

boy, listening eagerly from the outskirts of the crowd; and the audience, with perfect timing, gives the proper emotional responses. To laugh or to sigh at the wrong point in a story is inexcusable ignorance.

These tales cover an amazing range of subjects, including explanations of the universe and natural phenomena, accounts of God's dealings with their forefathers in ancient times, the origin of tribal attitudes, customs and practices, and object lessons on standards of conduct. In most of the tales the characters are animals to whom are attributed human motives, thoughts, and actions. Many of the longer tales are characterized by a wealth of incident and well-developed plots. Following is a rather literal translation of one of the simpler tales:

The Farm of the Gazelle and the Goat

A gazelle and a goat became friends. They decided to have a farm together, and they made a large farm. They planted guinea corn and cowpeas. The cowpeas yielded heavily.

One day the gazelle came with her daughter and gathered up all the cowpeas. There were none at all left for the goat. When the goat came to the farm, she did not see a single cowpea vine. So the goat went to the home of God and said, "What shall I do that I may have some cowpeas?"

Then God produced again for the goat many, many cowpeas on the farm. This time the goat came with her daughter to gather the cowpeas. They heaped up a great pile of cowpeas. Along came the gazelle and saw them. She said to the goat that they ought to divide the cowpeas. The goat said, "All right."

The gazelle then went and besought the fox to divide the cowpeas for them. While the gazelle was doing this, the goat went and brought two large dogs and hid them in the cowpeas. Soon the fox came and said, "I will now divide for *us* the cowpeas." Then he took a large basket and measured out *his* cowpeas and those of the gazelle. But to the goat he gave a very,

very small basketfull.

The goat then said, "Why have you given me so few cowpeas?"

The fox replied, "Do you want me to beat you?" And he continued to carry many cowpeas out of the farm for himself and for the gazelle, but for the goat he brought only a small amount.

But, alas, the fox and the gazelle did not know that the dogs were lying low in the cowpeas. As they continued to carry out the cowpeas, they passed so close to the dogs that they almost saw their bodies. All the while the fox was cursing the goat and saying, "If you utter a single word, I will eat you up, in truth."

Suddenly the dogs rushed out. The one chased the fox; the other the gazelle. They ran and ran. As for the fox, one dog caught him and ate him up. But as for the gazelle, the other dog was not able to catch her, because the gazelle is able to run amazingly fast.

Thus the cowpeas all became the property of the goats, and they carried them away to their home.

Obviously this folk tale points a moral as many of them do. The thief lost her property, but a corrupt and cruel judge lost his life. God is seen as a beneficent being, who is merciful in times of misfortune. Cleverness is also somewhat exalted, because the unfortunate goat finally succeeded by being smart enough to outwit and outmaneuver the gazelle.

JULIA ANN FLOHR

READING GRAPHS AID STUDENTS

THE reading efficiency of high school students improves markedly and their interest in reading is stimulated if a graph of their reading ability is explained to them and used as a guide for remedial instruction, says Miss Gladys L. Persons, director of the Theodore Roosevelt High School Reading Project and assistant director of the New York University Reading Clinic.

"Our experience with reading graphs of

boys and girls at Theodore Roosevelt High School during the past term proved anew that the graph serves a two-fold purpose: first as an indispensable aid to remedial instruction, and secondly, and perhaps of equal importance, as an almost infallible motivation in reading.

"The student's graph provides a measure of his rate of reading, the number of fixations and regressions per hundred words, the average span of recognition, and the average duration of fixation. The graph also helps the student to understand his individual faults, such as head movement and vocalization, and to try to correct them.

"At Theodore Roosevelt, after making reading graphs of all our students in corrective reading, we let each pupil see his own graph and learn all he can about it. We explain what the graph and the computations made from it mean in terms of his reading efficiency and of his ability to improve it. We give the students the norms for their grade. In short, we take them fully into our confidence.

"The pupils have responded in a most gratifying manner. When they discovered that many individual faults were apparent in the graphs, they were much impressed and looked upon the graphs as something very modern and scientific. They did not dispute them, nor try to 'alibi' themselves out of their records. Without exception, all resolved to show gains on the terminal testing.

"Each of the 157 students in the corrective reading group was retarded by at least two grades.

"The initial testing of the pupils showed that the lowest rate was 125 words per minute and the highest, 444. Thirteen per cent were reading in the range of 100 to 200 words a minute, 61% from 200 to 300 words a minute, and 26% above 300 words a minute. The lowest span of recognition was .65 of a word and the highest, 1.67 of a word.

"After a term's instruction, the lowest rate of reading was 145 words a minute

and the highest, 511. The lowest average span of recognition was .77 of a word and the highest, 2.17. Only one per cent now were reading in the range of 100 to 200 words per minute, 36% were placed in the 200 to 300 word range, and 63% tested above 300 words a minute.

"Teachers who use reading graphs will find an illumination thrown upon many of their problems. If you have a class which seems hopeless, disinterested, and slow, have their reading graphs made and study the patterns and the rates of reading. In your imagination you will be able to see the individual's painful and laborious physical activity in reading.

"Every school should have a thoroughly equipped and expertly staffed reading clinic. Such clinics are needed because there are reading disabilities which cannot be discovered without scientific instruments; because so many severe reading disabilities are with us that we shall lose face with parents and tax-payers if we do not deal with them adequately; because our old true and tried methods have failed; because the amount of required reading is increasing tremendously all along the line; and because interest alone is not sufficient to make every individual an efficient reader.

"Clinical work in remedial reading should concern itself with every phase of reading. It should begin with accurate, precise diagnosis by means of all tests, devices, and instruments at our command. The instruction which follows should proceed from expert motivation of reading to daily experiences in the development of all the reading skills. The reader's mind must be focused upon ideas, for gathering ideas is the main purpose of reading. Concentrated interest cannot be secured until obstacles and interferences are eliminated."

In the course conducted at the New York University Reading Clinic by Miss Persons, the lecture-discussions and laboratory work provides each student with the opportunity to make up a remedial program for his own

situation.

school and adapted to his own classroom

Each teacher brings his own subject to the laboratory for the diagnosis and correction of reading disabilities. These include testing his vision and making a reading graph, planning a remedial program based upon the findings, and giving lessons with an electrically operated machine which conditions the subject in proper mechanical habits of reading. Where necessary, the testing and instruction are supplemented by intelligence and psychological tests and by silent reading.

THE THIRD GRADE MAKES AN ART LOAN

THE third grade of the Madison College Training School was given the use of two of the Cipek prints, "Chasing the Pig" and "Spring." When the children began to consider the best place to hang these lovely prints, they found that the walls of their room were too crowded to accommodate both pictures at once. One child suggested sharing the two pictures with another room, and after some discussion, the children decided the loan should be to the 1A grade. They thought the picture "Spring" would be better for the younger children, as all of the children in this picture were younger. "Chasing the Pig" would be better for them in the third grade because the picture showed older children, they said. Besides, the children in the picture were grouped just the way they were trying to group subjects in the pictures they were drawing. Furthermore, the coloring of this picture matched their room better.

In deciding how the picture should be presented to the first grade, some thought that they should point out to the first grade children certain things to notice: that the colors harmonized, that they were echoed many times, and that the children in the picture were drawn large because they were the most important thing in the picture.

Fred said he thought it would be nice to write a story to go with the picture. The others agreed, discussed what might be said, then started writing their stories. The plan was to select one story to go with the picture, but when the stories were read to the group, so many were interesting that selection was too difficult. Therefore it was decided to write one for each first-grade child.

This brought on the problem of preparing the writing so that it could be read easily by a first-grade child. It had been some time since these third-grade children had used manuscript writing and it took much practice to recall it. They practiced writing large and plainly, they practiced spacing their writing better. They also practiced making more space between words, less space within the word, and better spacing for the story as a whole. They worked until each one had written his story in such a way that he thought it could be read by a first-grade child.

At the appointed time they took their stories with the picture and went to call on the first grade. They first stood around the room and talked about the picture as a group, then each third-grade child picked out a first-grade child and read the story to him. The first-grader in turn re-read the story to the third-grader. The younger children then showed their partners things of interest in their room, and the occasion ended with a feeling that everybody had had a profitable and enjoyable time.

This was a very simple adventure, such as might happen in any situation, and it afforded many learning opportunities. First, it was an unselfish adventure; the third-grade were building both a social and a helpful attitude toward younger children. Second, the adventure called for a knowledge of certain art principles. Third, there was a need for skill in writing, and practice was thus motivated. Lastly, it was an adventure which called for much oral conversation and many group decisions; it therefore helped to socialize the group.

RUTH THOMPSON