

A COMPARATIVE STUDY IN CHILDREN'S LITERATURE:
CONTRIBUTIONS BY AUTHORS, CONSULTANTS AND CHILDREN

A DIGEST OF A THESIS
PRESENTED TO THE GRADUATE FACULTY
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by
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In this modern age of so many distractions, it is the adults' responsibility to help children choose books for leisure time activity. Books should be subjected to the same standards of criticism as any other form of literature.

Adults must use delicacy and insight in deciding the criteria to be used when making selections. The possible experiences of children, imaginary or real, must always be a guiding principle.

One method that would help children to reach out and read more is the use of the adult storyteller. Listening to stories helps many children desire to read. Reading stories to children is easy, but skillful storytelling has to be learned. A few of the more common difficulties which might arise when unfolding a story to young children are the introducing of unfamiliar words, claiming group participation by too many questions, breaking up the story flow by showing too many illustrations, and explaining too much about the story.

Children need daily experiences with literature. It is found that when they have these varied experiences, most reading problems disappear. Interest and enjoyment of books are half the solution of many a reading problem.

Other methods which would help to make a desire to read become a part of children are: (1) letting children own a library card and feel free to use the library frequently, (2) allowing children to own a few books of their own, (3) with limited suggestions from adults, allowing children to make their own choices of books, (4) listening to their stories and discussing their books with them, which gives them an excellent sense of achievement.

The teacher and parent can be excellent guides in the children's world of books. They can read their old favorites as well as introduce new books to children.

A good literature program within the classroom consists of having a diverse collection of good library books covering wide ranges of level and content. A classroom library plus regular visits to the school or public library make this type of program so much more real and interesting. Good literature lessons consist of an introduction to the classroom library plus a few enthusiastic thumbnail reviews of the books available. Children's recommendations about the books they have read add to an enriching program. Within this library should lie books that widen the horizons of the brightest pupils, and others that put the slower readers at ease and arouse their interest

equally. Interest in library reading should be stimulated throughout the year with new recommendations about the books, book reports by the teacher and the children, round table discussions, dramatizations of parts of favorite stories, hand puppet acts, dioramas, and bulletin board displays. Encouraging children to want to read and to learn while reading is the writer's main purpose in writing this master's essay. Methods in kindergarten and grades one through three, research of today's children's authors, attendance at two reading councils, and classroom experiments all yielded information for the text of this thesis.