

# IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY

## Divorce Representation in Children's Literature

Honors Final Project  
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Avery Maresca

Project Advisor: Diana Lang

### Abstract

This project consists of researching children's literature across age groups that are available on divorce. After researching what age categories lack books regarding divorce, this project examines those books from one age category. While looking at those available books, topics were looked at to see which ones were addressed frequently, sometimes, or hardly ever. After compiling a list of topics, a tangible book was written, illustrated, and self-published that addressed those voids. This book can serve as a resource for children trying to navigate life while their parents are going through a divorce. It can also serve as a resource for parents and educational professionals while trying to figure out how to address these topics with children.

### Research Questions

What books are available for children regarding divorce of parents? What topics are covered and what voids exist? What are key concepts that children of this age should be familiar with?

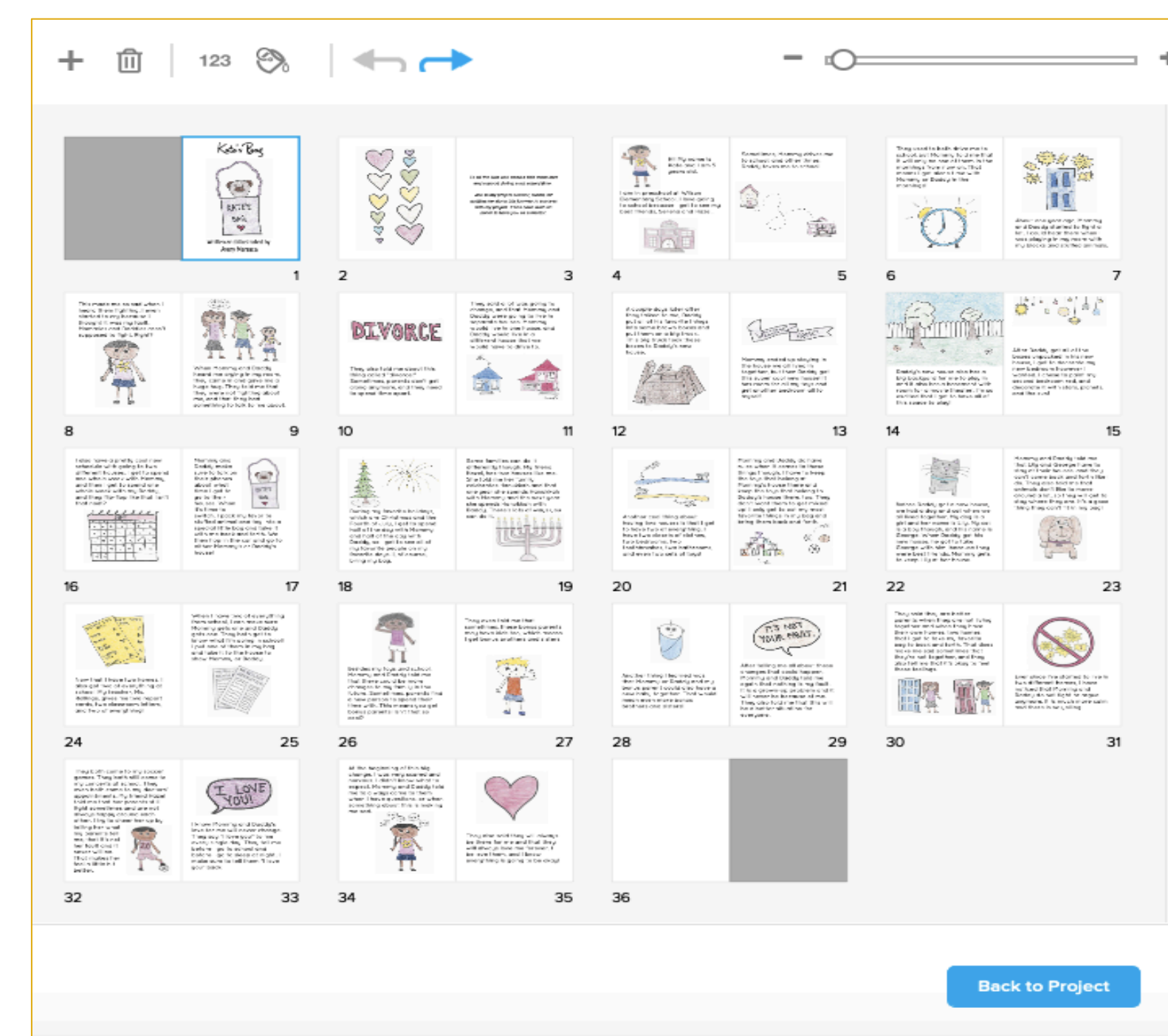
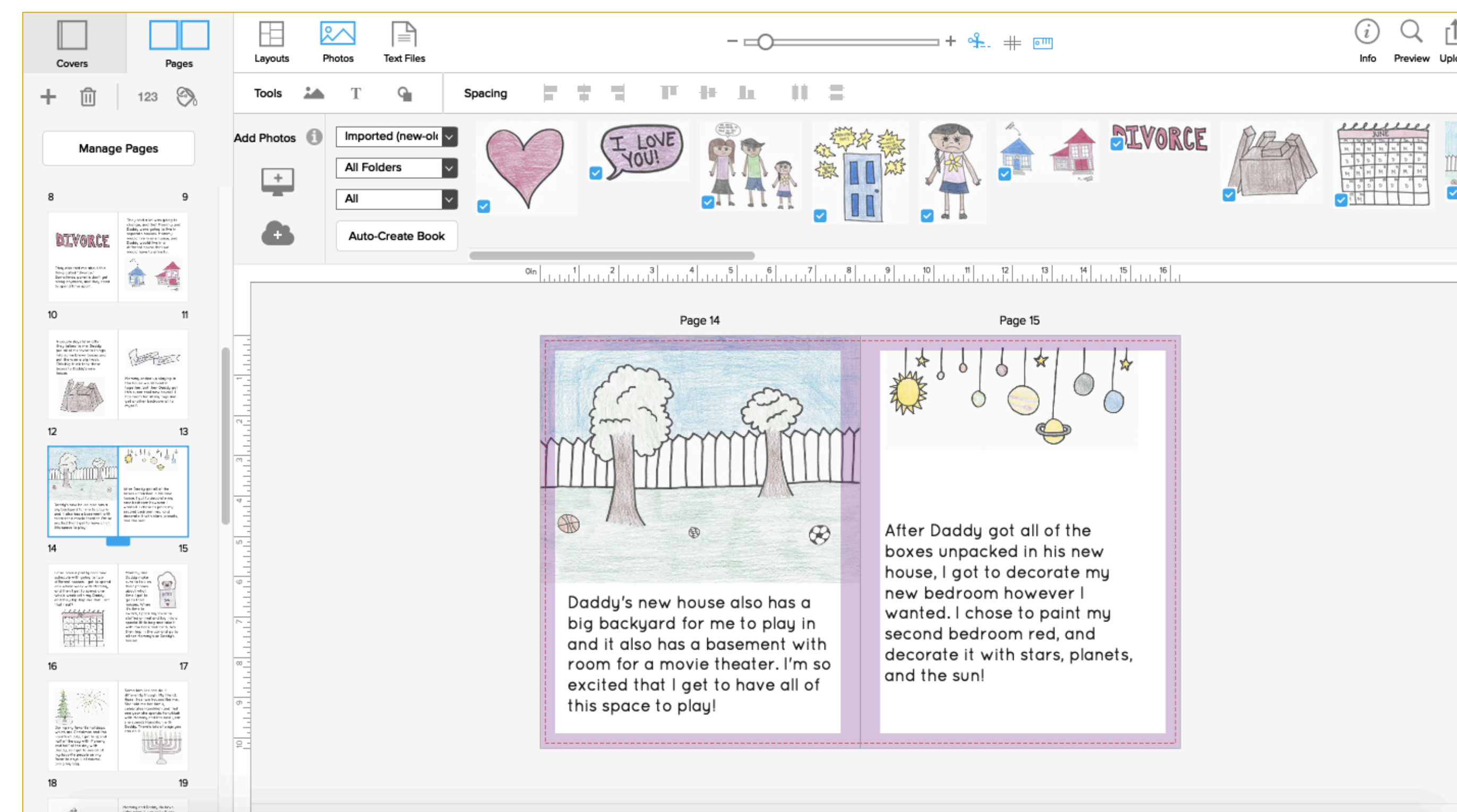
### Research Results

After conducting research on ten different children's books regarding divorce, there were some voids that existed in what was discussed within the books. Some of those voids that I noticed as a pattern throughout the books include:

- Specific changes children might go through (two different rooms, new schedule of who you spend what days with, spending holidays differently than before)
- Stepparents and stepsiblings
- What children can specifically do to work through their feelings regarding a divorce

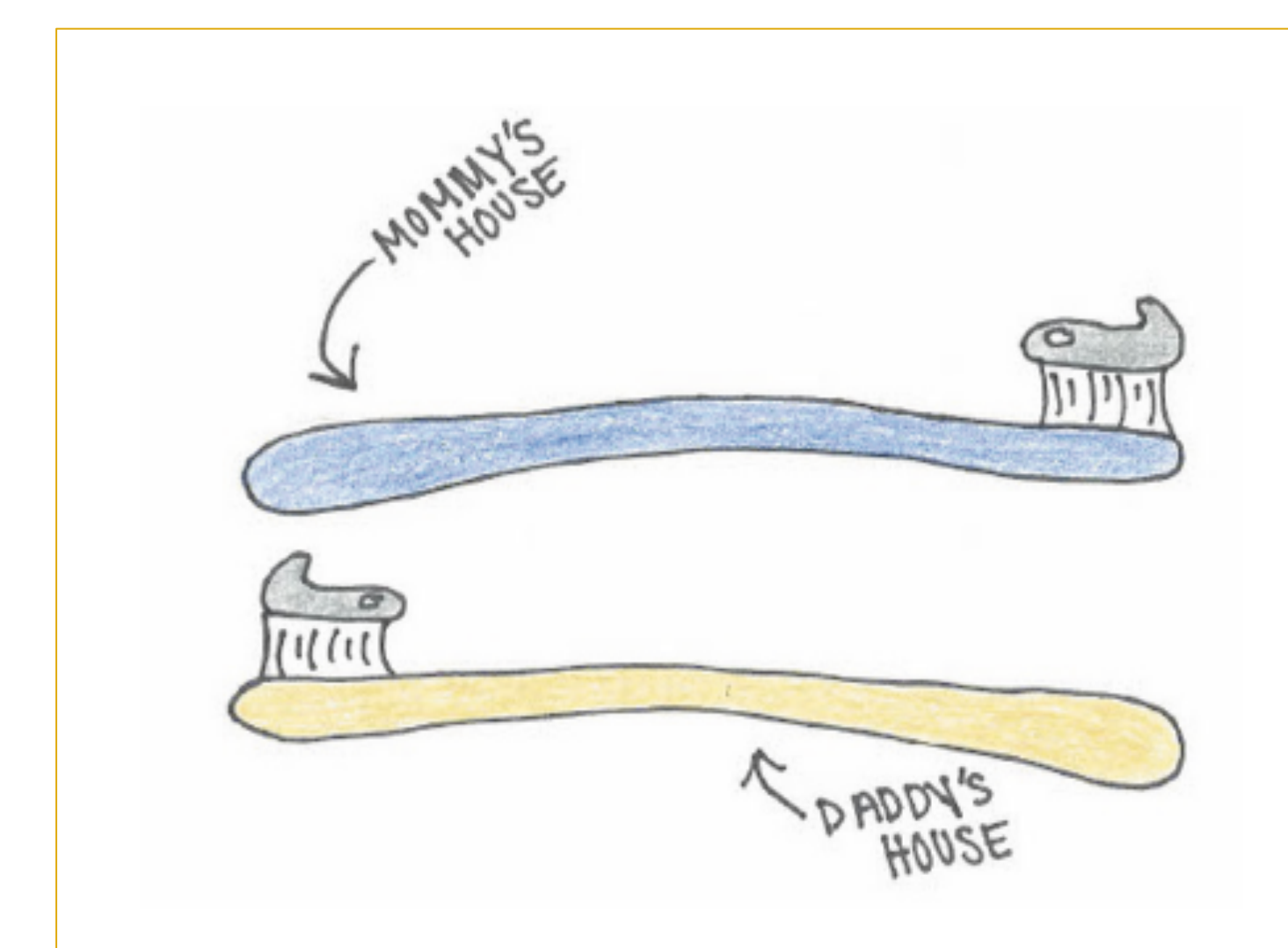
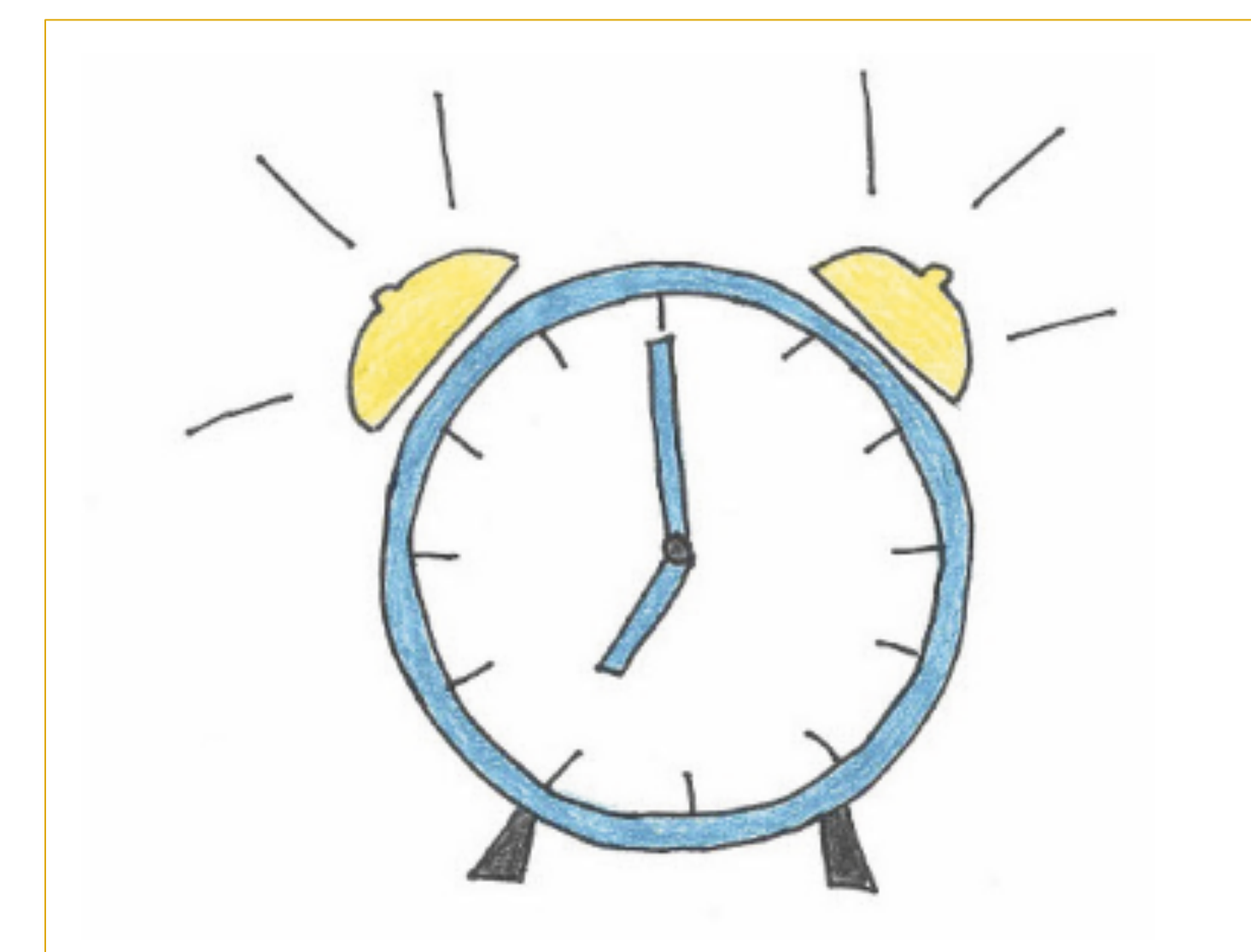
### Objectives

1. Help in filling a gap that exists in children's literature, specifically filling content voids regarding divorce
2. Helping children learn new key concepts regarding divorce
3. Learn the process of writing, illustrating, and publishing a children's book regarding divorce



**Left and Above –** These are screenshots from the publishing software that was used, called Blurb. It was very user friendly and a great tool for book publishing.

**Right –** This is the cover for the book, titled *Kate's Bag*. I chose this name because frequently when children are going between two different homes, they have a bag that they fill with their favorite things that they can take back and forth for comfort. The main character's name is Kate, which in which this book is named after.



**Above –** There are sample illustrations from the book. All illustrations were done with colored pencils and sharpies.

### Methods

#### Writing Process

The writing process began with the voids that I noticed through research, which led to a storyboard of where I wanted to include these components. I made sure to put the writing in very kid-friendly terms and explain the word divorce, in case the reader was not familiar with it. After getting feedback from multiple people, there was plenty of revision to make sure I was getting across what I wanted to in the words.

#### Illustrating Process

The illustrating process was the most nerve-wracking for me, since I do not consider myself very artistic. However, I do enjoy painting for a hobby, and I think some of those skills helped me through this process. I chose to use sharpies and colored pencils to create my illustrations, which I thought transferred well once scanned on to the computer. The people were the most difficult to make sure they look consistent throughout the book, but I think I am satisfied with how they turned out.

#### Publishing Process

The publishing process was the most satisfying for me, because everything was finally coming together, and I could see the final product forming. The software that was used was called Blurb, which was very easy to use. It is extremely easy to use. Using this software, I now understand how long it takes to create a book, order it, proof it, redo it, and reorder it again to finally get a book you are satisfied with.

### Conclusions

- There are many voids when it comes to children's literature and creating a book that fills those voids is intense and time consuming.
- Planning is essential to any large project like this one.
- This project was very rewarding, and I am excited to utilize it in the future, such as in my future classroom.