

Gray's Elegy
Thanatopsis
As You Like It

Contrast this group with the thirty classics most frequently appearing in high school curricula, as listed by Dora V. Smith, in *Instruction in English* (U. S. Office of Education Bulletin, 1932, No. 17):

Silas Marner
Julius Cæsar
The Idylls of the King
Ivanhoe
The Tale of Two Cities
The Lady of the Lake
The Ancient Mariner
Treasure Island
The Merchant of Venice
The Vision of Sir Launfal
As You Like It
Short Story Collection
Macbeth
The Odyssey
Sohrab and Rustum
The Sketch Book
Evangeline
Sir Roger de Coverley
Snow-Bound
The Christmas Carol
The Courtship of Miles Standish
Rip Van Winkle
The Legend of Sleepy Hollow
The Man Without a Country
Midsummer Night's Dream
Modern Verse Collection
Essay Collection
Burke's Speech on Conciliation
Selections from the Old Testament
The House of Seven Gables

The use of certain masterpieces not so generally studied was suggested by Hosis: *Coriolanus*, *Twelfth Night*, *Henry V*, Chaucer's *Prologue*, *Hamlet*, *Paradise Lost* (Books I and II), *Beowulf*, *King Lear*, and *The Jew of Malta*. When there is added to this wide list of classics a varied but discriminating list of modern works including, among others, selected specimens of Wells, Shaw, Noyes, Locke, de Morgan, Frost, Sandburg, Lindsay, Barrie, Maeterlinck, Dunsany, and Synge, it is apparent that the high school pupil of this decade is being offered a vastly richer and, it is believed, more nourishing diet than were his predecessors prior to 1900.

This liberalism in literature courses in the secondary schools parallels the efforts of the colleges to find a more effective way to select their incoming students. Twenty

years ago the examining boards began to sense the fact that formalized questions on the classics did not give a true indication of a pupil's ability to do college English. It was found that a truer picture of the student's potentialities was given by a comprehensive examination designed to test (1) his general knowledge of literature; (2) his ability to read with understanding an unfamiliar passage of literary merit; (3) his skill in expressing himself well in writing on one of a group of topics. In the last five years many colleges have supplemented their comprehensive examinations by aptitude tests. According to the latest report of the National Society for the Study of Education, the institutions adopting this innovation have found it highly successful. (See *Thirty-first Year Book of the Society*, Part II: Experiments in Liberal Arts and Education).

MILDRED R. OAKS

NATION-WIDE STUDY OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL GRADUATION EX- AMINATIONS

HOW did the United States come to possess Alaska?
Who wrote "The Pied Piper of Hamelin?"

Did Louis Pasteur discover blood circulation?

How often have questions such as these proved a bugaboo to you when you went to school? Well, they're still asking this type of question in elementary schools throughout the United States, according to Dr. David Segel, U. S. Office of Education Specialist in Tests and Measurements. Dr. Segel made a nation-wide study of elementary school graduating examinations. The survey reveals many interesting facts.

The Office of Education consultant gave special attention to tests given pupils in seventh and eighth grades of rural and village schools—tests upon which eligibility

for graduation to the junior or senior high school is based. He made an effort to find answers to questions such as: Is there any uniformity in construction and administration of elementary school graduation examinations in the different states? Are these tests an aid or a hindrance to the child's progress? Are tests used merely to measure accumulated facts, or are they attempts to measure the growth of the child in terms of his mental capacities.

It was found that 21 states administer state-wide examinations to pupils at the end of their elementary school period. In some cases the state department of education assumes only the preparation of the examination. In other cases it is concerned not only with construction of the tests but also with the procedure in the examination period and with the analysis of results. All or some of the counties in 16 other states administer elementary school graduating examinations on a county-wide basis. State boards of education in several states have set up regulations for such tests.

The prospective high school student is usually tested in arithmetic, reading, spelling, English, history, civics, geography, physiology, and hygiene. For the most part, locally constructed tests are used. Sometimes the pupil is asked for an essay type of answer to a question such as: What memorable law was passed during Cleveland's first term?, or Describe the Act of 1883. He may have to give a single answer to a question such as: Who wrote "The Raven"? There are also examinations which call for the pupil to fill in blank spaces with a name or a date, true or false statements to be so labelled, the multiple choice test, and the requested underlining of one of two grammatical forms given. The pupil is supposed to get a mark of 60 to pass in individual subjects, or an average of 70 or 75 for all tests taken, otherwise he will not be promoted to high school.

"Some educators are opposed to formal elementary school-leaving examinations,

while others believe they are necessary," Dr. Segel points out. "The validity of test results is dependent in part upon methods used in constructing examinations. Validity of examinations for use in determining eligibility for graduation from the elementary school is also dependent upon the comparability of scores on examinations for different years. Actually these tests furnish no definite standard for promotion."

Commenting on relation of the elementary school graduation examination to other testing programs of schools reporting in the Office of Education study, Dr. Segel says that in most schools the examination is the only formal type of testing carried on in the school. However, in some states and counties, this final test is but a part of a broader program of testing carried on through several or all of the elementary grades.

Recommendations, based on findings of this Office of Education survey, were announced as follows:

1. That examinations which are used mainly to determine eligibility for graduation from the elementary school be discontinued.
2. That there should be flexibility in the testing program of each state, this flexibility to be brought about through legislative authority granted to state boards of education to make rules and regulations regarding standardization and supervision of elementary schools.
3. That where a need for better pupil guidance, knowledge of individual differences, or a check upon efficiency of the curriculum is felt in the states, a testing program should be established.
4. That the teacher, under the direction of the county superintendent and the state department of education, should give and score examinations, scores for different pupils to be made available to the county superintendent for use in compiling average scores by

grades and in the supervision of instruction.

An analysis of examination gradings and types of tests given in the various states, together with suggestions and recommendations for improving this educational procedure, are contained in the report of this nation-wide study, "Elementary School Graduating Examinations," Office of Education Bulletin 1935 No. 16, available for ten cents from the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C.

MOUNTAIN CLIMBING ON WHEELS IN SHENANDOAH NATIONAL PARK

OPENING the northern segment of Skyline Drive brings the mountains as close as your automobile door, if you are one of the 13 million Americans living within a few hours' drive of Shenandoah National Park.

Sixty-five miles of scenic roadway along the crest of the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia are now included in this, the nation's newest, national park.

Mountaineering, if you should prefer it thus, becomes a spectator sport. Over 30,000 in a day may watch the fall fireworks of the trees from a ringside seat along the highway.

Faint Blue Haze Inspires Mountains' Name

For those who prefer nature undiluted, there are miles of trails for hikers from height to height, with numerous creeks between to cross on fallen logs.

Two main Virginia highways connect with Skyline Drive. Picnic grounds and parking spaces are found overlooking colorful valley views, their rustic fittings made of wood and stone found on the spot.

The Shenandoah National Park's 176,429 acres embrace scenery which is the happy medium for mountains. Higher, they

would be less accessible; lower, they would be less picturesque. Sidney Lanier admired the region, where "the Appalachian ruggednesses calm themselves into pleasant hills before dying quite away into the seaboard levels." The average altitude, somewhat higher than 3,000 feet, is just sufficient to catch the shimmering blue haze which named the Blue Ridge.

A color equally as characteristic is the gray-green of many a wind-bent "lonesome pine" near the ridge crests, or the deep green gloss of mountain laurel. Gray skeletons of chestnut trees, bleaching casualties of the blight years ago, stand against the green background.

Skyline Drive follows the Blue Ridge crest, with gently sloping foothills on the east and a sharp drop on the west into the field-checked and town-dotted Shenandoah Valley. Beyond the blue band of Massanutten Ridge, bisecting the valley, rise faint blue scallops of the Alleghany Mountains.

Mountain Spurs Form Picturesque Pockets

From the Blue Ridge branch numerous mountain spurs form shadowy pockets, or "coves." In winter they are drifted deep with snow that lingers for weeks. In summer their shady thickets are sprinkled with little waterfalls and rushing creeks.

Tucked away here have lived generations of mountaineers, isolated because they asked nothing of life except their mountains, and hence needed to seek nothing beyond. That they lived long and lustily, despite the rarity of reluctant doctors' visits, is proved by such legendary reminiscences as percolate through the constant *terbaccychawin'*. There was the bearded bare-footed patriarch who ruled Free State Hollow with his own gun, recognizing no outside authority, not even revenueurs. There were unkillable mountain dames, like the one who could spin yarns about the seventeenth century for her great-great-grandchildren.

Four hundred mountain families were moved from their log cabins and corn-and-

From *Geographic News Bulletin* No. 5, issued on October 12, 1936.