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**Silver Talismanor Moral Compass: Empathetic Experiences and Sustainable Practices Within Elizabeth Enright's *Thimble Summer***

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**Abstract**

Young children must arrive at an awareness of the appropriate universal concepts helping all to live in a way which will perpetuate and protect both the natural world and humanity itself. Such a lifestyle will be adopted and maintained primarily as empathy for others, and for nature herself, is developed within the character and psychological make-up of our youth. One method of assisting children in the development of such an overarching empathetic mindset is the sharing of children's literature carrying themes and character models which emphasize sustainable living practices, whether based in nature or relationships with others. Elizabeth Enright's Newbery award-winning title, *Thimble Summer*, is such a literary work. This Newbery-award winner speaks to healthy, sustainable living, as typified in healthy animals, as well as crops and life-affirming relationships, and the protagonist, Garnet Linden, remains an environmentally mindful, family-supportive role model for the 21<sup>st</sup> century child reader.

**Keywords:** Magical Realism, Morality, Nature, Sustainability, Nature-based Children's Literature, Environmental Stewardship, Environmental Education, Empathy