

discriminate between books that should be read and assimilated and those that should be ignored.

The English classroom must become a browsing room—a place where a child becomes thoroughly familiar with books—references, actual extracts from authors—stories, poems, sketches, essays, biographies, autobiographies, novels, from the extremes of the classics to sport writers. Each has his individual taste, each must find his interest and broaden his limited horizon with actual contacts with others through books. Some need encouragement to browse in expansive fields; some are not so ambitious and can undertake only a fenced and chosen few; some only taste what is laid before them. All progress can be recorded by a file system or notebook with candid criticisms of all discoveries. Most children like this method, especially the delving individually for the secret of an author's greatness, or his failure to hold attention or interest.

There are not many English teachers who feel that they have done all that they should, but if they have given their pupils the ability to find good food for thought and have trained them to express themselves correctly and effectively, they should have no cause for regret.

AURELIA BARTON

A PROBLEM IN DESIGN FOR ELEMENTARY CHILDREN

THE cafeteria in the Main Street School, a dark room in the basement on the north side, was painted orange—not the color of oranges but the color of fresh cheese. Each of the two rooms had several large orange-colored posts in the middle, white walls on three sides, and a sort of wainscoting effect on the fourth with white above orange. The concrete floor was painted to look like tile. What seemed to be needed was a touch of color which would draw the other rather wild colors into a unit.

The Art Committee, composed of five teachers, after discussing various suggestions for decorating, decided that what was needed was a border around the posts and just below the white on the orange wall, preferably a border designed by some child.

The Committee announced that a contest to design a border for the cafeteria would be open to any child who wished to take part. A border by a primary child would be used in the lower grade room and one designed by an upper grade child in the other room. Whether a class competed or not was left to the class and to the room teacher. The designs might be made in art class or in outside time.

It was only when the children began to submit designs that the art teacher learned that many children didn't know the difference between a design and a picture, and a few didn't know what was meant by a border. The art teacher showed samples of designs, particularly borders, clipped from magazines and from wall-paper books, and a number of stenciled borders which were made just for examples. Tree designs were compared with pictures of trees; flower designs with pictures of flowers. The children pointed out designs in print dresses and other objects. They began to collect designs.

By the comparison of designs with pictures the children learned that a design doesn't have to look like a real object but may be adapted from a real object. Square elephants or purple dogs could go into a design but not into a picture. They learned that border designs repeat the motif as many times as necessary to fill a space.

In order to help the second and third-grade children understand this repetition, the teacher let them suggest a motif such as a ball which she put on the blackboard and then repeated enough times to look like a border. The children then made borders of animals, flowers, fruits, and other motifs which appealed to them.

When all entries were in, they were

mounted on the bulletin board in the hall and the children were allowed to vote on the ones they liked best. The teachers also voted, their votes counting more than children's votes for obvious reasons. Oddly enough, the one acceptable design was a square duck made by a third-grade pupil; most upper-grade entries were too detailed and elaborate to be practical.

One mistake in requirements for entries was that a single motif with no repetitions was permissible. If designs had been submitted only in border form with at least three repetitions of the motif, they would have been easier to judge.

Since there were no acceptable designs from the upper grades, the dozen children whose designs were best were given an extra art class twice a week in which they worked on designs. This time they were given strips of paper 36"x6" and were allowed to make freehand borders with paint and brushes. They soon produced some rather interesting designs, one of which was selected by the Art Committee for use.

The children who designed the chosen borders with a little help cut the designs on stencil board and prepared them for use.

The final problem was selection of colors for the border. The consensus of opinion seemed to be that a touch of cool color was needed to relieve the warm brown and

orange, but there was a possibility that an additional color might be merely confusing. The Art Committee decided to try out several color combinations directly on the enameled wall with poster paint. A soft red-brown with a mossy green was one combination. Another was the same brown with white, and a third was all green. The first combination was the one selected.

Then came the job of painting the border on the wall. The art teacher selected and mixed the colors. Since children like to paint, the two children whose designs were used were allowed, under the supervision of the art teacher, to do the actual painting of the designs on the wall.

The practical values of this contest to the children were many. Probably every child competing now knows what is meant by the term "border design," and knows the difference between a design and a picture. The children enjoyed the work incident to the problem and in working developed an aesthetic appreciation of good design in decoration. In many classes the study of designs for walls was carried on into book covers, portfolios for drawings, and other things useful in the schoolroom. What is most important, the children gained some realization of the practical uses of art.

FRANCES GROVE

DEFINITION OF A PROFESSION

"The peculiar characteristics of a profession as distinguished from other occupations, I take to be these:

"First, a profession is an occupation for which the necessary preliminary training is intellectual in character, involving knowledge and to some extent learning, as distinguished from mere skill;

"Second, it is an occupation which is pursued largely for others and not merely for one's self;

"Third, it is an occupation in which the amount of financial returns is not the accepted measure of success."

—LOUIS D. BRANDEIS,
Justice of the U. S. Supreme Court.