

A GUIDE FOR THE SELECTION OF BOOKS
FOR YOUNG CHILDREN

By

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
I. THE PROBLEM	1
The Importance of Good Literature.	1
Good Literature's Contribution to Children	4
Need for a Guide to Select Books for Young Children.	5
Assumption	8
Purpose of the Study	8
II. CRITERIA FOR SELECTION OF BOOKS	9
Interest	10
Length	12
Content.	13
Style of Writing	15
Illustrations.	16
Knowledge.	17
Conclusion	18
Ethically Sound.	18
Physical Characteristics	19
III. PROCEDURE AND METHOD FOR DEVELOPMENT OF THE GUIDE	21
Selection of Books	24
Findings From Previous Studies	24
IV. ANALYSIS OF THE DATA.	28
Description of Sample.	28
Description of Specialists	30
Collection of the Data	30
Analysis of the Data	31
V. SUMMARY	34
Discussion of Results.	35
Recommendations.	36
SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY.	40

Chapter	Page
APPENDIX A	46
APPENDIX B	49
APPENDIX C	53
APPENDIX D	58

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
I. The Nine Criteria Showing Authors and Organizations' Agreement With Each Criterion	11
II. Percentile Ranking to Indicate the Classification of Books by the Five Qualitative Terms	24
III. Spearman Rank Correlation Coefficients Reflecting Relationship Between Book Ratings of Parents With Guide and Parents Without Guide to Book Ratings of Teachers	32
IV. Suggested Modifications of Hollenbeck's Revision of Guide	38
V. Group I Parents' Evaluations of the Eight Books According to Wettig's Guide	54
VI. Group II Parents' Evaluations of the Eight Books Without the Guide	55
VII. The Teachers' Evaluations of the Eight Books According to Wettig's Guide	56
VIII. Teachers', Group I Parents' and Group II Parents' Rankings of the Eight Books.	57
IX. Recommendations for Guide Revision.	59

CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM

The purpose of this research is to further test the guide for selecting books for preschool children developed by Wettig, 1961 (76), and also tested by Heath, 1963 (39), Niazi, 1963 (65), and Hollenbeck, 1969 (42). Descriptions and reference to this earlier research are given throughout this study. The four earlier studies indicated that ratings of the mothers who used the guide were somewhat more like the professionals. In addition to these findings, all earlier researchers recommended that the guide be further tested with larger and different samples.

The Importance of Good Literature

The importance of good literature for children cannot be stressed enough. The markets are overflowing with hundreds of children's books which are published each year. Some of these books contribute much to a child's pleasure and intellectual growth whereas; some of the books written for children today may even create fears or misconceptions within the child. Arbuthnot (4) has stated that:

Some books broaden a child's horizon and give him new sympathies, and understandings, open his insight into human relationships. Most good stories provide him with a clear standard of right and wrong, show him the conflicts and the ethics of human behavior . . . Other books provoke spontaneous and wholesome laughter. Still other books especially books of poetry have the power of opening the children's eyes to the wonder and beauty of the world. (p. 10)

Good books can serve many purposes in children's lives today.

Arbuthnot (4) stated that:

Certain basic needs are common to most people and most times. A child's needs are at first intensely and narrowly personal, but as he matures, they broaden and become more generally specialized. Struggling to satisfy his needs, the child is forever seeking to maintain the precarious balance between personal happiness and social approval and that is no easy task. Books can help him directly or indirectly. (pp. 2,3)

Arbuthnot (4) summarized some of the needs that books can satisfy:

(1) the need for security--material, emotional, intellectual, spiritual, (2) the need to belong, (3) the need to love and to be loved, (4) the need to achieve--to do or be something, (5) the need to know, (6) the need for change, and (7) the need for esthetic satisfaction. "Good reading can help every young human being to understand and satisfy these basic needs vicariously if not in reality." (p. 11)

Another author, Leland B. Jacobs (45), listed several reasons why children need good literature. "Children need literature, then, for entertainment, for refreshment of spirit, for the exploration of life and living, for guidance, for creative activities, and for the enrichment of language." (p. 8)

Witty (78), in addition, referred to Crosby (19) who had stated children's need for good books in a packet of materials as saying:

All children like all adults, have problems. Books will not by themselves solve children's problems or adults' problems. But books may help . . . A skillful teacher . . . is seeking constantly for ways to help children face problems, see them in perspective, and deal with them adequately. One of these

ways is centered in books and reading.¹

Cianciolo (18) in discussing how children's literature could be used to affect coping behavior said,

These books could be used to enable the reader to recognize his own problems and pressures, find possible solutions for them; if not a solution then a realistic, wholesome view of these problems. These books might also be the source of understanding the behavior of others. (p. 901)

Dinkle (22) stated that,

Stories should, at best, help the child understand his culture and his role therein, and should, at worst, not retard or obstruct his socialization. Ideally, each child should have stories that fit the mental and social growth he has reached, that pertain to the type of general role he may be expected to fulfill, and that help ameliorate his special problems. (p. 287)

Larrick (53) reported literature's contribution to children's growth as:

Through reading he is growing and developing as a person. If you can provide him with continuing delight in reading, you are contributing to his development as a self-sufficient individual. (p. 22)

Frank (32) pointed out that another purpose books serve is to help prepare a child for a predictable situation or to make the child comfortable in a present one as they identify with the characters in the story.

Bailey (11) said,

If we can recognize in a child, personality traits which may later grow into personality problems and if through books we can give him insight, we have been good teaching 'doctors.' If we can throw light upon all the dark crannies of the mind and heart before fear and hate and bias creep in, then we

¹Effort was made to find this publication; however, this investigator along with librarians were unable to locate a publication of Muriel Crosby's writing on "Reading for Human Relations," The Packet, Volume XVI (Winter, 1961-1962).

have gone a long way in educating healthy-minded boys and girls. (p. 40)

Arbuthnot (4) discussed how children need good books to give them something to think about. Also books provide fun and enjoyment which children so much need to relax from some of the pressures placed upon them. Literature serves many purposes in a child's life, and we see how important it is to a child's life to provide a good basic foundation for years ahead.

Good Literature's Contribution to Children

That good literature can contribute much to a child's life has been the topic of many author's writings. A child in his first six years of life is very impressionable. Adams (2) has recognized these years as the formative years in which behavior patterns are being established that will to a great extent affect his whole life. Thus, we can see the importance of giving children worthwhile experiences with literature in their early years.

Leonard (55) stated that:

Development of love of reading is dependent to a great extent on exposure to books in early childhood. If the child finds himself in an environment of books and moreover, is encouraged by an interested person to read books, he will come to realize what wonderful companions books can be to him. (p. 358)

Children develop much of their early tastes for literature through listening experiences. Tooze (74) stated that:

Because so much depends upon the child's first reading experiences this is one of the most critical moments in his growing experience. A wrong start, an unhappy association, may make a tremendous difference in a child's whole life. (p. 63)

Ellis (28) maintains that one major goal in providing good literature for children is to stimulate a love for books and a desire to want

to read books even after the disciplines of school are not with us.

Lindstrom (57) wrote,

Children are never too young to get to know books . . . reading to a child, letting him handle books and look at the pictures, these are things all young children enjoy. Even babies like to look at the pictures in storybooks. And these pleasures actually help lay the foundation for reading on one's own later on. (p. 84)

Need for a Guide to Select Books for Young Children

Schatz (69) wrote,

This endless variety of available picture books complicates the task of evaluation and selection. It is not just the author, illustrator or topic that makes one book more desirable than another. A major consideration is what the book will do for the reader. Will it open new doors, provide needed information, increase interest in reading or further appreciation of good literature? (p. 870)

How can an individual who may be responsible for selecting children's books distinguish between a book that is desirable and one that is undesirable? Inappropriate books may be just as attractive from the outside as appropriate books. Bibliographies of recommended children's books are not always easily accessible to parents. These lists even though available cannot contain listings of all children's books published; therefore, it seems that a guide with certain criteria to evaluate a book would be of value in helping parents select more often the books that would provide the most worthwhile literary experiences for children.

Parents, teachers, and librarians share the responsibility in providing children with literature that will enrich their lives. Children are completely dependent upon others to provide them with good reading material. The selection of the most appropriate and desirable books for

a child is of great importance because such selection can further stimulate his desire and love for books. However the selection of undesirable and inappropriate books can lead to unpleasant consequences such as fears and a lack of interest in reading.

Because so many books are being published today, educators seem to be in agreement that parents need some type of a guide to help them select books more wisely for their children. Many authors and educators have stated why parents need a guide to select children's books. Eakin (25) wrote:

Unfortunately children are not born with inherently good taste in their choice of books. Children do not, on their own accord and without adult guidance tend to choose good books in preference to mediocre or poor ones. They will remember the good ones longer and with greater pleasure, but they will not voluntarily choose them without considerable guidance from some adult in whose judgment they have confidence. (p. ix)

Fallacy in assuming that children's judgment is inherently good and that popularity is an unfailing valid criterion in selecting books has led to a serious situation in the production of good books for children. (p. x)

Weekes (75) commented on the need for a guide by saying:

There are standards to which reading material if worthy of being read, should reach. The dependence on others of the young children who cannot read throws the responsibility on the mothers who will read to him and choose for him. (pp. 16, 17)

Leonard (55) stated: "There are so many books being published today and the world is so crowded that guidance is needed for the best selection to enrich a child's world as far as reading is concerned." (p. 357)

Another writer, Ellis (28) pointed out the need for a guide by saying:

There are a number of good reasons why it is necessary to select books for children, because while so much is available which is of good quality there is even more which is

not and much of this larger section will have a detrimental effect upon its readers. (p. 3)

Heins (41) stated, "A true critical evaluation of children's books can begin only after a sifting has taken place. The responsible adult will soon learn that many books will have to be read, but few will be chosen." (p. 275)

Dinkle (22) summed up his thoughts about a guide by saying,

The basic defect of nursery literature, however, is its overlooking the great influence it has on child development. Although there are some good books on the market and they are occasionally recognized as such, parents, in the absence of well-formulated criteria by which to judge, usually mix the good with the bad, and thus lose the desirable effects that might be achieved. (p. 287)

Fenner (29) emphasized the need for a guide when he wrote, "It is difficult to know, with all the books today, what book appeals to a child. It is hard to remember what we liked or how old we were when we liked it." (p. ix)

Eaton (26) expressed a need for a guide by saying: "Children's books . . . are bought for children by adults; . . . parents and others who are selecting books for children need some thread to guide them through the maze." (p. ix)

Lohrer (59) stated:

In discussing guideposts to children's books, I cannot over-emphasize the powerful influence of the home as an important factor in developing reading tastes and patterns, as well as the habit of reading in our children today We are depriving our children of a heritage they have a right to receive when we fail to provide good books in abundance for our children. (p. 215)

Because many pleasant and worthwhile experiences with books are vital to the growth of children, educators see a need for helping parents to provide only the best by using a guide to select their books.

How, in light of these readings, can we distinguish the difference in books? This then is what inspired Wettig (76) to develop a guide containing nine criteria to help parents and non-professionals to more adequately judge between more desirable and less desirable books for their children.

Assumption

The investigator makes the assumption that the Guide for Selecting Books for the Preschool Child (Three and Four-Year-Olds) developed by Wettig (76) contains the criteria that will aid parents in evaluating books.

Purpose of the Study

This study is based upon Wettig's (76), Heath's (39), and Hollenbeck's (42) studies and their recommendations that the guide be further tested to evaluate its usefulness for parents and non-professionals in selecting books for the young child.

The overall purpose of this study was to further test the effectiveness of Wettig's guide for parents in selecting books for the young child. (Appendix A, p. 48)

Specifically, the purpose was to determine if the guide will be helpful to parents who have children enrolled in a University Child Development Laboratory Program. This segment of the population was not studied by Wettig, Heath, or Hellenbeck's sample, and this investigator was concerned whether the day to day visits influenced the parent's attitude about children's books.

CHAPTER II

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION OF BOOKS

The need for good literature has been pointed out by many different authors. We are living in an age in which children do not have time to spend reading undesirable books that are on the market; there is too much valuable information to learn about to spend time reading questionable literature.

Arbuthnot (9) stated that:

The thing to remember is that there are books waiting to be discovered that will make us laugh or weep and leave us feeling that this is a strange and wonderful world to be explored and loved. Book people help us to understand and enjoy real people of many varieties and make it easier to get along with them happily. After all, in life as in books, many kinds of people and animals are sharing with us these brief joyful moments of being alive. We can know more of them through books. (p. 18)

Wettig (76) in 1961 developed a guide consisting of nine criteria by reviewing the literature that had been written about each and subjected this criteria to professionals who assigned weights to each criterion. Heath (39) in 1963, Niazi (65) in 1963, and Hollenbeck (42) in 1969 submitted further support of the criteria by a later review of the literature and by subjecting the guide to two groups of parents (one with the guide and one group without the guide) who were randomly selected from the parents of four-year-olds in one city.

Wettig's (76) guide contained nine criteria which were: interest, length, content, style of writing, illustrations, extension of child's

knowledge, conclusion, physical characteristics, and ethical soundness. Wettig's (76) definition of each criteria and the supporting literature for each criteria is discussed in this chapter. Table I, p. 11 summarizes the authors and organizations that Wettig (76), Heath (39), Hollenbeck (42), and this investigator found to support these nine criteria. Educators began writing about the need for a guide as early as 1928 and in 1969 this topic still remains prevalent as indicated in more recent writings.

Interest

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. (Wettig, p. 14)

Table I, p. 11, summarizes several authors who supported interest as an important factor to consider when selecting books for children. To a growing child, the experience of the everyday world seems to hold his attention such as concrete ideas about themselves, mother and daddy, their home, animals, weather, and transportation. Young children of three and four enjoy simple stories of familiar events.

All of the foregoing authors expressed the view that for a book to become real to a child he must be interested in it. The views of two more authors are added to support interest as a criterion for selecting books for young children. Leonard (55) stated 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 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)

TABLE I

THE NINE CRITERIA SHOWING AUTHORS AND ORGANIZATIONS'
 AGREEMENT WITH EACH CRITERION
 (Wettig (1961), Heath (1963), Hollenbeck (1968), Hudgins (1969))

Criteria	Names of Authors or Organization	Total Number
1. Interest	Eakin, Langford, Arbuthnot, Larrick, Cappa, Terman and Lima, Weekes, Fenner, ACEI, NANE, Lambert, Dalgliesh, Fisher, Guilfoile, Maddock, Schatz, Leonard	17
2. Length	Fenner, Adams, Arbuthnot, Lambert, Eakin, Smith, Joseph	7
3. Content	Weekes, Langford, Arbuthnot, Frank, Bacmeister, Baruch, Abu Nasr, Mitchell, Tooze, Dalgliesh, NANE, ACEI, Lambert, Read, Freeman, Fisher, Eakin, Dinkel, Guilfoile, Huck, Willsher, Dawson	22
4. Style	Langford, Adams, Larrick, Dalgliesh, Weekes, Fenner, Arbuthnot, Lambert, NANE, Maddock, Dinkel, Guilfoile, Huck, Schatz	14
5. Illustrations	Langford, Larrick, Frank, Dalgliesh, Eakin, Lambert, NANE, ACEI, Heffernan, Fenner, Leonard, Freeman, Huck, Schatz, Field, Joseph, Baker, Rudisill	18
6. Knowledge	Arbuthnot, Frank, Fenner, Children's Bureau, Lambert, NANE, ACEI, Heffernan, Dawson, Ellinger, Guilfoile, Schatz, McManus	14
7. Conclusion	Adams, Arbuthnot, Guilfoile, Frank, Dawson, Lohrer	6
8. Ethically Sound	Weekes, Duff, Larrick, Browman and Templin, Dalgliesh, Arbuthnot, Maddock, Eakin, Guilfoile, McManus, Huck, Smith	12
9. Physical Characteristics	Langford, Frank, Weekes, Children's Bureau, Lambert, Heffernan, Arbuthnot, McManus	8

The everyday world for children of today may also find young children interested in outer space, underwater exploration, and electricity. All of the above authors agreed that children need many experiences both real and vicarious to understand the myriad of ideas that make up our world. Even though our society is changing and the interests of children are broadening, human nature still demands the same basic needs and children need a background of reality before they can successfully cope with make-believe.

Langford (52) also reported 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)

Length

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. (Wettig, p. 15)

Table I, p. 11, indicates several authors as supporting the criterion of length as important in selecting books for children. These authors agreed that children should not be expected to sit still and listen to a story for a period longer than fifteen minutes. Stories for the very young children should be brief, simple, and should hold their attention. However, even though children should not be forced to listen to all stories, it is very important that children be exposed to good books a little at a time because it is through these experiences that young children will develop a love for books and a quest for knowledge through books later in life.

Another author, Joseph (47), said this concerning the length of books for children: "Faced with perhaps the heaviest of developmental tasks is the preschool child whose literary experiences are just beginning. Because of his short attention span, his books must be brief." (p. 32)

Content

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. (Wettig, p. 18)

Twenty writers and two organizations (Table I, p. 11) agreed that the content of children's books should be carefully considered when selecting children's books. The theme of the story or what the book is about is the most important criterion in judging whether a book is worthwhile for the child or not. What a child reads or hears has an influence upon him--his thinking, feeling, and learning. The content should be socially sound for the story can help him in many areas of growth.

The fairy tale was given lengthy discussions among the authors. Each author supported the fact that fairy tales were better to leave until the child was older. Some writers recommended around the age of eight as the best time for fairy tales. Bacmeister (10) stated in a very precise manner that children enjoyed stories that contained more familiarity than strangeness. "The whole charm of fantasy lies in the way it breaks all the rules of logic and probability and that it is obviously no fun until you know the rules." (p. 10)

Willsher (77) said the following concerning fantasy:

Very often new pupils arrive at my school with established fears of giants and of wolves. Giants, it seems to me, are too real to the little boy or girl. The idea of an extremely large man with an extremely horrid nature is not, to them, fantastic and is just the subject for nightmares. So I would always say 'cut out giants.' Wolves are what you might call possible under certain conditions. 'Red Riding Hood' is out at this age; if a girl on a kind errand has such terrifying adventures, it is logical of the child to fear such things for himself 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. (pp. 90, 91)

In addition to the above writers, Baruch (13) 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 the pretending but in believing that what we pretend is true. (p. 238)

Dawson (21) wrote that when children understand the rules such as that animals cannot talk, it is fun for children to listen to the story. Some imagination is pleasurable but a story with too many confusing ideas needs to be postponed until a later age.

Children could very likely confuse what is real and unreal if stories of fantasy are read to the child when they are too young. Read (66) stated, "The real world is certainly sufficiently wonderful to stimulate the imagination of any preschool child." (p. 72) Educators and parents must consider the effects of permitting a child to become involved with unreal stories. For some, these books will have no significant effect but for others it could result in a dislike for all books. Books give children something to think about, and that is the

reason for carefully selecting the story content to be presented to children.

Style of Writing

The style of writing of the book should be suitable for the child in the following ways: The 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. The style of writing which includes 'silly' sounding words would be appropriate; however, slang and dialect should be avoided. (Wettig, p. 20)

In Wettig's (76), Heath's (39), Hollenbeck's (42), and this investigator's review of the literature fourteen authors were reported to be in agreement concerning style of writing in children's books. (See Table I, p. 11.) These writers feel that good children's books are written in such a way that the literature can be distinguished just as literature is for older people. The book should be written using good grammar and accuracy in writing.

Schatz (69) stated,

Language skills improve as children read and listen to good literature. These books satisfy children's desires to identify with characters, take part in adventures, and engage in make-believe. They extend children's interests, increase their vocabulary, and enable them to communicate more effectively. (p. 873)

Young children seem to delight in repetition of sounds and word jingles. Many times children will be heard using phrases quoted in books. These phrases have a smooth flowing quality that is pleasing to the ear. Larrick (53) reported that one of the best ways to test a book for style of writing was to read it aloud yourself. If it flows rhythmically to your ears--chances are it will appeal to children.

Illustrations

If the book is to be suitably illustrated 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 the pictures should be related enough to real life situations and experiences; so the child will not be confused. (Wettig, p. 21)

Several authors reported to be in agreement about illustrations in children's books. (See Table I, p. 11.) These writers agreed that the manner in which a book was illustrated was a very important criterion to be evaluated when selecting books for children. Children usually prefer pictures that are simple, clear and bright. Children demand correctness of the illustrations and thus the reading and illustrations should help support each other simultaneously.

In addition to the above writers, this investigator found three authors to support the above findings. Rudisill (68) 1952 supported this point by saying that children prefer pictures of realistic color, of great reality, and pictures that tell the story of the content.

Another writer, Schatz (69), stated,

Appreciation of the arts may originate from experiences with good music, live drama, art galleries, and museums. When it is not possible for children to have such first hand experiences, vicarious ones may be substituted. (p. 872)

Baker (12) 1963 further explained that the illustrations in children's books should reveal the best in art work because through this children learn to appreciate the lovely and beautiful. Also children develop a taste for art work.

Another author, Joseph (47), wrote,

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 the books to be well chosen. Unconsciously he develops a taste

for the worthwhile from or through carefully selected books.
(p. 32)

Knowledge

A 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. (Wettig, p. 23)

Table I, p. 11, indicates fourteen writers to support knowledge as being an important consideration when selecting books for children. Books serve many purposes in the lives of children some of which are to extend information, to present new knowledge, and to serve as a source of pleasure and fun. This investigator also found in the review of literature an additional author who supported this point of extending knowledge. Schatz (69) in 1967 stated, "Once children have discovered the information available to them in books, they often seem self-propelled in their quest for knowledge." (p. 872) This not only means intellectual knowledge but it also means social knowledge such as making friends or learning ways to keep friends. Much knowledge can be gained from merely looking at picture books. When children do not have the opportunity to have first hand experiences, accurate vicarious experiences could be substituted. Heath (39) reported that when there is humor in children's books it must be direct and obvious and should be based on familiar events.

Children are not too young to need reference books. Books serve as sources of information. Fenner (29) wrote,

Many times children will ask questions such as: "Do squirrels come from eggs?" In previous years parents would answer their questions if they knew the answers and if not they evaded them. However, today parents send them to books to get their own answers. (p. 4)

Through experiences with books children learn methods of problem solving and they learn how to develop some independence in seeking answers to their problems. Also a lack of knowledge is a good reason to look up an answer in a book.

Heffernan (40) stated that, "In this industrial and scientific age, it is especially necessary to have books that help the children understand the world in which he lives and his relation to it." (p. 119) Through opportunities for literature experiences children soon begin to realize the important role that books should play in their lives.

Conclusion

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. (Wettig, p. 23)

Six authors indicated in Table I, p. 11, that children's stories should have a satisfying conclusion. The story does not have to teach a lesson but it should solve the problem and leave the children with a fulfilling ending.

This investigator found that Frank (32), Dawson (21), and Lohrer (59), too, supported the above findings. They agreed that a story with action and some suspense was enlightening to a child but a satisfying conclusion was essential to give a child a sense of security.

Ethically Sound

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. (Wettig, p. 24)

Twelve writers as seen in Table I, p. 11, all expressed that

children's books should advocate upright standards of thinking and living. Arbuthnot (4) felt that books, many times, help children distinguish between right and wrong, and that attitudes and concepts can be derived from books. The ideas children form from books should be acquired from socially acceptable ones. Eakin (24) believed that "The content should meet modern standards of social and ethical values." (p. xi) It was also reported by Heath (39) that Maddock (60) felt books should contain a viewpoint that was moral, but should not moralize.

Smith (72) further stated,

We should put into their hands only the books worthy of them, the books of honesty, integrity, and vision--the books on which they can grow. The more we know about books, the better able we are to fulfill this noble aim. (p. 146)

Physical Characteristics

The book should have a strong and attractive binding with pages of durable paper, large clear printing and a size easy for the child to handle. (Wettig, p. 26)

Table I, p. 11, indicates several writers who all supported this point of physical characteristics as one of importance. When children are being read to they enjoy turning the pages or touching the pictures. Thus because children's books come in contact with many hands, the book should be sturdily constructed with heavy paper and strong binding. Several authors agreed that many of children's first books should be made of cloth pages. Also the book should be one that is easy for the child to handle.

Since this study was to test further the guide developed by Wettig (76) and supported by Heath (39), Niazi (65), and Hollenbeck (42), the

review of literature for this study was limited to the nine criteria for the guide.

CHAPTER III

PROCEDURE AND METHOD FOR DEVELOPMENT OF THE GUIDE

Wettig (76) in 1961 identified from the review of literature nine criteria for a guide for parents to use in selecting young children's books. To determine weighted values for the nine criteria, Wettig (76) consulted seven professionally trained nursery school teachers and requested that they give a per cent weight for each of the nine criteria indicating the value they thought each held in relating to each other based on 100 per cent. The per cent weights of these teachers' judgments were averaged and this became the weighted score for each criterion. (Appendix A, p. 48)

Wettig (76) found that when the weighted scale was tested and used on a number of books, the criterion for content was not large enough to discriminate between recommended books and non-recommended books. In consultation with specialists the assigned weights were revised and later the revision of the guide was presented to seven nursery school teachers along with two books to test whether the per cent weight assigned to each criteria would rate books in harmony with early childhood education specialists' judgment of acceptable or unacceptable books. The specialists felt the scale did discriminate. Wettig (76) stated that:

The revised weighted scores for the criteria were accepted by the majority of the teachers, and the investigator used their value judgments in designing the final guide to be used by mothers of four-year-olds. (p. 33)

Heath (39) in her study also reported that the nursery school teachers agreed upon the revised scale and the following assigned weights:

- (1) Interest - 15 per cent; (2) Length - 5 per cent;
- (3) Content - 40 per cent; (4) Style - 5 per cent;
- (5) Illustrations - 15 per cent; (6) Knowledge - 5 per cent;
- (7) Conclusions - 5 per cent; (8) Ethically Sound - 5 per cent;
- (9) Physical Characteristics - 5 per cent. (Wettig, p. 31)

In order to use the assigned weights for the criteria, Wettig (76) used Good and Scates (35) method for rating scales in which the qualitative categories were defined by taking the assigned weight of each criterion and dividing it into five parts. The qualitative terms were assigned values in relation to the weighted per cent for each criterion. (See Appendix B, p. 50.)

As a result of this procedure, Wettig (76) was able to use the terms of Excellent, Good, Fair, Poor, and Unacceptable in her guide. The five qualitative terms were defined in the Letter of Instruction for Parents who used the guide. They are as follows: Excellent - means the criterion is completely exemplified; Good - means the criterion is exemplified to a high degree; Fair - means the criterion is exemplified to a moderate degree; Poor - means the criterion is exemplified to a low degree; Unacceptable - means the criterion is not exemplified in any way. (Appendix B, p. 50)

These terms without the definitions were used on the Letter of Instructions to Parents who rated the books without the guide. These terms later gave a common basis for assigning the scores to a book rated without the guide. For example, a parent who rated a book "good" without the guide would receive a score of 80 when transferred to a

score sheet which was the total points for the rating of a good book with a guide.

The specialists in Early Childhood Education placed higher value on these three criteria: Interest, Content, and Illustrations than the other criteria in rating the books for children. Because of their importance, the teachers agreed on higher assigned weights for these criteria. Wettig (76) reported that the criteria of Interest, Content, and Illustrations then controlled the assigning of books into the classification of Excellent, Good, Fair, Poor, and Unacceptable. For an example, Wettig (76) stated,

A book which received a score of Unacceptable in the criteria of Interest, Content, and Illustrations and all other weighted points ranging from Unacceptable to Excellent, it would never rate above the Poor classifications. (p. 35)

Wettig (76) stated:

The point of a scale of 100 percent that would separate the 'Good' books from the 'Excellent' books was found by totaling the points under the 'Good' classification for Interest, Content, and Illustrations plus an excellent rating in every other criteria. This procedure gave a score of 86. Thus the score of 86 or above was required for a book to rate Excellent. This made an interval of 15 points for the Excellent classification. (p. 34)

Table II shows the total points of value each qualitative term caused the book to merit. Wettig (76) continued by saying that this procedure might seem subjective in method, but that it merely pointed out the high value early childhood education teachers placed on the three criteria of interest, content, and illustrations.

TABLE II
 PERCENTILE RANKING TO INDICATE THE CLASSIFICATION
 OF BOOKS BY THE FIVE QUALITATIVE TERMS
 (Wettig, p. 34)

Qualitative Terms	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Fair</u>	<u>Poor</u>	<u>Unacceptable</u>
Percentile Ranking	100-86	85-66	65-46	45-26	25-0
Interval	15	20	20	20	25

Selection of Books

This investigator used the same titles of books Heath used for her sample. This investigator felt that if possible the same books that Heath used in her study should be used so that a larger compilation of findings could be made using a larger sample of subjects.

From Heath's (39) research the investigator was able to secure the titles of the books used for her study. However, some of the traditional fairy tales could not be obtained and copies of these books were found in local stores. (Appendix A, p. 47) Thus, the editions of these books were somewhat varied from the versions that were used in Heath's study.

Findings From Previous Studies

Wettig (76) used a set of twelve books to test the value of the guide. Two groups of eight mothers rated the books--one group with a

guide and one group without a guide and then these ratings were compared to a group of nursery school teacher's ratings. Wettig's sample was small, but her findings pointed to the support of the guide; however, she did not treat her data statistically. Her major findings were:

- (1) The nursery school teachers tended to rate the books on the recommended list high and the non-recommended list low.
- (2) Two-thirds of the mother's ratings with the guide were more like the teacher's ratings than were the mother's ratings for the same books without the guide.
- (3) The mothers in both groups tended to rate the books that were not on the recommended lists higher than the teachers rated the non-recommended books.
- (4) The mothers who did not use a guide, more often rated the recommended books in a lower classification than the mothers who used the guide.
- (5) The eight nursery school teachers who rated the selected books tended to place the twelve books into the same classification as the two raters had placed them. (Wettig, p. 46)

Niazi, May, 1963 (65), used Wettig's (76) guide on Arabic literature for young children and reported that the guide was useful in evaluating Arabic literature.

Heath (39) August, 1963, found support for the guide. She used a total of 40 mothers of four-year-old children randomly selected from the 1962 school census of Stillwater, Oklahoma. These mothers were divided into two groups--one group of twenty mothers who used the guide in rating the books (Group I) and another group (Group II) which consisted of mothers who did not use a guide in rating books. These two groups rated eight books which had been selected from a larger group of books by early childhood education specialists. The eight books were determined by selection of the specialists using both high and low scored books to provide a sample which would give opportunity for the guide to discriminate.

Heath's (39) findings were as follows:

(1) The teachers tended to rate the books more often in the classifications of Excellent, Good, and Fair. That is the teachers tended to rate the books on the recommended list high and the non-recommended books low. (2) The mothers in both Groups I and II tended to rate the books on the recommended list more like the teachers; however, a larger per cent of the mothers in Group I (using the guide) rated more of these books in the Excellent and Good classifications than did the mothers in Group II (without the guide). (3) Seventy-five to eighty-five per cent of the mothers in Group II (without the guide) rated the three books not on the recommended list (Little Red Riding Hood, Sleeping Beauty, The Three Bears) in the classification of Excellent, and Good; while a range of fifteen to thirty per cent of the mothers in Group I (with the guide) rated the three non-recommended books in the Excellent and Good classifications. (4) The guide helped the Group I mothers to discriminate between recommended and non-recommended books; however, the guide did not help them discriminate between Good and Excellent books. (5) The mothers with the guide rated the non-recommended books more often like the teacher's ratings; which is further support that the guide discriminated between the recommended and non-recommended books. (pp. 26-28)

Hollenbeck (42) in May, 1969, also tested the guide. Her data were statistically analyzed and revealed that:

(1) Mothers using the guide to rate the books, as well as mother's ratings without the guide were significantly like the teachers' ratings at the .05 level of confidence. However, the parents using the guide had a higher correlation with the teachers' ratings than did the mothers without the guide. (2) There was a significant correlation between book ratings of all three groups.

Wettig (76), Heath (39), and Hollenbeck (42) recommended that more research be conducted to test the reliability and validity of the guide for rating books. Upon this recommendation this investigator used the same guide developed by Wettig (76) and the eight books selected by Heath (39) to test another sample's rating with and without the guide. This investigator followed the same general procedure as Wettig (76), Heath (39), and Hollenbeck (42); however, the sample of the present investigation was comprised exclusively of parents of children who were

enrolled in a university laboratory school. No parent who had a child enrolled in a nursery school was included in Wettig's (76), Heath's (39), or Hollenbeck's (42) sample.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

The purpose of this study was to test the guide for the selection of books for young children which was developed by Wettig (76); to achieve this purpose the following steps were followed: (1) selection of the sample, (2) the selection of the specialists, (3) collection of the data, and (4) treatment and analysis of the data. Discussion of these four steps will follow in this order.

Description of Sample

Parents of children enrolled in preschool laboratories were used for two reasons: (1) the investigator wanted to subject the guide to parents who had some contact with a University Child Development Laboratory since it was likely that day to day visits by parents in the program might reflect their exposure to good books for young children.

(2) This sampling was unique since studies of Wettig (76), Heath (39), and Hollenbeck (42) eliminated all parents if the child had at any time been enrolled in an early childhood education program.

An equal number of parents of the children enrolled in the Child Development Laboratories at Oklahoma State University was used for rating books with a guide; with an equal number rating the same books without a guide. The ages of the children of the parents who rated the books were comparable to the ages of the subjects which Wettig (76),

Heath (39), and Hollenbeck (42) used in previous studies. The number of school sessions in which the parents had had a child enrolled in the early childhood education program ranged from one to six sessions; a session being a semester or a summer term.

Some of the parents had children in two laboratories at the same time but were asked to participate in the study once. Parents with the guide will hereafter be designated as Group I and parents without the guide will be designated as Group II. Parents' names for this sampling were secured from the Oklahoma State University's Laboratory directories which are printed at the beginning of each semester. Alternate names were selected for Group I by taking odd numbers on one directory and even numbers on another. This procedure was reversed for Group II.

Some of the parents in both groups did not participate in the study due to lack of time or other personal reasons, which in the end accounted for twenty-four parents who used the guide and eighteen who did not use the guide. In order to have an equal number of participants who rated the books with the guide and without a guide, all the parent's names who used the guide were typed and put into a container. An individual (not the investigator) drew six names from the twenty-four names and the ratings by these parents were discarded. The final sample consisted of eighteen parents' ratings with the guide and eighteen parents without the guide.

No attempt was made by this investigator when collecting or analyzing the data to match the parent's level of education, background, or the ordinal position of the three or four-year-old child as was done in Hollenbeck's (42) study. The investigator assumed that in this University Laboratory Group that education and socioeconomic background

would be rather homogeneous, and that the ordinal position of the child would not affect the results of the study.

Description of Specialists

Nine professionally trained laboratory teachers were asked to rate the eight books used for the research. All the teachers who rated the books had at least a Master's Degree in Child Development and or Early Childhood Education and one teacher had a PhD in this field. Teaching experience ranged from one year to twenty-five years.

Collection of the Data

The parents (mother or father) of each child enrolled in the University laboratory school were contacted either by phone or asked personally if they would be interested in cooperating in a study to test a guide to help parents in selecting books for three and four-year-old children. Six of the parents were not able to participate because of lack of time or other personal reasons. If the parents said they were willing to help, then a date convenient for them to read and rate the books was scheduled and the books were taken to the parents by the investigator with the instructions for rating the books.

When the books were delivered to the parents, the investigator gave verbal instructions as well as the letter of instructions. The parents who were not using the guide to rate the books were given a sheet of instructions and were asked to read and then rate each book by writing on the page beside the title what value they thought each book merited--Excellent, Good, Fair, Poor, or Unacceptable. (Appendix B, p. 52)

The parents who used the guide were given a letter of instructions and the guide for rating each book. These parents were asked to identify the book they were rating by writing the name of the book at the top of each guide and then to check their value judgment in the appropriate square on the guide that best fit each criteria. (Appendix B, pp. 50 and 51)

The parents were allowed to keep the books in their homes as long as was needed to evaluate them. On the average the books were in each home about two days.

Analysis of the Data

The investigator employed the following steps to analyze the data: (1) tabulation of scores for each book rated by teachers, Group I, and Group II parents, (2) treatment of data by Spearman Rank Correlation Coefficient, and (3) treatment of data by the Kendall Coefficient of Concordance.

To treat the data it was necessary for the investigator to convert the qualitative terms to scores so that the ratings for all books could be compared. Group I's ratings (those who used the guide) were tabulated by transposing the check of what they felt each criteria merited to a score as described in Chapter III (p. 24). The assigned values of the guide were used to determine the total scores for Group I, while Group II's scores were transposed from a general rating to comparable scores. Ex: A book rated "good" was converted to a score of 80 since this was the total points for the "good" classification.

Data were analyzed by the Spearman Rank Correlation Coefficient to compare the correlation of rating scores between the Specialists and

Group I parents, and Specialists and Group II parents; the results are presented in Table III.

TABLE III

SPEARMAN RANK CORRELATION COEFFICIENTS REFLECTING RELATIONSHIP
BETWEEN BOOK RATINGS OF PARENTS WITH GUIDE AND PARENTS
WITHOUT GUIDE TO BOOK RATINGS OF TEACHERS

Groups	Spearman Rank Correlation Coefficient	Level of Significance
Teachers and Parents With Guide	.946	.01
Teachers and Parents Without Guide	.718	.05

Both groups rated the books much like the specialists whether or not they had the guide. However, when comparing the two groups the teachers and parents who used the guide had a somewhat higher correlation (.01) than the teachers and the parents who did not use the guide (.05).

The data when treated by the Kendall Coefficient of Concordance indicated likeness for the three groups at the .02 level of significance.

In summary, the findings from the foregoing analysis are:

(1) Both groups rated the books much like the specialists whether or not they had the guide.

(2) The book ratings of the parents who used the guide correlated

at a higher significance level (.01 level) with the ratings of the specialists than did the ratings of the parents not using the guide (.05 level).

(3) There was a significant correlation at the .02 level of significance between the book ratings of all three groups.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY

The purpose of this study was to further test the guide developed by Wettig (76) for the selection of books for preschool children. The sample that was studied included nine teachers who were trained in early childhood education and thirty-six parents who had three or four-year-old children enrolled in the University Child Development Laboratories at Oklahoma State University. Group I included eighteen parents who used the guide and Group II included eighteen parents who did not use the guide. The data were treated by using the Spearman Rank Correlation Coefficient and the Kendall Coefficient of Concordance.

The major findings of this study were:

(1) Both groups rated the books much like the specialists whether or not they used the guide.

(2) There was a significant correlation at the .01 level between the book ratings of Group I parents (those who used the guide) and the teachers; whereas, the book ratings of Group II parents (those who did not use the guide) correlated with the teacher ratings at a lower significance level (.05 level).

(3) There was a significant correlation at the .02 level of significance between the book ratings of the three groups.

Discussion of Results

The investigator felt that the high correlation of both Group I parents (those who used the guide) and Group II parents (those who did not use the guide) with the ratings of the teachers, could have been the result of comparable education and the effect of both groups of parents' being indirectly exposed to a well selected program of literature for young children in the Oklahoma State University Child Development Laboratories. This might imply that since the groups of parents were so similar, the higher correlation between ratings of parents with the guide and the teachers' ratings would seem to be due to the use of the guide.

The findings of this study were similar to previous studies conducted in that those parents who used the guide had a higher correlation with the specialists' ratings than those parents who did not use the guide.

This study differed from the research of Wettig (76), Heath (39), and Hollenbeck (42) because the sample tested was different in that the previous investigators eliminated any parents who had a child enrolled in the Oklahoma State University Child Development Laboratories at any time. This study was comprised exclusively of parents who had children enrolled in the Oklahoma State University Child Development Laboratories. Also in Wettig's (76) and Heath's (39) studies the data were not treated statistically as in Hollenbeck's study (42) and in this investigation.

Recommendations

In view of the previous research and from the review of literature this investigator concurs that a guide is needed to help adults select books for children. A thorough review of the literature reinforced how important literature is to a young child and that a child's first experiences with books tend to have an effect on his later attitude toward literature.

Concerning recommendations for the revision of the guide, it is suggested that the guide for selecting young children's books be condensed in accordance with Hollenbeck's (42) recommendation into four categories as follows: (1) Interest, (2) Content, (3) Illustrations, and (4) Physical Characteristics. However, this investigator suggests modifications of the weighted values which Hollenbeck (42) in her suggested guide revision assigned to the criteria of illustrations and physical characteristics.

In May, 1969, Hollenbeck (42) suggested a revision of Wettig's (76) guide for the selection of books for young children but did not validate it. This was achieved by condensing the nine criteria into four main categories. Following is a discussion of some of the reasons for such a condensation.

Interest - The criterion of interest and the criterion of length were combined to comprise the criterion of interest. Interest and length seem to be interrelated because for a book to catch and hold a child's attention he must be interested in it. Then, too, the length of the book must be within the child's attention span. The investigator supports Hollenbeck's (42) suggestion that the points for each of the two criteria be totaled to give an excellent rating of 20 with

intervals of five for the good, fair, and poor classifications with an unacceptable receiving a zero. (See Table IV, p. 38.)

Content - The second criterion was content. Under the heading of content several other criteria were combined because these criteria were all related to content. The criteria of extension of a child's knowledge, conclusion, being ethically sound, and style of writing all were grouped under the category of content since all of these criteria made up the content. Again the investigator supports the suggestion by Hollenbeck (42) that the points for each criterion be totaled to make a weight of 60 for an excellent rating and intervals of 15 for the other classifications. (See Table IV, p. 38.)

Illustrations - Illustrations of the book represented the third category. Illustrations in a child's book are very important because a child reads the story by the illustrations. The illustrations in a child's book should be large pictures that are clear in color, accurate, appealing to the child, free from too much detail, related to real life situations, and appear frequently enough to illustrate the story. This investigator recommends that the weighted value for this criterion remain the same as Wettig (76) developed in the original guide, which is the one used for this study. According to Wettig (76), the weighted value of an excellent rating concerning the criterion of illustrations would have a value of 15 with intervals of three for the remainder of the categories. (See Table IV, p. 38.)

It was suggested in Hollenbeck's (42) revision of the guide that the criterion of illustrations be given less weight and be given equal weight with the criterion of physical characteristics. (See Appendix D, p. 59.) It is the view of this investigator that the criterion of

TABLE IV

SUGGESTED MODIFICATIONS OF HOLLENBECK'S REVISION OF GUIDE

		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.	20	15	10	5	0
	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.	60	45	30	15	0
	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.	15	12	9	6	0
	Related to real life situations.					
	Appear frequently enough to illustrate the story.					
IV. PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS of the Book Should:						
	Have a durable binding.	5	4	3	2	0
	Have large print.					
	Be easy to handle.					

illustrations is of more importance than the criterion of physical characteristics and therefore should be given more weight.

Physical Characteristics - This investigator suggests that this criteria is more important but does not affect the value of the content and thus should maintain the score of five for an excellent book with intervals of one for the remaining classifications as was assigned by Wettig's (76) study. This criteria emphasizes the need to have a durable binding, to have large print, and to be easy to handle. (See Table IV, p. 38.)

This investigator suggests that further research to validate the guide be initiated and that a larger and more varied sample be utilized to determine the usefulness of the shortened revised guide with parents of different cultural backgrounds.

This investigator also suggests that the list of books to be rated be revised because five of the eight books were widely acclaimed to be very good books and thus it might have been easy to distinguish this. It is suggested that a list of books be selected at random from easily accessible places to buy books such as at super-markets, and variety stores. Also, it is recommended that the books be again rated by specialists and two groups--one group with the guide and one group without the guide to determine if there are any differences among the groups.

In conclusion, this investigator hopes that the studies that have already been conducted and the recommendations that have been made will stimulate further research which will result in the development of an improved guide for the selection of books for young children.

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APPENDIX A

THE EIGHT BOOKS EVALUATED BY TEACHERS,
GROUP I PARENTS AND GROUP II PARENTS

Titles of Books

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Finders Keepers | William Lipkind and
Nicolas Mordvinoff |
| 2. Horton Hatches the Egg | Dr. Seuss |
| 3. Little Red Riding Hood | Old Fairy Tale |
| 4. Make Way for Ducklings | Robert McCloskey |
| 5. Mike Mulligan and His
Steam Shovel | Virginia Lee Burton |
| 6. Sleeping Beauty | Old Fairy Tale |
| 7. The Three Bears | Old Fairy Tale |
| 8. Timothy Turtle | Alice V. Davis |

A GUIDE FOR SELECTING BOOKS FOR THE PRESCHOOL CHILD
(THREE AND FOUR-YEAR-OLD)
(Wettig (76), p. 56)

	R A T I N G S C A L E				
	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Unacceptable
<p>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.</p>	15	12	9	6	3
<p>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.</p>	5	4	3	2	1
<p>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.</p>	40	32	24	16	8
<p>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.</p>	5	4	3	2	1
<p>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.</p>	15	12	9	6	3
<p>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.</p>	5	4	3	2	1
<p>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.</p>	5	4	3	2	1
<p>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.</p>	5	4	3	2	1
<p>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.</p>	5	4	3	2	1

APPENDIX B

LETTER AND INSTRUCTIONS FOR JUDGING THE BOOKS*

Dear Parent of a Nursery School Child:

I am in the process of developing a guide which could be used by parents to rate books for preschoolers. This guide needs to be tested by a group of parents who will rate the eight books provided.

Below are the directions to help you use the guides which are to be found on the attached sheet, "A Guide for Selecting Books for the Preschool Child."

Your help and cooperation in this research is appreciated.

Sincerely yours,

Maxine Hudgins

Maxine Hudgins
Graduate Student, Department of Family
Relations and Child Development

DIRECTIONS

1. Please read each book carefully.
2. Please read each question and the description of the question on the attached sheet, "A Guide for Selecting Books for the Preschool Child."
3. Please rate each book by placing a check mark in the space provided which most nearly represents your judgment of this characteristic of the book.

EXAMPLERATING SCALE

<u>EXCELLENT:</u>	<u>GOOD:</u>	<u>FAIR:</u>	<u>POOR:</u>	<u>UNACCEPTABLE:</u>
means the criterion is <u>completely</u> exemplified.	means the criterion is exemplified to a <u>high</u> degree.	means the criterion is exemplified to a <u>moderate</u> degree.	means the criterion is exemplified to a <u>low</u> degree.	means the criterion is <u>not</u> exemplified in any way.

*From "The Development of a Guide for the Selection of Books for Preschool Children" by Lola Wettig, M.S., 1961, p. 64.

A GUIDE FOR SELECTING BOOKS FOR THE PRESCHOOL CHILD
(THREE AND FOUR-YEAR-OLD)
(Wettig (76), p. 56)

	R A T I N G S C A L E				
	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Unacceptable
<p>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.</p>					
<p>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.</p>					
<p>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.</p>					
<p>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.</p>					
<p>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.</p>					
<p>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.</p>					
<p>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.</p>					
<p>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.</p>					
<p>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.</p>					

LETTER AND INSTRUCTIONS TO PARENTS OF NURSERY SCHOOL CHILDREN*

Dear Parent of a Nursery School Child:

I am in the process of collecting information from parents that will help in forming a guide for the selection of books for preschool children.

Because you are the parents of a nursery school child you have been chosen to participate in this study.

Please read the eight books which I have given you. Beside the title of the books, which are listed below, write the word Excellent, Good, Fair, Poor, or Unacceptable as you feel the book merits. You may list as many as you feel under each classification; that is if you feel all the books fall into one classification feel free to place them there.

Sincerely yours,

Maxine Hudgins

Maxine Hudgins
Graduate Student, Department of Family
Relations and Child Development

Title of Books

1. Finders Keepers
2. Horton Hatches the Egg
3. Little Red Riding Hood
4. Make Way for Ducklings
5. Mike Mulligan and His Steam Shovel
6. Sleeping Beauty
7. Timothy Turtle
8. The Three Bears

*Adapted from "The Development of a Guide for the Selection of Books for Preschool Children" by Lola Wettig, M.S., 1961, p. 66.

APPENDIX C

TABLE V

GROUP I PARENTS' EVALUATIONS OF THE EIGHT BOOKS ACCORDING TO WETTIG'S GUIDE

Raters	Finders Keepers	Horton Hatches the Egg	Little Red Riding Hood	Make Way for Ducklings	Mike Mulligan and His Steam Shovel	Sleeping Beauty	Timothy Turtle	The Three Bears
1.	65	79	75	90	82	70	78	80
2.	90	74	45	91	69	58	65	88
3.	97	89	49	81	95	58	47	96
4.	85	78	42	97	99	63	71	61
5.	96	61	28	96	92	37	55	64
6.	93	99	94	97	80	86	65	78
7.	98	96	99	95	97	76	91	93
8.	72	95	75	98	84	89	79	95
9.	100	98	20	98	100	26	63	79
10.	76	45	80	77	52	63	30	63
11.	84	88	81	82	91	49	69	72
12.	71	83	74	80	75	73	82	94
13.	96	97	74	95	99	87	79	88
14.	83	99	91	100	100	78	73	93
15.	94	82	70	92	87	61	64	80
16.	79	90	60	99	99	81	85	75
17.	71	65	60	90	89	73	77	81
18.	84	100	79	84	86	73	82	91
Total	1534	1528	1196	1642	1576	1201	1265	1471

TABLE VI

GROUP II PARENTS' EVALUATIONS OF THE EIGHT BOOKS WITHOUT THE GUIDE

Raters	Finders Keepers	Horton Hatches the Egg	Little Red Riding Hood	Make Way for Ducklings	Mike Mulligan and His Steam Shovel	Sleeping Beauty	Timothy Turtle	The Three Bears
1.	80	80	20	100	100	40	100	60
2.	80	100	60	100	100	60	40	60
3.	100	100	40	100	80	80	40	100
4.	60	100	20	100	60	80	40	100
5.	80	80	40	100	100	20	40	80
6.	80	100	20	100	60	60	60	80
7.	80	100	20	100	100	60	100	60
8.	20	100	40	100	100	80	80	80
9.	80	100	20	100	100	60	80	80
10.	100	100	40	100	100	60	80	40
11.	60	100	60	80	60	60	60	80
12.	60	80	40	100	80	60	20	100
13.	80	100	80	100	100	60	80	100
14.	80	60	80	100	100	80	80	80
15.	60	100	100	100	80	60	60	80
16.	60	100	80	100	100	100	80	80
17.	100	100	80	100	100	100	80	60
18.	80	100	80	100	80	100	40	80
Total	1340	1700	920	1780	1600	1230	1160	1400

TABLE VII

THE TEACHERS' EVALUATIONS OF THE EIGHT BOOKS ACCORDING TO WETTIG'S GUIDE

Raters	Finders Keepers	Horton Hatches the Egg	Little Red Riding Hood	Make Way for Ducklings	Mike Mulligan and His Steam Shovel	Sleeping Beauty	Timothy Turtle	The Three Bears
1.	80	100	20	100	100	20	100	40
2.	80	60	20	100	100	20	100	20
3.	100	80	20	100	100	20	80	20
4.	80	80	20	100	100	20	80	60
5.	80	60	40	100	100	20	20	40
6.	100	80	40	100	100	20	80	60
7.	80	60	40	100	100	20	60	40
8.	100	60	20	100	100	20	60	80
9.	80	100	40	100	100	40	80	80
Total	780	680	260	900	900	200	660	440

TABLE VIII

TEACHERS', GROUP I PARENTS' AND GROUP II PARENTS' RANKINGS OF THE EIGHT BOOKS
(N = 8)

Groups	Finders Keepers	Horton Hatches the Egg	Little Red Riding Hood	Make Way for Ducklings	Mike Mulligan and His Steam Shovel	Sleeping Beauty	Timothy Turtle	The Three Bears
Teachers (9)	3	4	7	1.5	1.5	8	5	6
Parents with Guide (18)	3	4	8	1	2	7	6	5
Parents without Guide (18)	5	2	8	1	3	6	7	4

APPENDIX D

TABLE IX
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR GUIDE REVISION*

		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.	20	15	10	5	0
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 and sentence structure. Give a wholesome outlook on life. Be length for child's interest span. Leave the child with a feeling of satisfaction and completion.	60	45	30	15	0
III. ILLUSTRATIONS of the Book Should Be:	Large. Clear in color. Appealing to the child. Free from too much detail.	10	7	5	3	0
IV. PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS of the Book Should:	Have a durable binding. Have large print. Be easy to handle.	10	7	5	3	0

*Hollenbeck (42), p. 34.

VITA ⁴

Maxine Faye Fransen Hudgins

Candidate for the Degree of

Master of Science

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

Major Field: Family Relations and Child Development

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born at Clinton, Oklahoma, August 9, 1945, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Fransen; wife of Ltjg Ladd Hudgins, U.S.N.R.

Education: Attended Southwest Elementary School; Clinton Junior High School; graduated from Clinton High School in 1963; attended Southwestern State College in Weatherford, 1963-1964; attended Oklahoma State University, 1964-1967; received the Bachelor of Science degree in Home Economics from Oklahoma State University in 1967 with a major in Home Economics Education; entered Graduate College, January, 1967, and completed the requirements for the degree of Master of Science in Family Relations and Child Development in May, 1970.

Professional Experience: Graduate assistant in the Department of Family Relations and Child Development, June, 1967, to January, 1968; taught Home Economics at Aiea Intermediate School, Honolulu, Hawaii, March, 1969, to June, 1969.

Professional and Honorary Organizations: National Association for the Education of Young Children; Oklahoma Home Economics Association; American Home Economics Association; Phi Upsilon Omicron; Omicron Nu.