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RIGHT READING FOR CHILDREN

LET us always remember that our children are much more sensitive spiritual and physical organisms than we grown-ups. Materialism has not over-coated the beautiful mystery of their immortal inheritance. This inheritance I cannot define, but we know it is a part of the young child's Being.

An impression received into the mind through the organs of sight or sound is indelible. During the first seven years of a child's life he is learning and living more things in actual number than he learns through all the rest of his life. The right or the wrong reading leaves its indelible impress upon the child, especially during the early years of his life—let us say from four to ten.

I believe that parents should read more to their children during early life, and especially should this reading be at bedtime, when the *subjective* in the child is most naturally impressed; but let us beware what impressions we leave at this time of soul-building. The most insidious and destructive books imposed upon childhood are those that go by way of the parent or teacher whose judgments are confused by *intellectual* literary reviews, or the sentimental thrill over books called "artistic."

The safe rule to go by is a rule of thumb: "*Know* the right books; then go ahead," to which may be added, "*And if we don't know, let us learn to know.*"

What a Book Should Be

The right book is, primarily, a source of happiness and inspiration, be it sad or amusing, fanciful or simply homespun, serious or instructive.

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A book should be a thing of joy which, because of the beauty of its style, the inherent interest of the subject-matter, or its ability to transport the child into the land of make-believe, quickens the imagination and stimulates the desire for *imitation*. Book friends and book heroes are as real to the children as those of flesh and blood. We must therefore people the child's mental realm with those that are wholly worthy of love, loyalty, and emulation. Avoid as a plague that "modernism" which filches from the child his God and his Heroes.

A book should be accurate and true (if it is a subject dealing with facts), high-minded, reverent, fearless, and clean.

A book should be well illustrated. The illustrations, moreover, should be simple and beautiful, well drawn, and should conform to recognized standards of refined or vigorous art. The book should be well printed on good paper, with strong, attractive binding. See to it that books such as these are many and ever-present in the child's life environment.

What It Should Not Be

A book should not be tawdry or ephemeral, flippant, irreverent, cruel, deceptive, vulgar, or wickedly mischievous.

A book should not be illustrated in confusing, ultra-modern, or decadent style. Pictures should especially be free from suggestion of fear, violence, or vulgarity.

A book should not be selected without endeavoring to choose among the different editions the maximum of quality, not only in the character of the book but in the general make-up. Learn to know and throw out the *wrong* book.

The mental vocabulary of a child is a vocabulary of sense, emotion, and imaginative experience. Do we impose upon his

vocabulary that of the vulgar, slipshod, and carelessly selected book influence?

Negative

The wrong books impress the following negative qualities upon the child's mind:

Common tastes, lack of reverence, unrefined comprehensions, dishonest standards, disorderly mental operations, over-stimulation, lack of continuity, uninformed and unstabilized ideals and *vulgar* mental processes.

Constructive—Positive

In contrast, the right books impress the following finer qualities of spirit, mind, and character:

- A (1) Moral tone and standards
 - (2) Reverence
 - (3) High sense of honor
 - (4) Chivalry
 - (5) Cultural mental background
- B (1) Higher and finer ambitions
 - (2) Mental stability
 - (3) Broad basic judgments
 - (4) Fine standards of human and life relationships
 - (5) Normal patriotism
- C (1) Wholesome imagination and sympathies
 - (2) Refined appreciations
 - (3) Instinctive good taste
 - (4) Intelligent patience
 - (5) Clean sense of humor

We should avoid the endless groups of *series books*, which may and should be called "narcotic" reading. In themselves they are not all bad in tone or intentionally so in effect, but the child's books should be as different in character as the individuals in life whom he meets, and we should be

as careful in guiding our children to the selection of the right book friends as we are in their selection of playmates and daily comrades.

The "Safety Sixty"

As a guide to an absolutely safe selection of good books that are formative of the character and ideals of our children, I am listing what I call "*The Safety Sixty*." We all know that there are more than sixty right book friends, but let us start rightly with a few. After the titles of books selected I have corresponding letters and numerals, with the purpose of relating concrete influences to specific books.

I should add that many books I have named must be *read* to the child under eight; the list is primarily arranged for older children. Thoughtful parents are the best judges of the books suitable for the ages and temperaments of their children.

The sixty books given on the opposite page have been "*character analyzed*" and listed accordingly as good *mental comrades* for the child. My analysis is arbitrary and personal, but I ask you to study it and judge for yourselves whether it is a *right* guide to the selection of good book friends.

The *letter* and *numbers* of the "analysis" column correspond to those under the "constructive-positive" grouping. The specific influence of each book is there given in brief.

For example:—Hawthorne's "*Wonder Book*" serves to influence the young mind to—A (5)—*A cultural mental background*; C (1)—*Wholesome imagination and sympathies*; C (3)—*Instinctive good taste*.

In this way, "The Safety Sixty" are given their constructive value and character analysis, for the guidance of thoughtful parents and the good of their children.

	Author	Title	Analysis
1.	AESOP	<i>Fables</i>	A 1, 5; B 2; C 1
2.	ALCOTT	<i>Little Women</i>	A 5; B 4; C 4
3.	ANDERSEN	<i>Fairy Tales</i>	A 5; C 1, 2
4.	BARRIE	<i>Peter and Wendy</i>	A 5; C 1, 2, 3, 5
5.	BENNETT	<i>Master Skylark</i>	A 1, 3, 5; B 4
6.	BLACKMORE	<i>Lorna Doone</i>	A 1, 2, 3, 5; B 2, 3, 4
7.	BROWN	<i>Book of Saints and Friendly Beasts</i>	A 1, 2, 5; B 4; C 1
8.	BUNYAN	<i>Pilgrim's Progress</i>	A 1, 2, 3, 5; B 2, 4; C 1, 2
9.	CARROLL	<i>Alice in Wonderland</i>	A 5; C 1, 2, 5
10.	CARROLL	<i>Through the Looking- Glass</i>	A 5; C 1, 2, 5
11.	CHURCH	<i>Iliad</i>	A 5; B 1, 2; C 1, 2
12.	CHURCH	<i>Odyssey</i>	A 5; B 1, 2; C 1, 2
13.	COLLODI	<i>Pinocchio</i>	A 1, 5; B 2, 4; C 1, 2
14.	COOPER	<i>Last of the Mohicans</i>	A 5; B 2, 4; C 4
15.	DANA	<i>Two Years Before the Mast</i>	A 1, 3, 5; B 2, 5; C 2, 4
16.	DEFOE	<i>Robinson Crusoe</i>	A 1, 2, 5; B 2; C 1, 4
17.	DICKENS	<i>David Copperfield</i>	A 5; B 4; C 2, 5
18.	DICKENS	<i>Cricket on the Hearth</i>	A 5; B 4; C 1, 2
19.	DODGE	<i>Hans Brinker</i>	A 1, 2, 5; B 4; C 2, 4
20.	DOYLE	<i>The White Company</i>	A 1, 3, 4; B 1, 2, 4, 5
21.	FABRE	<i>Story Book of Science</i>	A 2, 5; B 2, 4; C 1, 2
22.	FIELD	<i>Poems of Childhood</i>	A 5; B 2, 4; C 1, 2, 5
23.	HARRIS	<i>Uncle Remus and His Sayings</i>	A 5; B 3, 4; C 1, 2, 5
24.	HALE	<i>Man Without a Country</i>	A 1, 2, 3, 5; B 2, 4, 5; C 1
25.	HAWTHORNE	<i>Wonder Book and Tanglewood Tales</i>	A 5; C 1, 3
26.	HUGHES	<i>Tom Brown's School Days</i>	A 2, 3, 5; B 1, 2, 4; C 4
27.	INGELOW	<i>Mopsa the Fairy</i>	A 5; C 1, 2
28.	KIPLING	<i>Captains Courageous</i>	A 1, 5; B 1, 2, 4; C 4, 5
29.	KIPLING	<i>Jungle Book (First)</i>	A 5; B 2, 4; C 1, 2, 4, 5
30.	KIPLING	<i>Jungle Book (Second)</i>	A 5; B 2, 4; C 1, 2, 4, 5
31.	KIPLING	<i>Just So Stories</i>	A 5; B 3, 4; C 1, 2, 3, 5
32.	KIPLING	<i>Kim</i>	A 1, 2, 5; B 1, 3, 4; C 1, 3, 4
33.	KINGSLEY	<i>Water Babies</i>	A 5; B 4; C 1, 2
34.	KINGSLEY	<i>Westward Ho!</i>	A 3, 5; B 1, 2, 4, 5; C 4
35.	LAMB	<i>Tales from Shakespeare</i>	A 5; B 2, 4; C 1, 2, 5
36.	LANIER	<i>Knightly Legends of Wales</i>	A 1, 3, 4, 5; B 1, 2, 5; C 2
37.	LEAR	<i>Complete Nonsense Book</i>	A 5; B 2; C 1, 2, 3, 5
38.	LYTTON	<i>Last Days of Pompeii</i>	A 1, 5; B 1, 4; C 2, 4
39.	LAGERLOF	<i>Adventures of Nils</i>	A 2; B 2, 3, 4; C 1, 3, 4
40.	PALGRAVE	<i>Golden Treasury</i>	A 1, 2, 3, 5; B 2, 3, C 1, 2, 3
41.	PORTER	<i>Scottish Chiefs</i>	A 1, 2, 3, 4, 5; B 1, 2, 5; C 1
42.	PYLE	<i>Merry Adventures of Robin Hood</i>	A 3, 4, 5; B 4; C 1, 2, 5
43.	PYLE	<i>King Arthur</i>	A 1, 3, 4, 5; B 1, 2, 5; C 1, 2, 4
44.	PYLE	<i>Men of Iron</i>	A 1, 3, 4, 5; B 1, 2, 5; C 1, 2, 4
45.	RUSKIN	<i>King of the Golden River</i>	A 1, 3, 5; B 4; C 1
46.	SCOTT	<i>Ivanhoe</i>	A 1, 2, 3, 4, 5; B 1, 2, 5; C 2, 4

	Author	Title	Analysis
47.	SCOTT	<i>Quentin Durward</i>	A 1, 2, 3, 4, 5; B 1, 2, 5; C 2, 4
48.	SETON	<i>Wild Animals I Have Known</i>	A 2; B 3, 4; C 1, 2
49.	SEWELL	<i>Black Beauty</i>	B 2, 3, 4; C 1, 2
50.	STEVENSON	<i>Treasure Island</i>	A 5; B 2, 3, 4; C 2, 3
51.	STEVENSON	<i>Black Arrow</i>	A 1, 3, 5; B 2, 4; C 2, 3
52.	STEVENSON	<i>Child's Garden of Verses</i>	A 5; B 2; C 1, 2, 3
53.	SWIFT	<i>Gulliver's Travels</i>	A 5; B 2, 4; C 1, 2, 4
54.	TWAIN	<i>Tom Sawyer</i>	A 5; B 3, 4; C 2, 5
55.	TWAIN	<i>Huckleberry Finn</i>	A 5; B 3, 4; C 2, 5
56.	TWAIN	<i>Prince and the Pauper</i>	A 3, 5; B 2, 4; C 2
57.	THACKERAY	<i>Rose and the Ring</i>	A 5; C 1, 2, 5
58.	WIGGIN & SMITH	<i>Arabian Nights</i>	A 5; C 1, 2
59.	WYSS	<i>Swiss Family Robinson</i>	A 1, 2, 3, 5; B 2, 4; C 4
60.	VERNE	<i>Mysterious Island</i>	A 5; B 2; C 1

JOHN MARTIN

A PLAN FOR A DEMONSTRATION TEACHERS COLLEGE

Training of Creative Teachers

ALL SOUND educational reconstruction depends upon the development of a new race of teachers—teachers who, through their own creative efforts, are able to call forth in their students constructive creative leadership. The teachers college of the future has for its chief problem the selection and development of a generation of teachers very different from the typical teacher of today. This imperative need of a new type of teacher calls for radical modification of our present institutions for the training of teachers.

Purpose

Aware of this very urgent need, Teachers College, Columbia University, contemplates the establishment of a Demonstration and Experimental Teachers College in the fall of 1932. This new institution is deliberately intended to break a new way in teacher education and thus provide facilities for observation, experimentation, demonstration, and practice of college teaching in the field of professional education of teachers.

An endeavor will be made to discover and develop new methods in the field of teacher education. There is a definite intention of avoiding in this new undertaking duplication of present procedures. The curriculum will make no attempt to follow either traditional or radical patterns but will strike out with the consciousness of an urgent need of teachers to be developed and educated far beyond any of our present standards.

Curricula and Plan of Study

Defining the curriculum as the sum total of experiences through which a student passes, what then are the chief characteristics of the curriculum of the new Teachers College? The modifying forces and influences which are brought to bear upon the student and to which he reacts are the environment in which he lives, modern and ancient cultures which must be revealed to him, contact with an inspiring and cultured faculty, intimate acquaintance with children and child life, a fine appreciation of our racial heritage as found in libraries, books, and museums—all this with a plan of study and method which tend to develop the student through his own initiative and self-activity.