 6)
Spirituality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledging a higher power or a greater purpose in the universe • How an individual makes sense of their existence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mysticism • Belief • Universe • Fate • Destiny • Chance 	‘The Piglet was sitting on the ground ... blowing happily at a dandelion, and wondering whether it would be this year, next year, sometime or never. He has just discovered that it would be never, and was trying to remember what ‘it’ was, and hoping it wasn’t anything nice ...’ (Milne, 2006, p. 103)

THE VIRTUE OF TEMPERANCE			
Strength	Identifying Criteria	Keywords	Example
Self-regulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regulate own behaviour • Overcome urges in goal directed behaviour • Punish or reward oneself to control behaviour 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Willpower • Self-control • Self-discipline • Resolve 	‘Then Piglet saw what a foolish Piglet he had been and he was so ashamed of himself that he ran straight off home and went to bed with a headache’ (Milne, 2006, p. 64)
Humility/modesty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognise own faults. • Admit the strengths in others • Low focus on self • Flexibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Humility • Diffidence • Reticence • Reserve • Discretion 	‘I am a bear of no brain at all’ (Milne, 2006, p. 38)
Prudence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weigh up choices • Consider risks • Avoid risk if possible • Goal-oriented behaviour 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Careful • Caution • Discretion • Good sense • Vigilance 	‘And there Piglet is,’ said Owl. ‘If the string doesn’t break.’ ‘Supposing it does?’ asked Piglet ... ‘Then we try another piece of string.’ This was not very comforting to Piglet, because however many pieces of string they tried ... always be the same him coming down;’ (Milne, 2007, pp. 138–139)
Forgiveness/mercy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An individual must display pro-social behaviour towards a transgressor • An apology is not essential 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acceptance • Pardon • Leniency 	‘You fell on me’ said Piglet, feeling himself all over. ‘I didn’t mean to’ said Pooh sorrowfully. ‘I didn’t mean to be underneath,’ said Piglet sadly. ‘But I’m all right now, Pooh, and I am so glad it was you.’ (Milne, 2007, p. 41)

APPENDIX C: RAW DATA ¹

HUMANITY

Social intelligence	Kindness	Love
BOOK 1		
Book 1, Chapter 1, p. 13	Book 1, Chapter 3, p. 36	Book 1, Chapter 2, p. 23
Book 1, Chapter 2, p. 21	Book 1, Chapter 4, p. 42	Book 1, Chapter 2, pp. 22–23
Book 1, Chapter 2, p. 23	Book 1, Chapter 6, pp. 69–70	Book 1, Chapter 2, p. 25
Book 1, Chapter 2, pp. 25–26	Book 1, Chapter 6, p. 70	Book 1, Chapter 5, p. 64
Book 1, Chapter 4, p. 45	Book 1, Chapter 6, p. 71	Book 1, Chapter 9, pp. 118–119
Book 1, Chapter 6, p. 74	Book 1, Chapter 8, p. 115	Book 1, Chapter 9, p. 122
Book 1, Chapter 8, pp. 109–110		
Book 1, Chapter 10, p. 137		
BOOK 2		
Book 2, Chapter 2, p. 23	Book 2, Chapter 1, p. 7	Book 2, Chapter 3, p. 36
Book 2, Chapter 2, p. 23	Book 2, Chapter 2, p. 2	Book 2, Chapter 3, p. 46
Book 2, Chapter 2, p. 26	Book 2, Chapter 2, pp. 23–24	Book 2, Chapter 3, p. 47
Book 2, Chapter 2, p. 31	Book 2, Chapter 2, pp. 30–31	Book 2, Chapter 4, pp. 52–53
Book 2, Chapter 3, p. 50	Book 2, Chapter 2, pp. 26–27	Book 2, Chapter 7, p. 118
Book 2, Chapter 6, p. 95	Book 2, Chapter 5, pp. 83–84	Book 2, Chapter 10, p. 176
Book 2, Chapter 7, p. 110	Book 2, Chapter 9, p. 138	Book 2, Chapter 10, p. 169
Book 2, Chapter 7, p. 111	Book 2, Chapter 9, p. 157	
Book 2, Chapter 8, p. 128		

¹ For exact text please contact the researcher: ldohmen@worldonline.co.za

WISDOM

Perspective	Open-mindedness	Creativity	Curiosity	Love of learning
BOOK 1				
Book 1, Chapter 1, p. 4	Book 1, Chapter 1, p. 1	Book 1, Chapter 5, p. 58	Book 1, Chapter 3, pp. 31–32	Book 1, Introduction
Book 1, Chapter 1, pp. 10–11	Book 1, Chapter 1, p. 15	Book 1, Chapter 6, p. 72	Book 1, Chapter 3, p. 34	Book 1, Chapter 7, p. 95
Book 1, Chapter 1, p. 16	Book 1, Chapter 3, p. 38	Book 1, Chapter 9, p. 125	Book 1, Chapter 5, p. 52	Book 1, Chapter 8, p. 100
Book 1, Chapter 4, p. 42	Book 1, Chapter 5, p. 54		Book 1, Chapter 9, pp. 122–123	
Book 1, Chapter 7, p. 84	Book 1, Chapter 6, p. 75			
Book 1, Chapter 8, p. 108	Book 1, Chapter 7, p. 94			
BOOK 2				
Book 2, Chapter 1, p. 3	Book 2, Chapter 1, p. 1	Book 2, Chapter 1, pp. 1–2	Book 2, Chapter 2, p. 19	Book 2, Chapter 4, pp. 58–59
Book 2, Chapter 1, p. 5	Book 2, Chapter 2, p. 22–23	Book 2, Chapter 1, p. 5	Book 2, Chapter 2, p. 30	Book 2, Chapter 6, p. 102
Book 2, Chapter 1, p. 9	Book 2, Chapter 3, p. 37	Book 2, Chapter 1, p. 7	Book 2, Chapter 2, p. 38	Book 2, Chapter 10, p. 172
Book 2, Chapter 1, p. 11	Book 2, Chapter 4, p. 64	Book 2, Chapter 2, p. 29	Book 2, Chapter 4, p. 62	
Book 2, Chapter 1, p. 12	Book 2, Chapter 6, p. 98	Book 2, Chapter 9, p. 145		
Book 2, Chapter 2, p. 23	Book 2, Chapter 8, pp. 129–131	Book 2, Chapter 10, p. 160		
Book 2, Chapter 2, p. 29	Book 2, Chapter 9, p. 148	Book 2, Chapter 10, p. 162		
Book 2, Chapter 3, p. 42				
Book 2, Chapter 4, p. 67				
Book 2, Chapter 7, p. 116				
Book 2, Chapter 7, p. 120				
Book 2, Chapter 7, pp. 120–121				
Book 2, Chapter 8, pp. 127–28				
Book 2, Chapter 9, p. 147				

COURAGE

Persistence	Vitality	Bravery	Integrity
BOOK 1			
Book 1, Chapter 1, p. 6	Book 1, Chapter 2, p. 19	Book 1, Chapter 3, p. 33	Book 1, Chapter 1, p. 7
Book 1, Chapter 1, p. 7	Book 1, Chapter 7, p. 85	Book 1, Chapter 3, p. 34	Book 1, Chapter 6, p. 73
Book 1, Chapter 2, p. 27	Book 1, Chapter 8, p. 101	Book 1, Chapter 5, p. 62	Book 1, Chapter 9, p. 130
Book 1, Chapter 4, p. 43	Book 1, Chapter 8, p. 111	Book 1, Chapter 9, p. 123	
Book 1, Chapter 5, pp. 52–53	Book 1, Chapter 10, p. 147		
Book 1, Chapter 9, pp. 125–126			
Book 1, Chapter 9, p. 132			
BOOK 2			
Book 2, Chapter 1, p. 4	Book 2, Chapter 2, p. 30	Book 2, Chapter 3, p. 44	Book 2, Chapter 5, p. 76
Book 2, Chapter 3, pp. 50–51	Book 2, Chapter 4, p. 53	Book 2, Chapter 3, p. 47	Book 2, Chapter 5, p. 79
Book 2, Chapter 5, p. 78	Book 2, Chapter 4, p. 61	Book 2, Chapter 4, p. 58	Book 2, Chapter 5, p. 80
Book 2, Chapter 7, pp. 123–124	Book 2, Chapter 4, p. 64	Book 2, Chapter 8, p. 139	Book 2, Chapter 5, p. 83
	Book 2, Chapter 4, p. 65	Book 2, Chapter 9, p. 150	Book 2, Chapter 6, p. 99
	Book 2, Chapter 4, p. 67	Book 2, Chapter 10, p. 167	

JUSTICE

Leadership	Citizenship	Fairness
BOOK 1		
Book 1, Chapter 4, p. 46	Book 1, Chapter 2, p. 28	Book 1, Chapter 7, p. 98
Book 1, Chapter 5, p. 63	Book 1, Chapter 5, p. 51	Book 1, Chapter 8, p. 102
Book 1, Chapter 8, p. 111	Book 1, Chapter 7, pp. 81–82	Book 1, Chapter 10, p.140
Book 1, Chapter 8, p. 112	Book 1, Chapter 8, p. 107	
Book 1, Chapter 8, p. 113	Book 1, Chapter 9, p. 133	
Book 1, Chapter 8, p. 122		
Book 1, Chapter 9, p. 131		
BOOK 2		
Book 2, Chapter 3, pp. 45–46	Book 2, Chapter 1, p. 7	Book 2, Chapter 6, p. 95
Book 2, Chapter 5, p. 71	Book 2, Chapter 1, p. 12	Book 2, Chapter 6, p. 105
Book 2, Chapter 9, p. 143	Book 2, Chapter 1, p. 15	
	Book 2, Chapter 1, p. 97	
	Book 2, Chapter 3, p. 50	
	Book 2, Chapter 5, p. 73	
	Book 2, Chapter 8, p. 126	
	Book 2, Chapter 9, p. 147	
	Book 2, Chapter 9, p. 150	

TRANSCENDENCE

Humour	Gratitude	Appreciation of beauty	Hope	Spirituality
BOOK 1				
Book 1, Chapter 1, pp. 2–3	Book 1, Chapter 2, p. 29	Book 1, Introduction	Book 1, Chapter 1, pp. 12–13	Book 1, Chapter 8, p. 103
Book 1, Chapter 1, p. 6	Book 1, Chapter 4, p. 42	Book 1, Chapter 4, p. 43	Book 1, Chapter 5, p. 53	Book 1, Chapter 10, p. 135
Book 1, Chapter 3, p. 30	Book 1, Chapter 6, pp. 77–78	Book 1, Chapter 6, p. 68	Book 1, Chapter 8, p. 100	
Book 1, Chapter 4, p. 40	Book 1, Chapter 8, p. 115	Book 1, Chapter 10, p. 146		
Book 1, Chapter 4, p. 43	Book 1, Chapter 8, p. 117			
Book 1, Chapter 4, p. 48	Book 1, Chapter 10, pp. 136–137			
Book 1, Chapter 7, p. 94				
BOOK 2				
Book 2, Chapter 3, p. 38	Book 2, Chapter 1, p. 8	Book 2, Chapter 4, p. 54	Book 2, Chapter 2, p. 21	Book 2, Contradiction p. i
	Book 2, Chapter 5, p. 79	Book 2, Chapter 5, p. 73	Book 2, Chapter 3, p. 30	Book 2, Contradiction p. ii
	Book 2, Chapter 8, p. 129	Book 2, Chapter 5, p. 75	Book 2, Chapter 3, p. 41	Book 2, Chapter 7, p. 106
	Book 2, Chapter 9, p. 150	Book 2, Chapter 5, p. 79	Book 2, Chapter 9, p. 145	Book 2, Chapter 10, p. 169
	Book 2, Chapter 9, p. 158	Book 2, Chapter 6, p. 90	Book 2, Chapter 10, pp. 168–169	Book 2, Chapter 10, p. 176
	Book 2, Chapter 10, p. 174	Book 2, Chapter 9, p. 146		
		Book 2, Chapter 9, p. 153		

TEMPERANCE

Humility and modesty	Self-regulation	Prudence	Forgiveness and mercy
BOOK 1			
Book 1, Chapter 1, p. 7	Book 1, Chapter 2, pp. 24– 25	Book 1, Chapter 1, p. 15	Book 1, Chapter 2, p. 26
Book 1, Chapter 3, p. 38	Book 1, Chapter 4, p. 46	Book 1, Chapter 7, p. 85	Book 1, Chapter 3, p. 48
Book 1, Chapter 7, p. 85	Book 1, Chapter 5, p. 60–62	Book 1, chapter 9, p. 131	Book 1, Chapter 6, p. 69
Book 1, Chapter 8, p. 116	Book 1, Chapter 5, p. 64		
Book 1, Chapter 9, p. 131			
BOOK 2			
Book 2, Chapter 8, p.138	Book 2, Chapter 1, p. 16	Book 2, Chapter 4, pp. 58–59	Book 2, Chapter 3, p. 41
Book 2, Chapter 9, p.149	Book 2, Chapter 3, p. 47	Book 2, Chapter 4, p. 60	Book 2, Chapter 4, pp. 67–68
Book 2, Chapter 9, p.150	Book 2, Chapter 3, p. 50	Book 2, Chapter 7, p. 110	
	Book 2, Chapter 7, p. 107	Book 2, Chapter 8, pp. 138–139	

APPENDIX D: CONSENT FORM

Informed consent form

A Bear of Very Little Brain: Positive Psychology Themes In the Stories of Winnie the Pooh

The aim of this study was to discover to what extent and in what ways positive psychology's twenty-four character strengths are present in the *Winnie the Pooh* books and how they are depicted. I invite you to participate in this study as a member of a peer review panel to review preliminary findings. Please read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to participate in the study. The research is being conducted by me, Lizette Dohmen (student number 45484740), as part of a dissertation requirement for a master's degree in Psychology at Unisa.

Background information:

Positive psychologists have tried to narrow down reasons which contribute to the concept of well-being. This has led to a diverse body of research but through literature review this study has found Peterson and Seligman's (2004) *Character Strengths and Virtues: A Handbook and Classification* to be the most inclusive categorisation.

Children's books have successfully been used to illustrate difficult psychological theories in the past and so the two books *Winnie the Pooh* and *The House at Pooh Corner* were chosen for this investigation. The texts were scrutinised to extract useful illustrations of Peterson and Seligman's (2004) twenty-four character strengths and 251 examples were extrapolated. As a member of this peer review panel I kindly ask that you not only re-examine and classify the extracts according to the defining criteria supplied, but also give your opinion during a group discussion on the findings.

Risks and benefits of being part of the study:

There should be no risk to your well-being as a participant. Your opinion is highly valued and your participation appreciated. All discussions will be a peer driven exchanging of ideas

Confidentiality:

The records of this study will be kept confidential. I will not include information that will make it possible to identify you in any way. Only on special written request from participants will such information be included in the study.

Voluntary nature of the study:

Your participation in this study is voluntary. If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time without penalty. Should you decide to withdraw, all data collected from you will be removed from record.

Statement of consent:

I, _____ have read the information and my questions answered to my satisfaction. I give my consent, by my own free will, to participate in this study.

Signature of study participant

Date

Print name of study participant

Signature of researcher (L. Dohmen)