As a Boy
As a boy I stood on the edge of the railway-cutting,
Outside the dark tunnel, my hands touching
The hot rails, waiting for them to tremble
At the coming of the noonday train.
The whistle of the engine hung on the forest’s silence.
And the train rolled on, every day.
I haven’t seen you again, bright boy at the carriage window,
Waving to me, calling,
But, I’ve loved you all these years and looked for you everywhere,
In cities and villages, beside sea
In the mountains, in crowds at distant places.

Ruskin Bond

(Rain in the Mountains: Notes from the Himalayas 115)
Introduction

An “Overview of Ruskin Bond” in Chapter I reveals that Rusty series is highly autobiographical in nature. In this thesis, Ruskin Bond’s books Rusty, The Boy from the Hills, Rusty Runs Away, Rusty and the Leopard, Rusty Goes to London and Rusty Comes Home are grouped under the term Rusty fiction. The stories clearly narrate his life from the time he is seven years old. They give an account of his family members, friendships and memorable incidents; the various places connected with his life form the settings of these narratives. Many incidents, characters and events in Rusty fiction parallel those in Bond’s autobiography. To write Rusty stories, Bond uses experiences gained from incidents and characters from his own life. He blends these incidents in his fiction around Rusty as a protagonist.

The following books mentioned are Ruskin Bond’s autobiography. They provide evidence about his life. The author narrates his life from childhood to adulthood in the following four autobiographical books: Scenes from a Writer’s Life: A Memoir, The Lamp Is Lit: Leaves from a Journal, Rain in the Mountains: Notes from the Himalayas, Landour Days: A Writer’s Journal. These books are referred to in this thesis as Bond’s autobiography. This study wants to identify Rusty with Bond from the way he struggles to fulfill his aim to become a writer in London and comes back to India from the tired life at Channel Islands in search of identity. Further this study analyses how imperceptibly, the growth and development of Rusty as a writer in the Rusty fiction blends with Ruskin Bond who establishes himself as a writer, thus making Rusty fiction autobiographical.
This chapter identifies Rusty as none other than Ruskin Bond himself. To prove this statement it is necessary to know the details of Ruskin Bond’s life from his four autobiographical books, and Rusty’s life given in Rusty fiction. Before going into these details, let us briefly analyse the term autobiography.

**Definitions of Autobiography**

*The Oxford English Dictionary* defines “autobiography” as “the story of a person’s life, written by that person” (69). When the autobiographical genre entered into the arena of literature, authors started using the genre to speak about their life and their literary works. This is how the genre of literary autobiography developed (69). In *A Dictionary of Literary Terms*, J. A. Cuddon declares that autobiography is “An account of a person’s life by him-or herself...An autobiography may be largely fictional.” To any author, writing about his/her own life or recalling details of their early life in a story form is interesting (63). In *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, M. H. Abrams defines autobiography as a story of an author’s life i.e. “...biography written by the subject about himself” (16). The author writes not only about himself but also about the people around him. He narrates the interesting incidents from his memory by depending on real incidents from a diary or a journal entry (16).

John Sturrock in *The Language of Autobiography* defines the term autobiography as “...a text which seeks to draw us into itself without reservations...” (3). It’s proper nature is to inform the “...truthfulness with which it seems to address us.” Literary autobiography is a text inhabited by real life incidents (3). The reader has to understand that the term autobiography is a mixture of real life incidents of the author along with some fictional ones which satiate the unfulfilled wishes of the
author at times. Sturrock adds that an autobiographical text invites the readers to understand that it is a story of “truth-telling”, and “self-presentation” of the author. Autobiography is a method used by writers to fulfil unfulfilled desires. “An author who was peculiarly present to himself when he was writing is now present to us as we read” (3).

Linda Anderson explores the ideological assumptions about the nature of the self that underlie autobiographical literary writing. Her work *Autobiography* introduces the forms and uses of this type and it analyses the key questions of identity, selfhood, speech and writing.

It is to be noted that autobiography is a combination of various genres like diary, journal and memoir. Bond’s autobiographies also follow this pattern. The literary meanings of “journal” and “memoir” as given in *Dictionary of Literary Terms* by Martin Gray and J.A. Cuddon are as follows. Gray explains that “journal” means “daily” in old French (156) and Cuddon states that journal is a “periodical” (438). The word “memoir” means “memory” in old French and means a kind of autobiographical writing, stressing on people or events witnessed by the author, rather than concentrating on the personality or life of the author (156, 172).

Linda Anderson in her book on *Autobiography* asserts that the nineteenth-century poet Robert Southey coined the term “autobiography” in 1809, when he was describing the work of the Portuguese poet, Francisco Vieira. The word “autobiography” was coined and became an established usage in the 1830s. William Taylor comments that the pedantic word “autobiography” might be a better term than the hybrid word “self-biography” (Anderson 7).
Anderson’s book *Autobiography* examines the theory and practice of autobiographical writing from St. Augustine to the present. Anderson offers a clear discussion of the autobiographical genre and its evolution and criticism. Anderson discusses St. Augustine’s *Confessions* as the origin of modern Western autobiography; moreover it is set as a model for latest texts by most critics. The critical approaches to Augustine’s *Confession’s* confirm that the definition of autobiography by itself is a genre. The different forms of the genre, from confessions and narratives to memoirs and diaries are explained according to their historical and cultural contexts (Anderson 19).

Felicity Nussbaum, in *Autobiographical Subject: Gender and Ideology in Eighteenth Century England* argues that by the 1830s “the word autobiography had become a matter of common practice in conformity with the dominant notions of a unified self,” the use of the word autobiography has to be dated not only to the days of discovery of the individual person of the author but also the period where literary genius can be established, since the modern critics have derived their models from a few classics (qtd in Anderson 7).

When Anderson searched for one proper definition, she found a variety of definitions. She points out the view of James Olney in *Metaphors of Self: The Memory of the Autobiography* that the definition of autobiography as a literary genre seems almost “virtually impossible” (Anderson 5).

Anderson also informs us that autobiography is generally analysed at one level, as personal criticism. Literary autobiography is the most highly developed
form of this universal activity of self-promotion. She adds that the writer has a function which can be determined or valued with reference to the self.

Autobiography is the guarantee of a remarkable human journey through time. Autobiography not only covers the inner life of its author, but also his/her contacts with the external commercial world by which the spiritual life of the author is conditioned. Autobiographers inevitably record details of contemporary life, which are considerable and ordinary and are not found worth recording in any official source. They also record their attitudes towards all events they witness in their life (Anderson 23, 47-8).

It is also true that no author is willing to reveal the entire truth to the readers. Only few want to admit their faults in their writings and give details of the same. However, for the readers and critics, it is interesting to read these authors and to evaluate their success or failure in life (Anderson 5).

Autobiographers give their life-stories to be understood by others in a dangerously elaborate form. They gather us around them to hear their story confidentially (Anderson 121-23). Nandan Sinha states that “adventure and nostalgia” represent the mind’s emotional oscillation “from the celebratory to the melancholic and back, but they are complementary” (111).

Ruskin Bond has written his autobiographical works from the year 1997 to 2002. The purpose of this study is to compare Rusty fiction with Bond’s autobiography. Even though they belong to various genres and are written in
different time periods, four autobiographical books have been taken into consideration which has more relevance to Rusty series. They are mentioned below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td><em>Scenes from a Writer’s Life: A Memoir</em></td>
<td>1997</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td><em>The Lamp Is Lit: Leaves from a Journal</em></td>
<td>1998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td><em>Rain in the Mountains: Notes from the Himalayas</em></td>
<td>1993</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td><em>Landour Days: A Writers Journal</em></td>
<td>2002</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The sequence of events in Bond’s autobiographical books is compared with Rusty fiction in the order of dates mentioned above. Bond and Rusty try hard to uphold strongly the importance of values in life. They share their feelings through their writing to show how they came up in life to become a writer. Ruskin Bond’s autobiography and his Rusty fiction are both narrated in the first person singular. As all autobiographies, Bond’s writings are also highly nostalgic in tone.

At the same time each of these books record the different ages of Rusty’s life which covers almost his entire life. They are discussed under the parameters derived from various excerpts from Linda Anderson’s book on autobiography. The main aim of this chapter is to identify that Rusty, the protagonist is none other than the author, Ruskin Bond himself. The Rusty fiction has autobiographical shades which are presented vividly through a comparison with Bond’s four autobiographical books. Khorana also substantiates that “Ruskin Bond is a highly autobiographical author” and it is true that his life experiences and nostalgic feelings give him the knowledge and maturity to establish his identity in the society as a writer (xi).
Let us briefly analyse the four books on Bond’s autobiography in the following section before discussing the autobiographical elements in Rusty fiction.

**Bond’s Autobiography - A Short Analysis**

In his *Scenes from a Writer’s Life: A Memoir*, Bond declares in the cover page that “The first twenty-one years of my life form the period covered by this memoir” (xiv). This period talks about his emotional, impressionable and vulnerable years. It portrays his struggle, setbacks and failures in tough situations. However, in critical situations there is hope and optimism and there is no cynicism during these years. His childhood experiences are depicted in his fiction, as reminiscences after several decades. In this comparative study similarities, parallels and changes between the two works are traced which raise the question how Bond has changed the situations in life to fictitious ones.

**a. Scenes from a Writer’s Life**

In the *Scenes from a Writer’s Life: A Memoir* Bond has presented “…his first full-fledged memoir, recounting his formative years” (*Scenes from a Writer’s Life: A Memoir* i). Furthermore he states that “…this is the first time I am attempting straight autobiography”. He adds that it is true that, the autobiographical elements is present in much of his work, “…but there is really more fiction in his fiction than the reader may realize” (*Scenes from a Writer’s Life: A Memoir* xiii). He acknowledges that the first twenty-one years of his life time is covered by this memoir.

Also his statement in *Scenes from a Writer’s Life: A Memoir* provides the details of the first twenty one years of his life, which “…are not years of great
achievement, they are formative years...” (xiv). These failures are the stepping stones in his later successful life.

The family trees of Ruskin Bond and Rusty are as follows:

Besides portraying himself as Rusty in Rusty fiction, Bond uses his father’s real name A. A. Bond as Rusty’s father. Bond’s maternal grandparents, maternal Uncle Ken, and maternal aunts in Scenes from a Writer’s Life: A Memoir have been changed to paternal grandparents, paternal Uncle Ken and paternal aunts of Rusty in Rusty fiction, while retaining their real names. This can be because Bond loved his father very much but did not have any support from his father’s side after his death, and therefore wanted to foreground the relations on the paternal side. He is bonding with his father’s family through Rusty which he could not in real life.
Ruskin Bond’s paternal grandparents’ family is given below:

Clerke is the family name of Bond’s maternal side and they had migrated to India from Britain in the 1800s. Two generations of Clarkes have lived in India. His maternal grandmother Ellen Clerke had settled in a small town called Dehra Dun. Every winter, when Bond visited Ellen Clerke from boarding school, he spent about a month with his maternal grandmother before spending the rest of the holidays with his mother and stepfather, which was the unsaid practice after his father’s death. Ellen’s garden had many trees; most of them were fruit trees – mangoes, litchis, grapes, bananas, papayas, and lemons. Gardener Dhuki, lived in the outhouse and had a son Mohan, about Bond’s age, and there was Ayah (Hindi word for Nanny), the elderly servant maid. There was Uncle Ken, a nephew of Bond’s grandmother. Uncle Ken mostly spent three months with his Aunt Mabel, Beryl and Emily and another three months with his maternal grandmother (Scenes from a Writer’s Life: A Memoir 72), (Our Trees Still Grow in Dehra: A Journal 93-94, photos on 66-67, 106).
Given below are the family trees of Bond’s maternal family recreated as paternal relations in Rusty fiction.

In *Scenes from a Writer’s Life: A Memoir* Bond states that after retirement William Dudley Clerke, Bond’s maternal grandfather, built the family home at 6, Old Survey Road in Dehra Dun located in the Doon Valley at the foothills of the Himalayas. He was the only one in Bond’s family to own a house in India. William Dudley Clerke died in Dehra Dun in 1935. Bond’s maternal grandmother died in 1951 in Ranchi where she stayed with her friends. Aunt Emily stayed in Ranchi because she had sold the family house in 1948 and left India. Emily settled with her family in Jersey in Channel Islands in 1949. The other members of the Clerke
family, except Bond’s mother, left either to go to England or New Zealand (88 - 176).

Edith Clerke (Bond’s mother) married Aubrey Alexander Bond (Bond’s father) in 1933 (Scenes from a Writer’s Life: A Memoir 53-54). When they married, Edith was about twenty and Aubrey nearly thirty-six. Ruskin Bond was born on May 19, 1934 in the Military hospital in Kasauli, a hill station near Sonawar. Alexander Bond was then working as an army officer for the Alwar State of Rajasthan. Edith stayed with her sister Gwen Stevens whose husband was a doctor in Kasauli. Bond’s father named him after the famous Victorian author John Ruskin (Scenes from a Writer’s Life: A Memoir 5). According to Bond, his parents had an age difference of fifteen between them. This is a possible reason for the breakdown of their marriage.

Herbert Bond (Bertie) was Alexander Bond’s elder brother. He worked in the Ishapur Rifle factory in India. He was a bachelor. Bond met Uncle Bertie only in England in 1954. Uncle Bertie was then living in England looking after a widow with seven or eight children. Bond’s father had a younger brother, Arthur, and one sister, Alma. Arthur died young and Alma was killed in an air raid over Manchester during the First World War. Uncle Bertie survived his sister and two brothers. Bond’s father was born in Shahjehanpur, a small cantonment town (Scenes from a Writer’s Life: A Memoir 177-178).

Bond’s paternal grandmother, who lived in Calcutta, was an orphan. She grew up on an Indigo estate in Motihari, in Bihar. She died in the winter of 1944-45, when Bond was ten years old. Bond had seen his paternal grandmother only once
Bond’s father had studied at the Lawrence Royal Military School, in Sonawar in the Himalayan Mountains. It had also been a military orphanage during his father’s time. His paternal grandfather joined the Scottish Rifles after leaving England at the age of seventeen. His paternal grandfather died while his children were very young (*Scenes from a Writer’s Life: A Memoir* 177-178, 35).

Bond had one younger sister, Ellen and one younger brother, William. Bond lived with his father and mother in Jamnagar of Kathiawar State until he was five or six years old. The frequent quarrels between his parents disturbed him a lot. His mother left Jamnagar when Bond was six years old. When Bond was eight years old (in 1942), his parents separated. That was mainly because his mother had liaison with Mr Hari, in Dehra Dun. Bond had to spend two years of life from the age of six or so with his father. Bond’s father died in September 1944. His childhood was not happy and content. Bond did not have the companionship and attention that grandparents and parents can often give their grandchildren and children. As a baby, he felt helpless and insecure since his mother left the family, but Bond’s father was his best companion. The two years he spent with his father were the happiest time of Bond’s childhood (*Scenes from a Writer’s Life: A Memoir* 2-35). Bond’s father died when he was twelve years old and the interpretation of his father’s death in Bond’s fiction is a kind of escape from earthly miseries, as Bond’s statement informs us in his *Our Trees Still Grow in Dehra*:
There being no tangible evidence of my father’s death, it was, for me, not a death but a vanishing. And although this enabled me to remember him as a living, smiling, breathing person, it meant that I was not wholly reconciled to his death, and subconsciously expected him to turn up (as he often did, when I most needed him) and deliver me from an unpleasant situation (44-45).

This reveals that although his father’s death made an indelible impression on his mind, he remembers his father’s words of optimism in his struggle and achieved success finally.

The following figure maps the real life relatives of Ruskin Bond with Rusty’s relatives.
In this book, he has included details of his schooling and his ambition of becoming a writer. In the second part of this book he covers his life experiences in London and his wish to come back to Dehra Dun. Further, he has also given details of his works written for various magazines which were stepping stones towards his aim of becoming a writer.

b. The Lamp Is Lit

In the book The Lamp Is Lit: Leaves from a Journal Bond states “My early forays into literary magazines are described in the first part of this book, along with examples of my work at that time” (x). He has written about his early years of freelance writing as soon as he returned from London. This book also comprises of short stories about the places he has travelled in India with particular attention to nature.

In this book Bond gives personal details from his childhood till sixty four years of his life. Bond had the opportunity to live with his maternal grandmother in her house later in his childhood until the disposal of the house in 1948. Bond completed his school education in the BCS Senior School with grants from the military after his father’s death. One of his chief inspirations to become a writer developed from reading books in his Senior School library. No teacher in the school taught or guided Bond on how to become a writer. In spite of not being from a well-to-do family his biggest achievement was publishing The Room on the Roof, his first book at the age of seventeen. Bond did not inherit any wealth from his paternal family. He had to earn to pay for his food and rent. Even though Bond initially started as a writer of novels, he also wrote short stories and essays. The publishers
of magazines imposed a limit on the words he wrote which motivated him to write more of shorter fiction.

The following tree presents the people in Ruskin Bond’s life who are retained as characters in his fiction.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>BOND’S FRIENDS</strong></th>
<th><strong>RUSTY’S FRIENDS</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Somi</td>
<td>Somi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suri</td>
<td>Suri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haripal</td>
<td>Haripal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hathi</td>
<td>Hathi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kishen</td>
<td>Kishen (Plays the role of Mr. &amp; Mrs. Kapoor’s son)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Omar (In the playing fields of Simla, Muslim friend)</td>
<td>Omar (In the playing fields of Simla, Muslim friend)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Meher Lal &amp; Mrs. Lal</td>
<td>Mr. Kapoor &amp; Mrs. Meena Kapoor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bansilal (Tonga driver)</td>
<td>Bansilal (Tonga driver)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dukhi (the gardener)</td>
<td>Dukhi (the gardener)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ayah (Hindi word for Nanny)</td>
<td>Ayah (Hindi word for Nanny)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madhu (Bhabiji’s granddaughter)</td>
<td>Madhu (orphan)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vu-Phuong (Bond’s first lover)</td>
<td>Vu-Phuong (Rusty’s first lover)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miss. Manning</td>
<td>Miss. Fielding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Bromley</td>
<td>Mr. Best</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Bond’s mother married Mr. Hari Lal. She became his second wife even when his first wife was not legally separated from him. Bibiji, Mr. Hari Lal first wife offered Bond a room and balcony above her provisional store in Astley Hall in
Dehra Dun. Bond had two stepbrothers through his mother’s second marriage (*The Lamp Is Lit: Leaves from a Journal* 3-4, 53).

Bond himself states in the Introduction to *The Lamp Is Lit: Leaves from a Journal* that autobiographical elements are present in his works. Therefore, it is necessary to know about Bond’s family, his educational background, how he has grown and emerged as a writer for children and young adults, and the chronology of his work that established him as a children’s author. The second part of his life is almost entirely in the mountains of Dehra Dun, when he became a full-time writer. Apart from his father, the other important people in his life are Prem, his wife Chandra, and their sons Rakesh, Mukesh and daughter Savitri. They all appear both in the life of Bond as stated in his autobiography and in Rusty’s life in Rusty fiction. After he settled down in Dehra Dun as a writer, Bond adopted Prem as his son. Through Prem, Bond had grandchildren Siddharth and Shrishti (Rakesh’s children), and he still lives happily with his extended family.

**C. Rain in the Mountains: Notes from the Himalayas**

“Prologue” and “Epilogue” in *Rain in the Mountains: Notes from the Himalayas* state that the narration is a “...record of my years in the hills is based on journals, notebooks, diary entries and personal essays” (240). Ruskin Bond spent twenty five years in the mountains and the details of these years are given briefly in the “Prologue” and “Epilogue”. Bond informs that “A diary is a useful tool for self-examination, particularly if both diary and the diarist are still around after some years” (*Rain in the Mountains: Notes from the Himalayas* 23). The Epilogue “Time
to Close the Window-The Mountain Remains” gives the notion to the reader that his life has reached its zenith. He acknowledges that he has lived a fruitful life.

Bond’s childhood influences were strongest, one such influence was the large library at Bishop Cotton School, Simla where he stayed for nine months. He owed a lot to that school library, where he read all the novels of Charles Dickens, R. L. Stevenson, and the essays of A. G. Gardiner and many others (Rain in the Mountains: Notes from the Himalayas 240-243).

With reference to the first thirty years, certain incidents in Bond’s life are highlighted. There are two occasions in his life when he almost got married. Once in London, when he was twenty-one, he was infatuated with a Vietnamese girl who never returned to London once she left for Vietnam, and the second time he fell in love with a nurse from Ferozepur who did not reciprocate his love (Rain In The Mountains:A Journal 240). His statement about his extended family whose love saved him from drowning is:

Raki, Muki, Dolli....They have grown up under my roof, they are with me now, and God willing, they and their children will be with me when I die. If I finally close this window and leave this town for another place, they will go with me. If they grow up and go away, I will stay near them. That’s what love is all about. Staying there, prepared to render service. Most of my life I have given of myself, and in return I have received love in abundance. Life hasn’t been a bed of roses. And yet, quiet often, I’ve had roses out of season (251).
These words of Bond show the amount of love towards his family, Raki, Muki, Dolly who are Prem’s children. Bond treats them as his own grandchildren. Bond balances the amount of his bitter feelings as a child with his adopted family’s abundant love in his later life. His comparison of his extended family’s love to a rose that blossoms in all seasons shows the kind of attachment he grew with this family though they were not related to him by blood.

The following is both Rusty and Ruskin Bond’s extended family tree.

```
RUSTY AND RUSKIN BOND'S EXTENDED FAMILY

- Prem and his Wife Chandra
  - Rakesh and his Wife Beena
    - Siddharth
  - Mukesh
  - Savithri
    - Shrishti
```

d. Landour Days: A Writer’s Journal

Bond in *Landour Days: A Writer’s Journal* compiles day-to-day life experiences recorded in his diary, mainly with references to nature, behaviour of birds and changes observed in trees and plants. Eccentricities of friends and family have been compared with the various seasons summer, monsoon, autumn and
winter. The introduction to *Landour Days: A Writer’s Journal* has relevant parallels with Rusty fiction. This reflects Bond’s ecological concerns.

Based on the above background information from the autobiographical books, let us discuss elements of autobiography in Rusty fiction in the following segment.

**Elements of Autobiography in Rusty fiction**

Through Rusty in Rusty fiction, Ruskin Bond recalls his boyhood. Bond is the creator of Rusty, at the same time he blends into the character Rusty, as the whole series is narrated in first person. Also, as an adult, Bond recollects his childhood memories through his creative skills. An autobiographer is an author who writes a story of his own life, his failures and achievements. The author tries to present himself as a protagonist and sketches an image of himself for the reader. The one who writes about his own life performs the task of a historian at the same time. “...it may be plausibly objected that his temptations to disguise” himself are equal to his opportunities of knowing himself better while writing (Prasad 236). From the psychological point of view, no one can know as well as the autobiographer himself his secret hopes and ambition ... how far his career fulfilled his real aspiration (236-237).

In subjective autobiography the author simply presents formulated events of his life through his fictional character. The represented character conveys the author’s thoughts and feelings. The actions seem to be detached and noncommittal (Abrams 119). In an objective autobiography the writer effaces himself from the
story to view his/her perception of life from an objective distance as another being. Autobiography covers not only the inner life of its author, but also his/her contacts with the external world, by which the author’s life has been conditioned (Anderson 5).

Having completed his autobiographical books, Bond has rearranged his short stories in Rusty fiction according to the protagonist’s chronological age and published them in the years 2003 and 2004. The events, places and people in Rusty fiction are reflected almost in the same manner as in Ruskin Bond’s autobiography. To create Rusty fiction, Bond derived from his personal experiences, and the incidents and characters of his own life. He blended them with fictional elements and ultimately wrote the five books of Rusty fiction, with Rusty as the hero.

In the 1920s Jacques Lacan reworked Freud’s theory in the light of humanism. Lacan argued that in the mirror stage the child constructs the self, that what is ‘known’ as the self is the cohesiveness of a reflection which the subject fantasizes as real. The idea of the mirror can be used as an analogy for the self-reflective project of autobiographical writing (Anderson 65). Bond’s writing is not self-reflexive. Ruskin Bond, through Rusty as a mirror image of himself, has employed Lacan’s idea of the “...mirror as an analogy for the self-reflective project of autobiographical writing,” thereby narrating his life incidents by means of this fictional character (Anderson 65).

We can also apply Sigmund Freud’s views on autobiography to Ruskin Bond’s books. According to Freud, “autobiography is “...open and frank...” (Anderson 69). Bond openly acknowledges his parents quarrel and the unpalatable
relationship between them. According to him, fifteen years of age difference makes their marriage “…obviously incompatible…” (Scenes from a Writer’s Life: A Memoir 24). He frankly announces his decision to remain a bachelor after witnessing his parents’ failed marriage (Scenes from a Writer’s Life: A Memoir 3).

Freud also states that ‘the past creates the foundation for the present and future and illuminates the flaws and diversions as well as the normal pattern for individual growth’ (qtd. in Anderson 61). This is relevant to Ruskin Bond’s life and narrative which starts from his early age and continues to adulthood. He had to face all kinds of troubles in his life but overcomes everything and finally identifies himself as a writer. Bond is unfortunate to lose his father, grandparents, nanny, friends and the people whom he loved after his visit to London. But he proceeds to live with optimistic hopes. His philosophy in life appears to be to look forward and search for new identities.

Freud opines that the “relation between narrative and the subject has important consequences for the understanding of autobiography and how we remember our lives (61-62).” Rusty had not seen his mother from the age of four onwards. He loses his father at the age of eleven and his grandparents also die; he was left under the care of a guardian. At the age of seventeen he searches for his identity, and moves back and forth between India and London, finally identifying his vocation as a writer and returning to India. Rusty learns from his past life and he accepts the troubles as stepping stones in his life. Rusty considers the flaws and diversions as a turning point in his life and he proceeds further towards independent growth and development as a writer. Bond has carefully interwoven his narrative
and his subjective experience to make the reader understand and remember their own lives in the process.

Freud acknowledged the “…impossibility of the task he [the autobiographer] has set himself of unifying within one narrative the different temporal layers…” (Anderson 62-63). In Ruskin Bond’s books, both autobiography and Rusty fiction, we find different layers of narration at different points of time in different phases of his life. Bond has attempted to unify these different timescales within one narrative. In Rusty fiction and Ruskin Bond’s autobiography we can see that the author, narrator and protagonist are one and the same. That is the subject is Ruskin Bond himself whether in Ruskin Bond’s autobiography or Rusty fiction, and hence the narrative is all about Ruskin Bond. The narrator of the Rusty fiction is Ruskin Bond as well as Rusty. We know that the author is Ruskin Bond, and also that Rusty the protagonist is none other than Ruskin Bond.

According to Freud, the “…ultimate aim of an autobiographer is to restore the meaning of therapeutic cure…” by providing their life experiences as a healing process (Anderson 64). Through Bond’s life the reader connects with the writer and the protagonist becomes a mentor for the reader. Like the protagonist the reader also goes down the memory lane of their own lives and gets insights about themselves.

In the Rusty series, we know that Ruskin Bond is the author, although Rusty is the narrator as well as the protagonist. Rusty is both subject and object of the narration. It is about the same person’s life that we are reading in both the works, i.e. Ruskin Bond’s autobiography and Rusty fiction through the eyes of the protagonist. Thus Ruskin Bond has succeeded in writing objectively about very subjective
issues. The only difference is that the Rusty fiction disguises the author Ruskin Bond. In the autobiographical works Ruskin Bond is the narrator, whereas in Rusty fiction, Rusty is the narrator.

In both the works, it is the adult Ruskin Bond or Rusty who recalls his childhood and teenage to narrate the story. Hence, both are the representations of the former self. Since we know that the author Ruskin Bond and Rusty are one and the same, we can compare and contrast their experiences as they are articulated in similar manner. Even as autobiography has shades of fiction embedded in it, we can safely assert that Rusty fiction is autobiographical.

In order to prove that Rusty fiction is autobiographical, the various definitions of the term “autobiography” can be applied to Bond’s works too. The main aim of this study is to prove that Rusty fiction is an autobiographical account. To prove that Rusty fiction has autobiographical features, the principles of the genre – fiction and autobiographical elements are brought together.

In the Rusty fiction, Rusty is the main protagonist; the recorded passage of time differs only by three years between Rusty and Bond’s own life. The memorable events in Rusty’s life have similarities to Bond’s life. Rusty fiction and Bond’s autobiography are juxtaposed to compare and contrast with examples and substantiate that Rusty fiction is highly autobiographical in nature.

**Rusty Fiction as Autobiographical Narrative**

Several critics have discussed about autobiographical works. If the work talks about a writer and incidents and places mentioned in their writing coincide
with an author’s real life, critics have identified that work as an autobiography. Linda Anderson’s book on Autobiography discusses the aspects of autobiography. It consists of different critics’ opinions and suggestions. This study chooses six relevant parameters from the elements of autobiography in Anderson’s book and applies it to Rusty fiction and Bond’s autobiography. They are as follows:

1. Retrospective prose narrative on the development of personality
2. Fixing the identity of author, narrator and protagonist
3. Reading and Representing the self
4. Merging of the author and the protagonist
5. Locating the Author’s milieu
6. The ‘conditions and limits’ of the genre

The main aim of this chapter is to relate Bond’s autobiography and parallel it to the Rusty fiction by applying the above mentioned six parameters. Even though the parameters taken into consideration here belong to different critics’ opinions and suggestions, they are interconnected with one another.

The first aspect ‘past narrated in the present by the author’ is practised in Ruskin Bond’s autobiography as well as Rusty fiction. Through the first parameter the second parameter is established, that the author Ruskin Bond, the narrator of the series Ruskin Bond and the protagonist Rusty are one and the same.

The third aspect, self-realisation, revealed by Bond through his autobiographical writing is that he identifies himself as a successful writer in the
society. He has mentioned in his diary entries and journals that all his writing is a portrayal of his ‘self’ (*The Lamp Is Lit: Leaves from a Journal*).

From the above three aspects we come to the conclusion, that in both Ruskin Bond’s autobiography and in Rusty fiction the author and the protagonist merge. The fourth parameter merging the author and protagonist is identified through the comparison and contrast of Ruskin Bond’s life and Rusty fiction.

The author’s position in the society in relation to his life experiences can be easily identified by the reader. The reader will be able to recapture the author’s point of view or intention (motivation) in his writing. At last, the above five parameters reinstates that writing has conditions and limits on truth telling and to a certain extent alone the writer can open up to the reader in fiction.

Let us apply these autobiographical parameters in Ruskin Bond’s autobiography and Rusty fiction.

1. **Retrospective prose narrative on the development of personality**

Philippe Lejeune defines an autobiographical work as “a retrospective prose narrative produced by a real person concerning his own existence, focussing on his individual life in particular on the development of his personality” (Anderson 2). According to this statement, comparing Bond’s autobiography with Rusty fiction, it has elements of time – past and present. Bond states in his autobiography the events of his past; Rusty fiction also traces the protagonist’s life from childhood to adulthood which has shades of Bond’s life. Cassidy informs us that at “…the exact same moment that nostalgia evokes a longing for the past” it “…suppresses
unwanted memories and emotion” (147). Both Bond’s autobiography and Rusty fiction deal with the individual life of Rusty as well as that of Ruskin Bond. This deals with the personality of a particular writer and concentrates more on how his personality changes throughout his life.

This parameter of autobiography as retrospective prose is discussed in the following section from relevant incidents narrated in Rusty fiction and Bond’s autobiography.

In “Preamble, Prelude, Prologue” (Scenes from A Writer’s Life: A Memoir xiii-xvi) Bond’s mother informs him that his maternal grandfather kept a number of interesting pets in his house and he used this information to write animal tales (xiv). But Bond himself in real life had never seen his maternal grandfather. Bond, in his fiction, changes his maternal grandfather to paternal grandfather. In his fiction, the protagonist, Rusty, lives with paternal grandparents, who keeps animal menagerie at home. His paternal grandfather in real life died when his father was young (Scenes from a Writer’s Life: A Memoir 53).

The corresponding incident in Rusty fiction is found in the stories “All Creatures Great and Small”, “A Tiger in the House,” “Monkey Trouble” and “Animals on the Track” in (Rusty, The Boy from the Hills). These are reminiscences of the author’s maternal grandfather who kept a number of pets, and they are recreated in Rusty fiction. In Rusty fiction, fulfilling Bond’s unquenched desire, Rusty lives with his paternal grandfather and pet animals. Bond did see his paternal grandmother who lived in Calcutta only once (34).
Through the narration, Bond uses animals to fascinate the children. He introduces humour and adventure that animals bring to children’s life through his fiction. The alteration of character of the grandparents shows that Bond loves his father more than his mother. This kind of conversion he has created in his stories to express his love and reverence for his father. In addition, through the narration, it is conveyed to young readers that keeping wild animals at home is not advisable. At the same time, he inculcates the child’s interest in values such as love for animals and nurturing the ecology.

In “Life with Father” (Scenes from a Writer’s Life: A Memoir 1-16) Bond announces that his parents were domiciled British who had lived in India for a decade. The evidence to this statement is that his “forefathers were British” (153-154) and Bond’s friends wanted him to “be more British in [his] preferences and attitudes” (143). The parallel statement to this can be found in the story “The Window” (Rusty Runs Away) from Rusty fiction which has a statement from Rusty, the protagonist who introduces his name and states “...I was of British parentage...” (4).

In Rusty, The Boy from the Hills Rusty states that he hadn’t seen his “...mother since her separation from father...” at the age of four. Rusty lived with his paternal grandparents until early boyhood from the age of seven (1). Bond’s parents had divorced when he was eight years old. The age difference between Ruskin Bond’s father and mother was nearly fifteen years, and this created a difference of opinion between them (9, 28). This is reflected in Rusty fiction.
The characters of Bond’s father and mother’s are similar in the Rusty fiction. His parent’s real life separation has been stated in Rusty fiction. Bond has narrated his life to heal himself in every sense of the word, overcoming inner conflicts; every child needs the company of parents, the quarrel of Bond’s parents made him feel insecure. The effect Bond’s parents’ quarrel had on his unmarried life is depicted in “words and wisdom from a disappointed bachelor!” *(Scenes from a Writer’s Life: A Memoir 4).* The life incidents of Bond and Rusty are so projected that the reader understands the family values. Bond has selected, altered, arranged and fictionalised his family members on the paternal and maternal side to suit the plot of Rusty fiction and cure himself from past bitterness. This narration reveals the truth that the personal behaviour of characters in his family is expressed to stress the point that family bonds are important. This comparison reveals the truth that Bond’s past life experiences are taken as illustrations for Rusty fiction. Through, Rusty, Bond shows the tolerance level even in tough situations. He also suggests it is not always the parents who should be forgiving, the child also need to imbibe this value.

Another incident is when Bond visits a room on the top of Jamnagar palace, which has an admirable colourful window pane that strikes him at once. In *Rusty, The Boy from the Hills* there is a story named “The Room of Many Colours” (*Rusty, The Boy from the Hills* 89-121) with fictitious character Queen written by Ruskin Bond at the age of forty. The latter is based on the childhood experiences of Bond at the age of six in Jamnagar palace (*Scenes from a Writer’s Life: A Memoir* 2-3). The role of the mad princess who lived in the top floor of a tower palace and Rusty’s experiences with her is interesting. But in real life, Bond at
the age of six visited a room in the top of the tower palace at Jamnagar where he lived at that time. The peculiar feelings felt by Bond became the setting of this fantasy world that he created with the fictitious character Queen, which he wrote nearly forty years after his visit to the tower. Bond in real life never had a friend like the Queen, but the stories that he heard from elders as a kid has been expressed in this fiction. In such a situation, it is essential to explore the intersection of the Rusty’s life and the narration of Bond. Through these fabricated incidents Bond inculcates friendship as a main theme and insists on young readers to respect their elders in whichever stage of life.

“Simla and Delhi, 1943” (Scenes from a Writer’s Life: A Memoir 17-24) outlines Bond’s happy memories of spending time with his father. Bond went by narrow-gauge railcar from Kalka to Simla with his father around May 1943. Bond had to join Bishop Cotton Prep School which was a boarding school. Since the admission took over a month, Bond enjoyed an idyllic holiday with his father. During a rickshaw ride around Elysium hill, Bond heard Rudyard Kipling’s story named Kim from his father who talked about the phantom rickshaw and the hero Kim. The narration shows that nature plays an important role in individual’s life. Nature has a power to heal. Added with a soothing tale, or fantasy to feed the imagination of a child, a walk down the road can be a reliable therapy.

During the winter of 1943-44 (three months – from December 1943 to February 1944), Bond spent the holiday with his father in the apartment of Scindia House facing Connaught Circus in New Delhi. He visited the
Humayun’s tomb and the library in Purana Kila. There were no tourists, guides, vagrants and health freaks at that time. New Delhi in 1943 was a small place and it had not grown into a metro swallowing vast area of land.

The life of Bond in BCS boarding school and in the rented apartment house with his father in New Delhi (Scenes from a Writer’s Life: A Memoir 1-24) has been recreated in “Coming Home to Dehra” (Rusty, The Boy from the Hills 191-93). Both the books narrate the same places and similar incidents except the changes in the lives, age of the protagonist and time periods in which Bond and Rusty lived. In Rusty series it is a flashback, Rusty is returning from his school to his mother and stepfather’s house for holiday. No one had come to receive Rusty from the station. At this time Rusty compares the happy times he spent with his father. Later visits to his mother’s place the words that express Rusty’s feelings are “My mother gave me a perfunctory kiss” and he felt odd because he “was left quite desolate” at his own home (Rusty, The Boy from the Hills 201).

Father’s role is important to the growing child. Every child needs the company of his father, who provides true love, knowledge and confidence during the growing years. Bond’s narration of these incidents is to emphasise the importance of a father’s love for a child. Not only Rusty lost his father’s love when he needed utmost support, he also had to share his mother’s love which he bitterly recollects “An eight year old is bound to resent his mother’s liaison with another man” (Scenes From A Writer’s Life: A Memoir 23). Bond cherished his father’s love who is his role model. Family, which should be a reassuring unit, was not the same for Rusty, which is why he finds solace in his
boarding. He develops his reading habit there which comforts him. Rusty also mentions the rental apartments he shared with his father which gave him more happiness than his mother’s big house. The incident contrasts the amount of love given to Bond by his parents and at the same time shows the maturity of Rusty at the age of eight.

“Reading was my Religion” (Scenes from a Writer’s Life: A Memoir 60-67) explains the company and faith provided by books. Bond read *David Copperfield* obtained from his teacher, Mr Jones. He decided to become a writer being inspired by little David. Bond was in-charge of the school library for the next three years, (1948-50). By reading the books in Anderson Library (inside school premises), Bond realises that “reading was his true religion” and it helped him to discover his interest in books. Since Bond was in continuous search for his identity, he recognised his own future in writing. From this, the author highlights the amount of self-confidence, necessary to a child, neither low self esteem nor over confidence helps in the long run. According to Rusty fiction, Rusty also read *David Copperfield* and *Oliver Twist* of Charles Dickens, as narrated in the story “Running Away” (Rusty Runs Away 48, 53). The story talks about a real character named Dul (Daljit), Bond’s friend (Scenes from a Writer’s Life: A Memoir 122).

The reading of the book *David Copperfield* by both Bond and Rusty indicates that both the author and the protagonist wanted to become writers like Dickens. In real life, Bond became an Indian writer, and Rusty also achieved a position as a writer in the society. The child reader can understand the pathos in
Dickens’ character Pip and David and how Bond/Rusty also had a troublesome childhood. Dickens’ characters are orphaned at an early age, likewise, in spite of having a mother and stepfather, Bond/Rusty feels alienated from a home atmosphere. The reader can easily connect Dickens’ characters to the author/narrator while reading Rusty fiction, and understand why Bond considered Dickens as his professional mentor. Bond in real life never ran away from home. To create an adventurous theme, he designs his protagonist Rusty in such situations. Bond through Rusty highlights the concern for nature, self-confidence, tolerance, positive attitude to move ahead in life without bitter feelings for others as well.

2. Fixing the identity of author, narrator and protagonist

The second parameter used is ‘the identity between the author, the narrator and the protagonist’ (2). To prove this statement, the author Ruskin Bond, the narrator Ruskin Bond/Rusty and the protagonist Rusty are similar. Bond disguises the role of Rusty, as an author, narrator and protagonist. The second parameter is applied in the following section to substantiate the fact that the author Ruskin Bond, narrator Ruskin Bond/Rusty and protagonist Rusty are similar.

In “Preamble, Prelude, Prologue” (Scenes from a Writer’s Life: A Memoir xv) Bond expresses his desire to become a writer having been exposed to classics such as Dickens’s David Copperfield and Hugh Walpole’s Fortitude, which motivated him to “...to be like the writer-heroes of both books”. His father introduced him to the world of books at the age of ten. Bond states about himself “...the seed had been sown and I had begun to dream” of becoming a writer (xv). In a parallel incident in Rusty Runs Away “Running Away” story,
Rusty’s reply to his friend about his future ambition is revealed in the words, “I want to be a writer” (*Rusty Runs Away* 45), which indicates that he had decided his profession at the age of fifteen (32, 134). Rusty identifies his interest in books. His aim of becoming a writer shows his maturity to understand his potentials early in life.

This reveals that the author and the narrator of Rusty fiction, Ruskin Bond is the protagonist Rusty in Rusty fiction. The previous incident also informs us that ambition in life is essential for young children. Even though Bond lost his father; the reading habit that he imbibed from his father inspired him to become a writer. During the crucial years from one to five, his father was fortunately by his side.

Bond says that after losing his father, he had troubled relationships and an unhappy childhood. But he adopted Prem and his young wife Chandra who submitted themselves into the hands of Bond, and became a part of his family in 1970. Chandra fills that emptiness of a daughter in Bond’s home and life that prevailed before her initiation in the family. Their children Rakesh, Mukesh and Savitri also grow up under the same roof. Rakesh married Beena; Siddharth and Shrishti are Rakesh and Beena’s children. Bond lives happily with them, he showers love on his grandchildren and great grandchildren that he himself desired and never got from his grandparents. As Bond describes, the “...bedlam of a large family living together has become an integral part of my own life, and for the most part it’s joy to my heart and music to my ears” (xvi).
Bond has introduced his family through Rusty, in the story “From Small Beginnings” in *Rusty Comes Home* (134-149) which is dedicated to Prem and his wife. Prem is the adopted son of Rusty through his extended family as narrated in the above story. The story “Tiger, Tiger, Burning Bright” in *Rusty Comes Home* (150-190) is dedicated to Rakesh who is the grandson of Rusty.

Prem, Chandra and their sons appear both in the life of Bond and Rusty. Eventhough Bond and Rusty are bachelors, both have adopted families. Bond wants to convey through Rusty that every man needs family relationship in life which is indispensable. Such relationships give warmth and affection. Bond heals himself from his past memories while sharing with the readers. Thus Bond’s creation is another baby/child that he fathers and it is therapeutic for him.

“Mother and Step Father” (*Scenes from a Writer’s Life: A Memoir* 32-40) episode highlights the bitter feelings of Bond towards his mother and stepfather. Bond never forgets that half-hour futile wait in Dehra Dun railway station after travelling all the way from Simla and rejection by his maternal grandmother. His maternal grandmother’s home on the Old Survey Road in Dehra Dun is the only place he knew and she refused to welcome him into her house (33).

The grandmother took Bond to his stepfather’s rented house in Dalanwala road in Dehra Dun. Bond came to know that his mother and stepfather were away on a shikar trip and they would return in the evening; before their return Bond made acquaintance with the cook-cum-bearer, an ayah (nanny) and a step baby brother, Harold. Bond understood that his stepfather
was not cruel or unkind, but something of a playboy, who loved drinking, dancing and hunting (35). Bond expresses his views on his maternal grandmother to show that the affection and strong grounding that grandparents bring in their grandchildren’s life are important for a child’s healthy growth. In Bond’s real life he lived with his mother and step-father. The void their presence brings to his life is expressed in Rusty’s hatred for the same people.

The narration in *Scenes from a Writer’s Life: A Memoir* has been partially recreated in “Coming Home to Dehra” in (*Rusty, The Boy from the Hills* 191-202). There are similar incidents in the case of Rusty. Rusty’s stepfather and mother, in the story go to Motichur for shikar (hunting) and return only in the evening. In Rusty fiction grandmother’s love and concern towards Rusty is explained through the statement, “You’ve grown since I last saw you, and you’re getting pimples.” Rusty thinks that grandmother’s statement is pleasing because granny never indulged in praise, as she was a taciturn person (200). This incident highlights the truth of love and affection expected by Bond showered on Rusty, his counterpart. This is why Bond alters his maternal grandmother’s character in Rusty fiction. Bond’s brother William and handicapped sister Ellen are omitted in Rusty fiction because his sister Ellen is a differently abled child, she had polio attack. His brother William was too small to introduce in the fiction while Bond was in his teens. Bond introduces his stepbrother in the fiction, although, a child, to accept him through his creation something he failed to do in reality. As a small boy, Rusty can tolerate a step-brother. Bond’s tolerance is revealed in the fact that he introduced his step-father in his fiction.
“The Playing Fields of Simla” (Scenes from a Writer’s Life: A Memoir 51-59) is fully recreated in “The Playing Fields of Simla” in Rusty Runs Away (104-114). The only change is that Bond was a twelve year old boy in Scenes from a Writer’s Life: A Memoir, whereas Rusty was a sixteen year old boy in Rusty fiction. In the process of this written therapy, Rusty gives insights to Bond as a mature adult, and Bond accomplishes an understanding of life and self which he did not have at Rusty’s age.

Bond visited Lawrence Royal Military School in Sanawar hills to play an inter-school hockey match. Bond found his father’s name Aubrey Alexander Bond on the school’s roll of Honour board. The names of the fathers of Bond and Rusty are the same as mentioned in “My Father’s Last Letter” and “The Playing Fields of Simla” (Scenes from a Writer’s Life: A Memoir 30) as well as “The Playing Fields of Simla” (Rusty Runs Away 107). The selection of name of the author’s father as A. A. Bond evidently indicates that Rusty in Rusty fiction loves his father. Also, the moment he finds his father’s name inscribed in the board Rusty feels happy, peaceful and a sense of belonging to the school sets in.

The author Bond was deeply attached to his father and so he brought him back to life in the stories “Escape from Java,” “Room of Many Colours,” “Funeral” and “Coming Home from Dehra” in Rusty, The Boy from the Hills. In reality, Bond had never visited Java with his father. His sole aim was to celebrate the pleasant memories with his father. The temporal memory of Bond emphasises the emotional bonding between father and son. This bonding has been described unifying these temporal layers of time within one narrative.
“A Walking Person” (Scenes from a Writer’s Life: A Memoir 68-74) introduces Bond at the age of fifteen, around May 1949. Bond had no friends of his own age in Dehra Dun. Bond remembered Uncle Ken, who stayed in Dehra Dun in his maternal grandmother’s house. He recollected how Uncle Ken managed quite well without a job. Uncle Ken used to divide the whole year between his three affluent sisters who lived in Mhow, Ranchi and Lahore. Finally Uncle Ken ended up as a village postmaster.

Bond wrote the story “Life with Uncle Ken” in Rusty, The Boy from the Hills to cherish the memories of Uncle Ken and his nature of leading an idle life. Uncle Ken, instead of earning his own bread, lives on his stepmother’s and stepsister’s money. Uncle Ken in Rusty fiction was connected with Rusty’s childhood from the age of nine to ten. Despite the fact that Uncle Ken is a humorous character, Bond wanted to convey the value of self-respect as a vital human quality which he did not possess. It stresses that laziness in life has to be avoided.

It also brings to light the aspect of humour in the life of a person being essential, and how there is a thin line of difference between humourous and cruel which should be carefully maintained. Melwani’s statement supports that Bond’s treatment of people in his fiction “...reveals that they have individual histories...” (Melwani 41) Chauhan states that Bond’s stories weave a “realistic drama from the depths of India” as one finds here (33).

In Bond’s life, he had faced many problems at the age of ten; one among them is his father’s death. Rusty fiction tells the story of his father’s death in “The
Funeral” (*Rusty, The Boy from the Hills* 183-90). Ruskin Bond expresses his emotional impact through Rusty in that story. Rusty fiction is the expression of Ruskin Bond’s mental strength to survive in the world after losing his father. In the fiction Rusty is elder than Bond, because he wanted to show his mature self through the character of Rusty.

So, Rusty was born three years earlier in the fiction to Ruskin Bond since Bond was twenty-one when he came back to Dehra Dun (*Scenes from a Writer’s Life: A Memoir* 158) and Rusty was twenty-four years old when he came back to Dehra Dun (*Rusty Goes to London* 78). Bond in “Return to Dehra” writes, “I had been away for over three years but the bonds were as strong as ever, the longing to return had never left me” (*Scenes from a Writer’s Life: A Memoir* 155). Bond’s yearning to return to Dehra Dun exhibits his nostalgia. This comparison reveals the truth that Rusty and Ruskin in their mind think of India as their home, Bond as a British person has more faith on India as his own land, so that he expressed his feelings through Rusty.

Everything Rusty encountered in life was an adventure to him. Dehra Dun gave him daily lessons on how to lead life. His friends, particularly Somi, the Sikh boy and Ranbir from a Hindu family embodied Rusty’s zest for life. The instinctive warmth in Somi’s hospitality when he ran away from his guardian’s house, was special. Somi even went out of his way to find Rusty a job as a private tutor for Kapoor’s son Kishen, and Rusty came to stay in Kapoor’s house. He developed a crush for Mrs. Meena Kapoor, the young wife of the alcoholic Mr. Kapoor. During a family picnic Rusty is left alone with Mrs. Meena Kapoor and finds joy in
expressing his ‘calf-love’ towards her. Adolescence gives way to adulthood and he grows up emotionally. Nevertheless, life has its dark nights of the soul, and Rusty gets his fair share of tragedy soon enough. Meena dies in a car accident; Rusty learns the grim aspects of life (Rusty and the Leopard 1-132).

In Scenes from a Writer’s Life: A Memoir Ruskin Bond states that he had stated the details of life in India “the nature and character of some of my friends-Somi, Ranbir, Kishen- and the essence of that calf-love I’d felt for Kishen’s mother. I could have left it as a journal, but in that case it would not have found a publisher” (138). So there is always a reflection in his writings which throbs with a realistic beat bordering on ‘auto-fiction’ (Chaddah 54).

Amitha Aggarwal states that Bond’s childhood, early adolescent experiences and the spirit of his age governed this artist’s mental nature. Bond is a subjective writer and recreates his boyhood and youth through his fictional protagonist, Rusty. Aggarwal supports the subjective writing of Bond with her statement that other writers like “Dickens, Chekhov, Strindberg and Samuel Beckett have practised subjectivity” (152). Ruskin Bond’s works promote the integration of the self with others. His works break the narrow walls of self and bind the self with others. They call for harmony and mutual adjustment to strengthen the human values.

Realising and Representing the Self

The third parameter used for this study is “realising the self and representing the self” (Anderson 4). This statement declares that Bond’s point of view about his life experiences are presented in the Rusty fiction. Moreover, the writer has written
Rusty fiction to project not only his life, but also the values he derived from life and the maturity he attained through the struggles in life. These incidents teach him several ways in which advancement in life is possible.

“My Father’s Last Letter” (Scenes from a Writer’s Life: A Memoir 25-31) -the title itself is an indication that something strange in Bond’s life is described here: Bond went to the boarding school in the year 1944. He was nine years old during the Second World War. Bond’s father was transferred to Calcutta and lived with his mother in Park Lane. Bond’s father wrote to him regularly once a week because he was unable to make a trip to Simla to see Bond during his mid-term holidays in 1944. Bond received a letter dated 20th August, 1944 from Calcutta written by his father. That was the last letter he received from his father. About two weeks later Bond heard of his father’s sudden death due to frequent bouts of malaria and jaundice. Mr. Murtough, one of Bond’s teachers, informed Bond that “God needed his father more than him” and thus conveyed his father’s death (30).

The relevant comparable elements from Rusty fiction are in the stories “The Funeral” (Rusty, The Boy from the Hills 183-90) and “Coming Home to Dehra” in (Rusty, The Boy from the Hills 193-95) which record Rusty’s father’s death. In the story “The Funeral” Bond has taken a real incident of his life as the foundation, but the narration is purely imaginary. Bond did not attend his father’s funeral in real life, since he was at the boarding school in Simla and got the news of his father’s death in Calcutta through ordinary post after two weeks. But the above story explains the author’s affectionate love towards his father.
Both Bond and Rusty lost their fathers around the age of ten. In Rusty fiction, Ruskin Bond fictionalises the incidents and relives his father’s funeral through the story; here Rusty attends the funeral, as he is staying with his paternal grandmother. The story “Coming Home to Dehra” (Rusty, The Boy from the Hills 191-203) explains Rusty’s boarding school life. Rusty’s class teacher informs Rusty about his father’s death through the words “God wanting your father in a higher and better place” which echoes Bond’s teacher Mr. Murtough from Scenes from a Writer’s Life: A Memoir (30) and Rusty, The Boy from the Hills (187).

The idea of this story is to show the sorrowful feelings of a fatherless child. The child attains maturity to accept his responsibility. Such incidents lead to the process of understanding of the self in the child. In real life Bond had not attended his father’s funeral but he mentally accepted his father’s loss which he has portrayed through Rusty.

In “A Far Cry from India” (Scenes from a Writer’s Life: A Memoir 131-138) Bond is in Jersey, in the Channel Islands. In his fiction Bond portrays his maternal aunt’s role through his fictitious paternal aunty. Bond was staying with Aunt Emily (his mother’s eldest sister). In 1952, Bond started preparing the first draft of his first novel based on his 1951 journal entry in Dehra Dun. Bond wrote this novel with details capturing the sights and smells of Dehra Dun that he knew well. The surroundings and friends play a key role in Bond’s writing (138).
Both “A Far Cry from India,” in *Scenes from a Writer’s Life: A Memoir* (131-138) and *Rusty Goes to London* (1-10) narrate the same story. Bond created his teenage friends Somi, Ranbir, Kishen in the stories, “It Happened One Spring” (*Rusty Runs Away* 115-95) and “Alone in the World” (*Rusty and the Leopard* 1-132). Kishen’s real father and mother are not found in *Scenes from a Writer’s Life: A Memoir* but they are derived from the character in Mehra Lal’s family. Bond experienced ‘calf-love’ for Kishen’s mother which is not mentioned in detail in *Scenes from a Writer’s Life: A Memoir*. However, such a feeling for an elderly woman by a teenager is a psychological phenomenon which happens in the process of mental growth from an immature adolescent to a matured adult. Bond’s frankness on this issue is revealed through Rusty’s elaborate narration of this incident. Both Bond/Rusty accept their feelings as a teenager, which shows their understanding of the self, because no one frankly confesses their flaws.

**Merging of the Author and the Protagonist**

The fourth parameter used in this study is Lejune’s view that “the author of an autobiography implicitly declares that he is the person he says he is and that the author and the protagonist are the same” (Anderson 2).

Through the above three parameters, we can conclude that Ruskin and Rusty are the same. There are many parallels in Rusty’s life as well as Bond’s fiction. Both have troubled childhood and suffer identify crisis and find consolation in their extended family.
The chapter “Hold on to your Dream” (Scenes from a Writer’s Life: A Memoir 88-92) explains that Bond was seventeen years old in the year 1951. Bond’s grandmother died a couple of years earlier in Ranchi. The family house on Old Survey Road was already sold by aunt Emily, the eldest daughter of Bond’s grandmother. She had left India with her family. Bond’s other relatives had also left India. Bond’s mother was the only one left in India amongst her family members. Most people, especially youngsters in Bond’s community had already left India.

Although Bond continued to live in Dehra Dun dreaming of becoming a writer. Bond at that period suddenly acquired a number of young friends from different communities in Dehra Dun. They are Ranbir and his sister Raj. Bond made friends with his neighbour, the Lal family. They were sketched as Kapoors’ in his first novel The Room on the Roof. Bond’s other friends included Haripal, Dipi, Somi and Chotu in the mohalla (Hindi word for colony). Somi was Haripal’s younger brother who was twelve-years-old. Bond and Somi went cycling on the roads of Dehra Dun. Somi who showed Bond around and cultivated the habit of helping, found a job for Bond as well as stood in hard times by his side. Towards the end of 1951, Bond went to England to live with his aunt Emily for some time. He wanted to fulfill his dream of becoming a writer and see that his books were published in England. Somi is an example for altruism. His immediate warm welcome to Rusty shows his positive approach to people.
There are parallels in Rusty fiction except that most of his teenage friends and a few other real families in the neighbourhood have been re-created in his first novel. Most friends of Bond remain the same in Rusty series. But some of their names are changed. Mr. Lal becomes Mr. Kapoor and Ranbir’s sister Raj is not mentioned in Rusty fiction. Mr and Mrs Kapoor play an important role in *Rusty Runs Away* and *Rusty and the Leopard* and the friends Duljit, Somi, Ranbir bear the same names. Kishen is the son of Mr and Mrs Lal. Some names which are retained show the emergence of Bond through Rusty, the protagonist.

In “Three Jobs in Jersey” (*Scenes from a Writer’s Life: A Memoir* 139-43) Bond’s London life experiences are told. Bond first worked in a solicitor’s office. His second job was an assistant to Miss. Manning in a travel agency, Thomas Cook and Sons, in Jersey. Bond lost his job in the travel agency because, as a slow learner, he could not handle bulk reservation of rooms. His third job was that of a clerk in the public health department. One of his fellow clerks, Mr. Bromley, helped him to buy a new portable typewriter under the Royal brand.

“Six Pounds of Savings” in (*Rusty Goes to London* 11-20) is a parallel narration to *Scenes from a Writer’s Life: A Memoir* 139-43 with some changes and some omissions to suit the plot of Rusty fiction. The name of Miss. Manning has been changed to Miss. Fielding. The name of Mr. Bromley has been changed to Mr. Best. The name of Aunt Emily remains the same. The travel agent’s name Thomas Cook is the same in both Bond’s autobiography and
Rusty fiction. Alteration of names signifies the characteristic nature of the characters created by Bond. ‘Fielding’ is Bond’s favourite author, and ‘Best’ is the name which expresses the good quality of Mr. Bromley. Bond sees growth and advancement of science during his life span. The portable typewriter, due to lack of laptop or computer in those days, became a necessary tool for him. He incorporates the real incidents of his life in the narration of Rusty fiction to pay homage to every single person who assisted him to achieve his goal of becoming a successful writer. Bond’s self confidence is clearly portrayed here.

In “Writing for My Life” and “All You Need Is Paper” (The Lamp Is Lit: Leaves from a Journal 3-15) describes Ruskin Bond’s life after returning to India from London. Bond was a freelancer in London. In 1955, within a couple of months of Bond’s return to Dehra Dun, the entire family left for Delhi. Bond lived in a room with a balcony above the grocery shop of Bibiji (his stepfather’s first wife), in Astley Hall (The Lamp Is Lit: Leaves from a Journal 3). Bond’s empathy towards Bibiji is revealed through his fiction.

Bond wrote in “All You Need is Paper” (The Lamp Is Lit: Leaves from a Journal 9-15) that Somi’s family had moved to Calcutta and Kishen’s to Bombay. Sudheer, a charming young boy whom Bond jovially calls a ‘scamp’(13) went on to become an assistant manager of a tea estate in Jalpaiguri, and he was killed by labourers working in that tea garden. Kishen, as a boy was not heroic. But at the age of forty, he died while trying to save a child from drowning.

“All You Need is Paper”, in Rusty Comes Home (1-7) is the same as given in Bond’s The Lamp Is Lit: Leaves from a Journal (9-15). Bond recreated his young
friends Somi, Ranbir, Kishen and others in the stories “It Happened One Spring” and “Alone in the World” in Rusty Runs Away (115-119). Bond shows the importance of Sudheer and Kishen in “The Hills and Beyond”, in Rusty and the Leopard (133-295). The role of Sudheer in the story “Rum and Curry” has an autobiographical genesis as Sudheer leads Rusty/Bond to his paternal aunt. From the characters of Somi, Ranbir, Kishen and Sudheer, Bond inculcates the value of altruism.

To show his gratitude towards his friends Bond’s teenage friends’ feature in his first novel which he wrote during his stay in England. Immediately after returning to India in a couple of years, he searches for his teenage friends in Dehra Dun. The friends had left Dehra Dun by then. When Bond returned to Dehra Dun and settled there, his Indian friends had moved out. That is the important turning point in his life.

The above narration tells us about the crucial role of friends during the formative years of a child. Throughout his autobiography and Rusty fiction, Ruskin Bond always remembers his friends. Even as an elderly person, he thinks of his teenage friends and remembers their helping attitude in a difficult situation which had supported him and led him to the present position.

In his Introduction to Landour Days: A Writer’s Journal (xiii), Bond writes that it is a book containing his journal, but the journal is not just about his life. The journal is about day-to-day living, his relationship with the world of nature, his literary career and with the people who lived with him and around him. He states that “...I am a subjective writer, and much that I have written over the years has been
drawn from personal experience” (xiii). Bond mentions about his father and the present family members like Gautam who is a grandson of Prem, in the journal. These kinds of notes give more insight into the character of the author (3-14).

The story “Upon an Old Wall Dreaming” in (Rusty Comes Home 211-15) is a narration of day-to-day living of Rusty and his relationship with the world of nature. This story “As Time Goes By” in Rusty fiction (Rusty Comes Home 205-10) is a narration of Rusty’s relationship with the people who live with him. The narration compares the friends he has with the friends he had and lost as he remembers them – Somi and Ranbir (his teenage friends).

In old age, a man has to cherish his present day-to-day life around him remembering the past incidents of life. Rusty/Bond as an old man shares his past incidents with his grandchildren. This is the essence of life for grandparents and an oral mode of transmission of traditional values from generation to generation. From the above, we may conclude on comparing similarities between Bond as an individual writer and Rusty the protagonist that their lives merge.

**Locating the author**

The fifth parameter is that “an autobiography can only be understood if the ‘place’ the authors themselves occupy in relation to their lives can be reconstructed by the reader” (qtd in Anderson 3). Through this, we can understand the location of the author in the society as well as the multiple roles played by him in the text.

In Scenes from a Writer’s Life: A Memoir Bond’s statement that “I was still a pimply adolescent when I decided I wanted to be a writer. I had read Dickens’
David Copperfield and Hugh Walpole’s Fortitude and decided that I wanted to be like the writer-heroes of both books” (xv). Bond’s interest to become a writer is inscribed in his mind from his childhood days. The parallel evidence from Rusty fiction is that in “Running Away” story (Rusty Runs Away 45), Rusty informs his friend Daljit that “I want to be a writer” when he is fifteen years of age. Rusty’s ambition and self-confidence are reflected in this.

Both Ruskin Bond and Rusty start thinking about their identity during their early teens. No wonder their focus of writing is about themselves. Only difference being Ruskin Bond lived with his stepfather in reality and Rusty lives with his guardian. Ruskin Bond’s guardian in fiction is inspired from his stepfather’s name. Through Rusty, Bond communicates to the reader that his habit of writing diaries creates the character of Rusty as a writer. In addition, the creation of stepfather in the fiction shows that Ruskin Bond feels lonely in his life, wherein real life he was accompanied by his mother and stepfather. Bond’s disappointments are shown through the character of Rusty who spent his time alone at his guardian’s house. These are the real expressions of Bond who conveyed his feelings in his fiction.

In “The Playing Fields of Simla” in Scenes from a Writer’s Life: A Memoir Ruskin Bond requests Omar to go through his first book, named Nine Months (the duration of the school term), which talk about the school incidents. Bond has mentioned that Omar should be regarded as his “first reader and critic” (54). The same kind of incident takes place in Rusty Runs Away “The Playing Fields of Simla.” Rusty informs Omar about his write up named Nine Months which consists of “some of the happenings at school and [has] lampooned a few of our teachers”
In “Reading was My Religion” (*Scenes from a Writer’s Life: A Memoir* 60-67) Ruskin Bond notifies that “I launched into *David Copperfield,* which I thoroughly enjoyed, identifying myself with young David, his triumphs and tribulations. After reading *Copperfield* I decided it was a fine thing to be a writer” (63). This reveals how he develops his dream of becoming a writer. In “Alone in the World” Kishen enquires Rusty about his future. Rusty informs Kishen that “I’m going to be a writer. I’ll write books. You’ll read them.” Kishen replies “You’ll be a terrific writer. You’ll be famous. You’ll be a king.” (*Rusty and the Leopard* 12) Through this comparison of autobiography and fiction we can analyse that both understood their interest lies in writing.

The “Return to India” in (*Scenes from a Writer’s Life: A Memoir* 154-158) Bond states that “...I set myself up as a freelance writer and bombarded every magazine in the country, I could probably eke out a livelihood” (155). The parallel in “A Far Cry from India” (*Rusty Goes to London* 1-10) Rusty states that “I’d always wanted to be a writer for nothing made me happier than being surrounded by books, reading them and then writing. Books had been my sole companions during the many lonely periods of my life”. And on another occasion Rusty informs the reader that he has come to London because “I had come here to try my luck at getting my first novel published. There really wasn’t much scope for struggling
young English authors in India at my time” (2). This statement proves his position in the society, as well as his love towards his profession.

In “From Small Beginnings” Bond states that the natural surrounding gives him insight into his writing. He states “...Mussoorie gave me the perfect opportunity and reason to finally settle down, put my roots down...” where his future as a writer was waiting for him (Rusty Comes Home 135). According to Bond, as stated in Epilogue (Rain in the Mountains: Notes from the Himalayas) “My life can be divided into two sections” (240) Bond has informed that in the first thirty years of his life he wandered everywhere with friends and next thirty years of his life he settled in Dehra Dun as a writer. From the above, the young reader can understand that one’s self-confidence helps throughout the life.

In The Lamp Is Lit: Leaves from a Journal he states that “…thirty years ago, … I ‘blossomed’ into the sort of personal nature writer and children’s writer described in my largely autobiographical Rain in the Mountains” (xi) which identifies him as an Indian writing in English mainly focused on children.

**Autobiography as an authoritative form of truth-telling**

The sixth parameter of autobiography is derived from Lejune and Gusdrow’s statements. An autobiography has ‘conditions and limits’ if it is to be containable as an authoritative form of ‘truth-telling’ which is clearly distinguishable from fiction (Anderson 5).

To support the statement we can confidently argue that in an autobiographical novel, fact and fiction are inextricably mixed together and
produces interesting stories in a fascinating manner. The autobiographical form has some conditions and limits to which extent it can be recorded. If the events discussed in the autobiographical novel are identified as a truth-telling of the author’s life, it is honoured by the reader.

In Rusty series, the author Bond has taken the real incidents from his life, and Rusty is both the narrator as well as the protagonist of the series. Bond’s statement in his book *Scenes from a Writer’s Life: A Memoir* confirms that “The reader may be surprised to know that this is the first time I am attempting straight autobiography...I have used the first person and taken the trouble to make the backgrounds and episodes convincing” (xiii).

In “The Young Rebel” (*Scenes from a Writer’s Life: A Memoir* 75-78) Ruskin Bond gives details of his experiences at BCS School in Simla. Bond was sixteen years old at that time, and he was an angry young adult revolting against rules, traditions, conventions, examinations and authority of any kind. He felt that he was wasting time in school since he learnt that his role model Dickens had not done much schooling. Once and for all Bond left BCS, Simla in the December of 1950. That was the end of his formal education in school. Looking back at the eight years of school life in Simla, Bond cherished the memory of his school friends, the school library and excursions to other towns.

Bond stayed with his stepfather and mother after he left school from the year 1951. Bond started writing stories for a magazine by name *My Magazine of India* which paid him a sum of rupees five per story. In 1951, Bond succeeded in selling a story to *The Illustrated Weekly of India* for fifty rupees. In Rusty
fiction, Rusty went to live with his father’s cousin Mr. John Harrison when he was twelve years of age and fled around the age of eighteen (Rusty, The Boy from the Hills 209). In Rusty series incidents are similar, but Rusty lives on his own to give the impression that Rusty is independent and individualistic. Ruskin Bond through Rusty conveys his inner self of being independent. Mostly the description of Rusty gives an insight into Ruskin Bond’s character and conveys his own expression in a frank manner, which is the form of truth telling. Bond and Rusty’s characters insist on the values of humility and self confidence.

Bond has created the character of the guardian, Mr John Harrison who substitutes his step-father Mr Hari Lal. Bond’s inner self is always conscious that he is under compulsion to live with his mother and step-father. His father died when Bond was ten years old, but Bond left for England at the age of seventeen. Bond modifies this event in the case of Rusty who lives with his guardian, Harrison from the age of twelve to eighteen; because Bond seems to hold the view that during the growing up period every child needs support to survive in society which he did not have. Through the character of Harrison he also brings out that food and shelter provided by his step-father was not enough emotional sustenance for adolescent years. Eventhough, Rusty hates his guardian he gives the due respect an elder deserves.

“The Pure, the Bright, the Beautiful” (Scenes from a Writer’s Life: A Memoir 93-130) contains extracts from Bond’s journal of 1951. It is more or less the origin of his first novel. The first journal entry in 1951 is about Bond’s meeting and friendship with Haripal (Scenes from a Writer’s Life: A Memoir 93-
94). The journal entry of February 28th is about Bond’s meeting and friendship with Somi (Haripal’s younger brother) (Scenes from a Writer’s Life: A Memoir 95-96, 98). The May 19th journal entry is about the celebration of Bond’s birthday, falling on that day, with Haripal, Somi, Kishen and others (Scenes from a Writer’s Life: A Memoir 111). The October 14th journal entry is about Bond’s leaving Dehra Dun to go to England.

Bond had explained in “Epilogue” to Rain in the Mountains: Notes from the Himalayas that it is a record of his life in the hills and based on “journals, notebooks, diary entries and personal essays” (240). The earlier examples given match with the above mentioned journal entry to show that the author and narrator Ruskin Bond is revealing truth through the protagonist Rusty. The term “I” is used as a narrator throughout the Rusty fiction because Rusty is Ruskin Bond’s mirror.

In “Return to Dehra” Bond’s love for Vu-Phuong is talked about. Bond felt that there is no one who can take the place of Vu-Phuong in his life. Also he was bored in the lonely life of London, since he missed intimate human contact. Bond decided to return to Dehra Dun without seeing the published copy of his first novel. Bond got fifty pounds advance for his novel from the publisher, Andre-Deutsch. He came to Dehra Dun when he was twenty one in the year 1953 (Scenes from a Writer’s Life: A Memoir 154-58).

The story “Return to Dehra” in Rusty Goes to London (74-78) is almost the same narration as in Scenes from a Writer’s Life: A Memoir (154-58). In Scenes from a Writer’s Life: A Memoir, Dipi and Bond’s stepfather waited in Dehra Dun station to receive Bond. But in Rusty fiction, Devinder waited in
Dehra Dun station to receive Rusty. Bond was twenty one when he returned whereas Rusty was twenty four. The reason for portraying Rusty as a twenty four year old is that, Bond feels that a man can take better decisions than a young adult. The above narration explains that Rusty fiction is mostly truth-telling. Bond conveys his real life incidents through Rusty fiction.

**Conclusion**

Ruskin Bond is similar to Rusty, the protagonist. Ruskin Bond creates the character of Rusty and recalls his younger days in his fiction. While writing about Rusty, Ruskin Bond accurately scrutinizes the incidents and projects them from his memory. His fictional characters are inspired from his own life experiences. They are the trajectory of his fiction.

In this chapter, we have analysed Ruskin Bond’s autobiographical works and his Rusty fiction through six parameters derived from various definitions of autobiography. Through these parameters, we can conclude that Bond’s autobiography and Rusty fiction correspond to the genre of autobiography. When considered a retrospective narration of a person’s life where there is similarity between the author, narrator and protagonist, we can see that these works by Ruskin Bond is similar to the protagonist whom he has created.

Since autobiographical writings are a form of truth-telling which intends to represent the self, analysis of Ruskin Bond’s autobiography and his Rusty fiction proves that he is the author, the narrator and the protagonist. Summing up, some characters who are present in Bond’s life and Rusty fiction: his father, mother, brother and sister. His mother married another Indian for the second time, through which he has a step-brother.
Rusty fiction clearly states Rusty’s father is the real hero of this fiction, who showers love on his son, even after Rusty’s mother had separated from him. According to Rusty, his father is not only a lovable person but also a mentor for him. Rusty’s father had devoted his life for his son till his sudden death. Mother has been portrayed similar to Bond’s mother living happily with her second husband. Ruskin Bond’s own brother and sister are not recreated as characters in Rusty fiction. Step-father’s character shows Bond has not considered him as an enemy. Bond did not elaborate on his brother and sister in his fiction, because he wanted to project only Rusty and his adventures.

The maternal grandparents’ characters as told by Bond’s mother have been moulded into paternal side in the fiction. Bond introduces his Aunt Emily, Aunt Beryl, Aunt Mabel and Uncle Ken in his fiction. Through the humorous character of Uncle Ken, Bond insists on the importance of work.

Bond has never received any kind of affection, except from his father in his life. So he insists that children need all kinds of relationships in their lives. In his fiction, Bond creates Rusty and his family to fill the emptiness in real life. Dukhi, the gardener and Ayha are important people in Bond’s life; they are not only caretakers of Rusty, but voracious knowledge providers. The Indian mythologies are highlighted when the characters Dukhi and his son tell tales to Rusty.

Miss. Pettibone and Miss. Kellener appear in both autobiography and fiction to present the European settlers’ position after independence in India. Bond’s life experiences are portrayed through the character of Rusty, it teaches young reader that life should always be filled with confidence and optimism. This encourages
young readers to follow their dreams without any fear. The comparison of Rusty fiction and Bond’s autobiography reveals the truths that love for their own self and love towards others is important for a human being. Every child needs relatives, friends and neighbours to lead a healthy life. Bond also preaches to children during difficult times children might have to live on their own and bravely hope for the best.

Bond’s aim in these works for children seems to be to inculcate values through the portrayal of this young hero. The family, environment and relationships play crucial roles in the formation of identity of a young adult. It also aids the development of a personality. These analyses lead us to the conclusion that these works are a ‘growing-up narrative’ or bildungsroman. Hence, the next chapter deals with Rusty series as bildungsroman.

Ruskin Bond in his life faces all kinds of troubles and failures, but he has taken that bitter feelings as an experience. As an adult, when he writes about his own life through a fiction, he has projected his entire life as example for young readers. Bond, conveys the tolerance, the selflessness attitude of Rusty as well as his friends like Somi, Devinder who help Rusty without any expectation in any critical situation. Rusty’s different life phases project the self-confidence to cross the hurdles in his life. Moreover, Ruskin Bond not only through Rusty but also through the characters of Grandfather and gardener inculcates the habit to preserve and protect nature. Both Bond and Rusty are humble even when they are popular writers.