

THESIS SUBJECT

I'm interested in studying new forms of therapy for elementary school children, with a particular focus on hospitalized ones.

Many children end up being hospitalized for numerous different reasons, such as chronic disease and infections. In these cases, children are forced to stay in hospitals for longer periods, with the possibility of suffering strong repercussions, from both psychological and relational points of view.

On one hand, children who are hospitalized for longer periods are noticed to have some kind of emotional damage, because they become lonelier and their feelings get hurt by not being able to stay with their friends and families. On the other hand, their perception of the world might change, affecting their sense of reality and way they view themselves.

Furthermore, therapies can make the child's routine very boring, and sometimes extremely painful, without any positive stimulation for the patient. This can contribute to making them have difficulties expressing their feelings, thoughts and ideas.

To repair these consequences, the role of children's books can be fundamental. Reading books to children is extremely important for their cognitive development, it can be used to help them identify with a character who is like them and currently dealing with a similar problem, emotions and experience. Shared reading interactions or bibliotherapy may also let the patient talk about themselves and express discomfort, therefore potentially bettering the child's quality of life and their relationship with the parents.

WHAT I WOULD LIKE TO DO

Although the theoretical part of my thesis is almost complete, practical experience would be essential for a more complete argument. For this reason, I would like to work and gain pieces of information in a relevant professional environment, such as children hospital or clinic. It would be particularly important to see for myself the healing power books can have, following projects related to bibliotherapy or any other therapy that includes books, picturebooks, fairy tales and go on.

It would be particularly interesting for me to see:

- which books are better than others for different kinds of therapy and children;
- how to "read" and interpret patients' responses to therapy;
- which are the positive/negative consequences of books' power.

All findings would be properly reported, using relevant tools such as registrations, questionnaires, true or false surveys created by me and my university professor.

WHEN

It would be ideal for me to have this experience during summer 2023, after my final exam session, and stay abroad for at least three months.

HOW

The University of Bologna offers scholarships to talented students, therefore this would be a golden opportunity to finalize my graduation thesis and have all research costs covered.