taxpayers, there should be an investigation to determine the individual mentalities that are to be placed in the educational hopper. There must be school graduations arranged to meet the educational demands of the different types of minds that present themselves, he asserts.

Mental ability is not equal in all persons, he declares, nor is there any particular relation between mental power and chronology. For this reason the chronological classification of children is to be discouraged, and in its place he urges that there should be established a system of educational training and discipline founded upon an appreciation of mental and physical health.

It may be argued that this is a costly suggestion, says the writer, as physical examination can be made rapidly while psychologic tests can only be given slowly. This is not wholly true, as only a small percentage of children will require individualized mental examinations and the status of the large majority can be adequately determined for practical purposes by means of group tests. It is admitted that considerable work along this line is still required; nevertheless, the careful development of group tests for elementary schools will be accomplished more rapidly when the demand for their use is stimulated by the desire of educational systems to employ them, in the opinion of the physician.

From the standpoint of promoting the welfare of their own children, says the writer, physicians should be the first to recognize the importance of mental examinations. They should be leaders in their communities in emphasizing their necessity, their pedagogic and hygienic value, their simplicity and their eminent practically. For the improvement of parental understanding of their children, for the increase of co-operation of parents with schools, for the relief of teachers from unnecessary burdens, and for the protection of the peace and progress of children, mental examinations are as essential as physical examinations.—New York Times.

"Just when the conservation and advancement of our civilization is laying larger demands on the public school, that institution is rapidly losing its power to meet even the comparatively modest requirements of a passage.—Frank E. Spaulding.

VI

SOME SUPPLEMENTARY READING MATERIALS FOR THE GRAMMAR GRADES

Once the child has learned to read, even ever so little, he should spend much of his reading period in reading. This means individual reading, with the teacher's direction, and a consequently reduced number of class "reading lessons." It also means the introduction into the primary and the grammar grades of much supplementary reading material. For children may acquire the ability to read after a fashion from cut and dried lessons from the school reader, but they do not acquire the reading habit. This comes only after much experience in reading complete selections of intrinsic interest.

This book-love may be fostered in the primary grades, but it is in the grammar grade years that it must be strengthened into a life habit. Here the child must read widely and constantly; read for wanted knowledge upon a topic under class discussion; read for skill in thought-getting and the power to convey this thought to others; and read for sheer enjoyment. I watched a 4-A class in our Training School during the past year. They were re-living pioneer days in the Valley of Virginia with Boone as the center of interest. Books and magazines accumulated, from the library, from home, from kindly disposed neighbors. During their free periods the class was allowed to go to the table and read. At the end of the unit of work, one child had read eleven books or articles concerning Boone. One overgrown boy of irregular attendance had read none; the class had averaged four books or articles each.

These children had been led to read by vitalizing a topic in history until they hungered for more information concerning it. Their history lesson became a conversation period when various pupils reported what they had found. Very often statements were challenged by some young thinker, but that only gave the speaker an opportunity to produce the book and read his proof aloud with a triumphant air. As a result of this supplementary reading the class gained in its ability to read both silently and aloud. They also learned how to handle books, how to use a table of contents and an index, how to
track a subject down until the information
they wanted was found. But by far the most
important outcome of the work was the
love of reading that the class acquired.

This keen interest in reading is often se-
cured by means of a story hour. Here the
children read books of their selection from
the table. Then once or twice a week the
group assembles for "stories." The child read-
ing generally tells the major part of his story,
reading the more interesting bits. If the
class understands that unless the reader in-
terests them they are free to pursue their own
reading, a strong motive for artistic oral
reading is secured. Children are not chal-
enged to hold the attention of the class when
the teacher sees to it that every one "keeps
the place," but when the responsibility is
turned over to them! that is quite another
matter. I remember one eleven-year old
boy, new to our school, who attempted to read
to his group with almost no preparation. He
was an abominable reader and by the time
he had finished practically the entire group
was quietly reading. He was chagrined to
the point where hard labor was attractive.
Or rather reading became a matter of far
more importance than he had ever deemed
it. He requisitioned the combined forces of
home and school, to help him choose another
selection and master it thoroughly. His
joy when the class gave him attention was
akin to that he experienced upon the play-
ground when he pitched a good curve. Read-
ing had been made worthwhile; it had been
put into the list of accomplishments worthy
of a boy's best effort.

When children spend much time in read-
ing, they pick up most of the necessary read-
ing abilities. But whenever occasion arises
the teacher calls all or a part of the class to-
gether for a lesson in reading skill. For this's
she may use a school reader, but she often
prefers a supplementary geographical or his-
torical reader, thinking this the best medium
for teaching how to study. In fact adequate
reading experience requires a goodly collec-
tion of books, general reference books, sup-
plementary geography, history and nature
study readers, and story books. The ones
commented upon below have been tried out
and found valuable. The list is not com-
plete, and there is somewhat an overbalance
of story books against informational ones. A
more detailed list made up by members of
the class of 1921 of the Harrisonburg Nor-
mal School will be published in a later issue
of The Virginia Teacher.

Skinner, Eleanor L.—Tales and Plays from
Robin Hood. Cincinnati: American Book
Company. 1915. 236 pages. (72 cents).

Bound in Lincoln green this little book has
all the charm of the immortal Robin himself.
The selected stories are told simply but in
beautiful style. The little plays tempt young
actors of today into a blissful loss of self-con-
sciousness upon the stage. I have seen more
than one fourth-grade boy master the reading
process in order to be chosen to read a favor-
ite part aloud. Although not a complete
edition, this one is probably the best one for
school use.

Bender, Millicent S.—Great Opera Stories.
1921. 186 pages. (80 cents).

This is one of the "Every Child Series." It
contains stories from some of the world's
greatest operas retold from original sources
It will be good supplementary reading for
the course in music appreciation.

Catherwood, Mary H.—Heroes of the Mid-
1898. 144 pages. (64 cents).

The early history of the Mississippi Val-
ley is here told with dramatic charm. The
writer has made a very faithful study of her
sources and there is much use of first hand
material. This is the type of history book
that a grammar grade boy borrows in order
to read it through ahead of the class.

Skinner & Wickes—A Child's Own Book of
1919. Book 1, grades 1-4, 92 pages, (72
cents). Book 2, grades 3-5, 130 pages,
(80 cents). Book 3, grades 4-7, 124 pages,
(80 cents).

A collection of the world’s best poetry for
children, well adapted for use as supplemen-
tary reading material. These poems are
equally good for individual or class reading.
Children love the books and unconsciously
acquire a permanent taste for poetry. They
are well bound, printed in good clear type,
with inimitable illustrations.

Colum, Padraic—The Children's Homer, or
the Adventures of Odysseus and the Tide

The “World’s greatest story” told for those whose imaginations are best “used to deeds and wonders,” the boys and girls. By weaving selected stories from the Iliad and Odyssey around the figure of Telemachus, Mr. Colum has made one continuous tale. Willy Pogany’s illustrations breathe the very spirit of old Greece into the pages of this little book. Every boy and girl has the inalienable right to know Homer—would that every one could know him through this unusual edition!


This is a good edition for children’s use. It is printed in good bold-faced type and well-bound. The style is good and the language easily within the grasp of fourth graders. The stories are dramatically told and are easily made into little plays.


These three “Arlo Books” are stories of rather unusual charm. They are so well written that they lend themselves well to oral reproduction, to division into thought units for oral reading, or to study lessons. “Clematis” is a story of American child life well adapted for use as the first complete reading book with a strong third grade or a weak fourth grade. “Arlo” is an interesting story of a boy living among the mountains of southern Europe. Anita is a little Colorado girl living with her parents in a mining camp of the early days. Her experiences give an intimate picture of the western mining country at that period.


This edition of the Norse myths is well adapted for use as a supplementary reader from the fourth to the sixth grades. A pronouncing vocabulary adds much to the worth of the book.


This story of a family of ten grandchildren living in the blackbelt of Alabama during the war between the states gives the child an insight into what life was really like in the South during this period. It is illustrated with some photographs of the grandchildren and their aunts. One of these aunts, Miss Julia Strudwick Tutwiler, afterwards became one of Alabama’s leading educators; known all over the country for her work in prison reform and child labor. Her father, the grandfather in the story, was born in Harrisonburg and received one of the first degrees from the University of Virginia.


Our country’s history is here told in a series of stories and poems. There is considerable new material. The author has drawn freely from Southern literature and thus gives a well-rounded picture. This book will serve equally well as a supplementary reader for ordinary use, as a source for special readings for opening exercises, or as a collection of stories for the child’s individual reading.


These stories are suitable for supplementary reading in grades 4-6, especially in connection with a study of Swiss child life.


These stories give a touch with nature and a refreshing inspiration toward the homey virtues. A vast amount of scientific knowledge about everyday things is wrought into them. The stories do not form a “whole” but each is in itself a complete unit.


Miss Best has prepared here a most excellent background for the study of American history. She tells her stories well, and has the knack of choosing stories interesting to children. The book is well illustrated.

A series of adventure stories intended to awaken interest in the seas, and especially in the American merchant marine. The boys and girls will find this book thrilling, and yet it will be of great benefit to them. For grades 6-7.


These books are a rare find, with scientific knowledge so well told that they are sure to hold boys and girls. “The Travels of Birds” gives good maps of the routes the birds take in their migrations. “Our Winter Birds” contains illustrations in color of both the permanent residents and the visitors. These books will be invaluable in connection with a Bird Club, or a project in bird study, they will be equally good for individual reading in the grammar grades.


This little story of Ruskin’s is indispensable in the grammar grades—every boy and girl has the right to read it at this period. There is nothing else with quite the same lesson of human kindness so artistically told. Miss Bates has edited this edition very carefully.


This is a good edition of this valuable fairy story, within the grasp of the fourth grade, but better suited to the fifth or the sixth grade. There are notes and some good illustrations.


In this book the important facts in the geography of the United States are grouped around representative cities. It will prove very valuable in training fifth and sixth grade children to give supplementary reports.


A collection of favorite stories in play form. Good for reading in “parts.” One of the “Everychild Series.”

KATHERINE M. ANTHONY

VII

PRIMARY LANGUAGE

A THIRD GRADE EXPERIMENT

The real teaching of language is often neglected in our primary grades. If we were to ask our fourth grade teachers to tell us which subject they find their classes to be least proficient in, I believe that the answer of a large number will be “language”. Language is rather an intangible subject to teach in a well rounded way and the results of the work are not always ponderable or measurable. For these reasons many schoolrooms miss the benefits and joy to be derived from language work with small children; but it offers great opportunities for habit building and for creative work and deserves our serious consideration and best efforts.

I believe that we do not set as definite aims for this work as we should and we do not do as intensive work as worth-while backgrounds demand. We sometimes allow the primary children to follow the line of least resistance in language. When a group shows that they are very much interested in some particular phase of the work, they are allowed to spend most of their time on that one phase. Sometimes the teacher enjoys one form of work much more than another and unconsciously strengthens that preference to the neglect of other phases.

Because we do not take the child’s measure in language, at regular intervals, as we do with his number work and reading, we are inclined to feel that it is not necessary for us to do as systematic, definite work as we do in those branches.

Let us, as primary teachers, set about changing this situation. We should have an aim in language, for every day we should know what we want to accomplish with our grade and work toward that goal surely and steadily. In order that we may preserve the spontaneous, free self-expression characteristic of most children upon entering school, and to secure in them steady growth in the mastery of style and form, so that both their oral and written expression may be effective, it is necessary for us to be keenly awake to our daily task.

THIRD GRADE ORAL ENGLISH

In order that the oral English of the children of the Third Grade may be well rounded,