A STUDY TO DETERMINE THE COMMON ELEMENTS IN
TEN NEWBURY MEDAL BOOKS (1940-1949)

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A STUDY TO DETERMINE THE COMMON ELEMENTS IN
TEN NEWBERY MEDAL BOOKS (1940-1949)

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Statement of Problem

The problem of this study is to determine the common elements in ten Newbery Medal Books published during the period of 1940-1949, inclusive, and to propose a series of criteria for judging children's literature. The books considered in this study include the following:

1. Daniel Boone: author, James Daugherty; illustrator, the author; 1940.

2. Call It Courage: author, Armstrong Sperry; illustrator, the author; 1941.


6. Rabbit Hill: author, Robert Lawson; illustrator, the author; 1945.

7. Strawberry Girl: author, Lois Lenski; illustrator, the author; 1946.

9. **The Twenty-one Balloons**: author, William Pene du Bois; illustrator, the author; 1948.

10. **King of the Wind**: author, Marguerite Henry; illustrator, Wesley Dennis; 1949.

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study is twofold: first, to determine whether the Newbery Medal Books under consideration meet the commonly accepted requirements of children's literature; and second, if they do not, to determine wherein they differ from acceptable criteria.

**Limitations of the Problem**

The title of this study indicates that the investigation is limited to the Newbery Medal Books published annually during the ten-year period between 1940-1949, inclusive. In addition, the common elements considered in the study are related only to the following seven areas: (1) classification of books, (2) physical makeup or format, (3) style, (4) setting, (5) characterization, (6) plots, and (7) themes.

**Definition of Terms**

Clarity is a prerequisite to the satisfactory development of any problem. For the purpose of explaining the
investigator's point of view, the following definitions are included:

1. A Newbery Medal Book is one which is selected each year as the most distinguished contribution to American literature for children, published during the preceding year. Today the author so honored is chosen by a committee of twenty-two members from the Children's Library Association.

2. The common elements are those characteristics which are present in two or more of the books under consideration. As an example, are few, several, or all of the books printed in large-size type? In other words, is large-size type a common element in the area of the physical makeup of the books, or are some of the books printed in medium-size type and some in small-size type, and therefore there is no common element in that area?

Method of Procedure

The development of the present problem involves the following steps of procedure:

1. Information was obtained on the Newbery Medal which is presented annually to some author of children's literature.

2. The ten books considered in the present study were read, and their authors and illustrators were identified and investigated.
3. The common elements to be sought were determined.

4. The books were re-read, and their common elements recorded.

5. The common elements of the Newbery Medal Books were developed into a proposed set of criteria for judging children's reading materials.

6. When all data necessary to the development of the problem were obtained, they were organized into the following chapters:

   I. Introduction.

   II. A brief review of the ten Newbery Medal Books for the period 1940-1949, with their authors and illustrators.

   III. Common elements in the ten Newbery Medal Books.

   IV. Summary and conclusions; proposed criteria for judging children's literature.
CHAPTER II

A BRIEF REVIEW OF TEN NEWBERRY MEDAL BOOKS
(1940-1949) WITH THEIR AUTHORS AND
ILLUSTRATORS

Before presenting a brief review of the ten latest Newberry Medal Books, it seems logical to include some information on the significance of the Newbery Medal as a criterion for the selection of books and the terms of the award. Both topics are explained in the succeeding discussions.

Significance of Criteria in Selecting Books

Today the annual output of juvenile books has exceeded one thousand titles. These books range from unreliable, undesirable, and trashy stories to those of scrupulous accuracy and invaluable significance.¹ This existent condition leads to the question, "How can a good book be distinguished from an inferior one?" or "What are the characteristics or qualifications of a good book for children?" The American Library Association endeavors to answer these questions, at least to some degree, by selecting annually the most outstanding contribution to children's literature.

¹May Hill Arbuthnot, Children and Books, p. 2.
It should be noted here that only a small part of children's literature consists of books that have been written especially for youth. When consideration is given to the books that are universally popular among children, and that now have come to be considered classics, it is found that many, if not most of them, were written solely for adults. Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress was intended for men and women. Defoe's Robinson Crusoe was written to express the author's views on current social and theological questions. Swift's Gulliver's Travels was a political satire for adults. Aesop's Fables was designed for men's moral and political guidance. A seemingly indefinite enumeration might be made of books which now are generally accepted as children's literature but which were originally meant for adults.²

The American Library Association's selection of a book is an indication of its high literary quality. However, it is not an assurance that children will choose the book as their favorite. Marie Rankin made a study of pre-adolescent and adolescent children's interests in fiction, as evidenced by their voluntary withdrawals from eight public libraries scattered from Brooklyn to Chicago.³ The ten most popular books included only one Newbery Medal Book. In this connection, Arbuthnot says that children know what books they

²Lewis M. Terman and Margaret Lima, Children's Reading, p. 9.

³Arbuthnot, op. cit., p. 560.
like, but they do not know all books which they are capable of liking. She also suggests that children, with a little guidance from adults, can enjoy a far wider range of books than they will ever discover when left to themselves.\(^4\)

Parents, teachers, and librarians can render invaluable service in guiding the reading of youth, because if the initial contacts with books are pleasant, books may become constant and lifelong companions.\(^5\) Such was the philosophy back of the Newbery Medal.

The Newbery Medal

John Newbery was the first English publisher of books for children. He was attracted to juvenile literature when Samber translated Perrault's *Tales of Mother Goose* in 1729. The popularity of these tales revealed to him the importance of the child as a potential consumer of books. In 1765 he published *The History of Little Goody Two Shoes*, which was the first novel of its kind to be written especially for children. He and his successors in his publishing firm continued to present other juvenile books, which was a significant step in the development of children's literature.\(^6\)

\(^4\)Ibid., p. 561.


This first English publisher of children's books has been honored each year since 1922, when the Newbery Medal is awarded to the author who, in the opinion of the judges, produces the most distinguished literature for youth.

Another publisher, Frederick G. Melcher, editor of the *Publisher's Weekly*, created, named, and donated this award as a tribute to the man who first recognized children as discriminating readers. The idea of the medal presented itself when Melcher was invited to make an address on children's books before a section of the American Library Association in Swampscott, Massachusetts, in 1921. He says that as he spoke to the enthusiastic group who knew what books appealed to boys and girls, he realized that those librarians could help produce better literature by giving authoritative recognition to authors who wrote the best juvenile material. Consequently, he suggested that an annual award, with Newbery's name attached, be given for the best book, and that the American Library Association's Section for Library Work with Children select the recipient. Since 1938, Melcher also has given a medal called the Caldecott Medal for the best picture book published the previous year.

At present, the honored author who receives the bronze Newbery Medal which was designed by René Paul Chambellan, is selected by a committee of twenty-two members. This group is composed of the four officers of the Children's
Library Association and the retiring chairman; four members of the Book Evaluation Committee and its chairman; chairmen of the four standing committees composed of Book Production, Professional Training, Publicity, and Membership; and four members of the Association of School Libraries and its chairman. Suggestions as to the books to be considered for the award are made to this committee by members of the Division of Libraries for Children and Young People. 7

In 1949-1950, Mrs. Lynn Uhler of Denton, Texas, served as one of the committee who selected the Newbery-Caldecott award for that year. She is a member of the Library Science Department of the Texas State College for Women and is treasurer of the Texas Library Association. 8

The Newbery Medal is presented to the outstanding author of the previous year at the annual meeting of the American Library Association. The selection is kept secret until the presentation is made by the chairman of the Children's Library Association. The terms of the award are as follows:

The author shall be a citizen of the United States. Some one living here temporarily is not eligible. His contribution shall be an original and creative piece of work. It shall be the "most distinguished contribution to American literature for

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7Edna Johnson, Carrie E. Scott, and Evelyn R. Sickels, compilers, Anthology of Children's Literature, p. 1034.

8Personal interview with Mrs. Lynn Uhler, Texas State College for Women Library Staff, Denton, Texas, April 27, 1950.
children," original in conception, fine in workmanship and artistically true. Reprints and compilations are not eligible for consideration. The book need not be written solely for children. The judgment of the voting librarians shall decide whether a book is a "contribution to the literature for children." The Committee of Award considers only the books of one calendar year, and does not pass judgment on an author's previous work or other work during that year outside the volume that may be named. The unanimous vote of the Newbery Committee is necessary if the work of a previous recipient of the medal is to be considered.9

A Brief Review of Ten Newbery Medal Books
with Their Authors and Illustrators

The succeeding discussions contain a resume of each annual Newbery Medal Book from 1940 through 1949. Information also is included relating to the authors and illustrators.

Daniel Boone. -- James Daugherty, author and illustrator of the 1940 Newbery Medal Book, was born in Ashville, North Carolina, in 1889. He is all-American by nature, experience, and travel. He said that he learned a whole stream of English and American literature from Chaucer to Mark Twain from his father, who read aloud while his son drew pictures. Daugherty studied at the Corcoran in Washington, at the Philadelphia Art Academy, and in London. He gives his father and mother much credit for their companionship, understanding, and affection.10

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9Johnson, Scott, and Sickels, op. cit., p. 1034.
10Ibid., p. 1076.
Daugherty is generally known for his illustrations, but he also wrote the text for his Newbery Medal Book. He is one of the best-known contemporary illustrators of books for young people.

The story of Daniel Boone begins with the author's reminder to his reader that the pioneer Daniel Boone lived in the days when American civilization was young and when the country was in the process of early evolution. Settlers who had become dissatisfied with their old homes packed their few goods, gathered up their children, and set out in covered wagons toward the West to unexplored lands where bears and other wild animals roamed, and where game was plentiful for meat.

Boone had many adventures. Some of them were sad; others were happy; and there were times when only his wits saved his life. It is said that he had an itching foot, which means that he was constantly on the move.

Born in Pennsylvania, he moved to North Carolina as a boy. When he married his childhood sweetheart, Rebecca Bryan, they first lived in Virginia and later in Kentucky, which he liked better. Here for three years he and his brother hunted animals whose furs were valuable. As they started to market with the furs, Indians overtook them and robbed the Boone brothers of their catch.
Boone loved his children, and he taught them all about the woods which he also loved. He thought they knew how to take care of themselves in the western wilderness, but troubles came to them.

One day his oldest son, Jamie, and another boy left on a trip to carry a message from Daniel to a man who lived in another part of the country. They were surprised by Indian raiders, and both boys were killed. When Daniel Boone went in search of them, he found six people scalped. Among them was his son!

At another time his daughter, Jemima, and two other girls were canoeing on the river when they were captured by Indians. As they were carried away, the girls marked a trail which a woodsman like Boone could not fail to follow. By their markers he was able to trace the girls, kill their Indian captors, and bring the girls safely home.

Unexpectedly Boone himself was captured by Indians when he and some friends were returning to camp through deep snow. He talked the chief into letting his companions go free, but the chief considered Boone a fine prize and would not give him up; so he was forced to live among the Indians, deep in the forest.

The Indians pulled out his hair, painted his body, and called him the chief's son. Boone pretended that he liked being an Indian, but secretly he was trying to think of a
way to escape. One night he overheard the redmen telling of their plans to capture the fort of Boonesboro next morning at sunrise. Daniel knew he must hurry if he were to get there in time to warn the settlers and save the fort.

He slipped away and traveled without rest. He had only one meal, but he reached the fort in four days. The Indians delayed, but later did attack and set fire to the fort. All appeared lost until the settlers prayed for help. A rain began falling and put out the fire.

Boone continued to fight Indians. His "itching foot" leading him on and on to new places, he became famous as a great Indian scout and an explorer of Western United States.

Call It Courage. -- Armstrong Sperry, author and illustrator of the 1941 Newbery Medal Book, was born in New Haven, Connecticut, in 1897. He spent his childhood in Stamford, Connecticut, where he attended Stamford Preparatory School. He also studied at Yale University Art School, Art Students' League, New York, and Academie Colarossi in Paris, France.

His training at the Yale Art School was interrupted when he enlisted in the Navy during the First World War. His enthusiasm never flagged during the two years he spent roaming through the islands in the South Pacific. He unwittingly absorbed much of the material he was to use later in his work.11

The story of *Call It Courage* begins a long time ago on an island in the South Seas. Here lived a boy who had a great fear. His name was Mafatu, which means "Stout Heart," but he really was weak-hearted. He feared the sea. He was so afraid of it that each day brought him more unhappiness.

His stepmother and brothers despised him because of his fear. They told him that the Sea God, Moana, was angry at the whole family because Mafatu was afraid. Whenever his friends went out in boats with their spears and shark knives to capture fish, Mafatu held back and offered excuses. Then he would overhear the boys laughing and saying, "Mafatu will never be a warrior. Mafatu is a coward!"

What hurt Mafatu the most was the shame his father felt about him -- the knowledge that his father had no pride in him. Mafatu's father was head of the tribe, and some day his son would become head of the tribe. But what kind of a chief would Mafatu make, a boy who feared to go out on the sea, when he must live by it, sail on it, and lead the men of his tribe on sea trips?

His only real friends, with whom he felt at ease, were a yellow dog, called Uri, and a huge bird, named Kivi. Standing alone one night on the beach, Mafatu decided he must do something to get rid of his fear of the sea. He turned to his dog and said, "We're going away." He pitched his
fish spear and some coconuts into a canoe, then he and the dog climbed in, and Mafatu rowed out to sea. Kivi led the way against the sky. Waves tossed the boat and washed away the paddle and coconuts. Mafatu drifted -- hungry, thirsty, terrified, with his skin blistered from the blazing sun -- until finally the canoe landed on a strange island. Here he and Uri lay exhausted for a while. After resting, he built a shelter and found fruit and some fish for food. Then, he needed weapons. He explored the island and found a large statue of an idol which the people worshiped. Trembling, he reached to seize a spear that he saw lying near the statue. Also in front of the idol were human bones, and he knew that savage peoples, known as the Eaters of Men, lived near by.

He carved a canoe from a tamamu tree and fashioned a knife from the skeleton of a whale. He fought and stabbed a shark which robbed his fish trap. He killed a wild boar and made himself a necklace of its teeth. All of these acts gave him courage, for before he would have been afraid.

As he was ready to leave for home, the beating of drums awoke him. The Eaters of Men had come! He leaped into his canoe with Uri and they outran them, only to run into a rough sea, but he was not afraid. He shook his fist at the sea and shouted, "I am not afraid of you!"
After a time he reached his home island where a crowd watched the incoming canoes. They acted surprised for they had thought he was dead. Mafatu said to his father, "I have come home!"

The chief, proud of his son, turned to the people and cried, "Mafatu, my son, Stout Heart, a brave name for a brave boy!"

*The Matchlock Gun.* -- Walter Edmons, author of the 1942 Newbery Medal Book, was born in Boonvill, New York, in 1903. His books reveal that he is "sort of a fancy reporter who reports on the past instead of the present."

His father was a lawyer as well as a farmer. It was on the farm that Walter learned to prefer the company of older men and of animals to that of boys his own age. At St. Paul's and the Choate School, where he received his preparatory education, he was miserable, and sometimes eased his misery by writing about the things he knew on the farm. When he was twelve his first writing was given recognition.

Life at Harvard was different, and for the first time Walter Edmons began to enjoy school. He did not stop writing after graduation in 1927. Before the end of a year, he had written sixteen stories and had sold seven of them. The nine hundred dollars he had received was a big sum, and the cash return inspired him to become a writer of books, not all of which are juveniles.\(^\text{12}\)

Paul Lantz, illustrator for *The Matchlock Gun*, was born in Stromberg, Nebraska, in February, 1908. Most of his childhood was spent on farms in Montana and in Missouri. His first interest in art was shown at the age of five, when someone gave him a tablet and some crayons. He set to work and produced a picture of a man walking down a board walk to a henhouse. In later years, he attended the Kansas City Art Institute and the National Academy of Design in New York.

He says that he has tried to master the craft of drawing, design, and painting in order to portray life and nature as he sees and feels them with as much understanding and power as possible. His aim is to depict the locale vividly. He loves children and likes to inspire in them a love for nature, good music, and a respect for the traditions of civilized behavior.¹³

The story of *The Matchlock Gun* begins back in the days when America was a young country, and the people were called pioneers. At that time children were doing exciting things and having adventures, the same as grown-ups. One boy who was about ten years old and who was named Edward, performed a brave act which saved his mother's life.

Edward lived with his Dutch father, Teunis Van Alstyne, a captain of the guard, a small sister, Trudy, and his mother, Gertrude. Their home was in what is now New York State.

This was when our country belonged to England before it became the United States of America.

What interested Edward more than anything else in their log house was a long gun, which rested on a rack over the fireplace. It was a very old gun which his great grandfather had brought over from Holland. One day Edward's father took it down and showed him how to light the powder and apply the fire so it would shoot.

Word came that Captain Van Alystyne must leave to lead his company in a fight against the Indians some distance away from home. Edward and Trudy said goodbyes to their father.

Late the next day Edward's mother heard from a neighbor that the Indians were coming, so she prepared for the children and herself to defend their home. "Edward," she said, "I want you to be a brave boy and do everything I tell you. Would you be afraid to fire Great-Grandfather's gun?"

"No, Mama," he said excitedly, "but I can't hold it!"

His mother took the gun down, loaded it, fixed a prop, and set it on a table near a lighted candle, with the barrel pointing out of the window. Then she gave him final directions.

"I am going outside," she told him, "to look for Indians. If they come, I'll call your name Ateoord!" (This was the Dutch name for Edward.) "You are to set fire to the gun and shoot it!"
She started for the garden, with a basket on her arm, pretending to hunt beans. Then she saw five Indians. Their bodies were red with war paint, and they were stealing upon her. Acting surprised, she screamed for her husband and began running toward her home. The Indians fell in behind her, not realizing she was leading them to the house for a purpose. Although she ran faster and faster, they gained. Breathless, scared, and exhausted, she reached her own doorstep and gasped, "At-eoord!" A terrible pain hit her shoulder and she knew an Indian had thrown a tomahawk at her. She fell just as a flash of fire burst from the house with a loud roar. Before she fainted, Edward's mother saw the first Indian fall, and she knew the boy had fired the old gun.

Soon Edward heard Trudy screaming, and he saw that the house was on fire. He and his sister dragged their mother to safety, and pulled the tomahawk out of her shoulder. Then he ran into the house and brought out the old matchlock gun.

When their father rushed up, he found Edward holding the big gun across his knees. He had killed the Indians, saved his mother's life, and also saved the old gun.

Adam of the Road. -- Elizabeth Janet Gray, author of the 1943 Newberry Medal Book, was born in 1902. As a child she lived in Germantown, Pennsylvania. She attended Friends' School, Bryn Mawr, and Drexel Library School. From her
youth she always planned to be a writer. All through college, during her teaching experience, and in her various jobs, she continued writing. She was twenty-three years of age when her first book was published.

An automobile accident killed her husband five years after her marriage. The love of her work helped her to overcome her grief and continue writing. She is a student who has done much research for her biographies. Adam of the Road is the result of poring over many romances and minstrel tales. Three years after receiving the Newbery Medal, she was appointed as a tutor of the Japanese Crown Prince.  

Robert Lawson, illustrator of Adam of the Road, was born in 1892 in New York City. He spent his childhood in Montclair, New Jersey. As a youth he showed no special aptitude for drawing or writing. His life was that of the usual child in a suburban town. During high school he became interested in art.

He attended the New York School of Fine and Applied Arts. For three years he did magazine illustrations, stage settings, and some commercial work. Later he went to France and did some illustrating there. He returned to the United States and continued commercial work and magazine illustrations before he took up etching.

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14 Johnson, Scott, and Sickels, op. cit., p. 1081.
At present, Lawson has settled in Westport, Connecticut. He has received several different awards for his illustrations. He continues to devote more and more time to illustrations for books and at present is confining his efforts to this type of work. He has begun to write his own text for his illustrations and has several outstanding books to his credit.\textsuperscript{15}

The plot of \textit{Adam of the Road} centers around a wandering minstrel boy who lived a long time ago. His father was a minstrel, and at first he would not let Adam go with him, but kept the boy in school.

Adam would have been very lonely if he had not owned a small red spaniel dog called Nick. Another good friend of his was a boy named Perkin, who was twelve years old. Perkin's father was a farmer and very poor, so Perkin wanted to go to school and study law to learn how to make money. Adam wanted to be only a magician. He taught his dog Nick to walk on his hind legs, roll over and play dead, and to do tricks only for his master.

One day at school Adam received a big surprise when his father came riding up on a beautiful gray horse, carrying a violin over his shoulder. Part of the surprise was a magician's suit he brought to Adam, including breeches, long

\textsuperscript{15} Mahoney, Latimer, and Folmsbee, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 321.
stockings, pointed shoes, and a fine silk coat exactly like his own. Moreover, Roger, as Adam called his father, told Adam that he could leave school, travel with him, and entertain as a junior magician.

They journeyed to London and stayed at the fine de Lisle house, where Roger was to entertain at a wedding. In a gambling game during the night, Roger lost his money and horse to a rascal minstrel named Jankin, so Adam and Roger were forced to set out on foot the following morning. Later they ran into Jankin in a restaurant. He tried to buy Nick, but Adam refused to part with his beloved little pet dog.

That night they slept at a tavern, or hotel, and when Adam whistled for Nick next morning, the little dog was gone. He found out from a stableman that the tricky Jankin had taken the dog and left early.

Roger and Adam began a search. Everywhere they went, they inquired for the pair. Once Adam, catching a glimpse of them boarding a ferry, attempted to swim after them and became lost from his father. Kind people helped him by giving him food, and letting him ride their horses along his journey. In one such group, he and his friends were held up by robbers, and Adam's harp was stolen. Later, by his quick wits, the thieves were captured and the harp returned.
Everywhere Adam went he asked whether the people had seen a small red dog and a wandering minstrel. Many persons asked him to remain with them and do other work, but always Adam clung to his determination to be a minstrel. Accidentally he fell in with some thieving minstrels, but he soon left their bad company, and returned to the de Lisle house. He spent a winter there in cold London. While he was skating one day, Adam ran into Jankin, who told him that his dog had run away.

Adam returned to the home of a woman who had boarded the dog while Adam was in school. She told him that Perkin had taken the dog with him. So Adam again took up his search. By now his clothes were ragged and his toes were sticking out of his worn shoes. He walked the last miles barefooted and arrived at Perkin's home, where Nick greeted him joyfully. Perkin's kind-hearted parents allowed Adam to work for them and earn new clothes. He put on his new clothes, and with his dog at his heels, he set out to visit his good friend, Perkin, now at Oxford. Surprisingly, there he found his father awaiting him!

*Johnny Tremain.* -- Esther Forbes, author of the 1944 Newbery Medal Book, was born in Westborough, Massachusetts. She was graduated from the Bradford, Massachusetts, Academy in 1912, then attended the University of Wisconsin. She returned to Massachusetts, where she became a member of the
editorial staff of the old publishing house of Houghton Mifflin in Boston.

She has written several books. Her biography of Paul Revere, a Book-of-the-Month Club selection in 1942, was praised by John Chamberlain as "a book which goes straight to the heart of life in old Boston without sacrificing an iota of universal quality." At present Miss Forbes is making her home in Worcester, Massachusetts, where she continues to spend her time writing.¹⁶

Lynd Kendall Ward, illustrator of Johnny Tremain, was born in 1905 in Chicago, Illinois. His childhood was spent in Evanston, Illinois; Newton, Massachusetts; and Englewood, New Jersey. He attended Columbia University and the State Academy of Graphic Arts in Leipzig, Germany. He returned to the United States and published his first woodcut illustrations for the novel God's Man. Five other books soon followed.

Lynd Ward is probably best known as a wood engraver and for his woodcut novels without a text, as they were the first published in this country. However, he refuses to be typed in any one medium. Frequently he works in water color, oil, lithography, in color as well as black-and-white, and mezzotint. His interests are as varied as are the books he illustrates. His books are often included in the "Fifty

Books" selected by the American Institute of Graphic Arts as outstanding productions.\textsuperscript{17}

This book, \textit{Johnny Tremain}, is the story of a nine-year-old orphan boy who was apprenticed, or hired out to learn a trade, to a silversmith, named Mr. Lapham. Because he was smart and really loved the making of silver, Johnny did most of the work, and the other boy apprentices disliked him.

When a customer, Mr. Hancock, ordered a sugar bowl made like a cream pitcher which he had, Johnny began work on it. In order to do a good job he visited a famous silversmith, Paul Revere, for help on the model.

The next Sunday Johnny was hurrying to pour the silver for the bowl into a mold, when the boys, taking out their spite on him, substituted a cracked crucible or mold. Of course, Johnny was taken by surprise. The running silver spilled, his hand slipped and plunged into the hot silver, and he fainted.

For days he suffered great pain in the home of Mr. Lapham's daughter-in-law, where he had a room. Of Mrs. Lapham's four daughters, only Cilla treated him with any kindness. Finally his hand healed, and the bandages were removed, but his hand was deformed and useless. He was so ashamed of his crippled hand that he kept it hidden in his

\textsuperscript{17}Mahoney, Latimer, and Polmsbee, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 368-369.
pocket most of the time. No one wanted to hire him, and he became despondent.

When Mrs. Lapham ran Johnny away from her house, he spent a night sobbing across his mother's grave. He remembered she had told him that he was related to a wealthy merchant named Lyte, and she had left him a silver cup to prove it. She advised him if he ever needed help to go to the merchant, so Johnny decided to do so.

The sly merchant claimed that Johnny had stolen the cup and had him thrown into jail. With the help of Rab, a friend of his own age, a lawyer, and Cilla, Johnny proved his innocence and was freed. He took a job delivering papers where Rab worked.

As a result of reports, the people around Boston were angry because England had sent a shipload of tea with a high tax on it. Johnny joined a party of patriots, dressed as Indians, who dumped the tea into the sea.

Freedom-loving men began to drill with guns in preparation for war. Johnny could not handle a gun because of his injured hand. When Dr. Warren, a surgeon, asked to look at it, Johnny was embarrassed and left immediately. He watched Rab leave to join the fighting men, but Johnny remained to learn what he could from British officers and report his information to the American leaders. In this way he helped the Colonists win a battle.
Johnny became anxious about his friend Rab. He left for Lexington after hearing that a bloody battle had been fought there. He found Dr. Warren and his wounded friend Rab, who handed his gun to Johnny, as he said, "I never did get to fire it."

This time Johnny, no longer ashamed, let the doctor see his hand. Johnny was happy when the doctor said that he could operate and make it good enough to hold a gun. Johnny, too, could fight for freedom.

**Rabbit Hill.** -- Robert Lawson, author and illustrator of *Rabbit Hill*, has been discussed previously as the illustrator of *Adam of the Road*. His versatility is emphasized in the combination of talents which he exhibits in *Rabbit Hill*, which is the story of lovable little Georgie Rabbit, who made an important announcement to his mother and father in their rabbit burrow on the Hill in the Country.

"New Folks coming! Into the big house," he said. Mother Rabbit immediately began worrying. She was afraid the "new folks" would not raise any food. However, Father Rabbit told her that it might be the beginning of better times. He carried the news about the new folks to Porkey the Woodchuck, Gray Fox, Gray Squirrel, Willie Fieldmouse, Mole, Phewie the Skunk, and Red Buck the deer.

Mother Rabbit, who was anxious about her old Uncle Analdas, sent Little Georgie with an invitation for her uncle
to come and live in their burrow. On the way back with Uncle Analda, Little Georgie made up a new song. It went like this: "New Folks comin', oh my! New Folks comin', oh my!" Soon all of the small animals were singing it. Even the carpenters and yardmen were singing about the new folks because there was work to do -- getting the house ready, planting a garden, plowing fields, preparing the lawn, spading flower beds, and setting out shrubs.

The small animals hid in clumps and watched the new folks move in. There was a man smoking a pipe, a stout colored woman, undoubtedly the cook, addressed as Sulphronia, and a lady with a large basket. When she opened the basket, out stepped a big tiger-striped cat. Uncle Analda immediately branded the cat as old, then he added, "I'd just as soon walk up and kick him in the face one of these days. I will, too!"

The New Folks appeared to like animals. The man put up a sign at the driveway reading, "Please drive carefully on account of Small Animals." When Willie Fieldmouse fell in a rain barrel, he was rescued by the man and taken care of in the house until he was able to leave.

In the meantime, the garden stretched out into long rows of beautiful green vegetables. A great time arrived for the small animals. It was dividing night when parts of the garden would be given to each animal for his very own,
but nothing would be eaten until the coming of Mid-summer's Eve.

Unexpectedly, grief came to the animal colony. One night beloved Little Georgie Rabbit was struck by a car which turned into the driveway. The animals saw the man carry a bundle up the driveway, and all of them grieved for dear Little Georgie. However, after a few days, Willie Fieldmouse told of peeping into the window and seeing the little rabbit inside.

A mysterious tall something was set up near a big pine tree at one end of the garden and draped with a cloth. The small animals were excited as they moved toward the garden on Midsummer's Eve. The man and the lady were sitting on a bench. Suddenly a ball of fur jumped from the lady's lap and Little Georgie shouted, "Mother, Father, it's me, Little Georgie, I'm all well!"

Then the man took the cover from the tall object at the end of the garden. There stood a statue of the Good St. Francis of Assisi, the protector of small animals. His hands were reached out as if he were blessing them. Below an inscription read: "There is enough for all." A bountiful table was spread in front of the good Saint which offered the food that each animal liked best. There was no need for the animals to take anything from the New Folks' garden. They ate their fill, then they pronounced the New Folks good!
Strawberry Girl. -- Lois Lenski (Mrs. Arthur Covey), author and illustrator of the 1946 Newbery Medal Book, was born in 1893 in Springfield, Ohio. Her childhood was spent there and in Anna, Ohio.

She received her bachelor of science degree from the Ohio State University. Later she attended the Art Students' League in New York City and the Westminster School of Arts in London.

She did all kinds of odd jobs to pay her expenses, and later went to Europe on her slender savings. She spent some months in Italy, but it was in London that she did her first illustrations for children's books. In 1927, she began writing and illustrating her own books, several of which were inspired by the interests and needs of her small son. An interesting factor in her writing is that she works out her books with the helpful advice of children themselves. These books are about youth in their natural environments and about the setting of the regions from which the materials and pictures were inspired.\^18

The story of Strawberry Girl centers around Birdie Boyer, a girl of ten, who lived with her family in the backwoods of Florida. Birdie was smart. She helped her mother in the house and her father about their small farm.

\^18Ibid., p. 333.
Living near the Boyers were the Slaters, their two little girls, Essie and Zephy, younger than Birdie, and a tall boy called Shoestring. The Slaters were unlike the Boyers. Pa Slater would not work. He dozed on the front porch and would not milk their cows or raise fruits for his children. The Slaters excused themselves for not raising crops by saying, "Nothing will grow in Floridy!"

Birdie plowed and set a sandy plot in strawberries. When the plants began to grow, the Slaters' horse got into the patch one night and trampled them into the ground. That same evening their cow pulled the bark and leaves from the Boyers' orange trees. Birdie's father built a fence around the strawberry field, but Shoestring, who happened along, told Birdie that his Pa would make trouble about it because they could never tell what he would do when he got drunk.

Next, the Slaters' hogs rooted under the fence and ran over the strawberry plants. In their night clothes, the Boyers, with an ax, a grubbing hoe, a broom and sticks, chased them away. Pa Boyer, angry, promised to "deal with that feller."

When Birdie attended church, she enjoyed hearing Miss Annie Laurie Dunnaway play the organ. Birdie wished that she could play one herself sometime.
One morning Birdie found a piece of paper tacked on their front porch. It read, "Will git you yet just you wate." She knew the Slaters had left it there, and this made her more uneasy.

During a candy pulling at their house, Birdie was pulling a taffy-colored rope of candy with Shoestring when he told her that his father was carrying pliers in his pocket to make trouble about the fence. Next morning, fresh cattle tracks across the strawberry field showed that he had cut the fence. Mr. Boyer and Birdie sprinkled flour over the plants, and the Slaters, who thought that it was poison, kept their cattle away. By protecting their plants, Birdie and her father were soon able to carry big boxes of ripe berries into town and sell them.

The Slaters and their careless ways continued to trouble the Boyers. They branded a spotted calf belonging to the Boyers. They poisoned the Boyers' only mule. They turned their hogs loose to root up the Boyers' crops. They left a message on the wall, which read, "Will get you iffem we got to burn you out." They built a fire behind the Boyer house and laughed when Birdie asked them to help put it out. Mrs. Boyer put out the fire, and Birdie rescued the two little Slater girls who were playing in the woods.

Mr. Slater, in a drunken spree, shot off the heads of their chickens and left home. When Mrs. Slater became ill,
Shoestring came and asked Mrs. Boyer for help. Mrs. Boyer nursed the boy's mother until she became better. Mrs. Boyer even prepared a company supper for the preacher who visited the Slaters' home. Then Sam Slater walked in. He was angry at first, but he soon became ashamed and with gratitude to Mrs. Boyer, he thanked her.

Within the next few days, Sam Slater was converted in a camp meeting. He announced that he was going to take a job and do better in providing for his family.

Birdie found a surprise one afternoon in the breezeway of her home. Her father said she had worked so hard on the strawberries that she deserved something nice, so they had bought an organ for her. Moreover, Birdie could take lessons and learn to play like her mother, who sat down and played the organ while all of the family sang a song.

Miss Hickory. -- Carolyn Sherwin Bailey (Mrs. Eben S. Hill), author of the 1947 Newbery Medal Book, was born in 1875, in Hoosick Falls, New York. Her father's tales were wonderful geography lessons. She was taught at home until she was twelve years of age; then she attended Lansingburgh Academy. Later she studied at Teachers College, Columbia University, and in Rome, Italy. When she returned to the United States, she served as principal of the Jefferson Avenue Kindergarten in Springfield, Massachusetts, and then as a teacher in the greater New York public schools.
Miss Bailey became editor of the children's department of the Delineator, and later editor of the American Childhood before she began producing books. In 1948 she had thirty-five books to her credit. Miss Hickory had its inception when Miss Bailey's grandmother made a "Miss Hickory" from a limb which grew on the 135 acres of timberland and apple orchard that belonged to the family.¹⁹

Ruth (Chrisman) Gannett, illustrator of Miss Hickory, married Lewis Stiles Gannett in 1931, and lives in New York City. She thinks that illustrating is like creative cooking. The artist puts in another bit of herb in the soup, supplies a sauce for the main dish, and adds something of his own to the taste or tang of the book.

She also thinks that pictures do not make a book any more than parsley makes an omelet, but they certainly are a part of the taste that the book-reader or the book-looker remembers. Her ideas of illustrating for children are the living part of the stories which boys and girls remember. She says, however, that she wants her pictures to merge with the text so that the book becomes a joint creation and the author and illustrator could call Miss Hickory "ours."²⁰


²⁰Helen Ferris and Ruth Hoyer, editors, Young Wings, monthly publication of the Junior Literary Guild, March 27, 1947.
The story of Miss Hickory centers around a little country woman who was made out of an apple twig for a body and a hickory nut for a head. She lived in a corncob house under the lilac bush in Great-Granny Brown's back yard. Late in September, dressed in her checked gingham dress, white apron and cap, she was sweeping the floor when a great yellow fowl appeared at her doorway. Mr. Crow had come calling. He brought bad news: Great-Granny Brown was closing her house for the winter. Usually Miss Hickory lived in Granny Brown's kitchen when the snow was deep, and her corncob house would not keep her warm.

Miss Hickory went to see for herself, and she found the big house deserted. On the way back she met a brindled cat, Mr. T. Willard-Brown, who told her that Chipmunk had already moved into her house for the winter. Poor Miss Hickory had nowhere to go. She sat under a rosebush that night and snow fell on her white cap.

Crow, the kindest of the barnyard animals, suggested that she travel with him to a new home he knew. He took her high up in an apple tree and pointed out an old nest of Robin's. Crow said that she needed a change, and that she would find new friends. The first thing she did was to make new fall clothes: a dress of golden leaves, a coat and cap of moss, trimmed with red-alder berries, and a muff out of a scarlet maple leaf.
There was one animal in the woods that Miss Hickory feared, and it was Squirrel. He always was hungrily searching for nuts, and he looked longingly at her head. To make matters worse, he lived in a hole at the foot of her apple-tree home, and he could run up the tree any time.

Miss Hickory made new friends among the animal-folk, and often she did good deeds for them. December brought heavy snow to the forest, but Miss Hickory pulled her leaf bonnet over her head in daytime and her moss blanket up snugly at night; and often, during the day, in her woods dress, she ran and played to keep warm. At Christmas, Squirrel invited her to the celebration at the barnyard on Christmas Eve. He told her that something wonderful would happen at midnight. Miss Hickory did not believe him and arrived too late to see the imprint of a baby's foot on the fresh straw in the manger.

In March the crows began to fly, and Miss Hickory could feel spring in the air, although it was still cold. She gave her nest a spring housecleaning, made herself some spring clothes, and found a pair of pink lady slippers for her feet. She dressed up and played awhile in the forest, but bad news awaited her at home. When she returned to the nest, she found the Robins had moved in. There were newly laid eggs, and Mrs. Robin was sitting on them while Mr. Robin fiercely guarded her. On her way down the tree, Miss
Hickory decided to move into Squirrel's hole, thinking he had left it. When she stepped into the dark interior, she did not see Squirrel in front of her, hungry as usual. He snatched off her hickory-nut head and cracked it. Even though her head was gone, she could still think, so she planned what to do. She climbed to the top of the apple tree, found a steady place on a limb, and went to sleep.

In May when the folks came back to the old place, two of the children found a new graft, or piece of apple wood, grown into the old tree, which caused it to burst into full bloom. Miss Hickory's arms and legs were covered with blossoms.

**Twenty-one Balloons.** — William Pène du Bois, author and illustrator of the 1948 Newbery Medal Book, was born in Nutley, New Jersey, in 1916. His childhood was spent in the United States and in France. He attended Miss Barstow's School in New York when he first entered school.\(^{21}\)

At the age of eight he went with his family to France and attended Lycee Hoche, Versailles, Lycee de Nice, and Morristown School. His life was spent in three places while he was in France: boarding school in Versailles, week-ends in Paris, and a small resort town in Normandy.

He has always liked a circus, and says that he went to as many as thirty circus performances in one year. He also

likes Music Hall acts, which he attended in France. When he came back to the United States at the age of fourteen, he knew the repertoire of every important vaudeville act.

Du Bois always tries to put more into the pictures of his books than in the text. He does not include too much description and he likes for his stories to jump from chapter to chapter, like a program of vaudeville acts. No doubt this style resulted from his experiences in France and other early impressions.

The story of *The Twenty-one Balloons* begins on the day when the newspapers carried a story of Professor Waterman Sherman, who was picked up in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean, barely alive. He was tangled in the wreckage of twenty collapsed balloons. These were the type used to carry a small cabin where passengers rode, but that is getting ahead of the story.

The professor, as he was called, because he had been a teacher of arithmetic for forty years, decided to seek adventure. He designed a big balloon made of rubber and silk which he called the *Globe*. To it he fastened a small basket house with everything in it for living on board. He went up in the balloon. For the first few days in his small room below the giant rubber bubble, he fished, slept, read, and ate, not worrying about where he was going. On the seventh day a sea gull pecked a hole in the rubber, which let out
the air. The professor became frightened. He cast everything overboard. Finally he tore off his basket cabin, and, clinging to the balloon, managed to land on an island, exhausted.

A strange gentleman, who came up with fresh clothing, invited the professor to look about. As they started, the island shook because there were volcanoes on it and these rumbled continually. The strange man, known as Mr. F, led the way to a door hidden in a jungle. When he opened it, a dazzling sight met the professor’s eyes. Inside was a big diamond mine. There were all sizes and shapes of diamonds, and his new friend invited the professor to fill his pockets.

Mr. F told the strange story of the island, called Krakatoa. Only eighty families lived there, and they kept the existence of the island and its diamond mine a secret from the rest of the world. He carried the professor through homes and restaurants and showed him inventions on which the people worked.

The professor asked his new friend what the people would do if the island were to blow up, for there was hot air down underground escaping through volcanoes. Mr. F explained that they had built a strange flying platform lifted by balloons which would carry eighty people.
Since the people did not hear much from the outside world, they asked the professor to address them and tell them something of what was happening in San Francisco, his home town. While he was talking, the wall cracked, plaster fell, and volcanoes roared. Everyone started running. They climbed on the platform and sent it up into the air.

Fire gushed out of the mouths of volcanoes, houses crashed, and explosions split the air. Even high up as the platform, ashes, lava, and dirt covered the people. All agreed that the professor should be the last on the platform, and that he should land it because he had no parachute.

While the platform drifted over different countries, families parachuted down to live there. The professor drifted alone over England and into mid-Atlantic until the platform crashed, and he was picked up by a ship's crew.

When the professor finished this fantastic story before a famous explorers' club, he was asked what he planned to do next. He held up his cuff links, showing big diamonds sparkling in them, adding that he intended to sell them, build another balloon, and take a long trip.

King of the Wind. — Marguerite Henry, author of the 1949 Newbery Medal Book, was born in 1902, in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, where her father owned a printing business. Her ambition, first conceived at the early age of ten, crystallized
one year later when the *Delineator* magazine accepted her first contribution. When she received payment for her production, she felt that she was just one step from heaven, and that the gate was ajar.

She was graduated from Riverside High School and Milwaukee State Teachers' College. She soon married and settled in Chicago. There she achieved her dream of becoming a professional writer.

In 1939 she and her husband moved to a farm in Wayne, Illinois. It was a new world to a city-bred girl -- a world of nature and animals and country ways. Under its spell, she wrote her first book for children which emphasized her interest in boys and girls, birds, pups, foals, and green growing things.22

Wesley Dennis, illustrator of *King of the Wind*, was born in Boston, Massachusetts. His childhood was spent at Falmouth on Cape Cod. He attended the New School of Art in Boston. He worked in the art department of several Boston newspapers. He also illustrated fashions for Jordan Marsh, and then went to Filene's where he majored in designing Christmas cards.

Later, he included portraits in his work. However, he was not satisfied in any of these positions, so he decided

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to concentrate on painting horses, as he liked to be around horses. He attended races all over the country and loitered around stables and paddocks. He camped out in a beach wagon and sold his paintings of horses to their owners.

He now lives on a farm near Montgomery, New York, where he raises sheep and pigs while he continues his work of illustrating.23

The leading character in King of the Wind is a little brown-skinned Mohammedan boy named Agba, who lived in far-away Morocco. He was deaf and dumb, but his handicap did not keep him from serving as a horse boy in the ruler's stables. It was his job to feed, water, groom, and exercise ten of the horses from the royal stables. There was one bay mare, a favorite of his, which was created from the wind itself, so an old story said.

One morning when Agba opened the door, there was a new colt lying at the feet of this mare. The sun shone on his coat of gold and Agba named him Sham, meaning sun. There was a white spot on the colt's heel which stood for swiftness, but on his chest there was a mark, like a head of wheat, a symbol of bad luck.

Agba taught the colt to eat by feeding it on camel's milk and honey. Agba loved little Sham, and the colt returned

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23 Mahoney, Latimer, and Polmsbee, op. cit., p. 300.
Agba's love. The other colts would have nothing to do with Sham. Perhaps they were jealous, for at one year of age the colt could outrun any of them.

The Sultan, ruler of Morocco, decided to send a gift of six horses and six horseboys to the King of France on a ship. Agba and Sham were chosen to be part of the royal gift. The dishonest captain of the ship starved the horses on the voyage until they were only skin and bones when they arrived. The king did not want the pitiable horses. Soon the king selected Sham to pull the cart for bringing supplies from the market to the palace kitchen. Sham had no trust for anybody except Agba. He overturned the cart, which caused the cook to become angry and sell him to a stranger man. Agba immediately left for Paris to hunt his beloved Sham. He found the horse, and in its stable a yellow tom-cat, called Grimalkin, which liked the horse as much as did Agba. The cruel master forced the horse to pull heavy loads of wood. Once when the load was so heavy that the horse could not pull it up an icy hill, the cruel man threatened to build a fire under him. Soon a good Quaker came along and bought Sham.

From then on, Sham and Agba lived in many places. Everywhere they traveled Grimalkin went along. For awhile they knew good times at an inn, but the innkeeper's wife did not like the cat. One night she caught Agba on a return
visit to see Sham and had him arrested and thrown into jail. He and Grimalkin stayed there several months, in fact until a good kind friend, whom Agba had once known, started on a trip to the prison to carry him a basket of good things to eat. She was offered a ride in the carriage of a royal couple, the Earl of Godolphin and his lady. They felt sorry for Agba and had him freed. The Earl bought Sham for his royal stable, and took Agba along, too.

The Earl's head groom did not like Sham, but preferred another horse named Bobgoblin. Sham fought the big stallion and won the beautiful white Lady Roxana. The first colt of this pair was named Lath, and it could outrun any two-year-old.

A great day came when Sham's three sons rode in the famous races at Newmarket. The King and Queen were among the visitors. The Earl invited Agba, who rode Sham, to lead the parade of horses from his stable.

The sons of Sham won every race and took a valuable purse for their owner. However, Agba felt that they were not as fleet as Sham, who was, indeed, King of the Wind.
CHAPTER III

COMMON ELEMENTS IN TEN NEWBERRY MEDAL BOOKS
(1940-1949)

The selection of books is a vital problem in the development of childhood and adolescence. Through extensive reading children broaden their concepts of the problems of life, both present and past, derive fun and recreation, widen the range of their observation, keep abreast with the times, and gain vicarious social experiences otherwise inaccessible to them. These outcomes may be either desirable or undesirable, according to the type of books which are read.

One of the effective ways of getting children to desire to enjoy good literature is to surround them with reading material that is of high quality and of interest to them. Because of the increasing recognition of this fact, schools and non-school agencies have extended much effort toward directing the reading habits of school-age children. However, when a recently representative study\(^1\) reveals that

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forty-five per cent of the books read by nine hundred adolescent boys and girls were classified as either worthless but harmless or definitely harmful, it appears that even more serious consideration should be given to the elements that are contained in modern literary productions which are offered to the youth of our land.

The purpose of this chapter is to show what elements are present in a majority of the ten Newbery Medal Books published during the period of 1940 through 1949. The following factors were analyzed in an effort to determine the elements common to most of the books: classification, physical makeup or format, style of writing, setting of time and place, and characters, plot, and themes. Each of these factors is discussed and presented by tabular form in the succeeding pages.

Classification

All of the Newbery Medal Books considered in this study are fictional. They represent the following six types of fiction according to Dewey's classification: biographical, animal, historical, regional, inanimate, and humorous. Table 1 contains data on the classification of each of the books.

When an analysis was made of data in Table 1 relative to which books belonged in certain classifications, it was found that Daniel Boone is biographical fiction. Rabbit
## TABLE 1

**CLASSIFICATION OF TEN NEWBERRY MEDAL BOOKS (1940-1949)**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Books</th>
<th>Classification of Fictional Types</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Biographical</td>
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<tr>
<td>Daniel Boone</td>
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<td>Call It Courage</td>
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<td>The Matchlock Gun</td>
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<td>Adam of the Road</td>
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<td>Johnny Tremain</td>
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<td>Rabbit Hill</td>
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<td>Strawberry Girl</td>
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<td>Miss Hickory</td>
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<td>Twenty-one Balloons</td>
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<tr>
<td>King of the Wind</td>
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Hill, Miss Hickory, and King of the Wind are animal stories. The Matchlock Gun, Adam of the Road, and Johnny Tremain are historical fiction. Call It Courage and Strawberry Girl...
are classified as regional fiction. Miss Hickory, in addition to being an animal story, is also classified as an inanimate object story. Twenty-one Balloons is the only humorous story in the ten books under consideration.

Further analysis of data in Table 1 shows that the following number of books was classified in each specific category: biographical, one; animal, three; historical, three; regional, two; inanimate, one; and humorous, one. From these data it is seen that animal and historical classifications tied for first rank, whereas regional ranked second. Inanimate and humorous stories tied for last place. Therefore, it was concluded that classifications of animal and historical fiction are common elements in the ten books under consideration. These findings coincide partially with the findings of Terman and Lima, and with those of Arbuthnot, who reports that animal stories are a favorite with both boys and girls.

Format

The attractive format or physical makeup of a book is of great importance, because books are often chosen because of their eye appeal. Terman and Lima say that "many a fine old classic is never sold or read when it is obtainable only

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in a poorly bound and poorly printed edition; but when the same book is republished in an attractive binder, with beautiful type and good paper, its circulation may increase many times. Since this is a widely accepted criterion, it is interesting to note data on the formats of the Newbery Medal Books, which are designated as the most distinguished annual literary productions for juvenile readers. Data on this factor are contained in Table 2. Information on the following items is included: binding, size of type, quality of paper, durability of the book, size and length of the book, and the number and type of illustrations.

** Bindings. -- An analysis of data in Table 2 shows that none of the bindings of the Newbery Medal Books is plain. This finding agrees with the recommendation of Huber, who says that children's books should have colorful jackets, because youth prefer them to plain ones.  

Further analysis of data in Table 2 shows that the following colors or combinations were used in the specified number of books: orange and brown, one; tan and brown, two; orange and black, two; black and gray, one; red and black, two; black and silver, one; and red and gold, one. Further analysis reveals that black was used in six books, orange in

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5 Miriam Blanton Huber, *Story and Verse for Children*, p. 20.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Books</th>
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<td>Call It Courage</td>
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<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Matchlock Gun</td>
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<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adam of the Road</td>
<td>Black, orange</td>
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<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td>Johnny Tremain</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rabbit Hill</td>
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<td>x</td>
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<td>Strawberry Girl</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miss Hickory</td>
<td>Red, black</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td>Twenty-one Balloons</td>
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<tr>
<td>King of the Wind</td>
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<td>No. of Full Pages</td>
<td>No. of Less</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>8.5x11</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>6.5x9</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>7.75x10</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>6x9.25</td>
<td>317</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>5.5x8.5</td>
<td>256</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>6x9</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>6x8.5</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>6x9</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>6x9.75</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>7x10</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
four, brown in three, red in three, tan in two, gray in one, silver in one, and gold in one. In other words, black and orange, with various combinations, ranked highest in the colors used for bindings. Therefore, it was concluded that a colorful binding using these two colors with various combinations is a common element in the ten books under consideration.

Size of type. -- This factor is of utmost significance in the format of children's books. Terman and Lima recommend that smaller type than ten-point should never be used for children's books. Even the ten-point of many faces is described as being too small for children's books. They recommend that twelve-point type be selected as the minimum size for young readers. For the very young children the type should be still larger. However, these authorities urge that the type should not be so large as to cause the child's eye movements to be smaller than his rate of comprehension. Such a condition retards the grasp of the sentence meaning.

Data on the size of type selected for the ten Newbery Medal Books under consideration are contained in Table 2. Information is included on whether the type is large, medium, or small in each book. An analysis of these data reveals that eight books contained medium type and two contained

---

6Terman and Lima, op. cit., p. 88.
small type; none contained large type. Therefore, it was concluded that medium-size type is a common element of the ten books. This characteristic meets the criterion of Terman and Lima, who say that children's books should be printed in type neither too large nor too small, if they are to be read quickly and without loss of effort.  

**Quality of paper.** -- The appearance, as well as the wearability and legibility of a book, is partially determined by the quality of the paper used in its printing. Some books with desirable contents are poor sellers because the paper tears easily and is not of a quality that causes the type to be read quickly. Information on this factor in the Newbery Medal Books is contained in Table 2, along with other data on formats. An analysis of these data shows that each publication contained desirable quality of paper. Therefore, that characteristic is considered to be a common element of the ten books. This finding meets the specifications of McKee, who recommends that only high-grade paper should be used in children's publications.  

**Durability.** -- If a book comes apart easily, it is not desirable for children. Loss of pages or the binding tends to make its reading unattractive. Data on how well the Newbery Medal Books are constructed are contained in Table 2.

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7Ibid.

An examination of these data indicates that each one of the publications is well put together. Therefore, durability is concluded to be a common element of the Newbery Medal Books.

Size. — Children often select books because of their size. One that is too large is hard to handle, whereas one that is too small is often illegible and unattractive. The manner in which the authors of the ten Newbery Medal Books endeavored, in collaboration with their publishers, to present the right size books is indicated in Table 2. An analysis of these data shows that three of these books, including Daniel Boone, The Matchlock Gun, and King of the Wind, are large. The first-named book is 8.5 by 11.0 inches; the second, 7.75 by 10.0 inches, and the third is 7.0 by 10.0 inches. The following six books are within the range of 6.0 by 9.75 inches: Call It Courage, Adam of the Road, Rabbit Hill, Strawberry Girl, Miss Hickory, and Twenty-one Balloons. Only one book, Johnny Tremain, is of the smaller size. It measures 5.5 by 8.5 inches. From these data it was concluded that an average size, which is interpreted as being within the range of 6.0 by 9.75 inches, is a common element of the ten books. This finding does not meet the recommendation of Bamberger, who suggests that the most
desirable size of a child's book is 7.5 by 5.0 inches. This size is large enough to permit easily readable type and yet small enough to be handled with ease by the child.

Length. -- If a book is too long, children may feel that they never can reach the end; if it is too short, they often think that it probably does not contain many things of interest. Therefore, it should be "just right" in order to have the highest appeal. Information on how the ten Newbery Medal Books meet the children's need relative to their length is included in Table 2. An examination of these data indicates that only one book, The Matchlock Gun, is as short as fifty pages. Daniel Boone and Call It Courage are less than one hundred pages in length. Rabbit Hill, Miss Hickory, Twenty-one Balloons, and King of the Wind are more than one hundred pages but less than two hundred pages in length. The remaining two books, Adam of the Road and Johnny Tremain, are the longest of all. The former contains 317 pages, whereas the latter numbers 256 pages. An analysis of these data leads to the conclusion that an average length, ranging from ninety-five to 194 pages, is a common element among seven of the ten books. This finding meets the criterion of Terman and Lima, who recommend that, in most instances,
children prefer to read books that are comparatively short in content.¹⁰

Illustrations. — Two factors which probably are responsible for the many lovely illustrated editions of children's books include the following: first, the discovery that the very best which society has to offer in realms of both the practical and the aesthetic is none too good to be utilized in the training of children; and second, juvenile literature offers simple imaginative, picturesque, and often aesthetic possibilities which few illustrators have been able to resist.¹¹

The extent to which the illustrators of the Newbery Medal Books have followed current trends in illustrating is indicated in Table 2. An analysis of these data indicates that the following number of books contain the specified number of full-page colored illustrations: two books contain between one and three full-page illustrations; three, between seven and ten; four, between thirteen and nineteen; and one contains thirty-two.

Further analysis also shows that the following number of books contain the specified amount of colored illustrations which are less than full-page size: two books contain

¹⁰Terman and Lima, op. cit., p. 89.

between twelve and fifteen such illustrations; three, between twenty-three and thirty; three, between thirty-eight and forty-nine; one, sixty-eight; and one, seventy. From an analysis of these data it was concluded that over half of the books have between twenty-three and forty-nine illustrations which were less than a full page in size. Therefore, a large number of colored illustrations, either full page or less in size, is considered to be a common element in a majority of the Newbery Medal Books. This finding meets the criterion of Terman and Lima, who are of the opinion that children's books should always be illustrated, and that young children, especially, should have books with many colored illustrations.\textsuperscript{12}

Style of Writing

High literary quality is a somewhat indefinable element which distinguishes the great book from the mediocre one. This achievement is the result of the writer's sense of beauty, his ability to paint striking word pictures, and his ability to ascend above the commonplace in content, although the subject may be a contemporary or true-to-life problem. The style employed by each of the authors who wrote the ten latest Newbery Medal Books is revealed in Table 3. Consideration is given to the following factors: correct English,

\textsuperscript{12} Terman and Lima, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 90-91.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Books</th>
<th>Correct English</th>
<th>Dialogue</th>
<th>Direct Narration</th>
<th>Dialect</th>
<th>Highly Descriptive Diction</th>
<th>Understandable Vocabulary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daniel Boone</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Call It Courage . . .</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Matchlock Gun . . .</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adam of the Road . .</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Johnny Tremain . . .</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rabbit Hill . . . .</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strawberry Girl . . .</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miss Hickory . . .</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twenty-one Balloons . .</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>King of the Wind . . .</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

dialogue, direct narration, dialect, highly descriptive diction, and understandable vocabulary.
An analysis of data in Table 3 reveals that nine of the ten Newbery Medal Books are written in correct English. *Strawberry Girl* is the exception. It contains dialogue and dialect which utilize incorrect expressions for the purpose of emphasizing characterization. Seven of the books are written in direct narration. The exceptions are *Daniel Boone*, *Rabbit Hill*, and *Strawberry Girl*, which employ dialogue. Each of the ten books employs highly descriptive diction and understandable vocabulary.

From the preceding data it was concluded that correct English, direct narration, highly descriptive diction, and understandable vocabulary are common elements in the style of writing employed in the ten books. These characteristics meet the standard set by Weeks, who says that writers of children's literature should use the same principles that produce the highest quality of adult reading material. A narrative form is generally preferred. The vocabulary and phraseology, as well as the content of the book, must be within the child's realm of experience. The choice of words is an important factor in the development of favorable reading attitudes. The writer must, in most cases, use the best English and the words and phrases must convey to the reader thought and feeling. "So well must the writing be

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13 Blanche E. Weeks, *Literature and the Child*, pp. 32-34.
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. ¹⁴

Setting

The importance of the setting of children's books is
emphasized by most people who are interested in providing
attractive reading materials for youth. One of the most
significant comments on this phase of juvenile literature
was quoted by Cann in the following excerpt which states
that a book

is worth reading because it widens the mental hori-
zon and deepens the spiritual understanding of its
young reader by the glimpse that it gives of life
as it really is or really was in the far away or
long ago. The boy or girl who reads the book lives
for the time being in a different world and comes
back to his own or her own world with the satisfied
feeling of having "gone places and done things."¹⁵

The different places and time settings used in the ten
Newbery Medal Books under consideration are indicated in Ta-
ble 4. Information is included on whether the place is a
familiar setting, American, or in other lands, and whether
the time is present or past.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 34.

¹⁵Cann, op. cit., p. 8.
### TABLE 4
**SETTING OF TEN NEWBERRY MEDAL BOOKS (1940-1949)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Books</th>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Familiar Setting</td>
<td>American</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daniel Boone</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Call It Courage.</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Matchlock Gun</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adam of the Road</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Johnny Tremain</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rabbit Hill</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strawberry Girl.</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miss Hickory</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twenty-one Balloons</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>King of the Wind</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An analysis of information contained in Table 4 shows that seven of the ten books have familiar settings. The
three exceptions to this rule are *Call It Courage*, *Twenty-one Balloons*, and *King of the Wind*. Their place settings are in other lands. Six of the titles have an American setting. *Call It Courage*, *Adam of the Road*, *Twenty-one Balloons*, and *King of the Wind* have their settings in other lands. Further analysis indicates that seven of the books use the past as a time setting, instead of the present. The exceptions include *Rabbit Hill*, *Miss Hickory*, and *King of the Wind*.

An analysis of the preceding data indicates that the following items are common elements in the setting of the ten books: familiar setting, American setting, and past time. These findings are in harmony with at least a portion of the philosophy of Weeks. She says that the story is more meaningful when it is in its rightful setting as to time and place, because the child is better able to understand the actions of the people who are motivated by the time and place element. However, she does not specify the location of the place setting or the period of the time setting.¹⁶

Characterization

Since children's literature, in the main, should reveal life as it is today, was in the past, or could be in the future, the characters are significant in determining whether a story is interesting or dull. Table 5 contains data on

the characterization utilized by the authors of the ten Newbery Medal Books considered in this study. Information is included relative to the sex of the main characters -- whether men, women, boys, or girls -- and their types -- whether American, people of other lands, or animals.

An analysis of data in Table 5 indicates that all of the books except *Call It Courage* and *Miss Hickory* contain men characters. All of them except *Adam of the Road* and *King of the Wind* contain women characters. Boys are introduced in all of the books except *Daniel Boone*, *Rabbit Hill*, *Miss Hickory*, and *Twenty-one Balloons*. Girls appear in only three books, *The Matchlock Gun*, *Johnny Tremain*, and *Strawberry Girl*.

When analysis was made of the types of the main characters it was found that the following books contain American people: *Daniel Boone*, *The Matchlock Gun*, *Johnny Tremain*, *Rabbit Hill*, *Strawberry Girl*, and *Twenty-one Balloons*. People of other lands appear in *Call It Courage*, *Adam of the Road*, and *King of the Wind*. Animal characters are introduced in *Rabbit Hill*, *Miss Hickory*, and *King of the Wind*.

An analysis of these data led to the conclusion that the following items are common elements in characterization of the ten books under consideration: men, women, boys, and American people. These findings are not wholly in agreement with the opinion of Arbuthnot, who says that juvenile
### Table 5

**Characterization in Ten Newbery Medal Books (1940-1949)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Books</th>
<th>Sex of Main Characters</th>
<th>Types of Main Characters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Men</td>
<td>Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Daniel Boone</strong></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Call It Courage</strong></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Matchlock Gun</strong></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Adam of the Road</strong></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Johnny Tremain</strong></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rabbit Hill</strong></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strawberry Girl</strong></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Miss Hickory</strong></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Twenty-One Balloons</strong></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>King of the Wind</strong></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
readers choose characters who are children like themselves, or who are understandable people whom they might know anywhere.17

Plot

The plot of a story is the vehicle which determines its interest in most instances. The elements used for this purpose in the ten Newbery Medal Books under consideration are indicated in Table 6. Data on the presence of the following items are included: swift action, slow action, suspense, appealing content, complicated plots, and satisfying end.

An analysis of data in Table 6 indicates that eight of the books contain swift action. The exceptions are Adam of the Road and Twenty-one Balloons. In each of these the action is very slow. Each of the ten books contains suspense, appealing content, complicated plots, and satisfying ends. From these data it was concluded that the following elements are common to practically all of the ten books: swift action, suspense, appealing content, complicated plot, and a satisfactory ending. These characteristics are recommended by Huber, who combines them into one term -- "robustness" -- and who says that many or all of these elements appear in any book of real interest to the young reader.18

17 Arbuthnot, op. cit., p. 561.
18 Huber, op. cit., p. 10.
### Table 6

**Plot Elements of the Newbery Medal Books (1940-1949)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Books</th>
<th>Swift Action</th>
<th>Slow Action</th>
<th>Suspense</th>
<th>Appealing Content</th>
<th>Complicated Plot</th>
<th>Satisfying Ending</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daniel Boone</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Call It Courage</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Matchlock Gun</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adam of the Road</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Johnny Tremain</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rabbit Hill</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strawberry Girl</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miss Hickory</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twenty-one Balloons</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>King of the Wind</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Theme**

Much has been written about the theme of books which appeal to children. Probably no great number of people agree on what subjects young readers are most interested in, but
the themes selected by the authors of the ten latest Newbery Medal Books have been ascertained. They appear in Table 7.

An examination of data in Table 7 indicates that six of the ten books are related to the subject of home and family life. The exceptions are *Call It Courage*, *Johnny Tremain*, *Twenty-one Balloons*, and *King of the Wind*. Seven of the books contain the element of adventure. Exceptions to this characteristic are *Johnny Tremain*, *Rabbit Hill*, and *Strawberry Girl*. Six of the books emphasize the element of winning over handicaps. *Rabbit Hill*, *Strawberry Girl*, *Miss Hickory*, and *Twenty-one Balloons* did not emphasize this element. Social problems is the theme of only one book -- *Strawberry Girl*. *Miss Hickory* and *Twenty-one Balloons* are the only two books which contain the element of mystery. Nature is one of the themes of four of the ten books: *Daniel Boone*, *Rabbit Hill*, *Strawberry Girl*, and *Miss Hickory*. Six of the books use pioneer life as a predominating theme. This list includes *Daniel Boone*, *Call It Courage*, *The Matchlock Gun*, *Adam of the Road*, *Johnny Tremain*, and *Strawberry Girl*.

From the preceding data it was concluded that the following themes are common elements of a majority of the ten books: home and family life, adventure, winning over handicaps, and pioneer life. These findings parallel in part the report of Jordan, who says that boys especially choose books
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Books</th>
<th>Home, Family</th>
<th>Adventure</th>
<th>Winning Over Handicaps</th>
<th>Social Life</th>
<th>Mystery</th>
<th>Nature</th>
<th>Pioneer Life</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daniel Boone</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Call It Courage</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Matchlock Gun</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adam of the Road</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Johnny Tremain</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rabbit Hill</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strawberry Girl</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miss Hickory</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twenty-one Balloons</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>King of the Wind</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

that appeal to instinct of achievement and to the spirit of adventure, while girls are interested in home and family.19

Summary

An analysis of the ten Newbery Medal Books for the period 1940-1949 resulted in very definite findings relative to the presence of certain common elements. These are presented in Table 8.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Common Elements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classification</td>
<td>Animal and historical fiction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Format</td>
<td>Colorful binding (black or orange with various other colors)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Medium-sized type</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Good quality paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Durable construction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Medium size (6.0 x 9.75 inches)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Medium length (95-194 pages)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Illustrations; colored; 8-19 full pages; 23-49 half pages or less</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Style of writing</td>
<td>Correct English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Direct narration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Highly descriptive diction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Understandable vocabulary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Characterization</td>
<td>Americans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Men</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Boys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plot</td>
<td>Swift action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Suspense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Appealing content</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Complications</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Satisfying ending</td>
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<tr>
<td>Theme</td>
<td>Home and family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Adventure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pioneer life</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
An analysis of data presented in Table 8 indicates that two types of fiction were the common elements in the classification of the ten Newbery Medal Books under consideration. The format included seven common elements: style, four; characterization, four; plot, five; and theme, three. Each of these common elements is discussed individually in the proposed criteria for judging children's literature which appear in the succeeding chapter.
CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY: PROPOSED CRITERIA FOR JUDGING CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

Summary

The problem of this study was to determine the common elements in the following ten Newbery Medal Books (1940-1949): (1) Daniel Boone, (2) Call It Courage, (3) The Matchlock Gun, (4) Adam of the Road, (5) Johnny Tremain, (6) Rabbit Hill, (7) Strawberry Girl, (8) Miss Hickory, (9) Twenty-one Balloons, and (10) King of the Wind. The seven elements examined included classification, physical makeup or format, style of writing, place and time setting, characterization, plot, and theme.

As a background for the study, the books were briefly reviewed. Information also was included on the authors and illustrators. The findings which resulted from an analysis of seven specified elements in each book were formulated into the succeeding criteria.

Proposed Criteria for Judging Children's Literature

Since the Newbery Medal Books are considered to be the outstanding annual juvenile publications, it is concluded
that the elements which are common to a majority of these books should be acceptable as criteria for judging literature which is recommended for young readers. Accordingly, it is suggested that the common elements which have been identified in the present study should be considered criteria for judging the highest type of children's literature. These elements are discussed briefly in the succeeding paragraphs.

Animal stories and historical fiction are desirable classifications to be used for juvenile literature. Most children love pets and are interested in the thrilling and dangerous adventures with fierce and untamed members of the animal kingdom. Boys and girls also are interested in the spirit and deeds of mighty leaders who played significant roles in the history of our country -- that is, if the story is interesting, fast-moving, and filled with exciting adventure.

The format of children's books should be attractive in every respect. A colorful binding -- predominantly black or orange with various other colors -- has eye-appeal. Medium-sized print is easy to read. A good quality of paper does not tear easily and increases the legibility of printing. Durable construction makes a book last longer and adds to its appearance of worth. A medium-sized book is easy to handle and easy to hold at the proper distance from the eyes. A medium-length book can be read quickly and generally
is not conducive to loss of interest, which often is the result of too many pages. A large number of colorful, full-page, half-page, or even small-sized illustrations are attention-getters and attention-holders in any book.

A high literary quality in the style of writing is desirable for children's books just as it is desirable for adults' literature. Correct English should be used always, unless dialect, provincialisms, or ungrammatical expressions are employed to emphasize characterization. Direct narration is preferable to dialogue in most instances. Highly descriptive diction with vigorous and attractive figures of speech is pleasant, if it is lucid and dynamic, but the vocabulary must be so understandable that it neither will slow up the reader nor distract his interest.

Settings of familiar, American scenes appeal to children, and American men, women, and boys are their favorite characters. The settings should be authentic, unless they are imaginary, and the characters should be true-to-life.

A time setting of the past is interesting to children. Although they enjoy contemporary activities, they also are attracted by the daring adventure and exploits, and the home life and happenings of characters who lived long ago.

Plots must move with swift action if they interest children. They must be characterized by suspense, appealing content, exciting complications, and a satisfying ending.
The pace of introduction to both setting and characters should be fast and the end of the story should be a real climax -- not an anti-climax.

Themes of home, adventure, and pioneers appeal to young readers. Stories of family life are interesting because they are within the realm of the children's own experience. Adventure satisfies their desire for excitement, while the theme of pioneers opens up a new world to the young mind.
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