A STUDY OF A SELECTED NUMBER OF STORIES SUITABLE
FOR DRAMATIZATION IN THE THIRD GRADE

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Statement of Problem

The problem of this study is to determine whether a selected number of stories possesses such qualities that would make them suitable for dramatization in the third grade.

Purpose of Study

The writer purposes to discover the types of stories that appeal to the interest and imagination of children of the third grade, and to determine whether the literary qualities and the dramatic possibilities of the stories are within the understanding and ability of the group.

Limitations of Study

It is not the intent of the writer to be concerned with any form of literary work other than the literary story. The large volume of available stories makes it possible to use only a selected number possessing dramatic possibilities. Third-grade children of a Dallas elementary school will be included in the study.

Definition of Terms

The literary story may be defined as one in which the
author has selected and arranged the events or incidents in such a way that serves to produce the desired literary effect.¹

A story dramatization is one in which "the pattern is set by someone else."²

Criteris

The following criteria were used in determining the suitability of the stories selected for dramatization by third-grade children:

1. Dramatic expression is a natural activity. Is it of value in the mental, moral, and social development of the child?

2. Content of the stories should appeal to the tastes, interests, and ages of children. Do the stories qualify?

3. Children's literature should possess a high degree of literary excellence. Does the story structure meet the standards of good writing? Do the qualities of the stories have emotional and imaginative appeal for the children?

4. Do the stories meet the requirements of drama? Are they within the dramatic abilities of children?

5. The values derived from the dramatization of a good story are worthy of the time spent on them.


²Robert Hill Lane, The Progressive Elementary School, p. 104.
The criteria for this study are based principally on six books: one on children's books,\textsuperscript{3} two on play making with children,\textsuperscript{4,5} one on creative drama,\textsuperscript{6} and two on literature for children.\textsuperscript{7,8}

Sources of Data

The data for this study have been gathered from books, current publications, and personal interviews. Basic criteria for evaluation have been obtained from the reading of books by authors in the fields of literature and drama for children; viewpoints of educators in the field of auditorium activities; current writings of authorities on public school dramatics; and opinions of children participating in the dramatization of stories.

Procedure

The writer has examined and selected a number of stories to be used in this study. A set of criteria has been formulated by which the stories may be judged.

A study of books by leading authorities in the field of

\textsuperscript{3}May Hill Arbuthnot, \textit{Children and Books}.
\textsuperscript{4}John Merrill and Martha Fleming, \textit{Play-making and Plays}.
\textsuperscript{5}Winnifred Ward, \textit{Play-making with Children}.
\textsuperscript{6}Corinne Brown, \textit{Creative Drama in the Lower School}.
\textsuperscript{7}Blanche E. Weekes, \textit{Literature and the Child}.
\textsuperscript{8}MacClintock, \textit{op. cit}. 
children's literature has been made in order to discover the types of stories most desired by children on the third-grade level, and to determine whether the literary qualities of these stories are of high degree of excellence.

Studies made by various authors in the fields of play-making and creative dramatics have been examined by the writer to determine the dramatic possibilities of the stories. Articles by leading educators, published in current magazines, have been investigated in order to gain information as to procedures in dramatization of stories.

The writer presented to groups of third-grade children a large number of stories from which they made selections for dramatization. Questionnaires were distributed to obtain children's evaluation of the stories. Consensus of opinions by specialists were obtained through questionnaires.

The above investigations were used as a basis for arriving at the conclusions in this study.
CHAPTER II

PRINCIPLES UNDERLYING THE SELECTION OF STORIES SUITABLE FOR DRAMATIZATION

Dramatization as a Natural Activity

The day is past when the dramatic impulse can be ignored in any educational scheme. This impulse is present in every human being, and like every good tendency, needs careful nurture if it is to bud, blossom and bear good fruit.¹

Dramatic play offers an invaluable opportunity to observe the child and to discover his potentialities. It points the way to a richer environment that is necessary for wholesome development. This activity is natural and necessary, and brings about an integration of intellectual, emotional, and physical aspects of experiences that are intensely personal and broadly social. To be of the greatest value, the integration must take place within the child. It cannot be forced on him by adults.

All play is dramatization in one form or another. It is inherent in the child’s nature and may be termed an art. Play as a growing-up process begins with the very young child. Children have to play and, in so doing, they learn to select from the things around them those that are

¹Merrill and Fleming, op. cit., p. xiii.
necessary to them in their activity. Habits of searching for something and using whatever materials are at hand are of great worth to the child in his future play.²

The young child's world is made up of things that he takes from the real world. His play is based largely upon imitation, and may be inspired by some ordinary happening, or may be stimulated by some imagined situation, or by some appealing story.³ The child may transport himself into a realm of imagination where he recreates those things about which he dreams. In this world of make-believe, a little girl may impersonate her mother. A little boy may live through the experiences of Indians, soldiers, or firemen. During these periods the children are larger and different personalities.⁴

The world of the very young child is narrow. He is self-centered, and his wants and purposes are the only things that have real meaning for him. As growth continues, his horizons are gradually broadened and expanded, and by the end of the second year of school he has developed social consciousness to such an extent that he becomes interested, not in self alone, but in other people and in other things.⁵


³Emily Ann Barnes and Bess M. Young, Plays, p. xi.

⁴Katherine D. Cather, Educating by Story Telling, p. 107.

⁵Ilse Forest, The School for the Child from Two to Eight, p. 175.
Dramatic play now begins to take a more definite form, and if it is encouraged and guided, definite growth and increased ability will lead to more formal dramatizations.\(^6\)

"Thus the spirit that leads children to play lady, doctor, church, or school will also lead them to enjoy story dramatization."\(^7\)

Selection of Stories

The choice of the story for reading and dramatization is of supreme importance. The story selected should have genuine appeal to the interests of children, should be suited to their ages and tastes, and should be worth-while in character. The stories should be challenging to the abilities of the children, and they should not be too difficult for dramatization.\(^8\)

Children's literature should not be judged by adult standards alone. To endure, and find a place in the child's regard, the literature should express the universality of truth and clearness of purpose characteristic of all good literature.\(^9\)

Contact with fine literature widens the horizons of the child, and the dramatization of a good story gives new insights and understandings far beyond those whose plots are

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\(^6\) Alice Dalgliesh, *First Experiences with Literature*, p. 126.

\(^7\) Charles M. Curry and Eric E. Clippinger, *Children's Literature*, p. 12.

\(^8\) Ward, *op. cit.*, p. 52.

\(^9\) Miriam Blanton Huber, *Story and Verse*, p. 3.
based on his own experiences.

Since interests and tastes of boys and girls of different ages vary, an understanding of their temperaments, environments, and previous experiences is necessary in order to choose wisely the materials having imaginative and emotional appeal.\(^{10}\)

Thus a good story to teach in class should be one whose materials correspond to the needs and tastes of children. The experiences portrayed should be not necessarily those that they have had, but such as they can conceive and imaginatively appropriate, and such as they might safely experience.\(^{11}\)

Though it is true that no two children are alike, certain interests can be counted on to predominate in groups of boys and girls of any particular age.\(^{12}\)

As the child enters the third grade of school, he has outgrown the self-centeredness natural to the young child. Wider experiences and a broader social acquaintance enable him to venture farther into the unknown at the same time that he retains the wonder of the world which was characteristic of his earlier years. This is the imaginative period in the life of the child, and though imagination is experienced in other stages of life, the strength and nature of his imaginative capacity at this time are best satisfied by imaginative literature.\(^{13}\)

\(^{10}\) Ward, *op. cit.*, pp. 32-35.

\(^{11}\) Mac Clintock, *op. cit.*, p. 80.


\(^{13}\) Elizabeth Nesbitt, "Books for Today's Children," *Horn Book*, XXIV (March-April, 1948), 92.
The fantastic and imaginative qualities of folk and fairy tales fascinate the eight-year-old. Interest in these tales may begin in some children at seven, and in others at nine, but the majority of children show the greater interest at the age of eight. At eight years, too, there is increased interest in stories of real life -- stories of other people and other lands. Realistic, animal, and nature stories are enjoyed, for the appreciation of his surroundings has grown and the child wants a reasonable explanation of things.\textsuperscript{14}

Types of Literature Approved by Leading Educators

Folk and fairy tales have a definite place in the life of the child. These tales take their themes from nature, from animal life, and from the lives of people. They are built on daily incidents of home life and experiences familiar to the child.\textsuperscript{15} The value of folk and fairy tales lies in the strong appeal to the idealizing faculty of the child, and in the ability to cultivate the imagination which enables the individual to recognize truth when he sees it.\textsuperscript{16}

Concerning the value of these stories Arbuthnot states:

\textsuperscript{14}Lewis M. Terman and Margaret Lime, \textit{Children's Readings}, p. 34.

\textsuperscript{15}Carolyn Bailey, \textit{The Story Telling Hour}, p. 49.

\textsuperscript{16}Edna Johnson and Carrie E. Scott, \textit{Anthology of Children's Literature}, p. 57.
They are the cement of society for they not only express, but codify and reinforce the way people think, feel, believe and behave. . . . They put the stamp of approval upon certain values held by the group, and thus cement it together with a common code of behavior. They teach kindness, modesty, truthfulness, courage in adversity -- and they make virtue seem worth-while, because it is invariably rewarded and evils just as invariably punished. This idea of the folk tales as carriers of the moral code helps explain the significance and emotional satisfaction they still hold for us today.17

Folk tales. -- The term "folk tale" is used to designate a very old tale that has been handed down orally from generation to generation. There are hundreds of these stories in every country of the world, and most of them were known before books were printed. The term "fairy tale" has often been applied to them because so many deal with fairies and magic.

European folk tales. -- Four national groups of European folk tales included in children's favorites have so colored the thinking of people that they have been termed classics.

The French fairy stories, written and compiled by Charles Perrault, are full of charm and possess more polish and sophistication than are usually found in folk tales. In place of dull narrative, they are lively with conversation. They appeal to all children.

The German folk tales were recorded by the Grimm Brothers in the simple language of the people of that era. The determination that the exact language of the time would

17 Arbuthnot, op. cit., p. 203.
be used is a standard by which other collections have been judged. These stories appeal to all ages, from the seven-year-old to maturity. They have had a great influence on the lives of people, and have often changed the attitudes toward life, human relationships, and moral standards.

The Norwegian tales are sincere and charming. They were collected by two friends, Peter Christian Asbjørnsen and Jørgen E. Moe, and were translated into English by the British scholar, Sir George Dasent. The tales were gathered from the lips of old story tellers who were relating them as they had been told in preceding generations. The general mood of the tales is serious, but the stories possess more humor than is usually found in other folk tales. There are no fairies, but magic objects take a hand in the affairs of men.

English fairy tales were compiled by Joseph Jacobs for the immediate enjoyment of the English children. Brutal and coarse incidents were omitted. Jacobs obtained a few of the tales from story tellers, but the majority he secured from written sources. The English fairy tales have three characteristics in common: stories of giant killers, humor, and the great number written on a level which appeals to younger children.\textsuperscript{18}

\textit{Folk tales of the United States}. -- Folk tales of the

\textsuperscript{18}\textit{Ibid.}, pp. 204-212.
United States fall into four large groups: tales from the American Negro, especially the Uncle Remus stories; the North American Indian tales; variants from European countries; and native tall tales.

Joel Chandler Harris, interested in the stories he heard from the plantation Negroes, made a collection of the Negro folk tales which he called the Uncle Remus tales. Into the character of Uncle Remus he put the gentleness, the philosophy, and the imagination of the Negro story teller. Into the mouth of Uncle Remus he put the tales he had collected. In language and setting these talking beast stories have a similarity to the talking beast tales of other lands, but the qualities they possess and their individuality are not to be surpassed by any beast tale in existence.

The North American Indian tales have been used very little as a part of literature for children. The American children are far more familiar with European stories than with the native Indian legends. The Americans are more closely related to the Europeans in race, customs, and ways of thinking, therefore the stories naturally are more interesting. Indian stories are not dramatic or well organized; they do not command intense interest. They include many myth-like qualities which are simple, brief, and moralistic. A few legends are interesting to children, but the majority are monotonous and so lacking in the grandeur of other myths
that children care little for them.

The Indian stories, in their original form, are a succession of episodes told night after night around the campfire. A great number in which the spirit of the tales, the atmosphere, and the customs of the Indians have been preserved, have been collected and edited but they are best used in connection with Indian units rather than for story telling.

Many variants of the European tales are found among American folk stories. They are much wittier and more satisfying than the old tales. The most amusing and significant collection is that of Richard Chase, who obtained the stories from mountaineers.

The native tall tale is a natural development from the exaggerated expressions and untrammelled humor of the American people. These stories, embodied with delusions of power, appeal to Americans because they are humorous tales of success. Their origin has never been credited to any specific locality, for they come from every part of the country. They are so funny that no child should fail to know them.19

The following classification has been given to folk tales: accumulative tales, talking beast tales, drolls, and realistic, or marcehen. The accumulative stories are

19 Ibid., p. 221.
folk tales the distinction of which lies in form rather than in their subject matter. The simplest of them are mere tales of repetition, like "The House That Jack Built."

They have strong appeal for the younger child. Beast tales are folk tales in which the actors are animals that act and talk like human beings. They resemble fables, but they are longer, and usually fail to emphasize morals. Drolls are intended to be comic, and to that end set forth the blunders, misadventures, and often undeserved good luck of fools and noodles. Marchen tales are known as nursery tales because of their simplicity of thought and form, their dramatic qualities, and their representations of animals and of supernatural characters and events. These qualities make them popular with children. They are highly romantic, and they often contain matter which is quite outside the range of human experience.20

Whatever its origin, the fairy tale is essentially the expression of the fundamental emotions and experiences of the folk. ... How exactly these characteristics mirror the inner life of young children. Overcome by the power and authority of the grown-up world, they protect themselves with dreams of future greatness in which their power will overshadow that of their present superiors. To their keen insight a person is beautiful, regardless of his outward appearance, if only his feelings and actions are gentle. ... In all these ways children find in fairy tales an expression of themselves and herein lies the value as well as the joy of the tales.21

20 Emelyn Gardner and Eloise Ramsey, Handbook of Children's Literature, pp. 81-82.

21 Eleanor Rawlinson, Introduction to Literature for Children, p. 234.
Modern fairy tales. — The beginning of the modern fairy story is credited to Hans Christian Andersen. Anderson rewrote many of the old folk tales he had heard in his childhood. To this collection he added his own stories which he patterned after the old folk-tale form.

Following the translation of Anderson's stories into English, new achievements were made in the field of fanciful literature for children. The writers of this literature established new tendencies which have been followed to the present time.

The modern fairy story forms a large portion of children's literature. Romantic and fanciful, these stories deal with magic and wonder and with unusual situations and characters. Fairies, humanized animals, and inanimate objects do all sorts of queer and interesting things.

Though the stories are written primarily for children, they lack the simplicity and sincerity of the old folk tales. Frequently, condensation and sophistication of the adult mind creep into the stories, and these elements leave the child bewildered and with the feeling of unreality. The style of humor is not that which appeals to youngsters, but is heavy and clumsy.22

Laura F. Kready makes the following statements concerning modern fairy tales:

22Lillian Hollowell, A Book of Children's Literature, p. 177.
To be literature ... besides characters, plots, setting, and dialogue, a classic must present truth; it must have imagination and emotion molded with beauty into the form of language; and it must have the power of a classic to bestow upon the mind a permanent enrichment. Any examination of the modern fairy tale very frequently shows a failure to meet these requirements.23

Animal tales. — There are three different types of animal stories. The first is the folk tale in which the animals are given the characteristics of human beings. The continued popularity of these tales is due to their humorous exaggerations, and even though they are completely unscientific, they have a definite appeal to children from the ages of three to seven, some to the ten-years-old, and a few to the twelves. To be sound, the stories must have good entertainment and good style, and must be true to human, not animal, nature.

The second type is one in which the animals are true to the species, but are given human thought and speech. The hardships and suffering of the animals are gently suggested in the stories for children from seven to ten, but for the older child cruelties and tragedies are portrayed. The children, through contact with such stories, develop a greater love and understanding for all animals, and are inspired to protect and care for them.

The third type is the story based on the reliable records of students of animal behavior. It usually pictures

23Laura F. Kready, A Study in Fairy Tales, p. 235.
the animal in its native surroundings. This type of story is popular with children from seven until the time they reach maturity, and the demand for more stories with appeal for this age group is steadily increasing. The stories hold great value for the child, for they help to enrich his life by expanding his sympathies and tenderness toward all animals.24

**Realistic tales.** -- The realistic story is a tale that is convincingly true to life. In it the people, action, and motives seem both plausible and possible. The present-day realistic fiction is predominantly honest. Authors have come to realize that children are sensible, normal human beings, interested in how other children and grown-ups get along in this work-a-day world. A good realistic story is valuable because it gives to real life some of the charm and glamor of fiction. Everyday happenings become more exciting when met with in some story. Realistic stories give children an insight into real-life situations. They convince them that there is fun to be had in doing the thing that has to be done in everyday living.25

**Literary Qualities**

**Form.** -- In a broad sense, a story is the narration of a succession of events which reaches its conclusion in

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24 Arbuthnot, op. cit., pp. 422-446.

25 Ibid., pp. 360-395.
chronological sequence. The recital of some event in history, or some occurrence in nature, for technical purposes or factual information, must follow the sequence of time or the order of cause and effect. The literary story differs from this type of narrative in that the author may select and arrange the events or incidents in any way that serves to produce the effect he desires.

The mere recital of events will hold the attention of children; however, it is the well-constructed narrative that will sustain interest to the conclusion of the story. Thus, it is the principle of organization that gives to the story its distinctive values in education.26

The story must conform to the techniques of the best short stories and the best literary dramas -- it must have a beginning, a middle, and an end . . .

The beginning of any well-constructed story or play states definitely and clearly the situations, presents the characters, introduces the conflicting forces, defines the difficulties, and sets forth the real problem so sharply that it cannot be misunderstood. The beginning, or exposition, shows the cause of things that are going to happen in the story or play. Next follows the logical and progressive development growing out of the premises stated in the exposition. The rising action culminates in an inevitable crisis. The descending action begins as soon as the resolving forces begin to act. The end is the conclusion, or denouement, that leaves the audience satisfied with the outcome.27

In children's literature the beginning is very important. The characters must be revealed immediately in their setting, and the emotional tone should be so apparent that the interest

26 McClintock, op. cit., p. 56.
27 Ibid., pp. 56-57.
and attention of the listeners, or readers, at once are caught and held throughout the story. The central theme must be set before them clearly. The body, or development, of the story is plot. This gives the picture of the experiences, and allows the individual to see the characters through the actions or experiences that come to them. To hold the interest, the plot must be concise, unusual, and entertaining. The images must be clear-cut and few in number. There must be a logical development of plot and an economy of incidents. Unity, the integration of each character, incident, or paragraph with the main theme, is necessary in a well-written story. The conclusion must have a happy outcome in order to leave the children emotionally satisfied.

The old folk tales closely resemble the clear-cut form of the old drama, and herein lies the charm that they hold, both for the adult and the child.

The beginning introduces the reader to the leading characters, the time and place of the story, the theme and conflict. The themes are robust and clear, and possess the elements of contrast which heighten the conflict and arouse the emotions. These themes, too, are often objective and understandable, having for their purpose the earning of a living, or the solution of some problem or situation.

The time element is important and the simple phrase, "Once upon a time," carries the individual into a world where anything can happen. The simple introduction catches the immediate attention of the child and increases the desire for more stories.

The development of the plot is, for the most part, logical and plausible. The stories possess unity of interest which is centered on a central idea, and they maintain a strict unity which holds the attention to the main theme.

The economy of incidents, which is so characteristic of the folk tales, is important to this study. The average number of incidents usually holds to three; however, if the conflict is great enough, more may be used. Suspense is the quality that builds up the folk-tale action until it reaches the climax.

The conclusions are swift and satisfying to the child's code of ethics. The children are left with their imaginations untroubled and happy in the outcome.31

Style

The content and style of literature should possess certain characteristics. One essential is that it must possess the right emotional tone. The author should write with sincerity, and without bias or prejudice. Characters must be true to human nature, and life in all aspects must be

31Arbuthnot, op. cit., p. 228.
portrayed honestly and fairly. The moral to be conveyed should be inherent in the story, and the story itself should be free from too much sentiment and morbidness.

The craftsmanship of the author must be excellent. Literature for children must be well written, in good English, and on the child's level. A wide range of words and phrases is necessary to reveal to the reader the thoughts and feelings of the writer. The treatment of the material must be such that it stimulates the right emotional response essential to understanding and appreciation. It should be marked by simplicity, force, and originality, and should reveal the spirit in which the author has approached the writing and the vein in which it is written.\textsuperscript{32}

Style is the charm of the folk tales. In them the words are suited to the mood of the story. In the beginnings and endings is established the predominating mood of the story. Dialogue is a part of the style that is so characteristic of these tales. It is so natural that real people seem to be speaking. Carefully chosen words make description unnecessary.

One of the characteristics of the tales is the use of rhymes. Stories are often part verse and part prose, an example of which may be seen in Hansel and Gretel. These are the things that add to the beauty of the stories and

\textsuperscript{32}Weekes, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 32.
the reason why they are so loved by children.\textsuperscript{33}

Content

In recent years a large number of studies have been made to determine the qualities that children most desire in their literature. Terman and Lima, in their investigations, found the following qualities most important to children: action, human interest, imagination, appeal, humor, and sincerity. Johnson and Scott list the following: action, human interest, imagination, and a sense of justice.

**Action.** -- A large number of children's stories should contain action; that is, they should be of things happening, of achievement. This action should correspond as nearly as is possible to the experiences and interests of the children, and they should be in harmony with their other activities.

The amount of action put into the children's story should be controlled, for too much or too concentrated activity is a mark of a sensational story. This type is not good for children. A central action to be accomplished, with just enough of subordinate activities to keep the story in action, is more suitable for children than a recital of events that create undue emotion.

**Human interest.** -- There are certain basic needs that are common to most people and to most times. Physical and material security, emotional and spiritual security, are

\textsuperscript{33}Arbuthnot, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 229.
powerful drives in human behavior, and form the themes of most stories.

Human-interest stories appeal strongly to children. Stories dealing with material comforts are always a source of interest to children. Stories of home life develop in the child a feeling of love and family loyalty. Stories of spiritual security in which right triumphs over wrong build religious faith and belief in the world where moral law prevails.

Human interest has an imaginative appeal for children and is one of the most important qualities found in literature for children.34

Imagination. "Children are naturally imaginative and often insist upon dwelling in a world of imagination, the character of which is largely determined by the literature with which they are familiar."35

In order to satisfy the imaginative side of children's nature, literature possessing imaginative qualities should be given them.36 However, the elements used to stir the imagination must be used with economy and discretion, for too much of the magical or supernatural creates undue excitement and strains nerves and wastes energy.37

36Edna Johnson and Carrie E. Scott, Anthology of Children's Literature, p. 57.
37Merrill and Fleming, op. cit., p. 22.
Humor. -- Another important quality that children like in stories is humor. The child loves a funny story and the tale that is humorous is a special pleasure.\textsuperscript{38}

The child's sense of humor is crude, and often it is difficult for adults to see things as a child sees them. A child's humor is physical. Ridiculous little happenings, misfortunes of others, grotesque exaggerations, unexpected turn of events, strange sounds and funny names will send a child into gales of laughter.\textsuperscript{39}

Poetic justice. -- Every story given to children should be characterized by poetic justice for that is the only kind of justice that the child knows. It sets the standard for children of what is desirable as well as for the undesirable. The child's feeling for regret and wrong is very keen, and he has absolute faith that good will be rewarded and the evil punished.

Children want happy outcomes. Should the conclusion of a tale be disastrous, preparation for this must be made in order that children may see the justice of the thing that is done.\textsuperscript{40}

Dramatic Possibilities

Purpose. -- Dramatization to be successful must have a

\textsuperscript{38}Kredy, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 21.
\textsuperscript{39}Dalgliesh, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 94-96.
\textsuperscript{40}Ward, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 56.
purpose. Concerning this Depew says:

Dramatization, like story telling, may be used to achieve secondary results, such as creating interest in literature, or giving a more vivid apprehension of a historical event or character. Dramatization is justified by the pleasure it affords; the spontaneous activity involved; the opportunity it gives children to exercise the impulse to mimic and imitate; the joy of active participation as opposed to passive learning.\(^{41}\)

A similar thought is expressed by Rugg and Shumaker:

There can be no question that dramatization aids the appreciation of literature. . . . By reproducing bodily the author's rhythms the imagination is stimulated; the emotions are freed; the pupil achieves a more sympathetic understanding. However, the literary use of dramas to be effective must be marked by joy. Aesthetic sensitivity cannot be forced. It must be the outcome of delight.\(^{42}\)

Elements of Drama

The story, if it is to have dramatic possibilities, should follow the structure of drama. Concerning this Mac-Clintock makes the following statements:

Every story that has length and dignity enough to be used in class gathers the incidents into movements that correspond to the three or five acts of a drama. There is something almost biologically necessary in at least three parts or movements in every organized story -- beginning, middle, and end. . . . In the story of the dramas the children may study, and in all such stories as they themselves dramatize, they will inevitably see that these stages or movements are essential or vital, dictating the organization of material into acts.\(^{43}\)

\(^{41}\)Ollie Depew, Children's Literature, p. 75.

\(^{42}\)Harold Rugg and Ann Shumaker, The Child Centered School, p. 274.

\(^{43}\)MacClintock, op. cit., p. 59.
The elements of drama are story, plot, character, impersonation, dialogue, gesture, and stage requirements.\textsuperscript{44} If the dramatization is to be performed well, an understanding of the difference between story and drama is necessary. Corinne Brown makes this clear:

In story the characters are described as to appearance, disposition and behavior; in drama the characters themselves must portray these qualities by pantomime or dialogue; in the story the place of action is pictured, in drama the setting or dialogue must set the scene; the story tells what action takes place, in drama the action itself is performed; the story tells the feelings of the characters, the drama demands that the characters show these feelings.\textsuperscript{45}

There are additional characteristics that are essential to the story if it is to be within the dramatic abilities of the children. Merrill and Fleming sum them up as follows:

The suitable narrative must have a simple plot, with one thread of interest which reaches a climax and has a happy outcome. It should fit the children's degree of experience and it should gain by dramatization. In it there should be no confusion between right and wrong in the sense in which children understand these terms; there must be no subtlety of character -- just good people and bad people in clash and struggle. And the former, who have the sympathy of the children, must always come out ahead. Here life and all its affairs must be conducted justly, honorably, and beautifully; for vivid, lasting impression is made upon the child by what he acts out and also by literature that he studies closely in making his play.\textsuperscript{46}

\textsuperscript{44}Ibid., p. 212.

\textsuperscript{45}Brown, op. cit., p. 58.

\textsuperscript{46}Merrill and Fleming, op. cit., p. 19.
The following excerpt from *Play Making and Play*, by Ward, indicates somewhat the same characteristics:

The stories which gain by dramatization are those with much action and dialogue, some interesting characters, an excellent plot with a strong climax and emotional appeal.47

It may be said, then, that stories worthy of dramatization are those possessing simple plots, plenty of action, some predominating characters, and poetic justice.

Choice of Stories

Stories used for the purpose of dramatization should represent the tastes and interest of the group as a whole.48 Since children of the third grade are at the height of their imaginative period, the folk tales furnish excellent materials for their use.

Folk tales are on the imaginative level that fits them for the child's use. They are the accounts of happenings by those who were rich in images and sense materials. . . . They are simple, sincere, and full of faith, and it is this simplicity, sincerity, and earnestness that give them their childlike qualities -- all qualities that one fails to find in the modern fairy tales written by a grown person for children.49

Selected Stories

Taking into consideration the tastes and interests of children during the imaginative period, and using as a basis

49MacClintock, *op. cit.*, p. 98.
for selection a list compiled by Winifred Ward, a number of stories were selected and read to children of the third grade. The following stories were chosen by them for dramatization:

Grimm Brothers:  "The Shoemaker and the Elves."
                  "Snow White and Rose Red."
                  "Hansel and Gretel."
                  "Brier Rose."
                  "The Bremen Town Musicians."

Joel Chandler Harris:  "The Tar Baby."
                       "Mr. Wolf Makes a Failure."
                       "The Well Story."

Constance Howard:  "Amelieanne and the Green Umbrella."

Theodore Suess Geisel:  "The 500 Hats of Bartholomew Cubbins."

"The Shoemaker and the Elves" adheres closely to the form of the short story, as well as possessing the elements of the drama. A blending of the three elements, character, plot, and setting, appears in the story. The distinct structure of the tale reveals the action, and the story is built upon an economy of incidents that culminates in the climax in a logical manner. The conclusion ends swiftly and satisfactorily.

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The characters are usual and the setting commonplace, but unusual happenings give to both an air of importance.\footnote{Kready, op. cit., pp. 82-84.}

"Snow White and Rose Red" stands the test of old tales. As a romantic type, the story contains beauty, adventure, and a sense of mystery. The characters are exaggerated and the incidents are beyond normal. The tale possesses a good, interesting plot with continued action throughout the narration. The climax is definitely marked. The characters present an interesting variety and strong contrast. The story has qualities of unusual beauties that appeal strongly to the emotion and imagination. The conclusion follows closely upon the climax and has a happy outcome.\footnote{Ibid., pp. 272-286.}

"Hansel and Gretel" is a fairy tale that has been more played than any other. Though it has been overused, each new generation finds it as charming as the last.\footnote{Ward, op. cit., p. 280.}

"Briar Rose" is one of the most poetic and artistic of the short stories. It may be played by primary children. The story divides itself into three parts. The plot lends itself easily to dramatization. After the climax of the tale, rewards and punishments are meted out. There is a slow stateliness of rhythm running through the story. Many
children can be used in the dramatization.\footnote{54}

"The Bremen Town Musicians," a tale from the Grimm collection, shows all the elements of true humor. Its healthy philosophy of life sees a comic situation in the midst of tragedy. The element of suspense is unusual and the tale is a series of surprises from the beginning to the climax. The variety of noises made by the animals carries a special element of humor. In the introduction, setting, characters, and dialogue is seen an example of a good short story. It is, indeed, a fine old tale and one that has constant appeal to children.\footnote{55}

The "Uncle Remus" stories, a collection of tales retold in Negro dialect by Joel Chandler Harris, constitute a charming and usable beast epic. These animal tales are unique in the sense of reality which they impart to characters and situations.\footnote{56}

They show a homely philosophy of life, flashes of poetic imagination, a child-like love of mischief and fun, and a perfection of pattern and style that are not surpassed by any beast tale.\footnote{57}

"Amelianaranne and the Green Umbrella," by Constance Howard, is a suitable story for dramatization. This has a

\footnote{54}Merrill and Fleming, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 73. 
\footnote{55}Kresdy, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 219. 
\footnote{56}Annie G. Moore, \textit{Literature Old and New for Children}, p. 104. 
\footnote{57}Arbuthnot, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 221.
human-interest theme that appeals to all children. 58

"The 500 Hats of Bartholomew Cubbins," by Theodore Seuss Geisel, is suitable for dramatization in the third grade. Though weak in substance, it offers much opportunity for characterizations. 59 Arbuthnot says of the story: "It is one of the most completely funny stories ever told for children. The scenes are hilariously funny and solemnly described. The story is a favorite from nursery through the sixth grade." 60

Principles of Dramatization

There are certain principles that should be considered in the dramatization of stories.

First, it must be the child's own work. It must be the expression of what the child sees in the story and not what the teacher experiences. Though it may be necessary for the teacher to make suggestions from time to time, the child's interpretation of the story is the important thing. 61

Utmost care needs to be exercised lest the adult standards of form and finish dominate the teacher's suggestions, for there is a vast difference between helping children to achieve the best they are capable of doing according to their own ideals of excellence and drilling them to conform to arbitrary standards not their own. So long as the social purpose governs and controls pupils in the presentation of a play, there is distinct value in the result. 62

58 Ward, op. cit., p. 64. 59 Ibid., p. 279.
60 Arbuthnot, op. cit., p. 313. 61 McKee, op. cit., p. 561.
62 Gardner and Ramsey, op. cit., p. 69.
A second principle is that the children should plan their own dramatizations. Involved in this is the selection of stories, choosing the cast and planning the settings.\textsuperscript{63} The selection of the story should be made by the children under the guidance of the teacher. The story must be one with which they are thoroughly familiar, otherwise the images will not be clear, and, as a result, the dramatizations will be cloudy and confused. Casting of characters must be carried out in a democratic way, preferably through the voluntary method. Careful observation will reveal the timid child who, if indirectly encouraged, will take a part in the dramatization and derive enjoyment from the participation.\textsuperscript{64} The stage settings should be simple and few, and the selection of such materials should be the responsibility of the children.

The third principle is that there should be no attempt for a polished performance. The time consumed in perfecting a performance defeats the purpose of getting the child to express what he has experienced in the story.\textsuperscript{65}

The dramatic activities should be so managed that every child has a chance to express himself. Opportunities should be distributed as equally as possible for the ideal is not the exploitation of

\textsuperscript{63}McKee, op. cit., p. 561.

\textsuperscript{64}Ward, op. cit., p. 95.

\textsuperscript{65}McKee, op. cit., p. 561.
individual talent, but the participation of all for the sake of a common goal.66

Finally, the entire activity should be marked with simplicity. Too much time spent on elaborate costumes or settings destroys the spontaneity of the dramatization, and the values to be gained are lost in a maze of machinery and decoration.67

Values of Dramatization

To judge the values of dramatization, it is well to consider the aims of the elementary school and how dramatization contributes to these aims. Generally speaking, the purpose of the elementary school is to develop the child into a well-rounded, capable, self-reliant, cooperative citizen.

The modern school recognizes its responsibility in educating children to be worthy citizens by giving boys and girls many opportunities for cooperating, planning, deciding, and evaluating. It believes in educating the whole child, and realizes that health, character, and personality development are as important as mental health.68 In regard to mental development Cather states that "close observance of children and a more general knowledge of psychology have brought educators to realize that imitative play is a big

66Gardner and Ramsey, op. cit., p. 77.
67McKee, op. cit., p. 562.
factor in mental development."\textsuperscript{69}

One of the specific aims of the elementary school is to fit its pupils to express themselves clearly and adequately. Dramatization offers excellent opportunities for development in this respect. A child is given something to say and the right to say it in his own way. He has opportunities to express his individuality without attracting attention.

Orderly thinking, judgment, selection of ideas, memorization, and originality are outcomes to be derived from true dramatization. Group work is promoted through the various interests of the class; literature is interpreted and appreciated; and good citizenship traits are developed. Dramatization is valuable in securing a happy, normal, correct oral language.\textsuperscript{70} Curry and Clippenger say: "Unconsciously the pupils will get from dramatization a training in oral English, reading, and literary expression that can hardly be gained in any other way."\textsuperscript{71}

Drama is experience in many situations and with many kinds of people, and through it the child gains insights into the relationships needed in living. Children need to

\textsuperscript{69}Cather, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 108.

\textsuperscript{70}Trommer and Regan, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 78.

\textsuperscript{71}Curry and Clippenger, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 12.
be educated for social living, and in order to live suc-
cessfully with other human beings it is necessary to under-
stand them. Through experience in drama a child becomes
more sensitive to the thoughts and feelings of others, and
acquires a better and broader understanding of them and,
with this, an ability to adjust himself socially to the group
of boys and girls who are cooperating with him in story
dramatization.

Another value derived from dramatization is the devel-
opment of creative thinking. In fact, the whole process of
story dramatization requires creative thinking. To train
children in this means to lead them to think independently,
to be individuals with ideas of their own. There are many
activities in school and home which may help in developing
the habit of creative thinking, but few offer greater possi-
bilities in this respect than play making.

Attention to the education of the emotions is an impor-
tant part of the training of children. Drama has to do with
emotions -- emotions concerning living situations. Through
dramatic expression a child steps out of his own personality
into that of another, rises above his own limitations, and
becomes free from many of the taboos and inhibitions of
daily life. There are many opportunities in dramatization
to guide a child in forming fine attitudes toward things
most worth seeking in life.
In conclusion, the values gained from dramatization may be summed up as follows:

1. Dynamic potentialities for use in the education of children.

2. Through experience a child is taught how to live.

3. Individuality is developed through habits of creative thinking.

4. Children are given opportunities for social adjustment.

5. There is growth in emotional control and mental and physical efficiency.

6. Play making is a form of oral communication which develops not only effectiveness in speech, but also certain qualities which are vital to the citizens of a democracy.

7. It belongs, therefore, in every elementary school.\(^{72}\)

Thus we see children having splendid classroom experiences in giving and taking constructive criticism. Learning to listen and to heed advice; to analyze a situation; to be honest and at the same time fair in one's opinions. These are truly among life's great lessons.\(^{73}\)

8. "Play making offers a unique opportunity for developing not only the exceptional child but the exceptional in every child."\(^{74}\)

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\(^{73}\)Elizabeth Black, "Informal Dramatics as a Socializing Force," Instructor, LIV (September, 1945), 38.

\(^{74}\)Ward, op. cit., p. 252.
CHAPTER III
THE EVALUATION OF STORIES

Not all stories lend themselves to dramatization. Beautiful stories which are superior because of their language or thought should not be used for play making. Stories possessing few characters, and a lack of action or dialogue, or stories having poor literary merit are not suitable material for children.

In the evaluation of a selected number of stories to be used for dramatization, the writer made use of various sources of information, and carried on dramatizations in the Stephen J. Hay School in Dallas, where she is an auditorium director.

One method used in the evaluation was the examination of books by well-known authors in the fields of children's literature and creative dramatics. Books by May Hill Arbuthnot,\textsuperscript{1} Johnson and Scott,\textsuperscript{2} and Anne Carroll Moore\textsuperscript{3} have proved valuable in determining the literary qualities of the stories.

\begin{itemize}
\item[1] May Hill Arbuthnot, \textit{Children and Books}.
\item[2] Edna Johnson and Carrie E. Scott, \textit{Anthology of Children's Literature}.
\item[3] Anne Carroll Moore, \textit{Literature Old and New for Children}.
\end{itemize}
In regard to folk stories Johnson and Scott state:

If literature, as has been stated, reflects life's real experiences, and interprets them with beauty of expression, then these tales and stories meet the supreme requirement, for they present life in all its countless varieties; they are simple in detail and abound in dramatic action; they are expressed in picturesque language, harmonize often by perfect unity between word and thought. 4

Here is an anthology that stands out because of the high quality of its selection and its intelligent editing and arranging. . . . Teachers in small schools or in country districts remote from book centers will find this volume a rich storehouse of just the material they need for use with boys and girls from 6 to 16.

The editors have supplied an excellent and suggestive general introduction on "Good Literature -- What Is It?" and enlightening brief introductions to the sections that contain folk tales, fiction, biography, and poetry. 5

May Hill Arbuthnot says: "The folk tales with their exciting action, rich imaginative qualities, and orderly and exact form satisfy some of the children's basic needs." 6

Much research has gone into the making of Children and Books. The chapter on history and trends, the Mother Goose chapter, the article on story tellers, all show careful study and clear presentation of interest to every teacher and librarian. 7

Concerning the literary qualities of the folk tales,

Anne Carroll Moore comments:

4Johnson and Scott, op. cit., p. 57.


6Arbuthnot, op. cit., p. 251.

More remarkable than their somewhat uncertain history and of deeper interest to most students are their endless variety, lasting quality, and universality of appeal. The perfection of style and form which marks some of them is a feature which arouses wonder and is worthy of study.\(^8\)

Anne Carroll Moore is in many ways the best known personality in the field of children's literature in America. To young readers she is known as the author of the "Nicholas" books and as the editor of Irving's Knickerbocker History of New York and The Bold Dragon. Among adults she is recognized for her leadership in children's library work and as an authority on young people's reading.\(^9\)

As to the dramatic qualities of the folk tales Miriam Huber makes these statements:

Children get a great deal of pleasure from dramatizing stories they like. The old tales are especially well adapted to play making because of their well defined plots and swift-moving action. The lines can be made up extemporaneously and such a play be free of the disadvantages and formality of the readymade play. A dramatization of a well known story can be a creative experience for children that brings great satisfaction.\(^10\)

This anthology and guide to children's literature has been expertly compiled to meet the needs of teachers and librarians as well as to provide very full and widely varied reading material for children of all ages. It gives the teacher a thorough acquaintance with children's literature.\(^11\)

Ward says of the dramatic qualities of the folk tales:

Now and then people tell us that children no longer care for fairy tales. Yet it is a fact that any

\(^{8}\)Moore, op. cit., p. 251.

\(^{9}\)Stanley J. Kunitz and Howard Haycroft, editors, Junior Book of Authors, p. 226.

\(^{10}\)Miriam Blanton Huber, Story and Verse for Children, p. 211.

\(^{11}\)Macmillan College Catalogues, Education and Psychology, p. 9.
children's theatre in the country will verify that the greatest crowds of the whole season flock to the theatre when it offers boys and girls a play based on one of the great old fairy tales such as "Cinderella," "Hansel and Gretel," "Jack and the Beanstalk," or "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs."

We shall likewise find stories of magic happenings highly popular as materials for dramatization.12

Those of us who have known and used Winifred Ward's earlier books dealing with dramatics for children welcome her new book, Playmaking with Children. As we read this book our faith in the creative aspects of teaching boys and girls comes alive anew. It is refreshing to reflect on the valuable ways children develop through genuinely creative experiences in playmaking.13

For further information the writer consulted the following publications: The National Education Association Journal, published by the National Education Association, is a magazine of high quality. It furnishes national leadership in educational policies, and serves as a clearing house of information in all phases of education. It deals with public relations and legislative programs, and administrative and teaching problems. Childhood Education is a magazine for teachers of young children. It is published monthly (September through May) by the Association for Childhood Education. Its purpose is to stimulate thinking on educational problems rather than to advocate fixed practices. The Instructor, a monthly publication, is an educational magazine containing teaching helps and devices.

12Ward, op. cit., p. 63.

The Horn Book is a bimonthly magazine. It contains excellent reviews and discussions of children's books, authors, and books in general. The Wilson Library Bulletin and the Library Journal are concerned primarily with matters pertaining to the library. Reviews and criticisms of authors and books also are found in these publications. The New York Times contains good reviews of books and authors. The Book Review Digest gives an impartial digest of reviews of books. It is published monthly and contains favorable and unfavorable opinions of book critics.

Another criterion which was used by the writer in evaluating the stories used for dramatization was the expert opinions of three educators who witnessed the performances. At another place in the study will be found the specific comments made by each. In summary:

Liddie MacPharr, instructor in the Stephen J. Hay School of Dallas, Texas, comments: "The children gave a sparkling dramatization which portrayed a living naturalness with definite enthusiasm and interest."

Nelle McCorkle, Director of Instruction in the Dallas Elementary Schools, states her opinion:

Many of the basic elements of good literary selections for dramatization in the third grade were observed in all the stories. The interest, excitement, tension, and enjoyment registered by the group members observing the dramatizations were evidence of their understanding and appreciation. . . . The
dramatizations were characterized by simplicity of stage properties and child-like portrayal of characters. The children appeared to enjoy participating in these activities.

Verna Treadwell, auditorium director in the Sam Houston School, Dallas, says:

The children in a most effective manner made the stories come to life. The children very definitely enjoyed the characterizations. By dramatizing these stories the children have gained a lasting memory of these childhood tales.

To determine the relationship between the age level and story interest of seventy-two children of the third grade in the Stephen J. Hay School, certain investigations were made.

In checking the cumulative records of the school, the ages were found to be as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ages</th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Girls</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Using as a basis the opinions of well-known authorities on types of literature having the greatest appeal to children on the third-grade level, the writer read to the children a number of stories consisting of folk and fairy tales, animal tales, and realistic stories. Casual discussion following the reading, and comments on the stories, revealed their preferences to be as follows:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Story</th>
<th>First Choice</th>
<th>Second Choice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Folk and fairy</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Animal</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Realistic</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The conclusion reached is that the child of seven or eight years gives first preference to folk and fairy tales, with animal stories ranking second in choice.

Table 1, prepared by Liddie Mae Pharr, Nelle McCorkle, and Verna Treadwell, gives a summary of the final evaluation of the story dramatizations. A questionnaire, based on the criteria, was used as a means of evaluating the stories. The stories were judged excellent, good, or fair on all of the following points:

1. How does the story rank as to literary excellence?
2. How does it qualify as to dramatic possibilities?
3. Does it appeal to the interest and imagination of the children as evidenced by a naturalness in the portrayal of the characters?
4. Is the story within the understanding and ability of the group?
5. Was the dramatization carried out in a simple manner?
6. Do you think the children enjoyed dramatizing the story?
### TABLE 1

**EVALUATION OF STORIES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stories</th>
<th>Literary Qualities</th>
<th>Dramatic Possibilities</th>
<th>Understanding and Ability</th>
<th>Interest and Imagination</th>
<th>Simplicity</th>
<th>Enjoyment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shoemaker and the Elves</td>
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<tr>
<td>Snow White and Rose Red</td>
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<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hansel and Gretel</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brier Rose</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Bremen Town Musicians</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mr. Wolf Makes a Failure</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Tar Baby</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brer Rabbit and the Well</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Table 2 shows the individual evaluation of the stories by Liddie Mae Pharr, Nelle McCorkle, and Verna Treadwell.

### TABLE 2

**EVALUATION BY TEACHERS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Critics</th>
<th>Literary Qualities</th>
<th>Dramatic Possibilities</th>
<th>Understanding and Ability</th>
<th>Interest and Imagination</th>
<th>Simplicity</th>
<th>Enjoyment</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pharr</td>
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<td>G</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>G</td>
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<td>McCorkle</td>
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<td>G</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>G</td>
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<tr>
<td>Treadwell</td>
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<td>E</td>
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</table>

"The Shoemaker and the Elves"
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Critics</th>
<th>Literary Qualities</th>
<th>Dramatic Possibilities</th>
<th>Understanding and Ability</th>
<th>Interest and Imagination</th>
<th>Simplicity</th>
<th>Enjoyment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pharr</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McCorkle</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>E</td>
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<td>E</td>
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<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treadwell</td>
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<td>E</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>E</td>
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"Snow White and Rose Red"

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"Hansel and Gretel"

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"Brier Rose"

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"The Bremen Town Musicians"

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"Mr. Wolf Makes a Failure"

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"Brer Rabbit and the Well"

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"Ameliaranne and the Green Umbrellas"

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"The 500 Hats of Bartholomew Cubbins"

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The conclusions reached by these educators were as follows:

1. The stories contain the basic elements of good literature.
2. The stories are actable.
3. The stories have definite appeal to the interests, tastes, and ages of the children.
4. The stories possess emotional and imaginative appeal.
5. The children experienced real enjoyment.

One of the most important phases of any dramatization is the children's evaluation of their work. The pupils, under the guidance of the teacher, selected the stories and planned the dramatization. A discussion by the class following the reading of the story determined its dramatic possibilities. When the choice of story was made, the group was divided into small units, each with a leader. Each unit in turn dramatized a part of the story. In this way every child participated in the dramatization.

Suggestions and criticisms were given at the end of each trial performance. When the final dramatization was given, the children were asked to consider the following points:

1. Did you like the story?
2. Do you think the children played their parts well?
3. How did the stage monitors handle the stage properties?
4. Did the children speak well?
5. Did you enjoy playing the story?
Table 3 gives a summary of the results of the evaluation and is offered for consideration. Numbers in the table refer to pupil responses to the questionnaire.

### TABLE 3

**CHILDREN’S EVALUATION OF STORIES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stories</th>
<th>Did you like story?</th>
<th>Did children play parts well?</th>
<th>How did children handle properties?</th>
<th>Did they speak well?</th>
<th>Did you enjoy playing stories?</th>
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CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

This study was concerned with the selection of a number of stories suitable for dramatization in the third grade.

The intent of the writer has been to show that definite types of stories have emotional and imaginative appeal for children seven and eight years old, and that the stories possess literary values and dramatic possibilities. The writer also has endeavored to show that the selected stories are within the dramatic abilities of the group.

Available authoritative sources of information, experiments in the classroom, and interviews with three well-known educators formed the basis upon which the study was made.

Conclusions

From this study definite conclusions have been reached:

1. Dramatization is a natural activity and is an educational tool in the wholesome development of the child.

2. Stories appeal to the interests, tastes, and ages
of children.

3. The child during the imaginative period (seven or eight years) desires imaginative literature, thus folk and fairy tales have definite appeal.

4. In form, style, and content the selected stories conform to the techniques of the best literary stories, have the right emotional tone, and possess qualities of action, human interest, imagination, humor, sincerity, and a sense of justice.

5. The stories were within the dramatic ability of the group. They possess plot, setting, dialogue, and story elements necessary for dramatization.

6. The spontaneity, simplicity, and enjoyment of the dramatizations revealed that the stories were on the dramatic level of the group.

7. Many values were derived from the dramatizations. The children made noticeable progress in self-expression, social development, speech improvement, and stage management -- factors which contribute to character building.

Recommendations

To the preceding conclusions the writer wishes to add the following recommendations:

1. Greater opportunities for informal dramatics should be offered the children.

2. Children should participate in the selection and
planning of all dramatizations.

3. Guidance, and not direction, should be the teacher's role in the program.

4. Careful consideration should be given to all suggestions offered by children.

5. Provisions should be made for working in small units during the dramatization period.

6. Familiarity with the story is necessary in play making.

7. Stories too difficult should not be used; only those within the understanding and ability of the group make good material.

8. Drill techniques kill the spontaneity of the dramatization and should be avoided.

9. The attitude of the teacher should be such that children are made to feel the work is their own.

10. Informal audiences, occasionally, should be invited to witness the dramatizations.

11. There should be no exploitation of children for pay programs.

12. Children should be given the responsibility of assembling materials for costumes and stage properties.
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