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Ten Second Reviews

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Ten Second Reviews

Esther Schroeder
Western Michigan University

Selecting The "Right" Book or Better Meeting Individual Differences in Reading

One of a teacher's major responsibilities is to guide students in selecting books for research or exploratory reading and for recreational or self-enrichment reading. Few teachers are able to keep up with the great number of books being published each year or to judge either their quality or potential reading levels. Few elementary schools have trained librarians to assist teachers with this task. Three sources of particular value in better meeting this problem are professional books concerned with book selection, professional magazines with significant reviews of children's books, and booklists developed by specialists.

These briefly annotated reviews suggest some of the particularly effective tools in helping the classroom teacher in any school situation.

Books About Books

Adams, Bess Porter, *About Books and Children*. Henry Holt and Company, New York, 1953.

No list of books to raise our sights and standards in providing the best of literature for children is complete without this reference. With the hundreds and hundreds of books being published parents and teachers need to be more concerned about the quality of the materials read. Criteria for selecting books and recommended annotated lists provide the reader guidance in selecting a balance in quality reading for boys and girls.

De Boer, John J. and Dallman, Martha, "Children's Interests in Reading," in *The Teaching of Reading*, pp. 225-266. Henry Holt and Company, New York, 1960.

The authors have provided an excellent background to assist teachers in identifying ways of interesting children in reading good books. The unusually detailed resources include book selection tools, sources of information concerning book clubs, as well as children's magazine sources.

Eakin, Mary K., *Good Books for Children, A Selection of Outstanding Children's Books Published 1948-57*. The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1960.

Books that have survived during the 1948-57 period are critically annotated and organized in alphabetical order. Suggested reading levels provide teachers necessary guidance in better meeting individual differences.

Fenner, Phyllis, *Something Shared: Children and Books*. The John Day Company, New York, 1959.

Phyllis Fenner's rich experience as a children's librarian and author makes this reference choice reading to teachers searching for ways of helping children develop significant interests in reading. Her warm enthusiasm and valuable suggestions stimulate the adult reader in becoming better informed about the best in books for children.

Fenner, Phyllis, *The Proof of the Pudding: What Children Read*. The John Day Company, New York, 1957.

This well-documented source book provides first-hand information concerning the best books of all times, why children like them, and the usual age when children read them. This is a lively source to share with parents as they seek guidance in selecting books for their children.

Larrick, Nancy, *A Parent's Guide to Children's Reading*. Doubleday and Company, Incorporated, Garden City, New York, 1958.

Parents are interested in their children's reading. "But how can we help?" "What books should we purchase for our children?" "How do we know what choices to make?" The author's suggestions are presented clearly as well as interestingly. This is the type of reference the school needs to share with the parents.

Larrick, Nancy, *A Teacher's Guide to Children's Books*. Charles E. Merrill, Books, Incorporated, New York, 1960.

The problem of successfully teaching boys and girls how to read and to involve them in the development of life-long habits of good reading demands a wealth of knowledge concerning the best in

children's books, the time in which we live, and boys and girls. Nancy Larrick has provided a valuable source book steeped in enthusiasm to promote a more lively and worthwhile reading program for children.

Robinson, Helen (Compiler and Editor), *Materials for Reading*, Proceedings of the Annual Conference on Reading. The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1957.

This is the most inclusive summary of all types of reading materials including basal readers, workbooks, teacher's guides, library sources, and books in each related subject area. In addition, much assistance is available in suggesting ways of using materials with the various interest and ability levels. Added strength of this reference centers on the administrator's role in providing teaching materials basic to effective learning.

Smith, Lillian H., *The Unreluctant Years*. American Library Association, Chicago, 1953.

This is a critical approach to children's literature rather than an annotated list of books for children. The author is concerned about the standards or the quality of books already written as well as those to be written. Since a teacher often has the selection responsibility, information concerning ways and means of distinguishing the mediocre and commonplace from significant literature is pertinent.

Tooze, Ruth, *Your Children Want to Read*. Prentice-Hall, Incorporated, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1952.

Our concern for the world problems of today and the need to develop a better informed citizenry is reflected throughout Ruth Tooze's contribution. Both parents and teachers will profit from her stimulating ideas concerning the selection of what children read.

Magazines and Newspapers

Childhood Education. The Association for Childhood Education International, Washington 16, D.C.

Published monthly from September through June, *Childhood Education* provides an outstanding section on "Books for Children." The

effective annotations and the suggested reading levels give the teacher the type of guidance necessary in meeting the varying needs of boys and girls.

Elementary English. The National Council for the Teachers of English, Champaign, Illinois.

All areas of the language arts are aided by the stimulating articles in this magazine published from September through June. The lead article is generally concerned with an author or illustration of children's books. Techniques for developing interest in books and ways of meeting differences, including individualized reading, are provided. The annotations of selected books provide up-to-date guidance to the teacher.

Library Journal (Junior Libraries Section). R. R. Bowker Company, New York 36, N. Y.

This journal, issued twice a month from September through June, appraises new books and records for children, youth, and adults. *The Junior Libraries Section*, which may be purchased separately, is included in each second monthly issue of the publication. Issues often provide concentrated assistance on a particular type of material. For example, the December 15th issue focused attention upon musical and story recordings.

The Horn Book Magazine. The Horn Book, Incorporated, 585 Boylston Street, Boston 16, Massachusetts.

Published six times a year, this magazine is entirely devoted to a study of books for children. Background information concerning authors, illustrators, techniques for developing reading interests and tastes, and thorough annotations are found in each issue.

Top of the News. American Library Association, Chicago.

Books, records, films, filmstrips, and magazines are examined and annotated. Articles as "Easy Adult Books for Slow High School Readers," "Northwest American History," and "Richer by Asia" increase the reader's knowledge of materials available for children and youth.

The children's book sections of such newspapers and magazines as the *New York Times*, the *New York Herald Tribune*, the *Chicago Tribune*, and the *Saturday Review* report periodically on new publications in the field of children's literature.

Bulletins (Selected)

Since there are many bulletins, ten have been chosen. These are the basic lists that should be available to all teachers in developing book recommendation orders for libraries, classroom, and home collections.

American Library Association, *A Basic Book Collection for Elementary Grades*. The Association, Chicago, 1960.

"The titles in this list provide a well-balanced initial collection for the library in a small elementary school." The various subject fields are represented, suggested grade levels are given, and the costs and publishers are included. The annotations aid the teacher in selecting books which best meet the varied needs of her group.

American Library Association, *The Booklist and Subscription Books Bulletin*. The Association, Chicago.

This bulletin is published twice a month from September through July and contains annotations of books for children, young adults, and adults, annotated lists of free and inexpensive materials, and information concerning all types of reference books. Since this is the most current of all book selection tools, this should be available to all teachers.

Arbuthnot, May Hill, *Children's Books Too Good to Miss* (rev. ed.). Western Reserve University Press, Cleveland, Ohio, 1959.

Two hundred of the finest books for children are annotated in detail. The illustrations add much to the reader's concept of the books.

Association for Childhood Education International, *A Bibliography of Books for Children*. The Association, Washington 16, D.C., 1960.

The table of contents reveals a list of books on all the subject and interest areas usually included in the elementary curriculum. Reading

levels, sources, and costs are stated. This selected list is revised periodically.

Growing Up With Books. R. R. Bowker Company, New York 36, N. Y., 1960.

This annually revised and simply annotated listing of 250 favorite books for children is a very inexpensive, effective tool for parents and teachers.

Growing Up With Science Books. R. R. Bowker Company, New York 36, N. Y., 1960.

Added emphasis on science has produced excellent new books listed in this inexpensive, annually revised tool indispensable to parents and teachers.

Heaton, Margaret M. and Lewis, Helen B., *Reading Ladders for Human Relations* (rev. ed.). American Council on Education, Washington 6, D.C., 1960.

Emphasis now being placed on more knowledge concerning the people of the world and their human relations problems demands broader reading in this area. This well-annotated book list gives the reader expert information concerning books meeting this basic need.

Kenworthy, Leonard S., *Developing World-Minded Children: Resources for Elementary School Teachers*, Brooklyn College, Brooklyn, New York, 1960.

A timely, annotated book list for more creative teaching of the social studies. This very inexpensive tool should be the property of every teacher.

National Council of Teachers of English, *Adventuring with Books.* The Council of Teachers of English, Champaign, Illinois, 1960.

Periodically kept up-to-date, this is an indispensable tool that should be available in every elementary school. Its companion, *Your Reading*, meets similar needs at the Junior High School level. The well-selected and carefully annotated lists provide guidance and information for adults trying to bring the right books to the right children.

University of Chicago, *Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books*.
Graduate Library School, University of Chicago.

Published monthly except August, this bulletin provides a current annotated list of the best in new books for children and young people. All vital information necessary for selecting and ordering books is included.

PROGRAM

Theme: *EXPLORING NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN READING*

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 27

Setting Reading Goals for Today's Challenge

Panel Discussion

Dr. Ben F. Ahlschewede, Chairman, Assistant Superintendent in Charge of Instruction, Battle Creek Public Schools

Dr. Sara Swickard, Department of Education, WMU

Mr. W. William Blackmore, Director of Children's Services, Kalamazoo County Juvenile Agent

Dr. Orval M. Conner, Elementary Consultant, Battle Creek Public Schools

Mr. Harvey Overton, Department of Education, WMU

6:30 P.M. Room 105—Smorgasbord-\$2.75

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 15

Meeting Individual Differences—Workshop

Miss Betty Stroud, Chairman, Principal, Indian Prairie School

7:00 P.M.—Indian Prairie School—Dessert and Coffee-\$.50

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 6

Implementing Recent Research Findings

Dr. Byron Van Roekel, President of the Michigan I.R.A., Department of Education, Michigan State University

6:30 P.M. Room 105—Served Dinner-\$2.25