

VALIDATION OF A GUIDE FOR THE SELECTION
OF BOOKS FOR YOUNG CHILDREN

By

PATRICIA DIANE KELTON

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Oklahoma State University

Stillwater, Oklahoma

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Thesis Approved:

Josephine Hoffer
Thesis Adviser
James E. Hoffer
Nick Stinnett
D. D. Durham
Dean of the Graduate College

788371

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CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM AND ITS IMPORTANCE

The purpose of this research is to validate a shortened form of the nine criteria guide developed by Wettig (71), in 1961, for the selection of books for preschool children. This research is a part of the project initiated by Wettig (71) in which nine criteria concerning the selection of books for young children were identified. Heath (35) in 1963, Niazi (56) in 1963, Hollenbeck (37) in 1969, and Hudgins (41) in 1970, found parents using the guide were more like the early childhood specialists in the ratings of the books than the parents who did not use a guide. Hollenbeck (37) and Hudgins (41) recommended the guide be shortened. The research described herein concerns the validation of scores for the shortened form.

Need for a Guide

That young children must trust adults to select literature for them is supported by the writings of many concerned with this problem (1, 4, 10, 13, 20, 27, 40, 53, 55, 63). Baruch (10) has said that:

A child's early story experiences are adult-controlled experiences to a great extent. The grown-up selects material to be presented. The grown-up discards. And often the selecting and discarding are done on the basis of adult likes and dislikes rather than on the basis of what the child does with the story, and what the story does to the child. (pp. 309-310)

Since children must depend on adults, adults must not only know children, they must also know what is desirable for them. Eakin (20) states that "as long as librarians, teachers, and parents are willing to buy mediocre books in large quantities, publishers will be willing to produce them." (p. x) The present research is designed to contribute to knowledge concerning the selection of books for young children.

Young children today do not have as much time to spend enjoying books as the children in the past. Today's children watch television, listen to the radio and stereo, go to play schools, and use their time in various other ways. It is important that these children be supplied with the best available books because they have little time to waste on the undesirable ones (66). Dawson (18) states that:

So many good books are published for children these days that we can afford to be choosy. Books that are mere attention-getters, that have questionable values are not good enough. (p. 272)

Children will listen to the books adults read them and the adult's responsibility is to see that the children become acquainted with the best children's literature (61). Freeman (27) writes, "Exposure to a child's first picture book can be very brief; but the impressions they leave often last a lifetime." (p. 83)

The Association for Childhood Education International (7), The American Library Association (2), Baruch (10), Dawson (18), and Huck and Kuhn (40) agree that a child should be presented with the right book at the right time to be most appreciative of good literature. If the book is too elementary, the child may be bored; the same is true if the book is too difficult to understand.

The Association for Childhood Education International (7) reported:

A real disservice is done by adults to both children and books by insisting that children read certain books just because they are, in the judgment of grownups, good for children. All too often a child turns away from books permanently . . . [when] at his stage of development . . . the books have no meaning. If modern education has made any one fact clear it is that children differ greatly in background and intellectual, social, emotional, and physical maturation. Frequently a premature experience with books, which most adults think are good for children, will actually give young folks a feeling that books which their elders approve are difficult and dull. The reaction of some to 'forced feeding' of good literature may be a sense of guilt or inferiority that they do not enjoy such books. (p. 6)

The child is influenced by every experience he has with literature. He will be forming concepts of the world in which he lives, as well as forming a background for his later reading skills. The child will be developing a taste for good literature; a few ordinary books will not mar his life, but it would be undesirable if he missed the truly excellent books (20, 30, 60, 63).

Huck and Kuhn (40) contend that:

Technological improvements have also paved the way for the mass production of little inexpensive books which frequently have shoddy art work and trite stories. Unfortunately, clever merchandising and mass distribution make these books more readily available to the public than those which represent the best in children's literature. (p. 469)

Many writers concerned with the selection of books for the young child have written that the task becomes more difficult due to the increasing number of new books on the market (4, 7, 14, 19, 24, 25, 26, 27, 29, 31, 40, 43, 45, 48, 60, 61, 63, 69, 72). Various authors estimate that between 1,500 to 3,000 new titles appear each year which are classified as children's books.

The Association of Childhood Education International (7) reports that:

Today as never before there is a great abundance of children's books in the much-less-than-a-dollar price range. Many of these books are written by respectable writers and illustrated by first-rate artists. When these inexpensive books are indiscriminately chosen, they certainly have a place in the child's experience with literature. However, children should have many experiences with well made books with content, illustrations, and format complementing each other. Only as children have the opportunity to feel in their hands the beauty of our handsomest children's books will they come to cherish the best that publishers have to offer them. (p. 3)

Because of the large supply of books from which to select, an adult purchasing a book can easily become disconcerted. It would appear that a guide for parents and other adults choosing children's books would be beneficial in distinguishing the acceptable books from the unacceptable ones.

This research is based on the three following assumptions:

- (1) A guide for selecting literature for young children is needed,
- (2) the criteria identified by Wettig (71) aids in the evaluation of books, and
- (3) specialists in early childhood are qualified to validate a guide.

Specifically, the purpose of this research is to validate a shortened form of a guide for the selection of books for young children based on the judgments of specialists in early childhood education.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Importance of Good Literature

Young children live in a complex world. One way for them to learn about their world is through books. Books can help the child understand experiences occurring in his everyday environment (6, 22, 27, 33, 52, 58, 61). Lewis' (52) statement is representative of the foregoing authors;

We know what a major task it is for young children to sort out realities around them, identify similarities and differences, and organize their surroundings for themselves. They enjoy picture books that help them in this effort. . . . They also enjoy those stories that simply confirm their everyday home experiences. (p. 387)

Because of the rapid pace of life in our world today, the child may not always have the opportunity to have first hand experiences in his learning. Vicarious experiences through the reading of books is the next best thing to being there. Johnson (43) wrote, "Good literature is no substitute for living but it can add immeasurably to the richness of living." (p. 181)

Books provide children with an accurate source of information (59). The information may concern the child's everyday life or it may prepare him for new and unknown events that he will face such as a trip to the dentist, a new baby in the home, or a vacation with his family.

Jacobs (42) has written:

Children need literature, then, for entertainment, for refreshment of spirit, for the exploration of life and living, for guidance, for creative activities, and for enrichment of language. (p. 8)

Adams (1) and Christianson (14) have reported that books can be a child's best friend. They take him to other lands and help him see how other people in the world live. Through reading stories about other boys and girls a child can come to have a better understanding of himself (21, 36, 42). Woods and Kennedy (74) suggest that:

Perhaps the most wondrous power a great book possesses is that no one can predict nor measure how it will affect an individual. We do know that children have an ability to achieve absolute identification with the characters of the books they read for fun and to live wholly within another period in their imagination. (p. 38)

The child must operate in an adult-controlled environment. He is constantly being told "no." Books can supply the child with a much needed escape from the adult world (4, 5, 7, 25, 30, 51).

Arbuthnot (4) reports:

They [children] suffer more than adults realize from the pressure of routines, adult coercion, tensions, and the necessity of conforming to a code of manners and morals whose reasonableness they do not understand. Some children suffer from school failures, family troubles, or feelings of social or physical inferiority. They, too, may seek an escape in books and the escape will be wholesome or the reverse depending upon what they read. (p. 9)

Another major contribution that literature makes to children is to increase their vocabulary (1, 8, 14, 22, 23, 24, 29, 33, 38, 40, 42, 52, 55, 61, 72). Young children are fascinated by words. Their vocabulary doubles in size between the age of three and five years of age. By listening to the words in a good story, the child learns to articulate and understand the meaning of new words. Words that rhyme are

often repeated over and over and this pattern is a joy to a child.

In addition to increasing a child's vocabulary, books supply many answers to the child's everyday questions and provide a sound basis for reading (23, 27, 40, 48, 55, 65). The child demands that his stories be read over and over. Older children associate the written word with the spoken word after several readings. Reading readiness is a necessary prerequisite for children if they are to learn to read adequately. Larrick (48) wrote that:

A child's aptitude for reading is determined long before he enters first grade. Indeed, some specialists say there is little that the primary teacher can do to help a child overcome the crippling effect of language starvation in his first five years. (p. 25)

Good literature affects the child's performance in school later on. Targ (65) explains that:

Mental and emotional response is developed by consistent exercise just as physical response is. The young mind trained on capsule rubbish or the TV substitute becomes an adult mind that resists anything intellectually demanding or mentally strenuous. (p. 25)

Good literature contributes to children's lives in a variety of ways. Not to be overlooked is the pure enjoyment, fun, and pleasure that children derive from listening to a good story.

In summary, good literature helps the child understand himself and the world around him. Books can provide the child with vicarious experiences. Stories may offer the child an escape from his adult-controlled world. Reading readiness and an increase in vocabulary are two major additional benefits reaped from association with good literature.

Criteria for Selection of Books

Wettig's (71) review of literature was discussed under the nine

criteria utilized in the guide, including: (1) interest, (2) length, (3) content, (4) style of writing, (5) illustrations, (6) knowledge, (7) conclusion, (8) ethically sound, and (9) physical characteristics. Hollenbeck (37) and Hudgins (41) recommended a combination of categories as follows: (1) interest and length, (2) content, knowledge, conclusion, ethically sound, and style of writing, (3) illustrations, and (4) physical characteristics. The review of literature which follows is presented according to these four categories.

Interest

Interest is discussed here according to the combination of the categories of interest and length which is: "Interest -- Catches child's attention in the beginning and holds it to the end; be length for child's interest span." (37)

Huck and Kuhn (40) wrote that:

Young children have many and varied interests. They are filled with 'insatiable curiosity' about their world. As boys and girls reach out for richer and wider experiences they are ready for many different types of picture books. (p. 126)

Most important for the child's first literature experience is that it depict familiar everyday experiences. Children like to hear stories about their family and about animals that they know about. Leonard (50) said that:

The little children live in the immediate present. His everyday world is a place of such marvel and mystery to him that living for him is exploration of the actual. It follows quite naturally that he prefers to hear about the things that belong to his environment that has to do with whatever he sees, hears, or handles. (p. 358)

Older children expand their reading experiences as their interest widens. There are many books published for young children on numerous topics and it challenges a parent or teacher to select those of interest to a particular child. Since there are so many books available, it seems questionable to force upon a child stories that hold little interest for him. Langford (47) states that:

Too often adults try to force their own tastes in literature on children. It is disappointing to parents and teachers when children do not enjoy a book which brought special pleasure to them when they were young. (p. 274)

Todd and Heffernan (67) support the same point when they write that:

If he [a child] is given books beyond his age level, he will be disinterested, will resort to other activities, or will otherwise express rejection of the unsuitable books. (p. 423)

In addition to selecting an interesting book, it is also important to give the child a book at the appropriate time. If the child is given a book that is too difficult, he will think that books are too hard to read. On the other hand, the child may become bored if the book is too elementary.

Dawson (18) has written that:

Children are hungrier for knowledge than we tend to realize. The facts need to be an extension of the child's actual experience rather than unrelated bits of wisdom. (p. 270)

A young child has a short attention span and his stories should not be so long that he will become restless (1, 10, 14, 24). In her pilot study, Wettig (71) wrote that:

It may be stated concerning a desirable length of book that: The three and four-year-old child has a relatively short attention span. Most preschool children can listen for a period of from 5 to 15 minutes. The book should not be too long or too short and simple for the child. (p. 15)

Content

Content in this writing is discussed according to the short form which means a combination of the categories of content, knowledge, conclusion, ethically sound, and style of writing. Hudgins (41) stated the content should be judged on the following basis:

Content of the book should: be about familiar situations; help the child learn about the world in which he lives; be sincere and true in facts; be correct in grammar and sentence structure; give a wholesome outlook on life; and leave the child with a feeling of satisfaction and completion. (p. 38)

Christianson (14) stressed the importance of reality in a story by writing that:

The realistic story is greatly enjoyed by the preschool child because it tells about experiences familiar to him. He is interested in the happenings of his everyday world and likes stories about himself. His imagination is stimulated as he learns about the things and people that make up his environment. Fantasy becomes suitable in his stories when he is able to differentiate between what is real and what is make-believe. (p. 206)

Some authors (7, 8, 27) believe that fairy tales have no place in the literature of very young children. Adults often forget at what age they enjoyed fairy tales and thus may be tempted to introduce them to children too soon. Willsher (73) emphasized that, "with each child it is a matter of careful judgment on the part of the adults as to what might frighten, what will thrill; and fear, of course, must be avoided." (p. 91)

Baruch (10) felt strongly about unrealistic literature for young children when she wrote:

We avoid tales of threatening punishment. We steer clear of the gruesome and the cruel. We admit that stories which have an element of tragedy or horror should not be read to the very young child. It is also feared that children will confuse the fantastic with the real and

thereby lose his sense of security; that false values will evolve, which may throw his understanding askew, that he may accept fiction as fact. The harm is not pretending but in believing that what we pretend is true. (p. 238)

Young children are curious beings. They are constantly bombarding adults around them with questions. During this period of insatiable curiosity is the time to help children learn that they can often find the answers to their questions in books. The books read to the child should have accurate information that they may make judgments appropriate for their age level (4).

Huck and Kuhn (40) state that:

Children are quick to detect the patronizing air of an author who talks down to them. They dislike a story that is too sentimental, and they see through the disguise of the too moralistic tale of the past. (p. 15)

Authors should use integrity in writing stories for young children. In addition to presenting truthful information, the characters should be realistic and life-like so that the child can identify with the character.

The story should be written on the child's level of understanding but children do enjoy the sound of words. They like to hear repetition in the story as well as learn new words and what these words mean. Concerning children's play on words Larrick (48) stated that:

It is natural for children of this age to have fun with words. They will repeat new words over and over as though savoring a delicate morsel. Often they indulge in spontaneous word games that sharpen their ear for oral language. (p. 41)

The conclusion of a story is important to a child. It should have a believable conclusion that fits the loose ends together so that the child has a feeling of serenity about what has happened. Adams (1) and Arbuthnot (5) agree that the story should leave the child with a

pleasant feeling of completion and satisfaction rather than fear and doubt.

Illustrations

The criteria for illustrations for this research remained the same as in Wettig's (71) study since this was recommended by Hollenbeck (37) and Hudgins (41) and will be discussed accordingly.

Arbuthnot (4) explained that:

Beautiful pictures can sell a trivial book, and sometimes a first-rate story is overlooked because it lacks attractive illustrations. With today's offset printing and remarkable color reproduction, the eye-appeal of books is more important than ever before, and consequently the artist plays a very significant role in the production of books for children. (p. 52)

Christianson (14), Eakin (20), Fenner (24), Fisher (25), and Freeman (27) agree that illustrations play an important role in a picture book by interpreting the text. Georgiou (30), Huck and Kuhn (40), Leavitt (49), Schatz (57), Smith (62), Smith (63), and Wills (72) concur that the child reads the pictures as the adult reads the text and the child may learn the meaning of new words as he listens to the words and sees them illustrated.

Huck (39) further explains that:

Today's world is a visually-minded one. A new freedom in art coupled with technological improvements in printing and picture reproduction have produced more attractive books than we have ever had. The past thirty years have witnessed the phenomenal rise of the picture book for young children. In the best of these, the pictures and the text are of equal importance in conveying the message of the book. Young children 'read' the pictures while adults read the story to them. (p. 59)

Smith (63) stated that:

Picture books also appeal to little children through the eye. A little child's approach to pictures is first of all a literary one. He expects them to tell the story he cannot read for himself. Pictures are his first introduction to books and through them his interest is caught. (p. 116)

The picture must portray the story accurately (4, 26, 45, 59, 68).

The size of the objects illustrated should be correct proportionally. Children do see the details in a picture. If the text describes three black kittens, children want to see three black kittens in the picture. Children also, want their pictures full of action just as the story should be filled with action.

Baruch (10) wrote:

For the child of four or five the picture-story book brings another sort of value. It has pictures which are linked one to another. Hence they give the child an insight into arranging symbols in orderly sequence, a process he will need to utilize with word symbols later when he learns to read. (p. 326)

Another author, Joseph (45) points to another value of illustrations:

Assuming that a child forms an approach to the world of color, design, and arrangement from the books with which he comes in contact when very young we see how necessary it is for books to be well chosen. Unconsciously he develops a taste for the worthwhile from or through carefully selected books. (p. 32)

Physical Characteristics

The criteria for physical characteristics remained the same as in the long form and will be discussed accordingly.

In regard to physical characteristics, Arbuthnot (4) has written:

The size of the type, the leading (the space between lines), and the number of words to a page are also important. Even in the picture-story for the nonreader, the small type used

in adult books is undesirable. Children of all ages have one suspicion in common. They are afraid of a book page with too solid a printed pattern. (p. 25)

A book should be sturdily constructed so that a child can feel free to turn the pages and carry it with him without fear of damaging the book. Heffernan and Todd (36) and Leavitt (49) suggested that the first books for children be made from cloth. The pages of other books should be made from strong, hard-to-tear paper. Books that have double-stitching insuring long wear are available.

Size is another physical characteristic to be considered. As previously mentioned, young children like to carry their books with them. This, then, suggests that a book that is too large would be cumbersome. The book does need to be large enough so that the child can see the illustrations without eye strain.

Summary

The four criteria for the selection of books for young children are summarized as follows:

Interest: the book should catch the child's attention in the beginning and hold it to the end. The length should be appropriate for the child's attention span.

Content: the book should be about familiar situations, help the child learn about the world in which he lives, be true in facts, give a wholesome outlook on life, and leave the child with a feeling of satisfaction and completion.

Illustrations: should be accurate, appealing to the child, free from too much detail, related to real life situations, and appear frequently enough to illustrate the story.

Physical characteristics: the book should have a durable binding, large print, and be easy to handle.

Review of Previous Research Related to This Study

In a pilot study, Wettig (71) identified nine criteria in the literature to be formulated into a guide. To develop a weighted scale for the guide, seven early childhood specialists were asked to indicate a weight for each of the nine criteria on the guide. "The percent weight assigned to each criterion was divided into five parts so that qualitative terms such as Excellent, Good, Fair, Poor, and Unacceptable could be used in judging the books" (71, p. 35).

Books were then selected and distributed to a sample of sixteen mothers of four-year-olds. One group was to rate the books without the guide while the second group was to use the guide in rating the books. The results from Wettig's (71) study indicated that a guide would aid parents in selecting books for young children.

In another study, Heath (35) followed the same procedure as Wettig (71) but her study included a larger sample of twenty mothers in each of the two groups. Heath (35) found that a guide did help mothers to discriminate between recommended and non-recommended books for young children.

Niazi (56) used the guide developed by Wettig (71) to evaluate books for young children which were written in Arabic. She found the guide to be helpful in evaluating these books as well as the books which were written in English.

Hollenbeck (37) followed the same general procedure as Wettig (71) and Heath (35). Her sample included matched mothers with twenty-five in each group. Again, she found evidence that the guide was an aid in selecting books for young children.

Hudgins' (41) research paralleled that of Wettig (71), Heath (35), and Hollenbeck (37) as to the procedure followed. One difference was that Hudgins (41) used only parents enrolled in University Laboratory programs. Her sample consisted of eighteen parents in each of two groups of children enrolled in the University Child Development Laboratories. Again, one group rated the books using a guide and the other group used no guide. Hudgins (41) found that the ratings of parents using the guide were more like the ratings of the specialists than were those of the parents who did not use the guide.

Hollenbeck (37) and Hudgins (41) recommended that the guide be condensed into four categories: (1) interest, (2) content, (3) illustrations, and (4) physical characteristics to facilitate its use.

CHAPTER III

PROCEDURE AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

The purpose of this study was to validate a weighted score for the short form of the guide (four criteria) recommended by Hollenbeck (37) and Hudgins (41). Both the long form, validated by Wettig (71), and the short form may be found in Appendix A.

To achieve the foregoing purpose the following steps were pursued:

(1) Two persons acquainted with specialists in early childhood education were asked to identify ten persons whom they judged to be qualified to select the respondents that would judge the weights for the four criteria.

(2) A letter (Appendix B) was sent to the ten specialists in early childhood education requesting the names of ten specialists whom they felt were qualified to determine the weighted value of the four criteria.

(3) Fifty-five names were reported by six specialists; four did not respond. A letter (Appendix C) was sent to the fifty-five persons nominated to participate in the study.

(4) Forty-one persons responded to the request for assigning weights to the four criteria on the short form of the guide. They are described in Tables I, II, III, and IV.

TABLE I
PRESENT POSITION AND ACADEMIC STATUS
OF THE FORTY-ONE SPECIALISTS

Present Position	Bachelor	Master	Doctorate	Total
College and University Teaching		26	13	39
Nursery School Teaching	1			1
Elementary Teaching	1			1
Total	2	26	13	41

TABLE II

PROFESSIONAL PREPARATION OF THE FORTY-ONE SPECIALISTS

Major Field	Bachelor	Master	Doctorate
Family Relations and Child Development		23	7
Elementary Education	1	2	3
Home Economics	1	1	1
Library Science			1
Educational Psychology			1
Total	2	26	13

TABLE III
GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION (UNITED STATES)
OF THE FORTY-ONE SPECIALISTS

Geographical Location	Number From Location
Northeastern	9
Southeastern	9
North Central	7
South Central	11
Northwestern	0
Southwestern	5

TABLE IV
TYPES AND YEARS OF TEACHING EXPERIENCES
FOR THE SPECIALISTS

Type of Teaching Experience	1-2 Years	3-4 Years	5-9 Years	10-35 Years
Nursery School	9	9	7	10
Kindergarten	5	4	2	2
Primary Grades	2	0	2	2
Intermediate Grades	5	0	1	0
Junior High	2	1	0	0
Senior High	4	1	2	0
College	11	5	4	12

The specialists' teaching experiences indicate the respondents had many years in which to select books for young children and that they had many times passed judgment on the acceptable and unacceptable books.

(5) The mean scores, for the four criteria, assigned by the forty-one specialists became the weighted score for the short form. The values for an excellent, good, fair, poor, and unacceptable book were arbitrarily assigned based on gradually decreasing scores beginning with the mean score by the method already established in previous research (71), pp. 33-35. They are presented in Table V, rounded to the nearest 5 to facilitate their use.

TABLE V
SPECIALISTS' MEAN SCORES OF WEIGHTED VALUES
FOR THE FOUR CRITERIA

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Unacceptable
Interest	25	20	15	10	5
Content	40	30	20	10	0
Illustrations	25	20	15	10	5
Physical Characteristics	10	8	6	4	2

Table VI presents the findings of this study in a form which could be useful to those persons responsible for selecting books for young children.

TABLE VI
RECOMMENDED WEIGHTS FOR GUIDE FOR THE SELECTION
OF YOUNG CHILDREN'S BOOKS

		R A T I N G S C A L E				
		Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Unacceptable
I. INTEREST:						
	Catches child's attention in the beginning and holds it to the end.	25	20	15	10	5
	Be length for the child's interest span.					
II. CONTENT of the Book Should:						
	Be about familiar situations.					
	Help the child learn about the world in which he lives.					
	Be sincere and true in facts.					
	Be correct in grammar sentence structure.	40	30	20	10	0
	Give a wholesome outlook on life.					
	Leave the child with a feeling of satisfaction and completion.					
III. ILLUSTRATIONS of the Book Should:						
	Be large.					
	Be clear in color.					
	Be accurate.					
	Be appealing to the child.	25	20	15	10	5
	Be free from too much detail.					
	Be related to real life situations.					
	Appear frequently enough to illustrate the story.					
IV. PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS of the Book Should:						
	Have a durable binding.					
	Have large print.	10	8	6	4	2
	Be easy to handle.					

A comparison of the short and long form of the guide (Appendix C) reveals that the criteria on the long form receiving the highest score by the specialists were also the criteria receiving the highest scores on the short form. Testing on different populations using both the long and short form will reveal the one that is most useful.

Summary

This study was concerned with validating a shortened form of the guide developed by Wettig (71) which would aid adults in the identification of suitable books for three and four-year-old children.

Forty-one persons from various geographic locations in the United States were nominated by six early childhood education specialists as persons qualified to assign weights to the four criteria guide.

The mean scores assigned by the respondents indicated the respondents on the short guide gave similar weighting to those specialists that had validated the Wettig guide.

Further research in which both the long and short form are subjected to populations which include adults with various backgrounds is recommended.

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APPENDIX A

**OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY • STILLWATER**

Department of Family Relations & Child Development
372-6211, Ext. 6084

74074

March 11, 1970

Dear

Your qualifications and contributions to the field of Early Childhood Education have distinguished you as a specialist in this area and for this reason, you have been selected to participate in an ongoing research project at Oklahoma State University.

Your participation in the study would involve nominating ten persons who you feel are qualified to assign weighted values to selected criteria for a guide to be used in selecting books for young children.

If you can participate, please give the names, position, and the present address of your recommendations on the enclosed form and complete the personal data sheet. This information would be appreciated by April 1.

Thank you for your cooperation and participation.

Sincerely,

Diane Kelton
Graduate Student

Josephine Hoffer, Adviser
Associate Professor, Acting
Head, Department of Family
Relations and Child Development

enclosures

NOMINATIONS

Name-Position-Address

Name-Position-Address

1. _____

6. _____

2. _____

7. _____

3. _____

8. _____

4. _____

9. _____

5. _____

10. _____

APPENDIX B



OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY • STILLWATER

Department of Family Relations & Child Development
372-6211, Ext. 6084

74074

You have been nominated by a jury of specialists as a person who would be qualified to participate in ongoing research at Oklahoma State University. The purpose of the research is to validate a guide that could be used in the selection of books for young children.

Your contribution to this study is to assign a weighed value to the four criteria on the guide. These criteria are recommendations found in the literature but educators have never placed a weighed value on them.

When determining values for the guide, please read carefully the characteristics of each of the four criteria. Then indicate the numerical value you would give to each criteria by weighing it in terms of a percent on a one-hundred point basis.

Please complete the enclosed personal data sheet and enclose it and your recommended weights for the criteria on the guide and return, if possible, by May 1, 1970.

Your response to this request is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Diane Kelton
Graduate Student
Early Childhood Education

Josephine Hoffer, Adviser
Associate Professor and Acting
Head, Department of Family Relations
and Child Development

DK:JH:cw

enclosures

PERSONAL DATA SHEET

Name _____

Present Position _____

Educational Background:

B.A. ____ or B.S. ____ Major _____ Year _____

M.A. ____ or M.S. ____ Major _____ Year _____

Ph.D. ____ or Ed.D. ____ Major _____ Year _____

Work Experience:

Number of Years

Nursery School _____

Kindergarten _____

Primary Grades _____

Intermediate Grades _____

Junior High _____

Senior High _____

College _____

Other _____

I would like a copy of the results of the study. Yes ____ No ____

RECOMMENDED WEIGHTS FOR GUIDE FOR THE SELECTION OF
YOUNG CHILDREN'S BOOKS SENT TO RESPONDENTS

WEIGHTS

I. INTEREST SHOULD: _____

Catch the child's attention in the beginning
and hold it to the end.

Be length for child's interest span.

II. CONTENT OF THE BOOK SHOULD: _____

Be about familiar situations.

Help the child learn about the world in which
he lives.

Be sincere and true in facts.

Be correct in grammar sentence structure.

Give a wholesome outlook on life.

Leave the child with a feeling of satisfaction
and completion.

III. ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE BOOK SHOULD BE: _____

Large.

Clear in color.

Accurate.

Appealing to the child.

Free from too much detail.

Related to real life situations.

Appear frequently enough to illustrate story.

IV. PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE BOOK SHOULD: _____

Have durable binding.

Have large print.

Be easy to handle.

APPENDIX C

A GUIDE FOR SELECTING BOOKS FOR THE PRESCHOOL CHILD
(THREE AND FOUR-YEAR-OLD)
(Wettig (71), p. 56)

		RATING SCALE				
		Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Unacceptable
1. Is the book <u>INTERESTING</u> ?						
The book should catch the child's attention in the first few sentences and hold his attention to the end. The three and four-year-old child likes plenty of action, suspense, and a logical plot in the story with an economy of incidence.		15	12	9	6	3
2. Is the book of a desirable <u>LENGTH</u> ?						
The three and four-year-old child has a relatively short attention span. Most preschool children can listen for a period of from five to fifteen minutes. The book should not be too long or too short and simple for the child.		5	4	3	2	1
3. Is the <u>STORY CONTENT</u> of the book such that the child will not be confused?						
The story content should be related to the familiar so the child will not be confused by the new or unfamiliar. All books do not contain an element of fantasy; however, when there is an element of fantasy present it should be related enough to real life situations and experiences so the child will not be confused with what is real and what is unreal.		40	32	24	16	8
4. Is the <u>STYLE OF WRITING</u> of the book suitable?						
Sentence structure and grammar should be correct. The three and four-year-old child seems to enjoy "catchy" and "silly" sounding words, as well as repetition and rhythm. This style of writing which includes "silly" sounding words would be appropriate; however, slang and dialect should be avoided.		5	4	3	2	1
5. Is the book suitably <u>ILLUSTRATED</u> ?						
The pictures should be large, distinct and not blurred, appealing, and free from too much detail. The pictures should appear frequently enough to illustrate the story as it proceeds. If there is an element of fantasy present, the picture should be related to real life situations and experiences so the child will not be confused.		15	12	9	6	3
6. Will the book <u>EXTEND THE CHILD'S KNOWLEDGE</u> or give him some understanding of human behavior or of the world in which he lives?						
The book should contain some new information, or should encourage the child to think, and should give the child a new approach to something with which he is already familiar, or it may extend his knowledge of humor.		5	4	3	2	1
7. Is the <u>CONCLUSION</u> of the story appropriate?						
The end of the story as well as the entire story should leave the child with a pleasant feeling of completion and satisfaction. The child should not be left with fears and doubts.		5	4	3	2	1
8. Is the book <u>ETHICALLY SOUND</u> ?						
The content of the story should be socially acceptable. The book need not teach a specific ethical lesson, but it should be completely sound in its morality.		5	4	3	2	1
9. Are the <u>PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS</u> of the book acceptable with: (1) Durable binding (2) Large print (3) A size easy to handle (4) An attractive outside cover?						
The book should have a strong and attractive binding and pages of durable paper, large clear printing, and a size easy for the child to handle.		5	4	3	2	1

VITA

Patricia Diane Kelton

Candidate for the Degree of

Master of Science

Thesis: VALIDATION OF A GUIDE FOR THE SELECTION OF BOOKS FOR YOUNG CHILDREN

Major Field: Family Relations and Child Development

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born at Fort Smith, Arkansas, March 17, 1947, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. M. B. Kelton.

Education: Attended Muldrow Elementary School; Muldrow Junior High School; graduated from Muldrow High School in 1965; attended Oklahoma State University, 1965-1969; received the Bachelor of Science degree in Home Economics from Oklahoma State University in 1969 with a major in Family Relations and Child Development; entered Graduate College, September, 1969, and completed the requirements for the degree of Master of Science in Family Relations and Child Development in May, 1971.

Professional Experience: Summer Faculty Member with the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board at Glorieta, New Mexico, June, 1969, to August, 1969; Graduate Assistant in the Department of Family Relations and Child Development, September, 1969, to January, 1970.

Professional and Honorary Organizations: American Home Economics Association; Oklahoma Home Economics Association; Phi Upsilon Omicron; Kappa Delta Pi; Oklahoma Association for Children Under Six.