



Winnie the Pooh

In the Classroom

ENG-3993

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1 Introduction

In this master's thesis, I have chosen to write about Winnie the Pooh, and the main characters of four children's books written by Alan Alexander Milne and illustrated by E.H. Sheppard in the 1920s. In this analysis I will refer to the collected stories and poems published in 1994. I am fascinated by the possibility that the characters of these stories can all be said to represent a part of the only human (boy) of the stories, Christopher Robin. The characters all have significant traits and all these traits can possibly be traits of one person. Anyone who has ever read, heard, or seen the books and movies of the popular bear would be capable of naming the most eminent characteristics of both Winnie the Pooh, Piglet, Rabbit, Tigger, Owl, Eeyore, and Kanga, and I intend to examine these characteristics with my initial question in mind. To do so I will use Frederick Crews' definition of traits from the book *Postmodern Pooh*. I will look at the traits in relation to the wisdom in Pooh with the book *Pooh and the Philosophers* by John Tyerman Williams as a guideline and I will use Glynis Hannell's book *Identifying children with special needs* to examine the traits in relation to students.

1.1 Statement of hypothesis

Can the characters in Winnie the Pooh be argued to be personifications of the various traits of Christopher Robin? And what can these traits tell us, when shown, in a pupil?

To illuminate my initial question I will start by introducing the author, with my main focus on his- and Winnie the Pooh's- career. This is relevant because of the fact that the books about Winnie the Pooh were written for the author's son, and it will in this respect be important to have some insight into the life and career of the man that made the characters that accompanied both his son, Christopher, and Christopher Robin, the character in the books.

The choice of approach will be explained as we go along, but as a starting point every theme we touch upon will have in common a strong focus on the characters of the stories. When we look at the different characters, we will also look at the characteristic traits in a pedagogical

and didactic perspective and thus shine some light on the different characters, and characteristics in that respect. The traits we will be looking at more closely are; Eeyore's melancholy, Piglet's timidity, Owl's pedantry, Kanga's maternal feeling, Tigger's exuberance, Pooh's narcissism, and Rabbit's authoritarianism. (Definition of traits from *Postmodern Pooh* by Frederick Crews, p.166) We will look at Pooh's narcissism in light of examples of his inordinate fascination with himself and excessive self-love, like his selfish constant quest for honey, inconsiderate of anyone else. “[...]Company means Food and Listening-to-Me-Humming and such like [...]” (Milne 1994: 29). Owl's pedantry is shown by his excessive concern with trivial things and outer formalities, like the use of long words to impress the others. Rabbit's authoritarianism is shown by his authoritarian attitude, and the fact that he sees the other animals, with the exception of Owl, as less smart, and because of that, in need of guidance. Kanga's maternal feeling is underlined by her constant obsession with Roo. Eeyore's melancholy, Piglet's timidity and Tigger's exuberance will be linked to different disorders in chapter six. The definition of the traits and the disorders they might be a symptom of will be examined closely.

Some of the interpretations of the Winnie the Pooh stories made in the book *Postmodern Pooh* by Frederic Crews show that we can look at the stories in a different light than the traditional one. Traditionally children's literature is interpreted in relation to children, and what they can learn from the stories they are told. The stories often have a moral purpose, like in Aesop's fables, to teach children the right thing to do in a given or general situation. The emphasis is often put on the fantasy world of the stories rather than on the traits of the characters. Even though other children's books might also have characters with traits like the ones in the Pooh stories, the more obvious traits in other stories might be heroism in a dangerous or difficult situation, cleverness when facing challenges, and morality in challenging situations. I am in no way saying that the Pooh stories lack these kinds of traits, nevertheless, the most obvious ones in this respect are the traits I have chosen to take a closer look at and these traits are more frequently observed in the classroom. Because the basis for this discussion is to see if the characteristics can all be Christopher Robin's, and if they are transferrable to different pupils in the classroom, it is relevant to look at some of the other interpretations made of the characters. *Postmodern Pooh* has a satirical approach, and one is not supposed to take the claims in it (too) seriously, nevertheless I chose to include this book in chapter three because of the different and new ways of reading the traditional stories. The

different essays show different ways of interpreting the characters; this is useful for this master's thesis.

In chapter four, I will look at the wisdom in Pooh, because it is important to recognize the underlying cleverness disclosed in the seemingly simple children's stories. In this discussion I will use John Tyerman Williams' book *Pooh and the Philosophers* to show the philosophical cleverness of Pooh. With this I will show that it is evident that not only children can learn something from Winnie the Pooh, but students of all ages. Nevertheless, this chapter is not a way of getting pupils to read the stories, but rather to show another way of using Pooh in a learning situation.

Because the claim is that the characters are really personifications of Christopher Robin's different characteristics I also have to include the real Christopher Robin, and to do this I will use his autobiography *The Enchanted Places* in chapter five. With regard to the characters, it is relevant to consider the life of the real boy that the stories were made for, besides, with some insight into Christopher Robin's life, the characters and their traits might possibly be easier to understand. To get a better understanding of the elements leading us to believe that the traits of the characters in the Pooh stories are really personifications of the different traits of Christopher Robin we need to look at the life of the boy who grew up with these stories. The autobiography gives us a unique peek into the making of the stories from the main person's perspective, and tells us about how some of the stories came to be. In this respect, the book is important to this thesis. By having an insight to the life of Christopher Robin Milne and the complexity of his mind, both the characters and the relevance to children are easier to comprehend. Every child is complex, consisting of more than one dominant trait, and this is illuminated by reviewing the boy's life.

The last chapter of this thesis is the most important one for the discussion of the pedagogical aspect, as I will look at the characters one by one, focusing on the personal trait of each of them that might be derived from Christopher Robin. In this chapter I will also be looking at each trait in reference to pupils, and explore the different approaches to the different special needs these traits might require. The traits of Piglet, Eeyore, and Tigger will be looked at

thoroughly, as their traits can be linked with three different diagnosed disorders, while the traits of Owl, Pooh, Rabbit, and Kanga will be looked at more in terms of identifying the trait, and determining if it can be a part of Christopher Robin's personality. Examples from Alan Alexander Milne's *Winnie the Pooh the Complete Collection of Stories and Poems* will be used. The book *Identifying Children with Special Needs* by Glynis Hannell provides us with checklists and action plans for teachers, and I will take a closer look at each trait, identify potential disorders, and relate it to a teacher-pupil situation. The traits will here be linked to different disorders, which they might or might not be a symptom of. This is not to indicate that a pupil with a given trait has to have a disorder, but rather to enlighten the disorder it might be a symptom of. I have chosen to use the traits given to the characters in Frederick Crews *Postmodern Pooh* and some of the traits are easier to detect than others. As a result, some of the characters' traits will be examined thoroughly, Eeyore's melancholy, Piglet's timidity and Tigger's exuberance, while others, Pooh's narcissism, Owl's pedantry, Kanga's maternal feeling, and Rabbit's authoritarianism will be more generally looked at in reference to the Pooh stories and examples of the trait from them. This is a logical approach both with respect to the traits, and with the length of this master's thesis in mind. In this chapter the question of the characters being a part of the boy, Christopher Robin, is firmly addressed and answered. The claim is that each trait can be a part of one child and because this discussion intends to examine the characters in relation to Christopher Robin, this is the natural part in which the question can be answered.

1.2 The pedagogical angle

The stories about Winnie the Pooh might, at first glance, seem to be more suited for children younger than the ones in my target group, which are pupils from thirteen to nineteen, as the Lektorutdanning is aimed at teaching in secondary education. Nevertheless, with this thesis I intend to prove that the stories are adaptable to classroom situations and schoolchildren of all ages. If not as stories read in class, then certainly as examples of the different kind of pupils one might encounter as a teacher. The characters in Winnie the Pooh and their traits offer a way of approaching the different needs a pupil may have by making them more harmless. While the stories in themselves might not interest students in their teens, the underlying wisdom might be a way of teaching them about the philosophers, or philosophy in a way which everyone can comprehend. However, it is important to remember that in this thesis the main focus is on the characters and their traits, and we will not go deeply into how to use

Winnie the Pooh to teach pupils about philosophy. Further, comparing the different traits of the different characters in Milne's texts to children with special needs can function as a helping hand for teachers. The main focus in this discussion is, then, not to find a way of teaching Winnie the Pooh stories to pupils in secondary education, but rather to be able to use these stories as a helping hand in identifying different traits in children that might or might not need special attention. In addition, if the trait is a symptom of a disorder, the stories of Winnie the Pooh can increase our understanding of the human mind beyond psychology and professional pedagogics.

The characteristics of children and the ability to recognise them is an important part of being a teacher, and the traits of the figures in Winnie the Pooh can illuminate some of the traits one is likely to encounter in the classroom. Because this is a master's thesis in the integrated program Lektorutdanning i språk og samfunnsfag-master (5årig), the entire thesis will, to some extent, be coloured by a pedagogical aspect in relation to the characters and pupils. The fact that the thesis has to have a pedagogical aspect played a part in the choice of text to analyse, as the pupils I will be working with is in their teens. The traits one sees in the Pooh characters can easily be applied to teenagers, and this fact makes the books about Winnie the Pooh relevant to my education and the profession I will enter. The fact that the characteristics I am looking for in the Pooh figures are characteristics every teacher is likely to encounter in pupils in the course of their working life makes the simile between Winnie the Pooh and pupils all the more relevant.

There are many characteristics in the Pooh books, and many of them could be analysed. The traits and the disorders that will be focused on in this thesis are traits that can advance creativity, imagination and humour, as well as invoking the behaviour this thesis focuses on. In this chapter of the thesis Glynnis Hannell's book, *Identifying children with special needs*, is the guideline to the different disorders the traits can possibly be a symptom of. The book provides guidelines on how to detect, manage, and possibly treat the disorders. This book suits the approach of the discussion in this thesis as the focus on the characters with traits that might be linked to disorders is emphasised.

1.3 Why Winnie the Pooh?

There are, of course, many other literary works that I could have used in the same context; nevertheless, I chose these because of the underlying element of both wisdom and complexity. This introduction can, to some extent explain why this paper is based around Winnie the Pooh, as opposed to other literature for children, such as *Charlie and the chocolate factory* or *Matilda*, by Roald Dahl, or the stories about *Mrs. Pepperpot* by Alf Prøysen. The question that got me interested in the Pooh stories; can the characters be part of Christopher Robin's personality? - could possibly be applied to other children's books, but the story behind the creation of Pooh made the choice to choose him and A.A. Milne's stories easy. I will quote Peter Hunt to explain the reason for choosing the stories about Pooh over other books written for children:

The *Pooh* books take on what is for children the ultimate in alien races – the adults. Unlike most children's books, where the adults are 'outside' the text, or distinctively of themselves, the adults in Milne's stories (ignoring the authorial characterisation) are of the same apparent species as the children. The conflict is internal. Thus we find Pooh (the bland, the confident, the mystic child), and his friend Piglet (the small, nervous, but very brave child), aided (slightly) by Tigger (the wild child) and Roo (the baby), pitted against a formidable array of adult traits. There is Rabbit (the egocentric, sarcastic boss), Owl (the pretentious and insecure egocentric adult), Eeyore (the depressive egocentric), and Kanga (the loving, but firm mother); each of them represent conflict of one kind or another, a way for the reader (the child) to fantasise superiority or victory in an alien world. (Hunt, 118)

Hunt's illustration emphasizes what makes the stories about Pooh special in comparison to other literature for children. The characters have the adult responsibility as well as being part of the childlike activities of the forest they live in. The animals all participate in the same activities, despite the fact that some of them inhabit the adult responsibility. Also, we see that the traits attributed to the characters in this article are easily comparable to the traits that will be further explored in this master's thesis.

2 The Author

The creator of Winnie the Pooh was Alan Alexander Milne, and he was born in London, on January 18, 1882. “Milne wrote, as all the best children’s writers do, ‘from a combination of memory, observation and imagination’.” (Thwaite 1992: 11). Long before he published any of his children’s books he was a well-known and rich playwright. In 1917 the first professional productions of one of his plays was launched, *Wurzel-Flummery*, and he continued writing plays throughout the 1930’s. His wish was to be remembered for his plays (Thwaite 1992: 30). The stage might have been a place for him to develop his characters and learning about the human mind, and in his autobiography Alan Alexander Milne comments on the fact that the critics pointed out that the hero of one of his latest plays were simply just Christopher Robin grown up (Thwaite 1992: 141). The characters of Winnie the Pooh and their traits are complex, like children also are. The author’s wish to be remembered for his plays can be said to have failed, but the characters might have gained from this wish.

2.1 His writing career

A.A. Milne started his writing career at the student magazine, *The Granta*, where he became editor in January 1902. After working as a freelance journalist in London he was, at the age of twenty-four, appointed Assistant Editor of the leading British humor magazine *Punch*. (Thwaite 1992: 22) In the period between 1903 and 1925, he wrote 18 plays and three novels. After the First World War A.A. Milne resigned from *Punch*, finding that he was no longer needed and there was no likelihood that he would ever be editor. He had married Daphne (Dorothy de Selincourt) in 1913, and in August of 1920 their son, Christopher Robin Milne, arrived, with the bear that would be known to the whole world as Winnie the Pooh arriving not long after. (Thwaite 1992: 36) The birth of his son marked a new path in his writing career, and the children’s books were published in the years after. The argument that the characters are personifications of the various traits of Christopher Robin is enhanced by the fact that A.A. Milne did not publish any children’s books before his son was born. The characters can in this way be argued to have been created as the characteristics of his son developed.

When We Were Very Young, the first children's book published by A.A. Milne in November 1924 (in both England and the U.S.), was clearly dedicated to his son Christopher Robin. (Thwaite 1992: 53) With his son, the arrival of Pooh, Eeyore and Piglet was a fact. At the time of this first edition Winnie the Pooh, still known as Edward Bear, has only two minor appearances (Thwaite 1992: 54-58). The name of Christopher Robin's toy bear came from a real bear in the London Zoo called Winnie, and a swan the family had called Pooh, and at the end of 1925 he appeared in a story for the very first time. *Eeyore has a Birthday* was published in 1926, and the book *Winnie-the-Pooh*, decorated by E.H. Shepard, was published the same year. According to the *New York Herald Tribune* the book was a success.

As you read the conviction grows on you that Mr Milne has done it again. There are not so very many books that, sitting reading all alone, you find yourself laughing aloud over. This is one of them. Here is nonsense in the best tradition... with the high seriousness about it that children and other wise people love. (Thwaite 1992: 99)

Further on *Now We Are Six* was published in 1927, in both England and America, and starred Pooh a great many times, as both Milne and Sheppard knew everyone would be looking for him after the great success the year before. (Thwaite 1992: 104) The fourth and last of the books, *The House at Pooh Corner*, introduces Tigger and the game of Poohsticks, but also reveals a more underlying theme considering the child growing up, and putting away childish things, like his toys.

2.2 The commercial success (and other products)

The success of Winnie the Pooh is evident, not only in the numbers of sold copies, but also in the number of other products sold by the use of the popular bear. In 1930, the first *Christopher Robin Birthday Book* was published and the Ashtead Pottery made a teaset for Princess Elizabeth, staring characters from Winnie the Pooh (Thwaite 1992: 118-119). Also, in the 1930's, there were soft toys, Christopher Robin dolls, sets with the animals in either ceramic or wood, board games, garden statues and bookends (Thwaite 1992: 138-139).

The rights to the Pooh books were left to four beneficiaries: his family, the Royal Literary Fund, Westminster School and the Garrick Club. His wife sold the rights to the Pooh-

characters to The Walt Disney Company. In 2001, the other beneficiaries sold their interest in the estate to the Disney Corporation for \$350m. Previously Disney had been paying twice-yearly royalties to these beneficiaries. (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/A._A._Milne) In 1966 Disney released the first film starring Winnie-the-Pooh. Originally, the film was meant to be a full-length feature, but the end result was the twenty-minute long *Winnie-the-Pooh and the Honey Tree*. In this first film, Piglet was not featured, and the Americans invented the Gopher. In addition, Disney songs replaced the Milne songs. In spite of the changes made by the Disney production, in an interview, Daphne Milne said:

Ever since I sold the film rights of the Pooh books to Mr Walt Disney, I had been wondering with some anxiety what he would make of them in a cartoon. I had confidence in Mr Disney's genius for handling imaginative themes – yet, one never knows whether one is going to agree! [...] If I did not like this version of Pooh I would feel deeply disappointed and hurt. Pooh is part of my life, part of my cherished memories. [...] It was all right. Nothing jarred. I was very relieved. (Thwaite 1992: 162)

The Pooh stories grew to become a big success and children embraced the characters. The world of Disney provides children all over the world with imaginary friends and a vivid fantasy world. Disney made the Pooh characters as popular as Donald Duck and Mickey Mouse. In this way, the stories influence children in many ways, and with Disney they were made more accessible.

More Pooh short features followed, four in all, and the characters appeared in other, new stories, and with the stories came the merchandise. Many regard the new features as bad for Pooh's image and career. They have nothing to do with either A.A. Milne, or E.H. Shepard. Nevertheless, the merchandise proved Pooh to be one of Disney's most successful character's since Mickey Mouse. In later years Disney has realized the value of the Shepard material itself, and is marketing merchandise with the authentic Shepard images. (Thwaite 1992: 163) In 1979 Pooh and his friends crowned their career by appearing on a British postage stamp. (Thwaite 1992: 178) Both in 1976 and in 1986 the birthday of Winnie-the-Pooh was celebrated all over the world, and the list of books and other features is endless.

Milne had been a success on the radio from the beginning. Already from the 1920s the Pooh songs were sung on the radio frequently. From 1929 the stories were read as regularly as the songs were sung. In 1933 and 1934 there were as many as eight Milne programs on ‘Children’s hour’ , but then there seems to have been a change, and hardly anything of Milne was heard until 1939. In the period that war was declared Winnie the Pooh was heard every Friday from 7 July until 29 September, and the following year stories from *The House at Pooh Corner* were regularly broadcast. After the war series of readings from the Pooh books were heard more or less every year. Pooh’s first appearance on TV in January 1952 does not seem to have been a success, as it was never repeated, but after 1975 William Rushton’s *Jackanory* readings were regularly repeated. In the theatre Winnie-the-Pooh never seems to quite have got a hold on things. Winnie-the-Pooh was, by 1992, translated into thirty-one languages: Afrikaans, Breton, Bulgarian, Castilian, Catalan, Chinese, Czech, Danish, Dutch, Finnish, French, Frisian, German, Greek, Hebrew, Hungarian, Icelandic, Italian, Japanese, Macedonian, Norwegian, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Serbo-Croat, Slovak, Slovene, Swedish, Thai, Esperanto and Latin.(Thwaite 1992: 187-190) There is no doubt that the popularity of Pooh will continue. There are not many people today that do not, in some way, know about the bear and his friends, and the stories are still being told to children, and grown-ups, and still will, for years to come.

2.3 Autobiography

In September 1939 Milne published his autobiography, *It’s Too Late Now*, and the book sold extremely well both in England and America. The book was chiefly concerned with his childhood, and only seven pages were spent on the children’s books. Even though he would not admit to being most interested in childhood, he devoted more than half of the book to his own beginnings. (Thwaite 1992: 141) In 1956 Alan Alexander Milne died, at the age of seventy-four. The fact that he spent such a great part of his autobiography on his own childhood might be a way of explaining his talent for writing for children, even though he himself did not prefer this writing. The fascination of his own beginning made him capable of seeing the world as a child, thus giving him a unique advantage when writing the Pooh stories.

The life of Alan Alexander Milne can in many ways be said to be represented by the stories of Winnie the Pooh. From the beginning of his writing career his dream was to be a playwright. However, the children's books are the work that has stood the test of time. In relation to the topic of this thesis, the success of his stories might have a connection to his fascination of his own beginnings, and later the childhood of his only son. It is in many ways possible to link this fascination to the Pooh stories, and the characters in them and in this way see the connection between the life of the author and the characters. The different aspects of personality and figures in the stories can be representative of all children and youth, which we will look at more closely in chapter six of this thesis.

3 Postmodern Pooh

To illuminate the claim made in the statement of hypothesis it is interesting to see what others have claimed about the Winnie the Pooh stories, with our main focus on the characters. In order to do this I have chosen to look at *Postmodern Pooh* by Frederick Crews because it features many different interpretations of the stories and the characters. Crews wrote *The Pooh Perplex*, as a collection of satirical essays allegedly written by different scholars about the underlying topics in the stories by A.A. Milne, in 1963. Then, thirty-eight years later, he decided to write a new one, which got the title *Postmodern Pooh*. The different essays in the latter book sheds some light on the very different ways of interpreting the different stories about Winnie-the-Pooh. The opinions and interpretations in these essays might be said to go rather far, considering what one might want to think about the hidden meanings in Pooh, nevertheless, it is important to be aware of the different ways it is possible to interpret these, seemingly innocent, children's stories.

Postmodern Pooh picks up where The Pooh Perplex left off all those years ago. Purporting to be the proceedings of a forum on Pooh convened at the Modern Language Association's annual convention, Postmodern Pooh parodies the academic fads and figures that hold sway at the millennium. (<http://januarmagazine.com/features/poohexc.html>)

The extreme meanings and statements in this book are many and the different essays, while they might be angled in different ways, all share the intent to shock. The book is said to consist of the different papers from the panel participating in “[...] the Modern Language Association's December 2000 convention in Washington, D.C.” (Crews 2001: xiv) Crews writes in the preface that;

I owe this happy outcome to Princeton's great scholar-critic N. Mack Hobbs. He it was who revived my faith that Pooh could still reward inquiry from any critical quarter, even the most arcane; who conceived of an instrumentality for generating completely fresh essays, not already printed ones such as those I had harvested from journals back in 1963; and who, with selfless dedication both to me personally and to the cause of disinterested learning, saw the entire project through to completion. (Crews 2001: xii)

I will focus on the different contributors' views of the different characters, and their traits and relation to each other. To start off we will have a look at the first article, by Felicia

Marronnez. According to Marronnez, Pooh; “[...] seeks nothing, perceives nothing, propounds nothing, but merely sings the noncommittally conditional, innocently egoistic “I could spend a happy morning / Being Pooh.”” (Crews 2001: 6) The claim that is made by this statement is that Pooh does not reach for anything other than the honey he craves to eat. He spends his time happy being warm in the sun, and almost forgetting what he was on his way to do, all because he thinks of nothing other than himself. As it so happens, in this particular excerpt he is on his way to see Rabbit, another character that the author has a strong opinion about.

Rabbit the nosy busybody, the restless, envious brain, the all-around expert who always gets it wrong. Rabbit is Discourse itself, particularly in its most seductively “present” form, speech. (Crews 2001: 7)

The characters are all given individual traits by their creator, and in this essay the traits are being pulled out and examined for what they really are. The only thing that truly matters to Pooh, it is claimed, is his next honey fix. If the means to getting the honey is to endure the talking of Rabbit, then so be it, but even to get his fix Pooh is not completely willing to endure his friend.

[...] Pooh, in Rabbit’s company somewhat later, gets “into a comfortable position for not listening to Rabbit.” Here he attunes himself, defensively, to gentle forest sounds “which all seemed to be saying to Pooh, ‘Don’t listen to Rabbit, listen to me.’ But Rabbit, of course, prevails, and Pooh is swept from trance into transaction yet again. (Crews 2001: 7)

The essay author argues that Winnie the Pooh is a freeloader, representing no positive social traits if you attend to him with no sentimentality. These claims fits perfectly in regard to the trait given Pooh by Hobbs, and this will be further explored in a later chapter. Because it is claimed that Pooh is narcissistic the examples used are relevant for the rest of this master’s thesis. However, there is no need to think that the other characters are getting a free pass.
Christopher Robin;

[...] from the animals' occluded point of view, is assumed to be utterly loyal and attentive to them. As we progress toward the dissonant climax of *The House at Pooh Corner*, however, it becomes increasingly apparent that Christopher is coming under the thrall of that deadly Pied Piper, Western culture. (Crews 2001: 10)

It is assumed that Christopher Robin, like Rabbit and Owl (at the very least think themselves to be), will be trained to be an intellectual, and thus will be dull and self-absorbed as every scholar is. Eventually, education will take the place of Christopher Robin's animal friends.

One of the other authors in the book, Carla Gulag, compares Christopher Robin to Mao. According to her; "He is a distinctly superior figure who, however, behaves neither like a feudal lord nor like a robber baron; he just drops in from time to time to see how his little friends are doing and to lend a helping hand when they're confused" (Crews 2001: 40).

According to Gulag Mao was a mild educator who cannot be blamed for the violence in his reign. "Mao displayed the same peaceable avuncularity as Christopher Robin, whom we can now correctly identify, in the Political Unconscious of Pooh, as a proleptic Mao figure." (Crews 2001: 41) In this respect, Christopher Robin seemingly is the obvious leader, the superior of the characters. The animals of the stories need him to guide them, to help them when they are confused. This makes him the Mao figure, because he functions to them as Mao, supposedly, did to the people of China, as a guide to a better way of life, because he is, by far, the one with the most knowledge and wisdom. The animals need help in all kinds of situations, and Christopher Robin is always the one they turn to. In that way he is the leader, and if something is unclear Christopher Robin's answer is always taken to be the right one, regardless of his real ability to answer said question. This role is inevitably a confidence boost for him and the traits of each character, in the concrete situations, might also be to some extent suppressed with the reassurance that they are given the answer to a particular question or issue. This, with the claim set for this thesis in mind, might be Christopher Robin trying to suppress his different traits, by reassuring himself that he has the answers to issues that worry him.

Sisera Catheter claims that the Pooh stories *Just Lack a Woman*. The gender of the characters and the lack of sexual awareness within them is a most interesting subject in relevance to their personality and the claim that they all represent a part of Christopher Robin. Can the fact that the female gender is severely underrepresented be explained by the fact that they are all inspired by the little boy of the stories? The only female, Kanga, was also originally a male. Catheter claims that the lack of female influence in the books can be seen in the light of the situation in the Milne household. According to Catheter, Daphne Milne had no special interest in her son, and had no trouble with him being away at school for long periods at a time. Further, her lack of interest is also implied by the monopoly that Alan Alexander Milne had at bedtime. The stories were made for father and son, the only mentioning of Daphne was in the dedication; “To Her... Because We Love You”, and Catheter claims, rather boldly, that no one who knew the Milne household was fooled by this dedication. (Crews 2001: 50-51)

Although difficult to take seriously, there are some points in Catheter’s essay worth mentioning. She is concerned with sexuality, and especially the gay aspect of the stories. Since the focus is a bit off the side from what we are concerned with, we will look at only part of her claim. The most interesting in this essay might be the claim that the animals in *Pooh* might possibly be hermaphrodites. Catheter uses the incident when Eeyore lost his tail to illustrate the claim. (Crews 2001: 57-58) As concerns the real Christopher Robin, this is an interesting point to make. The boy was, from an early age, mistaken for a girl more than once, and his long curly hair and girlish clothes did not make it any harder to make that mistake. She also claims that Pooh and Piglet living together can be compared to a gay marriage, even though not a monogamous one. (Crews 2001: 60) So, the sexuality in Pooh might be an interesting topic, but for now, our only concern with it is in regard to the traits of the characters. Christopher Robin, in addition to looking like a girl, spent a great deal of time with his Nanny, and the strongest influence on him, as a result, was from a female. The stories, though not all real of course, are generally known to be inspired by him, and it is easy to assume that even the stories made up entirely by A.A. Milne himself is made from his perception of his son.

Moving along to Orpheus Bruno, we will see that it is possible to compare Pooh to Shakespeare. According to Bruno, the masterworks of Shakespeare are evident in Milne’s writing, and he gives concrete examples of comparisons in the texts. He compares Eeyore to the melancholy Great Dane, and claims that “[...] Milne’s imagination was caught up not only

in Hamlet's plight but in the doomed Ophelia's as well." (Crews 2001: 71) Even so, the best example he uses is from the last of the four books, *The House at Pooh Corner*, and concerns itself with the happy ending one is used to in literature for children. When reading a children's book the reader automatically assumes that the ending will turn the story around and everything will end well, regardless of how hopeless the situation might be. In this book however, the situation is different and Bruno points out that:

No more in *The House at Pooh Corner* than in *King Lear* do we find the hero repaid with good fortune for his admirable traits and for the many indignities he has been made to suffer. Lear dies, heartbroken, over the corpse of Cordelia. Pooh will be unceremoniously tossed into an attic by some domestic factotum as Christopher Robin, putting away childish things, looks ahead to the well-known stages of English character building: Schoolwork, spanking, sodomy, self-abuse, and eventually espousal to a bucktoothed stick. (Crews 2001: 71)

One could both agree and disagree with the statements above, but one fact is inevitable; Pooh will eventually end up in the attic, so to speak. Never mind the spanking, and self-abuse, the main points made are true. Christopher Robin, by the simple truth that he is a boy, will eventually become a man. Nevertheless, even though it is Christopher Robin that survives, in the minds of the public, the reader, it is Pooh who has earned our lifelong affection.

Renee Francis raises the issue of the animals used in the stories, and claims that we are dealing with types, and not individual animals. The wise Owl, the squealy Piglet and so on, are not wild, but domestic:

Their sustenance and safety are guaranteed by Christopher Robin, and, in the discreetly obscured background, by his parents. Hence their evolutionary fitness is staked not on their ability to breed and to protect offspring but on their attractiveness to their caretakers. Far from being threatened with extinction by their ability to find their way home through the mist or to tell the difference between real and imaginary threats, they help themselves precisely by being helpless. (Crews 2001: 110)

According to Francis the animals represent types, and the different types go along together out of sheer necessity. The whole environment in Pooh depends on everyone being benign, and it works because of their interest as domestic breeds to do so. Further, the animals are relying on

Christopher Robin to be the helping hand in any given situation, leaving the animals dependent on their own helplessness. In this way it is also possible to come to the conclusion that the animals are not beasts at all, but have acquired as many human traits as they need to be completely domestic. (Crews 2001: 109-111)

Dudley Cravat III tells it like it is, and should be:

[...] dispense with all “theory” and accept the work as it is. The characters’ well-trimmed fur and feathers, their diffident and tactful manners, their geniality and community concern all attest to the author’s transparent aim, that of imparting Western Values to a conservatively attired little lad of sound English stock. [...] *Pooh* tells us that our democratic cultural tradition – derived from authors probably unknown to you, such as the ancient Greek philosopher Plato and the early renaissance Florentine poet Dante Alighieri – is accessible to any child, even one born with the admittedly grave handicaps of poverty and ethnicity. (Crews 2001: 159)

As we will see in chapter four about Pooh and the philosophers, the wisdom in Pooh is an accessible way of teaching children, of all ages, about the great thinkers of the world. As Cravat points out, the social situation does not limit the child’s ability to grasp the knowledge.

The final entry in the book is made by the man who initiated it in the first place, N. Mack Hobbs, and he starts off by acknowledging *Pooh* as a true classic. He goes on to give every character its traits, and it is these traits that we are especially interested in and will examine more closely in this thesis. “Eeyore’s “reality” is wholly governed by melancholy, Piglet’s by timidity, Owl’s by pedantry, Kanga’s by maternal feeling, Tigger’s by exuberance, Pooh’s by narcissism, and Rabbit’s by authoritarianism.” (Crews 2001: 166) Further, Hobbs comments that:

Milne tells us the story of his telling the stories to Christopher, who is hearing himself represented in those stories as an omnicompetent resolver of plot entanglements – when of course it’s only Milne (subtle mocker of his only child) who plays that role. The author lets each of his audiences – the fictive Christopher, the real one, children, and us adults – see only as much of his intent as he thinks we can handle. (Crews 2001: 166)

The potential for interpretations of *Pooh* is endless, and the search for the truth about the book, as a consequence, will be endless as well. There is no simple answer to how we are supposed to interpret the stories, and while every author of the book we are looking at obviously stands by their claims and interpretations, there is no reason why we should do the same. As Hobbs puts it:

Your role isn't to second my opinion but to crank out some analytical prose of your own – preferably something very different, so that the presses can keep humming and we can all (well, most of us) retain our jobs and keep making the conference rounds. (Crews 2001: 168)

And that is exactly the purpose of this discussion. We will examine if the initial claim of this master's thesis can be said to be true by looking at the character's and their personalities with emphasis on the possibility that they are all part of Christopher Robin's personality. The findings are one way, among many, to interpret the Winnie the Pooh stories. The claim that the characters are personifications of the different traits of Christopher Robin will be the starting point when taking a closer look at them. The different traits have been brought to our attention by many of the (alleged) contributors in Crews *Postmodern Pooh*, and we will make use of them when making interpretations of our own. In order to confirm or reject the claim which is the starting point of this paper it is important to have other critics in mind. The interpretations of Winnie the Pooh examined in this chapter are transmittable to the theme of character and will be referred to in later parts of this thesis. The wonderful fact about any literature is that nothing can be known with any certainty, and “knowledge is socially constructed. Knowledge is simply what the powerful want the powerless to believe – and that gets accomplished through rhetoric.” (Crews 2001: 171)

4 The Wisdom in Pooh; Pooh and the Philosophers

According to John Tyerman Williams, the author of *Pooh and the Philosophers*, Pooh is a bear of enormous brain. In his book he shows that the wisdom in *Winnie-the-Pooh* and *The House at Pooh Corner* contains the whole of western philosophy. As we have seen in the previous chapter, Cravat III also state that

Pooh tells us that our democratic cultural tradition – derived from authors probably unknown to you, such as the ancient Greek philosopher Plato and the early renaissance Florentine poet Dante Alighieri – is accessible to any child, even one born with the admittedly grave handicaps of poverty and ethnicity. (Crews 2001: 159)

We will look at some of Williams' interpretations of the stories concerning the deeper meaning behind Pooh's actions. The first example Williams points out is in relevance to the Greek philosophers and Pooh and the balloon incident. The use of a balloon to try to get to the honey is significant but also the honey in itself needs closer examination. The deeper meaning of 'honey', in this case, might just be philosophic truth. By listening to the voice within, Pooh has achieved enlightenment. The deeper meaning of 'honey' then is the quest for enlightenment, shown by examples like

[...] in St Matthew's Gospel, which tells us that John the Baptist fed on 'locusts and wild honey'; in Dean Swift, who associated honey with 'the two noblest of things, which are sweetness and light'; and in the hymn that describes the heavenly Jerusalem as 'with milk and honey blest'. These quotations – chosen out of many – make it clear that there was an ancient and persistent tradition which made honey a symbol either of some spiritual quest, as in St John's case, or the reward of the successful questor, as in the other examples. (Williams 1995: 6-7)

Further, one has to look at the balloon as well, as it is equally important. The elementary symbolism is the earth, obviously enough, but Williams takes it one-step further and calls the balloon "the hypothesis that the earth was a sphere" (Williams 1995: 10) what Winnie the Pooh then set out to do was to bring the two together. Does that mean that he failed? He does not get the honey, and Christopher Robin has to shoot the balloon in order to get him down. Pooh's explanation is that; "These are the wrong sort of bees... So I should think they make the wrong sort of honey." (Williams 1995: 10) Thus, he concludes that something in his

hypothesis was incorrect. This is not the last time the connection is made between honey and a balloon. When Eeyore celebrates his birthday, Pooh decides to give him a small jar of honey, and when meeting Piglet, he encourages his suggestion that he should give him a balloon. Neither the honey, nor the balloon reaches Eeyore in its original state. Piglet trips and bursts the balloon, and Pooh eats the honey himself, leaving Eeyore with “a useful pot”. Even though one might think that the gifts were inconsiderate at first, Williams’s points out the fact that Eeyore, in the story, is “as happy as can be”. The gifts might not have suited anyone else, but Pooh had the insight to know that it suited Eeyore. (Williams 1995: 16-19) With the already mentioned symbolic meaning of the two in mind, one might admire Pooh’s intellect.

He realized that such a simple mind as Eeyore’s could not accept the heliocentric theory at once. He must be brought to it step by step. [...] The deflation of the balloon suggests the difficulty Eeyore would have had in accepting a spherical earth at this stage of his intellectual development. (Williams 1995: 19-20)

Willingly or not, what Pooh has shown is that the intellectual development of Eeyore, or any child, consists of several steps.

4.1 Pooh and Plato

According to Plato, poets had no place in his ideal Republic, mainly because they told lies. Even so, he later stated; “that poetry should return, if she can make her defense in lyric or other metre.” (Williams 1995: 22) When Pooh is on his way to visit Christopher Robin he composes a new song, and the song ends with the line; “And I’ll have a little something in an hour or two!” (Williams 1995: 21) When realizing that the last line will be in place long before the estimated time in the line, Winnie the Pooh turns it in to a hum. A line in his song cannot be a lie. “This is the vital Platonic connection”. (Williams 1995: 21) In a learning situation, the philosophy of Plato might be difficult to grasp for any child. With this example from the Pooh stories the Platonic connection is made accessible for children of all ages, and might help to enlighten the philosophical aspect when learning about the philosophers. However, as this discussion is not chiefly concerned with how to teach philosophy to children we will move on to Aristotle.

4.2 Pooh and Aristotle

The philosophy of Aristotle is also represented in *Winnie-the-Pooh*. Within three lines Pooh manages to demonstrate Aristotle's logic, two of his four Causes, and his teleological approach:

If there's a buzzing-noise, somebody's making a buzzing-noise, and the only reason for making a buzzing-noise that I know of is because you're a bee. And the only reason for being a bee that I know of is making honey... And the only reason for making honey is so as I can eat it. (Williams 1995: 35-36)

Here we can see what Aristotle called Efficient Cause; the effect – buzzing – has a cause. Further, Pooh concludes that bees have to be the Efficient Cause because the buzzing is the effect of their action, and this conclusion he draws from his knowledge of bees. Then Pooh assumes that there is a reason for the action, which here is a purpose, and the idea of purpose is fundamental to Aristotle's philosophy. Cause and effect, reason and purpose, and logical assumption from knowledge of nature prove that Pooh demonstrates Aristotle's logic. (Williams 1995: 34-36) Like with Plato, the philosophy of Aristotle can also be made more accessible to children by demonstrating it with examples from the Pooh stories. The concept of cause and effect might be difficult to grasp for any student, and in a teaching perspective the presentation of the theory is crucial for a child's understanding of it.

4.3 Pooh and the Seventeenth-Century Rationalists

We will look at more philosophers by using the buzzing - honey example. First we look at the Seventeenth-Century Rationalist' and the *a priori* method, "That is arguing from first principles instead of from knowledge gained by experience." (Williams 1995: 45) In the example we see that Pooh "powerfully expresses the view that reason alone can give him an adequate knowledge of the nature of bees." (Williams 1995: 46) Further Williams argues that the example; "[...] refers just as clearly to one of Leibniz's basic principles: 'the principle that a reason must be given...or, in the common phrase, that nothing happens without a cause'" (usually called the Principle of Sufficient reason)." (Williams 1995: 55) With one example Williams has proved that Pooh can be said to have knowledge, both of the Seventeenth-century rationalists as a whole, and of the individuals, like Leibniz. The use of the same

example may contribute to the understanding of the different principles of the different philosophers. The notion that nothing happens without a cause is made accessible by the use of a simple example from the Pooh stories.

4.4 Pooh and the British Empiricist Tradition

Keeping up with the philosophic mindset, Pooh and Piglet's plan to catch a Heffalump can be placed in the British empiricist tradition, with philosophers like Locke, Hume and Berkeley.

The Heffalump may be regarded as a symbol of philosophical truth: Seldom seen, difficult to recognize, and "hardly ever... caught". Expecting to capture it at the bottom of a pit would then be an interesting variant on its traditional habitat at the bottom of a well. (Williams 1995: 80)

The plan in itself is more or less unenforceable. They do not even know if they have ever seen a Heffalump, and have no idea how to catch one. Nevertheless, they set the trap and hope to catch one. Their plan can be compared to the philosophers search for truth; more or less impossible. "Empiricism is usually defined as the doctrine that all knowledge is derived from experience, whether that experience is the sort common to all of us or the specialized kind generally called science." (Williams 1995: 60) The notion of philosophical truth is complex. Not only children, but adults as well may have difficulties explaining the concept. By using the attempt to catch a Heffalump as an example the notion is made more tangible and students may find the philosophy of the British Empiricist Tradition easier to grasp.

4.5 Pooh and the German Philosophers

The German philosophers can also be found in Pooh, first and foremost Kant. Again, the buzzing-honey example can illustrate what we are looking for, in the philosophy of Kant. According to Williams, Pooh's assumption that the only reason for the bees to make honey is that he can eat it is not evidence of limited intelligence, on the contrary, it is Pooh's

[...] obvious teaching device for explaining Kant's basic principle that our knowledge is strictly conditioned by the constraints of our own minds. Pooh's (assumed) inability to conceive of bees as anything but honey producers, and honey except as food for him, represents Kant's doctrine of our inability to conceive of the world except in terms of space, time and causality. Pooh goes on to illustrate Kant's key distinction between things as we know them ('phenomena') and things in themselves ('noumena'). "You never can tell with bees," said Winnie-the-Pooh.' [...] a clear reference to Kant's basic teaching that things in themselves (noumena) are unknowable. (Williams 1995: 117-118)

In reference to Nietzsche Williams points out a whole line of comparisons to *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, and in the end concludes that it is Winnie the Pooh, and not the obvious Christopher Robin (being the only human in the story) that represents Zarathustra in the world of Pooh. Nevertheless, to illustrate the presents of Nietzsche we look to Eeyore, and the first presentation of him;

The old grey donkey, Eeyore, stood by himself in a thistly corner of the Forest, his front feet well apart, his head on one side, and thought about things. Sometimes he thought sadly to himself, 'why?' and sometimes he thought, 'Wherefore?' and sometimes he thought, 'Inasmuch as which?' and sometimes he didn't quite know what he was thinking about. (Williams 1995: 142)

What this tells us is that Eeyore sometimes gets lost in his own thought and

"[...] this is a clear concrete realization of number 11 in the 'Maxims and Arrows' of Nietzsche's *Twilight of the Idols*, which runs,

Can an ass be tragic? – To be crushed by a burden one can neither bear nor throw off? ... The case of the philosopher.

There we have it all: the sadness; the specifically philosophical questions; their sometimes paralyzing complexity." (Williams 1995: 142-143)

Eeyore's ability to ask the questions makes him a philosopher, even though he lacks the ability to answer the questions he asks. Although the realization that he has his own thoughts seems to limit him, the reality is that thinking makes him intellectual, in spite the fact that he is not seen as one of the more clever animals in the forest. The inability to answer the seemingly easy questions Eeyore is asking himself might even be the reason for his melancholy.

4.6 Pooh and Existentialism

Williams also has a chapter on Pooh and Existentialism, claiming that the philosophers of that time disagreed on many things, but “[...] shared one vital characteristic: all of them produced interesting and often lengthy footnotes to certain particular aspects of Winnie-the-Pooh.”

(Williams 1995: 146) Existentialism is concerned with the concept of time, and being and nothingness, and these are concepts found everywhere in the Winnie-the-Pooh books. The different philosophers have their own way of going into the different concepts, and we will not emphasize any particular one here. Instead, we will have a look at one example for each concept, taken from the stories. As regards to the concept of time, the very best example in my opinion is the end of *The House at Pooh Corner*. The last line goes; “... in that enchanted place on the top of the Forest, a little boy and his Bear will always be playing.” (Milne 1994: 249) The concept of time in this line is clearly obscure, the little boy and his Bear will always be playing because the stories will keep on getting read, but in the traditional meaning of time the statement is fundamentally wrong. Concerning being, once again we may use Pooh’s attempt to get honey from a tree with a balloon as an example. The philosopher Heidegger wrote *What is Called Thinking?* The Decisive question he asked was ““What is That which direct us into thinking?”” (Williams 1995: 152) Pooh decides that the bees are the wrong kind of bees, and therefore make the wrong kind of honey, after being stung by one, leading us to the obvious answer to Heidegger’s question; “In Pooh’s case, the answer is simply: being stung by a bee.” (Williams 1995: 152) Further Williams concludes that; “No doubt it was this that made Heidegger realize that what directed him into thinking was the question of Be(e)ing.” (Williams 1995: 152) In regard to the concept of nothingness Williams lists many examples from the Pooh stories, one of them being when Pooh goes around to Piglet’s house to see what he is doing, but because Piglet is not there he cannot do it, because “‘the more he looked inside the more Piglet wasn’t there’.” (Williams 1995: 162) The nothingness seems to be able to grow in the Pooh stories, and this particular example is compared to the philosopher Sartre, who wrote in his text, *Being and Nothingness*, that; ““Pierre absent haunts this café...”” (Williams 1995: 163), which Williams considers to be an equivalent to the Pooh example, though not as impressive. Time, being and nothingness, being the concerns of Existentialism, are all found in the Pooh stories. The philosophers of that time may be more difficult to understand than some of the others we have looked at because, as Williams notes, they disagreed on many things. However, the examples from the Pooh stories may help students to grasp the main concept of Existentialism.

With this, we leave the philosophers and their links to Winnie the Pooh. The wisdom in Pooh is endless, if one wants to seek it, and the points made by Williams, as he writes in his book, are only scratching the surface. In his Tailpiece the author states:

Now that we have come to the end of this brief and elementary introduction to philosophy in the world of Pooh, it must be abundantly clear that no other philosopher, no group of philosophers, has cultivated more than a small area of that world. From the earliest Greek cosmologists to the various schools that dominated the first half of this century, we have seen that the Great Bear contains them all. (Williams 1995: 182)

The different philosophies can be taught to children of any age with the help of the Pooh stories, and as we have seen, the examples make the philosophy easier to grasp, for both children and adults. Williams's shows that the actions of Pooh and the other characters can be said to have a deeper meaning than the one initially seen, and the Pooh stories are filled with examples of search for philosophical truth. As the buzzing-honey example has shown, one adventure in the world of Pooh can be used to illustrate, and explain many of the different philosopher's ideas. Eeyore's melancholy can also be seen in a different way when looking at the philosophy in Pooh. The negativity can be seen as a philosophical trait, and not only as a testament that he might be depressed. The ability to ask the questions he ponders on makes him a philosopher, even though he lacks the ability to answer said questions. We have merely scratched the surface of Williams's book and the content is far more intricate than it appears in this discussion. Nevertheless, his work helps to illustrate some of the wisdom one can derive from the stories about the "Bear of enormous brain", and for our use, this is sufficient.

5 The Enchanted Places

Christopher Robin Milne published his autobiography *The Enchanted Places* in 1974, and this book gives an exclusive and priceless view into the making of a myth. How was it to be the inspiration for world famous stories about your teddy bear? How was the life of the real Christopher Robin? And is it possible to find the traits of the characters in him, like it is claimed in this thesis? To understand the characteristics of the young Christopher Robin we will look at his own story.

5.1 The name

Christopher Robin Milne was born in August 1920. His parents wanted a girl, and had initially decided on the name Rosemary. When their son was born, they chose one name each and the name became Christopher Robin. A name wasted on him because he called himself Billy Moon as soon as he could talk. Billy was the name his parents first decided on for him, and Moon was his attempt at pronouncing Milne at an early age, and this stuck with him. Moon was the name his father used for his son from around 1925 and throughout his life, all others subsequently used Christopher, and that is the only name he felt to be really his. (Milne 1983: 18) The name Christopher Robin as a result, was reserved to the fictional character of his father's books for children, and that might be the reason why the name Billy Moon always felt more his for the boy that was really named Christopher Robin. The human character of the stories his father told him about Winnie the Pooh and the other animals in the Hundred Acre Wood acquired the name given to him, and thus it was no longer his.

5.2 Childhood

A very important person in Christopher's early life was his Nanny. In order to understand their bond one must keep in mind what time he was brought up in. His life consisted of his nursery where he and his Nanny lived together, played together, and ate together, leaving his occasional encounters with his parents to be the events of the day. He met his parents after breakfast, after tea, and in the dining-room in the evening, where he played with his mother until his Nanny came to take him to bed. His Nanny stayed with him to the age of nine, and his loyalty was to her. (Milne 1983: 19-33) In this respect the absent of parents in the stories about Winnie the Pooh can possibly be connected to the fact that Alan Alexander Milne

himself was absent in the everyday life of his son. In the stories, the one the animals of the forest turn to when they need something is Christopher Robin, not an adult, possibly because of the lack of one.

Christopher was a skinny, underweight child. He was what grown-ups describe as a fussy eater. What he liked he ate, but what he did not like he pushed around his plate until Nanny gave in and let him go. But, considering that he was not eating enough and was not nearly fat enough, something had to be done. His parents tried strengthening medicine, which Tigger is so fond of, they tried gymnasium classes, boxing classes, and finally they tried massage, but he remained resolutely underweight, and he stayed so all his life. His appearance was girlish, with his long hair at a time when boys did not have long hair, and his general behaviour was very shy and un-self-possessed. He describes himself as not very bright, but good with his hands, and possesses obvious pride in this (Milne 1983: 37-41). Many of these traits can be seen in the animals in the stories about Pooh. The only thing Tigger eats is Roo's strengthening medicine, and Piglet can be said to be both very shy and un-self-possessed. The young Christopher may have inspired the characters that his father created. The Christopher Robin of the stories on the other hand is not like Christopher when it comes to self-esteem. As Gulag emphasises in chapter three, the boy in the stories is the ultimate leader and the one the animals turn to in need of help or guidance. The role of the one with the most knowledge and wisdom might have been given to the fictional Christopher Robin by A.A. Milne to give his young son more confidence.

5.3 Christopher and Christopher Robin

The Christopher Robin of the books and the son of A.A. Milne are certainly not always the same person. The stories, although written for Christopher, have characters and characteristics that can be linked to numerous students of very diverse minds in school. The traits can represent all kinds of children, the shy Piglet, the exuberant Tigger, and the melancholy Eeyore are just a few examples of the many traits that can be found and transferred to the classroom. The fact that the stories were written for Christopher does not mean that every one of them was written about him. The stories could be about other children, or even adults. Both Christopher and his father were always looking for ideas, but it is difficult to know what came first. Did Christopher do something and then his father wrote about it, or did his father write

something, and then Christopher did it? According to Christopher it is difficult to be sure. No matter what came first, they used to stand on Pooh-stick Bridge, throwing sticks in the water. Ashdown forest felt like their forest and Pooh's world was born within the real world. The forest that Pooh inhabits and Ashdown forest are identical. (Milne 1983: 58- 61) Likewise, Owl's house is a real tree that Christopher used to climb to impress Nanny, and Pooh's house was at the end of the garden at Cotchford farm in an ancient walnut tree.

The tree was hollow inside and a great gash in its trunk had open up to make a door. It was the perfect tree house for a five year old. [...] Pooh and I claimed it. It was Pooh's house, really, but there was plenty of room for us both inside, and here we came to play our small, quiet, happy games together. (Milne 1983: 65)

Eeyore lived in a field a little like the field that Jessica, the family's donkey, lived in. Other than that the Milne family's animals bear no resemblance to those in the stories. They liked cats, and had quite a few of them, some travelling with them between London and Cotchford, and most of them staying at Cotchford. Christopher had other creatures, like beetles, frogs and mice, that came and went, but he never got the one animal he had really set his heart on: an elephant. (Milne 1983: 74)

The toys of the famous stories came to the family in different ways. Pooh was the oldest, given to Christopher when he was only a year old, and he was his inseparable companion for years to come. "As you find us in the poem "*Us Two*", so we were in real life." (Milne 1983: 76) Eeyore was also an early present and might not have been as gloomy as a new toy as he appears to be in the stories. He might have held his head a little higher in his younger days. Piglet was a gift from a neighbour, and these three were the first characters of the stories. Owl and Rabbit were invented because they were needed. Later on Kanga and Tigger arrived. They were presents from his parents; "carefully chosen, not just for the delight they might give to their new owner, but also for their literary possibilities" (Milne 1983: 77), and that completes the cast of the original Pooh stories. Their life began in the nursery, first with Christopher playing, giving them voices, life, then with him and his mother giving them more character. At this point his father could take over and start writing the stories, and the Pooh in Christopher's arms became the Pooh who had gotten stuck in Rabbit's hole, and always searched for honey. (Milne 1983: 76-78) The stories began with a boy playing with his toys,

consequently giving the toys bits and pieces of his own character. When playing with his mother, she too gave characteristics to them, and the stories written became part of the whole family. “When my father made Rabbit say to Owl: “You and I have brains. The others have fluff”, he might have been thinking of the de Selincourts.” (Milne 1983: 107) The de Selincourts, Christopher’s mother’s family, had money, and consequently his mother did not need to learn the same things as others needed to learn. Daphne did not know how to cook or clean, because someone had always done it for her. Nevertheless, what Daphne was good at was decorating and furnishing their houses. The only gloomy, dark rooms were Alan’s in their homes, and according to Christopher, the gloominess of Eeyore’s character was perhaps the sadness of his father.

So perhaps somewhere here – in his armchair, in his little, north-facing bedroom at Cotchford, in his dark cramped, dismal bedroom next door to Gertrude and Mrs. Gulliver in London – is to be found the original of Eeyore’s Gloomy Place. (Milne 1983: 131)

Alan kept his feelings to himself and in the same way that Christopher might have rubbed off on his toys, his father might have as well. (Milne 1983: 130-131) As the stories evolved so did the characteristics of the toys, and in this way the whole of the Milne household might very well have a part in the stories about Winnie the Pooh. The stories had the biggest impact on the life of Christopher, after all, they were written for him, but it influenced the life of the whole family. The insight into the life of Christopher shows that the boy of the stories is a complex person, that is worth looking at in this respect, namely in reference to children in school. Every character is complex, like the students in a classroom.

5.4 Characteristics of Christopher Robin

The childhood of Christopher Robin Milne is heavily coloured by his shyness and his need to cling to someone. As an only child his full affection and dependence was given, first to his Nanny, and later to his father. When he was nine his Nanny left, and his father replaced her. “For nearly ten years I had clung to Nanny. For nearly ten more years I was to cling to him, adoring him as I had adored Nanny, so that he too became almost a part of me, at first, no doubt, to his delight, later perhaps to his anxiety.” (Milne 1983: 141) Considering that he was a very sensitive child, their relationship was his way of communicating. The shyness made

him depend on his father but also made him immensely sensitive to criticism from him, so the latter had to be careful what he said to his son. (Milne 1983: 140-141)

I was shy, solitary, awkward in company, inarticulate in speech, becoming worse as I grew older. How lucky, then, I was to have parents who understood, [...] so that during the holidays it was only kind to allow me to enjoy myself in the shallows. [...] Alone with myself. Alone – yet never lonely. What bliss this was! (Milne 1983: 149-150)

The whole term-time spent at boarding-school left little time for Christopher to be alone, thus, made him spend a lot of time not being comfortable. The shyness of his nature made it difficult to be the famous Christopher Robin. Life at boarding-school made a split in him, the school-boy was separate from the home-boy and;

[...] it was now that began that love-hate relationship with my fictional namesake that has continued to this day. At home I still liked him [...] At school, however, I began to dislike him, and I found myself disliking him more and more the older I got. (Milne 1983: 97-98)

No wonder his parents let him have his alone time when he was home for the holidays. His father, doubtlessly, could relate in some way to his son's feelings, though not completely feeling the same. A teacher may today have satisfied Christopher's need for someone to cling to. In today's society, the role of the teacher is more diverse than it was at the time when Christopher attended boarding-school. Nowadays the teachers are expected to notice every child in the classroom, and be able to assist with ways to overcome obstacles, like Christopher's need to cling to someone. His nanny, and later his father, fulfilled this need and consequently the characteristics may not have been detected in the same way a teacher should be able to today. As chapter six will show, the different traits in the stories, and in Christopher, when seen in a student, may need attention from the teacher.

5.5 Living with the Fame

The fame of Christopher Robin Milne was not wanted for most of Christopher's life. Being the son of an author, and an author with great success even, was not much help to him. After the war, in 1947, he was back in London and in need of a job but feeling that he was; "[...] the

wrong person in the wrong place with qualifications nobody wanted.” (Milne 1983: 165) His father had no occupation in which the son could take over the family business; he had no trade to pass on. The period spent looking for work in London was the worst period for him, and he was filled with bitterness and resentment. His only solution was to escape from it all, to keep out of the limelight. He wrote no letters, gave no interviews, because; “It seemed to me, almost, that my father had got to where he was by climbing upon my infant shoulders, that he had filched from me my good name and had left me with nothing but the empty fame of being his son.” (Milne 1983: 165) In the end, having realized that if nobody wanted to employ him he would have to employ himself, and, after toying with the idea of selling furniture, he ended up deciding to sell books. He chose this occupation because it was something he and his wife could do together as partners, in a part of England of their own choosing. From 1951 they had a bookstore in Dartmouth and fortune smiled upon them. (Milne 1983: 165-168)

In the end we learn that the blessing cannot be separated from the curse and *The Enchanted Places* allows us to understand, or begin to comprehend, how it was, and is, to be Christopher Robin in the real world, outside the world of Pooh and his friends.

The first fairy to visit the cradle had said “He shall have his father’s brains and his mother’s hands.” When she had vanished a second fairy appeared. “And his name shall be famous throughout the world.” Yes, it was another one of those cryptic spells that fairies have always been so good at, those spells that sound like a blessing but are in fact something of a curse. To be fair, in my particular case, it was again a bit of both. It is tempting, but of course quite impossible, to try and separate the blessing from the curse, to weigh them up and calculate which has been the greater. Tempting but impossible, and I shall never know whether or not I would have been better off as Charles Robert – or even Rosemary. (Milne 1983: 169)

With these words, we leave Christopher, and move on to Christopher Robin, and the other characters of the Hundred Acre Wood. We will now explore the claim that the traits of the real boy, who was only playing with his toys, are evident in the inhabitants of the forest. In addition, we will in the next part of this thesis focus more thoroughly on the pedagogical aspect of these traits, as having relevance to a classroom situation in reference to teachers and pupils. Here we will look at each trait and discuss how one might be able to identify and deal with it in a classroom situation. In addition, this is where we look at the initial question of this

master's thesis; Can the characters all be argued to be personifications of the various traits of Christopher Robin's personality?

6 The characters and their traits in relation to students

When looking at the different characters one by one in relation to students, it is important to remember that the different traits we are looking for are not, necessarily, a way of identifying special needs. The traits we are looking at can all be found in any classroom and we will be looking at them in a general perspective to discuss whether there are any ways of dealing with the different traits that are worth taking a closer look at. However, we will also look at the traits that require more professional help than the teacher can provide. It is important to remember that all students are different. In every situation, each child has to be observed individually, and the traits and behaviour we will be looking at have to be adjusted to fit each pupil. The ways of identifying different needs in pupils requires thorough reviews of each individual child in different situations and with different approaches. The first observations will always be made by the teacher, or to some extent, the parents, depending on what signs is evident in the child.

Every professional working with children and adolescents will sometimes have concerns regarding a particular student's learning or behavioral difficulties. In this situation, the professional may need to adjust the student's program, adapt classroom procedures, and make a decision about whether to seek further advice. [...] All teachers continuously observe students, and such observations are the source of valuable information about the student's individual needs (Hannell 2006: 1).

In Glynis Hannell's book *Identifying Children with Special Needs*, we are provided with checklists to help determine if an individual student needs special attention, and further if the child in question needs more help than the teacher can provide. We will have a closer look at the checklists that are relevant for the traits of each of the characters in the Pooh stories, and to illustrate the way one can identify the traits we will include examples from the books about Winnie the Pooh. The focus here is to see how to identify the traits we have found (and will be looking at in examples) in the characters and how one can handle the different traits in an educational context. As a teacher, one needs to be able to help children with special needs, regardless of whether he or she has or has not been given a diagnosis. We will look at the characters and their traits systematically, including examples and checklists where this is relevant. In the discussion of each character, we will address the question of the individual character being a personification of a part of Christopher Robin.

The traits, as mentioned before, are Pooh's narcissism, Eeyore's melancholy, Piglet's timidity, Owl's pedantry, Kanga's maternal feeling, Tigger's exuberance, and Rabbit's authoritarianism. With these traits from Frederick Crews' book *Postmodern Pooh* as a starting point it is obvious that some of them are more definable, and more suited to examine children with special needs, than others. As a result, we will look at some of the characters traits more thoroughly than others. In the case of the trait not being linked to a disorder, the focus will be on the character and the possibility that he or she is a personification of various trait of Christopher Robin. The traits that has been chosen to be linked to different diagnoses and different situations will be examined more closely than the traits less definable concerning a disorder. Further, we will link the traits more thoroughly examined to different disorders on account of the fact that the trait can be a sign of, or a part of a disorder that needs to be diagnosed. E.g., Tigger's exuberance can be a sign of the Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (AD/HD), and Eeyore's melancholy can be a sign of depression, and so on.

6.1 Pooh's narcissism

The most distinct trait of Winnie the Pooh, according to Crews, is his narcissism. Dictionary.com defines narcissism as:

Inordinate fascination with oneself; excessive self-love; vanity. Synonyms: self-centeredness, smugness, egocentrism.

Psychoanalysis. Erotic gratification derived from admiration of one's own physical or mental attributes, being a normal condition at the infantile level of personality development (<http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/narcissism>).

This trait is repeatedly illustrated in the Pooh stories. We have already, in chapter three, page 13, looked at the incident where Pooh gets in a comfortable position for not listening to Rabbit, even though he needs to spend time with him in order to get the honey he wants. We get another example of Pooh's egocentric thinking when he goes visiting Rabbit. He sees a hole in the ground and reasons that the hole means Rabbit. “‘And Rabbit means Company,’ he said, ‘and Company means Food and Listening-to-Me-Humming and such like. [...]’” (Milne 1994: 29). As we can see by this example, Pooh is only concerned with himself, also in relation to others. This is completely in line with what the critic Marronnez said about Pooh in

chapter three, page 13. The only thing that truly matters to Pooh, she claims, is his next honey fix. If the means to getting the honey is to endure the talking of Rabbit, then so be it. When Piglet's house is totally surrounded by water he does not know what other to do than to throw a bottle with a small piece of paper in it into the water and hope that someone will find it and come and rescue him. The bottle reaches Pooh, but, self-absorbed as he is, being a bear of no brain, he immediately assumes that the P's on the paper stands for Pooh, and the message has to be an important message for just him. When he finds Christopher Robin and he reads the note aloud, Pooh is surprised to learn that the P's are Piglet's.

As to Pooh's narcissism being a part of Christopher Robin's character, the answer is yes. This trait might very well be personified in Winnie the Pooh while in truth it is a part of Christopher Robin's personality. As the trait, when displayed in a child, is natural. At the end of *Winnie the Pooh* A.A. Milne even gives a slight hint (if one chooses to interpret it that way) that Pooh and Christopher Robin is the same person. Christopher Robin is asking his father about Pooh.

“Was Pooh’s pencil case any better than mine?”

“It was just the same,” I said.

He nodded and went out... and in a moment I heard Winnie-the-Pooh – *bump, bump, bump* – going up the stairs behind him (Milne 1994: 120).

Although any child can have narcissistic features, we will not go further in to this trait in this discussion because what we are mainly interested in is the different special needs a pupil may have, and ways of identifying those needs. To centre the world around yourself is natural for children and teaching that takes the child's own interest and world as its point of departure is commendable. However, when shown in adults the trait may very well be a sign of some sort of disorder. There are many ways to integrate this trait in a diagnosis, but as this thesis is limited in length, and focused on the classroom, some of the other traits will be given more attention.

6.2 Owl's pedantry

As with Winnie the Pooh, Owl's trait will not be linked to a specific disorder in the same manner as Eeyore's, Tigger's and Piglet's. Nevertheless, we need to look at Owl's pedantry in relation to the character, and Christopher Robin. A pedantic person is excessively concerned with trivial things and formalities and is pathologically concerned with rules and regulations in every given situation. While this in itself might not be a sign of any disorder, a pedantic person might have an underlying problem, like depression or anxiety, which brings out the pedantic behaviour. The need to emphasize one's own learning and the inability to regard common sense in relation to learned knowledge is not necessarily a good quality.

There are numerous examples of Owl's pedantry, and we need to look at some of them. When all the animals are going on an expedition to find the North Pole, Owl demonstrates this trait when talking to Kanga; “[...] telling Kanga an Interesting Anecdote full of long words like Encyclopaedia and Rhododendron to which Kanga wasn't listening” (Milne 1994: 92). As we can see from this example his anecdote contains difficult words meant to impress, but they make no sense together. In another example, an autumn storm blows down the tree with Owl's house in it. At the time when this happens both Pooh and Piglet are visiting Owl and they all get stuck in the house, because what used to be a wall is now the floor, and what used to be the wall with the door in it, is now the ceiling. When Owl wants them to think about how to get out, he does not say it, but rather “if Pooh was sure that *was* all, they could now give their mind to the Problem of Escape” (Milne 1994: 223). Again, he tries to make himself seem more important by using language that is more intricate. When Pooh then has an idea as to what to do, and it involves Owl flying with Piglet on his back he is happy to explain exactly why he cannot do it.

Owl explained about the Necessary Dorsal Muscles. He had explained this to Pooh and Christopher Robin once before, and had been waiting ever since for a chance to do it again, because it is a thing which you can easily explain twice before anybody knows what you are talking about. (Milne 1994: 223)

The most striking characteristics of Owl is his need to seem important, even when he does not know what he is talking about. The strength he has is dependent on the other animals not understanding what he means.

The desire to stand out in the crowd is a feeling most has touched upon at one point or another. In the case of Owl and his pedantry his need to stand out is shown by his use of words that the other animals does not understand, and this is for him a way of feeling superior, when in fact he might not be at all. A part of Christopher Robin's personality might very well be, to some extent, like Owl, pedantry. Thus, once again, the answer to our question is yes; Owl's trait can also be a part of Christopher Robin's personality. As with Pooh's trait, pedantry does not necessarily indicate that a child distinguishes itself from the rest of the children. To some extent the need to stand out is justified by the sheer fact that the student is in his or her teens.

6.3 Rabbit's authoritarianism

The most distinct trait in Rabbit, according to Frederick Crews, is his authoritarianism. Dictionary.com defines authoritarian as:

Favoring complete obedience or subjection to authority as opposed to individual freedom: authoritarian principles; authoritarian attitudes.

of or pertaining to a governmental or political system, principle, or practice in which individual freedom is held as completely subordinate to the power or authority of the state, centered either in one person or a small group that is not constitutionally accountable to the people.

Exercising complete or almost complete control over the will of another or of others: an authoritarian parent. (<http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/authoritarian>)

As with Pooh and Owl, I have chosen to look at this trait briefly. There are many examples of Rabbit's authoritarianism in the Pooh stories and we shall look at some of them. The first example shows how Rabbit tries to rule by fear. When Kanga and Roo arrive in the forest, Rabbit is unsettled because of the change. He then makes a plan for him, Pooh, and Piglet to steal baby Roo to blackmail Kanga to leave the forest again. In both making and executing

this plan, he is the undisputed leader. When Pooh comments on the plan, Rabbit is quick to discourage him with “you haven’t any brain.” (Milne 1994: 74) Subdued as Pooh is, his reply shows that he does not wish to contradict Rabbit. “I know” (Milne 1994: 74) says Pooh. Another example shows how important Rabbit (thinks he) is. On his way to see Christopher Robin, he reasons with himself.

“After all,” said Rabbit to himself, “Christopher Robin depends on Me. He’s fond of Pooh and Piglet and Eeyore, and so am I, but they haven’t any Brain. Not to notice. And he respects Owl, because you can’t help respecting anybody who can spell TUESDAY, even if he doesn’t spell it right; but spelling isn’t everything. There are days when spelling Tuesday simply doesn’t count. And Kanga is too busy looking after Roo, and Roo is too young and Tigger is too bouncy to be of any help, so there’s really nobody but Me, when you come to look at it. I’ll go and see if there’s anything he wants doing, and then I’ll do it for him. It’s just the day for doing things.” (Milne 1994: 178-179)

As we can see, he exaggerates his own importance and finds ways to reduce the importance of the other animals, as a way of feeling superior. Nevertheless, if there is someone whom he can relate to, it is Owl. “You and I have brains. The others have fluff. If there is any thinking to be done in this Forest – and when I say thinking I mean *thinking* – you and I must do it.” (Milne 1994: 181) Even when he is the reason that Pooh, Piglet and himself are lost in the mist, there is a long silence “in which nobody thanked him for the nice walk they were having” (Milne 1994: 211). Even though Rabbit is the authoritarian of the characters, we cannot leave him without including Piglet and Pooh’s thoughts about him. “‘Rabbit’s clever,’ said Pooh thoughtfully. ‘Yes,’ said Piglet, ‘Rabbit’s clever’. ‘And he has Brain.’ ‘Yes,’ said Piglet, ‘Rabbit has Brain.’ There was a long silence. ‘I suppose,’ said Pooh, ‘that that’s why he never understands anything.’” (Milne 1994: 215-216)

Like in *Postmodern Pooh*, as illuminated in chapter three, page 13, the way of explaining Rabbit is as the know-it-all expert who always gets it wrong. To some extent, it is not wrong to say that most people have an authoritarian side, even though the degree of authoritarianism varies a great deal. In the case of Rabbit being a part of Christopher Robin’s personality the embodiment of an otherwise suppressed trait might be the way of explaining the connection. Christopher Robin, while a gentle and delicate child in most situations might, while playing with his toys, have an authoritarian side, that came into its own in just the right situations.

Again, the conclusion is yes; this trait, as the other, can also be a part of Christopher Robin's personality.

6.4 Kanga's maternal feeling

The trait Frederick Crews has given Kanga is her maternal feeling. Given that she is the only female in the stories, it is interesting to look at this trait, and her relation to the other characters. As with Pooh, Owl, and Rabbit however, the trait will not be linked to a specific disorder. (As we have seen when looking at Rabbit,) Kanga and Baby Roo arrived in the Hundred Acre Wood after the other animals. When Rabbit plans to steal Roo to blackmail Kanga to leave the forest, her maternity displays itself. Rabbit has a plan, and in that plan one of the points is that "Kanga never takes her eyes off Baby Roo, except when he's safely buttoned up in her pocket" (Milne 1994:75). Kanga is always concerned with her child, and she spends all her time fussing over Roo. In the story *Tiggers don't climb trees* we get some insight into her daily life. "Now it happened that Kanga felt rather motherly that morning, and wanting to Count Things – like Roo's vests, and how many pieces of soap there were left [...]" (Milne 1994: 169). This illustrate the maternal feeling that Kanga possesses. On another occasion, Roo falls in the river while playing Poohsticks with the other animals. When he sees Kanga coming he falls again, on purpose, because he knows that when his mother shows up he has to go home and go to bed. While I would hesitate to claim that Christopher Robin has a maternal side, it is possible to convert it to suit a boy. Kanga's maternal feeling might be, for example, a personification of Christopher Robin's sense of responsibility towards his toys. Kanga's trait can be a way of showing the underlying parent-child relationship that Peter Hunt claims is evident in the Pooh stories in his article, Winnie-the-Pooh and domestic fantasy. As he puts it, the characters are either representing children or adults, and in this respect, Kanga is one of the adults in the forest.

Unlike most children's books, where the adults are 'outside' the text, or distinctively of themselves, the adults in Milne's stories (ignoring the authorial characterisation) are of the same apparent species as the children. The conflict is internal. Thus we find Pooh (the bland, the confident, the mystic child), and his friend Piglet (the small, nervous, but very brave child), aided (slightly) by Tigger (the wild child) and Roo (the baby), pitted against a formidable array of adult traits. (Hunt: 118)

The children are part of the adult world in A.A. Milne's stories and in this way, Kanga can be the parental trait of Christopher Robin personified. As with the previous traits, this can also be said to be a rather normal feeling for a child. In every classroom there are some children that feel the responsibility to keep the other children in line more than others. One explanation might be that the child in question has the responsibility of younger siblings at home. As we can see then, the trait of Kanga can be a personification of a part of Christopher Robin's personality.

6.5 Eeyore's melancholy

Moving on to Eeyore, the trait we have chosen to focus on is melancholy, and as mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, melancholy can be a sign of depression. Depression is a serious condition that often needs to be treated and it is important, for a teacher, to take signs of this disorder seriously. Depression, in our sense of the word, is defined by dictionary.com as "sadness; gloom; dejection. Psychiatry: A condition of general emotional dejection and withdrawal; sadness greater and more prolonged than that warranted by any objective reason" (<http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/depression>). Whereas melancholy can be a passing gloominess and might not be evidence that a pupil suffers from depression it is important to take the signs seriously. In Glynis Hannell's book, *Identifying Children with Special Needs*, the author make use of a form to identify depression in children and adolescents. The form is organized in a series of questions with a scale from 0 to 3 for the answers, and the numbers represent the answer:

0 Not at all, does not apply

1 Mild, sometimes observed, applies to some extent

2 Moderate, often observed, certainly applies

3 Severe, frequently observed, strongly applies

The questions are organized in categories, and the categories are: Negative mood; Loss of interest and enjoyment; Social isolation; Peer group dependence; Changes in energy levels; Disturbed eating or sleeping patterns; Poor concentration; Low self-esteem; Preoccupation with negative, violent, or morbid ideas; and Family history.

The last part of the form is reserved for additional comments and observations. Every category is followed by a series of questions relevant to the headline and the result will therefore be individual, and the form has to be analysed to give valuable information about the child's state of mind (Hannell 2006: 55-57). A form like this can be very helpful in the interpretation of signs in a student, and provides the teacher with guidance to determine the seriousness of the melancholy. To be able to know when the pupil should undergo a test, as the one focused on in this paper, or others, it is important to know which signs to look for.

6.5.1 Causes

There are two main causes of depression, depression without a trigger, and depression with a trigger.

It is known that irregularities in the chemicals in the brain, which are called neurotransmitters, are implicated in Depression. Depression can therefore occur without any events acting as a trigger. Children and adolescents do of course sometimes experience very sad or traumatic events. There will be a natural period of grief or distress. Depression is diagnosed when the sad or negative feelings continue beyond the expected recovery time after such event (Hannell 2006: 58).

If a teacher suspects depression in a child, presumably the teacher knows if he or she has experienced a very sad or traumatic event, and will react accordingly.

Children and adolescents that are depressed often seem sad and/or withdrawn, but there are other signs to look for as well. The student in question will rarely use the term depression, but might complain that everything is boring, or express other negative feelings. Further, it is common for these children to isolate themselves, especially from close interpersonal contact. Loss of interest in achievement and indifference regarding punishment and rewards are easily written off as laziness, but might in fact be signs that need to be taken seriously, especially if they appear in addition to other signs on the checklist. The child's behaviour towards other pupils is often different from their behaviour towards adults. Other pupils might observe a cheerful outgoing behaviour, while the same student may be sullen, disrespectful, disruptive, and bad-tempered towards the teacher and other adults. Changes in sleep patterns and eating

patterns can also be symptoms of depression. (Hannell 2006: 58) “Some students with Depression may become overly concerned about their physical health, making constant complaints about minor aches and pains that do not prove to have any organic origin.” (Hannell 2006: 58) A person suffering from depression might use illness and other complaints to get the focus away from how they are feeling mentally. If a pupil that has not been complaining about illness in the past starts developing hypochondriac traits, the teacher should be aware of the link between this and depression.

Considering that this is just a brief summary of some of the signs one should look for if suspecting that a pupil is suffering from depression, it is easy to see the value of a form, like the one Hannell presents in her book. There are always individual differences in a classroom of students, but as an aid in discovering the seriousness of a pupil’s melancholy, the checklist is valuable.

6.5.2 Eeyore’s trait

There are many examples of Eeyore’s melancholy in the Pooh books. When Christopher Robin takes all the animals on an expedition to find the North Pole, Eeyore displays his general mood repeatedly. First, he makes it perfectly clear that what they are doing is all the same to him, and that he is just coming along to oblige. Secondly, he complains about the order in which they should walk, without even knowing what an expedition is, and without being able to pronounce the word. In other words, he has no way of knowing if the position given him is good or bad, but is determined to complain nevertheless. When everyone is sitting down to eat their provisions and Christopher Robin asks if everyone has something to eat Eeyore’s answer is: “‘All except me,’ [...] ‘As usual.’” (Milne 1994: 91) In addition, he keeps asking if anybody else is sitting on a thistle. As it happens, Pooh is, and he moves to let Eeyore eat. He then states:

‘It doesn’t do them any Good, you know, sitting on them,’ he went on, as he looked up munching. ‘Takes all the Life out of them. Remember that another time, all of you. A little Consideration, a little Thought for Others, makes all the difference’ (Milne 1994: 91).

The lack of interest, the indifference to the others around him and a general negativity (and the perception that the fact that Pooh happens to be sitting on a thistle means that he was being inconsiderate towards him) are all signs that one should be aware of, if displayed in a child. Nevertheless, as already mentioned, there is a significant difference between being melancholic and being depressed. When Piglet thinks about how Eeyore would handle a difficult situation he concludes that; “[...] Eeyore is so miserable anyhow that he wouldn’t mind about this” (Milne 1994: 100). Eeyore’s home is called his Gloomy Place, and for the bigger part of the stories in *Winnie the Pooh* and *The House at Pooh Corner* he does not have a house. When Rabbit is trying to find a new house for Owl after his tree fell down he gets tired of Eeyore’s complaints and tells him that he too has the opportunity to come visiting both him and the others in their houses instead of just standing in his own corner of the forest waiting for others to come to him. Rabbit actually gets through to him getting him to realize that he can drop by at any time, but his melancholy shines through at the end; “And if anybody says in a Loud Voice ‘Bother, it’s Eeyore,’ I can drop out again” (Milne 1994: 229). Nevertheless, the melancholy of Eeyore, while it might be a sign of both loneliness and feelings of isolation, is probably not a sign of a serious depression. According to Christopher Robin Milne, as we have seen in chapter five on page 29, his father possessed the only gloomy, dark rooms in their homes and according to Christopher the gloominess of Eeyore’s character was perhaps the sadness of his father. Eeyore’s behaviour, if observed in a student, should be taken seriously. A student with this behaviour should be considered as a student with possible depression, not dismissed on the account of it being a motivational problem. (Hannell 2006: 59) Even though Christopher himself speculated that the gloominess of Eeyore might be a characteristic of his father, it is not impossible that it is also a characteristic of a child. As concluded earlier, the melancholy of Eeyore might be a sign of loneliness, and feelings of isolation, and these feelings can be a part of any child, regardless of the outer factors. The melancholy personified by Eeyore could be one of Christopher Robin’s characteristics.

6.5.3 Managing the disorder

In the cases where the teacher and/or parents feel certain that the child in question is suffering from depression, professionals need to be involved. Initially the teacher will be of primary importance in recognizing the depressed mood. “The teacher may need to be particularly vigilant with regard to the student’s irritability or tendency to withdraw and the way in which

this impacts the student's socialization and overall well-being" (Hannell 2006: 59). The teacher has a responsibility for dealing with the pupil, since the depression can influence the mode of the whole class. Further student counsellors, psychologists and/or psychiatrics are likely to be involved. Depression can "significantly impair social, academic, or other important areas of functioning. Counselling and medication are likely treatment options" (Hannell 2006: 59). If necessary, the teacher is responsible for helping the child get the necessary assistance needed, in collaboration with the parents in the case of the child being under age.

6.6 Piglet's timidity

In Piglet's case, the trait we have chosen to focus on is timidity. We will look at anxiety, because timidity is possibly a part of an anxiety disorder. Dictionary.com defines anxiety as "Distress or uneasiness of mind caused by fear of danger or misfortune. Earnest but tense desire; eagerness. Psychiatry: A state of apprehension and psychic tension occurring in some forms of mental disorder." (<http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/anxiety>) Hannell provides us with a checklist for this disorder as well, with the same scale for answering the questions, which is: 0 Not at all, does not apply, 1 Mild, sometimes observed, applies to some extent, 2 Moderate, often observed, certainly applies, 3 Severe, frequently observed, strongly applies. The questions are categorized (in all the forms), and the questions for this disorder are divided into: Disturbed sleep; Afraid of new experiences; Have physical signs of anxiety; Anxious about being separated from parent; Specific phobias; Obsessions or compulsions; Unusually upset by tragic events; Social anxiety; and Family history. At the end of every form, for every disorder, there is a column for additional comments and observations. (Hannell 2006: 39-41) The form provides the teacher or parents with the necessary help to map the seriousness of the child's anxiety, which is important in order to determine if professional help is necessary.

6.6.1 Causes

Causes of anxiety disorders are complex. While anxiety is a normal human emotion that has the effect of guiding us, and especially children, in our behaviour, an excess of anxiety will often make events and experiences from everyday life seem a greater and more frightening barrier than one can handle. It is more likely that a person with a family history of anxiety disorders suffers from it, than a person without it. Nevertheless, obviously anyone can be

susceptible to the disorder. A natural variation in how children cope with different situations has a tendency to make them anxious. The different anxiety-inducing situations can be aggravated by inappropriate treatment by adults. Both harsh treatment of anxious behaviour and complying it may ultimately increase the anxiety. In the case of harsh treatment it may lead to a doubling of the anxiety, the fear of the adult's reaction being added to the fear itself. In the cases where the adult complies with the fearful behaviour the child's fears might be extended in duration, frequency, and/or intensity. For example, a child that is afraid of dogs will most likely have a hard time overcoming that fear if adults have never allowed a dog to be near the child, and added to the fear by reacting negatively in the presence of dogs. Anxiety in children is often concerned with the need to be perfect. They may be excessively concerned about criticism and failure and they always seek the approval of those around, possibly both children and adults (Hannell 2006: 42).

6.6.2 Piglet's trait

Now we will look at some examples from the Pooh books concerning Piglet's timidity to consider whether Piglet's behaviour could be a sign of anxiety. Throughout *Winnie the Pooh* and *The House at Pooh Corner* there are many examples of Piglet's timidity, both hidden and out in the open. Piglet has no trouble with stating his own fears and worries. When the animals are planning to steal baby Roo, he tells the others that it is hard to be brave, when you are only a very small animal (Milne 1994: 75). On other occasions, he tries to appear brave to the others, even though he is not. When the water surrounds him entirely and he is all alone in his house, he reasons as to why he is frightened:

'It's a little Anxious, he said to himself,' 'to be a Very Small Animal Entirely Surrounded by Water. Christopher Robin and Pooh could escape by Climbing Trees, and Kanga could escape by Jumping, and Rabbit could escape by Burrowing, and Owl could escape by Flying, and Eeyore could escape by – by Making a Loud Noise Until Rescued, and here I am, surrounded by water and I can't do anything' (Milne 1994: 98).

As we can see he justifies his own fear by giving all the other animals ways, some better than others, to get themselves out of the same situation, while he is the only one who cannot do anything about it himself. Another example from *The House at Pooh Corner* shows us that he is described as timid at times as well. "Pooh," he said at last, and a little timidly, because he

didn't want Pooh to think he was Giving In" (Milne 1994: 128). His friends' perception of him is sometimes more important to consider than his own fears, and this is what makes him a very brave small animal, even though he himself is not always aware that the one is following the other. When all the animals are searching for Small, one of Rabbit's friends and relations, Pooh and Piglet fall into a hole, and decide that it has to be a trap. Moreover, that maybe a Heffalump made it. While waiting for help Piglet is dreaming a happy dream about exactly what both he and the Heffalump are going to say when it comes, and he feels confident that he will be able to convince him that he has got it all wrong, and that the trap is really his, made to catch a Heffalump. Nevertheless, when Christopher Robin turns up, looking for them, Piglet is both surprised and anxious, and does not dare to look up at what he thinks is the Heffalump. Very unsettled, he is not able to make the statement he was planning to make, and it is not before Pooh sees Christopher Robin that he realizes that he is not in danger.

As with the other characters we have already looked at, the timidity that is characteristic of Piglet is possibly nothing more than a part of the boy, Christopher Robin. Piglet's timidity might also be the embodiment of all the animals' fears, considering that the fact that he expresses them means that the others do not necessarily need to. Christopher Robin (the son of A.A. Milne), being a well-protected, and to some extent, lonely child, is not unlikely to have had some issues that might have been transferred to Piglet when the stories came to life in his nursery. The search for approval and the concern about criticism is touch upon in chapter five, page 30.

6.6.3 Managing the disorder

In the cases where it is necessary to consult with professionals, the class teachers, the counsellors, and the parents need to cooperate to support the child who suffers from an anxiety disorder. A psychologist or a psychiatrist may be involved to help the pupil manage with the anxiety symptoms, and in the cases where the anxiety is severe or prolonged, medication might be a part of the treatment as well. "The standard treatment procedure is cognitive behaviour therapy" (Hannell 2006: 44). To learn to constrain the emotional response to a situation, the therapist and the pupil work to obtain a response that involves cognition and logic. The anxiety-inducing situations need to be disarmed by logic, which in turn constrains the emotional response. To remain as comfortable as possible it is important to have a well-

known, safe environment, where they feel secure. Further, it is important that no adults try to force the issue by placing the pupil in a situation in which he or she might panic. The best way to manage anxiety disorder is to provide the pupil with a stable environment and relaxed, harmless opportunities to be near or be confronted with the trigger for anxiety without any excessive pressure, and with the ability to refrain (Hannell 2006: 44).

6.7 Tigger's exuberance

Frederick Crews sees exuberance as characteristic of Tigger, and the disorder we will be looking at (as previously mentioned) is Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, also known as AD/HD (for short). However, the Attention-Deficit disorder comes in two main forms, and even though it in Tigger's case will be evident that his symptoms indicate the impulsive-hyperactive type, we will in this part look at the inattentive type as well. An exuberant person is often overflowing with enthusiasm and energy, much like Tigger. First, we will look at the checklists. There are different checklists for the types, and as in the previous lists the answers are given on a scale from zero to three (as shown on page 40). The Attention-Deficit Disorder (inattentive type) checklist consists of questions in the categories: Inattentiveness; Poor organization; Impatience; Easily distracted; Poor memory; Specific learning disabilities; Family history; and last in every checklist is a column for additional comments and observations. (Hannell 2006:93-94) In the case of The Attentive-Deficit/Hyperactive Disorder Checklist, the first categories of questions are the same: Inattentiveness; Poor organization; and Impatience. However, the next categories differ somewhat from the inattentive type. In this case, the questions are in categories of: Impulsive; Excitable; Easily distractible; Physically restless; Social difficulties; Poor memory; Specific learning difficulties; Early history; and Family history. The last part is always the column for additional comments and observations. (Hannell 2006: 95-97) As we can see from the questions, what to look for differs in the two types of this disorder, and the first thing we need to do is determine the different characteristics of each type of the attention-deficit disorder.

6.7.1 The inattentive type

In this variant, the pupil often seems to be unfocused, and not present in the here and now. The workload is more or less never finished in the time given, when the pupil works on something the pace is slow and leisurely. The pupils with this disorder are far less obvious

than the hyperactive, impulsive type of pupil in the classroom, and he or she may have substantial difficulties with their learning due to the lack of attention and the difficulties in sustaining effort. (Hannell 2006: 98) In relation to students in the classroom, this disorder might be overlooked because the child is easily labelled as lazy and the inability to finish tasks is then seen as a consequence of this, not as a symptom of a disorder. As a teacher it is important to give students with these traits the attention needed to determine if the behaviour really is due to laziness, or if it can be explained by this variant of the attention-deficit disorder. The inability to concentrate does not necessarily mean that the child does not want to learn, or do the given task. The fact that this variant of the disorder is not easily detected makes the teacher's effort to determine the cause of the student's laziness all the more important.

6.7.2 The impulsive-hyperactive type

This form of the disorder is easier to identify, as the symptoms are more visible in the classroom. A child with this disorder is likely to be restless, impulsive, and loud, often finding it difficult to maintain concentration and in this way being an agitation torque for the rest of the students. This kind of student may not know when to stop in agitated situations, like in a mock fight, and will not stop until it gets out of hand or someone steps in. In addition, pupils with this disorder are often physically restless. He or she may have a continuous need to move, or fiddle with something, and a hard time staying still in their place, always wanting to be in movement. The restlessness is often so present that the pupil has a hard time settling down at night, and therefore takes a long time to get to sleep (Hannell 2006: 98). . Tigger displays the need to be in motion; he has a hard time staying still, or keeping in one place. This is consistent with this form of the disorder.

6.7.3 Causes

Attention-deficit disorder in both forms has a strong genetic link and it is common that several members of the same family have the same type of inattentiveness. While there are some links between food with high level of sugar (among others) and a person's hyperactivity, there is no reason to believe that high-level sugar intake can explain the behaviour of a pupil with this disorder. In other words, as opposed to the disorders we have examined in reference to both

Piglet's and Eeyore's traits, where the triggering factor is environmental, in this case the disorder is genetic. (Hannell 2006: 98)

6.7.4 Tigger's trait

As mentioned above, the signs that Tigger displays are consistent with the attention-deficit/hyperactive disorder, and to prove this we will look at some examples from the stories that illustrate this thoroughly. Tigger arrives in the Hundred Acre Wood in *The House at Pooh Corner*, the second of the books about Pooh and his friends. His personality is evident from the first day. He arrives outside Pooh's door, Pooh lets him in and he sleeps on the floor until the next day. The first thing he does is to tear down the tablecloth from the table, and go into a terrible struggle with it. His reason; it tried to bite him when he was not looking (Milne 1994: 142). From the very beginning, the disruptive behaviour is noticed by the other animals in the forest. Rabbit describes Tigger as strange and bouncy. “[...] he was the sort of Tigger who was always in front when you were showing him the way anywhere, and was generally out of sight when at last you came to the place and said proudly “Here we are!”” (Milne 1994: 178) This is consistent with some of the symptoms described above. Rabbit is not too friendly toward Tigger in the beginning. Pooh and Piglet on the other hand have a more understanding way of approaching him. When Eeyore claims that Tigger bounced him into the river, Pooh defends him by telling Christopher Robin that he do not think he did it on purpose, and Piglet explains it; ““He just *is* bouncy,” said Piglet, “and he can’t help it.”” (Milne 1994: 199) Much like the pupils that are diagnosed with the disorder, Tigger just is the way he is, and he cannot help it. Moreover, Piglet understands this, and wants the others to do so too. Rabbit on the other hand grows tired of Tigger's behavior and wants to make him feel small and sad for five minutes in the hope that that will change him. (Milne 1994: 204-205) The diagnosis will not disappear, neither in Tigger, nor in students. Luckily the plan results in Rabbit feeling very small and sorry, and happy to see “a Friendly Tigger, a Grand Tigger, A Large and Helpful Tigger, a Tigger who bounced, if he bounced at all, in just the beautiful way a Tigger ought to bounce” (Milne 1994: 213). These examples can be useful in a teaching perspective. The animals in the Hundred Acre Wood can show us that we need to accept everybody as they are, and the story about Rabbit is a good way of learning the value of every individual, even those who in some way stand out from the rest of the crowd. Tigger's disorder, as we have seen, can be a strain on both teacher and parent, and not least the child, especially before a diagnosis is given. Considering our characters and their connection to Christopher Robin however, we will

stick with the initial trait mentioned by Frederick Crews, which is exuberance. This expression can be interpreted as joy of life, abundance or vigour, and in this respect, it does not have to be a symptom of attention-deficit/hyperactive disorder. As a part of Christopher Robin's personality Tigger might be the personification of his childish joy and carefree existence (when playing with his toys), the part of him that is able to let go of every worry and sadness. To conclude; Tigger's trait can, as all the other characters' traits, be seen as a part of Christopher Robin's personality.

6.7.5 Managing the disorder

In the cases where the attention-deficit disorder is detected, the child in question needs to have a support system, both at school and in other situations. It is important to take this disorder seriously and facilitate so that the pupil can follow the educational program as well as possible. In the school setting the teacher and special needs teachers can play an important role. As concerns managing inattentive and impulsive behaviour, management specialists may also be involved, and in some cases, medication is required. (Hannell 2006: 99) Diagnosing this disorder does not mean that there is an easy solution to handling the inattentive or impulsive behaviour (for neither the pupil nor the teacher). However, it does provide the involved with a basis to handle it in the best way possible. Medical treatment can be a valuable approach, and the cooperation with the parents is important. In the cases where a diagnosis is given, it is always the parents, in collaboration with the child, who decides if they want to receive medical treatment. In some cases the families in question will not be willing to medicate their child, as the medication might affect the child's behaviour (in an unintended way). In other cases a child might be medicated for a limited period of time, and then try to manage without medication.

In Hannell's book, *Identifying Children with Special Needs*, the author points out different ways of managing the disorder in the classroom, which can be helpful. The child with this kind of disorder should sit near the teacher's desk, as it is important to remember that these pupils need more encouragement and rewards, and more reminders than the rest of the class. Cognitive behavioural therapy can be a way of teaching the student how to use self-monitoring to improve their own concentration and application, and the teacher and the pupil can benefit from having non-verbal cues amongst themselves as a reminder to the pupil to

concentrate on the task at hand. The goals set should be attainable and as short as possible in timespan, allowing the pupil to achieve them, and thereby achieve a sense of empowerment. Procedure is essential as the pupils with this disorder works best with a well-established routine. The structure around the pupil should be organized so that the student has everything prepared in an orderly fashion. Keep the number of things required to a minimum and structure the environment so that the pupil can attain success despite his or her difficulties. Self-esteem in these pupils is often low, so that every episode with appropriate concentration should be acknowledged, preferably with some sort of visible recognition such as badges or certificates and so on. It is important to remember that bad behaviour often is impulsive actions and it is important not to reprimand, but rather state the rule that is broken and find a solution to the problem in collaboration with the pupil. The directions given need to be clear and simple. Many students with the attention-deficit disorder have difficulty processing a series of auditory commands. Keep eye contact and give the student a reason to listen to you by making the task at hand seem as easy and fun as possible. As far as possible, a routine should be followed, giving the pupil both quiet time when quiet activity is required and the opportunity to release energy by for example taking a walk outside the classroom if it is required. It is important to remember that a student with a disorder is not free to do what they want but should be expected to conform to expectations about very important issues. Finally, managing the child should be a team effort, between the teacher(s) and the other adults in the pupil's life. Cooperation with the parents and siblings of the pupil helps prevent the parents from feeling that they are to blame for their child's misbehaviour in school, and ensuring that problems both at home and at school are recognized and dealt with more quickly.

In conclusion of this chapter, what we are left with is the knowledge that certain traits in children can have a deeper meaning than what you first assume. The traits and disorders that we have looked at are important signs in a teaching situation, and the importance of identifying disorders in pupils cannot be stressed enough. The diagnosis helps both the teacher and the parents deal with the pupil and his or her problems in the right way, and as a consequence the child have a better chance at following the educational programs set, and thus coping with his or her disorder as well as possible.

7 Summary and Conclusion

In this master's thesis, I have addressed the question *Can the characters in Winnie the Pooh be argued to be the personifications of the different traits of Christopher Robin? And what can these traits tell us, when shown, in a pupil?* In order to answer this question I have looked at the autobiography of the author Alan Alexander Milne, with the intent to shed some light on both his choice of stories to write about and the life of the author in reference to his only child, Christopher Robin. The importance of this chapter is to understand both A.A. Milne and his writing for children. In addition, the chapter shows the success of Winnie the Pooh, in reference to books sold, but also in reference to other products sold because of the great success of the books. The legacy of Alan Alexander Milne is also addressed, as the fame long outlives both the father and the son.

Further, we have looked at the Pooh stories in a less traditional way by using Frederick Crews' book *Postmodern Pooh*. With the characters and their traits as a starting point, we have used the essays of supposedly different authors in this book to illuminate some of the ways of interpreting the stories about Winnie the Pooh and his friends. Here we have seen that the children's stories can be seen in a very different light than the most common one, and we have gotten examples on the characters traits.

To show that there are many ways of reading the stories about Pooh, and that not all of them are only for children, we have looked at John Tyerman Williams' book *Pooh and the Philosophers*. With the help of this book, we have seen that the great philosophers of the world can be found in the Pooh stories, and that these stories can be a way of teaching philosophy. While this is not the main purpose of this discussion, the chapter is necessary to show that the Pooh stories contain more than what first meets the eye.

There is no way of writing about the fictional Christopher Robin without mentioning the real one. The autobiography of Christopher Robin Milne, *The Enchanted Places*, is interesting in reference to the initial claim, but also important in relation to this master's thesis as a whole. His perception of his father is also a part of how he himself is portrayed and in this book, we

get the real Christopher Robin, but also a little peek at the real Alan Alexander Milne, as his only son saw him. In this chapter, we look at the name, his childhood, his personality and his life with the fame of a fictional character. All of these points are important in relation to the purpose of this master's thesis.

The last chapter of this thesis, named the characters and their traits in relation to students, is the most important one from a pedagogical perspective. In this discussion, we look at each character in relation to a classroom situation and a teacher – student relationship. The characters and their traits are examined thoroughly, and in the cases where the traits might be a symptom of a disorder the disorder in question is considered as well. The disorders we have looked at are depression in relation to Eeyore's melancholy, anxiety in relation to Piglet's timidity, and the Attention-Deficit disorder in relation to Tigger's exuberance. The Attention-Deficit disorder comes in two main forms, and even though it in Tigger's case is the Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, also known as AD/HD (for short) that is probable, we have looked at the inattentive type as well.

In chapter 6.5, 6.6, and 6.7, the three characters are all examined with the same aim in mind. The characters are first looked at in relation to the trait and the disorder it might or might not be a symptom of, and then the causes of the disorder are examined. Further, the trait of the character in question is looked at with examples from the stories about Winnie the Pooh and his friends. In this chapter it is possible to link the trait to a pupil's behaviour by seeing the way the characters are behaving and what part of their behaviour it is possible to link to a disorder. Then we move on to say something about how the disorder should be managed, and if, or which, professionals should be involved. With this, it is shown what the different traits can tell us, when displayed in pupils, which is one of the main purposes of this thesis.

The different ways of interpreting the Winnie the Pooh stories in Frederick Crews' *Postmodern Pooh* have shown that these stories can be interpreted in many different ways. Regardless of the fact that these critics might be said to go rather far, Crews' book has shed some light on the different characters and their traits in relation to students. By the help of John Tyerman Williams the wisdom in Pooh has come into its own. The philosophical use of

Pooh might show students of every age that the philosophers of the world can be comprehended by use of this “little bear of no brain”, who according to Williams has enormous brain. Students of all ages can be seen in reference to the characters of these books and the traits can help teachers to discover students that needs special attention, in one way or another. Hannell has shown that some of the disorders are not necessarily detected, but rather misinterpreted as laziness or lack of concentration.

The characters in Milne’s texts represent the diversity of any pupils mind, like they represent the mind of Christopher Robin, and Milne’s world of Winnie the Pooh illustrates the diversity a teacher will face in the classroom. Hannell’s characteristics of different disorders are in this discussion used as a way of separating the different traits found in the Winnie the Pooh stories. The checklists and forms from Hannell can be used with the Winnie the Pooh stories as a tool, which enables teachers to see the students in the classroom in a different, and more individual way, in reference to possible disorders.

We have seen that all the traits and characters we have looked at may possibly be a part of one child, and therefore the conclusion is yes, the characters and their traits can all be a part of Christopher Robin’s personality. Thus, they can be the traits of any normal pupil’s personality. However, if one of these traits becomes overwhelmingly dominant in any child it is necessary to pay special attention to that child in order to determine what steps to take. The different characters are all dependent on Christopher Robin, and as the fictive critic Renee Francis pointed out in chapter seven of *Postmodern Pooh*, the animals help themselves by being helpless. This may indicate that the human is the one giving his toys pieces of his own personality. The characters depend on the only real boy, and this might be Alan Alexander Milne’s way of helping his son dealing with the different traits of his own personality.

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