

## SUPPLEMENTARY READING BASED ON MOTHER GOOSE RHYMES

**D**URING the first six weeks of work in the first grade a need for very simple reading material is always felt. This material should be easy enough for children to read almost immediately and still have interest enough to carry on from day to day until a primer can be used. Action sentences soon become only games. A daily bulletin helps somewhat, but does not supply the need. Children want to read and long for a real story from the very first. They come to first grade with a genuine love for Mother Goose, and it is from these that the first specific reading may be gotten.

"Jack and Jill" seems to be the general favorite, so our supplementary story chart begins with it. The rhyme is given by the children at first. Then they tell each line as it is printed on the board. After it has been read from the board the chart is presented and read. With this is used a set of strips with the sentences printed upon them and the children find and match them with the line on the chart as a check.

In a day or so the children are ready for their first story. At first it is wise to give enough in outline to create the desire to read more. For instance, some introduction like the following may be used: "Children, did you know that all of Mother Goose's children work and try to help their mother as you do? What do you suppose Jack and Jill did to help their mother? Do you ever carry water for your mother? Well, one day Mother Goose wanted some water, and our story tells how she called Jack and Jill to get it. Would you like to read to see if they did what Mother Goose asked them?" After this introduction the following story is read from the chart or poster:

Run Jack.  
Run Jill.  
Run and get a pail of water.  
Jack ran up the hill.

Jill ran up the hill.  
They ran to get a pail of water.  
Jack fell down,  
And broke his crown,  
And Jill came tumbling after.

After this rhyme the chart grows day by day. The next taken is "Two Little Blackbirds." This rhyme is taught in the same manner as "Jack and Jill" and followed up with a story based on the rhyme. "Boy Blue" is the fourth rhyme used, and from now on it is possible to make some attractive stories and good checks. Sometimes the rhymes are combined for the story as:

Boy Blue went to see Bo-Peep.  
Bo-Peep was in the meadow.  
She said, "I have some sheep, Boy Blue.  
Come and see my sheep."  
Boy Blue looked for the sheep.  
He asked, "Where are your sheep, Bo-Peep?"

Bo-Peep said, "Look under the haystack,  
Boy Blue.

My sheep are under the haystack.  
They are fast asleep."

With this story a completion check is used. The children find and pin the correct words or phrases in the space left in each of the four or five sentences taken from the story and printed on another chart or on the board. They get real pleasure from these checks.

All of these stories are about the same length and contain a complete thought unit. The vocabulary consists of words in the rhyme and a few action words. They will be found in the basal primer and in the Baker-Thorndike word list. The sentences are short to encourage the children to read in complete thoughts and not in broken phrases or just by words. The stories also have some repetition similar to all the primer stories. An average group can read these stories the second week of school, so by the time they are ready for a primer they have had some good experiences in reading. With a group of repeaters or very slow children these lessons are very good,

because they bring the joy of a complete story for every reading period. Thus the group is not bored by dragging one long story along for several days or a week.

As each story is made it is printed on tag board and illustrated (pictures from old primers may be used). A strip of cloth is pasted across the top and is fastened to a small easel or reading rack so the stories can be folded back as the children finish reading. Listed in order are the rhymes from which our chart is made: Jack and Jill, Two Little Blackbirds, Little Bo-Peep, Little Boy Blue, Humpty Dumpty, Tommy Tinker's Dog, Little Miss Muffet. These seem to lend themselves to the best story values, but any of the familiar ones may be used.

Any teacher of beginning reading can well appreciate the urge for reading such work will create. Besides this important value there are many others in this kind of reading as: they are made up of the vocabulary of basal primers; the sentences are short; they contain a complete thought; there is good opportunity to increase eye sweep; much drill may be had through the repetition in the stories; and they give real pleasure to the child.

M. E. CORNELL

#### A SECOND GRADE LIBRARY

The children in the second grade decided that their regular readers did not give them as much real reading as they wanted, so they decided to have a library. They visited the college library to find out how books are procured, how taken out, and how treated.

Some of the children donated books and magazines which they had at home. More books at ten cents each were ordered from F. A. Owen Company, Dansville, N. Y., and Flanagan and Company, Chicago, Ill. Other inexpensive picture books were bought from the Dime Store and from various other sources. Besides these, stories were cut from first and second readers and attractive covers were made for them. The

following is a partial list of the library books:

*Poems Worth Knowing, Book I*  
*Little Wood Friends*  
*Animal Stories*  
*Four Little Bushy-Tails*  
*Kitty Mittens*  
*Picture Study Stories for Little Children*  
*The Rabbit School*  
*The Teddy Bears*  
*A Cotton-Tail Picnic*  
*Little Black Sambo and Other Stories*  
*Four Little Cotton Tails at Play*

As a check for the books two cards are used. One with the name of the book on it is for the teacher. When a child gets a book out his name is put on this card, which he finds in the book, and the teacher or librarian keeps it. The other card belongs to the child and his name is written on it. When he takes a book out the name of it is written on his card. This gives him a record of all books he has read. If a child loses his card he cannot get a book out until a new card can be fixed for him. A book may be kept as long as the child wishes, but it is best to encourage the exchange of books every week. Should anyone be out of school with a contagious disease his book is not taken back. When the children are promoted they take all books they have given to the next grade, so they can begin a library there at once.

The Library Hour is 15 minutes daily. During this time the children exchange books, help each other decide on the best stories, and read as much as possible. Stress is not laid on the number of books read, but on the pleasure derived from reading the printed page.

Out of this hour has grown an organized Reading Club. The children elect their officers and also a committee to plan weekly programs. All stories used for the programs are selected from the library books. The children who participate in the programs

are also chosen each week by the program committee. To be admitted to the club each child must read before it and his ability passed on by the members.

Special dramatizations often develop from the work of the club. During Book Week they planned an original play in which the characters were selected from their books. Such favorites as the following were portrayed: *Robinson Crusoe*, *Little Black Sambo*, *Hansel and Gretchel*, and *Red-Riding-Hood*. The costumes were planned and made by the children. The final result was presented at a Mothers' Party for the patrons of the grade. Since then the club has presented dramatizations of various stories for the entertainment of members of their own grade and for other grades in the school. Such incentives for good reading are of untold value in any grade.

MARGARET MURPHY

To determine whether time devoted to home study by pupils in Western High School, Baltimore, is apportioned to the best advantage in preparation of different subjects in the curriculum, a questionnaire was sent to about 275 senior students. Answers show that history receives the most of home-study time, an average of 80 minutes. Latin comes next, with an average of 58 minutes; then stenography, 57 minutes; mathematics, 46; and modern languages and chemistry with an average of 45 minutes each. Pupils reported an average of 42 minutes home study of English and 38 minutes of biology. The average per pupil time for each subject is 53 minutes, or about three hours and a half of home study in all. This is thought to be an overestimate rather than an underestimate. A practical result of the survey has been to reduce the history assignment, which entails library work, and by readjustments of other objects to make more time available for home study in the subjects now below the median.

—*School Life*.

### THE TEACHER

"She was a teacher,  
Very many years,"  
He said to me,  
"And if she wearied  
Of the daily grind,  
We never knew,  
For she kept smiling—  
As school teachers do:

"And I can not recall  
Just what she taught,  
Nor what her methods were  
That brought  
Achievement to us  
In that school of yore:

"It has been long—  
Those days are far behind;  
Dim is her face,  
Nor do I know  
The color of her eyes, her hair,  
Nor whether she was plain,  
Or passing fair,  
And though she stood each morning  
At the door,  
I can not recollect  
A single dress she wore:

"But one thing lives—  
A memory as radiant  
As the Sirius star  
That hangs beneath Orion  
On the wall of space,  
And takes its shining way  
Across the winter sky—  
A silver thread,  
That will, forevermore,  
Its pattern trace  
Upon the scroll of years  
As they unwind—  
The one thing I remember—  
She was kind!"

SARAH WILSON MIDDLETON,  
*in the Christian Science Monitor.*