POETRY IN THE EDUCATION OF KINDERGARTEN TO GRADE THREE CHILDREN

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POETRY IN THE EDUCATION OF KINDERGARTEN TO GRADE THREE CHILDREN

by

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ABSTRACT

Many young children in the kindergarten to grade three years are being deprived of the heritage of great poetry which is theirs, and of its potential contribution to their education. This unrealized potential is, in part, the result of a reluctance on the part of teachers to make optimal use of poetry in the school life of the child. Foremost among the reasons for this reluctance is the inadequacy both of their exposure to good poetry for children and of their professional preparation. Furthermore, the content of the prescribed texts constitutes inadequate exposure to good poetry.

This study was undertaken to survey the literature germane to the subject of poetry in the education of the young child in order to establish a rationale for the according of a prominent place to poetry in the first four years of the child's school life, to examine criteria for judging the quality of that poetry and to apply those criteria in the compilation of an annotated bibliography of poems, and to suggest ways in which teachers may bring children and poetry together in a pleasurable and rewarding relationship.

Books and periodicals examined were identified through the use of the appropriate standard bibliographic tools. References cited reflect a representative sampling of opinions published in North America and Great Britain during

the period 1931-1981. The annotated bibliography is limited to print materials in the English language which are procurable in Canada and the United States. The list is not, nor was it intended to be, exhaustive. While every effort was made to include all those poets who have made a significant contribution to the existing body of poetry for young children, no attempt was made to list all the work of any given poet. The suggestions to teachers are designed to help those who may feel ill-at-ease in using poetry, but they are not intended to be followed slavishly.

Based on the findings of the study, a recommendation is put forward to suggest how schools may be supplied with an adequate, up-to-date collection of materials to ensure the success of the proposed program. Other recommendations focus on the pre-service and in-service preparation of teachers, and on the evaluation of the resulting program.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

A major aim of education is to ensure that children develop and use their powers of language both in its written and oral forms. It is through literature that an appreciation of our literary and cultural heritage may be developed. During the kindergarten to grade three years a meaningful introduction to that heritage can be provided by the sharing of nursery rhymes and poetry. In addition to introducing children to the basic literary concepts, and to language at its finest, this practice can foster an enjoyment of reading and lead to a life-long habit of reading and an appreciation of the best which our language has to offer.

The Problem

Great poetry is part of the heritage of English-speaking people, but its potential in the education of the children in our primary schools is not being realized. This failure may be attributed to the fact that not all teachers are sufficiently familiar with the body of poetry for children which is available, nor are they always conversant with effective methods for ensuring that the child's encounter with poetry will be a rewarding one, aesthetically and educationally.

Need for the Study

In the kindergarten to grade three years the only exposure to poetry that many of the children experience is by way of their reading "texts". An examination of the texts prescribed for these grades by the Newfoundland Department of Education revealed that the Language Development Reading Program (Nelson) contains a total of forty-nine poems, while the Integrated Language Program (Ginn) makes use of ninety-three poems. The kindergarten titles published by Nelson contain no poetry, but the textbook published by Ginn for kindergarten uses three poems. The authors of these programs did not intend that the selections in the texts would constitute the complete poetry program, and suggestions for additional material is provided in the teachers' source book. It is the opinion of the writer, however, that the only poetry which it can be certain that children will experience is that which appears in the texts. Without casting any undue aspersions on the quality of the poetry selections in these texts, the writer feels that if children are restricted to poems designated as being on their age- or grade-level, they are being deprived of the great heritage of English language poetry.

There are many excellent books of poetry for children, and more are being published each year. These include volumes of newly-published poetry and of generalized and specialized anthologies of previously published poetic works. Even with the best of intentions it is difficult

for teachers to keep abreast of the large amount of available poetry. Such knowledge is crucial, however, as the degree to which poetry can influence the educational experience will depend in large measure on the perceptions teachers have of poetry, the use they themselves make of it, and the degree to which they encourage student use.

Regardless of the quality of the materials available, these resources will achieve their potential in the education of the child only if they are used effectively. Unfortunately, not all teachers are oriented either by temperament, education, previous exposure to poetry, or professional preparation, to make optimal use of poetry in the classroom.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was threefold. First, it was aimed at surveying the literature germane to the subject of poetry in the education of the young child in order to establish a rationale for the according of a prominent place to poetry in the primary grades. Second, it was directed at examining criteria for the judging of poetry for children, thereby facilitating the availability to children and teachers of an improved quality of poetry selections. The third aspect of the purpose was to compile an annotated bibliography of selected poetry and to suggest ways in which teachers might use these poems with kindergarten to grade three children.

Objectives

Specifically, the objectives of this study were:

1. To survey the literature related to the use of poetry in the education of kindergarten to grade three children in an attempt to answer the following questions:
   (a) What is the nature of poetry for children?
   (b) What standards should be applied to the selection of poems?
   (c) Do children have preferences in their reading of poetry?
   (d) Should children be required to memorize and recite poetry?
   (e) Should children write poetry?
   (f) How important is the role of the teacher?
   (g) Is poetry necessary in the education of the young child?

2. To establish criteria by which to judge poetry for children and to illustrate these criteria by referring to specific poems.

3. To compile an annotated list of recommended poems. This list would be characterized by:
   (a) a balance between the old and the new,
   (b) suitability for use by children and teachers, (Any item appropriate for teacher use only would be so designated.).

(c) availability, unless otherwise indicated,

(d) appearance on at least two lists of recommended titles, (If no critical review available, it would be so indicated.)

(e) examination by the writer,

(f) annotations which would aid the teacher in selection.

4. To suggest methods which would assist teachers in their efforts to make poetry a pleasurable and valuable experience in the lives of children in kindergarten to grade three.

Methodology

The purpose of this study was to survey the literature pertaining to poetry in the education of the kindergarten to grade three child and to establish a rationale for according a prominent place to poetry in the school life of the primary grade child. This accomplished, it was then proposed to compile an annotated list of recommended poems, based on designated criteria, together with suggestions to teachers as to how these poems might be used.

Periodical articles and books pertaining to the study were identified through the use of the appropriate standard bibliographic tools. The references cited reflect a representative sampling of opinions published in North America and Great Britain during the years 1931 - 1981.

Criteria by which to judge poetry were decided upon after surveying the opinions of poets and critics in the published literature. These criteria were then illustrated by examples from specific poems.

The compilation of the annotated list of selected materials was effected by using the following steps:

1. Retrospective selection aids were consulted in order to determine which volumes of poetry have stood the test of time. Current reviewing sources were used to locate citations of more recent titles.

2. Current reviewing sources published outside of North America were consulted. As the list was to be confined to materials which were procurable in the United States and Canada, it was decided to delete from the list of selection aids all those titles published outside these two countries. (Volumes of poetry published elsewhere in the world, or in another language and translated into English, would appear in the American and Canadian reviewing tools.)

3. Items which received favourable reviews were examined.

4. Annotations were written for each item deemed suitable for inclusion in the selected list.

5. The list was sub-divided and placed in alphabetical order by author or compiler under the headings Nursery

Rhymes, and Poetry for Young Children.

Suggestions to the teacher were, in some instances, the result of reading in a wide selection of books and periodicals to which the writer was directed by consulting the standard bibliographic tools. Ideas which the writer adopted or adapted have been duly credited. All other suggestions are those of the writer. All suggestions have been titled, and arranged in alphabetical order.

Limitations

This annotated list is not intended to be exhaustive. While every effort has been made to include all those poets who have made a significant contribution to the body of poetry for children, no attempt has been made to list all of the work of any single poet. The list includes only those materials which may be procured in Canada or the United States. It is also restricted to materials in the English language.

Organization

This study is arranged in two parts. Part One consists of four chapters, the first of which provides a general introduction to the subject--statement of the problem, need for the study, purpose, objectives, limitations, and methodology. A review of the literature related to the

subject of poetry for children is the focus of chapter two, and it is reported under the following headings: The Nature of Poetry for Children, Children's Poetry Preferences, The Need for Poetry, The Selection of Poetry, The Teaching of Poetry, The Oral Presentation of Poetry, The Memorization of Poetry, and Children as Poets. Chapter three provides an in-depth discussion of the elements of good poetry for children and suggests criteria for judging and selecting, with reference to specific works, while chapter four contains a summary and recommendations.

Part Two, designed to serve as a booklet for the use of the classroom teacher, is made up of two sections. Section One, an annotated bibliography of selected titles, is further sub-divided under the headings Nursery Rhymes, and Poetry for Young Children. With the exception of the two adult reference volumes, which have been annotated, full bibliographic information only is provided for the Nursery Rhymes titles. Some suggestions to assist the teacher in bringing children and poetry together is the subject of Part Two, Section Two.

Further information of value to the teacher is appended and titled:

Appendix A Poetry Awards

Appendix B Selection Aids

Appendix C Sources Referred to in Part Two

CHAPTER 2

A REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction

Many are the advocates of the use of poetry in the education of the young, and the majority of these proponents of poetry-in-the-classroom deplore the very limited role which poetry does in actual fact play in the lives of school children. While the literature abounds with opinions, there is limited formal research providing statistical evidence to support those opinions. Blame is variously assigned to "the system", teaching methods, the education and professional training of teachers, and the selection and availability of materials. Praise is accorded to certain individuals, groups, materials, and methods.

The literature which is reviewed here is reported under the following headings: The Nature of Poetry for Children, Children's Poetry Preferences, The Need for Poetry, The Selection of Poetry, The Teaching of Poetry, The Oral Presentation of Poetry, The Memorization of Poetry, and Children as Poets.

The Nature of Poetry for Children

Much discussion focuses on the question as to what are good poems for children. Reeves (1958a) contends that we

"should apply the same criteria as for poetry in general, except that one must try to read it with the understanding, the vocabulary, and the feelings of a child" (p. 6). He believes that many children have been turned away from poetry because they have been treated to works of inferior quality as a result of the belief of some often well-meaning but ill-informed adults.

Huck (1979) shares this view of Reeves in that she believes that "it [poetry for children] differs little from poetry for adults except that it comments on life in dimensions that are meaningful to children" (p. 306). The only limitations she perceives are poems of passion and nostalgia, because these emotions are outside the experience of young children. Literary allusions and figurative language are of necessity limited, but they are appropriate provided they can be linked to something in the child's life.

The opinion of Hopkins (1972) is stated very succinctly: "Poetry for children should appeal to them--meet their emotional needs and interests" (p. 5). This statement in itself tells us little, but he then proceeds to share with the reader an interview with David McCord. In order to elaborate his own view he quotes McCord thus:

> Poetry for children is simpler than poetry for adults. The overtones are fewer, but it should have overtones. Basically, of course, it isn't different.... But poetry, like rain, should fall with elemental music, and poetry for children should catch the eye as well as the ear and the mind. It should delight; it really has to delight. Furthermore, poetry for children should keep reminding them, without any feeling on

> their part that they are being reminded, that the English language is a most marvelous and availing instrument. (pp. 37,38)

As has happened in other genres, children have adopted as their own some poetry which was written for adults. Apseloff (1979) heartily approves of this, and suggests that it is here that they find "poetry to grow on, to provide enjoyment for a lifetime, to stimulate the imagination and perception, to attune the ear to finer music and the power of carefully chosen words and created images" (p. 201). Repplier (1973) agrees, and affirms "it has been often demonstrated, and as often forgotten, that children do not need to have poetry written down to their intellectual level" (p. 264). These words of hers first appeared in print in 1892, and almost a century later, in 1980, we note that the British poet Leonard Clark concurs when he states:

> It has always been the test of a good poem for children that it is, first and foremost, a good poem... And it should always be remembered, too, that many children "apprehend" long before they can "comprehend". It is a delusion to think that children cannot get to the heart of a poem and have an inner sense about what it is trying to say, without having to understand the meaning of every word. (p. 42)

In his introduction to Tom Tiddler's Ground, de la Mare (1961) acknowledges the fact that some of the poems in the collection would be difficult and might always remain so. Although he does not belittle the importance of trying to understand what one reads, he stresses that we can, especially in our younger years, delight in the sounds of

the words of a poem--the rhythm, music, and lilt--without understanding the full meaning. He compares it to the pleasure one experiences in listening to the song of a bird.

Cameron (1969), C. S. Lewis (1973), and de la Mare (1963) share similar views on children's literature, and these views have significance in any discussion of the nature of poetry for children. Cameron states:

> The fatal point of view on the part of the lay reader, the writer or the critic is to consider it as if it exists in a vacuum instead of within the frame of reference of all literature (p. xiii).

C. S. Lewis warns that "the child as reader is neither to be patronized nor idolized" (p. 219), and de la Mare is convinced that "only the rarest kind of best in anything can be good enough for the young" (p. 9).

Whether one chooses for children the poetry written by the masters of the poetry-for-adults world or that written by poets who write solely for children is of little consequence, for, as Townsend (1974) reminds us, "poetry wanders unconcerned across the vague and shifting border between children's books and just plain books" (p. 131). What does matter, however, is summed up in these words of Huck (1979):

> In evaluating a poem for children it makes little difference who the author is, provided the poem speaks <u>to children</u> in the <u>language</u> of poetry. Children deserve excellence in poetry regardless of its source, but it must speak to them at their point of time. (p. 308)

In conclusion. Good poetry for children must meet all the criteria for good poetry for any age group. If children find something in a given poem which speaks to them--amuses, enchants, soothes, delights, moves them in any way--then that poem is for them.

Children's Poetry Preferences

There is a body of opinion which supports the contention that children will choose the best when given the opportunity. The following words of Steele (1971) typify this point of view:

> I for one would go on the assumption that our children are brighter and better than we have ever imagined them to be. Perhaps wrongly I would proceed on the premise that young minds like young bodies could profit by a little exercise. Perhaps unwisely I would put more trust in our children to choose wisely when given the chance. (p. 2)

A number of studies have attempted to determine students' preferences in poetry. Terry (1974) summarizes the findings of research done in the 1920s and 1930s thus:

1. Children are the best judges of their preferences.
2. Reading texts and courses of study often do not include the children's favorite poems.
3. Children's poetry choices are influenced by (1) poetry form, (2) certain poetic elements, and (3) the content, with humor and familiar experience being particularly popular.
4. A poem enjoyed at one grade level may be enjoyed across several grade levels.
5. Children do not enjoy poems they do not understand.
6. Thoughtful, meditative poems are disliked by children.
7. Some poems appeal to one sex more than another;

girls enjoy poetry more than boys.
8. New poems are preferred over older, more traditional ones.
9. Literary merit is not necessarily an indication that a poem will be liked. (p. 10)

In the early 1970s she conducted a national survey of children's poetry preferences in the United States to determine characteristics liked and those disliked. These findings are based on the responses of fourth-, fifth-, and sixth-graders who had listened to over one hundred selected poems. Poems liked were the contemporary, the familiar, the narrative, the humourous, and limericks; those disliked were the sentimental or serious and the traditional. Children liked rhyme, rhythm, and sound; they disliked imagery and figurative language. They preferred enjoyable familiar experiences to the unenjoyable familiar experiences.

Tom (1973) reports on a survey of the poetry selections read by teachers of the middle elementary grades to their students during a four- to five-month period, from September 1967 to January 1968. She draws these four major conclusions based on the findings:

(1) There is little variation in the poetry choices of men and women teachers.
(2) Teachers seem to be largely guided in their choice of reading material by what is easily available in textbooks.
(3) Teachers need to know more about poetry.
(4) Teachers need a wide exposure to contemporary poetry in their preprofessional and professional children's literature experiences. (p. 37)

Terry's research conducted nationally in the United

States reveals a consistency of children's preferences over the years, from the 1920s through to the 1970s. Tom's study, involving 260 teachers in 130 schools in five states of the United States, indicates that teachers were, for the most part, reading poetry written before 1928. Both studies involved children in fourth, fifth, and sixth grades.

Third grade students were the subjects of a study reported by Pittman (1966). Sixteen girls and sixteen boys were chosen to listen to a total of fifty poems at the rate of four poems per day; the poems were selected from recommended anthologies of poetry for children and included a wide variety of subjects and forms. The results indicated a preference for animal poems with a "rollicking rhythm", humourous poems, and "poems that related experiences similar to their own" (p. 57).

Fisher and Natarella (1979) report a study conducted in Georgia in an attempt to determine whether younger children enjoy the same kinds of poems as did the upper elementary students involved in Terry's study. The children in this study were in their first, second, or third year in school, in fifteen classes located in five schools. The children heard seven poems a day for seven days, after which they recorded their responses. The poems used varied in form, content, and poetic elements; both traditional and contemporary selections were included. The findings indicate that seventy-six percent of the children liked the poetry they heard, the most popular form being the narrative

and the rhymed, metered poetry. In terms of content, the preferences closely parallel those reported by Terry; in fact the only distinct differences apply to traditional poetry. Fisher and Natarella reported:

> No traditional poems were included in the fourth, fifth, and sixth graders' twenty-five most popular poems, but three of the five traditional poems surveyed in this study were very well liked. (p. 383)

A further observation of theirs indicates that "every single poem in this study had some children who thought it was great--that it deserved a star rating--and some that didn't like it at all" (p. 385).

Oster (1979) observes that "response research frequently reveals not intimacy, but animosity, in the relationship between poetry and young people, or sometimes a complete lack of acquaintance" (p. 36). Huck (1979) supports Oster's observation, but she expresses it less harshly when she states:

> It may well be that the consistency in children's poetry preferences over the years simply reflects the poverty of their experience with poetry ... In brief, the results of the studies of children's interests in poetry may be more of an indictment of the quality of their literature program than on the quality of their preferences. We need to ascertain children's poetry preferences <u>after</u> they have experienced a rich, continuous exposure to poetry throughout the elementary school. (p. 315)

A different type of response research is described by Barto (1979) when she observes that "the way children--especially small children--express themselves is through

smiles, laughter, happy cries, remarks, or bored eyes" (p. 11).

In conclusion. The research reports examined appear to indicate the validity of the assumption stated by Steele and quoted on page 13 of this paper. However, studies are too limited in number and scope, particularly at the primary level, to permit the formation of reliable conclusions. "When given the chance" is the operative phrase in Steele's statement; it is unrealistic to expect trustworthy opinions on a subject with which respondents have a limited acquaintance.

The Need for Poetry

Actually it is rather presumptuous of us to question the need for poetry in the life of the child, for, as Pilon (1978) asserts, "Children do bring poetry with them when they come to school; all too often they lose it there and never find it again" (p. 223). The work of Iona and Peter Opie (1959) bears ample testimony to the fact that children "seem to have a chant on their lips as constantly as they have a comic in their hands, or a sweet in their mouth" (p. 18). The Opies were referring to school children, whereas Chukovsky (1968) is dealing with those of a younger age when he writes:

> In the beginning of our childhood we are all "versifiers"--it is only later that we begin to speak in prose. The very

> nature of an infant's jabbering predisposes him to versifying. The word "mama" with its symmetrical syllabic repetition is a kind of model for rhyming.... There is hardly a child who does not go through a stage in his pre-school years when he is not an avid creator of word rhythms and rhymes. (p. 64)

Muir (1973), Logan and Logan (1967), and J. S. Smith (1967) all support the idea that there is a kinship between the child's world and that of the poet. Muir contends:

> When he is most lucky, the poet sees things as if for the first time; a child does this too, for he has no choice. (p. 269)

Logan and Logan elaborate further:

> The poet and the child are kin in the sense that the child like the poet sees with the imagination, hears with the ear of the musician, and shares what he sees and hears. (p. 501)

In his discussion of the ways in which childhood language and experience are akin to poetic experience and language, Smith concludes that young children "usually find nothing too strange or too boring, nothing unreachably divine or unspeakably trivial, about poetry" (p. 230). Basically, Coleridge's "willing suspension of disbelief" seems to pose less of a problem for the young child than it does for older children and adults.

Hopkins (1980) feels that one of the most significant developments in children's literature during the 70s was the establishment of the National Council of Teachers of English Poetry Award in 1977 (See Appendix A). He believes

that this annual award will "serve to promote poetry, giving the genre the importance it deserves". It is his hope that

> children will find that poetry helps them to enter worlds they never thought possible.... Poetry should flow freely in our children's lives; it should come to them as natural as breathing, for nothing--no thing can ring and rage through minds and hearts as does this body of literature. (pp. 374,375)

Ramsey and Ramsey (1967) quote Aileen Fisher on the subject of "bringing children and poetry together". Poetry is .. "something to open a child's eyes, to make him laugh, or wonder, or venture through a door ajar" (p. 594).

R. Lewis (1971) writes that "poetry is a way of speaking about the interrelation of things" (p. 144). This view is upheld by Rowsey (1979) when he affirms that students need more than facts; "they must also 'feel' the importance of issues". It is his belief that poetry "helps to establish the mood for building constructive attitudes about the human role in nature" (p. 36).

A great sensory receptivity and a lack of inhibition lie at the base of the play activity of the young child. C. Lewis (1971) refers to this playfulness as "one of the ingredients of poetry-making, essential in the whole approach to poetry; playfulness that leads to juggling with words, trying, testing, inventing" (p. 30). Muir (1973) contends that "children are intensely interested in words, and often make up a secret language of their own" (p. 270), while N. Tucker (1973), in his discussion of nursery rhymes,

suggests that "this delight in words... can act as a direct short cut into poetry itself" (p. 259). Baldwin (1959) issues these words of caution and advice:

> We live in an age when words are cheap and constantly being cheapened further: the slick slogan, the bare headline, the advertising catch-phrase are all forces at work to atrophy imagination. Only a fool would complain about such things or pretend that they ought not to exist. They ought not to exist by themselves, however.... It is literature, and more especially what is poetic in literature, that educates us in the quality of words, and it is from this factor and this only that we can equate sincerity of language. (pp. 6, 7)

Myra Cohn Livingston and Harry Behn, both of whom are major contemporary writers of poetry for children, insist on the personal nature of the poetry experience. Behn (1969) states emphatically, "I believe that poetry in childhood is essential to maturity. That is my theme" (p. 159). Livingston (1969) feels that it is the fact that it is such a personal thing, something that cannot be "rationalized", "explained", "classified", "proved", which makes it difficult to state precisely why poetry is important to the individual. She suggests that the very lack of dependence on fact may be the dimension which makes poetry so important (p. 174).

"The truly poetic response is one of pure pleasure" is the conviction of C.D. Lewis (1956). He believes that many "poetry-lovers" would be shocked if told that they did not love poetry at all, but rather the message to be gleaned from it. While not denying the fact that poetry may

communicate messages and still remain poetry, he is most adamant in his assertion that they are "by-products". It is his belief that the right attitude towards poetry is one of "lively acquiescence", for "if we resist the influence of a poem, it will fail in its main purpose, which is to speak directly to our heart" (pp. 5,6). Singer (1977) warns against didacticism in writing for children. Writing may have a moral, he believes, but it must have "beauty in itself". He adds, "The great works of literature actually teach us nothing" (p. 10).

Clark (1963) has no doubts as to the importance of poetry in the education of the child, for he states that it is not something which has appeal only in childhood. Rather:

> The drums and trumpets of poetry can be heard throughout the whole of life, rousing the blood to beat a little faster, the eyes to dance with gladness, and the heart to sing with thankfulness for what has been created out of words. (p. 11)

Another aspect of children's need for poetry is put forward by Boyd (1973). It is her opinion that

> poetry by its very artifice and artificiality makes it possible to express emotions that sound embarrassing in prose. It gives us words to say how we feel when we can't find these words within ourselves... Showing children that poetry says what they want to say but cannot or dare not is the way to start children on the road to a lifetime of enjoying poetry. (p. 20)

Newson (1963) asserts that, without poetry, the study of English will be incomplete, for "poetry is not a minor

amenity but a major channel of experience" (p. 156). As early as 1927 we find Huber, Bruner, and Curry writing that, in addition to accepting the obligation to help the child "interpret his environment for practical living", the school should also feel obliged to "help him to a realization of the spirit and imagination". They are convinced that "in poetry... the teacher has her opportunity" (p. 150). Almost forty years later, Clark (1966) states:

> If it is the duty of education, at home and school, to see to it that children use, and develop, their powers of language, and their knowledge of literature, so that they may grow and become maturer persons, then, it is also its duty, and privilege, to see to it that poetry is presented to them for, in poetry, language is seen at its best and strongest. (p. 58)

It has been observed by Baskin, Harris, and Salley (1976) that, for the most part, there is a similarity in the activities and scholastic behaviours of children in the early grades, in terms of intellectual performance. Students "learn to excel, enjoying the security of single answer closure and their teacher's approbation for stellar performances". They warn that an unfortunate side effect of such early experiences is that they "lay the groundwork for thinking in absolutes and certainties." Eventually, of course, children must learn that there are many questions which do not have a single right response. Baskin, Harris, and Salley therefore contend that

> poetry is one of the few countervailing influences to deliver this message in the lower grades. It encourages

> subjective response, rewards diversity, and widens the participatory base; making room for more kids in the winner's circle.
>
> Poetry, therefore, should be one of the most widely enjoyed experiences in the elementary school. (p. 259)

In conclusion. The evidence which emerges from the literature surveyed supports the belief that there is a natural affinity between poetic language and experience and the language and experience of childhood. This affinity should be fostered and extended, thereby keeping alive the child's sense of wonder, creativity, subjectivity, and love of language at its best. This is to be a pleasurable experience for the child and the basis for a lifelong enjoyment of poetry.

Selection of Poetry

The question which next arises concerns the importance of choosing poetry to use with children. Chambers (1979) claims that "in English poetry there is never any need to go to anything but the best; whatever one is looking for, there is so much to be found" (p. 112). This view is upheld by Muir (1973) when he affirms that "there is in fact a superabundance of great poetry which a child can spontaneously enjoy and use in his own way" (p. 271). Koch (1973) reminds us that too often we underestimate the capabilities of children, as "there is a condescension toward children's minds and abilities in regard to poetry

in almost every elementary text I've seen" (p. 7), and Groff (1966) warns of the danger in believing that "the young child can be gradually led to excellence through acquaintance with poems of lesser quality" (p. 458). This body of fine poetry for children may be found in nursery rhymes, eclectic anthologies, anthologies of individual poets, the Bible, and personalized collections. These will be discussed individually below.

Nursery Rhymes

Of the role of the nursery rhyme in the English tradition, Hazard (1944) writes that "her [England's] sons can barely lisp before she gives them a golden book". He describes these rhymes as "often only music, singing vowels, repetitions of sound, simple cadences stressed, full and sonorous rhymes... The sense is of less importance than the sound". The laudatory manner in which he discusses these nursery rhymes emphasizes the importance of "placing rhythm at the beginning of life... conforming to the general order of the universe" (pp. 81,82). Frye (1963) seems to share this belief, for he writes:

> The simplest form of literary expression, and the one most readily accessible to children, is, I should think, accentual verse, of the kind that we find in nursery rhymes, and which illustrates the affinity of poetry with dance and song and bodily energy. (p. 54)

Eclectic Anthologies

Causley (1966), Chambers (1979), Hill (1979), Huck (1979), and W. J. Smith (1976) discuss this topic at length and, in the process, point out the desirable and undesirable qualities of poetry anthologies in general and of certain volumes in particular. Chambers expresses his opinion thus:

> I have liked my anthologies to have some bite. I like the apparently disparate made harmonious by unexpected grouping; I like mixed conventions forming new patterns discovered by an anthologist with a refreshing mind of his own; I like a few poems which are comfortingly familiar and many more which startle me by their unfamiliarity. Most of all, I like to feel the force of the anthologist's personality--so long as it is worth getting to know, has a point of view, a passion for the art, and something (many things) to say. (p. 111)

He does, however, sound a note of caution. While paying glowing tribute to Charles Causley as poet and as anthologist, he hastens to put anthologies in their proper perspective when he states:

> They are appetizers for tasting this and trying that. They are maps, and like all maps, they differ in kind. ...They are libraries for browsing and useful for quick reference. They are travelling companions, too, Baedekers of verse. (p. 114)

Chambers concludes that anthologies are not enough, any more than tasting can take the place of a meal or that map study can substitute for an actual journey. "It is poets on their own that we should value most. The eclectic anthologies only help children discover them" (p. 115).

Anthologies of Individual Poets

In any consideration of the poetry which children enjoy, one becomes aware that the range is very wide. Some of their favourite poets write exclusively for them, some write for them only occasionally, while others do not write for the child audience at all. In her assessment of the poetry of David McCord, Livingston (1979) states that his work exemplifies all that is best in poetry for children because "he has never lost the sensitivities of childhood, the love of children, or the knowledge that curiosity and wonder are the lifeblood of the young" (p. 39). She uses the last two lines of McCord's "Pumpkin Seeds", "we bring alive a thing that's dead,/ And do it with a sense of love," to illustrate that "it would be impossible for anyone to write real poetry for children without this sense of love for bringing things to life" (p. 38).

The Bible

While discussing poems that "deal in beauty of language", Lucas (n.d.) suggests that such poems should be taught in a manner which will "make students conscious of the power and beauty of language when it is used well" and that "the Bible is famous for the rhythm and beauty of its language. No course in literature is complete without it" (p. 42).

Duff (1955) insists that the use of Bible reading in her family was not a result of "a feeling of traditional obligation" because she is convinced that "overconscientious

purpose has a way of defeating its own ends" (p. 123). Rather, she prefers that children enjoy the poetry of the Bible spontaneously from the very beginning of their acquaintance with it. For the young child this would of necessity mean hearing it read or spoken aloud, and "this is just as it should be, because so much of the enjoyment of poetry comes from the melodious sound of rhythm and cadence" (p. 145).

Personalized Collections

It is the opinion of Seely (1931) that "for every human being there is some poetry that is interesting, stimulating, educationally productive" (p. 65). The poems that are used should be chosen from the whole range of traditional and contemporary poetry. A teacher needs to have at his/her fingertips a personal file of well-loved poems, and should get into the habit of turning to it at any moment during the day for that certain poem to be used with a group, with an individual, or with the class as a whole, for as Kuskin (1971) reminds us, "the most precious thing about each of us is that which makes us different" (p. 47).

In the 'teaching' of poetry it is on the choice of materials that almost everything depends; by his/her expertise and intuition in this matter a teacher succeeds or fails initially. This is the opinion expressed by Baldwin (1959). He cautions: "Time, alas, is our enemy. Each failure to find really suitable material makes it more

difficult to gain the willing attention of the class next time" (p. 128).

The final word on the subject of selection will be accorded to L. Smith (1953):

> Children read, through inexperience, whatever comes their way. In a time when children's books are almost a matter of mass production, it is possible that a child may pass from infancy to maturity without encountering one book that will satisfy him in his search for experience and pleasure; that will offer him reality in the place of a shadow of reality. (p. 190)

She does, nevertheless, offer some consolation, in which is implied a challenge, when she observes that "children will defend themselves against encroaching mediocrity if the books of genuine quality are placed within their reach" (p. 190).

In conclusion. In varying degrees of conviction the literature surveyed supports the view that the single most important responsibility of those who would bring children and poetry together is to choose material wisely.

Teaching of Poetry

> How can the bird that is born for joy
> Sit in a cage and sing?

In these lines from Blake's "The Schoolboy" in Songs of Innocence is implied what is perhaps the major key to success for the teacher; it is the teacher who can ensure

the favourable "climate". Harding (1978), Reeves (1958a), and Blackburn (1966) believe this to be so. Harding asserts that, no matter what the method of presentation, in order for the teacher's sharing of poetry to be successful, it "must presuppose the teacher's genuine enthusiasm for the work of literature" (p. 387). Reeves is convinced that "without the teacher's personal enthusiasm for his subject, the prospect is bleak; with enthusiasm it is immense" (p. 10), and it is useless to try to "fake it", for, as Blackburn states, "children are not deceived by the surface attitude of a teacher. The ability to believe lies comes with 'maturity'" (p. 1).

The practice of the teaching of poetry is discussed by Painter (1970) and Haggitt (1967), and the opinions which these two writers express are in agreement. Painter observes that "just as we can never truly 'teach' creative arts, as writing, but can only uncover or ignite the spark, so it also is that we probably cannot 'teach' poetry". What teachers can do, she believes, is to "select poetry to read" and "guide children to poetry" (p. 20). Haggitt is more definite; he allows no "probably" in his statement, for he maintains:

> Poetry is a very sensitive and personal thing; we cannot teach it. We can only present it to children, and hope that our manner of presentation moves them to enjoy it. (p. 112)

It is worthy of note that fifty years ago Seely (1931) was

advising his student teachers to ask themselves precisely what they wanted to achieve with the poetry they read in school and with the pupils who read it with them, and what were some of the means they might employ in bringing about this achievement. Seely believed that if teachers individually came to grips with these two questions, success in the 'teaching' of poetry would be assured. Koch (1973) holds that there is a wide degree of confusion as to what constitutes success in this area; he contends that "what matters for the present is not that the children admire Blake and his achievement, but that each child be able to find a tyger of his own" (p. 27). Hopkins (1972) is convinced that "bringing children and poetry together can be one of the most exciting experiences in a teaching career," and that the reason teachers do not use poetry as often as they might is that they are "afraid of it" and "they were turned off during their own school years by the mere mention of the word poetry" (p. 8).

According to Hill (1979), there is a responsibility which should be assumed by all teachers and she states that responsibility thus:

> If they are to read poems intelligently and choose poems wisely for children, they also need to know how to do the fundamental brainwork. It is a rewarding experience to learn to distinguish good poems from poor ones, to discover rewards in the depths and delights of language when it is discriminatingly used. (p. 108)

Support for Hill's conviction comes from Painter (1970). She

contends that "teachers must put forth an earnest effort to grow in understanding of poetry and its satisfaction for the child". Furthermore, she asserts that if the teacher truly believes in the value of poetry, "he will cultivate a taste for it and turn to it for enjoyment" (p. 24).

In addition to possessing a wide knowledge of poetry, a teacher must adopt a sharing attitude and discover and enjoy poetry together with the children. We must heed the words of Logan and Logan (1967): "Poetry is for enjoyment, not for dissection" (p. 507). In this respect Allen (1967) offers excellent advice:

> Let the child's own experience open the poem or story for him and, conversely, let the poem or story open the child to his own experience. Simply let him live it. Let him grow through literature for a long time before we attempt to teach him how to analyse. Let him open the treasures found in literature at will, not by coercion. (p. 737)

Ciardi (1963), C. D. Lewis (1951), Lucas (1971), and Oster (1979) express opinions in support of this view. Ciardi states:

> The function of poetry, as Horace wrote centuries ago, is to "teach while delighting". Poetry can, and does, utter matters of great moral consequence: that is its teaching, its meaning. But unless the pleasure and delight of poetry come first no real meaning can follow. (p. 242)

He bemoans the fact that school work in poetry too often "hammers away at paraphrasing 'the meaning' of the poem while ignoring its joyful existence as a form" (p. 242).

Lewis advises:

> When we are young and first coming to poetry, our approach should not be a critical one: we must give our heart to poems before we can give our minds to poetry. (p. 4)

He warns against wasting time "comparing when we should be embracing" (p. 4). Lucas reminds us that "the eye grows shortsighted over the microscope" (p. 13), while Oster fears that formal teaching will result in students who treat poems as "analytical observers" when we would prefer that they be "involved participants" (p. 39).

Larrick (1971) views the state of the art more optimistically, for she writes:

> Teachers are emphasizing pleasure, not conformity. Concentration on metrical patterns and rhyme schemes, which used to vivisect verse in earlier generations, has almost disappeared. (p. 49)

This is the type of teacher of whom Logan and Logan (1980) approve when they state that "the teacher who has captured the magic of poetry and is ready to share it with a group of boys and girls is a catalyst who guides them through poetry to creative reading" (p. 209).

The teacher is constantly faced with the difficult task of trying to refrain from imposing his/her opinions and tastes too heavily. Gibran (1971), Frye (1964), and Causley (1966) offer advice. From Gibran:

> You may give them your love but not your thoughts,
> For they have their own thoughts. (p. 18)

Frye's advice is more emphatic:

> In my opinion value-judgements in literature should not be hurried. It does a student little good to be told that A is better than B, especially if he prefers B at the time. He has to feel values for himself, and should follow his individual rhythm in doing so... A sensible teacher or librarian can soon learn how to give guidance to a youth's reading that allows for undeveloped taste and still doesn't turn him into a gourmet or a dyspeptic before his time. (pp. 115,116)

The advice proffered by Causley has the tone of a wise old father's words to a child:

> 'Don't forget', I once heard a training college lecturer say to a group of departing students. 'You're not off to teach dwarfs. They're children'. His warning has haunted me ever since. So have some words of the Czech novelist Karel Capek. 'The young', he wrote, 'are a secret society, and the old have forgotten that they once belonged to it'. (p. 89)

Several writers express concern that young readers in their early years are not developing what Rosenblatt (1980) refers to as "the habit of aesthetic evocation from a text" (p. 393). She calls attention to what she considers to be a serious problem: "The efferent stance... has generally been emphasized throughout the child's experience in the home and in the school, to the neglect of the aesthetic" (p. 389). Chambers (1978) shares this concern, as is exemplified in his discussion of three levels of response to literature. The first level (retelling in the child's own words) and even the second level (discovering the "me") are dealt with by most teachers, he believes. His regret is that children are not being led to the third level of

response, that level when they learn "to take pleasure in the alternative world of the book and to explore why it is as it is" (p. 440). He feels that when children are led by a teacher they go where the teacher leads or remain where the teacher keeps them. He insists that "what we professional people need to learn is that when we talk to children about what we all have read, we should not be interlocutors but contributors (p. 441). A further proponent of the stance assumed by Rosenblatt and Chambers is M. Fisher. Writing in 1980, she emphasizes her position thus:

> A book is a man's creation and can only be read as such. It is our business to introduce him to his readers or his readers to him in such a way that we do not interfere with either party.... let us shut the door and leave child and author together. That is their right. (pp. 19,20)

In setting forth methods of approach to literature, Harding (1978) affirms that the requirements are "availability of a wide variety of appropriate titles, teacher acquaintance with the books, and teacher understanding of the individual child" (p. 383). Harding's conclusion is corroborated by R. Lewis (1971):

> I think there is no formula for getting a child to appreciate poetry or to write poetry. There is no one way of teaching a child or working with a child in this area. It depends on you as a person, your relationship to children as a group and a child in particular. I cannot impose my relationship to children on you. You have to discover what your relationship with a child is and then work from there. (p. 141)

With all due respect for the responsibility of the teacher in the bringing together of children and poetry, Causley (1966) feels compelled to warn against what he refers to as "an excess of reverence"; in the process he dispenses encouragement and consolation. These are his words:

> A good poem is a work of art. This means that, however much it is mauled or mishandled, it is still a good deal tougher and more durable, as well as a good deal tenderer than a lot of people. It will survive, fortunately, even the most zealous and well-meaning assassin who unwittingly does his best to kill what he most loves. (p. 97)

In conclusion. Although teachers and teaching practices come under attack from many of the sources quoted, there is, on the other hand, evidence of optimism. The unanimity of opinion as to what the role of the teacher can be may be summarized thus:

1. to provide a suitable environment;
2. to possess an enthusiasm for, and knowledge of, poetry for children;
3. to make available a judicious selection of that poetry;
4. to ensure that there is ample opportunity for the sharing of poetry;
5. to show respect for the opinions and tastes of the individual child.

Oral Presentation of Poetry

The Danish linguist Jespersen (1933) argues that because print plays such an important part in the lives of educated people they tend to forget that

> language is primarily speech. Many things that have vital importance in speech--stress, pitch, colour of the voice, thus especially those elements which give expression to emotions rather than to logical thinking--disappear in the comparatively rigid medium of writing, or are imperfectly rendered by such means as underlining (italicizing) and punctuation. (p. 17)

It is debatable whether his concern with the predominance of the print medium would assume such proportions today, when so much attention is being accorded to audio visual media, but his emphasis on the importance of speech is indeed valid. Clark (1966) shares his opinion when he writes:

> The reading by grown-ups to children, who, in general, have no considerable reading powers themselves, is of paramount importance. First readings, like first impressions, matter a great deal. The impact of inspired reading on young ears cannot be overstressed; the children should be intrigued from the beginning. (p. 60)

Blackburn (1966) deplores the fact that good poetry is sometimes presented in a way that is "false and inadequate", and that "the falsity lies in the way the poem is read". He contends that "a good poem contains within itself both deep thought and strong feeling", and that it is the responsibility of the reader to use "voice, intelligence and intuition" in its presentation (p. 7). The poetry sharing experience should be a pleasant one for both the reader and

the listeners, whether the reader be adult or child. Burns, Broman, and Wantling (1971) believe that young children reading poetry orally to other members of their class should be led to regard the experience as "enjoyable and purely for the purpose of sharing a delightful poetic experience" (p. 154).

In our associations with young children we need constantly to remind ourselves of Raspanti's belief. Writing in 1970 she asserts:

> The oral nature and, therefore, the aural appeal of poetry satisfies the child's aural sensitivity, capturing him in the net of sound and rhythm long before he can read. (p. 404)

She proceeds with this advice:

> This time of aural receptivity is the time for children to become conscious too of the aural richness of all language, but of the language of poetry in particular. Indeed, if the child does not come to poetry through these initial aural sensations, he may never come at all. (p. 404)

The experience of hearing poetry is crucial to children's discovery of "the hidden melody in the written word", she contends. The child who is deprived of this experience will, in later years, learn all the technical terms, analyze images, and learn to say all the right things about the "art of poetry", but "deaf to the music of words, he will walk lonely among those who hear" (p. 405).

In conclusion. From the literature examined, a consensus of opinion emerges supporting the view that poetry, especially in the early years, must be shared orally in a pleasant, relaxed atmosphere. Delight in the sounds of language should be fostered during the kindergarten to grade three years.

Memorization of Poetry

Required memorization and recitation of poetry has been widely practised, and soundly condemned by many, among them Huck (1979) who describes the practice as "an effective way to kill poetry". Huck does add, however, that children enjoy memorizing favourite poems, "provided it is done voluntarily and that they may select the poem" (p. 375). This is a view shared by Wilner (1979) in her discussion of the amazing success of her school poetry troupe. She relates that the experience taught her that "children like, when they are the initiators of the idea, to memorize" (p. 89).

It is the contention of Duff (1944) that in the early years the memory is both "receptive and tenacious, and if it is stored with 'images of magnificence' there will be less room for what is cheap and ugly" (p. 77). Again, in 1955 she writes, "all real poetry teaches some of its meanings by its very rememberableness" (p. 149).

Regarding the subject of memorization, Painter (1970) quotes several notables, among them Sir Winston Churchill,

who regarded the memorizing of literature as the most useful of all his school learnings. She concludes that there probably is no standard answer to the question of memorization because "many people tend to view the matter more from the standpoint of adults than of children" (p. 69).

On the subject of whether a teacher should memorize poetry, Painter states her firm conviction in the affirmative, and for these reasons:

> Many individuals find eye contact with listeners possible and desirable when no book intervenes.... Perhaps one of the most practical reasons for the teacher's memorizing is the fact that some poems are then instantly available. There is no rushing to find copies. (pp. 69,70)

When asked whether children should learn poetry by heart, Reeves (1958a) replies, "the ideal answer is No, but they should <u>know</u> a good many poems by heart" (p. 27). This can be accomplished, he feels, but only in a situation where the children have appreciated and enjoyed the poetry to which they have been exposed; in such instances it would be an automatic and unconscious process.

"Learning by heart should be learning by heart, and 'heart' is the operative word," asserts Blackburn (1966). He acknowledged the fact that teachers who, as children, were subjected to mechanical memorization will likely regard the practice with "acute suspicion", but points out that "the abuse whether of drinking alcohol, climbing mountains, or memorizing poems does not disprove the

potential value of such activities" (p. 23). He then proceeds to state what he considers to be ample justification for encouraging children to memorize poetry:

> Poetry is the expression of the thought and feeling of people who have thought and felt very deeply about our human situation and expressed their discoveries with exceptional fluency and power. There must be some virtue in learning their words--by heart. (p. 24)

In conclusion. There is general agreement that it is not memorization per se that has been responsible for turning children away from poetry; rather it is the required memorization of designated poems that has created, and continues to create, a distaste for poetry. Children will commit to memory, often unconsciously, poems which they particularly enjoy. Because children differ in their tastes, they should be allowed to decide for themselves which poems they will learn "by heart".

Children as Poets

Much discussion focuses on the question as to whether children should write poetry. Sandburg (1970) has as his answer, "Yes, whenever they feel like it". He defends his stance in these words: "If nothing else happens they will find it a training for writing and speaking in other fields of human work and play" (p. 170). Fisher and Terry (1977), Martin (1966), and B. Tucker (1973) agree. It is observed

by Fisher and Terry that the writing of poetry during the early years needs to be encouraged, expanded, and developed as "another kind of imaginative writing". It should be viewed as an "alternative way for children to express their personal reactions, feelings and observations" (p. 227). Martin feels that young children "have a sense of words as things to play with", and in addition to listening to and repeating rhymes, they like to "modify the ones they know and to improvise others" (p. 101). Isolating children's writing of poetry from the general writing of children is a difficult task, Tucker contends, for

> poetry is a more appropriate vehicle for the expression of some subjects, moods and attitudes and prose perhaps more appropriate for others since prose tends to expand and poetry to compress. (p. 22)

When queried as to what age would be a suitable one at which a child might start writing poetry, Sandburg (1970) replies "any age" because "poems are made of words and when a child is learning to talk, to shape words on its tongue, is a proper time for it to speak poetry--if it can" (p. 170). Sandburg's view is shared by the Opies (1959), Chukovsky (1968), Muir (1973), Logan and Logan (1967), and J. S. Smith (1967) and has been documented in the section The Need for Poetry (pp. 17-23).

One of the most important methods in stimulating children to write poetry is, in the opinion of Groff (1966), to "increase their familiarity with all kinds of poetic

expression by reading a wide range of poetry to them" (p. 462). He is very harsh in his condemnation of those who hold an opposing belief in this matter, for he asserts:

> Staggering the imagination are suggestions of how children can be taught to write poetry, the most demanding of all literary forms, before they have learned to understand what it is, to react to it, and to distinguish it from prose, before they have learned to appreciate either prose or poetry. The growth of this practice is explained by the unfortunate belief, which schools perpetuate, that any writing put together in a certain distinguishable form can thereby be called poetry. Hence the flood of execrable doggerel that goes under the name "creative writing". (p. 463)

Martin (1966) expresses concern about the relationship between the two directions which can be perceived in the young child's writing. These directions he calls "themes" and "games". The themes are important, as they explore the regions of the daily lives of the children and of their "imaginative wanderings". He voices his concern thus:

> If, at this age, they try to treat their themes as games and use rhymes and marked rhythms and stanza-forms, they destroy the symbolic themes which are the mainspring of their writing. Their control of language is not good enough to incorporate what they really want to say into formal patterns, so the rhymes take control and produce, on the whole, trivial writing in which the sound dictates the sense. (p. 101)

This attitude is one with which Koch (1970) concurs. He states his considered opinion, based on wide experience of working with children, in these words: "The effort of finding rhymes stops the free flow of their feelings and associations, and poetry gives way to sing-song" (p. 8).

He is, however, a fervent advocate of the practice of poetry-writing by children, and believes that they should be taken seriously because "children have a natural talent for writing poetry and anyone who teaches them should know that" (p. 25). He bases this belief on his conviction that "the power to see the world in a strong, fresh and beautiful way is a possession of all children. And the desire to express that vision is a strong creative and educational force" (p. 46). Another poet who has done considerable work with children, often in workshop settings, makes this observation: "Like gifted poets, children have a way of looking at the world around them and then letting their imagination take over" (Larrick, 1968, p. 4).

We should not try to impose techniques; it is crucial that the children's writing bear the stamp of their own individual personalities. According to Martin (1966), our duty is "to free the channels for the imagination to impose its own form on the writing", and she contends that, if children have had wide exposure to good literature, "the forms and language patterns of these will be in their inner ears, and will be used in the representations they make when they write" (pp. 105,106).

The evaluation of poetry written by children must be approached "with a more gentle hand" than that used to assess prose is the view advocated by Stewig (1980). This is consistent with the belief of Martin (1966), who also adds that "children do want someone to read what they have

written and to talk to them about it--about its content, not about its form" (p. 106).

On this subject of evaluation, Popper (1976) and Sandburg (1970) share similar views. To the query as to whether a child should have praise for his work, Sandburg suggests that

> the child should be told that poetry is first of all for the poet, that great poets usually die saying their best work is not written. Perhaps it is wise for every child to be told that it is a mistake for either a child or a grown-up accomplished artist to be satisfied with any past performance. (p. 170)

These words appear in Popper's autobiography:

> It is through the attempt to see objectively the work we have done--that is to see it critically--and to do it better, through the interaction between our actions and their objective results that we can transcend our talents and ourselves. (p. 196)

Of the positive effects which the writing of poetry has on children, Hazzard (1979), Koch (1970), and Martin (1966) express similar points of view. Hazzard feels that one of the most important benefits which accrued to the children who participated in his poetry-writing sessions was a realization on their part that "poetry, a medium which is so often perceived as precious and something to be held at a distance and clothed with dignity could be a congenial and, in the best sense, an everyday thing" (p. 127). Koch, also, claims this as a beneficial outcome of his work with children; in addition he describes the educational advantages

in this manner:

> Writing poetry makes children feel happy, capable, and creative. It makes them feel more open to understanding and appreciating what others have written (literature). It even makes them want to know how to spell and say things correctly (grammar). (p. 53)

In conclusion. General agreement exists as to the poetic nature of the language of children, and to the fact that, given encouragement, they will try their hands at composition. The activity of composing, however, should not be expected to produce measurable results. The experiences of those who have done considerable work in this area attest to the educational, cultural, and recreational values of the exercise, and, most important, to the self-fulfilling nature of the experience in the lives of the children.

CHAPTER 3

POETRY: ESTABLISHING A BASIS FOR SELECTION

Introduction

Poetry is capable of giving pleasure, and of being understood, on different levels, and of communicating different messages on each of these levels. It does this in language that is carefully chosen and disciplined. Langer (1953) insists that

> a poem always creates the symbol of a feeling, not by recalling objects which would elicit the feeling itself, but by weaving a pattern of words--words charged with meaning, and colored by literary associations--akin to the dynamic pattern of the feeling. (p. 230)

De la Mare (1957) states his view thus:

> Every fine poem says much in little. It packs into the fewest possible words--by means of their sound, their sense, and their companionship--a wide or rare experience. (p. 736)

Every poetry critic, whether self- or publicly-proclaimed, must have some underlying concepts as to the elements which combine to product the effect of which Langer and de la Mare write. Equally, it is wise to consider the words of Nathan (1981) as he discusses the theme of poetry criticism and democracy. It is his belief that "the question of good government as well as good poetry involves an historic perspective.... Minority, unique opinions must be tolerated.

if only because time may prove the opinion had merit" (p. 58). Auslander and Hill (1927) are in agreement, and, to support their contention, refer to Blake, who was "too different from his time to be immediately accepted" yet he was the first of the poets of the late eighteenth century to "make poems startlingly simple, beautiful, and natural" and that "perhaps in his madness or his great sanity he walked close to truth" (p. 232).

The teacher is required to be a critic, for, as Baldwin (1959) observes, "if one is to progress at all in the teaching of the Arts one must be not merely an observer: one must have an observable viewpoint" (p. 27). That 'observable viewpoint', which is evident every time a poem or a volume of poetry is presented to a class, is only as good as the background of knowledge and experience which produced it. One way of increasing one's perception in this regard is by making a study of the poems written by those poets whose reputation for writing the type of poetry which children like to hear and to read has not diminished over the years. The teacher who is completely familiar and at ease with such a body of fine poetry will be in a position to share it with children, and to use it as a standard by which to judge other poetry for them.

This chapter will consider the qualities which characterize good poetry for young children, the forms in which this poetry appears, and the subject matter with which the poet deals. The discussion will draw heavily on

the comments of authorities in the field and will be illustrated with examples from specific poems. Consideration will also be given to an evaluation of anthologies. By these means it is hoped that criteria will be established whereby the teacher will be aided in the selection of materials which will comprise a well-balanced collection of poetry for use with young children.

Specifically, the establishing of a basis for selection will be dealt with in the following sections:

The Elements of Poetry for Children

Rhythm

Sound

Imagery

Figurative Language

The Forms of Poetry for Children

The Subject Matter of Poetry for Children

Anthologies of Poetry for Children

It must always be borne in mind that, important as poetic techniques are, they are not valuable in isolation; rather, relationships must be explored. Ciardi (1959) reminds us that "only a poem can illustrate how a poem works" (p. 249) for

> human-insight of the poem, and the technicalities of the poetic devices are inseparable. Each feeds the other. This interplay is the poem's meaning, a matter not of <u>what it means</u> (nobody can say entirely what a good poem means) but <u>how it means</u>--a process one can come much closer to discussing. (p. 256)

The Elements of Good Poetry for Children

Rhythm

Young children are naturally rhythmical, and by exposing them early to rhythm in language, we are "conforming to the general order of the universe" (Hazard, 1944, p. 81). The poet uses rhythm to enhance what the words express. Dennis Lee's "Windshield Wipers", Robert Louis Stevenson's "The Swing", and Walter de la Mare's "The Horseman" are examples of the total impact of the rhythm on the idea of the poem, as indicated by the title. De la Mare's "Tired Tim" shows how word, mood, and meaning become fused in a poem: "Too tired to yawn, too tired to sleep:/ Poor tired Tim! It's sad for him."

When the rhythm of the poem changes it is a signal that a different element is being introduced. Phyllis McGinley contrasts the passage of time in "Lengths of Time" with the reminder "That time can/ Hurrylikethis/ Or plod, plod, slow." Myra Cohn Livingston indicates the end of the rally in "Ping-Pong" thus: "singsong/mishmash/ King Kong/ bong". In "74th Street" Livingston relates the story of the little girl's efforts to learn how to roller-skate, awkwardly and painfully; the single-word last line "again" tells the reader that, in spite of failure, she is determined to learn. Patricia Hubbell depicts the tread of the rooster in the "The Dawn Cock" in these opening lines: "Proud cock holds morning in his beak,/ Step, peck,/ Step, peck." The hard consonant sounds and the short vowels together with the

length of the lines help to create the strutting rhythm characteristic of the rooster.

Sound

The concept of sound in poetry will be discussed with reference to rhyme, alliteration, assonance, onomatopoeia, repetition, and coined words.

A major contributor to the musical quality of poetry which children so enjoy is the end rhyme. This accounts for much of the popularity of such poems as "Brother" by Mary Ann Hoberman and much of the work of Ogden Nash--"The Fly" and "The Octopus", for example.

It isn't only because young children relate to the predicament of "Godfrey Gordon Gustavus Gore", but the alliteration produced by the repetition of the initial hard "g" sounds, also contributes to the enjoyment. The "gushes" and "hushes", "flitter-twitters", and "whitely whirs" in Gwendolyn Brooks' "Cynthia in the Snow"; the ever-popular "splishes and sploshes and slooshes and sloshes" made by Susie's galoshes in Rhoda Bacmeister's "Galoshes" are examples of the effect of assonance. In his poem "The Pickety Fence", David McCord has created a complete poem by using a skillful combination of words to imitate the sound of a picket fence being hit by a stick, thereby providing an excellent example of onomatopoeia.

Repetition of a word, a phrase, a line, or a stanza is a technique used by poets to create a certain desired

effect. Consider the "sure--sure--sure" and "at all, at all, at all" in de la Mare's "Some one", the "Round about/And round about/ And round about I go--" of Milne's "Busy", and the refrain "The gobble-uns'll git you ef you don't watch out" of James Whitcomb Riley's "Little Orphant Annie".

Children are very familiar with the practice of coining words; they do it often in jumping-rope jingles for instance. Therefore, they readily related to Behn's "seagulls and eagulls", Farjeon's cat as a "slathery, slithery, hisser", and Conrad Aiken's cat as "whiskerious". A combination of coined words has produced Laura Richards' delightful "Eletelephony" and Lewis Carroll's "Jabberwocky".

Imagery

Poems for children must employ well-defined sensory images--sight, sound, smell, taste, touch. The symbol referents should be generally within the predicted knowledge base of the children, yet consideration should be given to the need to expand and extend the vicarious experience and to introduce innovative material. The actual sensory experience is undoubtedly the most effective and, if pleasant, the most desirable; poetry can not substitute for it. What the poet can do is recall to the reader's mind that past experience, extend it, and help the child to see it in a new light. "Words are magical; those that burst up into images are miracles" (Behn, 1969, p. 163).

Children enjoy poems which 'paint pictures', and many

have experienced the joy of having a new pet. Aileen Fisher's "New Puppy" presents an interesting picture, for: "He's the wiggliest/ bundle of wiggles/ you ever/ could hope to see."

Although some children may not have seen a skyscraper, they will be able to respond to the poet's request to "Tickle the sun" in Dennis Lee's "Skyscraper".

Whispering, a very commonplace activity, assumes a different perspective when one experiences "Whispers" by Myra Cohn Livingston. Not only does one 'hear', but the poet captures other sensory qualities. One feels the whispers when they "tickle", "blow", and are "soft as skin"; one sees them as the "words curl in".

A totally different concept of sound is conveyed in Valerie Worth's "cow", for "Her hoofs/ Thump/ Like dropped/ Rocks".

The senses of smell and taste are both appealed to in "Crunch and Lick" by Dorothy Aldis; it's easy for children to relate to the experience of eating a chocolate-coated ice-cream cone when it starts "To leak and trickle/ Down our chins." Similarly, in "pie", Valerie Worth so presents the process of making the apple pie "That we could happily/ Eat it up, even/Before it is cooked".

Anyone who has ever tried to handle a fish knows why Carl Sandburg refers to the baby fresh from the bath as "our fish child". Whether one has any intention of stepping on a sleeping snake does not detract from Jack Prelutsky's

warning not to do so "because/ his jaws/ might be awake".

Many poems appeal to several of the senses, as is seen in "A Naughty Boy" by John Keats, a poem written for the amusement of the poet's young sister, and which has appeal to all of the senses except that of smell.

Figurative Language

Because of the compactness of the language of poetry, figurative language is employed by the poet, thereby allowing him/her to make comparisons, and in a manner which permits the saying of one thing in terms of another.

When comparisons are made using the connecting words like and as, the writer is using simile. An example is seen in Tennyson's "The Eagle" when the poet describes the fall of the eagle as "like a thunderbolt". In Ciardi's "Mummy Slept Late and Daddy Fixed Breakfast" the waffles are "like gravel pudding".

By using metaphor the poet speaks of the person, place, or thing as if it were that particular object. In Vachel Lindsay's figurative description of the phases of the moon, "The Moon's the North Wind's Cooky", the cookie begins as whole and round, ends in crumbs, is replaced by another which meets the same fate. For Myra Cohn Livingston in "Winter and Summer", winter is "an ice-cream treat,/ all frosty white and cold to eat."

Personification is the practice of referring to inanimate objects as if they were living beings. "Summer

grass aches and whispers" in Carl Sandburg's "Summer Grass"; "the wind talks/ with its mouth wide open" in Adrien Stoutenberg's "The Storm".

It must be noted that the children in the kindergarten to grade three age group have not as yet reached the formal operations stage of mental development as set forth by Piaget (1976). Figurative language will of necessity be used only in relation to their experiential background.

The Forms of Poetry for Children

Most children in the age group under consideration here have undeveloped tastes, hence the obligation of the adult to introduce poetry in a variety of forms.

All children enjoy a story, so it isn't surprising that some of their favourite poems are of the narrative variety. Narrative poems may assume different forms, the sole requirement being that they tell a story. One of the best-loved is Clement Moore's "The Night Before Christmas", another Alfred Noyes' "When Daddy Fell Into The Pond". The narrative poem need not be long; Theodore Roethke tells the story "The Boy and the Bush" in ten lines. The story poem that has been adapted and set to music, the ballad, is very popular with young children. Some ballads appear in illustrated single-poem editions; Peter Spier's interpretation of "The Fox Went Out on a Chilly Night" is one example.

Although strict definition of the lyric is impossible

it may be stated that it is subjective, characterized by imaginative, melodious, and emotional qualities, and creates for the reader a unique, unified impression. Much of the best poetry for children is lyrical, as seen in William Blake's "The Lamb", Langston Hughes' "Poem", and Christina Rossetti's "The Wind". It is very often only part of a lyric which haunts the memory, as in Blake's "Little lamb, who made thee?"

The limerick, a particularly popular type of nonsense verse, follows a definite pattern of composition: five anapestic lines, the first, second, and fifth of which consist of three metrical feet, while the third and fourth are made up of two; those lines with the same number of feet are also the rhyming lines. While the definite origin of the form is not known, it reached the peak of its vogue when Edward Lear's Book of Nonsense Verse was published in 1846. Instant popularity characterized its original appearance, and the reception accorded the limericks of contemporary writers (David McCord and William Jay Smith, to cite just two) bears testimony to the continued popularity of the limerick form.

A wide acquaintance with free verse is essential if children are to be free of the conception that poetry must rhyme. This form relies on rhythm and cadence for its poetic qualities, and while it often looks different on the printed page, it will sound very much like other poetry when shared orally. In her three volumes Small Poems, More

Small Poems, and Still More Small Poems, Valerie Worth presents us with fine examples of free verse that is deceptively simple, in accord with the everyday things which are the focus of her compositions. In "safety pin", for instance, she writes of this familiar object when it is closed as "The silver/ Image/ Of some/ Small fish". Most children will find themselves endeared to the form after they have experienced Myra Cohn Livingston's "Revenge", which begins: "When I find out/ who took/ the last cooky".

During recent years haiku has received enthusiastic attention, particularly in the schools. Henderson (1967) notes that a lack of understanding has too often led to abuse. He insists that it is important to realize that, until children reach the formal operations stage of mental development as proposed by Piaget (1976), they will not appreciate this form. Henderson suggests that teachers use whatever method they find effective to make the following points:

> a. that a haiku is intimately concerned with nature (In more formal words, that some aspect of nature is an integral part of any haiku--even haiku in English.)
> b. that a haiku is not necessarily wholly about nature. (Strictly speaking, a haiku is not about nature at all. It is rather about some moment of human emotion.) (p. 49)

He reminds the reader that the 'syllables' used for the 5-7-5- count used as a general rule in classical Japanese haiku are not English syllables, and then he explains the

nature of the Japanese syllable (p, 14). It is the opinion of the writer that haiku should be used with great discrimination in the kindergarten to grade three years.

The writer seriously questions the application of the term poetry to the form known as concrete--the composition whereby the message is presented via letters (sometimes, but not always, in words), in a combination which suggests the pictorial representation of the thought. Much depends on the degree of 'concreteness'. David McCord's "The Grasshopper" retains the oral and aural nature of poetry, whereas Robert Froman's "Candy bar" has visual appeal, but would be of limited value to the non-reader.

The Subject Matter of Poetry for Children

Genuine poetry has strong emotional appeal, but it deals with subjects and ideas, and, consequently, appeals also to the intellect. From where is this subject matter derived? Brett (1981) believes that

> no less than prose it draws its subject matter from the whole life, and its appeal is to intellect, emotion, and imagination. Laughter, as well as tears, lie within its province; thoughts and feelings are equally evoked; imaginative stimulation is its natural concomitant. (p. 175)

Blishen (1963) affirms that the subject of poetry may be "anything whatever that can be expressed by human beings with a sense of words and of rhythm, a sharp eye, a keen ear, an inquiring mind and an open heart" (p. 8). W. J. Smith

(1976) expresses deep concern that "most recent collections of poetry for the young appear to concentrate on the realistic poem that offers little dimension to the imagination and no rhythmic assurance or consolation." He goes on to state that a lot of the volumes are illustrated simply with black-and-white photographs; this he deems significant "for often most of the poems they contain are verbal photographs of ordinary experience" (p. 42).

Some of the subjects which appeal to young children and which have been dealt with successfully in poetry will be discussed in this section.

The self is of perpetual interest to the child, and in "Happy Birthday To Me", Eve Merriam reveals a new concept of the old idea of growing up. The last two lines state: "My arms are growing down!/ See my last year's sleeves?"

Family receives much celebration in poetry, from the positive attitude to parents expressed in "Andre" by Gwendolyn Brooks, when Andre, requested in a dream to choose the ideal parents, was surprised to find "They were the ones I always had", to an older brother offering to sell his "crying and spying young sister" in Shel Silverstein's "For Sale". The flexibility of feelings for a sibling are depicted in Eve Merriam's "Sometimes"; there are days when one feels like sharing, but then, on other occasions, "I don't want to give my little brother/ A single thing except/ A shove".

The weather is a continual area of interest. Patricia

Hubbell's "Thunder Ride" voices the wonder of the child thus: "I wonder/ If thunder/ Is under/ Or over/ That cloud?"

Celebrations are happy times which children like to share in poetry. The excitement which surrounds the anticipation of opening all those secret packages is captured by Aileen Fisher in "Christmas Secrets" and it culminates in "Hurry, Christmas, get here first,/ get here fast... before we burst."

Animal pets is a major subject of interest for this age group. In "Dogs" Marchette Chute describes dogs of all shapes and sizes "And some are little bits of fluff/ And have no shape at all." Karla Kuskin, in "I Have a Lion", relates her experience with three pets that she "had" and lost, but now ... "I have a lion/ ... He never will slip out and leave me./ He's stuffed."

Everyday experiences receive much interesting treatment in poetry, as is attested to by, for instance, David McCord's "Every Time I Climb a Tree"--a truly enjoyable pastime, but "Though climbing may be good for ants/ It isn't awfully good for pants". In "Conversation" the same poet depicts the little girl who must go to bed, but doesn't want to--a subject which William Blake writes of in "Nurse's Song": "No, no, let us play, for it is yet day/ And we cannot go to sleep". Blake's lyrical treatment contrasts with the conversational tone of the McCord poem.

Times and seasons is a matter of concern for the young child. "The last snow is going,/ Brooks are overflowing,"

is Harry Behn's interpretation of the change of season in "Spring". In her poem "When", Dorothy Aldis refers to February as the time "When winter lifts a little bit/ And spring peeks through the crack." Another change of season is the time of back-to-school, and for Everett Anderson in Lucille Clifton's "September" it is a time of confusion: "I went to school every day last year,/ why do I have to go again?"

Mystery appears in poetry as it does in other forms of literature. Karla Kuskin's book of poems Any Me I Want To Be appeals to that love of mystery; sometimes the reader has to wait until the end of the poem to find out who is speaking, at other times the reader is left to guess the identity of the speaker. De la Mare's "Some One" creates a different type of suspense, as the reader is left with "So I know not who came knocking,/ At all, at all, at all."

The feelings of childhood--the anger, the happiness, the fear, the sadness--all are reflected in poetry. The anger which the young child feels on being questioned incessantly by grown-ups is expressed in Marci Ridlon's "Question", and this anger is voiced in the final lines: "See if I ever/ Come home again". The frustration with omnipotent adults is the theme of "Protest" by Felice Holman, and it is shown in: "How can I tell them/ that what they want/ I do not?" Happiness abounds in Margaret Hillert's "I'm Singing", as she expresses the reason for her happiness in "Because God made the little bird/ And spring and song and

me." The young child is interested in knowing the reasons for the different and often confusing feelings which he/she experiences, and it is this which Dorothy Aldis deals with in "Tell Me" culminating in "WHY/ Do I ask why?"

Humour is especially appealing to young children and the subjects referred to above are quite often treated in a humourous manner. Indeed, most poets have written some humourous poetry. The names of Edward Lear and Lewis Carroll have become linked to the nonsense poem, and Laura E. Richards' Tirra Lirra, first published in 1902, is still in print. The humour is provided not simply by the characters and incidents but by the coined words and names: Mrs. Snipkin, Mrs. Wobblechin, Phrisky Phrog, Queen Wolly-potump, pollothywogs, jigglety-joggle, and telephong. These account for the 'staying power' of Mrs. Richards' poetry. Modern day poets such as John Ciardi, N. M. Bodecker, and Jack Prelutsky, have all written successfully in a humourous vein.

Anthologies of Poetry for Children

Writing in 1953, Jarrell describes the typical anthologist as "a sort of Gallup Poll with connections" and comments that one finds it difficult to understand the reasons for the inclusion of certain poems whether it is "because he likes it, because his acquaintances tell him he ought to, or because he went to high school with the poet". He

contends that "anthologies are, ideally, an essential species of criticism" (p. 171). Yet, twenty years later, Townsend (1974) describes poetry written for children since 1945 as "unexciting"; he's convinced that "much of the most valuable recent work has been done editorially, in compiling anthologies and also in making selections for young readers from the work of individual poets" (p. 301).

The 'qualifications' of a good anthologist are discussed by L. Smith (1953). She suggests that, "just as it requires an artist to select the objects and then arrange them if a still life is to give pleasure to the eye", so perhaps it takes a poet to compile a good anthology (p. 101). Whether the anthologist is a poet may not be too important; what is mandatory is that the anthologist be a lifelong reader of poetry, for, as Reeves (1958b) writes, "the qualities that one looks for in children's verse are still ... best shown in the things that do endure in children's poems--nursery rhymes and the best of Walter de la Mare, for example" (p. 13). This presupposes a poetry reader, and, according to De la Mare (1957), a 'rereader':

> At every reading of a poem--though it may have been familiar from early childhood--some hitherto delicacy of rhythm or intonation may be revealed: new shades of meaning show themselves; and even difficulties may become apparent which were before unheeded. Indeed what is read on the printed page is so many words; they may mean much or little to the reader; but in either case it is he alone who out of them can create a <u>poem</u>, and therefore <u>his</u> poem. And this poem changes for him, as he himself changes with the years. (p. 477)

Ciardi (1959) and Townsend (1980) share de la Mare's view. Ciardi affirms that, because poetry is a dynamic, living thing, one experiences it as one does life itself. He maintains that

> one is never done with it: every time he looks he sees something new, and it changes even as he watches. And that very sense of continuity in fluidity is one of the kinds of knowledge, one of the ways of knowing, that only the arts can teach, poetry foremost among them. (p. 153)

It is Townsend's belief that

> the best children's books are infinitely rereadable; the child can come back to them at increasing ages and, even as a grownup, still find new sources of enjoyment. Some books, a few books, need never be grown away from; they can always be shared with children and with the child within. (p. 36)

Blishen (1963) uses the words "alarming", "pleasant", "terrifying", and "very agreeable" to describe his task as anthologist; people who collect things because these items give them pleasure find it difficult to choose a small number for display. He considers it his duty to point out that his anthology is a "gathering", that when a poem has given its share of pleasure, it will continue with its even more important work of making the reader "impatient for more" (p. 6).

L. Smith (1953) is of the conviction that "the satisfaction we gain from an anthology is in proportion to the fusion in its mating of the critical with the creative mind"

(p. 101).

When selecting an anthology certain questions concerning it need to be posed. It is the opinion of the writer that, if the questions listed below can be answered in the affirmative, that choice will be a good one.

1. Has the anthologist fulfilled his/her stated or implied purpose?

2. Are the selections of a consistent high quality?

3. Is there a balance between the old favourites and the good contemporary poems? (The answer to this question will depend on the anthologist's stated purpose.)

4. Will the poems in this volume appeal to the age group under consideration?

5. Are illustrations and format appropriate for both the poems and the age group?

6. Is the system of indexing and classification adequate for ready location of a poem?

7. Is the number of poets and poems sufficiently large?

Many poetry books for children are arranged so that poems on a similar subject appear together. Reeves (1958a) considers this practice to be "a mistake" because "it fosters the idea that the main thing about a poem is its subject"

whereas it is very important for children to realize that "every poem exists in its own right and for its own reasons" (pp. 47,48). It is the opinion of the writer that a subject arrangement need not have the adverse effect of which Reeves writes; the quality of the poetry should be able to speak for itself, regardless of its physical placement.

In Conclusion

A thorough acquaintance with the body of poetry for young children which has stood the test of time and with the work of the best of the contemporary poets is essential for any adult who endeavours to bring children and poetry together.

CHAPTER 4

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

Many young children in the kindergarten to grade three years are being deprived of the heritage of great poetry which is theirs and of its potential contribution to their education. This unrealized potential is, in part, the result of a reluctance on the part of teachers to make optimal use of poetry in the school life of the child. There are many reasons for this reluctance, foremost among them being the inadequacy both of their exposure to good poetry for children and of their professional preparation in this genre of literature. Furthermore, the content of the reading texts which are prescribed for the use of children in these grades constitutes a meagre poetry experience.

This study was designed to fulfill a threefold purpose. First, it was aimed at examining the literature related to the subject of poetry in the education of the young child in order to establish a rationale for the according of a prominent place to poetry in the first four years of the child's school life. Second, it was directed to the examination of criteria for judging the quality of poetry for young children, thereby facilitating access to high quality poetry for the use of children and teachers. The third aspect of the purpose was to compile an annotated bibliography of selected poetry

and to suggest some activities in which teachers and children might participate while using these poems.

The literature was surveyed in an attempt to find answers to the following questions:

(a) What is the nature of poetry for children?
(b) What standards should be applied to the selection of poems?
(c) Do children have preferences in their reading of poetry?
(d) Should children be required to memorize and recite poetry?
(e) Should children write poetry?
(f) How important is the role of the teacher?
(g) Is poetry necessary in the education of the young child?

The answers which emerged were used as a basis by which to establish criteria for judging the quality of poetry. These criteria were then illustrated with examples from specific poems. The above objectives culminated in the compilation of an annotated bibliography of selected poetry to be used with children in the primary grades, together with a list of suggestions to the teacher as to their prospective use in the classroom.

The books and periodical articles examined were identified through the use of the appropriate standard bibliographic

tools and the references cited reflect a representative sampling of opinions on the subject under study and published in North America and Great Britain during the period 1931 - 1981.

The compilation of the annotated list of selected materials was effected by using the following steps:

1. Retrospective selection aids were consulted in order to determine which volumes of poetry have stood the test of time. Current reviewing sources were used to locate citations of more recent titles.

2. Current reviewing sources published outside of North America were consulted. As the list was to be confined to materials which were procurable in the United States and Canada, it was decided to delete from the list of selection aids all those titles published outside these two countries. (Volumes of poetry published elsewhere in the world, or in another language and translated into English, would appear in the American and Canadian reviewing tools.)

3. Items which received favourable reviews were examined.

4. Annotations were written for each item deemed suitable for inclusion in the selected list.

5. The list was subdivided and placed in alphabetical order by author or compiler under the headings Nursery

Rhymes, and Poetry for Young Children.

Suggestions to the teacher were, in some instances, the result of reading in a wide selection of books and periodicals to which the writer was directed by consulting the standard bibliographic tools. Ideas which the writer adopted or adapted have been duly credited. All other suggestions are those of the writer. All suggestions have been titled, and arranged in alphabetical order.

The annotated list of recommended poems prepared by the writer was an attempt to familiarize teachers with the available selection of good poetry for young children. The list is not, nor was it intended to be, exhaustive. While every effort was made to include all those poets who have made a significant contribution to the body of poetry for young children, no attempt was made to list all of the work of any given poet. This list includes only those print materials which may be procured in Canada or the United States. It is also restricted to materials in the English language.

The suggestions to teachers are supplied to help the teacher who feels ill-at-ease in using poetry. The writer is not implying that a teacher should follow any or all of these suggestions slavishly; rather it is hoped that each teacher will adopt or adapt the suggestion which meets his or her requirements in a given situation and with a specific child or group of children.

The study was arranged in two parts. Part One consisted

of four chapters, the first of which provided a general introduction to the subject--statement of the problem, need for the study, purpose, objectives, limitations, and methodology. A review of the related literature was the focus of chapter two, and it was reported under these headings: The Nature of Poetry for Children, Children's Poetry Preferences, The Need for Poetry, The Selection of Poetry, The Teaching of Poetry, The Oral Presentation of Poetry, The Memorization of Poetry, and Children as Poets. Chapter three provided an in-depth discussion of the elements of good poetry for children and suggested criteria for judging and selecting, drawing heavily on examples from specific works for the purpose of illustration. The present chapter contains a summary of the study, together with recommendations based on the findings.

Part Two, designed as a booklet for the use of the classroom teacher, was divided into two sections. Section One, an annotated bibliography of selected titles, was further subdivided under the headings Nursery Rhymes, and Poetry for Young Children. With the exception of the two adult reference volumes, which have been annotated, full bibliographic information only has been supplied for the Nursery Rhymes volumes. Some suggestions to assist the teacher in bringing children and poetry together was the subject of Part Two, Section Two. Further information of value to the teacher has been appended under the titles "Poetry Awards", "Selection Aids", and "Sources of Materials

Referred to in Part Two".

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the writer makes the following recommendations.

It is recommended that:

1. the annotated bibliography which appears here be updated at two-year intervals by a person or persons appointed by the Department of Education;

2. moneys be supplied by the Department of Education to place the initial poetry collection in the school libraries of the province;

3. additions of new materials be acquired by using the annually budgeted school library funds;

4. courses in children's literature, of which poetry is a major component, be made compulsory in the preparation of primary and elementary teachers;

5. teachers be encouraged to share through professional publications other ideas which, in their personal experience, have proved successful in bringing children and poetry together.

It is further recommended that, if the execution of the above recommendations meets with a reasonable degree of

success, the school year 1986 - 1987 be designated as an opportune time for a graduate student in the Faculty of Education at Memorial University to conduct a survey of children's poetry preferences in the elementary schools of the province.

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PART II

AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY OF SELECTED POEMS WITH SUGGESTIONS FOR THEIR USE WITH KINDERGARTEN TO GRADE THREE CHILDREN

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SECTION 1

AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY OF POEMS

Introduction

Possibly the single most important responsibility of those who would bring children and poetry together is to choose material wisely. The annual accumulations of new material, added to the previously published volumes, increases the quantity of available materials to substantial proportions. This proliferation of materials, ranging from mediocre to excellent, requires of the prospective user a high degree of selectivity.

Undoubtedly the best method of selection is firsthand examination. Unfortunately, however, several circumstances mitigate against such a practice, foremost among which are access to the materials for examination by the selector and the time required for conscientious evaluation.

There are many selection tools which can assist in the selection process, and these tools may be divided into three categories. First, there are simple locator tools; for the classroom teacher these will consist mainly of publishers' catalogues. They contain bibliographic data and sometimes descriptive annotations, but seldom do they include critical evaluations. Second, there are reviewing tools which publish reviews and evaluations by qualified professionals. Reviews in periodicals aim to evaluate new materials as they

are published, and annual accumulations of such critical works contribute largely to the contents of the retrospective selection aids (See APPENDIX B). Third, there is the type of selection aid which is presented here. The annotated bibliography of selected poetry materials which follows is the result of the writer's having used the types of aids described above, plus personal examination of each individual volume. The annotations are descriptive; appearance on this selected list constitutes a favourable evaluation and recommendation.

The nursery rhymes, which the school-aged child will be familiar with at least orally, are available in a variety of interpretations. Full bibliographic information is supplied, but annotations are given for the two adult reference volumes only.

No attempt has been made to assign age or grade levels; the writer feels that the judicious use of the materials listed will result in each child's being able to find some poetry which will 'speak to' him or her. Any volume that has been judged to be appropriate solely for teacher use has been so designated in the annotation.

There exists an abundance of great poetry which a child can enjoy spontaneously and interpret in his or her own way, and it matters not whether that poetry was written for a child audience. Therefore, it behooves all who are entrusted with the guidance and nurture of young minds to ensure that at least a representative sampling of such great poetry is

made available.

The aim of this bibliography is to provide assistance to classroom teachers and teacher-librarians in their efforts to build a collection of high quality poetry materials for use with children in the kindergarten to grade three years.

Nursery Rhymes

Smooth stones from the brook of time,
worn round by constant friction of
tongues long silent.
Andrew Lang*

Alderson, Brian, comp. Cakes and custard; illus. by Helen Oxenbury. New York: Morrow, 1975.

Bodecker, N. M. It's raining said John Twaining; illus. by N. M. Bodecker. New York: Atheneum, 1973.

Briggs, Raymond, illus. The Mother Goose treasury. New York: Coward-McCann, 1966.

Brooke, Leslie, illus. Ring O'Roses. New York: Warne, 1922.

Caldecott, Randolph, illus. The hey diddle diddle picture book. New York: Warne, 1882.

De Angeli, Marguerite, illus. Marguerite de Angeli's book of nursery and Mother Goose rhymes. New York: Doubleday, 1954.

The house that Jack built; illus. by Seymour Chwast. New York: Random House, 1973.

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Lang, Andrew, ed. The nursery rhyme book; illus. by Leslie Brooke. New York: Dover, 1972. (Reprinted from a book first published by Warne, 1897.)

Lines, Kathleen, ed. Lavender's blue; illus. by Harold Jones. New York: Franklin Watts, 1954.

Lobel, Arnold, illus. Gregory Griggs and other nursery rhyme people. New York: Greenwillow, 1978.

London bridge is falling down! illus. by Peter Spier. New York: Doubleday, 1967.

Low, Joseph and Ruth. Mother Goose's riddle rhymes; illus. by Joseph Low. New York: Harcourt, 1953.

Old Mother Hubbard and her dog; illus. by Paul Galdone. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1960.

Petersham, Maud and Miska, illus. The Rooster Crows. New York: Macmillan, 1945.

Provensen, Alice and Martin, illus. The Mother Goose book. New York: Random House, 1976.

Reed, Philip, illus. Mother Goose and nursery rhymes. New York: Atheneum, 1963.

Rojankovsky, Feodor, illus. The tall book of Mother Goose. New York: Harper & Row, 1942.

Three jovial huntsmen; illus. by Susan Jeffers. Scarsdale, N.Y.: Bradbury, 1973.

Tripp, Wallace, illus. Granfa' Grig had a pig, and other rhymes without reason. Boston: Little, 1976.

Tudor, Tasha, illus. Mother Goose. New York: Walch, 1944.

Watson, Clyde. Father Fox pennyrhymes; illus. by Wendy Watson. New York: Crowell, 1971.

Wildsmith, Brian, illus. Brian Wildsmith's Mother Goose. New York: Franklin Watts, 1964.

Wright, Blanche Fisher, illus. The real Mother Goose. New York: Rand McNally, 1916.

Reference Books for Adults

Baring-Gould, William S. and Baring-Gould, Cecil. The annotated Mother Goose. illus. by Walter Crane, Randolph Caldecott, Kate Greenaway, Arthur Rackham, Maxfield Parrish, and early historical woodcuts. New York: New American Library, 1962

This is a gathering of more than a thousand of the

rhymes that are the heritage of an undetermined number of countries. Copious notes throw light on the meanings of rhymes, words, games, and political allusions. A bibiographic history of the older rhymes is provided. The 'personality' and controversial 'identity' of Mother Goose are also discussed.

Opie, Iona and Peter, eds. The Oxford nursery rhyme book. illus. by Thomas Bewick and Joan Hassall. New York: Oxford University Press, 1955.

The Opies have gathered into this collection 800 rhymes and ditties, thereby allowing the reader scope to pick and choose. They have, in some instances, provided more than one version of a rhyme, each being different from the text of the Oxford Dictionary of Nursery Rhymes. This is done deliberately; they state that they have no desire to establish standard texts, as there are no 'correct' versions of oral traditions.

The majority of the illustrations are from chapbooks and toy books of the 18th and early 19th centuries--the work of Thomas Bewick. Further engravings are supplied by contemporary artist Joan Hassall.

Poetry for Young Children

Aiken, Conrad. Cats and bats and things with wings; illus. by Milton Glaser. New York: Atheneum, 1965.

This is a collection of sixteen poems, each about a different member of the animal kingdom. A full page is devoted to each poem, with the individual poem being accompanied by a unique, full-page illustration.

Aldis, Dorothy. All together: A child's treasury of verse; illus. by Helen D. Jameson, Marjorie Flack, and Margaret Freeman. New York: Putnam, 1952.

One hundred forty-four poems from the author's first books--Everything and anything; Here, there, and everywhere; Hop, skip and jump; Before things happen--plus poems previously unpublished in book form have been selected by the author herself for this volume. The everyday experiences of childhood--being lost, caring for pets, getting dressed--are seen through the poet's eye.

Aldis, Dorothy. Is anybody hungry? illus. by Artur Marokvia. New York: Putnam, 1964.

This collection contains twenty-seven poems describing the eating habits of animals, birds, insects, children,--even flowers, which are happy to get a "lovely long drink" from "icicles melting/ and dripping around".

Arbuthnot, May Hill and Root, Shelton L., Jr., (eds.). Time for Poetry, 3rd general edition. illus. by Arthur Paul. Glenview, Il.: Scott, Foresman, 1968.

In this edition of a well-known anthology there appears a total of over seventy new poems, chosen primarily from the work of contemporary poets and those newly translated into English. Part One consists of more than seven hundred poems, plus notes for adults. Part Two, entitled "Keeping Poetry and Children Together", is designed to assist the teacher or any adult in working with children and poetry.

Armour, Richard. Who's in holes? illus. by Paul Galdone. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1971.

Making the most of rhyme, metre, and sheer play with words, Armour introduces the reader playfully, yet factually, to all kinds of interesting creatures that live in holes--including "That odd little fellow/ Or smellow,/ The skunk."

Asch, Frank. City sandwick; illus. by Frank Asch. New York: Greenwillow, 1978.

In his first picture poetry book, the author presents a special city tour. Addressing the goldfish in the poem "A City Pet" he says "if I lived in the jungle,/ You'd be an elephant.", and he depicts the sunset thus: "Its glow ignites/ The city sky/ With neon lights".

Asch, Frank. Country pie; illus. by Frank Asch. New York: Greenwillow, 1979.

"Roll up the moon,/ raise the sun,/ time for a change of scene." These are the opening lines of this volume of light-hearted poems about country life, both the real and the imagined.

Behn, Harry. Cricket songs; New York: Harcourt, 1964.

This is a collection of over eighty haiku which Behn has translated from the Japanese. The illustrations are reproductions of pictures selected from Sesshu and other Japanese masters.

Behn, Harry. The little hill; illus. by Harry Behn. New York: Harcourt, 1949.

This, Behn's first book of poems for children, contains thirty poems about nature and things familiar to childhood. The variety includes the nonsense rhyme "Mr. Pyme", the narrative "The Merry-Go-On", and the lyrical "Spring".

Behn, Harry. More cricket songs; illus. with reproductions of Japanese masters. New York: Harcourt, 1971.

A companion volume to Cricket Songs cited above.

Behn, Harry. Windy morning; illus. by Harry Behn. New York: Harcourt, 1953.

The everyday experiences of childhood are recounted by poet Behn thus: "Today I'll remember forever and ever/ Because I can count to ten." Sensitivity to nature is expressed in these lines: "There, like a bird, still on the tree/ Was that lonesome leaf, no longer gold/ But curly and brown and dry and old." Thirty-five poems in a similar vein make up this volume.

Belloc, Hilaire. The bad child's book of beasts; illus. by Basil T. Blackwood. New York: Knopf, 1965.

This collection was first published in 1896. Of the author, Frances Clarke Sayers writes in the foreword: "He knew intuitively the exquisite proportion that exists between nonsense, parody, and exaggeration and the ultimate wisdom of life", and she concludes that "from such largesse of spirit comes this child's play of a book, this heartsease of laughter".

Bemelmans, Ludwig. Madeline's rescue. illus. by Ludwig Bemelmans. New York: Viking, 1953.

This is a picture-story book with rhymed text about little Madeline in Paris. Her adventure in this volume consists of falling in the River Seine and being rescued by the dog, Genevieve.

Bennett, Jill, comp. Roger was a razor fish and other poems; illus. by Maureen Roffey. St. John's: Breakwater, 1980.

This collection which was first published by The Bodley Head contains, in addition to the title poem by Al Pittman, works by such poets as John Drinkwater and Rose Fyleman.

Blishen, Edward, comp. Oxford book of poetry for children; illus. by Brian Wildsmith. New York: Franklin Watts, 1963.

This collection of classic poetry for children relies heavily upon ballads and narrative poetry and is arranged by subject. Interesting titles are given to each section; for example, poems about the sea are headed "The World of Waters is our Home". An introduction by the compiler explains how and why the selections were chosen and offers some suggestions to children about poetry.

Bodecker, N. M. Hurry, hurry, Mary dear! illus. by N. M. Bodecker. New York: Atheneum, 1976.

The author has been referred to as the "Great Dane of Children's Poetry". Here he has provided a collection of poems, some of which play with words, some are sheer nonsense, some have perceptive commentaries on human behaviour lurking beneath the surface; all are delightful to read aloud.

Brewton, John E.; Blackburn, Lorraine A. and George M., comps. In the witch's kitchen; illus. by Harriett Barton. New York: Crowell, 1980.

The compilers have chosen forty-six poems from such authors as Aileen Fisher, David McCord, Shel Silverstein, Oliver Wendell Holmes, and, with the black and white drawings of Barton, have produced a book which evokes all the fun and fright which Hallowe'en inspires.

Brooke, L. Leslie. Johnny Crow's garden; illus. by Leslie L. Brooke. New York: Warne, 1978.

This is a reprinting of the volume which first appeared in 1903. The opening lines "Johnny Crow/ Would dig and sow/ Till he made a little garden" set the stage for the animal personalities who visit this garden. The animals are introduced through nonsense rhymes and accompanying illustrations both in black and white and in full colour.

Brooks, Gwendolyn. Bronzeville boys and girls; illus. by Ronni Solbert. New York: Harper & Row, 1965.

Here are poems for and about children. Each poem, named for a boy or girl, shows a sensitivity to the feelings of the child. For Cynthia, the snow "whitely whirs away", and it is "so beautiful it hurts". Vern's feelings for his pup she expresses thus: "And when you've had a scold,/ And no one loves you very" the pup will not "mock the tears you have to hide".

Brown, Marc, ed. Finger rhymes; illus. by Marc Brown. New York: Dutton, 1980.

Here is a collection of fourteen rhymes, with accompanying instructions for finger plays. There are double-page illustrations in black and white.

Brown, Margaret Wise. Nibble nibble; illus. by Leonard Weisgard. Reading, Mass.: Young Scott Books, 1959.

The twenty-five poems in this posthumous collection contain fourteen which are published here for the first time. They are divided into four units: "Deep In The Green Stemmed World", "In The Darkness Of The Sea", "Ask Now The Animals", and "One By One".

Browning, Robert. The pied piper of Hamelin; illus. by C. Walter Hodges. New York: Coward, McCann, 1971.

Browning's narrative poem which illustrates "if we've promised them aught, let us keep our promise" is enhanced by the full-colour illustrations of Hodges.

Carroll, Lewis. Lewis Carroll's jabberwocky; illus. by Jane Breskin Zalben. New York: Frederick Warne, 1977.

The poem is introduced by the appropriate excerpt from Carroll's Through the Looking Glass, and What Alice Found There, and the book ends with "Annotations by Humpty Dumpty"

from the same source, together with the text of "Jabberwocky". In between, the illustrations depict Humpty Dumpty as he explains the meaning of this much-loved nonsense poem.

Dedication: "To my good friends on all your 364 unbirthdays and the feelings you give me."

Carroll, Lewis. Poems of Lewis Carroll; illus. by John Tenniel, Harry Furniss, Henry Holiday, Arthur B. Frost, Lewis Carroll. New York: Crowell, 1973.

Myra Cohn Livingston has compiled this volume which contains poems from Wonderland, ciphers and riddle poems, the famous Hiawatha parody, odd bits of humourous verse, and the saga of the Snark. The compiler's biographical information and notes on the poems make the book very valuable for Carroll enthusiasts.

Chukovsky, Kornei. The telephone; illus. by Blair Lent. New York: Delacorte, 1977.

This book is adapted from the Russian by William Jay Smith, in collaboration with Max Hayward. It is a nonsense tale of how a motley collection of animals keep sending SOS calls to a small boy. The polar bear calls because his elephant friend wants peanut brittle, and the reindeer reports: "... Oh, dear, oh, dear,/ Did you hear? Is it true/ That the Bump-Bump Cars at the Carnival/ Have all burned up?"

Ciardi, John. I met a man; illus. by Robert Osborn. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1961.

The author states in the introduction that "these poems were written for a special pleasure. I wanted to write the first book my daughter read herself. To bring them within her first grade range I based them on the two most elementary word lists in general use." In addition to the basic word list he also gradually introduces more difficult words, using the basic devices of rhyme, context, riddles, and word games. This is a fun book to introduce the young child to the delights of language.

Ciardi, John. You read to me, I'll read to you; illus. by Edward Gorey. New York: Lippincott, 1962.

The poems in this volume cover a variety of subjects of interest to the young child. They are printed in two colours; those printed in black are for the adult to read to the child, while those in blue are written in a basic vocabulary which a grade one child should be able to read.

Clark, Leonard, ed. Drums and trumpets; illus. by Heather Copley. London: Bodley Head, 1962.

Subtitled "Poetry for the Youngest", this is an anthology for adults to read to and share with young children. In the introduction, the editor asserts that, while not all of the selections lie within the actual

experiences of the youngest, they are concerned with what he terms "the world of childhood". He considers it a book for young children "to possess, to look at, and enjoy, and later on to read for themselves when they can". He warns the reader not to dismiss the unfamiliar poems in the collection, for "they will not surrender all their honey at one sip".

Clifton, Lucille. Everett Anderson's year; illus. by Ann Grifalcon. New York: Holt, 1974.

The poet guides the reader through a description of the seventh year of Everett's life. There is one poem per month with a full-page illustration of each. The young child should readily be able to identify with these thoughts expressed by the author in free verse. An example: In September, "I went to school every day last year,/ Why do I have to go again?"

Cole, William, comp. A book of animal poems; illus. by Robert Andrew Parker. New York: Viking, 1973.

This anthology is broad and discriminating in its selections, and, as the editor indicates in the preface, it is not intended to represent every form of animal life. The majority of the selections are by contemporary authors, but the choices tend to be the lesser known poems. For example, included is Theodore Roethke's "The Heron", but not "The Kitty-Cat Bird" and Randall Jarrell's "In and Out

the Bushes" but not his familiar self-portrait by the bat poet. The poems are arranged by type of animal.

Cole, William, comp. Oh, that's ridiculous! illus. by Tomi Ungerer. New York: Viking, 1972.

Cole has deliberately omitted from this collection the nonsense verses of Carroll and Lear because he feels that they are readily available in several anthologies. Spike Milligan and Shel Silverstein are included, as are at least two serious poets, A. E. Housman and Theodore Roethke, who on occasion did write in lighter vein.

De la Mare, Walter. Bells and grass; illus. by Dorothy P. Lathrop. New York: Viking, 1963.

In the introduction to this volume the author explains how he came across a notebook which had been neglected for many years and which contained "pencil scribblings" dated 1905 - 1906. Some of these scribblings appear here, together with other poems which their finding inspired. He adds that they had been written "by and through that self within which, in however small a degree, there still lurked something that might merit so precious a tribute as that of being described as young.

De La Mare, Walter. Peacock pie; illus. by Barbara Cooney. New York: Knopf, 1961.

This collection of the most popular of the poems by de la Mare was first published in 1931. Among the Cooney illustrations in this new edition are those which capture the humour of "Off the Ground", the spookiness of "The Thief at Robin's Castle", and the mystery of "Some One".

De Regniers, Beatrice Schenk. Something special; illus. by Irene Haas. New York: Harcourt, 1958.

In nine sections ranging from "If You Find a Little Feather" to "If We Walked on Our Hands", the gently evocative mixes with the humour of incongruity. There are chanting games, gay nonsense, and, in "Little Sounds" insight into how wonderful is our sense of hearing. The poem "Keep a poem in your pocket" provides the introduction.

De Regniers, Beatrice Schenk; Moore, Eva; and White, Mary Michaels, comps. Poems children will sit still for; New York: Citation, 1969.

In their effort to satisfy the requirement suggested in the title, the compilers have chosen from the works of such poets as R. L. Stevenson, e.e. cummings, Karla Kuskin, and Robert Frost.

In addition, suggestions are offered as to how to use these poems in a classroom situation.

Downie, Mary Alice and Robertson, Barbara, comps. The wind has wings; illus. by Elizabeth Cleaver. Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1968.

The closing lines of the first poem in this collection "Let me sit silent/ Let me wonder" (from "Orders" by A. M. Klein) establishes the atmosphere for this compilation of Canadian poetry. The seventy-seven selections consist of Eskimo chants, translations of French Canadian folk songs, nonsense poems and modern verse.

Ellis, Louise. The alphavegetabet; illus. by Louise Ellis. Toronto: Collier Macmillan, 1976.

The author takes the reader on a playful tour through the vegetable world from artichoke to zucchini in twenty-six verses and twenty-five drawings. (She didn't illustrate the urd bean.)

Farjeon, Eleanor. Eleanor Farjeon's poems for children; unillus. New York: Lippincott, 1951.

This volume contains the complete text of four published collections of the author's poems: Come Christmas, Joan's Door, Over the Garden Wall, and Sing for your Supper. In addition, there are twenty poems, a few descriptive, but mostly lyrical, which had not been previously published outside England. In the foreword the author declares, "The result ... is so largely lyrical that it seems to me I have always versified with a tune in my ear."

Field, Eugene. Wynken, Blynken, and Nod; illus. by Barbara Cooney. New York: Hastings House, 1964.

This is a reproduction of the poem which first appeared in Poems of Childhood by the author in 1896.

Field, Rachel. Poems; illus. by Rachel Field. New York: Macmillan, 1957.

With the exception of six poems published here for the first time, this is a selection of the poet's work previously published in various magazines and in five volumes by Macmillan.

Miniature silhouettes by the author decorate the pages which precede each of the eight sections into which the book is divided.

Field, Rachel. Prayer for a child; illus. by Elizabeth Orton Jones. New York: Macmillan, 1944.

This prayer, written for the author's daughter, is presented in its entirety on the opening page. Subsequent pages give the poem, a line or two per page, with a facing full-page illustration.

Fisher, Aileen. Do bears have mothers, too? illus. by Eric Carle. New York: Crowell, 1973.

Big colourful close-up pictures of animal mothers and

babies complement the verses to provide accurate information on the theme of mother-child relationships among animals. Reassurance is offered to the baby monkey thus: "If you can't/ cling tight enough/ I'll hold you/ when the going's rough."

Fisher, Aileen. Feathered ones and furry; illus. by Eric Carle. New York: Crowell, 1971.

This is a collection of light, lilting verses telling of birds and animals both in their natural habitats and in the homes of their human owners.

Fisher, Aileen. My cat has eyes of sapphire blue; illus. by Eric Carle. New York: Crowell, 1971.

In this volume naturalist and poet Fisher describes the mutifaceted nature of cats and their activities. She does this affectionately and humourously in words and rhythms that the beginning reader will be able to cope with, but that will be enjoyed by the experienced reader as well.

Fisher, Aileen. Sing, little mouse; illus. by Symeon Shimin. New York: Crowell, 1969.

This is a story poem about a boy's unusual wish and its equally unusual fulfillment. "A White-Footed Mouse/ is sometimes heard/ to sing a song/ like a trilling bird."

Fowke, Edith, comp. Sally go round the sun; illus. by Carlos Marchiori. Toronto: Doubleday, 1970.

This anthology contains children's rhymes, songs, and games. Musical arrangements are by Keith MacMillan. Appended is a section of notes, references, and sources, plus directions for the games and finger plays.

Fox, Siv Cedering. The blue horse, and other night poems; illus. by Donald Carrick. New York: Seabury, 1979.

This collection of fourteen poems begins with "In the evening/ I pull the shades/ of my eyes/ to see/ what the night/ will show me." It continues with poems expressing what the child experiences before drifting off to sleep, and concludes with a hymn to morning.

Fraser, Kathleen. Stilts, somersaults, and headstands; New York: Atheneum, 1968.

These poems were inspired by the painting "Children's Games" by Peter Breugel the Elder. According to this artist of 400 years ago, children play close to one hundred games. The painting is reproduced here in whole and in parts and, together with the Fraser poems, allows the reader to compare today's games with those of 400 years ago--and to realize why these games still survive.

Frost, Robert. Stopping by woods on a snowy evening; illus. by Susan Jeffers. New York: Dutton, 1978.

Each line of one of the best-known and best-loved of Frost's poems is accompanied by the skillful artistry of Jeffers, resulting in a beautiful blend of lyrics and pictures. The kindly rotund figure with his "promises to keep" lends a Christmas touch.

Geismer, Barbara Peck and Suter, Antoinette Brown, eds. Very young verses; illus. by Mildred Bronson. New York: Houghton, 1945.

This anthology was compiled by two teachers who were convinced of the need for poetry in their work with small children. They indicate in the Foreword that they selected "those which have proved to have greatest appeal, either by their content, rhythm, words, sound, or humour." The poems are arranged under nine subjects for ease of use by teachers, parents, and children themselves.

Graham, Eleanor, ed. A thread of gold; illus. by Margery Gill. London: The Bodley Head, 1964.

The editor of this collection states in the introduction that, for the sake of brevity, she has "taken from some longer poems just a few lines for the sake of a single thought or impression". Several excerpts from the Bible appear in this anthology.

Greenaway, Kate. Marigold garden; illus. by Kate Greenaway. New York: Warne, 1910.

This collection was first published in England in 1885. These verses in simple rhyme for the young child have a floral theme which is well developed throughout the volume in words, design, and arrangement of the pictures.

Hazzard, Russ, ed. My third eye: Images of a cold country; illus. by Barbara Le Beau. Ottawa: All About Us/ Nous Autres, Inc., 1976.

This volume contains poems written by the students at St. Norbert Community School in St. Norbert, Manitoba. The age range of these poets is from six to twelve years.

Hoberman, Mary Ann. The raucous auk; A menagerie of poems; illus. by Joseph Low. New York: Viking, 1973.

In this collection of animal poems, the exotic and the familiar co-exist. There is the ocelot who "knowsalot", "growsalot", and who seldom ever "goesalot" to "places where it snowsalot", and the whale who, although "stout about the middle", nevertheless "likes himself like that". Each poem is accompanied by an illustration.

Hoberman, Mary Ann. Yellow butter purple jelly red jam black bread; illus. by Chaya Burstein. New York: Viking, 1981.

This volume is made up of a total of fifty-eight poems

on a variety of subjects. Some of the poems, for example "Brother" and "A Year Later" have appeared in earlier volumes by Hoberman, while others, like the title poem, appear here for the first time.

Holman, Felice. I hear you smiling and other poems; illus. by Laszlo Kubinyi. New York: Scribner, 1973.

This is a collection of lyric poems dealing predominantly with what it's like to be a young, growing person, as in "I scuff/ And puff/ And frown/ And huff/ And stamp/ And pout/ till I forget/ What it's about." There are also poems which transform the commonplace occurrences into something unique, as when pine trees are "bending kindly/ lending branches/ to a nesting bird".

Hopkins, Lee Bennett, ed. Easter buds are springing. illus. by Tomie de Paola. New York: Harcourt, 1979.

The poems in this anthology celebrate Easter in both its religious and its secular aspects. Sixteen poets contribute the nineteen poems, which include "Easter" by Elizabeth Coatsworth and the concrete poem "Easter" by the editor.

Hopkins, Lee Bennett, ed. Good morning to you, valentine; illus. by Tomie de Paola. New York: Harcourt, 1976.

Assembled in this volume is a wide variety of poetry--the ridiculous, the sentimental, the serious--in tribute to St. Valentine's Day. Literary quality ranges from the work of Shakespeare to jingles which might be scribbled by small children on their homemade cards.

Hubbell, Patricia. Catch me a wind; illus. by Susan Trommler. New York: Atheneum, 1968.

The poems in this collection are for those who feel the urge to experience the feeling that exploring the new and the unusual brings with it. For example, "Breakfast Conversation"--between the sugar bowl, honey pot, and cereal; "Chant of the Awakening Bulldozers"--"men think they own us/ BUT THAT CANNOT BE!"

Issa, et al. Don't tell the scarecrow and other Japanese poems; illus. by Talivaldis Stubis. New York: Four Winds, 1970.

This is a collection of haiku by famous Japanese poets. The back cover has the poem "Don't tell the scarecrow" printed in Japanese.

Jarrell, Randall. A bat is born; illus. by John Schoenherr. New York: Doubleday, 1978.

This poem is taken from the author's novel, The Bat-Poet. It depicts the common brown bat as it cares for its baby, while "All night, in happiness, she hunts and flies".

Schoenherr's interpretation has resulted in a stunningly vivid production.

Keats, John. The naughty boy; illus. by Ezra Jack Keats. New York: Viking, 1965.

This poem originally appeared in a letter to his fifteen-year-old sister Fanny when Keats was twenty-two in the summer of 1918. He claimed that the poem was about himself.

Kherdian, David, comp. The dog writes on the window with his nose and other poems; illus. by Nonny Hogrogian. New York: Four Winds Press, 1977.

The twenty-two short poems in this poetry-picture book were not written for children, because Kherdian believes that the best poetry for children is not poetry that is written for them but rather adult poetry which has been judiciously chosen. The one exception is "Poem" by Ruth Krauss, which was intended for children.

Kuskin, Karla. Dogs & dragons, trees & dreams; illus. by Karla Kuskin. New York: Harper & Row, 1980.

The author has brought together into this one volume fifty-seven poems that she wrote for children between 1958 and 1975. These poems are accompanied by notes on poetry appreciation and on the writing of poetry. One of these notes suggests "the words in a poem are like the colors in a painting. When they are put together with care, they make an engaging picture."

Kuskin, Karla. Any me I want to be; illus. by Karla Kuskin. New York: Harper & Row, 1972.

In these beautifully crafted and imaginatively illustrated poems Kuskin allows thirty familiar creatures and things to tell about themselves. Sometimes the identity of the speaker is evident at the beginning; sometimes the reader must wait until the end; and at other times it's a matter of guessing, with the help of the illustration. In "Note to Older Readers" at the beginning of the volume, the author states, "Instead of describing how a cat, the moon, or a pair of shoes appear to me, I have tried to get inside each subject and briefly be it".

Kuskin, Karla. Near the window tree; illus. by Karla Kuskin. New York: Harper & Row, 1975.

In response to the questions children have asked her

about where a poet gets ideas for poems, Kuskin prefaces each of the thirty-two poems in this collection with background notes addressed to the child reader. There is also an introduction addressed to adults. The poems themselves are light, lilting, and child-oriented.

Larrick, Nancy, ed. Green is like a meadow of grass; illus. by Kelly Oechsli. Champaign, Il.: Garrard, 1968.

For a period of fifteen weeks in Spring, 1967, Larrick conducted a workshop in poetry for children, which was attended by twenty-two teachers and approximately 500 children, aged six to thirteen. She states in the introduction that the participants "had an opportunity to listen to poetry and read or recite it almost every day. They began to see poetic pictures in the spring snow that covered their world for a few days and the mud puddles that followed. Soon they were creating their own poetic images and snatches of song." Larrick has selected seventy-four of the children's creations for this book.

Larrick, Nancy, ed. Piper, pipe that song again; illus. by Kelly Oechsli. New York: Random House, 1965.

In the introduction to this anthology, Larrick explains the significance of the title, and Blake's "The Piper" is the poem which is placed at the beginning. Selections were tested in a school situation before inclusion was decided

upon. The range is from "For lo, the winter is past" from The Song of Solomon to Ciardi's "The Reason for the Pelican".

Lear, Edward. The complete nonsense of Edward Lear; illus. by Edward Lear. New York: Dover, 1951.

This is a compilation of Lear's alphabet rhymes, limericks, and narrative poems. It is a reprint of the 1947 Faber edition published in England.

Lear, Edward. Edward Lear's the scroobious pip; illus. by Nancy Eckholm Burkert. New York: Harper & Row, 1968.

The original unfinished text of this poem was published in the U. S. in 1953. The completion was executed by Ogden Nash, and his additions are in brackets.

Lear, Edward. The owl and the pussy-cat; illus. by Barbara Cooney. Boston: Little, 1969.

This volume is an illustrated edition of the narrative poem of that title which also appears in The Complete Non-Sense of Edward Lear.

Lear, Edward. The quangle-wangle's hat; illus. by Helen Oxenbury. New York: Franklin Watts, 1969.

The narrative poem of this title appears in The

Complete Nonsense of Edward Lear and is presented here in a single poem illustrated edition.

Lee, Dennis. Alligator pie; illus. by Frank Newfeld. Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1974.

A young child asked her father for a poem at bedtime. That father was poet Dennis Lee, and Alligator Pie is the answer to that child's request. These rhymes are steeped in things Canadian, as it was the author's avowed intent to have Mother Goose co-exist with hockey and ookpiks.

Lee, Dennis. Garbage delight; illus. by Frank Newfeld. Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1977.

Here is a collection ranging from four-liners to four-page narrative poems; all are characterized by rhyme, a pronounced rhythm, and exaggeration. Readers should particularly enjoy the word twisters in "The Big Molice Pan and the Bertie Dumb" and the thoughts in "The Operation", as the child waits for mom to repair the teddy bear he has mangled.

Lewis, Richard, ed. In a spring garden; illus. by Ezra Jack Keats. New York: Dial, 1965.

This collection of twenty-three haiku by Japanese poets traces a spring day from the morning greeting to the snail

to the glowing firefly's goodnight.

The brilliant collage and water color illustrations complement this collection of poetry for the young child.

Lewis, Richard, ed. Miracles; Poems by children of the English-speaking world; Unillus. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1966.

In 1964 Lewis, with the assistance of UNESCO, travelled in eighteen countries where English was either the native language or an important second language. His intention was to collect poetry written by children. This volume contains approximately 200 of the more than 3000 poems he collected from children aged four to fourteen.

Livingston, Myra Cohn, ed. Listen, children, listen: An anthology of poems for the very young; illus. by Trina Schart Hyman. New York: Harcourt, 1972.

This collection includes the nonsense of Lear and Belloc, the fun of Aldis and McCord, the sensitivity of Hughes and Dickinson, in addition to selections from Shakespeare, Tennyson, and de la Mare. There are also a couple of poems by the compiler herself.

Livingston, Myra Cohn, ed. Poems of Christmas; unillus. New York: Atheneum, 1981.

Many of the carols and poems in this anthology will be

familiar, while others of the more contemporary present a new approach to the celebration of Christmas; all share in the wonder and joy of this season. This collection should prove invaluable to the teacher, and some of the more mature readers in this age group will be able to read at least some of the selections independently.

Livingston, Myra Cohn. The moon and a star; illus. by Judith Shann. New York: Harcourt, 1965.

A clever use of words, rhyme, and rhythm to portray the activities, thoughts, and imaginings of children make up this collection. The joy of roller skating with "April whistlin/ At your back", the realization that "Nine won't come again", the thankfulness for "the every morning sun" help to provide the experience of poetry for the young child.

McCord, David. Every time I climb a tree; illus. by Marc Simont. Boston: Little, 1967.

This is a collection of twenty-five poems from the author's books All Day Long, Far and Few, and Take Sky. Included are the poems which are widely anthologized.

McCord, David. The star in the pail; illus. by Marc Simont. Boston: Little, 1975.

McCord has selected twenty-six poems from his earlier

volumes of poetry as well as from those poems published in newspapers and magazines. The result is a book of his poetry for the very young reader.

McGinley, Phyllis. The year without a Santa Claus; illus. by Kurt Werth. New York: Lippincott, 1956.

This is the story poem of the "Curious/ Furious/ Fidgety year/ When Santa Claus/ Unhitched his sleigh/ And vowed he was taking a holiday". One boy has a very good idea, and the story of how that idea was carried out exemplifies the spirit of generosity for which Santa Claus stands.

Margolis, Richard. Only the moon and me; illus. by Marcia Kay Keegan. New York: Lippincott, 1969.

In free verse the author expresses the things children think about, based largely, he claims, on what he remembers of his childhood thoughts. They are the honest notions of children trying to make sense of their world.

Merriam, Eve. The birthday cow; illus. by Guy Michel. New York: Knopf, 1978.

Gay and humourous rhymes, jingles, word-play, and nonsense combine in a collection of fifteen poems which should have a special appeal for the very young child.

Merriam, Eve. Catch a little rhyme; illus. by Imero Gobbato. New York: Atheneum, 1967.

This volume completes a trilogy of poetry books for children. The author's two earlier books, There Is No Rhyme for Silver and It Doesn't Always Have to Rhyme are more suitable for use with older children, while this collection should appeal to the younger child.

Milligan, Spike. Silly verse for kids; illus. by Spike Milligan. New York: Puffin, 1968.

Milligan writes in the Foreword that most of the poems were written to amuse his children, and that some were written as a result of things they said. The title is a most appropriate one, as there are rhymes about such beasts as the Hipporhinostricow and of the Land of the Bumbley Boo where "They never blow noses,/ Or ever wear closes".

Milne, A. A. The world of Christopher Robin; illus. by Ernest H. Shepard. New York: Dutton, 1958.

Brought together into this one volume are the complete When We Were Very Young (1924) and Now We Are Six (1927). In addition to the black and white drawings of the original books, Shepard has contributed new endpapers and eight full-page illustrations in full colour.

Mizumura, Kazue. Flower, moon, snow; illus. by Kazue Mizumura. New York: Crowell, 1977.

This poet-artist's interest in, and concern for, the world of nature are evident in this volume of thirty haiku in praise of the joys of nature. In "A Note about Haiku" the author explains the special characteristics of this form.

Mizumura, Kazue. I see the winds; illus. by Kazue Mizumura. New York: Crowell, 1966.

In free verse and Japanese brush drawing, Mizumura portrays the many forms of the wind, which change as the seasons change. This small format book has the brief poem on one page, while on the facing page is the illustration.

Moore, Clement Clark. The night before Christmas; illus. by Tasha Tudor. Skokie, Il.: Rand McNally, 1975.

What began as a Christmas Eve surprise in 1822 by a devoted and imaginative father has become a classic. First published in 1823, it is from this poem that we get the names of the Christmas reindeer.

Other editions of this story poem are listed below.

Moore, Clement Clarke. The night before Christmas; illus. by Tomie de Paola. New York: Holiday House, 1980.

Moore, Clement Clarke. The night before Christmas; illus. by Paul Galdone. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1968.

Moore, Clement Clarke. The night before Christmas; illus. by Leonard Weisgard. New York: Grossett, 1949.

Moore, Clement Clarke. The night before Christmas; illus. by Arthur Rackham. New York: Lippincott, 1954.

Moore, Clement Clarke. A visit from St. Nicholas; illus. by Theodore C. Boyd. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1971.

This is a facsimile of the 1848 edition and includes the black and white engravings of Theodore C. Boyd. The afterword "Clement Clarke Moore and His Christmas Poem" gives an account of how the poem came to be written and published.

Moore, Lilian. I feel the same way; illus. by Robert Quackenbush. New York: Atheneum, 1968.

The feelings and thoughts of the young child are explored in these short poems. For example, after playing hard "I like to stop/ and listen to me/ thumping."

Moore, Lilian. See my lovely poison ivy and other verses about witches, ghosts and things; illus. by Diane Dawson. New York: Atheneum, 1975.

Simple and direct poetry about monsters, goblins,

witches, ghosts, and something that is "coming down/ slinkety-sly". These poems are appropriate for Hallowe'en or anytime when one needs scary poems which are also funny.

Morton, Miriam, comp. and trans. The moon is like a silver sickle: A celebration of poetry by Russian children; illus. by Eros Keith. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1972.

Here are ninety-two poems written by Russian children, aged four to fifteen years, living in thirty different cities of the Soviet Union. Morton, who translated and compiled this volume, writes in the Introduction: "The selections were made on the basis of merit alone, but an important consideration for inclusion was whether it was possible to translate the lines into English without loss of subtlety of meaning or the beauty of image and expression".

The title page for each of the separate sections contains, in addition to an illustration, selections from poems by classical and modern Russian poets.

Moss, Elaine, comp. From morn to midnight; illus. by Satomi Ichikawa. London: Heinemann, 1977.

Here is a collection of twenty traditional poems from such poets as Aldis, Blake, Farjeon, Browning, plus a concrete poem about the cello by the lesser known, Richard Lester. The neatly-framed, detailed pictures complement the text.

Nash, Ogden. Custard and company; illus. by Quentin Blake. Boston: Little, 1980.

The poems for this collection were selected by Quentin Blake, who illustrated the volume with his frenetic and comic line drawings. Selections range from terse masterpieces like "The Mules" to the narrative "The Boy who Laughed at Santa Claus". This volume is an excellent introduction to the fun and genius of Nash's poetry.

Ness, Evaline, ed. Amelia mixed the mustard; illus. by Evaline Ness. New York: Scribner, 1975.

This rich and varied collection reflects the poets' appreciation for, and understanding of, the female. A. E. Housman, John Keats, Gertrude Stein, and Myra Cohn Livingston are among the contributors of these twenty poems about girls of all ages, shapes, and sizes, and covering the literary spectrum of light verse, lyric, limerick, and traditional.

Newman, Fran. Sunflakes and snowshine; illus. by Claudette Boulanger. Richmond Hill, Ont.: North Winds Press, 1979.

In the Afterword to this volume Sheila Egoff writes: "The traditional, anecdotal and quotable verses reflect the personality of each month of the year. The illustrations (reminiscent of both Van Gogh and Kurelek) have an originality, charm and humour all their own, and are satisfyingly

child-like in their visual interpretation of the seasons."

This hardcover edition of the original 1977 paperback edition was created to commemorate the International Year of the Child 1979.

O'Neill, Mary. Hailstones and halibut bones: Adventures in color; illus. by Leonard Weisgard. New York: Doubleday, 1961.

The reader is invited to experience colour not only visually but as something that can be touched, smelled, and felt. Twelve simple poems describe colours in terms of objects, feeling, taste, and sound.

Opie, Iona and Peter, eds. The Oxford book of children's verse; London: Oxford University Press, 1973.

This volume brings together 332 British and American children's poems, spanning over 500 years. The compilers' objective, as stated in the Preface was "to make available in one place the classics of children's poetry". The chronological arrangement--from Chaucer to Ogden Nash--makes it possible to detect, in addition to poetic trends, changing social values and attitudes toward children. Notes on authors and sources have been appended.

A peaceable kingdom: the Shaker abecedarius; illus. by Alice and Martin Provensen. New York: Viking, 1978.

This was originally published in the Shaker Manifesto of July, 1882, and titled: "Animal Rhymes".

In these twenty-six rhymed lines the Shakers taught their children the alphabet. This newly-illustrated version employs a variety of real and imaginary animals in a running frieze printed on carefully antiqued paper. Background information on Shaker community life is supplied in an afterword by Richard Barsam.

Pittman, Al. Down by Jim Long's stage; illus. by Pam Hall. St. John's: Breakwater, 1976.

Subtitled: "rhymes for children and young fish", this book has one rhyme per page about the fish which live in Newfoundland waters.

Plath, Sylvia. The bed book; illus. by Emily Arnold McCully. New York: Harper & Row, 1976.

This book was written by Plath for her own children. The rhythm and rhyme of "Not just a white little/ tucked-in-tight little/ nighty-night little/ turn-out-the-light little/ bed" will appeal to the very young, as will the incredible beds which Plath presents in this fanciful creation.

Prelutsky, Jack. A gopher in the garden, and other animal poems; illus. by Robert Leydenfrost. New York: Macmillan, 1967.

Perfect for reading aloud, these delightful animal rhymes should have children eagerly chanting about the "yickity-yackity, yickity-yak" and the "giggling gaggling gaggle of geese."

Prelutsky, Jack. The Queen of Eene; illus. by Victoria Chess. New York: Greenwillow, 1978.

Here is presented a series of peculiar people in rhyme and picture. The only relationship among them is that they are merrily ghoulish and nonsensical.

Prelutsky, Jack. The snopp on the sidewalk; illus. by Byron Barton. New York: Greenwillow, 1977.

In this collection of verses the reader is introduced to a new breed of creatures: the Wrimple, who is responsible for all those things which go wrong around the house; the Monumental Meath, who, because he has no teeth, isn't really to be feared; the Wozzit, who wreaks havoc in the closet; and, of course, the Snopp.

Rawlins, Margaret G., comp. Round about six; illus. by Denis Wrigley. New York: Warne, 1973.

Among the poets represented in this collection are

Jane Taylor, John Keats, Aileen Fisher, and Spike Milligan; there are also some poems by children. The arrangement is in three sections titled: "Five and a Half", "Six and a Half", and "Seven and a Half", and each section is preceded by a Table of Contents.

Richards, Laura E. Tirra lirra; illus. by Marguerite Davis. Boston: Little, 1955.

Humourous made-up words ("telephunk", "Bogothybogs", for example), funny characters and situations, combined with the skill of a verse maker and storyteller make this a delightful collection of rhythmical nonsense poems. They have been selected from the author's early books and from "St. Nicholas" magazine.

Riley, James Whitcomb. The gobble-uns'll git you ef you don't watch out! Illus. by Joel Schick. New York: Lippincott, 1975.

Here is the classic story poem of those "Gobble-uns" who spirit away ill-mannered children, as told by Little Orphant Annie.

Roethke, Theodore. Dirty dinky and other creatures; illus. by Julie Brinckloe. New York: Doubleday, 1973.

The poems in this collection, depicting the mingled reality and fantasy of the world of the child, have been

selected by Beatrice Roethke and Stephen Lushington. The closing line of "The Meadow Mouse" summarizes the theme of the poems: "All things innocent, hapless, forsaken".

Rossetti, Christina G. Sing-song; illus. by Arthur Hughes. New York: Dover, 1968.

This is a reprint of the title first published in England in 1872. The lyric grace of the poetry of Rossetti is an ideal follow-up to the Mother Goose rhymes and an introduction to lyric poetry for the young child. This volume contains, among others, "Who Has Seen the Wind?", "What Can I Give Him", and "Ferry Me Across the Water".

Sandburg, Carl. Wind song; illus. by William Smith. New York: Harcourt, 1960.

The introduction to this book is a hand-written letter from Sandburg to the reader. It says in part: "Dear young folks: Some poems may please you for half a minute & you don't care whether you keep them or not. Other poems you may feel to be priceless & you hug them to your heart & keep them for sure. Here in this book poems of each kind may be found: you do the finding".

Among the poems which have been popular with children and which appear in this collection are: "Paper I", "Paper II", and "Arithmetic".

Seuss, Dr. And to think that I saw it on Mulberry Street; illus. by Dr. Seuss. New York: Vanguard, 1937.

This is a story in rhyme of how little Marco sees a horse and wagon on Mulberry Street while coming home from school. His imagination takes over, and the horse becomes a zebra, then an elephant, then .... His flight of fancy ends when he arrives home.

Seuss, Dr. How the Grinch stole Christmas; illus. by Dr. Seuss. New York: Random House, 1957.

These nonsense verses tell the story of the Grinch who lived on a mountain and was quite happy to have no contact with the people who lived in the valley below. At Christmas time it was impossible to ignore their happy singing, and one year it decided to put an end to Christmas. The way to do this, it thought, was to steal all the presents. To its great surprise, it discovered the real meaning of the joy of Christmas.

Silverstein, Shel. Where the sidewalk ends; illus. by Shel Silverstein. New York: Harper, 1974.

This volume is a collection of cartoon-style comic drawings and a variety of poems, some of which are nonsense verse, while others have a pointed message. The humour is attained by preposterous characters, hilarious situations, the sound of words, or a combination of the foregoing.

Spier, Peter. Noah's ark; illus. by Peter Spier. New York: Doubleday, 1977.

On the first page of this book is printed "The Flood" by the Dutch poet Jacobus Revius (1586-1658), translated by Spier. The wordless picture book which follows tells the story of what happened both inside and outside the ark during the forty days and nights.

Starbird, Kaye. The covered bridge house and other poems; illus. by Jim Arnosky. New York: Four Winds, 1979.

Among the characters whom the reader meets in this collection are: Eddie, who "Wasn't ready/ once/ too/ often"; Hugh, who "was puzzled by the word/ Which wasn't one he knew"; Ruth, who, "believes/ In telling the truth/ Even about a broken tooth". In addition to these childhood experiences, the author gives her views on such things as a June morning: "It seemed as if Someone Important/ had ordered/ The world to shine".

Stevenson, Robert Louis. A child's garden of verses; illus. by Tasha Tudor. New York: Henry Z. Walck, 1947.

These verses were first published in England in 1885 under the title Penny Whistles. Through succeeding generations they have continued to be part of the heritage of English-speaking children.

Other editions of this volume are listed below.

Stevenson, Robert Louis. A child's garden of verses; illus. by Gyo Fujikawa. New York: Grosset, 1957.

Stevenson, Robert Louis. A child's garden of verses; illus. by Brian Wildsmith. New York: Franklin Watts, 1966.

Stevenson, Robert Louis. A child's garden of verses; illus. by Jessie Wilcox Smith. New York: Scribner, 1905, 1969.

Stevenson, Robert Louis. A child's garden of verses; illus. by Erik Blegvad. New York: Random House, 1978.

Summerfield, Geoffrey, ed. Junior Voices: An anthology of poetry and pictures; New York: Penguin, 1970.

The editor has drawn on his experience of junior schools in England to edit four volumes of poetry and pictures for children aged seven to eleven. The thirty illustrations, thirteen of which are in colour, have been reproduced from copyrighted works from such sources as the Tate Gallery and the Metropolitan Museum of Art. The poems are from a wide variety of sources, ranging from the work of children to the works of Walter de la Mare and Robert Graves, including poems of non-English poets in translation.

Thurman, Judith. Flashlight, and other poems; illus. by Reina Rubel. New York: Atheneum, 1979.

This is a collection of twenty-five short poems which reflect some of the major and minor encounters of childhood, as in "Humps are lumps/ and so are mumps," and the campfire which is "leaping to lick our fingers". Others display in a new light such things as soap and rags.

Tippett, James S. Crickety cricket; illus. by Mary Chalmers. New York: Harper, 1973.

The fifty-two poems which make up this collection originally appeared in seven previously published books and in magazines. Everyday experiences of the child are presented in simple rhythmic patterns and predictable rhymes.

Untermeyer, Louis; ed. The golden treasury of poetry; illus. by Joan Walsh Anglund. Racine, Wis.: Golden Press, 1959.

Untermeyer has collected over 400 poems and arranged them in twelve categories, with each poem or group of poems preceded by a commentary in conversational tone. There are few contemporary poets included in this collection of predominantly narrative poems and ballads.

Updike, John. A child's calendar; illus. by Nancy Ekholm Burkert. New York: Knopf, 1965.

The arrangement of this book is such as to provide a poem for each month, with a picture for each poem. It begins "The days are short,/ The sun a spark/ Hung thin between/ The dark and dark." Continuing on its recounting of events in a child's year, it ends with the final lines of the December poem: "Wrapped up in hope--/ Another year."

Wallace, Daisy, ed. Monster Poems; illus. by Kay Chorao. New York: Holiday House, 1976.

Wallace has gathered a total of seventeen poems about monsters written by fourteen different authors. The reader is invited to think about: "What kind of pet/ Would a monster get/ If a monster set/ His mind on a pet?"

Weiss, Renee Karol, comp. A paper zoo; illus. by Ellen Raskin. New York: Macmillan, 1968.

This collection is subtitled: "A collection of animal poems by modern American poets."

While teaching kindergarten, Weiss used poems by such poets as Theodore Roethke, e.e. cummings, and William Carlos Williams to the great delight of her students. She has brought together in this book the poems which she used.

Willard, Nancy. A visit to William Blake's inn; illus. by Alice and Martin Provensen. New York: Harcourt, 1981.

In the introduction to this volume the author relates how, at the age of seven, she was introduced to the poetry of Blake. It was his poetry which became the inspiration for these poems about life at an imaginary inn run by William Blake himself and staffed by angels, dragons, and rabbits. Among the guests are sunflowers and the King of Cats. A theme of harmony pervades the poems, as is shown in the line "Dancing starts where fighting ends". The illustrations reflect the London of Blake's time.

Wilner, Isabel, comp. The poetry troupe; An anthology of poems to read aloud; illus. by Isabel Wilner. New York: Scribner, 1977.

The selections which the compiler has chosen to be included in this volume were, under her direction, researched and selected by children during their poetry troupe experience. This experience involved practicing reading poetry to each other, and then deciding on a program of sharing that poetry with an audience. The resulting collection is a mixture of the traditional and the contemporary.

Woodsworth, William. Lucy Gray, or solitude; illus. by Gilbert Riswold. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1964.

This story poem was written at Goslar, Germany in 1799.

The author states that "it was founded on a circumstance told me by my sister, of a little girl who, not far from Halifax, Yorkshire, was bewildered in a snow-storm". The poem is hand-lettered by Margaret Riswold, and illustrated in pastels by Gilbert Riswold.

Worth, Valerie. More small poems; illus. by Natalie Babbitt. New York: Farrar, 1976.

These poems offer illuminating perceptions of homely, everyday items such as, for example, a safety pin, thereby exemplifying what is the essence of the poetic vision and function. The verse is free but disciplined, and deceptively simple.

Companion volumes are:

Worth, Valerie. Small poems; illus. by Natalie Babbitt. New York: Farrar, 1972.

Worth, Valerie. Still more small poems; illus. by Natalie Babbitt. New York: Farrar, 1978.

Zolotow, Charlotte. River winding; illus. by Kazue Mizumura. New York: Crowell, 1970.

This is essentially a book of feelings shared so that the reader knows that the writer is someone who understands, and the illustrations harmonize with the mood of each poem.

The opening poem, ending: "River winding, where do you flow?" is an invitation to the young reader to experience the thoughts expressed in the subsequent poems of the collection. There is the spring wind, "smelling of spring and growing things", the "blazing blazing/ orange and gold" of autumn, and "A moment in summer/ belongs to me/ and one particular/ honey bee". The volume concludes with that special feeling at bedtime when "she hears the wind ruffling outside/ saying sleep sleep sleep".

SECTION 2

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS

Introduction

When do children first encounter literature? The lucky ones meet it in infancy through the medium of nursery rhymes, and, by the time they arrive at school, they have been read and recited to, and they, in turn, have done their share of reciting and, in some instances, reading as well. For those fortunate ones, some of their happiest memories will likely center around this sharing activity. For others, the exact opposite is true; books are not among their favourite things, and a library of books or even the classroom collection which they are unable to read can hardly be expected to hold much appeal for them.

The task of the teacher is to make poetry come alive for the child, regardless of that child's background and experience. Teachers have used, and continue to use, methods ranging from simply making collections of poetry available and leaving the rest to chance, to the 'teaching' of specific poems only. Some excellent methods are also being practised.

What follows is a collection of suggestions to teachers as to practices which should prove helpful in working with poetry and young children in the classroom situation. In compiling the list of suggested do's and don't's for teachers,

the writer is indebted to similar suggestions by Sutherland and Arbuthnot (1977) and Huck (1979) and to countless other authors whose thoughts on this subject have become assimilated into and are indistinguishable from the writer's own. These suggestions are not, nor were they intended to be, a guide book of lesson plans. The writer believes that the two basic criteria for success in this endeavour are:

1. a knowledge of all kinds of poetry for children, and an appreciation and love for the best of that poetry;

2. an acquaintance with, and love and respect for, each individual in the child audience.

Both the annotated bibliography and the suggestions which follow are presented in the hope that they will prove of assistance in meeting the first of these criteria; meeting the second is the responsibility of each individual teacher.

Do's for Teachers

DO make poetry a natural part of every school day.

DO remember that children, in the process of learning to read, should hear most of their poetry before being required to cope with print.

DO have a wealth of poems at your fingertips, and on the tip of your tongue.

DO make lots of books of poetry available to children.

DO encourage wide reading of all types of poetry.

DO use books of poetry along with prose, thereby encouraging the conviction that poetry is a normal alternative method of expression for the writer.

DO remember that we are not all expected to like the same poems.

DO try to understand why others' preferences may be different.

DO remember that there are poems whose meaning can hardly be fathomed, but whose beauty can be appreciated.

DO remember that silence is often the best applause.

DO remember that sharing is the keyword; enjoy poetry with children.

DO start where the children are in the poetry experience, and then expand and deepen their interests and experience.

DO remember that appreciation for poetry develops slowly.

DO allow time for children to <u>think about</u> poetry.

DO allow time for personal enjoyment of poetry and for the compilation of personal anthologies.

DO encourage children to write their own poetry.

DO encourage children to share their individual poetry compositions with you and with each other.

DO encourage children to memorize some poetry.

DO prepare yourself for the presentation of poetry to children; read aloud and listen to your own reading.

DO use recordings to supplement, but not to replace, teacher presentation.

DO capture for yourself the magic of poetry, and make every effort to keep that magic alive.

DO be alert for new poems and methods of sharing which appear in current professional publications.

DO share poems and poetry activity ideas with colleagues.

DO know standards for judging poetry.

DO remember that your school and public libraries exist to help you obtain the materials you need.

DO make enjoyment the keynote of every poetry experience.

Don't's for Teachers

DON'T introduce poetry by dissecting.

DON'T use long introductions; use two readings rather than an introduction and a reading. The poet provides his or her own introduction and creates mood.

DON'T talk at length about a poet until after the children have become acquainted with his or her poetry.

DON'T use poetry as a reading exercise.

DON'T use poetry as an exercise in penmanship.

DON'T stress mechanics; undue emphasis on this aspect of poetry can cause children to become more concerned with the manipulation of words rather than with the thoughts with which the poem deals.

DON'T interpret poetry for children, or emphasize one correct interpretation.

DON'T criticize children unduly for their lack of insight and/or appreciation.

DON'T require oral reading and memorization.

DON'T break a poem into meaningless parts.

DON'T drill vocabulary.

DON'T overanalyze.

DON'T require that every poetry session be followed by discussion, written work, art, or other prescribed activity.

DON'T confuse poems about children with those for children.

DON'T use poetry to preach.

Suggested Classroom Activities

Sources of individual poems and books referred to in the activities which follow are listed in Appendix C. The writer is not inferring that this is the only source of a given poem; many of them appear in several collections. Mother Goose rhymes are merely listed, as they may be readily located in the sources set forth in Section One.

Audio Recordings of Poetry

Poetry may be shared by using recordings on disc or cassette. A variety of commercial recordings are available, but, as they vary in quality, it is advisable to consult the selection aids before purchasing. There is controversy as to the relative quality of recordings made in a studio as against those made 'live', and this controversy exists concerning the recording of poetry, as well as that of musical performances. There can be little doubt that the disc of Dennis Lee's Alligator Pie, for example, is enhanced by the reciprocal participation of poet and the child audience, but that does not mean that such a condition is a prerequisite to a successful recording venture.

It is not necessary that all recordings for classroom use be commercially produced; they can be made by teacher and/or children, and subsequently used by individuals or groups in a listening center.

Poetry may be read by children and recorded with a

musical background or other sound effects that will enhance the mood, tone, and rhythm. This is an activity during which it might be advisable to seek help from the music teacher, as this is a project which requires expertise which the classroom teacher may not possess.

Birthday Celebrations in Poetry

Every effort should be made to ensure that poetry plays a part in the personal lives of the children. One of the major events is the birthday of the individual children. Whatever form birthday celebrations take in a given classroom, it should be possible for poetry to be included.

Here is one suggestion:

A large cardboard birthday cake makes an ideal place to store poems with a birthday theme. The birthday child gets an opportunity to draw one and attach it to the outside, where it will remain until the next birthday child replaces it with a favourite. It is possible that the child may not particularly like the first one extracted, so further draws are permitted, to a maximum equal to the age of the child.

The birthday child is given the option of reading the poem to the class.

Adding poems to the birthday cake collection will be an ongoing class project.

If the occasion is celebrated by the wearing of a special hat, the poem may be taped to the hat.

Body Movement and Poetry

Poetry expressed in body movement is to be distinguished from finger play, which presupposes sitting still, and usually consists of predetermined patterns of movement in unison. It also differs from dramatization. What is suggested in this instance is body movement, however wild or subdued that movement by which the child interprets the message or mood of the poem.

Examples of movements suggested by poems are:

1. Arm swinging--"The Swing" by Robert Louis Stevenson
2. Hopping--"Hoppity" by A.A. Milne
3. Marching--"Buckingham Palace" by A.A. Milne
4. Skipping--"To Market, To Market" from Mother Goose
5. Walking--"Hot Cross Buns" from Mother Goose

The poem "Fueled" by Marcie Gans is an excellent example of the type of poem that allows for free interpretation of the message by means of movement. It should be interesting to contrast how the child interprets "the rocket tore a tunnel/ through the sky" and "the seedling/ urged its way/ through the thickness of black".

Choral Reading

An introduction to this activity may be provided by suggesting that the children join in the refrain of a poem such as James Whitcomb Riley's "Little Orphant Annie".

This impromptu introduction is suggested primarily for enjoyment, but also in the hope that some of the problems which this activity often presents may be forestalled. Foremost among these problems are: (1) How do we avoid the sing-song effect? and (2) How do we deal with the extremes of the merely mechanical presentation and the artificially, over-refined recitation?

James Reeves suggests a solution which has worked for him. He advocates using the nursery rhyme "Ladybird, Ladybird", after first making sure that the children know what a ladybird is. Each child raises the right index finger and pictures a ladybird sitting on top. They then say the poem, not bothering whether they are reciting together, but being very sure that they are speaking as if they are warning their particular insect of its danger. It is crucial that the speaker focus on the meaning and the mood of the poem, for good reading of poetry must come from within the speaker. If this is happening, the speaker will not then be concentrating on the manner of speaking. This idea is borrowed from

Teaching Poetry; Poetry in Class: Five to Fifteen by James Reeves (London: Heinemann, 1958)

This type of activity is not intended to be training for a verse-speaking choir, as that is a difficult, highly-specialized job to be undertaken only by a person trained for that purpose. It is a means whereby children can read together, each supporting the other, and the reluctant

reader is not left out. A lot of improvisation should go along with this activity, as naturalness of presentation is the aim of all choral reading.

Discussion of Poetry

It should always be borne in mind that the object of discussion is to stimulate thought, to think, to share ideas--not to test memory. Discussion period is a time of interaction when the teacher plays a limited role as one of the group, a time of unconditional acceptance rather than of competition. Successful learning is dependent on a building up of the child's self-confidence; creative achievement is impossible for the child who has a low opinion of self-worth. The child who is denied the validity of his or her own thoughts and feelings can hardly be expected to express them openly. Poetry discussion, then, should be characterized by honesty, thoughtfulness, mutual respect, and creativity.

The best discussion comes from the spontaneous response of the child. If the adult begins the discussion, it should be with an open-ended question as, for example, "Is there something that someone would like to say?"

Among the questions which might be discussed are:

1. How does the poem make you feel?
2. What pictures do you see as you read or listen?
3. What sounds do you imagine as you read or listen?

4. Are there any words, phrases, lines, that you particularly liked or disliked? Can you explain why?

5. How should the poem be read--loudly, softly, fast slowly? Do tempo and volume remain consistent throughout the length of the poem or do they vary?

6. Why might this poem not appeal to everyone? To what people might it not appeal?

Dramatization of Poetry

With this age group practically all poetry 'teaching' should be oral, active, and, in a lot of instances, dramatic. The poems which lend themselves best to dramatization are ballads, narratives, and those containing dialogue. The level of sophistication of a given dramatic presentation will be determined by individual circumstances.

Some examples of poems which should lend themselves to dramatization are:

1. "The King's Breakfast" by A. A. Milne
2. "The Pied Piper of Hamelin" by Robert Browning
3. "Daddy Fell Into the Pond" by Alfred Noyes

Another form of dramatization by which young children may enjoy interpreting poetry is by the use of puppets. The shy child, who may be reluctant to express thoughts and feelings in front of a group, may be quite willing to do so for a puppet. Poems that will be effective with puppets are:

1. "The Monkeys and the Crocodile" by Laura E. Richards
2. "The Owl and the Pussy-cat" by Edward Lear
3. "The Telephone" by Kornei Chukovsky

(See also "A Poetry Animal Fair", p.158)

The radio play concept may be employed with a poem such as "Wind Song" by Lilian Moore. A different child can be chosen to produce the sound effects for each of the quiet things in "When the wind blows/ the quiet things speak", while another child recites the poem.

Enjoying Rhythm and Sound in Poetry

Poetry is meant to be read aloud, and in many poems the rhythm and repetition are so intriguing that they invite group participation.

An interesting experiment would be to try sitting around on the floor in a circle for that extra feeling of togetherness. When the weather permits, this may be an outdoor activity.

It would probably be wise to begin with some nursery rhymes which children know from memory--rhymes such as "Pat-a-cake, pat-a-cake, baker's man", and then proceed to poems or songs which have a lot of repetition so that children can readily chime in on the repeated parts--"If all the seas were one sea", for example.

Many poems by modern poets can then be used--David McCord's "The Pickety Fence", and Jack Prelutsky's "The Mean

Old Mean Hyena", to mention just two.

Children love the newness of coined words, and take great pleasure and pride in repeating them. They also enjoy a ridiculous combination of words.

This activity was suggested in

"Poetry in the Story Hour" by Nancy Larrick (Top of the News, January, 1976, 151-161)

Growing Up With Poetry

Most primary grade classrooms use some method of measuring and recording the growth of the students. This may take the form of a commercially-produced chart, or it may simply be a designated space on a door or wall of the classroom, marked off in centimeters.

At a height not to exceed eye-level of the majority of the students, a variety of poems about growing may be displayed. The children who can read independently will be allowed to do so, while non-readers will have the poem(s) read to them by the adult who is doing the measuring and recording. This does not mean that an adult would not willingly read a poem to the capable reader who requests it, of course.

Initially, a couple of poems may be chosen by the teacher, but children should be on the alert for poems to use for additions and substitutions. It is not mandatory that all poems placed here be about growing; the suggestion is designed to reinforce the conviction that poetry can permeate all of life.

Hallowe'en in Poetry

During planning sessions for the Hallowe'en party, the teacher should share with the children some poems with a Hallowe'en theme. There should be copies of a minimum of five poems for each child and, if possible, the books from which they were taken should be made available in the classroom library. (See "Personal Anthologies", p. 153, for suggestions as to where these poems should be kept.)

As children like to keep their plans for party costumes a secret, it might be suggested that they hunt for a poem about what they will be masqueraded as, and that they make a copy of that poem to pin to their costumes. Older students could be asked to help those in kindergarten and grade one who might need assistance in choosing a poem and in making a copy.

Poetry-sharing at Hallowe'en party time will be a natural outcome of this project, and when students parade to other classrooms to show their costumes they will be 'advertising' poetry.

Classroom decorations may consist of mobiles of cats, bats, witches, ghosts, and jack-o'-lanterns, with an appropriate poem about the depicted object printed on the reverse side of the figure.

This suggestion may be adapted for other festivals as well, but it is especially important for Hallowe'en because this is the first major celebration of the school year, and

it is an excellent opportunity to allow the children to see that poetry can be an important and enjoyable part of their festivities.

Incidental Sharing of Poetry

The immediacy of an experience, and the ability of the teacher to respond with related memorable words will do much towards endearing children to poetry.

A few examples will serve to illustrate:

1. Situation: A child with a loose tooth

   Quotation: "I jiggled it/ jaggled it/ jerked it" by Lee Bennett Hopkins

2. Situation: Many children with head colds

   Quotation: "I am discouraged/ With my nose./ The only thing it/ Does is blows" by Dorothy Aldis

3. Situation: A dull, rainy day

   Quotation: "I like it when it's mizzly/ and just a little drizzly" by Aileen Fisher or "'Twas a misty, moisty morning" from Mother Goose

4. Situation: Putting mittens on correctly

   Quotation: Thumbs in the thumb-place/ Fingers all together!" by Mary Louise Allen

5. Situation: Child is looking for yet another book about dinosaurs

Quotation: "But they/ Still walk/ About heavily/ In everybody's/ Head" by Valerie Worth

There is a high probability that the teacher who makes a practice of incidental sharing of poetry will find that children will want to hear the whole of the poems from which the teacher quotes, and that they will soon be active participants themselves.

A Literature Learning Package

Literature packages can be developed for children of any age and will differ in content and format depending on the age of the children and the goal of the experience.

Let us consider a literature package on the subject Dogs, designed to reinforce the poetry-prose relationship. Examples of the types of things which will be included in the package are:

1. Story books (Poofy loves company by Nancy Winslow Parker)

2. Story-in-rhyme books (Old Mother Hubbard and her dog; illus. by Evaline Ness)

3. Information books (Training a companion dog by Dorothy Broderick, and About dogs: the 1977 Childcraft annual)

4. Poetry books (Hark! Hark! The dogs do bark, and

other rhymes about dogs, chosen by Lenore Blegvad)

5. Laminated copies of poems from eclectic anthologies, preferably with space for children to make a picture with grease pencils

6. Sound filmstrips (Angus and the ducks by Marjorie Flack)

7. Cassette tapes of stories (Sounder by William Armstrong)

8. Laminated copies of crossword puzzles (Puzzles may be made by the teacher or obtained commercially.)

9. Jigsaw puzzles (These may be made by children.)

10. Cassette tapes of poetry recorded by the teacher and/or children

11. Activity sheets (These should be designed for enjoyment, not of a workbook nature.)

12. A cassette tape made by the teacher giving instructions on the use of the activity sheets and the literature package generally

This suggestion is adapted from ideas contained in Reading guidance in a media age by Nancy Pollette and Marjorie Hamlin (Metuchen, N. J.: Scarecrow Press, 1975)

Organized Sharing of Poetry

The teacher should plan for an organized sequence of poems to be shared regularly. These poems should be incorporated into annual, monthly, weekly, and daily lesson plans, and take advantage of the seasonal and thematic approaches to planning. The reading of one poem a day means that children will be experiencing approximately two hundred poems in a given school year. Some of these poems are certain to make lasting impressions; others will be forgotten before the day is through. However, by using such a number and variety of poems, each child will surely find a few which will have deep personal meaning.

While it is important to introduce new poems, it is also important to keep 'old favourites' alive--old favourites of both the children and the teacher. A repetition of requests results in unconscious memorization.

In addition to at least one good general anthology, the teacher needs a personal file of poems, arranged in whatever system the individual finds most convenient for the purpose of sharing, both on an incidental and on an organized basis.

Personal Anthologies

Periodically throughout the school year the teacher will be giving the children copies of a variety of poems. Also, children will be encouraged to gather their favourites from all available sources. The problem arises as to how

and where these poems will be kept.

Following are some suggestions for the format of the child's personal anthology:

1. Each child may keep a notebook exclusively for that purpose, and here the poems will be copied as they are collected.

2. The child may make a poetry book, scrapbook style, with space for illustrations if desired. Arrangement and production will depend upon the level of sophistication of poetry experience of each individual child involved. It may consist simply of a MY FAVOURITE POEMS collection, in the order in which the poems were collected; on the other hand, it may result in a special topics collection or an eclectic anthology, complete with a table of contents and an index.

3. The child may choose to copy each poem on a separate card and file each in a box, purchased commercially or handcrafted in Art class. Another possibility is the loose-leaf binder format.

This is the most important anthology that the child will own, and as it may also be the only collection of poetry in the home, it may prove to be the incentive needed to encourage poetry sharing in the family. It is important that ample time be allotted for this activity, and that it be accorded due respect.

A Pocketful of Poetry

For this activity the teacher should hold a hand mysteriously in a pocket and solicit guesses from the children as to what is hidden there. The poem that is concealed should be short and one with wide appeal, preferably funny. When the poem is shared, the teacher will casually remark words to the effect: "Actually there is a poem about what I have just done", and then introduce Beatrice Schenk de Regniers' "Keep a Poem in Your Pocket". Continue with the observation that we may not always have a pocket in what we are wearing, and that sometimes our pockets become full of other things. At this point it would be interesting to share David McCord's "What's in Pockets" and the book Peter's Pocket by Judi Barrett.

Of course eventually we want to keep a lot of our favourite poems 'in our heads', but for the time being we need to decide on a suitable place to store those favourites. Discussion should follow as to a good place, and it is quite possible that many children will like the idea contained in Peter's Pocket. Other suggestions might include 'pockets' cut from sturdy cardboard and taped to the child's desk--and the teacher's.

(See also "Personal Anthologies", p. 153.)

A Poem for a Picture

Children are very familiar with the practice of illustrating a story; in fact, it appears to be one of their favourite activities. An interesting activity would be to reverse the process and find a poem that 'goes with' the picture.

The teacher will make available a variety of pictures, making sure that there are at least twice as many pictures as there are children. The object is to match a poem to a picture, not necessarily what it is, but what it suggests to the viewer and/or how it makes the viewer feel. Included in the collection should be visual representation of rhythm--skipping, water flowing, rain falling, for example.

Apart from the commercially-produced pictures found in most schools, the teacher should be constantly alert for other sources of pictures for use in classroom projects. Magazine advertisements, labels from food containers, and photographs are among these other available sources.

This activity may lead to discussion as to whether a child prefers to have poetry illustrated, and whether the picture aids or deters appreciation of the work.

Poetry Across the Curriculum

Too many people think of poetry as belonging exclusively to the Language Arts segment of the curriculum, and it is unfortunate that, at this stage of the child's education

particularly, the school curriculum should be perceived as being segmented. Two areas of the curriculum which are considered most unlikely to be associated with poetry are probably Mathematics and Sports. Some examples of poems which may be used with these are:

Mathematics -- "Arithmetic" by Carl Sandburg

"Euclid" by Vachel Lindsay

"Multiplication is Vexation" from Mother Goose

"There was an old man who said 'Do'", Anonymous

"To think that two and two are four" by A. E. Housman

Sports -- "Hockey Game" by Dennis Lee (Ice Hockey)

"A Year Later" by Mary Ann Hoberman (Swimming)

"Ping Pong" by Eve Merriam (Table Tennis)

"The Sidewalk Racer" by Lillian Morrison (Skateboarding)

"Suddenly" by David McCord (Ice Skating)

Two activities which may help to reinforce the idea of the interrelatedness of poetry to other school subjects are:

1. Each child searches for a poem about his or her favourite thing, school subject, or sport.

2. Each child finds a book of poems, preferably a special topics collection, and writes a poem which he or she feels 'belongs' there.

Poetry and the Senses

A series of walks around the neighbourhood may be planned, each walk designated as a different sensory experience. Before starting out, instructions similar to the following may be given to the class: "Today we will take a walk along the street behind the school. Let's listen and make note of the different sounds that we hear." After returning to the classroom, everyone including the teacher will search for a poem which reminds him or her of a certain sound. Also, children may want to write their own poems about the experience.

Depending upon the size of the group, it will be interesting to have spontaneous quotes of phrases, lines, or whole stanzas, during the walk. (See "Incidental Sharing", p. 150.)

This suggestion may be repeated as a 'seeing walk' and as a 'smelling walk'.

A Poetry Animal Fair

This activity may be planned in conjunction with the Art teacher, or after an Art project with the classroom teacher when children and teachers have made puppets of various animals. Puppets of the hand or the stick variety are equally acceptable.

On a table placed in a prominent place in the classroom, poetry books about animals and general anthologies in which animal poems may be found will be displayed. Everyone is

expected to select a poem for his or her puppet. Opportunity is provided for each participant to recite the chosen poem while working the puppet. The very shy child and/or the non-reader may feel free to ask a classmate or the teacher to read for him or her, and this stipulation is made at the beginning of the activity so that everyone will feel at ease and be able to enter into the fun and excitement of the 'fair'. (Many shy children have been known to forget their shyness while 'being' their puppet character.)

This is an activity which may be a joint project of the classroom teacher and the teacher-librarian, and may very well take place in the library.

This suggestion is an adaptation of an idea presented in

Pass the Poetry, Please! Using Poetry in Pre-Kindergarten--Six Classrooms by Lee Bennett Hopkins (New York: Citation Press, 1972)

Poetry Gifts

Everyone is familiar with the practice of searching for that very special gift for a special person. That process may be extended to include finding a very special poem for that special someone.

This activity will necessitate having access to a large number of poetry books, and in the initial stages of the project should take place in the library. Ample time should be allowed for browsing and for sharing of favourites with classmates, teacher, and librarian.

When the search has been completed, a discussion should take place as to the format in which the poetry gift will be presented. Among the possible choices may be: (1) printed on a handmade greeting card and given on a special occasion; and (2) illustrated, made into a picture, and gift wrapped.

It is imperative that the authorship of a poem be acknowledged at all times. This fact must be impressed upon the children from the beginning.

A Poetry Happening

At some time during the school year it would be a good idea for children to share with others outside the classroom the poetry experiences they have been enjoying together. This sharing may take the form of recitation before a regular school assembly on a very informal basis, or it may be a poetry happening to which parents and other guests are invited, and in which the whole school participates.

Whatever form the happening assumes, it should definitely be non-competitive. It should be used to foster the right motives: a love of poetry, and a desire to share that love with others.

This occasion would be an appropriate time to invite a poet to visit the school and do a reading of poetry. Children need to see writers, to be assured that they are

actual flesh-and-blood people, not simply names on a page, or people who lived and died a long time ago.

A Poetry Piggy Bank

Poems may be printed on coin-shaped construction paper and then laminated for extra firmness. These may then be deposited in a handmade piggy bank made of cardboard or other suitable material. This provides an excellent storage place for those poems which the teacher shares with the children, on an incidental or organized sharing basis.

Children should feel free to borrow a poem from the bank at any time.

This suggestion is an adaptation of an idea presented by Caroline Feller Bauer in a storytelling presentation to teachers and teacher-librarians in Calgary on March 31, 1982.

Further ideas are to be found in

Handbook for Storytellers by Caroline F. Bauer (Chicago: American Library Association, 1977)

A Poetry Place

A special area should be set aside in the classroom and designated "Poet's Corner" or some other name decided upon by the class. Following is a brief description of examples of things which may be featured in this special place:

1. A collection of poetry books may be displayed, the display to change regularly or spontaneously. The display should be on a low table or shelf in order to be accessible to the shortest child.

2. A poem tree may be used to which children attach copies of their favourite poems as leaves. The tree can be made very easily by planting an old bare tree branch in concrete or a container of rocks. This is also an attractive way to display seasonal poems.

3. A poetry box may be placed in this corner, the box to house the children's own poetry compositions when they are ready to share them with others.

4. A special tribute to a specific poet--on that poet's birthday, for instance, may be featured here. All the available volumes of the poet's work may be displayed, and, in instances where a certain anthology may contain only one poem, that poem should be copied, mounted, and laminated. A photograph and biographical information may also be included, as well as any non-print materials such as disc, tape, or cassette recordings, or filmstrips.

5. The birthday cake will be housed here. (See "Birthday Celebrations in Poetry", p. 142.)

The backdrop for this area should feature a poem printed in large, readable-across-the-classroom script. This poem should be changed at least weekly, and, depending

on the maturity of the children, it should be done by them. Grade three students should be quite capable of printing the poem early in the school year, and many grade two students very soon thereafter.

The 'poetry place' should be one where children can feel free to spend time at their own convenience.

This idea is adapted from ideas contained in "Give Children Poetry!" by Lee Bennett Hopkins, Instructor, March 1982, 36-37,40.

Prose-Poetry Tie-ins

When stories and poems are used together in the story hour, the child soon takes for granted the fact that poetry is a natural method of expression for the writer.

Some examples of these story-poem tie-ins are:

1. Nothing at all by Wanda Gag, and "Busy" by A. A. Milne.

2. The snowy day by Ezra Jack Keats, and "Cynthia in the snow" by Gwendolyn Brooks.

3. Cabin full of mice by Jane Foster, and "Deer Mouse" by Aileen Fisher.

4. Ben's trumpet by Rachel Isadora, and "Lewis has a trumpet" by Karla Kuskin.

5. The Aminal by Lorna Balian, and "The little turtle"

by Vachel Lindsay

6. Fish for supper by M. B. Goffstein, and "The fish with the deep sea smile" by Margaret Wise Brown

7. Gilberto and the wind by Marie Hall Ets, and "Wind Song" by Lilian Moore

8. The littlest angel by Charles Tazewell, and "Shepherd's song at Christmas" by Langston Hughes

The Weather in Poetry

From paper or cardboard a blank monthly calendar, approximately 105 cm wide and 75 cm tall, may be constructed and placed on the classroom wall. It may be drawn directly onto the chalkboard if space permits.

At the bottom of the calendar, large envelopes labelled SUN POEMS, FOG POEMS, RAIN POEMS, WIND POEMS, SNOW POEMS, or any variation thereof may be attached. Finding a variety of poems for each envelope will be an ongoing class project.

Each day a child tells the class what the weather is like, and then chooses a poem from the appropriate envelope. The child attaches the poem to that particular day's space on the calendar. When the weather changes, the child who first reports the change has the option of changing the poem but should feel under no compulsion to do so.

This activity will result in exposure to at least one poem per day, and will be an incentive to children to become alert for poems on a specific subject.

APPENDIX A

POETRY AWARDS

Amelia Frances Howard-Gibbon Medal

Initiated in 1971, this medal is awarded annually by the Canadian Library Association for outstanding illustrations in a children's book published in Canada during the previous year. It honours and commemorates the illustrator of An Illustrated Comic Alphabet, published in 1859 and regarded as the first Canadian picture book.

1971 The Wind Has Wings Illustrated by Elizabeth Cleaver (Toronto: Oxford University Press)

1977 Down by Jim Long's Stage Illustrated by Pam Hall (St. John's: Breakwater Books)

Canadian Library Association Book of the Year for Children

Created in 1947, this award is presented annually to the author of the best-written English language book for children in Canada during the previous year.

1970 Sally Go Round the Sun by Edith Fowke (Toronto: McClellan & Stewart)

1975 Alligator Pie by Dennis Lee (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada)

1978 Garbage Delight by Dennis Lee (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada)

Imperial Order of the Daughters of the Empire Award

In 1975 the Toronto chapter of the IODE established this award to be given annually in December to children's books by authors or illustrators living in the Toronto area. (The year listed indicates the year in which the book was published.)

1974 Alligator Pie by Dennis Lee (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada)

John Newbery Medal

Donated by the Frederic G. Melcher family as an incentive for better quality in children's books, this medal has been awarded annually since 1922, under the supervision of the Association for Library Services to Children of the American Library Association, to the author of the finest work in children's literature published in the United States during the preceding year. The medal is named after the British printer and bookseller, John Newbery (1713-1767), who is regarded as the first person to print and sell books specifically for children.

1982 A Visit to William Blake's Inn: Poems for Innocent and Experienced Travellers by Nancy Willard; illustrated by Alice and Martin Provensen (New York: Harcourt)

This marks the first occasion that this prestigious medal has been awarded to a book of poetry; also unprecedented is the fact that the illustrators received the Caldecott Honor award for their work on this volume.

Kate Greenaway Medal

This medal is given annually by the (British) Library Association to the most distinguished work in children's book illustration first published in the United Kingdom in the previous year. It honours Kate Greenaway (1846-1901),

the popular British illustrator of children's books.

1966 Mother Goose Treasury. Illustrated by Raymond Briggs (London: Hamish Hamilton)

1969 The Quangle-Wangle's Hat. Illustrated by Helen Oxenbury (London: Heinemann)

National Council of Teachers of English Excellence in Poetry for Children

This annual award, established in 1977, is presented to an American poet in recognition of his/her body of work in poetry for children.

1977 David McCord

1978 Aileen Fisher

1979 Karla Kuskin

1980 Myra Cohn Livingston

1981 Eve Merriam

1982 John Ciardi

New York Times Choice of Best Illustrated Children's Books of the Year

The New York Times sponsors an annual selection of the best illustrated book of the year. It was initiated in 1952.

1952 Madeline's Rescue by Ludwig Bemelmans illustrated by Ludwig Bemelmans (New York: Viking)

1953 Mother Goose Riddle Rhymes by Joseph and Ruth Low; illustrated by Joseph Low (New York: Harcourt)

Randolph Caldecott Medal

This medal has been awarded annually since 1938, under the supervision of the Association for Library Services to Children of the American Library Association, to the illustrator of the most distinguished picture book for children published in the United States during the preceding year. It honours the British author-illustrator, Randolph Caldecott (1846-1886), who devoted as much attention to his illustrations for children's books as he did to his other art work, thus lending prestige to the making of picture books for children.

1945 Prayer for a Child by Rachel Field; illustrated by Elizabeth Orton Jones (New York: Macmillan)

1946 The Rooster Crows, traditional Mother Goose; illustrated by Maud and Miska Petersham (New York: Macmillan)

1954 Madeline's Rescue by Ludwig Bemelmans; illustrated by the author (New York: Viking)

1978 Noah's Ark, the Bible; illustrated by Peter Spier (New York: Doubleday)

Ruth Schwartz Children's Book Award

First presented in 1976, this award is provided by the Ruth Schwartz Foundation in commemoration of the late Ruth Schwartz, who was for many years the proprietress of a Toronto bookstore. It is given to an outstanding work of children's literature published in Canada during the previous year. The Canadian Booksellers' Association, in co-operation with the Ontario Arts Council, decides upon and administers the award.

1977 Garbage Delight by Dennis Lee; illustrated by Frank Newfeld (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada)

APPENDIX B

SELECTION AIDS

Current Reviewing Sources

The Booklist. The American Library Association, 50 East Huron Street, Chicago. Twice a month January through July, and once in August.

This is a recognized reviewing medium of the American Library Association. Reviews are comprehensive, with suggestions as to age and grade suitability.

The Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books. Graduate Library School, University of Chicago Press, 5801 Ellis Avenue, Chicago. Monthly except August.

Reviews are critical and thorough, with evaluations of literary quality as well as grade level and reading level. New books which are not recommended are also included. Annotations indicate whether a given volume is recommended, acceptable, marginal, or not recommended.

The Calendar. Children's Book Council, 67 Irving Place, New York. Semi-annual.

In addition to information about children's books, this newsletter supplies notification of special events and projects which are of special interest to those who work with children.

Canadian Materials. Canadian Library Association, 151 Sparks Street, Ottawa. Quarterly.

This periodical reviews materials produced in Canada, by Canadians, and/or on Canadian topics. It is aimed particularly at the school population.

Cricket Magazine. Open Court Publishing Company, 1058 Eighth Street, LaSalle, Illinois. Monthly.

This is a literary magazine for elementary school children. In addition to excerpts from books, it contains new stories and poems by well-known and highly respected authors. "Cricket's Bookshelf" features child-oriented reviews, and "Meet the Author" provides a means whereby children are given information on their favourite authors.

The Horn Book Magazine. Horn Book Incorporated, Park Square Building, 31 St. James Avenue, Boston. Six times a year.

The detailed reviews are classified by subject and age level, and it is worthy of note that only recommended material is reviewed in this periodical. The October issue features "Fanfare", which is a list of the outstanding books reviewed in the preceding year.

In Review: Canadian Books for Children. Ontario Provincial Library, 14th Floor, Mowat Block, Queens Park, Toronto. Quarterly.

An authoritative and critical reviewing tool, this periodical presents a straightforward assessment of Canadian books for children. Included also are articles on Canadian literature, reviews of professional library literature, and biographical profiles of Canadian authors.

Instructor. (Incorporates Teacher) The Instructor Publications, 7 Bank Street, Dansville, New York. Monthly except June and July. November and December issues are combined.

Regular features of this periodical for teachers are "Keeping Up"--book reviews, and "Poetry Place"--poems selected by Lee Bennett Hopkins, with information on the poet and suggestions as to how the poems may be used.

Language Arts. (Formerly Elementary English) National Council of Teachers of English, 1111 Kenyon Road, Urbana, Illinois. Monthly September through May. November and December issues are combined.

The "Books for Children" section of this official journal of the NCTE Elementary Section regularly contains reviews of children's books. Articles on the teaching of literature appear frequently.

School Library Journal. R. R. Bowker and Company, 1180 Avenue of the Americas, New York, N. Y. Monthly September through May.

This periodical attempts to review all children's books published in the United States each year. The evaluations are aimed at school and public libraries. Highly recommended books are starred.

The WEB: Wonderfully Exciting Books. The Ohio State University, The Reading Center, Columbus, Ohio. Quarterly.

This publication is devoted to the reviewing of children's books and to suggestions as to how teachers can use children's literature in their classrooms. The regular feature "Web of Possibilities" proposes activities to use with a given book, theme, or genre. These activities offer subject tie-ins.

Retrospective Selection Aids

Children's Catalogue, 14th ed. The H. W. Wilson Company, 950 University Avenue, Bronx, New York.

This work, now in its fourteenth edition, first appeared in 1909 as an inaugural venture in selective bibliography. The Catalogue includes books for children from pre-school through sixth grade, and supplements are published annually for each of the four years between editions. This 1981

edition includes 5,091 titles and 11,256 analytical entries. The volume is organized into three parts for most effective use: Classified Catalogue--Author, Title, Subject, and Analytical Index--Directory of Publishers and Distributors.

The Elementary School Library Collection, 13th ed., 1982. Bro-Dart Foundation, P.O. Box 3488, Williamsport, Pa.

The basic arrangement is a classified one, but there are index approaches by author, subject, title, and grade level. Annotations are included, and materials--print and non-print--are evaluated so as to indicate which titles would be considered basic to a beginning library collection and to the subsequent acquisition phases. This publication is designed to assist in the establishment of new school libraries serving children of the kindergarten to grade six years.

Indexes to Children's Poetry

Brewton, John E. and Sara W., compilers. Index to Children's Poetry. Bronx, New York: Wilson, 1942.

In excess of 15,000 poems by approximately 2,500 authors in 130 collections of poems for children and young people are indexed here. The poems are classified under more than 1,800 subjects, and grade levels are also noted. A directory of publishers is provided.

Brewton, John E. and Sara W., compilers. Index to Children's Poetry; first supplement. Bronx, New York: Wilson, 1954.

This supplement indexes 66 collections published between 1938 and 1951, following the form of the main volume cited above.

Brewton, John E. and Sara W., compilers. Index to Children's Poetry; second supplement. Bronx, New York: Wilson, 1965.

This is an extension of the main volume and the first supplement cited above. The 85 collections which are indexed here were published between 1949 and 1963.

Brewton, John E.; Brewton, Sara W.; and Blackburn, G. Meredith, compilers. Index to Poetry for Children and Young People, 1964-1969. Bronx, New York: Wilson, 1972.

This volume is an extension of the basic volumes published under the titles Index to Children's Poetry, plus the first and second supplements cited above. Here are indexed more than 11,000 poems of approximately 2,000 authors as contained in 117 collections.

Brewton, John E.; Blackburn, G. Meredith; and Blackburn, Lorraine A., compilers. Index to Poetry for Children and Young People, 1970-1975. Bronx, New York: Wilson, 1978.

This volume covers 110 collections published from 1970 through 1975. In excess of 10,000 poems are indexed according to title, subject, author, and first line, following the style established in the 1942 edition and maintained throughout the subsequent editions entered above.

APPENDIX C

SOURCES REFERRED TO IN PART II

About Dogs: the 1977 Childcraft Annual. Field Enterprises, 1977.

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Allen, Mary Louise. "The Mitten Song" in M. H. Arbuthnot (Comp.), Time for Poetry. Scott, Foresman, 1968.

Armstrong, William. Sounder. Harper, 1969.

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Barrett, Judi. Peter's Pocket. Atheneum, 1974.

Blegvad, Lenore. Hark! Hark! The Dogs do Bark, and other rhymes about dogs. Atheneum, 1976.

Broderick, Dorothy. Training a Companion Dog. Prentice-Hall, 1965.

Brooks, Gwendolyn. "Cynthia in the Snow" in G. Brooks, Bronzeville Boys and Girls. Harper, 1956.

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De Regniers, Beatrice Schenk. "Keep a Poem in Your Pocket" in B. S. de Regniers Something Special. Harcourt, 1958.

Ets, Marie Hall. Gilberto and the Wind. Viking, 1963.

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Flack, Marjorie. Angus and the Ducks. Doubleday, 1930.

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Gans, Marcie. "Fueled" in L. B. Hopkins (Comp.) Poetry on Wheels. Garrard, 1974.

Goffstein, M. B. Fish for Supper. Dial, 1976.

Hoberman, Mary Ann., "A Year Later" in Yellow Butter Purple Jelly Red Jam Black Bread. Viking, 1981.

Hopkins, Lee Bennett. "This Tooth" in L. B. Hopkins (Comp.) Me! Seabury, 1970.

Housman, A. E. "To think that two and two are four" in H. Plotz, Comp. Imagination's Other Place. Crowell, 1955.

Hughes, Langston. "Shepherd's Song at Christmas" in M. C. Livingston (Ed.) Poems of Christmas. Athenum, 1980.

Isadora, Rachel. Ben's Trumpet. Greenwillow, 1979.

Keats, Ezra Jack. The Snowy Day. Viking, 1962.

Kuskin, Karla. "Lewis Has a Trumpet" in K. Kuskin, Near the Window Tree. Harper, 1975.

Lee, Dennis. "Hockey Game" in D. Lee. Alligator Pie. Macmillan, 1974.

Lindsay, Vachel. "Euclid" in M. C. Livingston (Ed.) A Tune Beyond Us. Harcourt, 1968.

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McCord, David. "The Pickety Fence" in D. McCord, Every Time I Climb a Tree. Little, 1967.

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_____. "What's in Pockets" in D. McCord, Away and Ago. Little, 1975.

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in A. A. Milne, The World of Christopher Robin. Dutton, 1967.

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