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THE ROLE OF THE LIBRARY
IN THE
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

AN ABSTRACT OF
A THESIS
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by
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In this rapidly changing world textbook learning alone has become inadequate. The need for elementary school libraries has thus become very important. An effective library program provides a most productive environment for the mental growth and development of students in the school. This is accomplished through the cooperation of the principal, the teaching staff and the librarian.

The school library is a place where pupils can study, browse and do research, independently, in groups or as a whole class. The library has material for these purposes, arranged in a systematic way, and is easily located.

Worthwhile library experiences should involve reading aloud to youngsters, listening and participation by them. Library instructions, conducted by the elementary school librarian and followed up by the classroom teacher, who stays in the library during that time, should include: introduction to the library and its organization, knowing various parts of a book, classification and arrangement of books and materials, understanding the use of the card catalog, knowing how to use the encyclopedias, dictionaries, developing skills in the use of special reference materials, and other areas of printed information. With the teacher's encouragement of the pupils in the classroom, the library experience is much more reinforced and meaningful. Only then are the broad areas of literature taught with greater

understanding and appreciation. Children can be motivated in a creative sense through the use of the library. Making displays about books and writing poetry can help a child to bring forth his abilities in art, creative writing and dramatic arts. Choosing children as library helpers enhances their interests about the library, its importance and function. Thus a good library program stresses guidance and is trying to create good library habits in concentration, orderliness, self-discipline, responsibility, and respect for others as well as for library property. A librarian, who is patient, good-natured, tactful, cheerful and friendly, influences others in such a way that they in turn respond in a similar manner.

No library program can be effective without the principal's support, understanding and leadership. It is the administrator who points out to the community that a library program with a full-time, qualified and certified librarian is a minimum requirement.

With the help of the teaching staff, the librarian selects the appropriate material for the library, which later has to be ordered, processed, organized, accessioned, labeled, circulated and thus made available to teachers and students. Daily routines have to be attended to besides the library instructions. Therefore, it is unfortunate that many times the library service is judged not by its different daily activities but by statistics. Yet it is the quality and not the quantity which is an important factor.

Having a library in the elementary school means that the public library becomes more important to the students of the community. Not only are the hours more convenient, but the public library can also provide additional material which can complement that of the school library.

An understanding between the school, its library and the community will provide for a pleasant and peaceful co-existence. The people then will lend their support where needed, and see to it that the education provided is the type of which everyone is proud.