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A Study of Methods to be Used in Developing a Selective List of Kindergarten Books for Antioch School, Merriam, Kansas

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A STUDY OF METHODS TO BE USED IN DEVELOPING A
SELECTIVE LIST OF KINDERGARTEN BOOKS FOR
ANTIOCH SCHOOL, MERRIAM, KANSAS

d+
A Problem Submitted to the Department of Education in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Course in Research Problems 390b

by

Anita Moore

PORTER LIBRARY

KANSAS STATE TEACHERS COLLEGE

Pittsburg, Kansas

January, 1958

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INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

This problem was an attempt at collecting through the opinion of forty-five kindergarten teachers in Northeast Johnson County, Kansas, a selective list of kindergarten books suitable for use in the Antioch School, Merriam, Kansas.

Need for the Study

There was a great need for a preferred list of books to help teachers select materials which would meet the interests, needs, and experiences of the child and at the same time create a desire to read.

As soon as children begin to enjoy books, whether read to them or by them, they begin to form tastes in reading. Because much material that is undesirable is still published for children, and because wrong choices in books may lead to faulty conceptions of life, to wrong habits, or to mental stagnation, guidance of children's reading is imperative.¹

Since teachers for the most part have had to order books from catalogues and were not able to evaluate them, there was a need for a bibliography arranged according to title, author, publisher, date published, and price at the present time. There was also a need for a selective list of books that was systematically organized according to units of interest, so that they may be secured with little loss of time and effort

¹California Curriculum Commission, Teachers' Guide to Child's Development (Sacramento: State Printing Office, 1930), p. 593.

and utilized at the psychological moment (the time when actually needed in relationship to use.)

Purposes of the Study

It has been the writer's purpose to: (1) Make an extensive and fairly complete survey of books that are being published for kindergarten children; (2) Organize a selective list of books which had been arranged according to the interests, experiences and needs of the child; and (3) Make available a bibliography which contains the title, author, publisher, date of publication, and the present catalogue price, so that it could be used as a guide by kindergarten teachers and others who are interested in selecting books of this age.

Research Design

The Documentary Method. One of the important items in the documentary method of research is the collection of the data from the library. It affords the researcher an opportunity to become better acquainted with the methods of research and to obtain materials which he might not have been able to secure through other sources. The documentary method also consists of criticism of the data which covers both internal and external processes. If one is to achieve success in his research it is important to build a good bibliography from which to work. By skimming through the index the researcher will be able to

determine whether he wishes this book placed on his list for future note taking.

Knowledge of library techniques and tools, and skills in the use of the guides to the literature, can make at least three contributions to problem solving. (1) A carefully planned program of reading frequently is the source of significant problems; (2) A systematic canvass of the related literature is the means of determining whether the proposed study unnecessarily duplicates some earlier investigation. (3) The knowledge secured from such reading, in terms of sources, procedures, and results, represents essential orientation for definition of the problem.²

The Check List Method. The second method of research used in this study was a check list. "When preparing a check-list one must, of course, collect the items to be included. The items may be obtained by interview, written statement, analysis, reading and recording, or a combination of all of them."³

Whenever several items of data are collected, a check list may be used to assemble them. The most common use of the check list is to assemble data for evaluation or rating purposes. A bibliography might be assembled into a check list and sent to experienced teachers with the request that they check the references which they consider most helpful.⁴

The most important criterion for a check-list is completeness. Since the check list presents a list of items for evaluation or for directing attention toward significant elements, it is essential that every significant item appear. If the check-list is to be used for rating purposes, criteria need to be chosen and clearly defined. The criteria to be used must depend upon the purpose in

²Carter V. Good and Douglas E. Scates, Methods of Research (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1954), pp. 153-154.

³Douglas Waples and Ralph Tyler, Research Methods and Teachers' Problems (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1930), p. 547.

⁴Ibid., pp. 545-546

view. If the teacher wishes to know how well the selections are enjoyed, she will choose the criterion "enjoyment."⁵

Sources of Data. A partial survey of the literature on selecting books for children, available in the Porter Library, Kansas State Teachers College, Pittsburg, Kansas; The Kansas City Public Library, Kansas City, Missouri; and the Antioch School Library, Merriam, Kansas, was made. This included books on story telling, language arts, exploring literature with children, and reading readiness.

In securing more information for this study, a survey of book lists compiled by the American Library Association, American Childhood Education, the Children's Book Center of Chicago, and the Kansas State Reading Circle was made.

Interviews were conducted with ten kindergarten teachers. The interview method was chosen, because the writer was able to secure a list of books that had been read, re-read, and evaluated.

Prior to conducting the interview, a list of questions to be asked the interviewees was made. Those interviewed suggested many of the books that were listed in the selected bibliography, Appendix.

⁵Ibid., p. 548

Limitations of the Study

The most limiting factor of this study was the limited time available. For a study of this type to be of real value it should be made over a three or five year period, so there would be time for the teachers to try out different books, and to eliminate those that did not appeal to or meet the needs of the child.

The county is not coordinated through a central system as city schools are; therefore there are no lists of books that "all" teachers use as a reference. Each school has made its own selection for its library and the teachers generally were familiar only with the books in their own libraries, which in many cases were very limited.

ANALYSIS OF DATA

Evaluation of the Literature

"The flood of recent publications in children's books is so overpowering that it is important to remind ourselves that there are old books in children's literature as fresh and servicable today as they were fifty years ago."⁶

"In making a selection of the literature the teacher must try to include the best of the old, tried, and tested materials and a wise sampling of the more recent publications."⁷

Books continue to be a prime source of comfort and aid in making life meaningful. It behooves the adults to see that the right books get to the individual child at the right time -- which is the time when he wants them and can in his own way profit from having read them. The teacher should have access to a wide variety of good reading materials. It is also significant that these materials should be systematically organized according to units of interest, so they may be secured with little loss of time and effort and utilized at the psychological moment (the time when actually needed in relationship to use).⁸

If literature is to serve children when and where they need it, those nearest them in their daily activities and most directly responsible for their guidance must be very much at home with the wealth of available material. The matter of developing a real interest in books becomes a factor in reading readiness that the kindergarten teacher must put on her list of firsts. If little or no interest is shown in books and stories, the teacher must

⁶Mary Hill Arbuthnot, Children and Books (New York: Scott Foresman and Co., 1947), p. 11.

⁷Josephine C. Foster and Keith E. Headley, Education in the Kindergarten (New York: American Book Co., 1936), p. 186.

⁸Leland Jacobs, Invitation to Believe and Make Believe (New York: The Combined Book Exhibit, Inc., 1957), Introduction.

tactfully bring the children in contact with them in such a way that a desire to read is stimulated.⁹

All teachers should be interested in helping children develop an appreciation for good books, but it is the kindergarten and primary teachers who take children with their book backgrounds and their non-book backgrounds, plus all their other differences, and introduce them to a new world of books. The kindergarten teacher works to develop an interest in books and to build a background of nursery rhymes and stories that should be common knowledge for all children of their age, to broaden their interests, to expand their knowledge and to develop habits and skills needed for reading.¹⁰

Most of the studies indicate that children with kindergarten experiences tend to excell non-kindergarten children. While the kindergarten has many justifications other than direct preparation for reading activities, kindergarten experience does appear to be a significant factor in readiness for reading.¹¹

Results of the Check List

In making this study a check list of 100 books was sent to forty-five kindergarten teachers in Northeast Johnson County, Kansas. Thirty-four of these lists were checked and returned. Nine of the teachers had one to two years of experience, nine had three to five years of experience, and sixteen had taught over five years.

⁹Jean Betzner, Exploring Literature with Children (New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1943), pp. 51-53.

¹⁰Zelma W. Baker, The Language Arts, The Child, and the Teacher (San Francisco: Fearon Publishers, 1955), pp. 48-49.

¹¹Emmett and Albert Betts, Foundations of Reading Instruction (Chicago: American Book Co., 1948), p. 117.

The preliminary survey, made by interviews, indicated that about fifty percent of the books on the list would be "children enjoyed" or "no noticeable response." The remaining fifty percent of the books on the list would be "not familiar with this book."

Based on the results of the survey, fifty percent of the list was made up of books "children enjoyed," ten percent "children did not enjoy," and fifteen percent not generally being used, but familiar to some teachers. Twenty-five percent were selected by the writer to determine how many were familiar with these books and their opinions of them.

The final survey indicated forty-two percent of the children enjoyed the books, seven percent made no noticeable response and fifty-one percent of the teachers were not familiar with some of the books listed.

List I shows the final list of fifty books the kindergarten teachers selected as those the children enjoyed most.

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary and Conclusions

This problem was an attempt at collecting through the opinion of forty-five kindergarten teachers in Northeast Johnson County, Kansas, a selective list of books suitable for use in the Antioch School kindergarten.

The primary purpose of this study has been fulfilled in the compilation of a selective list of books, but the writer feels that this investigation has revealed some conclusions that are worthy of mention. Teachers with up to two years of experience were more familiar with the newer books. However less than ten percent of this group of books had been used. The teacher with five years experience used the same books, the ones that are more or less "old standards." The teachers just out of college were using more of the newer books.

Through interviews it was also noted that there was a limited amount of money available for purchasing books. To have a variety from which to choose, the less expensive books were selected.

The writer is aware of the fact that it is impossible to arrive at an absolute system of classification or to make a complete list of books to be used. Because of considerable differences of opinions resulting from varied experiences and new materials being published each year, this list of books will need revising from time to time.

Recommendations

A check list cannot be comprehensive enough to get an exact evaluation of each book. Therefore the writer recommended that each teacher introduce more new books each year, evaluate them and add to the selective list. The final list would be more valid if the books were tried and tested so that no new books appeared. Then by process of repeated surveys a selective list of greater value could be assembled.

As this would be rather costly, it has been suggested that several teachers work together on conducting this survey.

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APPENDIX

APPENDIX

List I

A Selective List of Books

September

Jerry at School

Author	K. and B. Jackson
Illus.	Corinne Malverson
Publisher	Campbell and Hall, Inc., Boston, Mass.
Price	\$0.78

Mother Goose

Author	Jane Werner
Illus.	Alice and Martin Provensen
Publisher	Campbell and Hall, Inc., Boston, 1956
Price	\$2.39

School Days

Author	Kathryn Jackson
Illus.	V. LaMont
Publisher	Campbell and Hall, Inc., Boston, 1956
Price	\$1.69

Willie Goes to School

Author	Pauline Vinson
Illus.	Pauline Vinson
Publisher	MacMillan, New York, 1953
Price	\$1.56

October

Proud Pumpkin

Author	Nora S. Unwin
Illus.	Nora S. Unwin
Publisher	Alladdin Books, New York, 1953
Price	\$1.97

NovemberThe Thanksgiving Story

Author	Alice Dogliesh
Illus.	Helen Sewell
Publisher	A. C. McClurg & Co., Chicago, 1957
Price	\$2.50

DecemberChristmas Puppy

Author	Bill and Bernard Martin
Illus.	Bill and Bernard Martin
Publisher	Tell Well Press, Kansas City, Mo.
Price	\$1.25

Santa's Toy Shop

A Golden Book

Author	Al Dempster
Illus.	Walt Disney
Publisher	Simon and Schuster, New York, 1950
Price	\$0.50

The Little Engine That Could

Author	Watty Piper
Illus.	Lois L. Lenski
Publisher	The Platt Munk Co., New York, 1930
Price	\$1.00

'Twas the Night Before Christmas

Author	Clement Moore
Illus.	Leonard Weisgard
Publisher	Grosset and Dunlap, New York, 1949
Price	\$2.00

JanuaryThe Snowman Who Wanted to Stay

Author	Sarah Derman
Illus.	Dorcas
Publisher	Whitman Publishing Co., Racine, Wis., 1948
Price	\$1.50

FebruaryTrue Book of Holidays

Author	Purcell
Illus.	Purcell
Publisher	National Prebinds, New York, 1956
Price	\$1.50

MarchPitter Patter and Hiding Places

Author	Dorothy W. Baruch
Illus.	Charles G. Shaw
Publisher	E. M. Hale Co., Eau Claire, Wis., 1953
Price	\$1.50

Pussy Willow

Golden Book

Author	Margaret Wise Brown
Illus.	Leonard Weisgard
Publisher	Campbell and Hall Inc., Boston, 1956
Price	\$2.19

AprilGolden Bunny

Big and Giant Golden Book

Author	Margaret Wise Brown
Illus.	Leonard Weisgard
Publisher	Campbell and Hall, Boston, 1956
Price	\$2.19

Five Little Rabbits

Author	Bill and Bernard Martin
Illus.	Bill and Bernard Martin
Publisher	Tell Well Press, Kansas City, Mo. 1951
Price	\$1.25

The Country Bunny and the Little Gold Shoes

Author	DuBose Heyward
Illus.	Marjorie Flack
Publisher	Houghton Mifflin, Boston, 1939
Price	\$2.75

The Funny Bunny Factory

Author	Adam Green
Illus.	Leonard Weisgard
Publisher	Grosset and Dunlap, New York, 1950
Price	\$2.00

The Golden Egg Book

Author	Margaret Wise Brown
Illus.	Leonard Weisgard
Publisher	Simon and Schuster, New York, 1947
Price	\$2.19

The White Bunny and His Magic Nose

Author	Lily Duplaix
Illus.	Masha
Publisher	Simon and Schuster, New York, 1945
Price	\$1.25

MayThe Little Red Hen

Little Golden Book

Author	J. P. Miller
Illus.	J. P. Miller
Publisher	Campbell and Hall, Inc., Boston, 1957
Price	\$0.50

AnimalsAngus and the Ducks

Author	Marjorie Flack
Illus.	Marjorie Flack
Publisher	Doubleday, Doran, Garden City, N. Y. 1930
Price	\$1.50

Great Big Animal Book

Library Binding

Author	Rojankovsky
Illus.	Rojankovsky
Publisher	Campbell and Hall, Inc., 1956
Price	\$2.52

Theodore Turtle

Author	Ellen MacGregor
Illus.	Paul Galdone
Publisher	Kansas State Reading Circle, Topeka
	1956
Price	\$1.48

The Rabbit Who Wanted Red Wings

Author	Carolyn Sherwin Bailey
Illus.	Dorothy Grider
Pub.	Platt and Munk Co., New York, 1945
Price	\$2.25

The Tale of Peter Rabbit

Author	Beatrix Potter
Illus.	Beatrix Potter
Publisher	Frederick Warne and Co., New York
Price	\$0.75

The True Book of Pets

Author	Illa Podendorf
Illus.	Illa Podendorf
Publisher	Childrens Press, Chicago, 1956
Price	\$2.00

CircusThe Circus Baby

Author	Maud and Miska Petersham
Illus.	Maud and Miska Petersham
Publisher	MacMillan Co., New York, 1950
Price	\$1.50

The Circus Comes to Town

Author	Veronica S. Hutchinson
Illus.	Erick Berry
Publisher	E. M. Hale & Co., Eau Claire, Wis., 1932
Price	\$1.75

Wait for William

Author	Marjorie Flack
Illus.	Marjorie Flack and Richard A. Holberg
Publisher	Houghton Mifflin Co., New York, 1953
Price	\$1.25

Community HelpersDaddies-What They Do All Day

Author	Helen Walker Puner
Illus.	Roger Duvoisin
Publisher	Lothrop, Lee Shepard, New York, 1946
Price	\$1.00

Your Friend the Policeman Ding Dong Book

Author	Miss Frances
Illus.	William Neebe
Publisher	Rand McNally Co., Chicago, 1953
Price	\$0.50

CountingChicken Little Count to Ten

Author	Frisky
Illus.	Frisky
Publisher	Childrens Press, Chicago, 1954
Price	\$1.73

Tell-Time Goes A'Counting

Author	Charlotte Steiner
Illus.	Charlotte Steiner
Publisher	The Combined Book Exhibit, Inc., N. Y.
Price	\$2.00

CowboysCowboy Small

Author	Lois Lenski
Illus.	Lois Lenski
Publisher	Oxford University Press, New York, 1949
Price	\$1.25

Little Wild Horse

Author	Hetty Burlingame Beatty
Illus.	Hetty Burlingame Beatty
Publisher	Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston, 1949
Price	\$2.50

HousesThe Little House

Author	Virginia Lee Burton
Illus.	Virginia Lee Burton
Publisher	Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston, 1950
Price	\$2.50

InsectsLittle Squeegy Bug

Author	Bill and Bernard Martin
Illus.	Bill and Bernard Martin
Publisher	Tell Well Co., Kansas City, Mo., 1945
Price	\$1.25

Transportation

AIRPLANES

Looby

Author	Hardie Gramatky
Illus.	Hardie Gramatky
Publisher	G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1941
Price	\$2.75

The Little Airplane

Author	Lois Lenski
Illus.	Lois Lenski
Publisher	Oxford University Press, N. Y., 1938
Price	\$0.50

AUTOS AND TRUCKS

The Little Auto

Author	Lois Lenski
Illus.	Lois Lenski
Publisher	Oxford University Press, N.Y., 1951
Price	\$0.50

BUS

Bingity-Bangity

Author	Fleur Conkling
Illus.	Ruth Wood
Publisher	Wonder Books, New York, 1950
Price	\$0.50

FIRE ENGINES

Five Little Firemen

Golden Book in Library Binding

Author	Margaret Wise Brown
Illus.	Gergely
Publisher	Campbell and Hall, Boston, 1957
Price	\$0.83

The Big Book of Real Fire Engines

Author	George Zaffo
Illus.	George Zaffo
Publisher	Grosset and Dunlap, N.Y., 1950
Price	\$2.00

The Little Fireman

Author	Lois Lenski
Illus.	Lois Lenski
Publisher	Oxford University Press, N. Y., 1951
Price	\$0.75

TRAINS

Whistle for the Train

Picture Book

Author	Golden MacDonald
Illus.	Leonard Weisgard
Publisher	Doubleday & Co., New York, 1955
Price	\$2.50

Smoky Poky

Author	Bill and Bernard Martin
Illus.	Bill and Bernard Martin
Publisher	Tell Well Co., Kansas City, 1949
Price	\$1.25

ScienceThe True Book of Insects

Author	Margaret Friskey
Illus.	Anna Pistorius
Publisher	Childrens Press, Chicago, 1954
Price	\$2.00

SeasonsAll Falling Down

Author	Gene Zion
Illus.	Margaret Bloy Graham
Publisher	Harper and Brothers, New York, 1951
Price	\$1.75

The True Book of Seasons

Author	Podendorf
Illus.	Podendorf
Publisher	Childrens Press, National Rebinds New York, 1956
Price	\$1.00