EVALUATION OF THE STATE-ADOPTED READERS FOR FIRST AND SECOND GRADES FOR THEIR LITERARY QUALITIES

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EVALUATION OF THE STATE-ADOPTED READERS FOR FIRST
AND SECOND GRADES FOR THEIR LITERARY QUALITIES

THESIS

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By

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

The problem for this study is to determine whether or not the state-adopted readers for first and second grades have literary qualities.

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to make a thorough investigation of the state-adopted readers for the first and second grades to determine if they have literary qualities that would encourage the reading and appreciation of good literature.

Need for the Study

The realization that there is a very definite need for children to develop an appreciation of good literature was the basis of this study. Observation and comments of teachers in junior and senior high school concerning children's attitudes toward literature and their reading habits furnished general evidence that such a need existed.
If children are to develop an appreciation for good literature they should start in the primary grades. The development of the ability to enjoy and appreciate good literature will come from the reading of materials that are made available for the pupils.\(^1\) W. S. Gray says "stress on children's literature in recent discussions of reading programs in elementary schools have attached large importance to adequate provision for children's contact with good literature."\(^2\)

The children of today need a wide variety of reading materials to broaden their knowledge of their surroundings and of the world. With the parents busy and away from home a good part of the time children are thrown on their own resources. They need to learn how to manage themselves, solve their problems, and how to spend their leisure time most profitably. The children of today should know something about people in their community and of other lands in order that they may live more harmoniously with them. As Jean Betzner sums it up, "Appreciation of the significance of the human being is one of the most enduring results of familiarity with literature."\(^3\)

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\(^3\)Jean Betzner, *Exploring Literature with Children*, p. 4.
Children should have books to satisfy their curiosity and interest along many lines. Books not only serve as sources of information in the field of science, history, biography, travel, and adventure, but they give pleasure and afford children a means of escape from reality. May Hill Arbuthnot says,

Reading is one rich source of insight. And reading the right books can actually strengthen a child for the difficult task of growing up, so the books we are looking for are books that meet the child's needs and have lasting significance.⁴

Limitation of the Study

This study will attempt to analyze the nature, content, and literary qualities of state-adopted readers for first and second grades. This study is not experimental and makes no attempt at an experimental investigation. The evaluation is obtained principally from the opinions of specialists in the field of children's literature.

Procedure

Sources of data.--The data used in this study were obtained from books relating to children's reading and literature, teacher's manual for readers, periodical and professional publications written by individuals who have made a study of children's reading and literature. Twenty state-adopted readers for first and second grades were used.

⁴May Hill Arbuthnot, Children and Books, p. 10.
Much valuable information was secured from the following books: *Children and Books*, *Exploring Literature with Children*, *Parents and Children Go to School*, Teacher's Manual for Second Grade, *Reading and Literature in the Elementary School*, *Teaching of Reading in the Elementary School*, and *Literature and the Child.*

Treatment of data.--This study is organized into four chapters. Chapter I, the introduction, gives the statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, the need for the study, the procedure, and the source and treatment of the data. Chapter II gives a definition of literature. Some criteria are set up for evaluating the literary qualities of the state-adopted readers for first and second grades. In Chapter III the textbooks will be listed and evaluated as to their literary qualities by the criteria set up in Chapter II. A table of the books and their evaluation will be given. Chapter IV presents the conclusions and recommendations concerning the literary qualities of state-adopted readers for first and second grades.

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CHAPTER II

DETERMINING OF LITERARY QUALITIES IN CHILDREN'S
READING MATERIAL

Definition of Literature

In order to be able to judge the literary qualities of the state-adopted readers for first and second grades, an attempt will be made to define literature for children. First, what is good literature? The following are definitions that have been found from reading and discussion with teachers.

The Twenty-fourth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education states: "Literature includes all writings that express for us what we consciously or unconsciously feel the need of saying but cannot."

C. Alphonson Smith gives Matthew Arnold's definition, "the best that has been thought and said."

Blanche E. Weeks' definition is: "The term literature has been used to cover good wholesome reading matter, as well as reading matter of fine quality."

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1 Twenty-fourth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, p. 25.
3 Blanche E. Weeks, Literature and the Child, p. 4.
Ruth Priddy of North Texas State College gives this definition to her English 221 classes, "Literature is the best writings of the time."4

This conclusion might be drawn: Literature is the best writings in every field, not in poetry and fiction alone, but including selections of history, travel, science, and biography. Children's literature is not very different from adult literature. The difference is the content and the treatment of the content. Betzner says:

There is no body of literature which belongs distinctly to children. It is obvious that art materials are the property of any who wish to possess them. Quantities of literature can be enjoyed by adults and children alike. Certain it is that boys and girls do not limit their investigation to the materials consciously written for them within the last two centuries. When one refers to children's literature, he has in mind that published material which, because of its availability, traditional value, proved interest and appeal, and current social approval, children come in contact with and put to use in one way or another. "Use" here refers to obvious evidence that boys and girls voluntarily listen to it, read it, request it, ask questions concerning it, invest time, money and effort to making it their own, and incorporate some of it in their everyday conduct.5

Curry and Clippinger say, "Children's literature is also literature for adults and it is not only the child's inheritance but the inheritance of humanity."6

Children's literature, therefore, is the best writings in every field, not in poetry and fiction alone, but including selections of history, travel, science, biography.

4Statement by Ruth Priddy in English 221 classes, North Texas State College.
5Jean Betzner, Exploring Literature with Children, p. 52.
6Curry and Clippinger, Children's Literature, p. 8.
Determining Criteria for Judging Literary Qualities in Children's Reading Materials

In order to determine the literary qualities of the state-adopted readers for first and second grades, some criteria from which an evaluation can be determined will be set up.

Dorothy Baruch gives her criteria for selecting children's books as follows: Will the story interest the child? Young children are interested in the close-by things, their families, homes, pets, and playthings.

The fact that young children become aware of their environment through actual experiencing, through actual contacts, has vast significance in the matter of story selection. Hearing stories about things concerning which no awareness has been gained is like listening to a foreign language that is not comprehended.7

Is the story understandable? Children's stories should contain words that they understand. Words are symbols by which man makes himself understood. He cannot be understood unless the words he uses have meaning to him and the person to whom he is talking. Therefore, it is necessary for the young child to have books written in simple language that will be easily understood.

Thus a story about "weaving, carding, and spinning," words all outside the children's range of experience, was not properly understood. Another in point was the child who interpreted a story that the "beer

7Dorothy Baruch, Parents and Children Go to School, p. 310.
running over steps and walls, and floor" meant the
hair jumping off the man's chin and running all
around. "The beer," she said, "the long white
beer—like Santa Claus's beer—it jumped off his
face and ran around."8

What effect will the story have? Children need to have had
adequate experience with the subject matter to have the
ability to separate the factual from the fanciful. Stories
may develop an appreciation of the better things of life or
they may develop sympathy for those who need sympathy; they
also develop friendliness toward other people. Then, again,
reading of certain stories produce fears for the child if
the reading material is not within his experiences.

In the "Three Billy Goats Gruff" mention of the troll
under the bridge to the grown-up is amusing. To a
child it can be terrifying. Ronald had heard it
and had listened with eyes wide. Three days later
he went with his mother for a long walk that took
them over a bridge. Ronald clutched at his mother's
dress. He commenced to cry, "Don't let him eat me
up." Trolls and bridges had become associated in
his mind. He had not had sufficient experience in
living to know that trolls had no actual place under
the bridges in his world. Even the "big bad wolf"
may be terrifying to the sensitive little child who
cannot place wolves in woods far from his bedroom or
in cages in the zoo.9

Does the book have literary value? A book should not be
given to children just because it has traditional literary
value. A standard was set up by the literature committee
of the Association for Childhood Education in their 1932
conference.

8Ibid., p. 8. 9Ibid., p. 317.
Content should be worthwhile and should function in the lives of children today. A classic that no longer functions may as well be laid aside. An outstanding example of this is *Aesop's Fables*, which has little, if any, place in the lives of young children.\(^{10}\)

Are the illustrations accurate and clear to give the meaning and form to the story and objects that are illustrated?

Whenever possible illustrations should be used that show comparisons of size, shape and color of the unknown object to objects the child knows. An elephant drawn the same size as a mouse may, for all its accuracy otherwise, be confusing if the child knows the mouse well and is using his knowledge of mice to help him gather some impression of the larger animal.\(^{11}\)

The following standards for the selection of good literature were taken from McKee's *Reading and Literature in the Elementary School* and *The Teaching of Reading in the Elementary School*.

Each selection must possess literary merit and content that is worth reading. Reading materials for children fall into four general types: (a) that which reports actual experiences, episodes, and incidents, such as Chapman's *Travels of Birds*; (b) that which is true to life but does not report actual occurrences; (c) that which makes no pretense of being anything other than fanciful, such as nonsense jingles and fairy tales; and (d) that which pretends, but fails, to relate true occurrences or be true to life, such as cheap adventure stories.\(^{12}\)

Biography, travel, science, history, and other truthful and interesting reports are representative of the first type. The second type includes good poetry and fiction.

\(^{10}\)Ibid., p. 325. \(^{11}\)Ibid., pp. 326-327. \(^{12}\)Paul McKee, *The Teaching of Reading in the Elementary School*, p. 565.
Nonsense, humor, and fanciful stories come in the third type. The fourth type should be omitted from children's literature.

Each selection should appeal to the child's immediate interests. This means children's books should contain stories that are within their experiences and that are of interest to them, but they should be selected from the best literary selections. Each selection should be interesting in its own right. "This means that each book, story, or poem chosen must be fun for the pupil to read. There is no place for the dull or insipid selection which does not offer a strong interest pull."\(^{13}\)

The selections to be included should cover a wide range. The materials selected for children's reading should not be limited to poetry and the so-called classical selections, but should include selections from history, travel, science, biography, industry, art, and music.

The materials selected should fit the child's different moods. They should include stories dealing with humor, nonsense, patriotism, self-sacrifice, heroism, and courage. The materials should cover a wide range of peoples and countries. The stories should include American life and literature.

\(^{13}\)Ibid., pp. 565-566.
as well as the literature, customs, activities, and habits of the people of other countries.

The illustrations contained in selections should be good. In order that there be good art quality, there must be harmony of line and color, drawing, and placing on the page. The illustration should tell the story and should be easily understood by children.

The physical make-up of the book should be good. The bindings of the book should be durable and the covering should be of good color. The paper should be of good quality opaque paper and the type large and legible.

In selecting children's literature, Blanche E. Weeks ranks content first. "Consideration must first be given to criteria of content, for the elementary-school child is primarily concerned with what he reads, for there lies the drama, the ideas or thoughts which will arrest his attention and hold his interest." It must be remembered, however, that the form of writing intertwined with the content and the disregard of one is likely to do injustice to the other, but content comes first.

The second criterion: The content should be true; the stories should reveal life as it is or as it can be. The people in the stories should be real to the child, "so that

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14bid., p. 508. 15bid., p. 509.
16Weeks, op. cit., p. 28.
human nature, which is to say life, is revealed to the
dchild reader through the people created by the writer."\textsuperscript{17}

A third criterion: Whatever is created by the writer
should be plausible; the content of the story must be some-
thing that the child can believe, it might be possible for
it to happen under the circumstances of the story.

As soon as the scene of a story is laid in some un-
known country across the sea, in Nemo Island as in
the \textit{Little Lame Prince} or in the once-upon-a-time
days, anything is possible and therefore probable
in these unknown and little understood situations.
At the same time whatever does happen must be
plausible under the conditions governing the action
of the story.\textsuperscript{18}

A fourth criterion: There should be informational
and factual reading material; informational and factual
reading material can broaden a child’s outlook and enrich
his experiences. It must give the right setting as to time
and place.

In its rightful setting as to time and place, the
story becomes more meaningful to the child; he is
better able to understand the actions of the people
of the story who are, of course, motivated by the
conditions of life, essentials perhaps in time or
space, or similar or dissimilar to the conditions
governing the child’s own life. History, geography,
bioography, science can all be part of the story con-
tent as essential elements in the story structure.
Each subject well written can become part of the
literature which the child reads. When read for its
own sake, any factual material should be authentic,
adding to the child’s store of knowledge and thereby
contributing directly to experience which will bring
to the imaginative type of reading.\textsuperscript{19}

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{17}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 29. \hspace{1cm} \textsuperscript{18}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 30. \hspace{1cm} \textsuperscript{19}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 31.
\end{flushright}
A fifth criterion: A child's book must be well written.

The writer of children's literature needs to write as well as the writer of literature for adults. The same principles govern both, and in general, whatever criteria must be satisfied when evaluating the craftsmanship in one case, must be satisfied also in the other case.\textsuperscript{20}

The choice and use of words is an important factor in the development of favorable reading attitudes. There must be a constant growth in reading vocabulary. The writer must use the best English, and must be careful of the choice of word and phrase. The words and phrases must convey to the reader thought and feeling. "So well must the writing be done that the author creates a world, so real that the child who enters it returns to his own world of reality with a sense of having lived the experience embodied in the story he has read."\textsuperscript{21}

Sixth criterion: The physical make-up of the book should influence the reading of the book; there are certain aspects of the physical book which have definite interest value. These are the cover, the jacket, or loose-leaf cover; they tend to attract the child when they are attractive in form. Florence E. Bamberger found in her investigation that small children like gay books with red, blue, or yellow covers. They prefer books that are easy to handle, about seven and a half inches long, five inches wide, and one inch thick.

\textsuperscript{20} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 32.  \textsuperscript{21} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 34.
A seventh criterion: Illustrations are valuable additions to books; children show preference for many illustrations of the large full-page type. The illustration should be placed as nearly as possible to the part of the story that it is illustrating.

Alice Dalgliesh says there are so many beautiful books and so many undesirable books for modern children that certain questions should be answered when selecting a book for a child.22

Is the book suited to the mental age of the child? Books are no longer selected for "a child of four or seven." The intelligence, interests, and experience of the child are taken into consideration.

Is the subject matter interesting to the child? Does he really enjoy it? Some children have had little or no experience with books so that they will like books with more pictures and simple stories about their experiences. They like stories about children like themselves. Other children who have more imagination will like fairy tales.

Is the content of the book worthwhile? Will it stand reading and rereading or is it a trivial book that will be looked at once, then put aside?

22Alice Dalgliesh, *First Experience with Literature*, pp. 7-11.
Is the book well bound and durable? Many books are so poorly put together that when children handle them they come to pieces.

Is the book suitably illustrated? Books for children should be of good art quality on the interest level of the child. The child must be able to understand the picture.

Is it well written? Children should be given only the books that are written in the best English.

Miriam Blanton Huber says the books that are made available to children should be a large variety and of a high quality as possible; "surprise, suspense, vivid characters, and fast-moving action are the qualities that the child seeks and we can make sure that he finds them in books of genuine value." The reading interest of children, says Huber, may find satisfaction in variety of choice. The reading list should include poetry, fanciful and realistic fiction, humor and nonsense, science, history, and biography. (1) Poetry is like music, its rhythm and cadences appeal to the emotions. If children's experiences have been such to furnish the right background for the poetry that they come in contact with they will enjoy it. (2) Children get varied experiences from fanciful tales. They need the idealizing of human relations and a belief in the possibility of improving situations.
In the old tales daring, bravery, originality, and clear thinking often transform a commonplace character into a hero. There are no confused issues remaining when the tales are done; justice and right win. The old folk tales have a quality indispensable in children's stories—that of robustness. They are free of sickly sentimentality and artificiality, which are the elements most to be avoided in all literature for children.  

(3) "Children love to find funny and ridiculous things in stories." They do not like the same humor that adults like, nor do they like humor "that wounds at the same time that it pretends to amuse." People of all ages need literature that will cause them to laugh to overcome the seriousness of life. (4) In the industrial age of today children want materials that tell about scientific and industrial facts. The books should be judged for their accuracy in content and the simplicity in which it is written.  

"Children have a definite preference for the formats of books." The size of the book is a factor by which children select a book and they prefer large type to small. They are influenced by an illustrated cover and binding of bright color.  

Numerous illustrations make a book desirable for children. They prefer large pictures to small and of bright colors. They like pictures that tell a story and have humor and action.

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24 Ibid. 25 Ibid. 26 Ibid., p. 20.
May Hill Arbuthnot says that children's needs and interests must be kept in mind in choosing books for children. Children six and seven years old need books that will help them understand their world.

Today's children are interested in the world of machinery and will pour by the hour over books of trains and airplanes. They want stories about real children of their own kind, not children of foreign lands, or children who walk with fairies, but just bread-and-butter youngsters in a recognizable environment.²⁷

They like animal stories. These stories are divided into three groups, ourselves in fur, animals as animals but talking, and animals as animals. The stories of animals as animals but talking are the stories that younger children are interested in. The animals in these stories strut about with the same virtues as human beings. "Of the folk-tale type we ask only good entertainment and good style. Such stories to be sound must be true to human, not animal, nature, and they must be told with light-hearted wisdom."²⁸

Children like funny stories. They need to laugh in literature as well as in life. Laughing relieves the tension and relaxes taut nerves.

It is good for us to laugh. Someone has said that a teacher should count the day lost when her children have not, at one time or another, thrown back their heads and laughed spontaneously and heartily.²⁹

Children should have books that are well written, but in simple enough language for them to understand. There should

be clear-cut themes and plenty of action; the style should
interest young readers; and the stories should be true to
human nature. The same criteria are good for all books of
fiction. "In short, whether it is a fairy tale or a tale of
home life today, a slight story of the here and now, or a
saga of pioneer life, the book must fulfill certain literary
criteria in order to hold the child's interest and be worth
reading."30

Children's books should have pictures that are colorful
and appealing as children want their pictures to have story-
telling quality as well as humor.

The following are some of the final conclusions that
have been drawn by Florence Bilau Bamberger in her study,

The Effect of the Physical Make-up of a Book upon Children's
Selection:

1. The physical make-up of a book does exert in-
fluence upon children's selections.
2. Size appears to be a factor in book selection.
The small diminutive volume does not appeal as strongly
as a larger book. The size most acceptable to the
children in the primary grades appears to be about
seven and one-half inches long by five inches wide and
one inch thick.
3. The cover appears to be a factor in determining
children's selection. The color of the cover exerts
an influence. Brightness is a pleasing factor to chil-
dren. Blue, red, and yellow are the favorite colors
for covers.
4. Titles are an additional factor influencing
book selection.

30Ibid., p. 394.
5. The internal arrangement of books: (a) Numerous illustrations make a book acceptable to children. Twenty-five per cent of the book space seems the minimum amount of space to be devoted to pictures to make a book acceptable for little children. Large, full-paged pictures are preferred to smaller ones inserted irregularly in the text. (b) Colors preferred by the younger children are rather crude and elementary, having a high degree of saturation and a great deal of brightness. Older children gradually grow in a preference of softer tones. (c) Humor and action in pictures make an appeal to primary children. (d) Pictures that have story-telling qualities have a high attraction. (e) A fair number of stories in a given field attract children to a book.

6. The short interest span of primary children seems to be a psychological explanation for their preference for not many lines to one page. For the same reason a wide margin appears to be attractive, and an average width of at least one inch should be used.

7. Titles appear to exert an influence with all children. The word "reader" in a title appears to exert a negative influence upon the older primary children. More pleasing and suggestive titles on textbooks might make them more acceptable to the patrons for whom they are designed.

8. The physical make-up of the textbook seems to be of a kind to exert a negative rather than a positive appeal.31

A brief summary of what makes good literary qualities for children's books has been given from the following books:

Children and Parents Go to School, The Teaching of Reading in the Elementary School, Reading and Literature in the Elementary School, Literature and the Child, First Experience with Literature, Story and Verse for Children, Children and Books, and The Effect of the Physical Make-up of a Book upon Children's Selections. In selecting a book for a child, the interest

31 Florence Eilau Bamberger, The Effect of the Physical Make-up of a Book upon Children's Selection, pp. 131-132.
and need of the child should be kept in mind. Arbuthnot says "a book is a good book for children only when they enjoy it; a book is a poor book for children even when adults rate it a classic if children are unable to read it or are bored by its content." The agreement among these authorities on the following criteria is revealed in Table 1.

The following criteria for judging literary qualities in first- and second-grade readers are recommended:

1. The content of the book should appeal to the interest of the child. Children six and seven years old want stories of real children of their own age. They are interested in all kinds of machinery (airplanes, trains, boats, automobiles, and tractors). They are interested in stories about nature, animals, birds, insects, flowers, trees, rain, snow, and wind.

2. The book should stimulate imagination and feeling. Children's books should appeal to the child's curiosity and imagination. A book should have surprise, suspense, vivid characters and fast-moving action to appeal to the child. The content must be true. It must reveal life as it is. The people in the stories must be real to the child. The content of the story must be plausible. It must be something that the child can believe.

\[32\text{Arbuthnot, op. cit., p. 2.}\]
TABLE 1

AGREEMENT AMONG SEVEN AUTHORITIES CONCERNING DESIRABLE QUALITIES IN CHILDREN'S READING MATERIAL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Authorities</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Content appeals to the interest of the child</td>
<td>X X X X X X</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stimulates imagination and feeling</td>
<td>X X X X X X</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selections cover a wide variety of subjects</td>
<td>X X X X X</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written according to good language, structure, and form</td>
<td>X X X</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary understandable</td>
<td>X X</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illustrations good</td>
<td>X X X X X X X</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acceptable physical make-up</td>
<td>X X X X X</td>
<td>5</td>
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*Authors: A, Baruch; B, McKee; C, Weeks; D, Dalgliesh; E, Huber; F, Arbuthnot; G, Bamberger.

3. The selections should cover a wide variety of subjects. They should include poetry, fanciful and realistic fiction, humor and nonsense, science, history, and biography.

4. The book should be well written according to language, structure, and form. The story should be written in the very best English possible. The words and phrases must convey to the reader thought and feeling.

5. The vocabulary should be understandable. Children's stories should contain words that they understand. There must be a constant growth in reading vocabulary.
6. The illustrations should be good. Illustrations must be of good art quality. There must be harmony of line and color. Children show preference for many illustrations of full and half-page type. The illustration should be placed near the part of the story that it is illustrating and should have story-telling quality.

7. The physical make-up of the book should be good. The book should be durable so that it will not come to pieces when children handle it. Children prefer books with an illustrated cover, and gay colors. They like books that are easy to handle. The best size for this age group appears to be seven and a half inches long, five inches wide, and one inch thick.
CHAPTER III

EVALUATION OF THE STATE-ADOPTED READERS FOR FIRST
AND SECOND GRADES FOR THEIR LITERARY QUALITIES

This part of the study concerns the evaluation of the
state-adopted readers for first and second grades for literary
qualities. These books were judged by the criteria that were
set up in Chapter II. The criteria are:

1. The content of the book should appeal to the interest
of the child.

2. The book should stimulate imagination and feeling.

3. The selections should cover a wide range of subjects.

4. The book should be written according to language,
   structure, and form.

5. The vocabulary should be understandable.

6. The illustrations should be good.

7. The physical make-up of the book should be good.

The books evaluated are:

Crabtree, Eunice K., Walker, Lu Verne C., and Canfield, Dorothy,
To School and Home Again, Lincoln, The University Publish-
ing Company, 1940.

Daw, Seward E., McKee, Jessie F., and Aldredge, Edna M., We


Gray, William S., Baruch, Dorothy, and Montgomery, Elizabeth R., We Come and Go, Chicago, Scott, Foresman and Company, 1946.


These books will be evaluated in the above order.

*To School and Home Again* by Eunice K. Crabtree, Lu Verne Crabtree Walker, and Dorothy Canfield is based on the experiences and activities of children in the home and at school. There are stories about pets and their activities that children will enjoy. The characters are real boys and girls. They carry on activities that boys and girls in the first grade might carry on. The children’s humor, curiosity, and suspense are stimulated by following the activities of the children and animals through the stories.

The book is well written with repetition of word and good phrasing that carries thought and meaning. The vocabulary will be easily understood by children in the first grade and will help build a reading vocabulary.

The illustrations are good. They are bright in color and pleasing to children. They show the action of the children and animals and express the moods that are given in the stories.

The physical make-up of the book is good. It is bound in a bright green and yellow cover. The illustration of a boy and girl going to school and the title of the book will prove helpful in encouraging children to select the book. The book is about the right size for children to handle easily.
The stories in *We Live and Grow*, a first reader, by Seward E. Daw, Jessie F. McKee, and Edna M. Aldredge are based on children's interests and experiences. They center around characters and things that children know, the family, playmates, toys, pets, and other animals, as well as nature.

Imagination and feeling are found in each section. Each story has one or more of the following: curiosity, suspense, vivid characters, and fast-moving action. The characters are true to life. The science and nature stories give the child much factual information about birds, animals, insects, and plants.

The book is divided into six sections. Each section is about a different subject. The first section of the book includes stories of family life. The activities are closely related to the experiences of most of the children in their homes and in their immediate environment. The second section is about health. It should help the child to become interested in good health and help him develop good health habits. The third and fourth sections contain stories of nature and science. The stories will give the child much valuable information about nature. The fifth section contains adventure stories and teaches safety. The last section is about farm life. It gives true information about farm life and farm animals.
The book is well written. The sentences are short, but they convey the thought and meaning. The vocabulary is within the first-grade child's understanding and by the later part of the year the child should be able to read it. The illustrations in We Live and Grow enrich and make clear the story. The factual content is well illustrated with authentic drawings. The art quality and harmony of line and color are good.

The physical make-up of the book is good. The book is well bound and will not come to pieces with handling. The cover is gay with an illustration and title that should influence children's selection of it. The size is eight inches long, six inches wide, and one-half inch thick. However, children should be able to handle it easily. The book meets the requirements set up in Chapter II for literary qualities.

Neighbors on the Hill by Marjorie Flack and Mabel O'Donnell is a second-grade reader. The content of this book is a continuous story about a boy eight years old and his sister six years old, their family, and their playmates. They live in the country on the hill. The activities on the farm, changing of the seasons, and the stories about nature should appeal to the interest of boys and girls.

This book should appeal to the child's curiosity and imagination. It has surprise, suspense, and vivid characters. It reveals life to the child as it is on a New England farm. The characters in the story will be real to the child. The
information that is given in the nature stories is authentic and children can gain much factual information about making maple syrup, habits of birds, animals, snakes, frogs, and the seasons. The selections cover a variety of types. There is realistic fiction, humor, and science.

The book is well written in good English. There are colorful and pleasing phrasing and vivid description. There are much thought and feeling conveyed to the reader. Second-grade children will be able to understand the vocabulary of this book with the help of the teacher. The illustrations will help give meaning to the stories. The factual content is illustrated by authentic drawings. The action in the stories is clearly shown. The pictures are colorful and are well placed on the page.

The book is well bound and will withstand hard handling by children. Children will be attracted by the title and illustration on the cover. The book is small enough to be held easily by children without tiring them.

In the Curriculum Foundation Series by William S. Gray, Dorothy Baruch, Elizabeth R. Montgomery, and May Hill Arbuthnot, the material is based on the experiences and interest of children. This series includes the four books that follow.

The stories in We Come and Go, a pre-primer, are closely related to the experiences of children with their family and
their immediate environment. There are stories of pets, toys, and machinery that will stimulate the interest of the child. The stories are realistic that center around the family and the family's activities. The pets have the characteristics of real dogs and cats. The stories have humor, suspense, surprise, vivid characters, and fast-moving action that will give the child pleasure in reading. The stories cover a variety of materials. There are realistic stories with humor and stories of animals with their individual characteristics that are true. The dog and cat in the stories run and play; the dog finds the ball and runs away; he sits up and begs for food and digs in the sand like the children's own pets.

The book is well written. The stories are short, but each story has a plot and a high interest peak. The repetition of words helps to convey the thought and feeling. The vocabulary of We Come and Go will be easy for the child to understand. The repetition of the words will help with the recognition of the words. They are words that the child uses and hears every day in his play and at home. The illustrations are in good color harmony and they are well placed on the page. They depict the action and the mood that are expressed in the story.

The cover of the book is blue with an illustration that will appeal to children. The title is also one that children
will like. The book is not very durable and will not stand much handling. The book is small and will be easy for the child to hold.

Fun with Dick and Jane is a primer. The content centers about characters and things that children at this age level are interested in, the family, friends, having fun in play and work in the home, enjoying experiences at the farm, and playing with pets and toys.

Imagination and feeling are stimulated in the realistic stories of the children and their activities and experiences in the home, at the farm, playing with pets and toys, and having fun with friends. Humor, suspense and surprise are in the unexpected outcomes, and satisfying conclusions. The animal stories contain information that is true and will broaden the child's understanding of animal characteristics.

In the variety of subjects there are realistic fiction, humor, nature, and science. The realistic stories and humor are found in activities of work and play of the characters. Nature is revealed to the child through the authentic characteristics of the animals. Science is revealed through the working of the telephone, automobiles, airplanes, and talking dolls. The stories are written in good English. The sentences are short but they convey the thought and feeling.

The stories in Our New Friends, for first grade, and Friends and Neighbors, for second grade, like the others in
the Curriculum Foundation Series, appeal to the interest of the child. They present realistic stories of activities of children at home and at school and fun with pets and with other real animals. Realistic and fanciful stories are presented in Our New Friends and Friends and Neighbors. The fanciful stories appeal to the child's imagination and the realistic stories center about children, their family, friends, and amusing experiences with animals on the farm. The children are engaged in activities that are natural and appealing to children. The stories bring out humor, surprise, and suspense. Factual and informational material is given in the stories about animals. The stories cover a variety of subjects. There are fanciful and realistic stories, humor and nonsense, and nature stories.

In Our New Friends and Friends and Neighbors each story has a plot of its own. Each mood and experience is felt and understood. The sentences are longer but have more detailed description.

All the books in the Curriculum Foundation Series, Fun with Dick and Jane, Our New Friends, and Friends and Neighbors, have vocabularies that are common to children's activities and experiences.

The illustrations in Fun with Dick and Jane, Our New Friends, and Friends and Neighbors are colorful and accurate. They enrich and make the story clear. In the realistic and
fantastic stories the illustrations help to arouse the curiosity and stimulate a desire to read the story. The illustrations of the factual material are true.

The physical make-up of the books is good. The books are red, yellow, and blue and will appeal to the children. The title and the illustration on the cover will influence the children to read the book. The books are well made and will not come to pieces when the children handle them. The books are of a size that will be easy to hold.

Along the Way, for second grade, by Gertrude Hildreth, Allie Lou Felton, Mabel J. Henderson, and Alice Meighen, contains stories that are based on experiences and activities of children and the care of their pets. The stories cover a broad field of materials. There are stories about animals, insects, plants, Indians, and transportation.

The stories in Along the Way appeal to the curiosity of the children. The stories involve humor, surprise, and suspense. There are vivid characters in the realistic stories. The content of the factual material is true. The selections cover a wide variety of materials. There are stories about Indians, transportation, and nature. The realistic stories contain humor and nonsense. One poem is included in the selection.

The book is well written. The structure of the sentences, which are short and clearly stated, meets the requirement of
the criteria set up in Chapter II. The sentences are not too long and there is repetition as well as rhythm of words. Most of the vocabulary will be easily understood by the majority of the pupils.

The illustrations in Along the Way will help present the stories in a meaningful experience. The pictures are colorful and attractive and are well placed on the page. They have story-telling qualities. The illustrations of the factual material are authentic and helpful to the child in understanding the reading material.

Along the Way meets the criterion on the physical make-up of the book. It is a gay red color with an illustration and title that will appeal to the child. It is well made and will not be easily torn up. It is not up to the criterion on size, but it will be easy for the child to hold.

Bigger and Bigger by Inez Hogan is a pre-primer. The content of the book will appeal to the child for a little while. The story is about twins. It starts when the twins are babies and follows them through the book until they are six years old and are going to school. Their activities will be of interest to the children.

The vocabulary is within the understanding of the child. The repetition of the words will encourage the child to read. The illustrations are the best part of the book. They tell the story well. The pictures are attractive and colorful.
The expressions on the faces are animated. These should interest the children so that they will wish to read to understand what the characters are doing. The book will be easy to hold as it meets the criterion on size.

*The Ranch Book*, for first grade, by Miriam Blanton Huber, Frank S. Salisbury, and Arthur I. Gates, is a continuous story but is divided into chapters and the chapters are divided into stories. The content of the book is based on experiences and activities of children on a ranch. The story should be familiar to most children in Texas and will appeal to them. The activities and experiences of the characters will furnish curiosity, suspense, and surprise. There is plenty of fast-moving action that will appeal to the children. The stories concerning the life on the ranch are authentic and will give the children much information that they will appreciate.

The book is well written. The sentences are short but they are clearly stated. There are repetition, pleasing phrasing, and vivid description. The everyday atmosphere is created by style and conversation of the characters. The vocabulary is well chosen for this special book, but all children in Texas may not understand some of the idioms, such as, "come and get it," "catch up the horses," "round up," and "cut out," but by the help of the illustrations they may understand this usage.
There are a few good full-page colored illustrations. The other illustrations are in black and white, but they are good and will help add to the interest and understanding of the stories. The illustrations are placed near or on the page with the story they are illustrating. The illustrations tell the story and children will receive much enjoyment from just looking at the book.

The book meets the criterion on physical make-up. It is durable and will withstand much hard wear by the children. The cover is one that will attract children. The title alone would attract readers and the illustrations on the cover will be a drawing factor. The size of the book is good as it can be held without much difficulty.

Awake and Away by Leslie W. Irwin, Wade W. Tuttle, and Caroline DeKeliver is a pre-primer. It is a health and safety book. Children should understand good health habits and safety through the activities of the children, their father and mother, friends, and pets. The content will appeal to the curiosity of the child. The characters are vivid and they have the same experience that real children have.

The first seventeen pages contain no word symbols and the next ten pages contain one sentence. The rest of the book has two or three short sentences clearly stated. The vocabulary can be easily understood by the children.
The illustrations come up to the criterion set up in Chapter II. The pictures are large, full-page type. The colors are good and the pictures are well placed on the page. They tell the story so that there is little need for written vocabulary.

The book is well made and will withstand the handling that the children will give it. The binding, title, and illustrations will appeal to the child and should influence his selection of the book.

_The Wonderworld of Science_ by Warren Knox, George Stone, Morris Meister, and Doris Noble is a second-grade reader. The content should appeal to the interest of the child. It is material about science and nature that will introduce the child to a new world of adventure. The material included in these science readers deal with machinery, the seasons, plants, insects, birds, animals, and the weather. _The Wonderworld of Science_ should appeal to the child's curiosity and encourage him to read other books on science. The content of the book is authentic and the child should gain much valuable information that will help him live happily in his physical world.

The stories are short in _The Wonderworld of Science_, but the simple style in which it is written and the careful choice of words convey the thought to the child and should make it desirable reading for him. The vocabulary is well chosen and will be understood by the children in the second grade.
The words are found in three approved word lists and will promote a steady growth in reading vocabulary.

The illustrations in *The Wonderworld of Science* are the outstanding feature of the book. There are many illustrations and the majority of them are colored. They are well placed on the page and there is harmony of line and color. The child can gain much factual information by just looking at the pictures for they are authentic to the subject they are illustrating.

The book is well bound and durable. Children can handle it again and again and it will not come to pieces. The design and color will appeal to the child. It is green with an all-over design. The title should attract readers. The book is about the right size for a child to handle with ease.

*The Wonderworld of Science* meets all the requirements for good literature for children except a variety of content. It may make up for this in the interesting way the material is presented.

*Anything Can Happen* by Mary Geisler Phillips and Nabel O'Donnell is a second reader that contains materials that are based on the experiences and activities of a six-year-old boy, his family, and friends. There are stories of nature and machinery that should prove interesting to children.

*Anything Can Happen* meets the criterion on literary quality. Following David through his activities appeals to
the child's curiosity and imagination. There is surprise and suspense in David's ride in his wagon, on the train and fire engine. The characters in the story are true to life. *Anything Can Happen* is a realistic story, appealing to the children's emotions. The child gets science information through the stories of the changing seasons and habits of animals.

The book is one continuous story divided into six chapters. The chapters are divided into different stories. The stories are not too long but they are well written with short sentences that are clearly stated. The words and phrases convey the thought and feeling. The vocabulary is within the understanding of the child. It will add to his reading vocabulary.

The illustrations are of good color harmony and they are well placed on the page. They add to the interest of the story by interpreting the story properly.

The physical make-up of the book is good. It meets the criterion in color and illustration. It is about the right size for the child to handle easily. The book is well bound and can be handled often by the children without coming to pieces.

*Through the Day*, a first-grade reader, by Sidman P. Poole, Thomas F. Barton, and Clara B. Baker meets the first criterion. It is based on children's experiences and activities. It
contains stories with which the children are familiar. The material in the stories are about children, animals, birds, flowers, trees, the weather, and the seasons. The book will appeal to the child's curiosity. The stories reveal life as it can be by the experiences of the children. The activities that they carry on could be carried on by real children. The stories about nature are true and the child will gain factual information from them.

*Through the Day* is a geography foundation series. It is realistic fiction. It has much factual information on science.

The book is well written. The sentences are short, but they convey the meaning to the child. The vocabulary is within the understanding of the second-grade child. It will fit the child's environment and will increase his reading vocabulary. The illustrations are of good color harmony and they are well placed on the page. The pictures have story-telling qualities. The illustrations have a direct reference to the material to be read.

*Through the Day* meets the criterion on physical make-up. The book is well made and will not come to pieces when children handle it. It has a gay cover of yellow and an illustration that will appeal to the child. The book is larger than that of the specification set up in the criteria, but the child can probably handle it without much difficulty.
The series of books by Marjorie Pratt and Mary Meighen are Read Another Story, Long Long Ago, and Have You Read.

Read Another Story is a primer. It is a book that children will thoroughly enjoy for the stories are about children, animals, and machinery. Most of these are familiar to children.

Read Another Story contains fanciful tales. They are realistic stories and talking beast tales. The stories will stir the child’s curiosity and imagination. Surprise, suspense, vivid characters, and fast-moving action may give the child a desire to read the book. The content is true as far as the characteristics of the animals go. For example, the bears are looking for honey. They find it by looking up in the tree and sniffing. The characteristics of the turtle are given in these words, "creepy-crawly! creepy-crawly!" Most small children know that bears like honey and turtles are slow.

Read Another Story does not contain a variety of types but it does contain humor and nonsense. The child will chuckle many times over the description of characteristics and activities of the characters in the stories.

Long Long Ago contains folk tales of other lands and of America. The stories will appeal to the child for they are centered about children and animals. The book will stimulate the child’s imagination and curiosity. There is
suspense in most of the stories. For example, in the story "Not Enough Leather" the child is held in suspense for fear the little mouse will not get away from the cat.

There is only one type of story in *Long Long Ago* and that is the folk tale. The stories contain nonsense and humor. They are expressed in the activities and characteristics of the animals.

*Read Another Story* and *Long Long Ago* are well written. The sentences are short and clearly stated. They convey thought and feeling to the reader. The repetition of words and phrases in *Read Another Story* will appeal to children in this age group. The vocabulary in *Read Another Story* and *Long Long Ago* will be understandable to first-grade children with help from the teacher.

*Have You Read* is a second-grade reader. It contains fanciful stories. The content will appeal to the child for it is centered around animals and children. *Have You Read* will stimulate the imagination and feelings. There are suspense, surprise, vivid characters, and plenty of action. The content is true as far as the characteristics of the characters are concerned. *Have You Read* does not have a wide variety of types. Fanciful tales are the only type included.

*Have You Read* is well written according to structure, language, and form. The words and phrases convey thought...
and feeling to the young reader. The sentences are longer but they are clearly stated and the ideas expressed are within the understanding of the child in the later part of the second grade. The vocabulary in Have You Read is too difficult for boys and girls in the first half of the school year but some of the boys and girls might be able to understand it the later part of the school year.

The illustrations in Read Another Story, Long Long Ago, and Have You Read are good. They have good art quality and harmony of line and color. They are well placed on the page. There are many full-page brightly colored pictures in each book. The pictures interpret the story well. They should arouse an interest and desire in the child to read the story.

The books are well made and will not be easily torn up. The covers are of good color and are attractively illustrated. They should appeal to the child. The titles should influence the reading of the books. According to the criteria set up in Chapter II the books are too large, but the children should be able to handle them easily.

Who Are You? by Adda Mai Sharp and Epsie Young is a pre-primer. It is a book that beginning first-grade children will thoroughly enjoy. The story centers around five baby animals, a duck, a bear, a turtle, a fox, and a rabbit. The activities of the animals will interest the child and encourage him to read the book.
The child's curiosity will be appealed to in following the activities of the animals. There will be surprise and suspense for the child in his reading to find out what happens next. The descriptions and habits of the animals are true and the child will gain much valuable information from reading the book. The vocabulary is within the understanding of the child. They have come in contact with the words in other pre-primers.

The illustrations are good. The colors are bright and will appeal to the child. The pictures are well placed on the page and they will help interpret the story for the child. The coloring and habits of the animals shown in the illustrations are true and the child will gain factual information from looking at the pictures.

The physical make-up of the book is not very good. The book will not stand very much handling by children. The color, title, and illustration of the cover meet the requirements of the criterion.

*Bill and Susan* by Mila B. Smith is a pre-primer containing material based on the experiences of children in a home background. The members of the family, pets, toys, and objects in the story are those with which most children should be familiar. The story is one continuous story starting with Bill, Susan, and their dog Perky, and broadens to the activities of the entire family.
The story reveals life as it is and the characters in the story will be real to the child. The action in the book should appeal to the child's curiosity and carry him eagerly from page to page. The child's sense of humor will be stimulated by the action of the pets. The book meets the requirements of a variety of subjects; the content contains realistic stories, humor, health, and science.

The book is well written. The sentences are short and are clearly stated so that children should understand them. The vocabulary is well chosen and is within the understanding of the child.

The illustrations are attractive and colorful. There are few details and they are well placed on full or half page. They are informational and tell the story.

The book is of a size that the child can handle easily. The design, the illustration, the title, and the color are good. These may encourage the child to select the book for reading.

Table 2 is an attempt to summarize the evaluation of the readers used in the state of Texas for first and second grades. The books are checked according to their literary qualities. It can be seen that all nineteen books have at least three of the qualities. These qualities are: content appeals to the interest of the child, written according to good language, structure and form and illustrations are good.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Books</th>
<th>Content Appeals to Interest of Child</th>
<th>Stimulates Imagination and Feeling</th>
<th>Selections Cover a Wide Variety of Subjects</th>
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<tr>
<td>To School and Home Again</td>
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<td>We Live and Grow</td>
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<td>Bill and Susan</td>
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CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

In the preceding chapters this study has attempted to set up criteria by which the literary qualities of the state-adopted readers for first and second grades may be determined.

In order to determine the literary qualities, a brief summary of what makes literary qualities for children's books was given from the books that were listed in Chapter II. From their statements criteria were determined. They are as follows:

1. The content of the book should appeal to the interest of the child.
2. The book should stimulate imagination and feeling.
3. The selections should cover a wide variety of subjects.
4. The book should be well written according to language, structure, and form.
5. The vocabulary should be understandable.
6. The illustrations should be good.
7. The physical make-up of the book should be good.
In Chapter III this study attempted to evaluate the state-adopted readers for first and second grades as to the criteria proposed. The findings of this evaluation are:

1. All the books have content that will appeal to the child. The stories in these books were closely related to the experiences of the children and their environment. They contained stories about children, pets, toys, nature, and machinery. These are the things that interest first and second grade children.

2. Seventeen of the books stimulated imagination and feeling. The stories had some of the qualities of humor, suspense, surprise, vivid characters, and fast-moving action.

3. Only seven of the books had a wide variety of subject matter. The majority of the books contained only one or two types.

4. All the books were well written according to structure. They were written in good English. The sentences were short, but they conveyed thought and feeling. In the pre-primers, primers, and first-grade readers there was repetition of words; this will enlarge the child's reading vocabulary.

5. The vocabulary in all the books is within the first- and second-grade child's understanding except Have You Read. Some of the children might be able to read and understand it by the later part of the year.
6. All the books contained good illustrations. They had good color and line harmony. They were well placed on the page and illustrated the story accurately.

7. All but the pre-primers had good physical make-up. The pre-primers had paper covers and were not put together well. They will not stand much handling. The first- and second-grade readers have attractive covers and are well made.

8. The books in the Curriculum Foundation Series by William S. Gray, Dorothy Baruch, Elizabeth Montgomery, and May Hill Arbuthnot were the best books according to the criteria for children in the first and second grades. They met all the qualifications set up in the criteria in Chapter II. Neighbors on the Hill and Along the Way also met the qualifications.

9. This study indicated that the Textbook Committee has shown a knowledge of literary qualities for first and second grades in its selection of readers for the schools of Texas.

10. Bigger and Bigger, a pre-primer, had only four of the qualifications. The book would appeal to the young reader if it stimulated his imagination and curiosity. It needs vivid characters and fast-moving action. The cover would have a greater appeal if the design were simple.
Recommendations

In view of the criteria for selecting books and the evaluations made, the writer would make the following recommendations:

1. The content in the state-adopted readers should center about characters and things that children in the first and second grades are interested in. These are: children their own age, pets, toys, machinery, and nature.

2. To meet the child's needs, the content should include a wide variety of subjects.

3. All books should be written in the best English and the best style that are possible.

4. All books should contain vocabularies that are understandable to the child at his grade level. Series of books like the Curriculum Foundation Series and the John C. Winston Series should be adopted. A series of books would promote continual growth in reading vocabulary.

5. The illustrations should have color and line harmony and should be well placed on the page. The pictures should be simple but they should tell the story properly.

6. The pre-primers should be as well bound as the other readers in first and second grades if they are adopted for the same length of time.
7. A study should be made as to why the use of the materials that have good literary qualities does not result in the choice of similar materials by elementary school children in their leisure reading.
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