

**THE CENTRALIZED ELEMENTARY SCHOOL LIBRARY AND  
ITS IMPORTANCE TO THE READING PROGRAM**

by 500

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## INTRODUCTION

A major purpose of the school is to develop readers who can read and who can choose to do so because they learn early what reading can do for them. A lush environment of a library can help motivate the child to learn of the world and its people, can help him understand his own country better and help him to answer his age-old questions about himself and his environment.<sup>1</sup>

With the cooperation of the classroom teacher and the librarian, a child can be aided in the development of insights and understandings of his world and be helped to grow into maturity by way of the world of reading. This world must take into consideration the individual differences of the child, and the centralized library can become the learning laboratory and center of the child's world of reading.<sup>2</sup>

The resources of the library are an integral part of any quality educational program. A child needs more than to be able to read and write, but to be able to think and act with competence and to be able to translate knowledge into constructive action and rational behavior. Learning must go beyond the limits of a textbook and the confines of a classroom.

The teacher and librarian cooperatively define the goals and concepts for building, extending, reinforcing, unifying and integrating knowledge by structuring a planned multi-media approach to teaching and learning. The extent to which children and young people of today will be

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<sup>1</sup>Sara Krentzman Srygley, "The Role and Function of the Elementary School Library," Elementary English, 44:472-474, May, 1967.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

creative, informed, knowledgeable, and wise within their own years, will be shaped by the boundaries of the content of the library resources available within their schools and the competency of the librarian and teacher who use these resources for the children's benefit.<sup>3</sup>

Reading is a tool of living and a large objective of teaching is to arouse the pupil's desire to read, and to become attached to reading as a means of satisfying one's need for recreation and self-education. Wise reading guidance by the librarian and classroom teacher begins with a child's present ability. The child's grade level may not necessarily be an indication of his reading level. He may be in the fifth grade, but can read at only a second grade level. The use of wisely selected materials high in interest but lower in reading level can lead a child to a more normal accomplishment.<sup>4</sup>

There is a variety of kinds of reading and each kind has its own technique and set of skills. Wherever reading is a tool of learning in a particular field of knowledge, then it is of great importance that the reader be taught the skills to master certain subject matter. Pupils must be taught to read and to understand scientific content, and many failures in mathematics are caused by an inability to read the content. Reading is a school problem and not merely a departmental responsibility. But first, the child must want to read.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Alice Lohrer (ed.). The School Library Materials Center: Its Resources and Their Utilization (Champaign, Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 1963), pp. 69-75.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Margaret K. Walraven, and Alfred L. Hall-Quest, Teaching Through the Elementary School Library (New York: H. W. Wilson Company, 1948), pp. 44-46.

The centralized library and the twentieth century school embrace a wide range of activities and is child centered. The first concern of the school is the growing person and his curiosity about his environment. The emphasis is upon the individual and the recognition of the need for independent study.<sup>6</sup>

What is independent study? It is not likely to be found in a closely structured classroom, bare of materials in which basic activity involves reading from a textbook. It is activity which takes place when a highly motivated pupil searches for information and ideas with which to formulate concepts, comparisons, and conclusions. This search can take place only in resource centers which are highly conducive to productive learning and where the student can find a simulated situation for those many occasions when he can not make a trip geographically or historically to seek the original resource.<sup>7</sup>

A major goal of the library and the reading program is to encourage independent study and therefore, behind each student must be a range of library materials to stimulate and satisfy the individual needs of the student and free him from the narrow boundaries of the textbook. The library with a well balanced collection, should provide facts and dreams for the student as well as activity and enjoyment. Teachers and librarians work together to insure a sound educational program through reading; whether for information and knowledge, personal enrichment, or pleasure.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup>Lohrer, loc. cit.

<sup>7</sup>Margaret Chisholm, "Change or Progress? Guidelines for Developing Auxiliary Media Centers," School Libraries, 18: 13-16, Winter, 1969.

<sup>8</sup>Lucile F. Fargo, The Library in the School (Chicago: American Library Association, 1939). Chapter 4.

## THE PROBLEM

Statement of the problem. The purpose of this library study is to show that the problems faced by a teacher in efficiently teaching each child while attempting to be effective with all students can be alleviated with the help of a trained librarian working with a well equipped centralized elementary school library. Because of this additional aid by the librarian, the classroom teacher can focus attention on the strengths and weaknesses of each child and can help each child raise his level of competence in reading through a more individualized program.

Importance of the study. One way to measure what a school thinks about education is the school's image of its library. A small, attractive but little used library shows that a school sees education as something it does to a child, while the school with a large, active, busy library, creating an atmosphere of people in pursuit of something, indicates that a school thinks of education as something it helps students to do for themselves.

The U. S. Commissioner of Education, Harold Howe II, has stated that a major educational goal is creative inquiry of an individual nature. In the centralized school library, a child can explore on his own. The variety of materials and the encouragement of their use by the teacher and librarian allows for wider and greater reading depth than a textbook, and provides for reading interests that may develop as a result of room interests and studies. The wide range of materials mentioned in this study and some of the methods of using these materials can help develop reading confidence in a pupil who may not be able to read with competence the material or subject matter of the textbook.

Definition of terms. In this study, the reading program refers to the entirety of the school curriculum, including all areas of subject matter, and not just a time set aside in the school's daily program for the teaching of reading skills from a basal reader. The centralized library is the hub of the learning activities of the school. In the physical confines of the library are found all the supplementary materials, book and non-book, which aid or enhance the total learning process of the school. The collection refers to all the materials found in the central library whether they be the printed-word materials or audio-visual aids. Everything that is in the library that is used as an enhancement of the educational program is considered part of the library's collection of learning devices for the education of its users.

Procedures. A variety of available material was read, analyzed and organized for this library research.

## REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This portion of this study is a review of books and articles by librarians, teachers and other educators who were interested in the problem of the teaching of reading in the elementary schools as a duty and responsibility of both the classroom teacher and the librarian. Emphasis was placed upon the importance of individual attention and the necessity of a well organized and well equipped centralized library to help meet the needs of the individual pupil.

Free reading. In order to extend his experiences, a child should be free to explore areas of personal interests or concern. The reading ladder, made by the librarian and the teacher working in cooperation and with knowledge of the child's knowledge in a particular area. The child need to go from the very simple to the more complex not only in concepts but also in reading levels. He should start with easily read information about a basic concept of the subject that he has an interest in.<sup>9</sup>

A sixth grader concerned with a growing body that he does not understand and of fears that are brought about by half-truths, ignorance and superstitions, may want to know more about himself and the age old question of the child, "Where did I come from?" An individualistic reading ladder made especially for the child, with the approval of his parents, may do much to alleviate some very real pre-adolescent fears. Such a ladder may include McClurg's "All About Animals and Their Young," which tells how different kinds of animals reproduce and also the importance of the "mother

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<sup>9</sup>Kenneth L. Donelson, "Free Reading: Another View," Journal of Reading, 12:547, April, 1969.

instinct. " Another book in simple terms which answers a young child's general questions is Gruenberg's "The Wonderful Story of How You Were Born. " Levine's book, "A Baby is Born" was written by clergymen and takes its format along lines of questions which are first asked by a child. The book can easily be read and understood by fifth and sixth graders. "Growing Up", is for the child with little background or for one who wants a review of the subject of sex and reproduction. Beck's "Human Growth" tells how life begins and goes on. It is in simple terms for boys and girls, with questions and answers at the end of each chapter. It is based upon an educational film shown to junior high pupils.

Free reading helps take care of a child's individual interests and concerns, and helps make reading a personal experience that it may not be in the classroom.

The disadvantaged and bibliotherapy. There are many books which deal with the problems of ignorance and poverty, of deflated and bruised egos, of separation from parents, of tension between parents, and of war anxieties. A book may help a child identify with the book's characters and their situations and may help him recognize his own problems and help him to find solutions or give him a realistic wholesome view of these problems. Books may be a source of understanding behavior of others and may serve to prevent the occurrence of a problem or may even furnish a source of escape from other problems. Bibliotherapy, as a dynamic interaction between the personality of the reader and literature, can help bring about facets of coping with behavior, personality assessment, and the shaping of developmental values.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup>Patricia Jean Cianciolo, "Interaction Between the Personality of the Reader and Literature, "School Libraries, 17:13-17, September, 1968.

The disadvantaged child is quite often inarticulate and silent. Children who have been encouraged to choose poetry that they like, and who have been encouraged to respond to it in their own way, have become more articulate and have broken through their wall of silence. Frequently as the child hears poetry, he adds new lines and improvises as he goes along. To some children, this may be their first introduction to English speech. Some of the ballads of Judy Collins and Joan Baez can be used to introduce poetry to older children. Even blues singing, if it fits the group can be used.<sup>11</sup>

It has been found that listening to, reading, and creating poetry can help increase the amount of reading a child will do. Once a child begins to read and write poetry, he may find a new awareness of the world around him. It has been found that an inarticulate pupil is more apt to respond to a short, concise, vivid imagery of a poem, but will hesitate to respond when a solid page of print is presented on the same subject. Poetry, for the disadvantaged child, can help him reach one of the important goals of reading--the joy of seeking and creating.<sup>12</sup>

All children, those "with" and those "without," share general interests and are not markedly different from each other. Children laugh at humorous situations and understand tragic and disappointing ones. The "children without" can be led to enjoy rhyme and rhythm, stories of adventure, stories of animals, and stories of real life. Their interests are as broad as life and as wide as the subjects dealt with in books. The key to success is getting the right book to the

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<sup>11</sup>Nancy Larrick, "life ain't been no crystal stair," *Library Journal*, 94:843-845, February, 1969

<sup>12</sup>*Ibid.*

right child. Even in the darkest of slums, people have their aspirations. Books can help create finer dreams and because of these dreams, make life a little better for these children who have been given little else but dreams to live by.<sup>13</sup>

Negro History Week can be used by the teacher and the librarian to focus attention on those Negroes who have made and are making outstanding contributions to society. This focus can help raise the aspirational level of Negro boys and girls and give them a sense of belonging. It can say to them, through many books, "WE have helped to make America great."<sup>14</sup>

More and more of our Negro children are questioning the values and beliefs of their parents and the library must provide materials to answer these questions. White children are also being brought into these issues and they also want to know about the Negro and his contribution to America. Books about the Negro can do much to help a depressed race understand itself and can help create a growth in understanding between ethnic groups by the encouragement of reading in this area of Negro achievement and accomplishment.<sup>15</sup>

The disadvantaged often finds that the basal readers, featuring stories about unreal children who speak in clipped sentences and who live in a middle-class utopia, do little to kindle the love of reading. By providing youngsters with a variety of books that they can relate to, many barriers to reading can be removed, and again, help to create a better self-image of the

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<sup>13</sup>Marion Edman, "Literature for 'Children Without'," Library Quarterly, 37:32-45, January, 1967.

<sup>14</sup>James E. Wright, "Help Change the Pecking Order," Library Journal, 94:153-154, January 15, 1969.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid.

Negro, not only to himself, but to others who have had presented to them a new picture of the Negro.<sup>16</sup>

Many of our disadvantaged children indicate a need to become physically involved with the learning process and audio-visual aids, such as tape recorders and ear phones, filmstrip viewers, and reading games help meet this need. This area of the collection not only provides incentives, but also helps reinforce skills of learning.<sup>17</sup>

The centralized library is the focal point of the individualized program of self-help and a well organized and selected collection helps create and enhance the reading ability of the disadvantaged, and helps bring knowledge, adventure, and joy into the incredibly meager lives of the impoverished child.<sup>18</sup>

Kindergarten children. For the very young child, the story hour can help promote personal experiences, concept development, listening and language experiences, and can also help stimulate curiosity. The young child can be helped, through the story hour, to develop an increased attention span, a positive attitude toward school in general, and reading in particular. In this story hour there can be much use made of story telling books, records, and filmstrips to help develop and encourage the necessary skills of listening and to also help develop language experiences. Activities

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Beverly M. Keener, "Individualized Reading and the Disadvantaged," The Reading Teacher, 20:410-412, February, 1967.

<sup>18</sup> Jennelle Moorhead, "Four Days in May," P. T. A. Magazine, 59:2-3, May, 1965.

of the story telling hour such as cutting paper, pasting, coloring, and similar activities can help expand the child's experiences which can lead to interests in reading.<sup>19</sup>

The young kindergarten child can find great joy in the use of picture books, and these books can be an invaluable aid in helping him gain a mathematical vocabulary and concepts. This invaluable part of the collection is one means of introducing, clarifying, enriching and emphasizing mathematical ideas. No matter what the concept may be, there is a book to enhance and entice the child's imagination and therefore help create the embryonic skill of reading for information.<sup>20</sup>

There are books of a repetitious nature such as Alain's "One, Two, Three, Going to Sea," or they may be nonsensical counting books such as Bishop's "Twenty-Two Bears." Other books may suggest the concept of line, shape and colors, which are described in Borten's "Do You See What I See?" Heide's "How Big Am I?" can help develop the small child's concept of size. An appreciation of good books and learning can prove to be meaningful and fun for the young child as he indicates to the teacher that he is ready for the experience of reading.<sup>21</sup>

Health education. Today's health education calls for an up-to-date curriculum which is relevant to the current needs of today's children. The confrontation by the mass media of the knowledge explosion in medicine,

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<sup>19</sup>Joan Powell, "Story Hour for Preschoolers," The Instructor, 77:33, November, 1967

<sup>20</sup>Margaret McIntyre, "Books Which Give Mathematical Concepts to Young Children: An Annotated Bibliography," Young Children, 24:287-291, May, 1969.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid.

psychology and sociology has presented new problems and questions for our children. New conceptual approaches have been chosen which allows pupils to develop a framework for absorbing expanding knowledge. Emphasis has been placed upon those life processes which lead toward a level of well-being which enable more successful living.<sup>22</sup>

Children's questions in the classroom reveal their concerns. They are concerned about such matters as why their skin is brown, and what color are they inside. They ask, "Why is it bad to hate people?" or, "Why do I have bad looks?". Children ask, "How is a baby started?", and "Why is my hair blonde, but my mother's hair is brown?" They have concerns about the control and manufacture of drugs and how one gets to wanting drugs and why would someone ever start taking drugs.<sup>23</sup>

Children are willing and eager to learn for themselves how their bodies and psyches function. This knowledge can not come from a single textbook or from a structured class in "health." These questions can better be answered along individual lines of individual study as the child's needs and problems arise. A well-rounded library collection in the elementary school must be available to the child, and reading experiences can help him find solutions to his problems or answers to his questions.

Science and mathematics education. The explosion of knowledge has brought about the child's need to seek ways to assimilate and use this new knowledge. The best of classroom methods can not cover everything that

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<sup>22</sup>Orvis A. Harrelson, "Today's Children--Today's Health Education," *The National Elementary Principal*, 68:6-8, November, 1968.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid.

a child's curiosity and awakened interests may require. There is a problem of selection and the ability to locate what is needed or is to be learned. Independent study may be the only way to meet the child's demand for materials that help him answer his questions. The library can help pupils develop and encourage inquisitive natures as they learn subject matter and research techniques and skills.<sup>24</sup>

The librarian can be a catalyst for learning and with the cooperation of the teacher can help emphasize the place of reading as a part of learning. Reading must be an important part of every science program, for a scientist does not reach the frontier of knowledge without reading. Books such as Kohn's "The Scientific Method" and Watt's "Archeology, Exploring the Past," illustrate the process of inquiry.<sup>25</sup>

The child must have the courage to look, to observe, and to experience. In books and in conversations, the librarian and the classroom teacher must provide the child with experiences that are puzzling and which in turn will pique the child's curiosity. If he takes care of plants, he is up against the reality of natural laws. He must learn what amount of water is good for his plants and what amount is insufficient. His thirst for knowledge will encourage him to seek further information in a carefully selected school collection.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>24</sup>Robert R. Carter, "Library--Use Program," The Science Teacher, 36:66-67, January, 1969.

<sup>25</sup>Doris Young Kuhn, "The School Librarian--Catalyst for Learning," School Libraries, 17:9-14, Winter, 1968.

<sup>26</sup>Luitgard Wundheiler, "A Psychological Basis for Judging Children's Literature Dealing With Nature and Science," Library Quarterly, 37:23-31, January, 1967.

Children want books that give them information that they need in order to meet some specific need of their own making or choosing. The science and mathematics curriculum should preserve and increase the child's curiosity and his sense of wonder. The library can make a great contribution in achieving this purpose. Individual inquiry can develop a child's understanding of the methods of science and the concepts of mathematics. He can learn about the investigation of scientists, of their tools of inquiry, and of their lives through individual search in books.<sup>27</sup>

The development of science and mathematical interests can be greatly developed in the library by the use of a browsing corner or a special display shelf for new and interesting material. Children need time to "dip into" many books, periodicals, and encyclopedias in order to satisfy their individual tastes and in order to help develop and create science interests and mathematical concepts. Such books as Brindze's "The Story of Our Calendar," "The First Book of Time," by Bendick, and "Around the World with Darwin," by Selsam, can pique the curiosity and interest of children and therefore put into their hands reading materials that would enhance their curiosity and sense of wonder.<sup>28</sup>

Social studies education. In order to have a successful social studies program, there is needed a wealth of materials which are freely used, and are readily accessible to the child for his use. The school library

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<sup>27</sup> Doris Young Kuhn, "The Library and Science and Mathematics," Theory Into Practice, 6:8-11, February, 1967 .

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

can by an enrichment factor because a textbook can be only a guide, a summary of events, and a base for a "selective recitation of facts and information."<sup>29</sup> There is a need for supplementary materials which can be available only in a well-stocked and well-organized library.

A good social studies program should have an impact upon the development of a pupil's thinking abilities. The program should provide for adequate and differentiated instruction which accommodates the variety of individual differences between and among pupils. The subject matter should be modified to meet the learning background and the skills of the individuals. Non-reading vehicles such as recordings, pictures, filmstrips, and so forth, should be used to encourage enthusiasm and a desire to read further on the topic or subject of a pupil's interests.<sup>30</sup>

Some interesting recordings that may help stimulate a child's reading interests are, "Songs of the North and South," and "Sea Chanties," which includes songs about the Erie Canal and the Rio Grande. A recording which introduces children to the working world of the railroad engineer, zoo veterinarian, aquanaut, and the astronaut and many other interesting professions is, "What Do You Want To Be When You Grow Up?". Many educational records come with supporting film strips and flat pictures which are intended to stir the child's interest and to encourage him to read for further information.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>29</sup>Alice B. McGuire, "The Library and the Social Studies," Theory Into Practice, 6:13-17, February, 1967.

<sup>30</sup>John Jarolimek, "Guidelines for Elementary Social Studies," Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, New York: 1967.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid.

Literature. A child seems to read more often the subjects that interest him, and he seems to have general as well as specific reading interests. Reading preferences of boys and girls seem to differ within certain age groups and in order to satisfy a child's reading interests, the reading program must have a variety of materials of high interest level for different age groups and which span a wide range of reading difficulty.<sup>32</sup>

A single textbook might retard the child's development as a critical reader, and therefore, the child must be exposed to many books, magazines, and other printed materials which contain a variety of views and writing styles. This variety of materials helps create a discriminating reader who develops the ability to evaluate the authenticity and validity of what he reads, helps to formulate an opinion about the materials, and then proceeds to act according to his own judgment as to the value of the book.<sup>33</sup>

A centralized collection provides materials which help the child develop his feelings and impressions about underlying themes, help develop an awareness of the author's style, and help develop an awareness of the sincerity and consistency in the portrayal of a character's strength and weaknesses. This centralized library can be an important influence on the growth of reading abilities and habits of the child.<sup>34</sup> This central collection provides a constant flow of materials to and from the classroom. It is a resource pool that is available where and when it is needed.

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<sup>32</sup>Jean E. Lowrie, Elementary School Libraries (New York: The Scarecrow Press, 1961), pp. 23-56.

<sup>33</sup>Patricia Jean Cianciolo, "The Library and the Reading Program," Theory Into Practice, 6:18-21, February, 1967.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid.

Children do not usually know why they like or dislike a book. They do not know how to express a value judgment and may never fully understand what they take from a book. Nevertheless, some adult criteria can be impressed upon the young readers so that they can make initial reading judgments and have a basis from which they can discuss literature.<sup>35</sup> These judgments may excite the young readers' imaginations and give them an insight which may come to fore, days, weeks, or even years later. We want to give children the working tools for understanding and for the discussion of children's literature. We also want children to become more critical readers in the process.<sup>36</sup>

The young readers can be made aware of the criteria of originality and imagination of good literature by such books as "Paddle-to-the-Sea," "Alice in Wonderland," and "Charlotte's Web." Genuine emotions are depicted in "Island of the Blue Dolphins," and "And Now Miguel." "The Return of the Twelves," "Charlotte's Web," and "A Wrinkle in Time," are good illustrations of the criterion that the events of a story be plausible, even in fantasy. Are the characters in a book consistent and life-like in real-life situations? Children can be given "The Bronze Bow" to read for the study of the character of the boy in the story. The Indian in "Choctaw Code," displays a real-life characteristic of concern for others, as does the father in "White Danger." A smooth and logical plot are to found in "Daughter of the Mountains," "The Dark Frigate," and "Coxton's Challenge." Insights into behavior are

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<sup>35</sup> Harlan S. Hansen, "Teaching Sixth Grade Children Criteria for Evaluating Their Recreational Reading," School Libraries, 17:37-40, September, 1968.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

very realistically portrayed in books such as "Roosevelt Grady," "The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn," and "Charlotte's Web."<sup>37</sup>

Critical readers develop a sense of social consciousness in their relations with others and an appreciation of books as cultural objects which contain many expressions of human creativity. Critical reading not only aids the young readers in forming value judgments of what is good literature for hours of pleasure, but also helps develop a discerning sense for what is authentic and relevant when choosing from a profusion of informational books, some well written and accurate, some not so well written or accurate.<sup>38</sup>

Well written books with interesting titles can greatly help expand a child's vocabulary with words that take on meaning as the child reads or discusses a book. The difference between a "biography" and an "autobiography" become truly a part of the child's own vocabulary after he has actually met, through reading, the differences between these two kinds of books. The teacher can present the book "Invincible Louise" for a discussion of the term "invincible." Once the idea of bravery, fearlessness, and dauntlessness is brought out, the book becomes more appealing because of the interest in the new word and all its connotations that are now the child's own. Other books with interesting titles that may aid in vocabulary building and aid in a true comprehension of the author's use of certain words are Hawes' "The Dark

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> John Sherman, "Children and Their Libraries," Improving College and University Teaching, 17:55, Winter, 1969.

Frigate," "Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea," by Verne, "The Yearling" by Rawlings, and Schmidt's exciting book, "This is My Heritage."<sup>39</sup>

Many children think of magazines as strictly adult fare, but in the school library they are introduced to a new world of children's literature, the children's magazines. Children who may not be interested in the longer passages and format of a book may find the shorter stories and articles of a magazine more to their liking. The shortness of the written material with its high interest level may even encourage a child to read about a particular area or subject that he may shy away from when it is found in book form.<sup>40</sup>

Some of the children's magazines that are found in the elementary school library are, "American Girl," "Boy's Life," "Nature Magazine," "Popular Mechanics," "Story Parade," and "Wee Wisdom." In these magazines, written for all ages, for all reading levels, and for a variety of interests, can be found information and pleasure for all children of all ages and at all reading levels.

Fine arts education. An important purpose of the fine arts in the elementary schools is to help develop in the child an awareness of himself as an individual and an awareness of the world around him through experiences. Improvised dramatics can generate a curiosity and a desire to explore the world of literature through the art of drama. Literature appreciation grows and holds promise for the unmotivated the reluctant,

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<sup>39</sup>Walraven, op. cit. pp. 22-23.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid. 71-73.

and the non-reader. Library oriented programs, stimulated through classroom activity, introduces the idea that literature and the library are exciting worlds to discover.<sup>41</sup>

Until recently, the fine arts have been a very neglected field in the elementary school curriculum. Growing interest in music, dance, art, drama, and literature has brought about their inclusion into the curriculum of the grade schools. As a result, the elementary library has included materials in its collection to help the student explore and pursue his own particular areas of interests through books, filmstrips, records, videotapes, etc.<sup>42</sup>

Numerous books in the elementary library enable the student to study the lives of famous musicians and composers. The well written biographies by Mirsky of Mozart, Beethoven, and Bach, as well as the lives of present day musicians such as Bernstein, Toscanini, and Gershwin, presented in the writings of David Ewen, help present to the student a picture of great human beings as well as great artists and musicians.<sup>43</sup>

Music appreciation can be enhanced by making available books which help the child understand the composer's intent, and thus, a greater enjoyment from the music because of an understanding of its background. Chappell's "The Sleeping Beauty," and "The Nutcracker," give the child an insight into the composer's intent and therefore enhances the child's enjoyment of the

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<sup>41</sup>Marian I. Fertik, "A Crescendo: Creative Dramatic in Philadelphia," Wilson Library Bulletin, 43:160-164, October, 1968.

<sup>42</sup>C. William Riley, Ella A. Schrock, and Betty Jane Lahman, "The Library and the Arts," Theory Into Practice, 6:23-26, February, 1967.

<sup>43</sup>Ibid.

actual music when he hears it.<sup>44</sup>

Introduction of painting masterpieces can motivate a child to read about the artists and their works. Biographies of artists, describing how they work and showing examples of their works, can be read as the artist's work is being studied. Examples of authentic biographies for children are Ripley's "Picasso," "Michelangelo," "Van Gogh," and "Gainsborough."<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>44</sup>Ibid.

<sup>45</sup>Ibid.

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

A library means different things to different children. Those who make use of the school library do so for a wide variety of reasons. The extensive use of the library is an adjunct to formal education and children who use the library for their voluntary out-of-school education are rarely conscious of an educational purpose. Education is a by-product and librarians and classroom teachers must know about more than books, but must know about children. The quality of what children read, the stage of development of individual children and the attitudes that they bring to the books that they read, will determine the dimensions of their education.

It is the function of the school library, working through the efforts of the classroom teacher, to assist the child in interpreting himself in relationship to others, to help him develop a better understanding of the world about him, to help arouse his intellectual curiosity, and to introduce him to his rich cultural heritage through the written word of books, magazines, and pamphlets. It is also the school's responsibility to instill within the child a life long love of books, which will aid the child in the realization of his best self and greatest social efficiency.

Encouragement along individual lines, using a variety of materials, book and non-book, can help create an enthusiasm that children may never have experienced before. For the first time, children may find themselves not in competition with more able students and may find that the end product of their work is the same in individual achievement as the more able students around them. The centralized library with the librarian and teacher working together can greatly enhance the development of reading in the elementary school.

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THE CENTRALIZED ELEMENTARY SCHOOL LIBRARY AND  
ITS IMPORTANCE TO THE READING PROGRAM

by

NELLIE MARDIE STONE

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AN ABSTRACT OF A MASTER'S REPORT

submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree

MASTER OF SCIENCE

College of Education

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY  
Manhattan, Kansas

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The study is an attempt to show that books are meant to be used and not kept for special occasions, and that if children can be taught at an early age to acquire certain fundamental feelings in regard to literature and to life, they will probably enjoy reading all their lives. They will share the feelings and needs of others through identification in fantasy in their picture books, stories, and poetry. They will be given words with which to express themselves and will hear how their language can be used in a rich, exciting, and moving way. Children will know that between the covers of books all exciting things happen and that they too can accumulate knowledge and wisdom through their reading.

Children can find books that deal with facts, that are concerned with information, and that are to be read for the enjoyment of reading. The magic of words and pictures dealing with experiences, places and things lying outside the child's environment can be brought close to him. Books can help satisfy and stimulate the insatiable curiosity of a child.

Teachers and librarians working together can put the right book at the right time into a child's hands. Books and other library materials can help create a desire to read and stimulate a curiosity to find out what is written by reading certain selected books and using other materials found in the library. The teacher works hand in hand with the librarian of a well equipped centralized library. The teacher knows the child and his needs, while the librarian knows the materials of the collection which will help meet the individual needs of the child.

A well equipped centralized elementary school library can furnish the multiplicity of materials needed to really individualize a child's reading

experiences and enrich his experiences through reading and the stimulation and encouragement to read. Reading becomes an integral part of the child's life and is not just confined to a set time in his school schedule. The school library can help put reading on a more personal basis and help the child gain knowledge that he may not have been capable of or able to acquire in the regular reading program of the classroom.