HISTORICAL FICTION IN THE ELEMENTARY GRADES

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by

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ABSTRACT

Historical fiction has a rich potential to contribute to the intellectual, emotional, social, and even spiritual growth of children. Yet the potential of this genre is not recognized by many elementary school teachers. Foremost among the reasons for this reluctance is that not all elementary school teachers have been exposed to study in children's literature which would give them an awareness of the rich resources that are available in historical fiction, as well as the approaches, techniques, and activities appropriate to the teaching of literature in general and historical fiction in particular. Furthermore, the Program of Studies prescribed by the provincial Department of Education makes no particular reference to either children's literature or historical fiction.

This study was undertaken to establish a set of criteria which teachers may use in evaluating and selecting books of historical fiction for their pupils, to develop a workable unit of study for historical fiction within an elementary school literature program, and to provide a small core list of historical fiction appropriate to elementary school pupils.

All available literature pertaining to the nature of historical fiction as a literary genre and the potential value this genre has for sharing with elementary children

was reviewed. This review formed the basis for the set of criteria. The recommended core and alternate lists consist of books which meet the criteria of excellence formulated from the literature review, have been personally examined by the writer, have been recommended in at least one reputable selection aid, and are presently in print or because of their interest, appeal, and popularity are available in the existing collection of many schools.

The teacher's guide demonstrates one approach to teaching historical fiction. No attempt was made to deal with the many other, equally worthwhile, approaches. The recommended core and alternate lists of books are not exhaustive. They are samples selected for their literary qualities and supportive themes.

Based on this study a number of observations and recommendations are made to suggest how schools and teachers may be supplied with adequate up-to-date materials to ensure the success of a literature program. Other recommendations focus on the pre-service and in-service preparation of teachers.

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my Mom and Dad, Bessie and Douglas White, whose unsung lives--struggles, hopes, dreams, and loves--provided the inspiration for this project. It is out of their love, sacrifice and joy of learning that this project was born.

SECTION I

THE STUDY

CHAPTER ONE

THE STUDY

Introduction

Literature has much to offer children. Jacobs (1955), Walker (1964), and Troy (1973) all contended that literature can serve to enrich and enliven existing curricular programs. Literature can also serve to enhance specific aspects of a child's mental and creative development. Loban (1966), Allen (1967), and Miller (1967), for example, strongly advocated the use of literature for the development of what many call a child's sixth sense--imagination. While Jacobs (1955) felt that exposure to literature can help to develop a child's creative thinking, literature can also serve more utilitarian functions. The Nebraska Curriculum Development Center (in Tiedt & Tiedt, 1967) has developed a literature program which teaches the more frequent grammatical, linguistic, literary, and generic conventions. Perhaps the most significant function of literature, however, is its power to entertain and delight, and to provide for a child hours of pleasure from being hooked on books (Huck, 1979).

Literature, then, can serve many functions in the intermediate school. Certainly it is able to cut across curriculum areas, enriching and expanding the learning

experience of children. Troy (1973) reminded us that although "dry facts are soon forgotten, attitudes, feelings and general concepts can remain forever" (p. 474). We should work to develop these attitudes, feelings, and general concepts in pleasant ways through literature, Troy believed.

The general role which literature can play in an elementary school program is articulated by Loban (1966). He wrote that literature serves to

> clarify experiences, to make the reader more intensely aware of life, to extend that awareness. The best writers, whether for children or adults, extend and enrich experiences, making it possible for the reader to reduce confusion and to find more meaning in his personal adventures with life. (p. 751)

While there are a number of types or genres of literature (fantasy, realistic fiction, poetry, nonfiction, and the like), all of which may provide vicarious experiences from which children may reap many benefits, it is historical fiction that most allows children to reach across the ages and be touched by the lives and conditions of other people in other times. This genre allows its readers to share the life style, conditions, beliefs, hopes, dreams, defeats, agonies, and triumphs of people of another era. Through historical fiction learning becomes an interaction with living, and the past is recreated in the present. Through historical fiction the child can live vicariously the events of history and learning is made more meaningful and real. Historical characters are revealed as real

people, possessed of the same human qualities as the reader himself. Through such an interaction with the past--its events, people, and conditions--children may grow to appreciate the fact that humanity is essentially the same no matter what the era, and that man has forever grappled with the universal question about the meaning of life and human relationships with nature and other people. Only the man-made problems are different.

Problem

Historical fiction, like all good literature, can provide entertainment and pleasure at the narrative level. Like all good literature, it can go beyond telling a good story to stimulate the imagination, evoke emotion, provoke thought and enrich life. Stories about the past may develop a sense of history, a feeling for the continuity of life and the interdependence of all people--past, present, and future. Such stories may develop a sense of people and thus, as Huck (1979) suggested, they may "free readers from the cocoon of their self-centered little worlds and enlarge their life spaces to include a feeling for the past" (p. 466).

Unfortunately, there appears to be a tendency to dismiss historical fiction as neither good history nor good fiction (Walsh, 1972). Elementary school teachers need to be aware of the rich potential of historical fiction, not only as enrichment for history and/or social studies, but

in contributing to the total worth of the individual. Teachers need also to be aware of approaches, techniques, and activities appropriate to the teaching of the genre. Since not all teachers have been exposed to study in children's literature in general or historical fiction in particular, and since the program of studies presently in use in the schools makes no particular reference to either children's literature or historical fiction, it is unlikely that elementary school teachers give much, if any, serious consideration to the genre. In order for teachers to be encouraged to give historical fiction more emphasis they must first be made aware of the rich resources of historical fiction that presently exist for this age group, they must be alerted to recognize the rich potential of this genre, and they must recognize that there are many ways of presenting the genre to their students.

Purpose

This study was designed to establish a set of criteria which teachers can use in evaluating and selecting books of historical fiction for their pupils, to develop a workable unit of study for historical fiction within an elementary school literature program, and to provide a small core list of historical fiction appropriate to elementary school pupils.

Need

The program of studies for the elementary school curriculum in this province is void of any semblance of a thoroughly planned presentation of historical fiction as a literary genre. The recommended language arts curriculum for grade 4 consists of a choice between the Nelson and Ginn programs. The grades 5 and 6 curriculum is a choice between the Nelson and Copp Clark series. Neither of these three recommended programs offers a generic study of historical fiction, nor indeed a study of any literary genre. Neither is historical fiction fairly represented in the reading texts. Of the 108 stories included in the Nelson program for grades 4, 5, and 6 only eight may be considered historical fiction. The Ginn program contains 47 stories, four of which may be considered historical fiction. The Copp Clark program contains 67 stories, 14 of which are historical fiction. In the three recommended programs for the elementary language arts curriculum only approximately 8.5% of the fictional stories are about the past. There appears to be a remarkable lack of concern for historical fiction and the benefits which may accrue to elementary children from a study of this genre.

History is people--and people not so very unlike ourselves. Sutcliff (1973) reminded us that "people don't change . . . under the changing surface patterns of behavior, the fundamental qualities and emotions and relationships remain the same" (p. 308). Today's children live in

a real world of instant electronic communication, mass transportation, micro-computers, emotional turbulence, as well as self-accusation and self-actualization. The problems, frustrations, hopes and dreams of today's elementary child are real; so too were those of elementary children throughout the ages. History is people--people shaped, molded and transformed by the circumstances of their time. Historical fiction allows the mingling of the past with the present. The young reader of historical fiction reaches across the ages to experience with someone of another era these unique qualities which make them both human. Superficial trappings in dress, speech and habit are set aside. The interaction of the reader and character allows the child to discover his own identity in his real world.

In order for children to be able to receive the fullest benefit of historical fiction, educators need to be fully aware of the potential of each book to do something worthwhile for elementary school children. If a book is truly excellent, it has done something far more than teach or build character; it has expanded the reader's mind a little. It has, as Karl (1967) stated,

> added to the total bulk of his own experiences and given him a wider base from which to look at the world. Perhaps it has allowed him to have, for a few moments, a viewpoint that he will never be able to hold but that he can now understand a little; perhaps it has taken him to a place he will never go but has become an essential part of him. (p. 31)

It is vital, therefore, that children's books be examined critically and selection decisions be based on the

literary merit of each book. Educators must develop a full understanding of what constitutes excellence in children's literature. Furthermore, teachers need guidance in presenting the genre to children so that they will receive the fullest benefit from each literary experience.

Limitations

This study is concerned with historical fiction for children. Specifically, it is concerned with establishing a set of criteria by which books about the past may be judged, with designing a unit of study for teaching the genre in an elementary school literature program, and providing a list of recommended books for the genre. There are, of course, other aspects of the genre which might be explored, such as the use of historical fiction within specific content areas. It is not within the scope of this study, however, to include all possible approaches to the genre. Also, the recommended core and alternate lists of books are not exhaustive. They are samples selected for their literary qualities and supportive themes.

Methodology

In attempting to fulfil the purpose of this study a number of steps were followed. All available literature pertaining to the nature of historical fiction as a literary genre and the potential value this genre has for sharing with elementary children was reviewed. Based on this review

an attempt was made to prepare a comprehensive statement regarding the nature of historical fiction and those characteristics that make for excellence in this genre.

In addition, the writer developed a teacher's guide for sharing historical fiction with children in the elementary grades. This guide is complete with an introduction, statements on generalizations and concepts, and a description of and a suggested approach to evaluation. Included also are a number of lesson plans. The guide also includes an appended bibliography of 75 recommended books appropriate for the elementary grades. Books included in this bibliography are those which:

a) meet the general criteria of excellence as outlined in Chapter Three;
b) have been personally examined by the writer;
c) have been recommended in at least one reputable selection aid;
d) are presently in print or because of their interest, appeal, and popularity are available in the existing collection in many schools.

Organization of the Thesis

This study is reported in two sections. Section I is a report of the study itself. Chapter One includes an introduction to the study, a statement of the problem, the purpose and the need for the study, its limitations, and the methodology followed. Chapter Two presents a review of

the literature reported under the following headings: The Nature of Historical Fiction, The Value of Historical Fiction, The Child and Historical Fiction, and Sharing Literature with Children. Chapter Three develops a set of criteria for evaluating historical fiction, and Chapter Four summarizes the study, and makes recommendations.

Section II of the study is designed to serve as a teacher's guide for sharing historical fiction with children in the elementary grades. This guide is complete with an introduction, statements on generalizations and concepts, and a description of and a suggested approach to evaluation. Included also are a number of lesson plans. The guide also includes an appended bibliography of 75 recommended books appropriate for the elementary grades.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

In this chapter the literature related to the literary genre of historical fiction will be reviewed and particular emphasis will be given to the rich potential of this genre to stimulate the imagination, evoke emotion, provoke thought, and enrich the lives of elementary school children. The literature examined will be reported under the headings The Nature of Historical Fiction, The Value of Historical Fiction, The Child and Historical Fiction, and Sharing Literature with Children.

The Nature of Historical Fiction

"Historical fiction is fiction with an historical perspective" (Brett, 1981, p. 96). Like all good literature, its heart is an exciting story consisting of complex character interactions and events. Walsh (1972) pointed out the importance of the narrative when she stated, "If the novel as a form of art can have anything to say about history, it must say it through story, through character and event, not merely through setting" (p. 19).

Huck (1964), Trease (1972), Fisher (1973), and Sutherland (1981) all agreed that the main concern in

historical fiction must always be the story itself. The elements of a good story--plot, action, suspense, characters and the like--are all essential if the novelists hope to reach their audience.

The historical novel also has a central theme. Trease (1972) emphasized the importance of contemporary relevance which "is not just an extra tacked on. It [contemporary relevance] lies at the heart of the theme. It is the quality that, however little noticed by the young reader, gives the writer an additional dynamic for his work" (p. 25).

Historical novels, according to Donelson (1980), show us "both real and fictional characters trying as we all must, to work out problems and human dilemmas" (p. 248). They are not, contended Egoff (1980), concerned only with great heroes and heroines, but instead they portray "small people caught in events almost beyond their understanding and certainly beyond their control" (p. 200).

The contention that historical fiction, an account of true human experiences, is timeless is further supported by Lively (1973) and Fisher (1980). They both agree that the universal truths of human kind are ageless and for no special age. Books of historical fiction show real people of the past, as Lively (1973) wrote, "unsure of themselves

unsure of their status and their function and in so doing help a child see himself as part of a whole historical perspective" (p. 42).

The past is people, according to Sutherland (1981), and it portrays "how people manage to live and love and find joy in accomplishment whatever the times" (p. 371). It is, as Brett (1981) suggested, within the realm of historical fiction to

> portray ordinary people going about the routine business of living, but sometimes caught in extraordinary circumstances. It depicts their successes and their failures. It shows them meeting overwhelming odds with courage and superhuman effort; it shows them also defeated by circumstances they are powerless to dictate or control. (p. 97)

The historical novel provides a door to an earlier age. Not only does it meet all the requirements of good fiction, but as Sprague (1966) indicated, "it reveals the past, as accurately as painstaking research can reveal it" (p. 283). In the historical novel the past is not merely sugar coated; it is a total interweaving of fact with imagination.

Historical fiction is authentic. The writer, according to Nelson (1972), has so steeped himself in the period that he "has learned not only how the people lived, dressed and talked, but he also knows what they thought and believed" (p. 636). This strict adherence to accurate and authentic detail is further supported by such notable authors as Kamm (1966), Trease (1972), Laidlaw (1978), and Huck (1979). Hester Burton (1977), herself a distinguished writer of

historical fiction, commenting on her own rules for writing historical novels, claims that she must acquaint herself thoroughly with the historical period and the events she is describing. Moreover, she says, she must be able to carry this knowledge as lightly as the contemporary novelist carries his knowledge of the contemporary scene. Burton wrote:

> I should be able to see clearly in my mind's eye the houses in which my characters live, the clothes they wear, and the carts and carriages, and ships in which they travel. I should know what food they eat, what songs they sing when they feel happy, and what sights and smells they are likely to meet when they walk down the street. I must understand their religion, their potential hopes, their trades, and - what is most important - their relationships between different members of a family common to their particular generations. (p. 160)

Clearly, the historical novel must be an intricate balance between fact and fiction. The more fact an author has to deal with, the more imagination he will need to carry it off. It is, as Fisher (1980) remarked, "not enough to be a scholar, essential though this is. Without imagination and enthusiasm, the most learned and well-documented story will leave the young reader cold, where it should set him on fire" (p. 225). Historical fiction should fuse fact and fiction into a warm, exciting whole, appearing not as fact at all, but as a lively story.

Geoffrey Trease (1972) believed that the writing of an historical novel is the fusion of fact with fiction to create an illusion. The reader, he suggested, must be simultaneously convinced of two separate things:

> First, that these characters are alive and warm and tangible, as if they were in the room with them; second, that they are not modern people in this room, but are in another time and place whose atmosphere they have thrown around him and themselves, like some magic pavilion. (p. 16)

Synthesis

The literature reviewed above emphasizes that historical fiction, like all good literature, has an exciting plot, realistic characters, appropriate use of dialogue, a universal theme, and a strong sense of time and place. In addition, historical fiction is able to clothe the facts with thousands of minute details, thereby bringing life to the era. Its raw material is, as Brett (1981) noted, "the product of sound study and research heightened by perception and interpretation; the product itself is a creation of imagination and artistry" (p. 97).

The Value of Historical Fiction for Children

Those who write about historical fiction are in general agreement that books of this genre have a rich potential to offer children. Edwards (1972) maintained that historical novels have the power to

> evoke an active and enquiring involvement in the past . . . to stir imagination, heighten awareness of the origins of everyday things, add another dimension to the child's view of his surroundings, and develop some appreciation of very different ways of behaving and believing. (pp. 24-25)

The past, according to Sutherland (1981), is much more than an accumulation of dates and events. "It is," she said, "people and how people managed their lives - lived,

loved, found joy in success and anguish in failure" (p. 371).

Historical fiction for children does more than transmit facts. Both Troy (1973) and Sutherland (1981) pointed out that the historical novel presents and interprets the facts to make the reader feel as if he were there. Gray (1979) shared the belief that historical fiction "goes beyond the factual presentation . . . and brings events and people to life for the reader" (p. 295). History can and should be brought vividly alive for children. Sutcliff (1973) expressed the belief that young people need a sense of the continuity of time that historical fiction can offer. They need, according to her, to know and understand something of where they are now and where they are going. History can achieve this aura of reality for children, she believed, through the masterful presentation of people with whom children can identify through a universal sameness in humankind through what she described as "like calling to like under the changing surfaces" (p. 311).

Many noted authors such as Horovitz (1962), Fritz (1967, 1976, 1976), Georgiou (1969), Edwards (1972), Trease (1972), Sutcliff (1973), Monjo (1975), Burton (1977), and Sutherland (1981) all agreed with Huck (1979) that one of the essential values of historical fiction is the ability to allow the reader "to experience the past; to enter into the conflicts, the suffering, the joys, and the despair of those who lived before us" (p. 465). Historical fiction, according to Donelson (1980),

> provides wonderful opportunities for living in someone else's shoes. Readers feel emotions they could get in no other way, whether it is the exhilaration of being on top of a magnificent mountain, the satisfaction of winning against incredible odds, or just the weakkneed relief that comes from living through a harrowing experience. (p. 248)

The contention that books of the genre of historical fiction can permit children to live, vicariously, in another time is further supported by Huus (1978). She wrote that books of historical fiction

> make the past live as no textbook can. The vicarious experience they [books of historical fiction] provide help today's reader understand better the difficulties faced by children and adults of previous generations and recognize their courage and faith in meeting obstacles. (p. 7)

In its finest form, Smith (1976) suggested, "the historical story brings to a child, through imaginative happenings, an experience of living in other times. It brings a sense of the significance and color of the past in a way that transcends history" (p. 164). Smith emphasized the empathetic value for children which exists in historical fiction. The known facts of the past are interwoven with such intangibles as human thoughts and feelings, she explained, and she elaborated that the skillful intertwining of the known tangibles with the imagined intangibles of thought, feeling and the like, allows the reader to actually feel the atmosphere or flavor of another era. Historical fiction can then, as Georgiou (1969) pointed out, through a successful blending of the chronicle and imagination, "bring children a sense of the significance and flavor of other

times and what it must have been like to live in the past" (p. 306).

Once they become involved in a well told story, children may receive other benefits from their reading experience of historical fiction. They may be able, as Georgiou (1969) said, "to provide life from another angle" (p. 306). This image of "life from another angle" is also used by Moir (1976) who suggested that through the reading of historical fiction "children can perceive life from another angle whose perspective can arouse emotions and deepen impressions of character and images never to be forgotten" (p. i). Historical fiction, Moir continued, "can bridge gaps between time, space, and people" (p. i). The idea that historical fiction can reveal life is also supported by Huus (1978). She wrote that such books "connect the reader to his world and show how man has adapted, improved, and is conserving his environment" (p. 4). It was her belief that "books reveal a reader to himself and help him understand others" (p. 4).

The contention that books of historical fiction can give children a sense of their own humanity is supported by a number of other authors who wrote on this subject. Monjo (1975), a prolific writer of historical fiction, would like his books of historical fiction to arouse young people, "to make them understand that all great human beings were once uncertain children, unaware of their powers" (p. 440). Fritz (1976), another writer of historical fiction, believed

that young people, like adults, need books about the past to give them greater insight into the human condition. In such books the reader is able to "find familiar threads running through the lives of others" (p. 193). Reading such books, according to Lively (1973), is "a step towards an awareness of other people, which is the most vital step toward being not just an adult, but a mature adult" (p. 401).

Other authors offer additional values of historical fiction for children. Smith (1976) commented upon its potential to arouse an interest in history and historical characters. Monjo (1975), Davin (1976), Fritz (1976), and Collier (1982) all agreed that historical fiction can help personalize history, enabling it to impart a deeper historical understanding. Farrell (1981) felt that books from the genre may "help students to understand the physical and mental climate of another time while providing us with a common topic for a discussion of setting, characterization, and point of view" (p. 3).

Farrell also believed that historical fiction may serve, as well, to enable us "to accommodate the variety of reading levels and abilities which we find within our English classes" (p. 3).

In her discussion of historical fiction Huck (1979) also claimed that historical fiction for children does more than merely transmit historical information. She contended that books in this genre help children to experience the past, to enter into the conflicts, the suffering, the joys

and the despair of those who lived before us; to develop a feeling for the continuity of life, a perception of themselves and their present place in time as a part of the living past; to see and judge the mistakes of the past; to see change as natural and essential; and to help children to see the interdependence of humankind (pp. 468-470).

The value of historical fiction, then, is not found in an exact chronological understanding of history; rather its value lies in its potential, as Brett (1981) suggested, to

> reveal the way things were . . . provide a stage for the eminent characters of history to faithfully re-enact their roles . . . provide the same stage for the less dramatic lives of countless men, women, and children of whom history has no record . . . depict with equal accuracy the glorious and shameful deeds of the political and military leaders of the nations . . . portray ordinary people going about the routine business of living . . . and present a picture of a period complete with sights and sounds and smells. (p. 97)

Synthesis

Books of historical fiction may be a source of entertainment and delight, but they serve many other purposes as well. They serve to move the reader into the consciousness of another time. They may develop a feeling of period and give a sense of immediacy to particular events, or create an emotional awareness of people who lived in another era. They may, as well, develop insight into the self as a member of humanity. The genre of historical fiction, then, gives the reader more than history; it serves to give essence to history.

The Child and Historical Fiction

More than 20 years ago Early (1960) was propounding the thesis that if educators were to help children receive the full benefit of literature in general and historical fiction in particular, they "must know something about the kinds of abilities, understandings, and experiences that deepen enjoyment. Moreover, they must know the range and quality of enjoyment that may be evoked by literature and experienced by individuals" (p. 161).

The elementary school years constitute what Gillespie (1975) termed "the optimal period for the humanization of the growing individual" (p. 173). This is what Piaget (in Wadsworth, 1979) identified as the concrete-operational stage or what Early (1960) considered the unconscious enjoyment stage of literary development. Delight comes easily. Interests are universal. Children in this stage of development are natural collectors of things and facts. They busily gather and store up bits and pieces of knowledge, as well as collections of objects. It seems, as Gillespie (1975) suggested, that "everything under the sun and beneath the earth's crust has potential for capturing the child's attention" (p. 174).

Much has been done to assess the reading preference of children of the middle grades. Jacobs (1955), almost three decades ago, reported that the reading interests of children were catholic in nature. Children of this age

group, he reported, preferred books which dealt with animals, adventure, home and family life, everyday experiences, sports and games, robust fancy, folk tales and biography. In his review of the literature related to the reading interests of elementary school children, Parsons (1981) found a consistent pattern of reading interest from as far back as 1924 to the present day. Most researchers, he reported, found that "in fiction, boys and girls in the intermediate grades are generally more interested in reading animal stories, mysteries, adventures, historical fiction, realistic fiction, and science fiction" (p. 38).

Tucker (1981) contended that children love books which expose them to a wonderful world of adventure. He believed that children at this stage are often disappointed by the results of their real life, and therefore need adventures in which heroic children are shown overcoming formidable obstacles without adult assistance or supervision. The chief lure of any story is, according to Tucker (1981), "always the initial interest that the plot gives [the child], and the way in which the reader's curiosity, once aroused, is then satisfied in the pages to come" (p. 132).

The first consideration of elementary children is, then, according to Smith (1973), "the immediate interest of children . . . in the action of the story the author tells" (p. 398). If the story does not have a good plot, Smith (1973) maintained, "no matter with what skill or art it is

presented, it will not hold the interest of elementary children for long" (p. 398).

Historical fiction author Geoffrey Trease (1977) believed that while it is interesting to learn what people wore in days gone by, what their houses were like, and what they ate, this information is only moderately exciting. Trease said that "children love a story, a chronological sequence of incidents and situations ending in a climax" (p. 28). He warned that this is a truism which we who work with children and books would do well to remember. Sheila Ray (1970), commenting on the recent apparent proliferation of books of historical fiction, also supported the notion that "for children up to the age of eleven or twelve the emphasis must be on adventure" (p. 115).

The realization that historical fiction is not just history but a very interesting story is given additional credence by such authors as Becker (1936), Georgiou (1969), Gillespie (1975), Andrews (1977), Haugaard (1979), and Sutherland (1981) who all agreed that historical fiction has perennial appeal to the middle school age reader. Gillespie (1975) attributed this appeal largely to "the romance and glamour . . . the chivalry, panoply and pageantry which beguile his [the reader's] fancy" (p. 187). The historical fiction writer must therefore be first and foremost a story-teller. Eric Christian Haugaard (1979), himself a reputable writer of historical fiction, explained:

> It is to the tale that I pledge my allegiance. I want to catch the children's attention to such an extent that they forget their own lives, their own problems. . . . I wish to entertain and to amuse, for those books that I have learned most from have been those which have entertained me. No one as yet, that I have heard of, has been bored into wisdom. (p. 706)

The contention that children's books should have fast-moving action was also noted by Jacobs (1955). In addition, almost three decades ago, this author suggested that books for younger children should have direct conversation, plausible, well delineated characters, and freedom from direct moralizing and sickly sentimentality. He insisted, though, that they should be rich in honest sentiment (p. 3).

Early's (1960) summation of the expectations of elementary school children are as true for today's children as they were for the children of 20 years ago. It was her belief that children of this age group want

> a definite plot, with action rising to a climax and falling to a satisfying conclusion. . . . It should have a "point" - an easily recognized purpose or theme. . . . The subject may be fanciful or realistic, but in either case close enough to the reader's experience so that he can respond readily. The story should be told in language that delights the ear and fits the subject. (p. 163)

It would appear, then, that books for children must reach their readers at a fairly narrow and immediately recognized level. Yet, this need not necessarily be the case. Authors such as Tucker (1972) and Smith (1973) agree that within the limitations imposed by the developmental level of the children there is an opportunity, as Tucker (1972)

suggested, "to start broadening concepts, and introducing more subtle ways of thinking" (p. 131). Involvement in a good, convincing story at an appropriate intellectual and emotional level can, Tucker believed, "help children without their necessarily recognizing it, towards understanding why people act in the more puzzling ways that they sometimes do" (p. 131).

Schlager (1978) reported that children clamor for books which reflect their perceptions of the world--books "whose main characters reflect the complex psychological and emotional aspects of the reader" (p. 137). Children seek, and should find in reading, according to Arbuthnot (1971), vicarious satisfaction for their basic human needs. Maslow (in Sutherland, 1981) identified five levels of these basic human needs: psychological, safety, belongingness and love, esteem and self-actualization, and cognitive and aesthetic needs (p. 20). Fritz (1980) suggested that both directly and indirectly books can help children better understand themselves as individuals with a sense of who they are and what is their part in society.

The genre of historical fiction can help fulfill children's need to know themselves and their world. Reading these novels may help children realize that there is history in all men's lives, and that reading history is not to relive the past but to revisualize the present. Reading historical fiction may be, as Burnett (1976) described it, "the discovery of the flame that is the human spirit" (p. 94).

Children need a sense of history. They need to see, as Lively (1973) did, that "we live in a permanent world that reaches away, behind and ahead of us, and . . . people are never complete . . . but knowledge expands and contracts, opinions harden and soften, and people end up as a curious, irrational blend of experiences and memory" (p. 407). Children have to be made aware of this wider framework of time and space, Lively (1973) claimed, because if they are not they may "grow up enclosed in their own personalities" (p. 407). The purpose and indeed the need of historical fiction for children is perhaps best articulated by Haugaard (1979) who stated, "The purpose of my art is to take my readers outside themselves, and if I succeed they will understand themselves a little better" (p. 706).

Synthesis

Children of the middle grades are at an important stage of development. They are easily delighted, are natural collectors of objects and facts, have specific psychological, intellectual and emotional needs, are interested in a wide range of reading materials, and love a good story. Good historical fiction and children of this age group are well suited. Books of this genre provide wonderful adventures while satisfying the child's natural quest to know himself, his world, and its people. The value of historical fiction to broaden, deepen, and enrich the lives of its readers is especially meaningful for elementary school age children.

Sharing Literature with Children

Children and literature, according to Gray (1979), can and should be brought together, but this will not happen, Karlin (1971) warned, in an atmosphere of written reports and meticulous analytical study. Far too many children, he suggested, have been turned away from the joys of literature by the dull, lifeless drudgery of such tasks. Modern children have access to a great many means of relaxation, entertainment, pleasure, and distraction. Literature has to compete for the attention of children with television, movies, arcade and home computer games, as well as a wide array of organized recreational activities. If it is to compete successfully, and it must, literature must be a pleasant experience for children. Karlin (1971) believed that much depends upon the way in which literature is presented to or shared with children. He contended that "children who participate in a literature program that makes them keenly aware of the joys they can find in books will seek them out as surely as they pursue other experiences that give them pleasure" (p. 339). Children, according to Huck (1979), have a way of seeking that which is meaningful and pleasing to them. The teacher, she contended, should therefore strive to promote and enhance the pleasure of reading through meaningful and exciting experiences with literature.

Of prime importance in sharing literature with children is the creation of a positive atmosphere which is conducive to reading. Authors such as Larrick (1960), Huck and Kuhn

(1968), Chambers (1973), Sadker and Sadker (1977), and Huck (1979) all agreed that "the school has the responsibility not only to teach children to read, but to create an environment that will make them want to read" (Huck & Kuhn, 1968, p. 545). Karlin (1971) offered a number of suggestions for creating a positive reading environment. He suggested that each classroom should have its own library of books, should set aside an area where children might browse among the shelves and be able to read in comfort without interference, should promote books through such activities as displays, bulletin boards, posters, models and the like, and should involve the children in the planning and operation of the reading corner.

Huck (1979) emphasized the importance of a positive reading environment which encourages frequent and wide reading. In her opinion a positive literary environment provides time for children to read books of their own choice every day. It allows time for children to share their experiences with literature in many ways. She particularly emphasized the importance of the daily story hour (p. 210).

Another literary experience which is recognized to be of extreme value in presenting literature to children is reading aloud. There is, as Karlin (1971) suggested, "no more effective way of bringing children and books together than the teacher's showing enthusiasm for them [books] through good oral reading" (p. 342). Reading aloud to children serves a number of worthwhile educational purposes. Sadker and Sadker

(1977) contended that reading aloud serves to fill the gap between what a student is capable of reading and what interests and intrigues him. Also, they believed that reading aloud serves to create a valuable bond between the teacher and members of the class. In addition, there is evidence to suggest that reading aloud to children may serve to expand language skills (Cohen, 1968); develop aural comprehension (Sadker & Sadker, 1977); develop a listening vocabulary and acquaintance with English syntax, and an awareness of style, character and plot (Sutherland, 1981); and generate further interest in books (Huck, 1979). It is this latter value of reading aloud to children which Iverson (1967) believed is the ability to "make real and personal and satisfying the aesthetic rewards of language . . . [by showing] in your voice the sounds, the rhythm, the images, the appeals to emotion [which are] the language of literature" (p. 3). It follows, then, as Huck (1979) suggested, that reading aloud may be effective in developing "a taste for fine literature" (p. 708).

The selection of the right book to be read aloud to children is of extreme importance. Just as children can be readily turned on by oral reading of an exciting book, they can just as readily be turned away by having to sit through a laborious reading of a dull or unimaginative book. Care must therefore be taken in selecting the right book to read aloud to children. Schmitt and Nora (1964) offered a number of criteria for use in the selection of books to read to

children. They advised that educators should select books which children could or would not read themselves, which possess qualities found in all good literature, which gain something in being read aloud, which broaden horizons, stimulate imagination, and deepen and enrich the child's understanding of the world and fellow man.

Dramatization is another worthwhile approach to sharing literature with children. Larrick (1960), Huck and Kuhn (1968), Carlson (1970), Sadker and Sadker (1977), Huck (1979), and Sutherland (1981) all agreed that children should be exposed to literature through dramatization. Allen (1967), for example, suggested that presenting literature through drama allows the child to "enlarge his understanding of the text, sharpen his perception and thereby learn to know his own self more intimately" (p. 78). Tidyman (1969) also believed in the importance of sharing literature through drama. He believed that dramatization is "a natural way to share the fun and excitement of literature" (p. 187).

Literature can be presented to children through drama in a number of different forms. Tidyman (1969), in a comprehensive itemizing of the more frequently used dramatic media, suggested that children may express their interpretations of stories they have read through such activities as finger play, dramatic play, pantomine, informal dramatization, puppets, formal dramatization and the like. These types of sharing experiences will, according to Schmitt and Nora (1964), encourage children to do more and better reading. In addition,

these authors claim that "books so publicized will attract many new readers" (p. 506).

There are other equally worthwile suggestions for sharing literature with elementary school children. These include the use of creative writing and arts and crafts (Larrick, 1960), oral presentations of stories read (Burns, 1961), storytelling by teacher and students (Schmitt & Nora, 1964), book clubs (Cianciolo, 1967), the use of multi-media materials (Karlin, 1971), individual student-teacher conferences (Donelson, 1980), and written responses to books read (Sutherland, 1981).

A good literature program, according to Sutherland (1981), must set as its goal the development of reading habits that will last a lifetime. The activities presented here are designed to open doors to literature. Historical fiction is one such door. Through the sharing of historical fiction in meaningful and pleasant ways children may come to want to read and reread books independently, may grow to an ever-increasing enjoyment of historical fiction in particular and literature in general, and may develop an interest in reading as a leisure-time activity.

Synthesis

The perpetuation of the myth that literature is dull and difficult must cease. The myth can be dispelled by the creative teacher who is able to present literature in a meaningful and enjoyable manner. Approaches which have been

recommended in the literature review are designed to achieve the primary goal of any worthwhile literature program--the development of avid, lifetime readers of literature. These approaches include reading aloud to children, storytelling, and a wide variety of drama and arts and crafts activities.

CHAPTER THREE

CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING HISTORICAL FICTION

Historical fiction as a literary genre must be characterized by the same general standards of excellence as those that apply to all literature. There are, however, some particular qualities germane to historical fiction just as there are to each of the other genres. In order to understand and identify the qualities that are characteristic of historical fiction it is necessary to examine the literary elements of plot, theme, characterization, setting, and style as they pertain to this genre. It is also necessary to identify other characteristics which distinguish this genre from other literary genres. Good historical fiction involves the reader dramatically and emotionally in a past era, while at the same time it may illuminate both the present and future. The universality of mankind--the unchanging truth of the human experience--makes good historical stories timeless. Through reading historical fiction each generation of readers may become involved in a literary experience in which, as Egoff (1975) suggested, "child calls to child across the years" (p. 97).

Quite apart from its potential for enjoyment and delight, good historical fiction may be a good educational tool. It allows the child to know the past. Haugaard (in

Egoff, 1981) suggested the importance of a knowledge of the past when he stated:

> The man without a past is a fiction; even willful ignorance cannot erase our history. Only in eternal night will man be shadowless, and the past not follow the present into the future . . . knowledge of the past - of history - gives perspective to our world. Without that knowledge our loneliness would be harder to bear and sorrow would easily crush us. (p. 159)

Knowledge of the past may add a new dimension to the experience of a child. Such knowledge, as Belloc (in Horovitz, 1962) wrote, "does more to the mind even than does travel" (p. 256). Knowledge is one reward of reading historical novels. "The truth of knowledge," Haugaard (1979) wrote, "got us thrown out of paradise; . . . eating heartily of its fruits is the only means by which we can get back in" (p. 702).

Books of historical fiction must be carefully selected and evaluated critically, however, if children are to be the beneficiaries of all that genre can offer. Each piece of historical fiction must be judged by those standards of excellence which have been demonstrated by the best writers in the field. A great piece of historical fiction must be, according to Horovitz (1962), "written with absolute unity and depth of time, place, character, and plot . . ." (p. 256).

Setting

Successful writers use setting--the context of time and place--not only as part of plot but "to make the story live for readers, to help them visualize exactly what is happening, to illuminate character, to symbolize important feelings, and to establish moods" (Donelson, 1980, p. 45).

Setting is more important in some genres of literature than in others. It is particularly important, of course, in science fiction and fantasy, as it is in historical fiction. In historical fiction setting is critical to the successful narrative. The setting of historical fiction must, according to Huck and Kuhn (1961), "make the period come alive for the readers by recreating both the physical environment of the times and capturing the spirit and feelings of the age" (p. 296). The spirit of the past is captured by an author's providing graphic details for colorful backdrops; filling in scrupulously accurate details, even the smallest ones, depicting life in the past with quaintness and antiquity; clarifying the issues of the period; and providing a sense of history (Georgiou, 1969).

Historical stories, the unique product of an individual author's creative imagination, must be written with a conscientious attempt to create an effective setting. By the creation of such a setting the author will give the reader what Jacobs (1961) referred to as the "heightened moment of sensitivity," a moment in which the reader "feels himself in and of the past and is bigger today for having been with yesterday" (pp. 193-194). Setting, then, establishes that sense of reality which is so necessary if the characters are to be meaningful for the young reader.

Plot

The plot of a story is defined by Donelson (1980) as "the sequence of events in which the characters play out their roles in some kind of a conflict. It is what happens" (p. 27).

In historical fiction, the author has to construct his plot against the backdrop of what has actually happened. Most of the plot is fictional and imaginary, yet the major facts of the historical period must be scrupulously adhered to. The author relies on minor imagined details, skillfully blended and interwoven with the known facts, so as to re-create the spirit of the period. The known facts, as Georgiou (1969) said, "come alive as the warm essentials that leave an impression of history" (p. 307).

An exciting plot, or story, is essential in historical fiction. Arbuthnot (1971) believed that if children were literary analysts they would "probably insist that the first requisite of a good story be lively action or plot" (p. 1109). Children, she maintained, like stories which "have a brisk introduction that launches the plot, a development full of action and growing suspense, and a conclusion that settles everything, including the villian" (p. 1109). Donelson (1980) and Karl (1967) both agreed on the nature and importance of a good plot. Donelson suggested that it is one in which "the action is continually rising, building suspense, and finally leading to some sort of a climax" (p. 28). Karl contended that the author of a book of historical fiction needs "a

strong sense of plot - to know where the story begins, reaches its climax and ends" (p. 33). The importance of the plot was supported by such notable authors as Ray (1970), Smith (1976), Trease (1977), Fox (1979), Huck (1979), and Fisher (1980), all of whom agreed that in books of historical fiction for children there can be no question but that action and adventure are the major requirements.

The secret of successful historical fiction is, in part, the art of telling a good story. Fox (1979) contended that this art of storytelling is ultimately the art of truth, and it is, she maintained, "the truth of life one finds in great stories" (p. 223).

An exciting plot, then, is essential in books of historical fiction for younger children. Such plots are the ones in which the action is continually rising, suspense is created and maintained, and an exciting climax brings everything to a satisfactory conclusion.

Theme

Closely related to plot is theme. Theme ties the story together. It answers such questions as "What does the story mean?" and "What is it about?" Theme pervades the story, staying with the reader long after other literary elements such as plot and setting have faded (Donelson, 1980). Although it is not always easy to define, theme is essential to the narrative. Indeed, Arbuthnot (1971) considered it to be "the motivational force behind the whole story" (p. 1109).

In books of historical fiction the most important consideration is, according to Georgiou (1969), "the impression the idea makes on the reader" (p. 307). Hersey (1949) agreed, maintaining that "the things we remember [for long] periods are emotions and impressions and illusions and images and characters" (p. 80). These are the elements of theme.

Theme is the central idea, the backbone of the story. It provides insight into and understanding of the past. It also throws light upon the events of the present. Huck (1979) believed that books of historical fiction are concerned with such basic universal concerns as "the meaning of freedom, loyalty and treachery, love and hate, acceptance of new ways, closed minds versus questioning ones, and the age old struggle between good and evil" (p. 469). Georgiou (1969) suggested that books of historical fiction may deal with such broad central ideas as, for example, "the dignity and worth of man . . . causes in support of civil rights, abolition of serfdom, triumph over handicap, tyranny, or injustice" (p. 307).

A good book of historical fiction, according to Karl (1967), can be compared to an iceberg--one-tenth is on the surface and nine-tenths lies below. The nine-tenths is the most important, for as she contended, "it is the hidden and suggested depth [theme] that gives the reader room to imagine, room to explore" (p. 36). Theme, then, provides a dimension to the story that goes beyond the narrative. It allows the reader to reach into the story as far as imagination will allow.

Characterization

Books which have strong, well-developed characters often become popular, even though they may not have particularly exciting or interesting plots. Good characterization refers to the ability of a writer to present his main characters in such a way that the readers are able to closely identify with them--to feel as if they too are living the characters' experience. Good characterization, according to Donelson (1980), allows the reader to "become more interested in what is going on in the character's mind than they may be in what is happening to the character from the outside" (p. 33).

In well-written historical fiction the characterization, as Georgiou (1969) wrote,

> brings into sharp relief memorable personages who serve as vehicles to communicate the underlying themes . . . call up universal human feelings . . . deepen insights regarding universal human needs, and provide for the identification that strengthens involvement in the story which taps the essence of life in some other era. (p. 308)

Characters of historical fiction should be unique and memorable. Stereotypes are soon forgotten, but, as Arbuthnot (1971) indicated, "unique, salty, vivid characters capture the imagination and affection of young readers [and] add spice to reading" (p. 1009). The main characters of historical fiction, while not generally actual historical personalities, must, as Karl (1967) affirmed, "be real people who talk and act as real people in their situation would talk and act"

(p. 34). They should, as both Kamm (1966) and Huck (1979) agreed, be firmly set in their period, acting in accordance with the values and beliefs of their time, but in such a way that their actions and predicaments have a meaning for today. This view is also shared by Irwin (1971), who stated that "characters should accurately reflect that period and background as they were" (p. vi). Fisher (1980) pointed out that historical novels should have as their central character an individual with whom the reader can identify. The central character should therefore be, according to Huck and Kuhn (1961), "a boy or girl experiencing the life of his time as a child" (p. 296), and one who represents the child reader in the past. The characters must be believable and meaningful to the child of today. The best books of historical fiction are those in which children of the past and present may share some common bond of experience.

Farrell (1981) maintained that characters should "illustrate the fact that in spite of differences in life style, all people share the same emotions and face similar problems" (p. 4). Places and events may be different, but human nature tends to remain constant. The character's struggle to remain free and unconquered becomes, as Egoff (1975) contended, "a universal struggle - an echo of the struggles of mankind that have gone before and a foreshadowing of all those yet to come. The events may be in the past, but the courage, hope, generosity, and friendships that . . . characters express are immutable in each generation" (p. 97).

Characters in historical fiction, then, may be actual historical personages, but more often they are ordinary people like ourselves, born out of the imagination of the author. These people are shown living their daily lives and preoccupied with the task of obtaining food, clothing, and shelter, while at the same time struggling with overcoming emotional and spiritual problems. The characters are real people with whom the reader can identify because although the styles of dress and cultural practices may differ, the individuals themselves are very like ourselves.

Style

Style, as defined by Donelson (1980), is "the way a story is written as contrasted with what the story is about. It is the result or effect of combining [all] the literary aspects" (p. 45). An author's style is an individual matter--authors are individuals and no two use exactly the same style. The particular style which an author adopts results, according to Donelson, from "the unique blending of all the choices each individual makes" (p. 45). There are, however, within this spectrum of creative individuality, specific style conventions which authors may utilize. Georgiou (1969) contended that in historical fiction a very significant style characteristic is the picturesque language used. "Interesting words, colorful dialogue, suitable names, choice human-interest details, all well blended, lend credence to the story," he claimed, "and help to create a sense of living in another age" (p. 308).

Writers of historical fiction are, however, faced with a special problem. In the handling of language and dialogue, they must consider to what extent they are able to faithfully reproduce the language of the period, and to what extent they will use standard English. There must be a balance between authenticity and readability. This dilemma is stated succinctly by Sutherland and Arbuthnot (1977):

> If the words and sentence patterns are so archaic as to break the reader's concentration the author is in difficulty. If the conversations are too contemporary in tone, the mood of the story may be destroyed. (p. 268)

The solution would appear to be in the form of artistic compromise. Sutcliff (in Haviland, 1973) believed that the 'sound' of a sentence, not linguistic accuracy, is the crucial consideration. In historical fiction language authenticity and intelligibility must combine to communicate the spirit and the flavor of an age. Hunter (1975) is very clear and definite on this subject. She wrote:

> The dialogue the historical novelist must always settle for is a clear, plain English which in itself is timeless, and which should be touched by the fashions of an age only when these can extend its main function. (p. 51)

Style is, of course, much more than an author's use of such literary devices as figurative language, colorful dialogue, suitable names and the like. The author must be able to bring all such devices together imaginatively to create a memorable story which "preserve[s] the dignity of the past [and] catch[es] the flavor and drama appropriate to the theme" (Georgiou, 1969, p. 308). Style, then, is as unique and individual as the authors themselves. Yet good

writing style must be appropriate to the plot, theme, and characters, creating both the mood of the story and the spirit of the setting.

Evaluation of Historical Fiction

There are available a number of published sets of criteria for evaluating historical fiction. Donelson (1980), for example, suggested that good historical fiction usually has a setting that is integral to the story; an authentic rendition of time, place, and people; an author steeped in the period; believable characters with whom young readers can identify; evidence that people of all eras share similar emotions; reference to well-known events or people; and a sense on the part of the reader of having lived in that time or place.

In the criteria for historical fiction set forth by Huck and Kuhn (1961) emphasis is placed on a good exciting story, a recreating of the physical environment and spiritual feeling of the age, historical accuracy, a theme, and a central character with whom the reader can identify.

Christopher Collier (1982), himself a history teacher and writer of historical fiction for children, offered four criteria for evaluating books of this genre. He contended that the historical novel must focus on an important historical theme, an understanding of which helps us to deal with the present; center on an episode in which the theme inheres in fact; attend to the historiographic elements; and present

accurate detail" (p. 33).

A comprehensive set of criteria, encompassing most of the concerns of all the authors cited, was developed by Georgiou (1969) (see Appendix B). He suggested that the setting of an historical novel should be an accurate, authentic and graphic presentation of detail which remains faithful to and recaptures the spirit and flavor of the period. The plot of the historical story, he suggested, should be an exciting adventure in keeping with the pace of living during the period of history recreated in the book. The good historical novel has a strong, original, comprehensive theme of high caliber which confirms for children a fundamental truth of human worth and dignity. Central characters are real people who possess many worthy attributes, serve as vehicles to communicate underlying themes, and genuinely reflect the mannerisms, speech, dress and cultural mores of the period in which they live. The style of writing should, according to Georgiou, authentically reflect the dignity, life style, point of view, people and issues of the period. The writing should give the young reader a sense of history, an opportunity to "live" rather than just "witness" history (pp. 328-330).

It would appear, then, that those concerned with developing criteria for the evaluation of historical novels all agree that historical fiction must meet the requirements of good writing. Readers should be able to come away from the novel with the feeling that they know a time or place

better--as though, indeed, they have visited it for at least a few hours.

Synthesis

Historical fiction is a genre of literature, and as such must first meet the general requirements for good literature. In addition, historical fiction has certain distinguishing characteristics. It must blend fact and fiction, be accurate and authentic, reflect the values and spirit of the times, use authentic language, and develop a theme which provides insight and understanding. Historical fiction at its best helps the reader to realize that history is a continuum--that just as today's way of life is the result of what people did in the past, so the future will be colored by the events of the present.

CHAPTER FOUR

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATION

Summary

This study was undertaken because of the writer's strong belief in the importance of historical fiction for elementary children and out of concern for the relative lack of importance attached to this literary genre. Many authors agree that there are desirable results when children read good books of historical fiction. Arbuthnot (1971) contended that through such worthwhile reading the child will:

> gain insight into his own behavior, his social relationships, and his responsibilities . . . grow in reverence for life, in enthusiasm for knowledge, and in sensitivity to beauty and goodness. And . . . will keep his zest for life and the gift of laughter. (p. 1112)

This notwithstanding, there is little emphasis given to historical fiction in our elementary schools. Furthermore, many educators of elementary school children are not aware of the rich potential of literature in general or historical fiction in particular to enrich, extend, broaden and enhance the learning experiences and total development of children. Even while teachers have an intuitive awareness of the great benefits to be derived from a generic study of literature, they are often handicapped by a lack of exposure to children's literature, and a lack of

familiarity with historical fiction as a literary genre.

The primary purpose of this study was to develop a workable guide for the teaching of historical fiction within an elementary school literature program. The study was also designed to establish a comprehensive set of criteria to assist teachers in evaluating and selecting books of historical fiction for their pupils. In addition, the study includes a short core list of reputable historical novels appropriate to the elementary school children.

In attempting to fulfill the purposes as stated above a number of steps were followed. All available literature pertaining to historical fiction and children was reviewed and reported under the headings Nature of Historical Fiction, Value of Historical Fiction, Historical Fiction and the Child, and Sharing Historical Fiction with Children. The related literature was searched in an effort to compile a comprehensive statement of what constitutes excellence in historical fiction. A teacher's guide for sharing historical fiction with children in the elementary grades was then developed. This guide has an introduction for the teacher, a statement of generalizations and concepts, a discussion of the nature of the guide, a list of educational objectives, as well as statements on the organization of the guide and student evaluation. In addition, the guide has five fully developed lesson plans centered around the literary elements--setting, plot, theme, characterization, and style--found in historical fiction. Each lesson plan includes an

introduction for the teacher, a list of specific behavioral objectives, a list of resource materials, a synopsis for the teacher of the novel being studied, as well as a suggested procedure and suggested follow-up activities. The guide has a concluding statement on evaluation of pupil performance as well as an appended bibliography of recommended books of historical fiction appropriate for the elementary grades. Books included in this bibliography are those which meet the general criteria of excellence as outlined in Chapter Three, have been personally examined by the writer, have been recommended in at least one reputable selection aid, and which are presently in print or because of their interest, appeal, and popularity are available in the existing collection in many schools.

Observations and Conclusions

On the basis of this study it is possible to make a number of observations and draw some conclusions.

A study of the program of studies revealed that there is no systematic study of historical fiction recommended in the curriculum for the elementary schools in the province of Newfoundland and Labrador.

The primary purpose of such a study of historical fiction would be to introduce children to the joy and pleasure to be derived from reading good books of historical fiction. Furthermore, whatever approach is followed in a study of historical fiction in the elementary grades this primary purpose must be kept in focus.

A study of the related literature revealed that there are a number of different approaches which may be followed in presenting literature to elementary children. A program can, for example, be centered around a study by author, genre, theme, or literary elements. A study of the genre of historical fiction with particular reference to the literary elements of the genre is one approach worth considering for elementary children. Any such program of study would be primarily concerned with creating a love for reading.

There are available a number of excellent selection tools to aid the teacher in choosing books for children.

There is a wealth of excellent books of historical fiction available.

A program of study can, and should, be developed to facilitate the development of a love of reading and an awareness of the joy which it can bring, to move children vicariously to another time, to recreate an emotional empathy for people in other eras, and to give personal insight into the nature of humanity and the nature of self.

Recommendations

Based on the above observations and conclusions, a number of recommendations are made.

1. It is recommended that a guide to the teaching of historical fiction be made available to teachers.

2. It is recommended that guides offering other approaches to the study of historical fiction be developed. Such guides might approach the genre from a study of a particular period, a particular author, or a study of the various fundamental themes found in historical fiction.

3. It is recommended that a list of children's books of the type developed in this study be made available to every elementary school teacher and updated on a regular basis.

4. It is recommended that a guide of the type developed in this study be developed for the teaching of other literary genres.

5. It is recommended that teachers in either their pre-service or in-service preparation be exposed to at least one course in children's literature.

6. It is recommended that teachers who have had no exposure to courses in children's literature be strongly encouraged or motivated to upgrade in this area.

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SECTION II

A TEACHER'S GUIDE FOR SHARING HISTORICAL FICTION WITH CHILDREN IN THE ELEMENTARY GRADES

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Introduction

I give you the end of a golden string
Only wind it into a ball
It will lead you in at Heaven's gate
Built in Jerusalem's wall.
(William Blake)

The teacher, as Chant (1980) suggested, "has [precious] gifts to give: enjoyment, entertainment, creativity, understanding of self, and the ability to reason." These gifts, she contended, "begin in the classroom with children's literature" (p. 3). While it may be true that it is not possible to teach literature but, rather, that literature must be experienced, it lies within the power of every teacher to give children a rich experience with literature. In sharing books with children, however, teachers must go beyond the familiar surface level. They must participate along with their children in a literary encounter that allows them to actually experience the events and the setting and identify with the central character. Through such a shared emotional, sensual, and literal experience both teacher and pupil may emerge with an added insight into what it means to be human. Good teaching, then, involves the children in literary experiences which help them in developing insights and understandings they did not have before. Such encounters may provide a measure against which children can assess their own actions and feelings and, as Ousbey (1981) suggested, such experiences

may "help [them] to grow up inside themselves and to cope with a range of changing emotions which is, and will be, a feature of their daily lives" (p. 67).

Through books children begin to entertain ideas, and ideas, as Huck (1982) pointed out, are the heart of education. A great misdirection in schools today is an over-emphasis of facts. Literature is concerned with feelings and with the quality of human life. Literature has the power to make the reader more humane--more truly human. It can, for example, show the reader the indignity of slavery, the atrocities of war, the horror of the holocaust, the cruelty of the Beothuck annihilation, all from a personal perspective. It can, as well, show us the deeply felt emotions of people--both the great and the ordinary. It has the potential to communicate the pride of achievement, the power of love, the beauty of nature. It can show us truths about ourselves and others.

In addition to its capacity to humanize the reader literature can, according to Huck (1982), help children to develop their imaginations. It can develop a sense of wonder, an appreciation for the beautiful, and a heightened awareness of the joy of living. Literature can develop compassion, by educating the heart as well as the mind. It can develop a sense of what is true and just, it can sharpen sensitivities, and it can offer valuable insights. In addition to these inherent values of a study of literature, Somers (1979) contended that literature offers more

opportunities than does any other program to consider "ideas, values, and ethical questions crucial to [children's] development as moral human beings" (p. 2).

Among the many reasons for teaching literature, Farmer (1967) believed, is that it is "a source of inexhaustive delight." More than any other medium Farmer affirmed "literature reflects life in all its aspects and thereby becomes the chief source for understanding ourselves and others" (p. 457). Other authors have offered similar goals for a literature program. Flanigan (1973) suggested that the aim of a study of literature is to develop children who can read independently, enjoy reading works of literature, and have a general understanding of the characteristics of literary excellence. Foltz (1981) also claimed that the primary objective of a literature program is to assist the students to increase their enjoyment and delight in literature by providing time for them to reflect on books, by examining with them values presented in books, and by giving preference to the long range purpose of developing children who continue to read throughout a lifetime.

The pleasure to be derived from reading a good book is intrinsic motivation for learning to read and understand literature. Reading for personal interest and enjoyment is indeed a worthwhile habit for children to acquire. Getting children into the reading habit is not hard, according to Butler (1982). She wrote:

> Getting children "hooked on books" . . . is not hard if we clear away the rubble and bulk from our curricula and adopt a "first things first" philosophy. And first of all, on an unassailable pinnacle comes reading, responsive, joyful reading. Unless we believe this, and respond to the challenge to make reading of this sort a reality for all children, we are likely to leave many of them stumbling among the foothills. Our children can all reach the ridges, and many of them the peaks. Let us all redouble our efforts to get them there. (p. 82)

It would seem clear, then, that elementary school children could receive much benefit from a planned literature program. Authors such as Flanigan (1973), Stewig (1978, 1980), and Western (1980) all agreed that "elementary school children can profit from a systematic study of literature, literature studied in its own right, not . . . correlated with a social studies unit or plugged into a time slot reserved for free reading" (Western, 1980, p. 395). Such a systematic literature program can be arranged in a number of ways. Huck (1979) and Stewig (1980) agreed that literature can be studied by author, by themes, by literary elements, by topics, or by genres.

This teacher's guide offers a systematic approach to the study of historical fiction as one literary genre. Historical fiction, like all good fiction, has an exciting plot, a strong sense of time and place, as well as universal themes. This genre invites the reader to transcend time, to experience and be affected by the lives and conditions of those who have lived in earlier eras. Apart from experiencing the enjoyment and delight resulting from reading a fine story, children who read historical fiction

may benefit by being moved into the consciousness of another time. They may develop a feeling of period--an emotional awareness of people not totally unlike themselves who lived in other times. They may, as a consequence, increase their awareness of historical events; they may also develop an appreciation of the commonality of human experiences and of their own membership in the total human community.

The major idea behind the development of this teacher's guide is that students need to be introduced to the basic elements of the genre of historical fiction, and they should become aware of the types of important questions they need to ask as they read. These basic questions should be applied each time the students read so that, as Stewig (1978) suggested, the strategy becomes a natural way to approach literature. As students become more competent readers, their application of the basic strategy will become more sophisticated and they will derive greater understanding and enjoyment from the literature they read.

The basic elements in historical fiction, as in the other literary genres, are setting, plot, theme, characterization, and style. This teacher's guide offers ONE specific approach for the study of historical fiction. There are, of course, other approaches which might be adopted. In this particular approach each literary element will be studied in depth with reference to a specific book of historical fiction. Although a good book of historical fiction will, of course, have all four major

elements interacting successfully with each other, this teacher's guide allows for the analysis of each literary element individually. This is done for the sake of instructional economy. IT MUST BE EMPHASIZED, HOWEVER, THAT IN PRESENTING THE VARIOUS ELEMENTS OF THE NOVEL, THE TEACHER MUST ALWAYS BE CAREFUL NOT TO PUT TOO MUCH EMPHASIS ON REACTIONS TO PARTS OF A STORY. AN OVEREMPHASIS ON ANALYSIS COULD RESULT IN THE STUDENT'S LOSING SIGHT OF THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE PARTS TO THE WHOLE. While in this teacher's guide the emphasis is on the children's ability to analyze a story according to its literary elements, the teacher must ensure that children develop the ability to synthesize--to put to use the knowledge gained in analysis to form a better, more complete understanding of the whole. In a good historical novel the whole is greater than the sum of its parts.

Generalizations and Concepts

Generalizations that teachers need to accept:

Literature is a process by which the writer communicates to the reader an account of his or her experiences, vicarious or real.

The reader's experiences, vicarious or real, determine and limit the extent to which he or she can mentally participate in literature.

Creativity is cultivated by the effective teacher who establishes a classroom atmosphere in which divergent

and productive opinions are encouraged and respected.

Children need to be given an opportunity to interact with the teacher, with each other, and with the novel. In so doing their understanding of the book may be enhanced even though, in the final analysis, each reader plays the text on the instrument of his own mind.

The ability to read prose with ease and understanding is an asset, but the weak reader can also be effectively guided in a study of literary elements. The reading aloud of historical novels by the teacher is one way of including the poorer readers in a meaningful study of literature.

Concepts that children can acquire:

An understanding of plot and story pattern.

An awareness of interrelationships between theme and plot.

The ability to consciously identify with story characters.

The ability to recognize specific feelings, emotions, and character traits.

The ability to recognize and evaluate techniques used by the author.

The Nature of the Guide

This teacher's guide is intended to help teachers to develop and enhance the desire and ability of elementary school children to read novels of historical fiction with understanding and appreciation. Any school which plans to use this approach must make certain provisions. The core books used must be made available for the students to borrow or purchase. It is suggested that schools provide these required books in the cheaper paperback editions. In addition, the school must be prepared to stock its library with a wide variety of carefully selected historical fiction novels. Books may be chosen from those listed in the appended bibliography.

The guide is addressed to the elementary school teacher. The introductory comments, definitions, illustrations, and suggestions are all for the benefit of elementary school teachers who may need some assistance in setting up a literature program in their classrooms. Suggestions for teacher stimulation of discussion are made throughout. These suggestions for teacher responses to students are just that--suggestions. IT IS NOT THE INTENT OF THIS TEACHER'S GUIDE TO BE PRESCRIPTIVE. Rather, its procedures are suggestions which teachers who know their students will be able to incorporate in their lesson plans as the need arises. Teachers must also realize that it is not necessary for all children to do all of the suggested activities. Teachers are expected to choose from the suggested

activities those which meet specific instructional needs. Neither should teachers restrict themselves to those activities suggested in the guide. There are many other equally worthwhile activities not included. In short, the procedures and activities outlined in this guide are suggestions which teachers may draw upon in planning their literature program. No guide can presume to prescribe a method of instruction in literature instruction. There are no substitutes for teachers possessed of a love of reading and dedicated to the task of developing in children good reading habits and an appreciation of literature. Such teachers will be able to guide children to draw upon all previous learning experiences with literature as well as their own first hand experiences with life. Through such guidance children will be better able to grow to the realization that, as Huck (1982) suggested, while "literature will not save the world . . . it is one of the things that makes this world worth saving" (p. 316).

Educational Objectives

In a broad sense the educational objectives of this teacher's guide are similar to those of most other such guides--to help children achieve competence at the highest possible level and to use this competence in personal, intellectual, and creative pursuits. It is further hoped that this guide will give teachers some ideas for introducing and developing literary skills pursuant to the development of an appreciation of the literary elements of

historical fiction. As a result of the educational experiences which are provided for them, children will be able to:

be more highly selective in choosing historical novels;

distinguish among various styles used by authors of historical fiction;

evaluate various aspects of human relationships on the basis of the behavior of and interactions between and among historical fictional characters;

identify, analyze, and synthesize the plot and theme of historical fiction;

understand and appreciate how environment can influence the behavior of historical characters and also of people of today;

understand how people in all historical periods share a common humanity;

understand how the various literary elements work together to make a well written historical novel;

develop such a love for reading and a taste for literature that reading for pleasure will become a part of their daily lives.

Organization of the Guide

In a number of individual units the guide provides suggestions for instruction in the elements of historical

fiction--setting, plot, theme, characterization, and style. Each unit is developed to be presented with reference to one specific historical novel. There is included with each unit a short list of recommended alternate books from which teachers and students may choose. These books have been chosen because of their interest appeal, their literary excellence, and their suitability for the elementary child. Each individual lesson follows a Directed Lesson Format. A directed lesson provides for a three-pronged approach to instruction:

Part one of the directed lesson provides specific instruction in a particular literary element. It includes also suggestions for a discussion designed to set the stage for the reading of the recommended novel and to motivate the readers to begin the reading.

Part two of the directed lesson provides for a guided silent reading of the book. Introductory questions are suggested with the purpose of establishing a purpose for reading and reinforcing the concepts taught in part one.

Part three of the lesson provides an opportunity for extending the learning. This is a follow-up session to provide enrichment for and/or reinforcement of the concepts being studied. This should be a nonthreatening lesson. In the discussion and the related activities emphasis is on the enjoyment of literature.

It must be stressed again, however, that while the individual lessons follow a directed approach, the guide

is not meant to be prescriptive. The choice of text, style of motivation, type of introductory questions and follow-up activities are choices best made by the individual classroom teachers. The guide merely offers suggestions. It is a resource which may assist teachers in planning and implementing their own literature program.

The guide has appendices which include an annotated bibliography of recommended books, and a comprehensive section on extending literature through games and other related activities.

Evaluation of the Literature Program

It is not the purpose of the teacher's guide to provide a specific content which the children must master. Neither does the guide intend to recommend specific teaching practices through which teachers are to "teach" historical fiction. Rather, this guide is intended to demonstrate a process whereby children in the elementary grades may be exposed to the genre of historical fiction from a literary perspective. Evaluation therefore should not, and indeed cannot, be based on the degree of mastery of specific skills or specific content. Such a dogmatic approach to evaluation would effectively destroy the overriding objective of the program--to develop such a love for reading and a taste for literature that children long after they have left school will continue to get hours of pleasure from reading.

Evaluation of the program must be subjective and ongoing. The best measure of its success is the degree to

which children develop the habit of reading. Huck (1979) maintained that "one of the challenges of education is to teach skills, attitudes, and appreciations so that children will continue to make reading an integral part of their lives" (p. 748). The primary purpose of a systematic study of literature, then, is that children will become avid readers and find a lifetime of pleasure in reading good books. Unless this does happen the program has not achieved its overarching goals.

Suggestions for Using the Guide

This teacher's guide consists of five units each dealing with one of the five elements of literature--setting, plot, theme, characterization, and style. The units are similar in their approach. Each unit has an introduction, objectives, a list of resource materials including a list of core and alternate novels, a synopsis for the teacher, and a suggested procedure for teaching each lesson.

The procedure is structured to allow for initial motivation and discussion, a guided silent reading, a fun-oriented section designed for extending the learning of concepts taught in earlier discussions, and a follow-up section.

The motivation and discussion sections of the lesson are self-explanatory in each unit. In the silent reading section, however, it is important that the teacher be cognizant of a number of important stipulations. Each student will be given introductory questions to establish a purpose

for the reading. In order to participate fully in discussion students should have each section read prior to the scheduled class time. The teacher may present several of these introductory questions before the pupil begins to read the section. This would then provide a purpose for reading. After each section has been read the questions may serve as a basis for class discussion. Such a discussion would, of course, be a free and open dialogue between teacher and pupils and among pupils. The short list of questions does not attempt to be exhaustive. Rather, the questions are intended to provide models of the kind of introductory questions which might facilitate a meaningful study of setting, plot, theme, characterization, and style in historical fiction.

The third section of each lesson should be a fun-oriented follow-up to a detailed study of the novel. The suggestions for activities are given as examples only. There are many other equally worthwhile activities not included. The creative teacher will, no doubt, be able to add to and modify the suggestions offered here to suit individual needs. No student or class is expected to do all of the activities suggested in this section. The variety of ideas included is intended to reach as many students as possible. The teacher should allow each child to choose perhaps one activity to do individually and one to do as a member of a group. Where activities call for the use of books of historical fiction other than the core novel, students should make use of school or classroom libraries. No student should be expected to

purchase books for these activities.

It is extremely important that teachers using this guide recognize that while the guide has separated the literary elements for the sake of instructional economy, these elements cannot be taught in total isolation from each other. Every good book of historical fiction does, of course, have all of the literary elements interrelated. In fact, its strength in large measure depends on that interrelationship. A literature program, and literature instruction, must therefore reflect this holistic concept of literature.

In the follow-up activities starting with UNIT TWO and continuing in each of the remaining three units children are given the opportunity to apply the knowledge gained in each new unit to all novels studied previously. In addition, the children are asked to apply the knowledge gained in previous units to the novel currently being studied. Every child will be expected to complete each activity in this section. The program will therefore culminate with the children's having studied each literary element separately while having also applied each element to each of the five novels in the core list. Each novel will, in fact, have been studied as a complete, self-contained literary entity.

In the introduction to the teacher a number of significant points have been identified and emphasized. These points relate to and are based upon the philosophy underlying the entire teacher's guide. It is critical, therefore, that

any teacher planning to use this teacher's guide in the classroom fully understand and appreciate that philosophy and note the considerations and cautions stressed throughout this introduction.

UNIT ONE

SETTING

Introduction

The setting involves the place and time in which the story takes place. It involves an actual geographical location or a general environment, or atmosphere; it is concerned with an historical period, a season, a day, or an hour. Historical novels should have settings which are clear and authentic in every minute detail in order to make the reading experience a memorable one for young readers.

Objectives

At the end of this unit the children will be able to:

a) use clues to identify the setting of historical novels;

b) recognize the setting of an historical story as the time and place of the action;

c) make judgments as to whether the same story would happen in a different setting.

Resource Materials

Core Novel

Armstrong, William. Sounder.

Alternate Novels

Brink, Carol Ryrie. Caddie Woodlawn.

Burton, Hester. In Spite of All Terror.

Collier, James Lincoln, and Christopher Collier. My Brother Sam Is Dead.

De Angeli, Marguerite. The Door in the Wall.

Dejong, Meindert. The House of Sixty Fathers.

Edmonds, Walter D. The Matchlock Gun.

Forbes, Ester. Johnny Tremain.

Fox, Paula. The Slave Dancer.

Garfield, Leon. Smith.

Haugaard, Erik Christian. Hakon of Roger's Saga.

Haugaard, Eric Christian. The Little Fishes.

Hunt, Irene. Across Five Aprils.

Monjo, F.M. The House on Stink Alley: A Story About the Pilgrims in Holland.

Peck, Robert Newton. A Day No Pigs Would Die.

Rockwood, Joyce. To Spoil the Sun.

Sperry, Armstrong. Call It Courage.

Walsh, Jill Paton. Fireweed.

Yates, Elizabeth. Caroline's Courage.

Sounder--A Synopsis for the Teacher

Sounder is a powerful story of human courage and endurance. The novel is centered around the lives of a poor black family living in the rural south during the Great Depression. During the harsh winter the father has to resort to stealing a ham to feed his starving wife and children.

Sounder is a great coon dog with a magnificent voice that rolls through the night and across the flatlands, louder than that of any other dog in the country. When the sheriff's posse comes to arrest the father for his crime, Sounder rushes to save his master and is shot. The dog does not die, but crawls away in the woods to await his fate. For months the oldest son hopes for the dog's return. When Sounder finally does come back home he is disfigured, crippled and silent. The boy then passionately searches the prison camps for news of his father. The father finally returns but, like the dog, he too is disfigured, crippled and silent. Both creatures of their environment die the following winter. The boy is left sad but hopeful for a better future as a result of his education which he is passionately pursuing with the assistance of an old teacher.

Procedure

I. Motivation and Discussion (approximately 40 minutes)

The teacher reads to the class the first section as far as ". . . he would always have Sounder" (p. 3).

The teacher then asks:

1) What clues do you have concerning the time and place of the story?

2) What kind of book do you think this will be? How do you know?

The teacher should allow time for any student who wishes to do so to express an opinion. All suggestions should be accepted. The teacher continues the discussion by saying something like the following: "There are many different kinds of stories. Sounder is called historical fiction. Why do you think it is called historical fiction?"

After time has been allowed for discussion and interaction the teacher should explain to the children that the setting gives us clues that let us know that a book is historical fiction. The teacher should ask how this is shown in Sounder. Again, time must be provided for full discussion.

The teacher should continue this discussion by asking the children: "While the word fiction means that the story is not true, could such a story happen?" The teacher may then guide the discussion to allow the children to see that historical fiction must show us the truth about time and place where the story takes place. It is this truth about time and place which makes the story seem interesting to us.

It is important that the teacher remember that the chief purpose of this part of the lesson is to provide the stimulus for continued reading of the story. Discussion should not be forced or in any way didactic. Rather, there

should be an informal, free-flowing presentation of ideas bonded together by the enthusiasm of the knowledgable and enthusiastic teacher.

II. Silent Reading (approximately six 40 minute periods)

The student's silent reading of the novel may be guided by the following suggested divisions and introductory questions appropriate to each section.

Section 1: From "The tall man . . ." (p. 1)
to ". . . the open cabin door" (p. 20).

Section 2: From "Shut the door . . ." (p. 20)
to ". . . Sounder did not come back" (p. 52).

Section 3: From "One night the boy . . ." (p. 52)
to the end.

Introductory Questions

Section 1: Where does the story take place?
How do you know?
Is it a believable place? Why?
At what time in history does the story take place?

Section 2: How does the boy distinguish between house windows and cabin windows?
What do you know about the boy?
How are the lives of the people directed by the place and time in which they live?

Find examples of the author's use of authentic details to make the story and people appear lifelike?

Section 3: Could this story happen in a different setting? Why or why not?

How might the lives of the boy's own children be different from his own childhood?

III. Extending the Learning (approximately four 40 minute periods)

1. Have students draw a picture of the family cabin and its surroundings to emphasize the idea of loneliness.
2. Have students act out the scene in chapter 2 where the sheriff and his deputies arrive and arrest the father. Have them do it again, but do it as though it had been the house of a white man. Discuss the differences, if any.
3. Have students act out a conversation between the boy and his parents about the past and the future after the father returns home.
4. Have students read another book of historical fiction from the list of alternates. Have them discuss some questions such as: In which parts of the book is the setting provided? Does it change? In what part or parts does it change? Why do you think it changes?

UNIT TWO

PLOT

Introduction

The plot of an historical novel is the plan of action, sharing what happens to the characters and what they do. The plot is, as Huck (1979) suggested, "the thread that holds the fabric of the story together and makes the reader want to continue reading" (p. 6). If we are to create in children a desire to read historical fiction, we must present them with successful stories in which, as Sloyer (1982) indicated, "the action is quick and uninterrupted. The interest turns on some dramatic movement. The ending is clear and satisfying" (p. 7). Huck (1979) wrote that a well constructed plot grows logically and naturally from the action and the decisions of the characters. The plot, she contended, "should be credible and rising true rather than depending on coincidence and contrivance. It should be original and fresh rather than trite, tired and predictable" (p. 7). The teacher must help young readers become more observant, more critical, more demanding, and thus more discriminating in their reading. Proper guidance in studying plot should, as Flanigan (1973) suggested, "help the student to reach a level of maturity in reading at which he can recognize and reject poor literature" (p. 28).

Lesson One--Story Line

Objectives

At the end of this lesson the children will be able to:

a) recall and use acceptable literary terminology (setting, story line, rising action, climax, denouement) when writing about or discussing what historical novels are;

b) define a story line as the planned description of a series of events leading up to a problem and how it is solved;

c) identify the components of a plot as he/she evaluates stories of historical fiction;

d) recognize and classify the four components of a) story (setting, problem or rising action, climax, and denouement);

e) make judgments about a book of historical fiction on the basis of its plot construction;

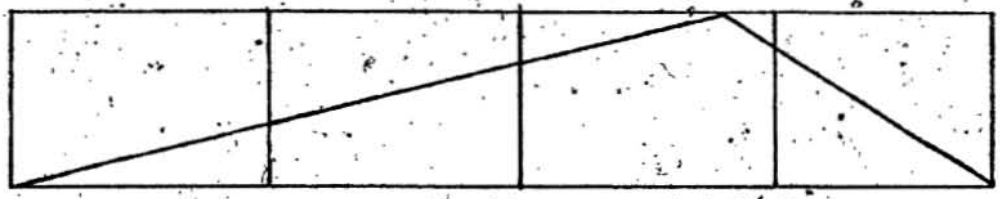
f) identify a piece of historical fiction as a good story by its form and structure.

Four Parts of a Story

A story has four parts as illustrated below:

SETTING	PROBLEM (Rising Action)	CLIMAX	ENDING
Beginning (who, where, when)	Action starts, complications develop, suspense is created, conflict grows	Highest point in the rising action	Problem is solved, questions answered. Story is completed.

The story line of a piece of writing can also be illustrated with the use of a diagram.



This diagram can be effectively used for instructional and evaluation purposes.

Resource Materials

Core Novel

Collier, James Lincoln, and Christopher Collier. My Brother Sam Is Dead.

Alternate Novels

Armstrong, William H. Sounder.

Arthur, Ruth M. An Old Magic.

Burton, Hester. In Spite of All Terror.

Edmonds, Walter D. The Matchlock Gun.

Fisher, Leonard Everett. Two If By Sea.

Fox, Paula. The Slave Dancer.

Garfield, Leon. Footsteps.

Haugaard, Erik Christian. Hakon of Roger's Saga.

Hunt, Irene. Across Five Aprils.

O'Dell, Scott. Island of the Blue Dolphins.

Rockwood, Joyce. To Spoil the Sun.

Speare, Elizabeth George. The Witch of Blackbird Pond.

Sutcliff, Rosemary. Blood Feud.

Walsh, Jill Paton. Fireweed.

My Brother Sam Is Dead--A Synopsis for the Teacher

My Brother Sam Is Dead is set at the time of the American revolutionary war. The American war of independence, like all military conflicts, often engulfed the lives of ordinary families. One such family caught up in this bitter struggle was Sam, his brother Tim and their mother and father. My Brother Sam Is Dead is a novel of conflicting loyalties within a country and the injustices that are inevitable when men set about the business of killing each other. Sam, the only member of his family fighting for the rebels, is falsely accused as a petty thief by his comrades and is executed as an example of his general's discipline. This exciting Newbery honor winner takes an honest look at the injustices of all wars.

Procedure

I. Motivation and Discussion (approximately one 40 minute period)

The teacher says, "I am going to read chapter 1 of our book, My Brother Sam Is Dead. I want you to listen as I read to see if you can answer the questions on the board."

The teacher should duplicate or write on the board questions similar to the following:

Do you think this is part of the setting, problem (rising action), climax or ending of the story? How does the author introduce the reader to the story? Who is in the story? What are they doing? Where is Sam going?

After the teacher has read chapter 1 to the students, the above questions should be used as a basis for class discussion on setting. The teacher can then guide the students to see that the setting is the beginning of the story where time and place are established and essential characters introduced.

The teacher should then shift the discussion to the second part of a story--the problem. The teacher says to the students: "Any story needs a problem to be solved because without it there would be no story. Without a problem of some sort we would have merely a retelling of an incident, not a story."

The teacher can then introduce a discussion by asking a question such as:

In My Brother Sam Is Dead, what problems can you see happening to the major characters?

Then the teacher says to the students, "In addition to setting and problem almost every story has a climax which is usually near the end. The climax is the highest point in the rising action--a kind of turning point. The reader is so interested that he/she just "has" to keep reading to find out what happens or how the problem is solved. Can you

think of a story that you especially liked? What was the most exciting part of that story?"

The teacher then explains to the class that after the climax has been reached, the problem in the story is solved. The final part of the story, the denouement (or ending), shows not only how the problem is solved, but often indicates how the major characters rearrange their lives. The reader, at the end of a good story, is usually left feeling good about life and the people of the world.

II. Silent Reading (approximately eight 40 minute periods)

The student's silent reading of the novel may be guided by the following suggested divisions and introductory questions appropriate to each section:

Section 1. Chapter 2.

Section 2: From the beginning of chapter 3 to the end of chapter 9 (p. 126).

Section 3: From the beginning of chapter 10 to the end of chapter 12 (p. 180).

Section 4: From the beginning of chapter 13 to the end of the book.

Introductory Questions

Section 1: Where does the story take place?
At what period in history does the story take place?
Could the same story happen in a different setting? Why or why not?

Section 2: Explain how Sam, Tim, and their father differ in their feelings about war.
What do you think were the father's reasons for not supporting the rebel cause?
Do you think Tim will be able to adjust to the loss of his father? Explain.

Section 3: What are the primary problems faced by the characters so far in the story?
How do the actions of each individual character affect the lives of the other characters?
What new problem do the characters now face?

Section 4: What is the climax of the story?
How is the new problem solved?

III. Extending the Learning (approximately four 40 minute periods)

1. Have students describe in an oral sentence or two the storyline of the novel.
2. Through group discussion have students describe several story plots in order to develop the habit of looking at stories in that way.
3. Students may be invited to share an especially interesting setting, problem, climax or denouement with the class.
4. Have students select other books from the list of alternates and give a complete description of its plot including setting, problem, climax, and denouement.

5. Involve the students in writing activities in which they produce their own stories.
6. Have students select an historical story and, using the picture storyline, tell what part of the story is the setting, problem, climax and denouement.
7. Sample plot lessons used to guide discussion may be duplicated and given to the children. Have the children answer the following questions about their books:
   a) What is the main problem or action in your book? How do you know it is the main problem?
   b) How was the problem solved? How did the solving of the problem change or influence the lives of those involved?
   c) How did the story end? Would you have made it end differently? Why or why not?

Lesson Two--The Buildup

Objectives

At the end of this lesson the students will be able to:

a) identify the buildup or the rising action of an historical novel;
b) use planned "buildup" in their own creative writing.

Definition: The buildup, one of the most important ingredients in a work of historical fiction, constitutes the rising action of the story and leads to the climax. Many important

events, usually becoming more and more exciting toward the end, take place to build up the suspense and the rising action and lead to the climax.

Procedure

I. Review and Discussion (approximately one 40 minute period)

The teacher should review the previous lesson on the elements of plot by asking such questions as:

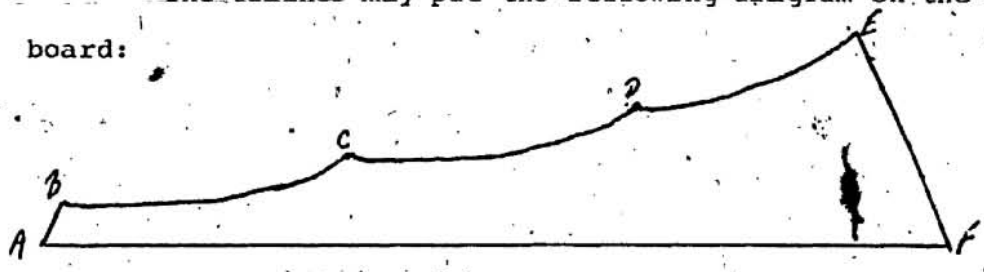
Who can remember what the plot of a story is?

What are the main parts of a story?

Who can show a storyline on the board?

The teacher can then begin a discussion on the buildup by asking: "Do most stories have just one exciting part or several exciting parts? From your reading of My Brother Sam Is Dead can you name some especially exciting parts of the story? How could you diagram a storyline such as that?"

The teacher may put the following diagram on the board:



The teacher may then ask, "What do you think points A, B, C represent? What point represents the climax? How do you think points A, B, and C are related to the climax? What do you think the "buildup" of a story means?" (Buildup refers to the string of events that constitute the rising action and lead to the climax)

II. Extending the Learning (approximately two 40 minute periods)

1. Distribute copies of the following list of passages to the class. Ask the pupils to put an X in front of any of the numbered passages that might be considered an important event in the buildup of the story My Brother Sam Is Dead. (Answers supplied for teacher convenience)

___X___ 1. "Go Sam, Go. Get out of my sight. I can't bear to look at you any more in that vile costume. Get out and don't come back until you can dress as my son, not as a stranger."

_____ 2. "Tim, you can help us by keeping an ear out in the tavern."

___X___ 3. The cow-boys had lain in ambush in the hemlock groves, jumped father, and taken him away someplace.

_____ 4. Food was in short supply and so was everything else and we could steal anything we could get our hands on. . . .

___X___ 5. The officer raised his sword and charged toward the house, and troops ran after him.

_____ 6. I now spent my day digging and planting in our kitchen garden by the side of the house so we'd have fresh vegetables for the tavern.

X 7. "They're after the munitions stored in Danbury," he said. "I came up here to warn the militia."

X 8. Mother and I went to the window. The troop marched by, then broke formation, and began to spread out through the village looking for shelter from the rain.

X 9. Life at the encampment was cold and miserable and the only relief from them was drinking.

X 10. . . . Sam slammed backwards as if he'd been knocked over by a mallet. I never heard the guns roar.

X 11. I married and had children, and with work and God's will I prospered. . . .

Ask: a) Which of these passages is the main climax of the story? Why?

b) Why might passages 1, 2, 5, and 8 be considered part of the buildup or rising action in the story?

c) What are the other passages?

d) What happens in passage 10 to establish it as the climax of the story?

2. Tell the pupils that plot is a series of actions, not just one incident. It involves a beginning, a middle, a climax and an end. In a plot conflict is essential. Every story must have a crisis, a point

of great suspense, which results in a climax and an ending where loose ends are tied together. Then have students use books from the list of alternates and be prepared to discuss the concept of buildup and conflict.

IV. Follow-up Activities (approximately four 40 minute periods)

1. Make a time sheet or time line to fit the story of Sounder.
   Start with the time at the beginning of the story.
   Tell the important things that happened then.
   Tell the next time that something important happened.
   Tell what happened at that time.
   Continue until you finish all the main events of the story.
2. How many main sections are there in Sounder?
   Make subtitles for each section.
   Briefly outline what happened in each section.
3. Describe the setting of the novel My Brother Sam Is Dead.
   What changes would you have to make in your own daily life to live in a setting such as this?
   List the changes.
4. Write four sentences which answer the following questions on the novel My Brother Sam Is Dead.

a) Who or what did something important, or funny, or exciting in the story?

b) When did this happen?

c) Where did it happen?

d) Why did it happen?

UNIT THREE

THEME

Introduction

The overarching theme of a book reveals the author's purpose in writing the story. Theme provides a dimension to the story that goes beyond the narrative level. Such worthy themes as courage, acceptance of self (or others), friendship, growing up, overcoming fear or prejudice serve to set in action truths worthy of lasting forever and inspiring the reader's inner self (Huck, 1979, p. 8).

In this unit the pupils will consider the theme of man's struggle to overcome his own fear. The primary purposes in a study of this or any other theme are to help children think about their own values, to provide opportunities for them to consider alternatives in a situation and to choose among them. Such a study of theme is not necessarily meant to transmit particular values to the child but, as Huck (1979) suggested, to help them "learn something about the process of valuing how it happens, and what makes people hold certain beliefs and behave in a certain manner" (p. 733).

Objectives

At the end of this unit the children will be able to:

a) describe the universal theme in a book of historical fiction in a sentence or two;

b) tell how the plot is influenced by the underlying universal truth;

c) recognize strengths and weaknesses in themes of historical novels;

d) tell how instances in an historical novel causes the reader to experience the same feelings and emotions as those of the character.

Resource Materials

Core Novel

Sperry, Armstrong. Call It Courage.

Alternate Novels

Burton, Hester. In Spite of All Terror.

Clements, Bruce. Prison Window, Jerusalem Blue.

Collier, James Lincoln, and Christopher Collier. My Brother Sam Is Dead.

Dalgliesh, Alice. The Courage of Sarah Noble.

De Angeli, Marguerite. The Door in the Wall.

Dejong, Meindert. The House of Sixty Fathers.

Edmonds, Walter D. The Matchlock Gun.

Fox, Paula. The Slave Dancer.

Haugaard, Erik Christian. Hakon of Roger's Saga.

Haugaard, Eric Christian. The Little Fishes.

Heyman, Anita. Exit From Home.

Hunt, Irene. Across Five Aprils.

Speare, Elizabeth George. The Witch of Blackbird Pond.

Sutcliff, Rosemary. Blood Feud.

Walsh, Jill Paton. Fireweed.

Walsh, Jill Paton. Toolmaker.

Yates, Elizabeth. Carolina's Courage.

Zei, Alki. The Sound of the Dragon's Feet.

Call It Courage--A Synopsis for the Teacher

Mafatu is a twelve-year-old Polynesian boy who has an inherent fear of the sea. The sea had taken his mother and it seemed to Mafatu that the sea gods would not be content until they had him too. So, though he was the chief's son, he feared and avoided the sea. This finally resulted in his being branded a coward.

To escape the taunts of his friends and elders, and to prove to them and himself that he was not a coward, he set forth in a canoe, determined to conquer his fears or be conquered by them. He took with him his only friend Uri, his dog. He endured a hurricane and loss of his supplies, but discovered that in the struggle for survival, he was resourceful beyond his greatest expectations. This is the story of how a small boy's courage grew; of how he was able to overcome his own fears to return triumphantly to his people, exhausted in body, but strong and fearless in spirit, and deserving of the name Mafatu--Stout Heart.

Procedure

I. Motivation and Discussion (approximately one 40 minute period)

The teacher reads the following sentences to the children:

1. Courage and patience can overcome almost any obstacle.
2. It is better to be a dead hero than a live coward (or vice versa).
3. Good things come to anyone who is generous, thoughtful and kind.

The teacher then asks, "Could any of these sentences be used to tell something about life?" The teacher explains that there is a word which we use to describe what a story has to say about people and the way people live their lives. The teacher then asks, "Who can tell me that word? Yes, it is theme."

The teacher explains to the children that the theme of a story describes the way the author feels about certain aspects of life. The children should then be guided to realize that without theme, a story would not have much significance and probably would not be much of a story.

Before proceeding with the reading of Call It Courage the teacher may motivate the children by saying to them, "Most people have had experiences when they were being criticized by their friends. Try to remember an experience like this from your past."

The teacher then says, "I am going to read a short section of our novel Call It Courage. I want you to listen to discover why Mafatu, the central character, was taunted by his friends."

The teacher reads aloud to the students from the beginning to "He was the boy who was afraid" (p. 17). After the reading, the teacher uses the introductory question as a starting point for a discussion. The children should be allowed to share their own experiences with being the victims of ridicule. The teacher will encourage the students to recall and describe their feelings during such an experience. The teacher will attempt to develop feelings of empathy towards Mafatu, but will not force the point.

II. Silent Reading (approximately eight 10 minute periods)

The students' silent reading of the novel may be guided by the following suggested divisions and introductory questions appropriate to each section.

Section 1: From "His hands were damp . . ." (p. 18) to "Mafatu gripped the steering paddle and followed" (p. 20).

Section 2: From "Day broke over . . ." (p. 21) to ". . . . he touched the boy's cheek with his hot muzzle" (p. 34).

Section 3: From "There was a fan . . ." (p. 35) to "He fell into a heavy, dreamless sleep" (p. 79).

Section 4: From "The very next morning . . ." (p. 79) to the end of the story.

Introductory Questions

Section 1: What does Mafatu decide to do? Why?
Do you think this is a wise decision?
Why or why not?

Section 2: Who were the two gods in the boy's life?
How did he feel towards each god?
Why did he fear Moana, the sea god?
How do you think Mafatu will make out on the island?
Will he be able to survive?
What are some of the things he will need in order to survive?

Section 3: How does Mafatu show resourcefulness?
Courage?
What does he learn about courage?

Section 4: How does the boy reveal his final, total victory over the source of all his fear, Moana the sea god?
What is the universal theme of this story?

III. Extending the Learning (approximately four 40 minute periods)

1. Tell the children that when Mafatu watched the other boys go off fishing and listened to their condemnation of him as a coward, he had three choices:

a) He could make a special effort to overcome his fears of the sea by forcing himself, through sheer will power, to join the other boys in their adventure.

b) He could resign himself to his own unnatural fear of the sea, and a life of doing women's work.

c) He could find some special way to prove to himself and the others of the tribe that he was not a coward.

Explain to the children that Mafatu takes the last alternative. Ask:

1. Do you think that was the right choice to make? Why or why not?
2. Can you think of other ways in which Mafatu might have reacted to the taunts of the other boys?
3. What would you have done?
4. Can you think of any time when you have teased someone else or have been teased by others? How did you feel?
5. Why do you think children tease each other?
6. How did being teased make Mafatu feel?
7. Why do you think Mafatu became such good friends with the dog and the albatross?
8. Mafatu went away partly because he was unhappy. Do you have somewhere special to go when you are unhappy?

9. At the end of the story Mafatu collapses in his father's arms. Finish his sentence.

2. Invite the children to write short stories based upon given themes such as:

   If you cannot win make the one ahead break the record.

   The strong take from the weak, but the smart take from the strong.

   Crime does not pay.

   The children can also invent their own themes and plan stories around them.

3. Mafatu leaves his homeland determined but uncertain. Have two students act out the two voices speaking within Mafatu--the voice of determination and the voice of fear.

4. Ask the students to imagine that Mafatu eventually succeeds his father as the great chief of the Hikueru and one day learns of a young boy who fears the sea. Have them enact a scene in which Mafatu speaks with the boy and his parents.

5. Decide as a class some of the important emotions that Mafatu felt throughout the book (fear, shame, resentment, determination, pride, and others). Have them pantomime these emotions, moving from one to the next at intervals signaled by a leader. Have them concentrate on Mafatu's experiences and intense feelings as he gradually grows from cowardice to courage.

6. Throughout the book, Mafatu converses with Moana, the sea god (who opposes him), and Maui, god of the fishermen (who protects him). Have the students write a dialogue between these two gods during Mafatu's return voyage to his homeland.
7. Remind the students that after Mafatu removed the spearhead from the base of the idol, "he knew that he had won a great victory over himself. He had forced himself to do something that he dreaded, something that took every ounce of his will" (p. 50). Have the students write (or tell) about a time when they won a victory over themselves. Compare it with Mafatu's.
8. Have the students read a book from the list of alternates in order to find:
   a) the theme of the book;
   b) a sentence that best summarizes the whole story;
   c) three sentences that tell the most important things that happen in the story.

IV. Follow-Up Activities (approximately four 40 minute periods)

1. Choose sections from Sounder. Ask students to identify words that contribute to the overall feeling intended to be created by the section.
2. Select several selections from My Brother Sam Is Dead. Mount each clipping on a 6' x 8' card, and place them in a file box with directions. Students

may read the cards, decide and write what the author's purpose is for each, and check their answers with a prepared answer card.

3. Have students prepare a large map of the area in which the story of Call It Courage takes place. Have the students also trace the events of the story on the map.

4. Have the students list words and phrases in Call It Courage which tell where the story took place. Have them write a paragraph in their own words describing the setting of the story.

UNIT FOUR

CHARACTERIZATION

Introduction

Perhaps, as Parker (1966) contended, "the most important single element in story is that of character" (p. 75). It is the character to whom the reader responds with concern and recognition. True characterization is, according to Huck (1979), "another hallmark of fine writing" (p. 9). Fine writing has what Watson (1980) described as "believable characters described in full dimension of human personality traits confronting new obstacles that require reliance on self-resources" (p. 10). In addition, well written children's books will have consistency in character portrayal, so that the characters act in accordance with their age, culture, educational background and the like. Yet, well written books will have characters which grow and develop throughout the story (Huck, 1979, p. 9). It is the character of the story who will often remain in our memory long after the details of the plot are forgotten. A character must be both compelling and understood, for as Sloyer (1982) wrote:

> Children enjoy finding people like themselves in stories they read. . . . Characters who are school age, facing some of the same problems as our students. . . . Characters who relate to one another and to the action of the plot. . . .

> Characters who have spunk, who grow because of what happens to them in the story. . . . .
> Characters with whom a child can identify. (p. 8)

Before children can be expected to take part in character analysis, they must be taught to identify and appreciate the roles that are played by specific characters in a story. In this unit children are provided with the opportunity to relate characters of historical fiction to people in the world of today, thereby gaining some important insights into human behavior as well as into characterization as an essential literary element.

This unit is concerned with a study of characterization through a study of the character of Sarah Noble. The importance of human behavior to the development and resolution of the plot should become evident. Furthermore, characters of historical fiction should be seen in the context of their time, yet reflecting the particular universal traits which make them real human personalities.

Objectives

At the end of this unit the children will be able to:

a) identify techniques used by writers of historical fiction to create clear images of historical fiction;
b) observe and interpret changes in the personality and behavior of historical story characters;
c) select thoughts, words, and actions which reveal the personal traits of historical story characters;

d) imagine themselves as historical characters and describe how they would have acted in given historical situations.

Resource Materials

Core Novel

Dalgliesh, Alice. The Courage of Sarah Noble.

Alternate Novels

Armstrong, William H. Sounder.

Arnold, Elliot. A Kind of Secret Weapon.

Bawden, Nina. Carrie's War.

Brink, Carol Ryrie. Carrie Woodlawn.

Bulla, Robert Clyde. Viking Adventure.

Burton, Hester. In Spite of All Terror.

Burton, Hester. To Ravensrig.

Clements, Bruce. Prison Window, Jerusalem Blue.

Collier, James Lincoln, and Christopher Collier. My Brother Sam Is Dead.

De Angeli, Marguerite. The Door in the Wall.

Edmonds, Walter D. The Matchlock Gun.

Forbes, Ester. Johnny Tremain.

Fox, Paula. The Slave Dancer.

Fritz, Jean. Brady.

Haugaard, Erik Christian. Hakon of Roger's Saga.

Heyman, Anita. Exit From Home.

Hunt, Irene. Across Five Aprils.

Lively, Penelope. Fanny's Sister.

Rockwood, Joyce. To Spoil the Sun.

Speare, Elizabeth George. The Witch of Blackbird Pond.

Yates, Elizabeth. Carolina's Courage.

Zei, Miki. The Sound of the Dragon's Feet.

The Courage of Sarah Noble--A Synopsis for the Teacher

This is the true and inspiring story of eight-year-old Sarah who accompanies her father into the wilderness to cook for him while he builds a cabin for his family. Sarah continually reminds herself of her mother's parting words, "Keep up your courage, Sarah Noble" (p. 12). Sarah remembers those words many times to keep the wilderness, the strange night noises, the Indians and the separation from her family from frightening her. Symbolic of Sarah's courage is the red cloak that Sarah's mother had fastened around her just before she left home.

Procedure

I. Motivation and Discussion (approximately one 40 minute period)

The teacher may initiate children into the concept of characterization through a guided discussion. Questions such as the following may be used to prompt and guide the students. The teacher asks:

What is meant by the character of a story?

What makes you like some characters better than others?

Can you name some characters whom you have liked?

What makes some characters unlikable?

Can you think of a story you have read that has had both good and bad characters?

When you read a story, does it take you very long to decide who the good character is?

How about the bad character?

The teacher then will explain to the students that when the characters (whether good or bad) are in some kind of a struggle, we call it conflict. The teacher writes the word conflict on the board and then asks:

Why do you think a writer would want his characters in a conflict?

Can a character be both good and bad?

How do you feel when you have unintentionally hurt someone's feelings?

How do you feel when you realize that you have forgotten to do something for someone?

With whom are you angry? Yourself or the other person?

The teacher then explains to the students that good characters in a story may have bad character traits also. This causes conflict within the character. This kind of conflict is called inner-conflict. The teacher then asks the students:

Have you ever felt inner-conflict?

Students should be allowed to share their own experiences of inner-conflict.

The teacher may provide additional motivation for the story by explaining to the students that one of the most important elements in any story is people--the characters around whom the story grows. What the characters think, what they do, what they say, how they feel and react are the most important parts of any story. The reader must, therefore, think about the characters in order to understand and appreciate the story.

II. Silent Reading (approximately eight 40-minute periods)

The student's silent reading of the novel may be guided by the following suggested divisions and introductory questions appropriate to each section:

Section 1: to ". . . he was still awake" (p. 5).

Section 2: to "Sar-ah, Sar-ah, Sar-ah" (p. 32).

Section 3: to ". . . to Tall John's house" (p. 38).

Section 4: to the end of the story.

Introductory Questions

Section 1: Who is the main character?
Why does Sarah have trouble sleeping?
Why is Sarah travelling in the wilderness?

Section 2: Who are the other characters?
How do the other characters feel about each other?
What can we tell about Sarah from her father's expression "You are too wise for your years" (p. 14)?

How does Sarah feel when the Indians first come upon her?

What does Sarah do to keep her days full when her father is away building the house?

How do Sarah's clothes make her feel safe?

Section 3: How does Sarah feel about having to live with the Indians?

How would you feel?

How does Sarah handle her fear?

Section 4: Has Sarah changed by the time her family returns? Does she look and act differently?

In what ways is she the same?

Sarah says she has become a woman. In what ways is this true?

Describe Sarah. What are her good traits?

What are her bad traits (if any)?

Does any character learn something important in the story?

Does any character change his/her attitudes or behavior?

III. Extending the Learning (approximately four 40 minute periods)

1. Have several students act out the scene in which Sarah meets the Indian children. They should try to show how Sarah's attitude toward them changes and how their reaction toward her changes.

2. Let small groups make up a skit about one of the following:
   a) meeting someone new and strange;
   b) greeting someone you love very much whom you haven't seen for a long time;
   c) being teased about something you are afraid of or uncertain about.
3. Have children write three entries in a diary that Sarah might have kept. They may choose three consecutive days or pick any three exciting days to write about.
4. Have the children write a letter that Sarah might have written and sent to her mother. Choose one of the following times when Sarah might have written:
   a) after her first night in the forest;
   b) after her stay at the Robinson's house;
   c) after she first met the Indians;
   d) when her father was returning for the rest of the family.
5. Let the children write or tell what happened to Sarah when she grew up. Did she move to a city? Did she have a job? Did she remember her Indian friends? Did she get married?
6. Have the children read a book from the list of alternates and
   a) tell in what ways two of the characters are alike. Tell in what ways they are different;

b) tell how the characters change in the story and why they change;

c) find the sentences and words that best describe a character.

IV. Follow-Up Activities (approximately six 40 minute periods)

1. Reread the first chapter of Sounder. Who do you think is the main character? What kind of person is this character?
   In your own words describe this main character. List specified words from the novel that support your description.
2. Choose two characters from the novel My Brother Sam Is Dead. Describe each individual. Would these characters make good neighbors? Give reasons for your answer.
3. Choose an interesting character from the novel Call It Courage. Give a visual picture of your person, using one or more of the following ideas:
   a) Make a character out of clay.
   b) Make a paper and cloth picture of the character.
   c) Paint the character either in water colors or oils.
   d) Do a finger painting of the character.
   e) Draw the character with a pencil or crayons.
   Place the finished character on display for others to see.

4. Most stories have an introduction, a body and a conclusion.
   Divide The Courage of Sarah Noble into these main parts--beginning, problem, climax, ending.
   Give subtitles for each section.
   Suggest why you divided the novel at the places that you chose.
5. From your reading of The Courage of Sarah Noble, why do you think the author solved the main problem the way he did? What was his purpose in doing this? What was he trying to tell us?
   Suggest another method of presenting the same theme. What will happen to the main character in this other presentation?
6. Every story is set in a particular place. Describe the setting of The Courage of Sarah Noble. Compare this setting with your own neighborhood.

UNIT FIVE

STYLE

Introduction

The manner in which an author selects and arranges words in presenting his story is referred to as his style. A good writing style is successful in creating and reflecting the mood of a story. The style, of course, should be appropriate to the plot, theme, setting, and characters. This is true of historical fiction as it is true of other genres. The appropriateness of the style to the setting of the novel is, however, particularly important in historical fiction.

Children in the middle grades can appreciate figurative language and symbolic meaning, provided that they meet these literary techniques within a context that is meaningful to them. The intent of this unit is not to analyze an author's style, but to provide children with an opportunity to react to it. Specifically, the purpose is to help children appreciate the creative elements of figurative and descriptive language in an author's writing style.

Objectives

At the end of this unit the student will be able to:

a) recall and use the terms simile, metaphor, and figurative language when writing about or discussing an author's style in historical fiction;

b) identify examples of similes, metaphors, and figurative language in novels of historical fiction.

Resource Materials

Core Novel

Garfield, Leon. Smith.

Alternate Novels

Dalgliesh, Alice. The Courage of Sarah Noble.

De Angeli, Marguerite. The Door in the Wall.

Fox, Paula. The Slave Dancer.

Garfield, Leon. Devil in the Fog.

Garfield, Leon. Footsteps.

Haugaard, Eric Christian. The Little Fishes.

O'Dell, Scott. Island of the Blue Dolphins.

Rockwood, Joyce. To Spoil the Sun.

Seredy, Kate. The White Stag.

Sutcliff, Rosemary. Blood Feud.

Yates, Elizabeth. Carolina's Courage.

Zei, Alki. The Sound of the Dragon's Feet.

Smith--A Synopsis for the Teacher

Smith is the story of a twelve-year-old boy in the grimy, shadow-filled underworld of eighteenth-century London. Smith must survive by pickpocketing. In the process of earning his living Smith is a witness to the murder of a man whom he has just robbed of an impressive looking document. The plot develops with a whole cast of unscrupulous characters seeking the document and its lure of untold wealth.

Smith is a story of intrigue, violence and suspense. Through the colorful and powerful style of Leon Garfield the reader is able to get an appreciation of life in England during the eighteenth century.

Procedure

I. Motivation and Discussion (approximately three 40 minute periods)

The teacher should begin the discussion of style by saying something like the following to the students: "Authors use many techniques or tools in order to make the story seem more real to us. Some of these tools are (these may be listed on the board) the use of figurative language, local color, and similes and metaphors. Let us first discuss the use of figurative language in a story."

The teacher should then ask the students what is meant by the following sentences:

The children were not surprised because Bob spilled the beans.

The boys nearly died laughing.

The teacher asks: "Did Bob really spill some beans? Were the boys really near death?"

The teacher then explains to the students that these and other such expressions which most of us use from time to time are called figures of speech.

The teacher should say to the students: "We sometimes refer to this as using figurative language. Can you think of other examples of figurative language? To make characters seem like 'real people' authors let the characters 'talk' naturally. Most of the things we say may not be completely true literally, but they do help others to understand us more clearly. Study the following sentences. Why is each not completely true?"

The teacher may then list the following examples of figurative language on the board, and use them as a basis for class discussion.

I will go out into the world.

That is all you know.

She took the girl into a room full of yarn.

Her nose must have been a foot long.

I have always been weaving.

Local Color

The teacher says to the students: "Writers sometimes use special words in order to make clear in our minds a certain image, scene, place, or situation. This is called local color in a story. Listen to the following passages from our novel Smith and try to decide something about the central character of the story and where he lives."

The teacher reads from "He was called . . ." (p. 3) to ". . . such as Smith" (p. 4).

The teacher then asks the students: "Which words help you know the nature of Smith and his environment?"

Similes

The teacher says to the students: "We all have read stories in which the author gave such a good description that we could almost 'see' the people or things in the story. Have you noticed that authors sometimes give a clear mental picture of something by comparing it to something entirely different? For example, in Smith (p. 3) we read, "A rat was like a snail beside Smith." Comparisons like this are called similes." (The teacher writes simile on the board along with an example to illustrate the term. The teacher then asks what is meant by the following similes:

white as snow	straight as an arrow
hot as fire	sharp as a tack
quick as a wink	flat as a pancake
strong as an ox	

Metaphors

The teacher reviews what a simile is. The students are then asked: "What 'clue' is used to help the reader recognize a simile?" (The words, "like a", "as a", or "than a" are all used between the two things being compared).

The teacher says to the students: "Another way to describe things clearly is to call them something else, something that is well known to the reader. For example, in Smith we read, 'The musty, tottering forest of the town' (p. 5), '. . . the bowels of the town' (p. 10), 'flew up the stairs' (p. 37), and '. . . their feet kissed the cobbles . . .' (p. 40). What do these quotes tell us? Does the town really have bowels? Why do you think the author used that word? Did Smith really fly up the stairs? What did the author mean by their feet kissing the cobbles? Such words which refer to one thing and mean something else are called metaphors. (The teacher writes the word on the board along with an example). Here are some common metaphors. Tell what you think the author of each means."

frozen with fear
green with envy
burst into laughter
His eyes dropped out of his head.
He put his foot in his mouth.
The doctor was tied up.

The wind caught the sails.

Lights flashed in his eyes.

Bells rang in his ears.

A bright yellow flame shot out of the spout.

Before asking the students to read the book silently the teacher may introduce the story by reading chapter 1 aloud to the class.

The teacher may begin by saying something like the following: "I am going to read a short section of our novel Smith to you. I want you to listen to discover ways in which the author uses language to make Smith seem real and interesting to us."

This introductory statement gives the students a purpose for listening to the oral reading of chapter 1 by the teacher and provides a starting point for a discussion on the effective use of figurative language. After the teacher has read chapter 1 to the students, the introductory statement may be used to initiate a class discussion. The teacher should guide the students to see how figurative language helps the reader to get to know the character and his setting better, as well as to make the story more interesting.

II. Silent Reading (approximately twelve 40 minute periods)

The student's silent reading of the novel may be guided by the following suggested divisions and introductory questions appropriate to each section:

Section 1: Students read chapter 2.

Section 2: Students read to the end of chapter 3.

Section 3: The teacher reads chapters 4, 5, and 6, giving special emphasis to the passage beginning "now all was settled . . ." (p. 60).

Section 4: Pupils read to the end of chapter 8.

Section 5: Pupils read to ". . . absorb him entirely" (p. 90).

Section 6: Pupils finish the novel.

Introductory Questions

Section 1: How does the author use language to give the reader a clear picture of Smith's home and home life?

Section 2: Find specific examples of metaphor and simile.

Section 3: How does the author's use of simile, metaphor, and colorful language make you feel?

Section 4: Did the use of language create any particular feeling? (The teacher should look for kinesthetic responses--under the skin sensations--caused by such words as brisk, bitter, shudder, stabbed).

Section 5: How does the passage make you feel?
(Afraid, sad, excited, apprehensive)

Section 6: How does the author make you feel when Smith:

a) is put in jail (p. 95)?

b) is visited in jail by Mr. Mansfield (p. 129)?

c) escapes from jail (p. 142)?

d) realized that his friend Lord Tom had betrayed him (p. 156)?

e) witnessed the death of his friend Lord Tom (p. 205)?

f) became a young gentleman (p. 211)?

III. Extending the Learning (approximately four 40 minute periods)

1. Present the pupils with a relatively simple sentence. For example:

The man walked down the street.

Guide the discussion with such questions as:

How did the man walk?

How did the man feel?

What did the man see as he walked?

As ideas are presented by the class, lead the students to see that sentences with descriptive words place vivid pictures in the mind of the reader. Refer them to specific examples in the novel such as the sentences beginning:

"The old gentleman . . ." (p. 5).

"as the old gentleman . . ." (p. 8).

2. Present root sentences from which pupils choose several to expand for image effect. Sentences such as the following may be used:

   His favorite spot was Ludgate Hill (p. 4).

   Two men saw him (p. 38).

   Miss Mansfield was a commoner (p. 50).

   Smith's friend looked like a parrot (p. 102).

3. Present descriptive words, such as soft, green, envious, from which pupils are to formulate similes.

4. Invite the pupils to find metaphors and similes in the novel being studied or in another novel of historical fiction.

5. Ask the pupils to explain what they think the author meant by each of the following passages from Smith:

   "he was quicker than a rat, sharper than a stoat, foxier than a fox . . . he knew the town's corners and alleys and courts and by ways better than he knew his own heart . . . he could vanish into the thick air in the twinkling of an eye . . ." (p. 11).

   "for the dark houses and the dimly silvered streets - with their gutters running down their bellies like black wounds - held another, more formidable menace" (p. 41).

"Give him another half hour and he'll be trying on his new clothes and strutting like the king of the weasels" (p. 64).

"How much better it is to put our cards on the table - play fair . . . and be friends" (p. 118).

"She rustled tremendously as she moved like great sweeping of autumn leaves" (p. 187).

6. In the following paragraph children are to underline all of the descriptive words that are not absolutely necessary to tell what Smith is seeing:

The old gentleman's face was faithfully turned toward a certain dark doorway. He seemed to peer very anxiously round the heavy shoulder of a man who was holding him - as if for a better view. His eyes flickered with pain at the knife's quick prick. Then he looked surprised - amazed even - as he felt the cold blade slip into his heart. (p. 9)

IV. Follow-Up Activities (approximately eight 40 minute periods)

1. From your reading of Sounder list some good descriptive words. Write a good descriptive sentence of your own using these words.
2. Find sentences in the novel My Brother Sam Is Dead which are good examples of colorful or figurative language.

3. Make a booklet with similes, metaphors, or colorful language found in the novel Call It Courage.
   Illustrate your booklet.
4. Find examples of colorful language in the novel The Courage of Sarah Noble. Be prepared to explain these examples to the class.
5. How many main sections are there in the novel Smith?
   Make subtitles for each section.
   Briefly outline what happened in each section.
6. List words and phrases in Smith which tell where the story took place.
   In your own words, write a paragraph describing the setting of the book.
7. Many things are learned by "reading between the lines."
   What information did you learn from your reading of Smith without being specifically told by the author?
8. What information do you have about the main character in the novel Smith?
   Choose three qualities of the main character that you admire and tell why you think they are good qualities.

EVALUATION

As children develop a basic understanding of the lessons taught in this guide, an ongoing evaluation is necessary. The guidelines on the following pages may help the teacher evaluate the extent to which the children are succeeding in meeting the general objectives of the program. It must be remembered, however, that the following are suggested guidelines for ongoing, informal assessment. They are not to be used to enable the reader to rank or otherwise "grade" children in any way.

1. The teacher may keep a cumulative file on each child for his own assessment of that child's progress. This will also serve to inform the next teacher of what the child has read. The form in Figure 2, or an adaptation of the same, may serve this purpose. Some teachers may prefer a shorter version as illustrated in Figure 1 below.

Pupil's Name: _____

Book Title: _____

Author: _____

Date Started: _____

Date Completed: _____

Comments about the Book: _____

_____

_____

Figure 1. Evaluation form.

2. Encourage children to keep records of their own. Children should be encouraged to keep these records in their own personal file. They may bring their file with them to their weekly conference with the teacher. During these individual conferences each child is given the opportunity to discuss with the teacher the books he/she has been reading. The form illustrated in Figure 2 may be useful for this purpose.

Title: _____

Author: _____

Publisher: _____

Date Published: _____

Other books that you have read by the same author: _____

Briefly tell about your book, using the following outline:

Setting: (who, where, when, what, why)

_____

Problem: (state the problem and one main event and buildup leading up to the solving of the problem)

_____

_____

_____

Climax: (how was the problem finally solved)

_____

_____

Ending: (how did the characters in the story react when the problem was solved?)

_____

_____

Figure 2. Pupil record form.

3. Give the children an informal inventory to determine their background of exposure to books.
4. Record examples of children's unsolicited responses to literature, as seen in their play, talk, art, or writing. Similar records may be kept of any solicited responses to literature.
5. Observe and record the degree to which children are attentive and involved as they listen to stories.
6. Ask the following questions of each child. Keep a cumulative record of your assessment.
    1. Is the child responding to a greater range and complexity of work?
    2. Is depth of understanding emphasized, rather than the number of books read?
    3. Is the child relating literature to his own life?
    4. Is the child voluntarily reading more at school?
    5. Do the parents report an increase in reading at home?
    6. Is the child beginning to see literature as a source of lifelong pleasure?

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APPENDIX A

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY OF BOOKS OF HISTORICAL FICTION

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Horn Book Magazine, October 1969, 45, p. 537.
Booklist, July 15, 1969, 65, p. 1277.

Thompson, F.C. Danger in the coves. Toronto: Macmillan, 1963, 122pp.
Recommendations
Egoff (1975), p. 129.

Trease, G. When the drums beat. London. William Heinemann Ltd., 1976, 44pp.
Recommendations
Junior Bookshelf, April 1976, 40, p. 95.
Growing Point, March 1976, 14, p. 2816.

Walsh, J.P. Fireweed. New York: Farrar, Straus, 1970.
Recommendations
Huck (1979), p. 508.
Sutherland (1981), p. 392.

Walsh, J.P. The walls of Athens. London: William Heinemann Ltd., 1977, 39pp.
Recommendations
Growing Point, March 1978, 16, p. 3265.
Junior Bookshelf, April 1978, 42, p. 94.

_____. Toolmaker. New York: The Seabury Press, 1973, 47pp.
Recommendations
Horn Book Magazine, July 1974, 50, p. 284.
Center for Children's Books Bulletin, September 1974, 28, p. 19.

Wilder, L.I. Little house in the big woods. New York: Harper & Row, 1953, 238pp.
Recommendations
Huck (1979), p. 493.
Sutherland (1981), pp. 42-43.

Wood, K. Samson's long ride. Toronto: Collins, 1968, 77pp.
Recommendations
Egoff (1975), p. 130.
In Review, Autumn 1968, 1-2, p. 19.

Yates, E. Carolina's courage. New York: E.P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 1964, 96-p.
Recommendations
Huck (1979), pp. 492-493.
Sutherland (1981), pp. 377-378.

Zei, A. The sound of the dragon's feet. New York: E.P. Dutton Inc., 1979, 113pp.
Recommendations
Sutherland (1981), p. 379.
White (1979), p. 117.

APPENDIX B

CRITERIA FOR HISTORICAL STORIES

Complete Source: Georgiou, Constantine. Children and their literature. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1969, pp. 328-330.
Used by permission of the author.

Criteria for Historical Stories

THEME

- Is the theme (or themes) historically basic to human experience?
- Does the theme concern itself with human worth and dignity and other ideas deserving of children's attention?
- Is the choice of theme in the story comprehensible to the age group for which the book is intended?
- Is the theme strong enough to communicate without condescension at the appropriate emotional level of children?
- Is the underlying theme in a story original enough so as to afford a fresh perspective for viewing life in the past?
- Are the basic ideas dominating the story capable of lending themselves to the re-creation of life long ago so that the people, places, and issues of the times appear as alive as those of today?
- Does the theme remain constant with the truth in human experience, especially in developmental levels of childhood?

- Is the theme of a caliber high enough to satisfy young readers so that they become inspired by life in the past?
- Do the themes in the stories of long ago confirm for children a fundamental truth of human experience so as to link them with the ebb and flow of human life?

PLOT

- Is the story a genuine adventure in the past?
- Is the adventure concerned with action and resolution of conflict characteristic of the times the book tries to re-create?
- Is the action paced closely enough to make the story move swiftly through historical details?
- Does the movement of action intensify the interest in the story so that it grows more absorbing?
- Are the events, actions, conflicts, characters, settings, tightly interrelated in developing the basic idea?
- Have details of time, place, and the social order been used naturally with imaginative inventiveness?
- Is there adequate chronological sequence to the events in a book so as to afford a sense of time's passage?
- Does the story line weave itself strongly through the facts of history so as to form an indivisible whole?
- Is the story paced in keeping with the rate of living during the period of history retraced in the book?
- Are the details in the story used to point up the human interest elements?

CHARACTERIZATION

- Do characters come alive within the historical framework of the story?
- Are the characters drawn with close, human details that sharpen their relief against a period background?
- Do the characters serve as vehicles to communicate underlying themes or message in a story of the past?
- Have the significant characters in the story been drawn so as to represent memorable personages in history?
- Do these characters possess many attributes worthy of emulation?
- Can present-day youngsters readily identify with characters drawn from the past because of the universality they reveal in the story?
- Have these long-departed characters been depicted with convincing characteristics?
- Are the characteristics, mannerisms, speech, dress, and attitudes of the characters a genuine reflection of the period in which they lived?

Style

- Is the style of writing in keeping with the theme and period stressed in the story?
- Have colorful words, phrases, names, dialogue been utilized skillfully so as to paint an accurate picture of the times?
- Are some elements of language archaic enough to afford a feeling of long ago?
- Have accurate idioms and obsolete expressions been effectively used to capture the flavor of a period in history?
- Does the style of language preserve the dignity of the past without excessive use of idioms, archaic terms, and the like?
- Is a sense of history gained from the language used in the story?
- Is the writing free of sentimentality as life is approached from a historical perspective?
- Are the perspective, the point of view, the theme, historical backgrounds, and character portrayals achieved through clarity, order, and unity in the writing of a period story?
- Has authenticity been preserved in affording glimpses of life long ago or life that is fast disappearing?
- Can the style of writing give young readers an opportunity to "live" rather than just "witness" history?
- Is the writing true to the times, settings, peoples, and issues so that there is obvious integrity about the book?
- Is the book designed so that in no way does it "falsify history's fundamental record" even though the style of writing has utilized invention?

Setting

- Has the story employed historical details to stimulate a sense of awareness of life long ago?
- Are the historical details graphic enough to form a colorful background against which characters and episodes can move convincingly?
- Do these graphic details of time, place, and the social order give an authentic, truthful picture of history?
- Are major and minor details scrupulously accurate so as not to be in the least unfaithful to the period in which the story takes place?
- Have accurate details of a period been presented to demonstrate captivating quaintness and the charm of antiquity?
- Does the unity of elements in the settings—those of time, places, people, beliefs, costumes—remain faithful to the spirit of a period in history?

APPENDIX C

SELECTION AIDS - A SELECTED LISTING

Current Reviewing Sources

Bookbird. Package Library of Foreign Children's Books, Inc., 119 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York, 10003. Published quarterly.

This is an international periodical on literature for young people. It includes papers about books and authors in many countries, and prize-winning books.

The Bulletin of the Centre for Children's Books. Graduate Library School, University of Chicago Press, 5801 Ellis Avenue, Chicago, Illinois. Monthly except August.

This periodical gives critical reviews with evaluations of literary quality as well as grade and reading level. New books which are not recommended are also included. Annotations indicate whether a given book is recommended, acceptable, marginal, or not recommended.

Canadian Materials. Canadian Library Association, 151 Sparks Street, Ottawa, Ontario, K1P 5E3. Quarterly.

This periodical reviews print and nonprint materials produced in Canada, by Canadians, and/or on Canadian topics. It is a valuable tool aimed particularly at the school population.

Canadian Children's Literature. Box 335, Guelph, Ontario. Published quarterly.

This journal is published by the Canadian Children's Press. It is a periodical of criticism and review.

The Horn Book Magazine. The Horn Book, Inc., 585 Boylston Street, Boston, Massachusetts, 02116. Published six times yearly.

This periodical is devoted wholly to children's books and reading. It contains detailed reviews of current

books. Entries are classified by subject and age level. In October there is a "Fanfare" list of outstanding books of the preceding year.

The Junior Book Shelf: A Review of Children's Books. Marsh Hall, Thurstonland, Huddersfield, HD4 6Xb, Yorkshire, England. Six issues yearly.

This periodical reviews books published in England. Each review gives a summary of the book and some evaluative statements on quality.

School Library Journal. R.R. Bowker and Company, 1180 Avenue of the Americas, New York, New York. Monthly, September through May.

This periodical reviews all children's books published in the United States each year. Single and double stars indicate better-than-average and exceptional-quality books, respectively. Entries are arranged by different grade levels and subject categories.

Top of the News. 50E. Huron Street, Chicago, Illinois, 60611. Published quarterly.

This periodical is published by the American Library Association. It reviews both print and nonprint.

The Web: Wonderfully Exciting Books. The Ohio State University, Room 200, Ramseyer Hall, 29 West Woodruff, Columbus, Ohio, 43210. Published quarterly.

This publication offers reviews of children's books and suggestions as to how teachers can use children's literature in their classroom.

Retrospective Selection Aids

Adventure with Books. National Council of Teachers of English, Citation Press, New York, New York. 1981.

This booklist for elementary schools is revised periodically. It contains a classified bibliography of over 1,000 titles. Books are organized under subject categories. The brief annotations include price, date, and age level.

Best Books for Children: Preschool Through the Middle Grades. Gillespie, John T. and Gilbert, Christine B. (eds.), 2nd ed. New York, Bowker, 1981. Published annually.

This booklist contains over 4,000 approved titles. Annotations are arranged by grade and subject. There is an author-illustrator index and a title-series index.

Elementary School Library Collection. Bro Dart Publishing Company, 1609 Memorial Avenue, Williamsport, Pennsylvania, 17701. 1982.

The entries are classified. Annotations are indexed by author, subject, title, and grade level. This publication is designed to assist in the establishment of new school libraries serving children from kindergarten through to the sixth grade.

APPENDIX D

AWARDS AND PRIZES - BOOKS OF HISTORICAL FICTION

Awards and Prizes

James Adams Children's Book Award

Initiated in 1953 by the U.S. Section of Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, this award was created for the purpose of encouraging publication of books for children that are of literary merit and contain constructive themes which promote peace, dignity, and equality for all people, as well as social justice, and to recognize and commend authors and publishers of these books.

1968 The Little Fishes by Erik Cristian Haugaard. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1967.

1970 The Cay by Theodore Taylor. New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1969.

Boston Globe Honor Book Award

This award, created in 1967 by the Boston Globe and The Horn Book Magazine, is given for outstanding fiction, outstanding nonfiction, and outstanding illustrators.

1967 The Little Fishes by Erik Christian Haugaard. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1967.

1967 Smith by Leon Garfield. London's Pantheon Books, 1967.

1977 Blood Feud by Rosemary Sutcliff. London: Oxford University Press, 1976.

1977 (Honor) Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry by Mildred D. Taylor, Dial, 1976.

1981 (Honor) Footsteps by Leon Garfield. New York: Delacorte Press, 1980.

Carnegie Medal

First introduced in 1937 by the British Library Association, the Carnegie Medal is given for the outstanding book for children, written in English and published in the United Kingdom during the preceding year.

1973 (commended) Carrie's War by Nina Bawden. New York: J.B. Lippincott Co., 1975.

1979 (commended) Exeter Blitz by David Rees. New York: Elsevier/Nelson, 1979.

Lewis Carroll Shelf Award

This award, created in 1958 by Dr. David C. Davis, was given annually to those tales that possessed enough of the qualities of Alice in Wonderland to enable them to stand on the same shelf. This award was discontinued in 1979.

1957 Cadadle Woodlawn by Carol Ryrie Brink. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1935.

1957 The Courage of Sarah Noble by Alice Dalgliesh. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1954.

1959 The White Stag by Kate Seredy. New York: The Viking Press, 1937.

1960 The Matchlock Gun by Walter D. Edmonds. New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1941.

1961 Blue Willow by Doris Gates. New York: The Viking Press, 1940.

1961 The Door in the Wall by Marguerite de Angeli. New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1949.

1961 Island of the Blue Dolphins by Scott O'Dell. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1960.

1966 Across Five Aprils by Irene Hunt. Chicago: Follett Publishing Co., 1964.

1970 The Cay by Theodore Taylor. New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1969.

1970 Sounder by William H. Armstrong. New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1969.

Child Study Children's Book Award

Created in 1943 by the Child Study Association of America, the Child Study Children's Book Award is given annually to a book for children that deals realistically and in a positive way with problems in their world.

1955 Plain Girl by Virginia Sorensen. New York: Harcourt, 1955.

1956 The House of Sixty Fathers by Meindert Dejong. New York: Harper and Row, 1956.

Commonwealth Club of California Writers Award

This annual award was established in 1932 to encourage good literature in California. It is awarded solely to writers who are residents of California.

1940 Blue Willow by Doris Gates. New York: The Viking Press, 1940.

1969 The Cay by Theodore Taylor. New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1969.

1978 North of Danger by Dale Fife. New York: E.P. Dutton, 1978.

Governor General's Literary Award

This distinguished award was first established in 1937 to honor outstanding books. The award is administered by the Canada Council.

1959 Nkwala by Edith Sharp. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1958.

Canada Council Award for Children's Literature

This award, which was first established in 1915, is given in recognition of outstanding contributions to Canadian literature for children in both English and French languages. The prize is awarded by the Canada Council.

1976 Shantymen of Cache Lake by Bill Freeman. Toronto: James Lorimer, 1975.

1980 Days of Terror by Barbara Smucker. Toronto, Vancouver: Clarke, Irwin, 1979.

Guardian Award for Children's Fiction

Created in 1967 by the staff of The Guardian, this annual award is presented for an outstanding work of fiction for children by a British or Commonwealth author.

1967 Devil-in-the-Fog by Leon Garfield. London: Longman, 1966.

1976 The Peppermint Pig by Nina Bawden. New York: J.B. Lippincott Co., 1975.

International Board on Books for Young People [IBBY] Honor List

Every two years since its inception in 1956, an IBBY Honor List is announced for the purpose of furthering the goal of encouraging worldwide understanding through literature. This award is associated with the Hans Christian Anderson Award.

1956 (USA) Carry on, Mr. Bowditch by Jean Lee Latham. Boston: Houghton, 1955.

1958 (USA) The House of Sixty Fathers by Meindert Dejong. New York: Harper and Row, 1956.

1960 (Canada) Nkwala by Edith Lambert Sharp. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1958.

1960 (USA) The Witch of Blackbird Pond by Elizabeth George Speare. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin Co., 1958.

1962 (USA) Island of the Blue Dolphins by Scott O'Dell. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin Co., 1960.

1964 (USA) The Bronze Bow by Elizabeth George Speare. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin Co., 1961.

Little, Brown Canadian Children's Book Award

This award, first created in 1957 by the Little, Brown Publishing Company, is intermittently given to Canadian authors for a previously unpublished fiction or nonfiction manuscript for children.

1957 Nkwala by Edith Sharp. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1958.

National Book Award

Created in 1950 by the Association of American Publishers, this award gives recognition to the most distinguished books of the preceding year.

1974 Summer of My German Soldier by Bette Greene. New York: Dial, 1973.

1975 My Brother Sam Is Dead by James Lincoln Collier and Christopher Collier. New York: Four Winds Press, 1974.

1977 Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry by Mildred D. Taylor. New York: Dial, 1973.

John Newbery Award

The distinguished Newbery Award was established in 1922 by the Association for Library Services to Children of the American Library Association to encourage original

and creative work in the field of books for children. The award is presented to the author of the most distinguished contribution to American literature for children published in the United States in the previous year.

1929 Trumpeter of Krakow by Eric P. Kelly. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1925.

1936 Caddie Woodlawn by Carol Ryrie Brink. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1935.

1936 (Honor) The Good Master by Kate Seredy. New York: The Viking Press, 1935.

1938 The White Stag by Kate Seredy. New York: The Viking Press, 1937.

1941 Call It Courage by Armstrong Sperry. New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1940.

1941 (Honor) Blue Willow by Doris Gates. New York: The Viking Press, 1940.

1942 The Matchlock Gun by Walter D. Edmonds. New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1941.

1943 Adam of the Road by Elizabeth Janet Gray. New York: The Viking Press, 1942.

1944 Johnny Tremain by Esther Forbes. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin Co., 1943.

1946 (Honor) Justin Morgan Had a Horse by Marguerite Henry. New York: Rand McNally and Co., 1945.

1950 The Door in the Wall by Marguerite de Angeli. New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1949.

1953 (Honor) The Bears on Hemlock Mountain. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1952.

1954 . . . And Now Miguel by Joseph Krumgold. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1953.

1955 (Honor) The Courage of Sarah Noble by Alice Dalgliesh. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1954.

1956 Carry on Mr. Bowditch by Jean Lee Latham. Boston: Houghton, 1955.

1957 (Honor) The House of Sixty Fathers by Meindert Dejong. New York: Harper and Row, 1956.

1959 The Witch of Blackbird Pond by Elizabeth George Speare. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin Co., 1958.

1959 (Honor) The Perilous Road by William O'Steele. New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., 1958.

1961 Island of the Blue Dolphins by Scott O'Dell. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin Co., 1960.

1962 (Honor) The Bronze Bow by Elizabeth George Speare. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin Co., 1961.

1965 (Honor) Across Five Aprils by Irene Hunt. Chicago: Follett Publishing Co., 1964.

1970 Sounder by William H. Armstrong. New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1969.

1972 Incident at Hawk's Hill by Allan W. Eckbert. New York: Dell Publishing Co., Inc., 1971.

1974 The Slave Dancer by Paula Fox. Scarsdale, New York: Bradbury Press, 1973.

1975 (Honor) My Brother Sam Is Dead by James Lincoln Collier and Christopher Collier. New York: Four Winds Press, 1974.

1975 Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry by Mildred Taylor. New York: Dial, 1976.

APPENDIX E

TWENTY-FOUR THINGS TO DO WITH A BOOK

Source: Fox; Geoff. Twenty-four things to do with a book. Children's Literature in Education. New York: Dial, Autumn 1977, 8, 135-138.
Used by permission of the author.

For Individual Readers

1. Keep a 'reading log' — possibly in a special notebook printed by a school's resources centre. The record might include: title, author, when and where the story takes place, notes on the main characters, the part which was most enjoyed, further reflections.
2. Write a description of one of the characters in the book 'as if he or she were coming through the door now,' or at a particular moment in the story. Do a drawing or painting that is consistent with the text to set alongside the writing.
3. Write a letter to a friend about a book which you especially liked. This activity is most successful (and educationally justifiable!) if there is a real recipent of the letter in another school. The scheme might best be run therefore by two teachers in different schools, perhaps as part of a wider exchange of letters, information, tapes, etc.
4. Write a letter to the author of a book (via the publisher) containing questions, criticism, expressions of enjoyment, etc. The general experience of this activity is that children's writers are not merely long-suffering, but welcome the contact with their rather elusive audiences.
5. Make a poster for the 'film-of-the-book'; stars, what-the-critics-say, etc.
6. Redesign and make a cover (including front, spine, and back) for a new edition of the book. Include the title, author, publisher's blurb.

For Pairs, Small Groups or the Whole Class

7. Begin each lesson with a three-minute (maximum) reading, *prepared beforehand*, by a member of the class. Initially the extracts are chosen simply from a book the reader has enjoyed. Sometimes the class may talk about the reading, sometimes not. If the daily ritual is popular, and continues for several weeks, it may be useful to give the topics of the readings a focus; for example, the reading should be 'exciting,' 'about an event in the past,' 'funny,' 'about someone you admire or envy,' 'about a family,' 'about someone alone.'
8. Ask a local author to come to the class and talk about his books; ideally, at least some members of the class should have read some of them.
9. In a book where a journey is important (as is the case in many books for young readers), create one or several large wall maps on which the movements of the characters are plotted and perhaps illustrated by groups in the class.

10. Another journey idea is a long collage or painted background on which the class places characters, pictures of episodes, etc., as the story develops.
11. For historical fiction or novels with complex relationships, family trees either in two dimensions or as mobiles can help understanding.
12. Set aside a corner of the room, or even transform the whole room, in order to recreate aspects of the book there. Have maps, collages, models, or writing about the book. In a neighbourhood school with younger children, it may be possible to aim for a 'display day' straight after school - for parents and siblings.
13. Draw or paint a series of pictures mounted on a long sheet of paper (e.g. wall paper) so that a 'strip cartoon' of episodes can be put on a roller and displayed.
14. Have a taped 'Book Programme' in which a group discusses one book or each member contributes a short review of different titles.
15. Retell a short extract from the story as a radio play onto tape recorders (include sound-effects, introductory music, etc.). Play it back to the rest of the class or to other (younger) classes.
16. Make the sound-track of a very short extract from a novel. Action-packed pieces are most fruitful and enjoyable for this work, which promotes very close reading of a text: for example, Grendel's arrival at Heorot as the warriors sleep off the previous evening's feast, and his ensuing murder of Hondsciow and struggle with Beowulf.
17. Assign groups to work either on the same book or on different books. The task is to promote the book to readers of their own age–the group is, as it were, hired as an advertising agency by the publishers. Their promotions can be written, spoken or taped. The effectiveness of the groups is evaluated by another class to whom their efforts are offered. A rank order might be produced by the listening class's votes.
18. Tape a simulated 'Phone-In' programme with 'calls' either to characters in a book, asking about their motives, attitudes, actions, etc., or to the author. The teacher can judge how heavily he needs to become involved in this, depending on the abilities of his class and how accustomed they are to this sort of work.
19. Write a set of 'opening-out' questions about a book (*not* mere factual checks) for the use of individuals and groups in younger classes.
20. Retell a fairly short extract from the story with puppets (short because it seems better to become immersed in a close and thorough reading rather than spreading energies too thinly).
21. The group is employed by a movie tycoon to 'vet' possible sources for scripts. Would the book under consideration make a good film? Has it

box office appeal, and for what kind of audience? Is the subject likely to be interesting *to look at*? Will the dialogue as it stands in the book sound like 'real speech' or will it have to be rewritten? Do any stars immediately seem appropriate for any of the roles?

22. Select some events or one major incident from a book. Using these episodes, compose a page from a newspaper that could have been printed where the story takes place. Include appropriate headlines, news stories, interviews, pictures (drawn or photographed with a Polaroid camera using 'staged' subjects), advertisements, etc.

23. Divide students into pairs–'A' is a librarian, 'B' is a borrower who likes to know what a book is about before taking it home. Have 'B' cross-question 'A' about plot, characters, setting, and 'the way it's written.' This is a useful exercise to introduce books to potential readers or to deepen understanding of a book.

24. Conduct a *post mortem*, having members of a class discuss *in role as characters in the novel* the parts they have played. This activity fosters close examination of motivation. For example, a character who has been a 'victim' in the plot now has the opportunity to challenge the actions of more powerful characters. Discussion should be consistent with the text.

APPENDIX F

SUGGESTIONS FOR SHARING OF AND RESPONDING TO LITERATURE

Source: Gillespie, M.C., & Conner, J.W. Creative growth through literature for children and adolescents. Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Co., 1975.
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Suggestions for Sharing of and Responding to Literature

Individual Speech Activities

1. Prepare a monologue from a story.
2. Show step-by-step ways to make an object if a "how-to-make-it" book was read.
3. Tell about a humorous incident, the most exciting happening, the most interesting event, the part liked best, or the saddest part of a story.
4. Read aloud beautiful descriptive passages, interesting conversational sections, or other special spots of a story.
5. Tell the story to an appropriate musical accompaniment.
6. Act out a pantomime and encourage the audience to guess what the story is about.
7. Tell why you would or would not have liked a book character as your friend.
8. Prepare a book review to present to a class of children younger than yourself.
9. Broadcast a book review. Employ sound effects, background music, etc.
10. Dress as one of the characters and describe the role of that person.
11. Give a brief biography of the author.
12. Set a poem to music.
13. Use a flannel board and tell the story while you put characters on the board.
14. Tell about an interesting character in a book so that other students will want to get acquainted with such a person.
15. Report on a travel book. Illustrate the lecture by using postcards and magazine pictures.
16. Give a sales talk. Act as a salesman trying to sell a book to the class.

Art Activities

1. Make a poster (flat or three-dimensional) to advertise the book.
2. Make a book jacket and write an accompanying advertisement.
3. Create a series of illustrations for a story.

4. Use information from a book to make a scrapbook on a particular subject.
5. Make a movie on rollers.
6. Build a diorama or sand table construction.
7. Dress a doll or puppet like a character from a book.
8. Sculpt, using modeling clay, a scene or characters from a book.
9. Create a colorful mural on blackboard, paper, or cloth.
10. Make an imaginary map about a place or a trip as described in a book.
11. Construct a miniature stage setting for one of the scenes in a story.
12. Make models of book characters, animals, or buildings from soap, wood, or plaster.
13. Dress dolls made from paper, wire, or rags as book characters.
14. Make a rebus of an incident in a book.

Writing Activities

1. Write about an interesting character in a book so that other students will want to get acquainted with such a person.
2. Write about the most humorous incident, the most exciting happening, the most interesting event, the part liked best, or the saddest part of the book you read.
3. Write a letter to a friend advising him to read a book.
4. Write a simple book review.
5. Make a list of new, unusual, or interesting words or expressions found in a book.
6. Write your own story from a book title; then, after reading the book, show the class the differences in the two plots.
7. Write a series of questions which you think other readers should be able to answer after reading the book.
8. Make a list of reasons for liking and disliking a book.
9. Write another adventure that a character might have had.
10. Be a favorite character; write a letter as this person might have written it, keep a diary of this person's experiences or write how you think this person felt after a particular experience.
11. Write why you would or would not have liked a particular book character as your friend.
12. Write a different ending for a story.
13. Outline the main points of a story as: (I) Introduction (characters, setting, mood, etc.); (II) Plot development; (III) Climax; (IV) Conclusion. Write a brief synopsis.
14. Create another character who would fit into a story and write a chapter including your character.
15. Write an original reference book of facts from a nonfiction book.
16. Write letters to the library board requesting that certain books be purchased.

Drama Activities for Groups

1. Make a miniature television set and present a performance.
2. Present a choral reading to an audience.
3. Dramatize a poem.
4. Act out a story; several persons who read the same story can work together.
5. Make a puppet show.
6. Be a reporter at the scene. While something is happening, describe a crucial scene on the spot as if you were a T.V. or radio reporter.
7. Write a dialogue that certain characters might have had, and present it as a skit.
8. Plan a living book as a class project. Make a large frame and present tableaux.
9. Write and produce an original play about the magic of books.

10. Plan a poetry parade where each student is costumed to represent a person in some favorite poem.

Group Activities for Panels or Discussions

1. Students who have read the same book can check each other by writing questions which they think readers should be able to answer after reading the book.
2. Plan and present a book fair.
3. In a discussion compare two books on the same subject, two books on different subjects, or two books by the same author.
4. Hold a round table discussion under a student chairman. Four or five students should read the same book and discuss it.
5. Discuss how you might have acted in a particular situation as described in a book.
6. Assemble a display of regalia related to a favorite book.
7. Write a movie script for a good action story.
8. Discuss reasons for liking or disliking a book.
9. Have several students choose favorite authors. Each may give a brief biography of the author and tell some of the author's books.
10. As a group activity, plan and decorate a bulletin board with pictures of people laughing; include incidents from funny stories.
11. Plan a class visit to a bookstore or library to become acquainted with new books.