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A STUDY OF FOURTH GRADE CHILDREN'S INTERESTS

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A STUDY OF FOURTH GRADE CHILDREN'S INTERESTS

By

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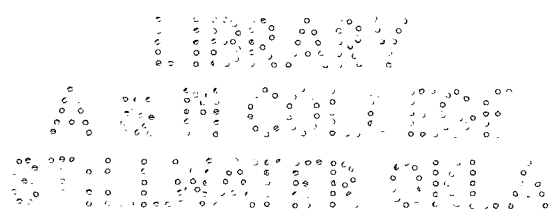
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CHAPTER I  
INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this investigation is to discover the play-, life-, reading-, study-, and school-interests of fourth grade pupils of the elementary school.

A major problem of every teacher is to discover the interests of her pupils and to relate the school work to these interests. An attempt will be made to arrive at some understanding of the interests of fourth grade pupils and the factors which help to create these interests.

The factor which releases the child's energy in this process of becoming himself is his interest. Interest provides the impelling drive which makes a human being master the hard disciplines of a craft, overcome obstacles, persist in the monotonous acquisition of skill, and push out the boundaries of his knowledge. Education based on interest lays hold of the spirit of the individual and lights its fires. Such education is always based on experience, on rich full living.

Interest takes on the significance of an index of emotional tendencies and of the organization of the personality of the individual. We have perhaps been too long concerned with the abstract considerations in our attempt to understand the interests of the individual. We need to see these psychological factors in concrete form in order to understand them. The interest life of the individual is rich or bare according to his social background. The training, the environment in which we live, determines, perhaps, more than anything else, the number, kind, and complexity of our interests.

If children show very great differences in their abilities, they show even as great differences in their interests. A child grows up.



He develops attitudes toward this and that, towards religion, politics, authority and what not. He grows up into a conservative, a radical, a doctor, a plumber, an atheist, a Methodist, a cosmopolitan, and so on. The main difference between him and other people is not necessarily a difference in abilities, but more often lies in another important aspect of human reaction; it is a difference in interests.

## CHAPTER II

## METHODS AND MATERIALS OF THE INVESTIGATION

This investigation was made with the pupils of the fourth grade in the elementary schools in Bristow, Oklahoma, during the school year 1940-1941. The 104 children studied in this investigation ranged in age from eight to eleven years. Of this number 53 were girls and 51 were boys.

The information was secured by means of an interview form. It was hoped that the choices of the children would reflect no specific environmental background and would be more representative of all children.

The examiner said to the child. "Here are some questions. I want you to write the answers. You are to read each question and answer it the way you really feel about it." The answers and the children's choice were recorded. The data thus gathered are presented in the accompanying tables.

The data should represent the reactions of the children free from adult or other children domination. The instructions for administering the questionnaire emphasize that the child is to answer the questions as he really thinks about them. The pupils understood that the results of the questionnaire were not intended for school purposes, and frankness in answering was encouraged. Most of the children knew the examiner, who had formerly taught them in the third grade.

The following factors were taken into consideration in comparing children's interests: (1) chronological age, (2) father's occupation, (3) sex, (4) I. Q., (5) school subjects taught in the system where this test was given, and (6) the platoon system in the school.

## INTERVIEW FORM

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_ Sex \_\_\_\_\_

1. What do you want to be when you grow up? \_\_\_\_\_
2. What is your favorite type of story? \_\_\_\_\_
3. What is your favorite game? \_\_\_\_\_
4. What subject do you like best to study? \_\_\_\_\_  
Why? \_\_\_\_\_
5. What subject is it that you do not like to study? \_\_\_\_\_  
Why? \_\_\_\_\_
6. What is your favorite magazine? \_\_\_\_\_
7. What is your favorite story book? \_\_\_\_\_
8. What is your favorite comic strip? \_\_\_\_\_
9. Do you like to go to school? \_\_\_\_\_ Why? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
10. When you finish high school, do you want to go to college? \_\_\_\_\_  
Why? \_\_\_\_\_
11. Do you like to play with children older than you? \_\_\_\_\_  
Why? \_\_\_\_\_
12. Do you like to play with children younger than you? \_\_\_\_\_  
Why? \_\_\_\_\_
13. Do you like to play with children your own age? \_\_\_\_\_  
Why? \_\_\_\_\_



TABLE I  
INTELLIGENCE QUOTIENTS OF THE 104 FOURTH GRADE PUPILS

Intelligence Quotients	Boys	Girls	Total
124-127	-	2	2
120-123	2	4	6
116-119	4	4	8
112-115	5	8	13
108-111	8	4	12
104-107	3	7	10
100-103	7	9	16
96-99	5	3	8
92-95	6	2	8
88-91	2	3	5
84-87	2	3	5
80-83	3	2	5
76-79	2	1	3
72-75	1	1	2
68-71	1	-	1
Total	51	53	104

## CHAPTER III

## ANALYSES AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

## A. Occupational Interests

Further significant data with reference to this general topic are yielded by studies of the ambitions and vocational interests of children at different ages.

These findings are in accord with what has already been said about the development of interests. The occupational interests of the boys and girls were ranked according to their preference. Table II shows the 26 occupations chosen by the boys and the 15 occupations chosen by the girls. The first three occupational choices made by the boys show that they have a definite tendency to choose occupations which call for muscular as well as mental effort. The first three occupations given call for a large degree of outdoor life. The fact that a far greater number of boys gave aviation as their first choice than gave any other occupation is particularly interesting. Some probable explanations for the popularity of this occupation are: (1) the large amount of general publicity given this vocation, (2) the appeal made by the very nature of the occupation to adventurous boys, and (3) the fact that the most popular heroes of the past few years have been men in the field who have especially appealed to boys of the "hero-worshiping" age.

The younger boys' interests are in the active and dramatic occupations. In accord with the fascination which mechanical things have for many boys of these ages, there emerge ambitions toward engineering and invention.

Conventional attitudes operate much more than might at first be thought. Consider for instance, the total disapproval and ridicule from family and

companions which could be directed toward the average boy if he announced an ambition to be a chef. Among both children and adults, conventions as to desirable choices have great influence.

The girls' choices give evidence of a widening of the field of occupations for women and a tendency to choose vocations which require specialized training. Nursing and teaching led the list by a wide margin. The girls show throughout an interest in teaching, first because the teacher is presumable the most important woman in the child's experience outside the home, and later because teaching is felt to be a genteel and proper occupation for a woman, because there are more opportunities for women in teaching than in most other occupations. Other occupations have their appeal. A childhood fondness for painting and writing may, especially if there is much adult admiration of the productions, lead to a more or less permanent artistic or literary ambition. Younger children show interest in the dramatic occupations of actress or opera singer. Matter-of-fact girls may, from their home or school experience, develop a special interest in home economics or nursing. The appeal of work as a "private secretary" combines these factors of feminine interest and usually meets with home approval. Ambitions may in consequence be directed largely toward a social career. In short, once more there is a development from simple to elaborate interests; again the girls show an earlier and more complete domination by social interests; and here especially clearly do the conventions influence girls, in various and often subtle ways.

Many circumstances may determine the occupational choice. Frequently the youngster decides to specialize in a given subject because of his liking for or admiration of a teacher of that subject. A father or mother may push a pupil toward a certain line of work because he or she had an unrealized

ambition in that field. Finally, accidental circumstances may determine the choice.

A survey of the data shows an interest in the active and dramatic occupations; conventional attitudes play a large part, and vocational fashions are evident.

TABLE II  
 NUMBER OF PUPILS GIVING FIRST CHOICE TO VARIOUS OCCUPATIONS

Occupation Preferred	Number of Pupils Preferring		
	Boys	Girls	Total
Teaching	4	14	18
Airplane Pilot	13	4	17
Nursing	0	14	14
Clerk	5	3	8
Secretary	0	5	5
Beauty Operator	0	3	3
Housewife	0	3	3
Stewardess	0	2	2
Policeman	2	0	2
Engineer	2	0	2
Artist	2	0	2
Bus Driver	1	0	1
Orchestra Leader	1	0	1
Farmer	1	0	1
Detective	1	0	1
Mechanic	1	0	1
Soldier	1	0	1
Inventor	1	0	1
Postman	1	0	1
Boxer	1	0	1
Airplane Maker	1	0	1
Fireman	1	0	1
Cowboy	1	0	1
Oil Field Worker	1	0	1
Carpenter	1	0	1
Banker	1	0	1
Poet	1	0	1
Chemist	1	0	1
Grocer	1	0	1
Dairyman	1	0	1
Park Warden	1	0	1
W. P. A. Worker	1	0	1
Doctor	0	1	1
Cowgirl	0	1	1
Pianist	0	1	1
Librarian	0	1	1
Movie Actress	0	1	1
Telephone Operator	0	1	1
Opera Singer	0	1	1
Total	49	55	104



## B. Play Interests

The data concerning play interests are given in Table III. A notable difference in the play interests preferred by boys and those preferred by girls is indicated by the boys' strong interest in games involving motor activity, in which boys usually excel, while girls' preferences were for games of a more social nature. A partial explanation of this result may be that the conventions and social restraints placed on girls curb their interest and their skill in games requiring motor activity. Table III shows the 21 games chosen by the boys and the 31 games chosen by the girls.

Table IV shows the interest in other children, older, younger, and fourth grade age in playing together. Reasons are given in each case for the play according to age.

If play is defined as those things which individuals do simply because they want to, then a catalogue of play is evidently a catalogue of the activities which have some sort of natural appeal.

It will be noticed in general that boys of ten like very active games like football, playing catch and riding a bicycle. Ten year old girls differ from the boys in the less active character of their games, in the earlier appearance of sex-social interests (doubtless related to the earlier physical maturing of the girls), and the greater prominence of such interests. It must not be assumed that any of these changes are sudden. In all cases the changes are gradual.

Only the effect of differences in general mental ability remains for brief mention. In general, children pedagogically retarded or behind in school, tend to engage in more social activities than children who have

TABLE III

## NUMBER OF PUPILS GIVING FIRST CHOICE TO VARIOUS GAMES

Games Preferred	Number of Pupils Preferring		
	Boys	Girls	Total
Football	31	1	32
Dodge Ball	0	14	14
Baseball	10	5	15
Dolls and House	0	11	11
Chinese Checkers	2	9	11
Basketball	3	0	3
Monopoly	2	1	3
Hide-go-seek	1	2	3
Marbles	2	0	2
Jacks	0	2	2
Kickball	1	0	1
Store	0	1	1
Punch-the-icebox	0	1	1
Tiddle Winks	0	1	1
School	0	1	1
Pick-up-sticks	0	1	1
Soft-ball	0	1	1
Blind Man's Bluff	0	1	1
Total	52	52	104

progressed normally.<sup>1</sup> Children who are ahead of the average grade for their age do not as a group show either fewer play activities or more solitary play; in short, acceleration seems to do no harm to the happy life.<sup>2</sup> Exceptionally intelligent or gifted children read more and, largely as a result of this, apparently, engage somewhat less frequently than average children in social games and plays and in very active games, but indulge in about the same total number of play activities.<sup>3</sup> In short, the gifted children seem not to show unfortunate limitations or peculiarity in their play, but the duller children read less, and engage more in social and active games.

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<sup>1</sup>Lehman, Harvey C. and Witty, P. A., The Psychology of Play Activities (New York: A. S. Barnes and Company, 1927).

<sup>2</sup>Lehman, Harvey C. and Shikles, Gail, "A Study of Play in Relation to School Marks," Educational Administration and Supervision, (April, 1928), 238-246.

<sup>3</sup>Lehman and Witty, op. cit.

TABLE IV  
PLAY INTERESTS OF CHILDREN

		BOYS	
Do you like to play with children older than yourself:		Number	Reason Given
Yes	26	1.	I have fun with them.
		2.	I make good friends.
		3.	Because we have fun.
		4.	I don't want to make them mad.
		5.	I like to play with my cousin.
		6.	They can teach us new games.
		7.	They play fair and make nice friends.
		8.	We can have fun.
		9.	They teach me new games.
		10.	They can help me.
		11.	They are the only ones I have to play with.
		12.	I like to play hard.
		13.	I like them.
		14.	I have lots of fun.
		15.	If I was to get lost, I would be taken home.
		16.	They know what to play.
		17.	They know more things to play.
		18.	I can have more fun.
		19.	We can have lots of fun.
		20.	We won't hurt each other.
		21.	They will take care of me.
		22.	I have lots of fun.
		23.	I learn things.
		24.	If I get hurt, they will take care of me.
		25.	I can beat them.
		26.	They know more things.
No	20	1.	They play too rough.
		2.	They might hurt you.
		3.	They might hurt me.
		4.	They are too rough.
		5.	They might cheat you.
		6.	They knock you down and do everything to you.
		7.	They do not like to play.
		8.	You might get into trouble.
		9.	They play too rough.
		10.	They are too, too rough.
		11.	They might hurt me.



12. They play too rough.
13. They might hurt me.
14. Sometime I might get hurt bad.
15. They might hurt the little ones.
16. They play too rough.
17. They are too rough.
18. They like to fight me.
19. I like to play with some and some I don't.
20. They are too rough.

---

Sometimes

4

1. Some are friendly and some are not.
  2. Some of them are good and some of them are bad.
  3. They play some games I like to play.
  4. I like to play with the ones that like the things I do.
-



TABLE IV (Continued)  
PLAY INTERESTS OF CHILDREN

		GIRLS	
Do you like to play with children older than yourself:		Number	Reason Given
Yes	20	1.	I can have someone to play with.
		2.	They are nice to me.
		3.	They know more.
		4.	I can learn things from them.
		5.	I have an older brother that I like to play with.
		6.	They think of more funny things to do.
		7.	I have more fun.
		8.	They will play games with me.
		9.	I like to play with all children.
		10.	I have lots of fun with them.
		11.	They play fair.
		12.	They teach me new games.
		13.	I have fun.
		14.	They play fair.
		15.	I have more fun.
		16.	The older ones know more than the younger children.
		17.	Some are a little too rough.
		18.	I have lots of fun.
		19.	I have fun.
		20.	They can help me play.
No	25	1.	I am afraid I will get hurt.
		2.	They play too rough.
		3.	I don't like to because I don't have any fun.
		4.	Their games don't fit with mine.
		5.	They don't play good.
		6.	Children older than I are too rough.
		7.	Some act too smart.
		8.	I like to play with children my size.
		9.	They will hurt me.
		10.	They do not know how to play.
		11.	Some of them are bossy.
		12.	I do not have any fun.
		13.	Sometimes they run over you.
		14.	They think up hard games to play.
		15.	They do not like to play what I like.

16. They do not want me to play with them.
17. They do not know how to play.
18. They won't play with me.
19. They may not like to play what I like to play.
20. They are too rough.
21. They try to run you.
22. They always want to play what they want to.
23. They play rough.
24. They play too grownup.
25. They want to play older games.

---

Sometimes

- 8
1. It seems they don't care to play with me.
  2. Sometimes they fight a lot.
  3. Some of them don't know the games I do.
  4. They are nice to me.
  5. They try to run over me.
  6. Some are nice and some are not.
  7. They don't always fight.
  8. They don't always fight.
-

TABLE IV (Continued)  
PLAY INTERESTS OF CHILDREN

		BOYS	
Do you like to play with children younger than yourself:		Number	Reason Given
Yes	13	1.	They are funny.
		2.	I can tell them what to do.
		3.	I can teach them things.
		4.	You can get a lot of fun out of them.
		5.	They are funny.
		6.	We play together well.
		7.	They can't run off and leave me.
		8.	They like to play with me.
		9.	They play what I like to play.
		10.	They are easier to make friends with.
		11.	They can't hurt me.
		12.	I have fun with them.
		13.	I like to play with them cause it is fun.
No	38	1.	If they were to get hurt, I would get the blame.
		2.	They don't like to play the things I do.
		3.	I don't have fun with them.
		4.	I want to play with those my age.
		5.	I'm afraid they will get hurt.
		6.	I don't like to play with them, cause I hurt them.
		7.	When they get hurt I don't like to hear them cry.
		8.	They are too mean.
		9.	They might get hurt.
		10.	They don't know how to play the games I like to play.
		11.	They can't play like I can.
		12.	They can't play what we can play.
		13.	They are too little.
		14.	I might hurt them.
		15.	I might hurt them.
		16.	They might get hurt.
		17.	They want to play baby games.
		18.	I might hurt them.
		19.	They might get hurt.
		20.	They get hurt too easy.

21. They like to play cowboy.
22. I might hurt them.
23. They want to play little games.
24. They get in the way.
25. They don't know how to play anything.
26. I might hurt them.
27. They might get hurt.
28. They don't play right.
29. I cannot have any fun.
30. I might hurt them.
31. They might get hurt.
32. I am afraid I might hurt them.
33. I might hurt them.
34. They are too little.
35. They cry too much.
36. They don't know how to play.
37. They might get hurt.
38. If we were running a race, they could not go fast and we would lose the race.

TABLE IV (Continued)  
PLAY INTERESTS OF CHILDREN

		GIRLS	
Do you like to play with children younger than yourself: Number			
Yes	30	Reason Given	
		1.	They are always happy.
		2.	They don't fuss all the time.
		3.	I have lots of fun with them.
		4.	They are always happy.
		5.	They say funny things that makes me laugh.
		6.	I like to rock them to sleep.
		7.	They are funny.
		8.	I like the way they talk and play.
		9.	I can have more fun with them.
		10.	I have more fun with them.
		11.	I have fun.
		12.	We can learn games.
		13.	To teach them how to play with others.
		14.	So they will know how to play when they get older.
		15.	They are more fun to play with.
		16.	I have lots of fun with them.
		17.	There aren't many other children.
		18.	They should have a good time.
		19.	I like to play house with them.
		20.	Some are in my room.
		21.	I can have fun with them.
		22.	We can play babies.
		23.	You can do what you want to.
		24.	You can have more fun.
		25.	I think they are cute.
		26.	I like little children.
		27.	They are cute.
		28.	They have fun.
		29.	They are cute.
		30.	I like to play with everyone.
No	21	1.	They cry and fuss.
		2.	They are too small.
		3.	I would hurt them.
		4.	They are too little and might get hurt.
		5.	They don't know how to play.
		6.	You can't have much fun.
		7.	They don't know how to play.



8. They do not understand.
9. They want to play baby games.
10. I might run over them.
11. They might get hurt.
12. They don't know how to play the games I do.
13. They are too small and might get hurt.
14. They are too easy to hurt.
15. They don't know how to play fair.
16. They don't know how to play like other children.
17. If I wanted to play a game, they don't know how.
18. They cannot do the things I can.
19. Their games don't fit with mine.
20. They get hurt too often.
21. I might hurt them.

---

Sometimes

- 1 1. Sometimes I don't and sometimes I do.
-

TABLE IV (Continued)

## PLAY INTERESTS OF CHILDREN

BOYS		
Do you like to play with children the same age as yourself:	Number	Reason Given
Yes	50	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. They play fair.</li> <li>2. They are agreeable with every- thing.</li> <li>3. I can have more fun.</li> <li>4. We can play better.</li> <li>5. We won't hurt each other.</li> <li>6. I am not afraid I will hurt others or get hurt.</li> <li>7. We can play the same games.</li> <li>8. We won't hurt each other.</li> <li>9. We would have more fun.</li> <li>10. I have lots of fun.</li> <li>11. They can play better and get along.</li> <li>12. They can't run over you.</li> <li>13. I like friends that like me.</li> <li>14. I cannot hurt them easily.</li> <li>15. We can play the same games.</li> <li>16. They play the games I do.</li> <li>17. I won't get hurt.</li> <li>18. We can play football.</li> <li>19. We don't get hurt.</li> <li>20. We can't hurt each other very bad.</li> <li>21. I can have more fun with them.</li> <li>22. We can have more fun.</li> <li>23. I would know them better and they would try to help the team to win.</li> <li>24. We can have more fun.</li> <li>25. They would know the kind of games to play.</li> <li>26. We have fun.</li> <li>27. I like to play with them.</li> <li>28. They are my size and not too rough.</li> <li>29. I won't hurt them and they won't hurt me.</li> <li>30. They won't hurt me and I will not hurt them.</li> <li>31. We can play many games.</li> <li>32. I can play rough and not get hurt.</li> </ol>

33. They can't hurt me..
34. They can play like I do.
35. They know as much as I do.
36. It is fun and we won't hurt each other.
37. They know how to play the games I like to play.
38. They won't get hurt.
39. They are a lot kinder.
40. They don't hurt me and I don't hurt them.
41. We can have a good time.
42. If I play right with them, they will play right with me.
43. They are more friendly.
44. I like to play with them.
45. We can have a good time.
46. I have fun with them.
47. They play the same things I do.
48. We are by ourselves and we don't get hurt.
49. They are my size.
50. They can play as rough as I can.

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No	0
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Sometimes	1 1. Some I do and some I'm mad at.
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TABLE IV (Continued)  
PLAY INTERESTS OF CHILDREN

GIRLS		
Do you like to play with children the same age as yourself:	Number	Reason Given
Yes	52	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. They can play the games I can.</li> <li>2. I would rather play with children my own age.</li> <li>3. They can play the same thing I can.</li> <li>4. They are good to me.</li> <li>5. We have fun.</li> <li>6. They won't get run over.</li> <li>7. They like to play the games I do.</li> <li>8. We can have more fun.</li> <li>9. We can have more fun.</li> <li>10. They do not hurt me.</li> <li>11. They are my size.</li> <li>12. We have lots of fun.</li> <li>13. They know most of the games I do.</li> <li>14. They know the games I do.</li> <li>15. They like the games I like and won't get hurt.</li> <li>16. They know the games I like to play.</li> <li>17. We can play the same things.</li> <li>18. We can play together.</li> <li>19. They play what I want to play.</li> <li>20. They can't hurt me and I can't hurt them.</li> <li>21. They play the way I do.</li> <li>22. It is fun to play together.</li> <li>23. They want to play what I know.</li> <li>24. I won't hurt them and I won't get hurt.</li> <li>25. They seem closer to me.</li> <li>26. I don't feel left behind or older.</li> <li>27. They might know a game I don't know.</li> <li>28. They know what I like to play.</li> <li>29. I like to because I have fun.</li> <li>30. Their games fit with mine.</li> <li>31. They know my games.</li> <li>32. I have lots of friends my age.</li> <li>33. They are so much fun to play with.</li> </ol>

34. They know all the games I do.
35. They can play the same kind of games I do.
36. They know my games.
37. I have more fun.
38. We have fun together.
39. They know how to play without fighting.
40. They know the things to play.
41. I have more fun with them.
42. I can do the same thing they can.
43. We all like to play the same thing.
44. We can have a better time.
45. I want them to be in the same grade I am in.
46. We can help each other in our school work.
47. I have lots of fun with them.
48. They know most of the games.
49. We have fun together.
50. I like to play with children my age.
51. I like children my age.
52. We can do the same things.

No	0	
Sometimes	1	1. Sometimes I do and sometimes I don't.



### C. Study Interests

Table V discloses some results worth consideration. The boys and girls did not agree in their liking for various subjects. Art ranked first with the boys which was due chiefly to the fact that woodcraft and leather work was being taught at the time the questionnaire was given. Another reason which may have influenced the boys' choices was due to the fact that the instructor was a man.

Art ranked first with the boys, while with the girls, Art ranked second. Social Studies ranked first with the girls, while with the boys, Social Studies ranked second. Library was third choice for the boys and sixth choice for the girls. Arithmetic ranked fourth choice with the boys and seventh choice with the girls. Reading ranked fifth choice with the boys and third choice with the girls. Spelling ranked sixth choice with the boys and fifth choice with the girls. Health ranked seventh place with the boys and eighth place with the girls. Boys did not like Penmanship, while the girls chose Penmanship as their ninth choice.

Table VI shows the number of pupils disliking different subjects and their reason why. Boys disliked Music more than any other subject, while the girls disliked Arithmetic. Arithmetic ranked second as the most disliked subject with the boys, while the girls indicated English as the most disliked. Both boys and girls chose Social Studies as the subject disliked for the third place. Music ranked fourth place for the girls. Reading ranked fourth place for the boys, while the girls ranked it in the ninth place. Library ranked fifth for the boys and sixth for the girls. English ranked sixth for the boys. Art ranked seventh for the boys and

eleventh for the girls. Girls also added Dictionary Study, Penmanship and Health. Five boys stated that they did not dislike any subject, while fourteen girls stated that they did not dislike any subject.

In checking through the children's reasons for making their choices of subjects, it soon became apparent that most of the responses showing disapproval could be classified under five general headings: (1) Faulty or uninteresting course or materials, (2) Lack of ability or aptitude on the part of the pupil, (3) Method of teaching, (4) The teacher, (5) The value placed on the course by the pupil.

It is a popular concept that if a large percentage of the children actively dislike a given subject, it is certain that they approach the learning of this subject under a most serious learning handicap, if we regard interest as essential to learning. In such a case we must recognize that there is something basically wrong with the subject matter, with its grade placement or with the way in which it is taught. Children may dislike what is demonstrably a very valuable subject because it is inherently difficult for them and they constantly find in it the experience of failure.

One might infer from the results of the study that children are inclined to like subjects which are specific and objective in their immediate outcomes, such as arithmetic, art and reading. In these subjects they can see quite immediately the products of their efforts.

An interesting thing observable in checking children's reasons for their subject choices was the fact that, while they were rather indefinite about their reasons for liking subjects, although they were inclined to have definite likes, they were most definite about their reasons for disliking subjects, and their reasons for disliking them fall into large

general categories which lend themselves readily to consideration in curriculum building.

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TABLE V  
 NUMBER OF PUPILS LIKING VARIOUS SUBJECTS AND WHY

BOYS		
Subject Liked Best	Number	Reason Given
1. Art	20	1. I might make money for my picture. 2. We get to make things. 3. We get to do craft work. 4. I like to paint, draw and do craftwork. 5. I like to draw. 6. It is fun and easy to do. 7. I like to draw. 8. I like to draw. 9. I like to draw and paint. 10. We work with wood craft. 11. It is so interesting. 12. I like art because it is beautiful and I like to draw. 13. I can learn how to draw. 14. I get to use paint. 15. I can learn how to draw and be an artist. 16. I like to draw. 17. It is not hard. 18. You can make pretty pictures and see pretty pictures. 19. I like to draw. 20. I want to know how to draw.
2. Social Studies	14	1. You can study about the world. 2. It is interesting. 3. You can study about the way people live. 4. We study about interesting things. 5. It is fun and I like it. 6. The questions aren't hard. 7. We study about different people. 8. I like to study about other lands. 9. I like to study about people. 10. I learn about the world. 11. I learn about different lands. 12. It is interesting. 13. I want to learn about the world. 14. I want to learn how other people live.
3. Library	6	1. It is interesting. 2. We can read different books. 3. I get to read a lot. 4. You learn to read better and more. 5. I like to read books. 6. It is fun to read.

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4. Arithmetic	4	1. It teaches you to figure. 2. It does you a lot of good. 3. It is the easiest for me to learn. 4. I am best in it.
5. Reading	2	1. It tells about everything. 2. I am best in reading.
6. Spelling	2	1. It is fun to use new words. 2. I think it is easy.
7. Health	2	1. You learn to keep your body well. 2. It is fun to learn about.
8. Music	1	1. We have a good teacher.
Total	51	

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TABLE V (Continued)

## NUMBER OF PUPILS LIKING VARIOUS SUBJECTS AND WHY

GIRLS		
Subject Liked Best	Number	Reason Given
1. Social Studies	23	1. We study about other lands. 2. I like to learn about other lands. 3. You study about many lands. 4. I like to study about other lands. 5. I like to study about many lands. 6. I like to know about other lands. 7. I like to study about other lands. 8. It tells us about other lands. 9. It is interesting. 10. I learn how other people live. 11. I can learn about other countries. 12. I learn about different countries. 13. It is easy. 14. I can learn about the world. 15. We learn about other people. 16. I like it. 17. I study about the world. 18. It is interesting. 19. We make a book that we can keep. 20. You study about the world. 21. It is helpful to know. 22. I like it very much. 23. It is interesting.
2. Art	15	1. We get to paint. 2. It usually has beauty. 3. I like to draw and color. 4. I like to do craftwork and draw. 5. I like to do craftwork. 6. I like to draw. 7. I like to draw pictures. 8. I enjoy it very much. 9. I like the way pictures are drawn and painted. 10. It is a good skill to learn. 11. It is a good skill. 12. I like to draw. 13. It teaches you to draw. 14. I love to draw and color. 15. I like to paint.
3. Reading	4	1. You can read different stories. 2. I like to read. 3. I like to read. 4. The questions aren't hard.

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4. Music	3	1. It is fun to sing and you learn many good songs. 2. I like to sing. 3. When you grow up you will learn how to play instruments.
5. Spelling	2	1. I like it. 2. We learn to spell words.
6. Library	2	1. I like to read books and magazines. 2. I enjoy it best.
7. Arithmetic	2	1. When I grow up I want to be a clerk. 2. It is so easy.
8. Health	1	1. I like to study about the body.
9. Penmanship	1	1. So I will be able to write a nice hand.
Total	53	

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TABLE VI

## NUMBER OF PUPILS DISLIKING VARIOUS SUBJECTS AND WHY

BOYS		
Subject Disliked	Number	Reason Given
1. Music	13	1. I don't know my syllables. 2. You have to find do in syllables. 3. You have to write syllables. 4. I don't like to sing. 5. I don't like to sing. 6. I don't sing very good. 7. I don't like to sing. 8. I can't get syllables. 9. I don't like music. 10. I don't like music. 11. I don't like to sing. 12. It has too many syllables. 13. I don't like to study syllables.
2. Arithmetic	9	1. I don't like the teacher. 2. It is too hard. 3. It is too hard. 4. I don't know my problems. 5. It is sorta hard. 6. It is too hard. 7. I don't know how to do it good. 8. Some of them are hard problems. 9. We have to add, divide, subtract, multiply to get a certain answer and sometimes we miss it.
3. Social Studies	6	1. I make bad grades. 2. I don't like to study it. 3. I think it is hard. 4. You have to use the geography too much. 5. You have to answer so many questions. 6. I don't like to give reports.
4. Reading	5	1. I do not like to read. 2. I do not like to read. 3. It is not fun. 4. I cannot read good. 5. You have to answer too many questions.
5. Library	5	1. We have to learn numbers. 2. The teacher gets grouchy. 3. You have to learn numbers. 4. The teacher is mean. 5. You have to sit in little chairs.

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6. English	4	1. We have to write paragraphs. 2. It is not interesting. 3. We have to memorize things. 4. I cannot get it.
7. Art	4	1. I can't paint. 2. You have to draw just right. 3. It is too easy. 4. Your paper gets too messy.
8. I don't dislike any	5	1. I like them all. 2. They are all interesting. 3. They are all easy. 4. It is fun to study them all. 5. I like to study all subjects.
Total	51	

TABLE VI (Continued)

## NUMBER OF PUPILS DISLIKING VARIOUS SUBJECTS AND WHY

GIRLS		
Subject Disliked	Number	Reason Given
1. Arithmetic	12	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I think it is hard.</li> <li>2. It is so hard.</li> <li>3. It seems hard for me to do.</li> <li>4. It seems hard to do.</li> <li>5. It is hard.</li> <li>6. You have to divide and I don't like to.</li> <li>7. I do not like to study it.</li> <li>8. The teacher does not explain it good.</li> <li>9. I don't like the teacher.</li> <li>10. I don't like the teacher.</li> <li>11. It is too hard.</li> <li>12. I just don't like it.</li> </ol>
2. English	6	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I don't enjoy it.</li> <li>2. I don't enjoy it at all.</li> <li>3. It is sometimes very hard.</li> <li>4. I don't like it.</li> <li>5. I just don't like it.</li> <li>6. I get the wrong answers.</li> </ol>
3. Social Studies	5	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. They always last too long.</li> <li>2. You can't have fun finding answers.</li> <li>3. I do not enjoy it.</li> <li>4. It is too hard.</li> <li>5. I don't like to study about other countries.</li> </ol>
4. Music	5	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I don't like syllables.</li> <li>2. I don't like to sing notes.</li> <li>3. I don't like to sing notes.</li> <li>4. We have to sing.</li> <li>5. I don't like music with music syllables.</li> </ol>
5. Spelling	2	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I don't like spelling.</li> <li>2. I have to learn to spell.</li> </ol>
6. Library	2	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I don't like to read very much.</li> <li>2. I have to sit in baby chairs.</li> </ol>
7. Dictionary Study	2	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. You have to look up words.</li> <li>2. The words are too hard to find.</li> </ol>
8. Penmanship	2	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I have to write too much.</li> <li>2. I don't like to do push and pulls.</li> </ol>

9. Reading	1	1. I make bad grades.
10. Health	1	1. We have to stay in and study.
11. Art	1	1. I can't draw.
12. I don't dislike any	14	1. I like all my subjects. 2. I like them all. 3. I like to go to school and learn. 4. I like to do all of them. 5. None of them are hard. 6. I learn lots in every subject. 7. I like all my subjects. 8. I like to go to school and work. 9. They are all easy. 10. They are fun to get. 11. They teach you to learn. 12. They are all easy. 13. They teach you things. 14. They are all easy.
Total	53	

#### D. School Interests

The relation of the teacher to the individual child is an outstanding element in the social psychology of childhood. Important also is the "atmosphere" of the classroom, for it is possible to develop a feeling of naturalness and nervous relaxation or of tense effort and artificiality. Much of the school's influence on children depends upon this "atmosphere" which may cause them to love school or dread it. Progressive teachers are attempting to make the school a place in which natural childish activities and interests may be guided in such a way as to bring about a good education. The effort is to make the school the center of childhood society, rather than a place in which children become unsocial, or even anti-social. Table VII shows the number of pupils liking or disliking school and the reason for their choice. Girls like school better than boys.

Table VIII shows the number of pupils expressing the desire or lack of desire for further education by going to college after graduation from high school. Reasons were also given by the children. The desire for a good education was the prime reason.

TABLE VII

NUMBER OF PUPILS LIKING OR DISLIKING SCHOOL AND THE REASON WHY

BOYS		
Likes to go to School	Number	Reason Given
Yes	39	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. You do not have to sit around.</li> <li>2. It is interesting.</li> <li>3. You have lots of friends.</li> <li>4. You can learn more.</li> <li>5. The schools are bad as college.</li> <li>6. You learn things.</li> <li>7. You can learn better.</li> <li>8. You can learn.</li> <li>9. I don't like to sit around the house.</li> <li>10. You can read all kinds of books.</li> <li>11. I will learn more than those who don't.</li> <li>12. You learn to read and write.</li> <li>13. I learn more.</li> <li>14. To learn to read, write, spell and do arithmetic.</li> <li>15. I like to study and draw pictures in art.</li> <li>16. I like to go to school to learn.</li> <li>17. I want a good education.</li> <li>18. I want to have an education.</li> <li>19. You learn how to read and write.</li> <li>20. So I won't be dumb.</li> <li>21. I want an education.</li> <li>22. I want a good education.</li> <li>23. I like to go because it is fun.</li> <li>24. I want a good education.</li> <li>25. I have good friends to play with.</li> <li>26. I learn more.</li> <li>27. I want to learn more.</li> <li>28. There is nothing hard about it.</li> <li>29. I want an education.</li> <li>30. You get an education and you can get a job easier.</li> <li>31. You learn more in school than out of school.</li> <li>32. I want to learn about the world.</li> <li>33. I want to have a good education.</li> <li>34. I want an education.</li> <li>35. I like to go and get an education.</li> <li>36. I like to learn things in school.</li> <li>37. I like to learn about all things.</li> <li>38. I want to be smart.</li> <li>39. So I won't be dumb.</li> </ol>

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No	11	1. I don't like to study. 2. I don't like my teacher. 3. I have to study so much. 4. I don't like to study. 5. I like to play better than I like to work. 6. I would rather play. 7. I don't like it. 8. I have a club to attend to. 9. I have to work too hard. 10. I like to play. 11. I have to take too many tests.
Sometimes	1	1. Sometimes I get a spanking if I do not do good work.
Total	51	

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TABLE VII (Continued)

## NUMBER OF PUPILS LIKING OR DISLIKING SCHOOL AND THE REASON WHY

GIRLS		
Likes to go to School	Number	Reason Given
Yes	51	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I learn a lot.</li> <li>2. You can learn more things.</li> <li>3. I like my teachers, studies, and friends.</li> <li>4. The teachers are nice to me.</li> <li>5. It is easy.</li> <li>6. You will get part of your education.</li> <li>7. You learn good manners.</li> <li>8. We have some good teachers.</li> <li>9. It teaches you how to read and write.</li> <li>10. You learn things.</li> <li>11. You learn more things.</li> <li>12. You learn something.</li> <li>13. You learn many different things.</li> <li>14. I learn things.</li> <li>15. I can learn things.</li> <li>16. I have a nice teacher and learn a lot.</li> <li>17. It teaches you things.</li> <li>18. You learn things you should know.</li> <li>19. You get educated.</li> <li>20. I can learn things.</li> <li>21. It is fun to go to school.</li> <li>22. I like my teachers.</li> <li>23. I learn and have many friends.</li> <li>24. I want to learn.</li> <li>25. You learn more than by staying out.</li> <li>26. I like all the subjects.</li> <li>27. I can learn more things.</li> <li>28. I want an education and make friends.</li> <li>29. I like to do the school work.</li> <li>30. I like school very much.</li> <li>31. I like all my teachers, subjects and playmates.</li> <li>32. I learn things.</li> <li>33. I like to learn things.</li> <li>34. It teaches us what we don't know.</li> <li>35. I like all my teachers.</li> <li>36. I have fun at school.</li> <li>37. I have more fun.</li> <li>38. I can get an education.</li> <li>39. I like to know different things.</li> <li>40. I like to study about different things.</li> <li>41. I like to see my friends.</li> </ol>



42. I like most of my friends.  
 43. We study about different countries.  
 44. I like to study all of my lessons.  
 45. You learn many things in school.  
 46. I like to work and play.  
 47. I want an education.  
 48. I want to grow up smart.  
 49. I want a good education.  
 50. I like to learn all I can.  
 51. I don't want to be dumb.

No	2	1. It is too much work. 2. We have to work in school.
Sometimes	0	
Total	53	

TABLE VIII

NUMBER OF PUPILS EXPRESSING THE DESIRE OR LACK OF DESIRE FOR  
 FURTHER EDUCATION BY GOING TO COLLEGE AFTER GRADUATION FROM HIGH SCHOOL

BOYS		
Wants to go to College	Number	Reason Given
Yes	41	1. You will get more education. 2. I want to get an education. 3. I want to be a pilot. 4. So I will have a good education. 5. I can learn the joy of being a boxer. 6. You will get more jobs if you do. 7. I will know more when I grow up. 8. So I can be an airplane maker. 9. You can learn more about things. 10. Maybe I will be well educated. 11. So I can be educated. 12. It will help you know more. 13. I want to learn how to do things. 14. I want to grow up with a good education. 15. I want to learn. 16. You will learn more. 17. You will learn a lot. 18. I want to learn to make things. 19. I want to learn to be a pilot. 20. So I will be really a smart person. 21. I want an education. 22. To get a good education. 23. I want to get an education. 24. I want to have an education. 25. I want all the education I can get. 26. I want to learn to be an airplane pilot. 27. I want to study art. 28. I want an education. 29. I want to be an airplane pilot. 30. I want to be an airplane pilot. 31. I want to get an education. 32. I want to learn to be a policeman. 33. I want an education. 34. I want a good education. 35. I want an education. 36. So I can get an education. 37. I want to have a good education. 38. I want to learn all I can. 39. I want to be smart. 40. I want my folks to be proud of me. 41. I want an education.

- |    |    |   |
|----|----|---|
| No | 10 | 1. It will take a long time to finish.        |
|    |    | 2. You have to do too much work.              |
|    |    | 3. I don't want to go.                        |
|    |    | 4. I'm going to go to work.                   |
|    |    | 5. I don't like to study.                     |
|    |    | 6. I don't want to be a doctor or<br>teacher. |
|    |    | 7. I don't want to go.                        |
|    |    | 8. It is too hard.                            |
|    |    | 9. I won't have the money.                    |
|    |    | 10. The work is too hard.                     |

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Total	51
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TABLE VIII (Continued)

NUMBER OF PUPILS EXPRESSING THE DESIRE OR LACK OF DESIRE FOR  
FURTHER EDUCATION BY GOING TO COLLEGE AFTER GRADUATION FROM HIGH SCHOOL

GIRLS		
Wants to go to College	Number	Reason Given
Yes	46	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I want to get an education.</li> <li>2. I want an education.</li> <li>3. I want to get an education.</li> <li>4. I can get a better education.</li> <li>5. I want to get an education.</li> <li>6. When I grow up I will get a good job.</li> <li>7. I might be a teacher.</li> <li>8. I want to get a good education.</li> <li>9. I want a better education.</li> <li>10. I hope to have a good education.</li> <li>11. I want to get a good education.</li> <li>12. I want an education.</li> <li>13. I want to be a teacher.</li> <li>14. I learn to be a secretary.</li> <li>15. I want to learn to be a nurse.</li> <li>16. So I can learn to do something.</li> <li>17. I want to get an education.</li> <li>18. I want to be a beauty shop lady.</li> <li>19. I want to learn to be a teacher.</li> <li>20. I have to have a good education to teach.</li> <li>21. I want to be a stewardess.</li> <li>22. I want a good education.</li> <li>23. I want to be a stewardess.</li> <li>24. So I can get an education.</li> <li>25. I want to get an education.</li> <li>26. I think I could get my lessons good.</li> <li>27. I want to learn more.</li> <li>28. You can study what you want to be.</li> <li>29. It educates you.</li> <li>30. You can learn a lot more.</li> <li>31. So I can learn to be a good nurse.</li> <li>32. To learn home economics.</li> <li>33. To get a better education.</li> <li>34. I'll know more.</li> <li>35. So that I can get educated.</li> <li>36. I'll learn a lot.</li> <li>37. I will get an education.</li> <li>38. I'll learn more about things.</li> <li>39. I think you will learn more.</li> <li>40. I can live in a dorm, cook, swim, and sew.</li> <li>41. I want an education.</li> </ol>

42. I want to get a good education.
43. To learn things and to get good jobs.
44. I think it would be fun.
45. So I'll know more.
46. So I can get a good job later.

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No	7	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I don't like school.</li> <li>2. It would cost my folks too much money.</li> <li>3. It is too hard.</li> <li>4. Mother doesn't want me to go.</li> <li>5. I don't think I would like to go.</li> <li>6. I don't like to work.</li> <li>7. I don't like to study.</li> </ol>
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Total	53	
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## E. Reading Interests

The results of investigations of the development of reading interests are roughly as follows.<sup>1</sup> Children just beginning to read (about 6 or 7 years old) show special delight in short, profusely illustrated, rather fanciful stories about animals or fairies or other children. Typical are the Peter Rabbit books. Gradually there is a certain emergence from fancy to fact; and for three or four years, beginning with 9 or 10, the boys are interested in tales of active adventures, in invention and mechanics, in the lives of famous men and in material about hobbies.

Boys and girls seemed about equally interested in mystery stories and this type ranked first in the list. The boys' strongest preference was for the mystery stories. The girls' strongest preference was for fairy tales. Fairy tales ranked third with the boys. Adventure stories ranked second with boys and third with the girls. Boys expressed more interest in detective stories than girls. Other types of stories were not of outstanding interest to the children. Table IX shows the type of story most liked by both boys and girls. Stories of mystery and fairy tales have a strong appeal for this age group.

Boys and girls from a high socio-economic background reveal more discrimination in their expressed reading interests, and evince greater enthusiasm for exciting adventure than pupils from a neighborhood of low economic and cultural status.<sup>2</sup> The pupils of the lower environment reveal

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<sup>1</sup>McKee, Paul, Reading and Literature in the Elementary School (Dallas: Houghton-Mifflin Company, 1934).

<sup>2</sup>Terman, Lewis M. and Lima, Margaret, Children's Reading (2d ed.; New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, 1931).

a pattern of development of reading tastes that lags behind that found among the more fortunately situated children.

These types of stories were determined by the child's own selection. Each child was asked to write his favorite type of story. In Table IX, the types of stories listed are those chosen by the child himself.



TABLE IX  
 TYPES OF STORIES MOST LIKED BY BOTH BOYS AND GIRLS

Type of Stories Preferred	Number of Pupils Preferring		
	Boys	Girls	Total
Mystery	14	15	29
Fairy Tales	11	16	27
Adventure	12	9	21
Detective	8	1	9
Animal	1	4	5
Folk Stories	0	3	3
Western	2	0	2
Travel	0	2	2
Ghost	0	1	1
Prison	0	1	1
Cowboy	0	1	1
Murder	0	1	1
Funny	0	1	1
Sad	0	1	1
Total	48	56	104

## 1. Magazines

Studies of magazines show almost 100 per cent of the younger children looking at the pictures and cartoons. Girls read more magazines than boys. Nine boys stated that they did not read magazines whereas only two girls made the same statement.

The eight representative children's magazines as constituting the collection in this platoon school are in order of their preference: Story Parade, Wee Wisdom, Child Life, Children's Activities, American Boy, Open Road for Boys, Playmate, and Boys' Life.

In their bibliographies of children's literature, Bamberger and Broening<sup>1</sup> list these children's magazines: Child Life, Parties (Dennison Publishing Company), St. Nicholas, Nature Magazine, John Martin's Book, American Boy, Youth's Companion, Popular Homecraft, Home Geographical Monthly, Boys' Life, and Model Airplane News and Junior Mechanics.

In comparison with this study, three magazines are the same in both groups. They are Child Life, American Boy and Boys' Life.

Table X shows the types of magazines most frequently read by both boys and girls. Many children listed adult magazines. An explanation of this is probably due to the fact that adult magazines are those which are more available in the home.

Magazines should be selected so as to procure for pupils of various ages, adequate treatment of a wide range of interesting, worthwhile content. At the same time, stimulating stories, poetical appeal, and artistic features should be given due consideration.

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<sup>1</sup>Bamberger, Florence E. and Broening, Angela, A Guide to Children's Literature (Baltimore: John Hopkins Press, 1931).

TABLE X

## TYPES OF MAGAZINES READ MOST FREQUENTLY BY BOTH BOYS AND GIRLS

Magazines Preferred	Number of Pupils Preferring		
	Boys	Girls	Total
Story Parade	6	13	19
Wee Wisdom	6	12	18
Child Life	1	8	9
Life Magazine	6	1	7
Saturday Evening Post	4	1	5
Children's Activities	0	4	4
Colliers	3	1	4
Farmer's Stockman	4	0	4
American Boy	3	0	3
Open Road For Boys	3	0	3
Movie Magazine	0	3	3
Good Housekeeping	0	3	3
Playmate	0	2	2
Popular Mechanics	2	0	2
National Geographic	2	0	2
Boys' Life	2	0	2
Farmer's Wife	0	1	1
Farmer's Journal	0	1	1
Ladies Home Journal	0	1	1
Do not read magazines	9	2	11
<b>Total</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>104</b>

## 2. Books

During the fourth year in school, children are now reading somewhat independently; they have formed an acquaintance with a considerable body of literature; they have developed preference for particular types of books.

Table XI shows the favorite book of each child. "Blaze and the Forest Fire" by Anderson<sup>1</sup> ranked first with the boys with a total of ten preferences. "Flicka, Ricka, Dicka and the New Dotted Dresses" by Lindman<sup>2</sup> and "Susanna's Auction,"<sup>3</sup> a French story, ranked first with the girls with a choice of four for each book.

The boys listed 30 different books and the girls listed 34. All these books are found in the school library or in the public library which is situated in the same block as the elementary school. It must be remembered that this school has the platoon type of organization and the children spend 30 minutes a day in the school library. This period is usually given to the children as their free reading period under the direction of a trained librarian.

Table XI shows the wide interest that these pupils have from their selection of books. Included in this list of books are: biography, myth and legend, animal stories, factual stories, achievements of people, safety stories, adventure stories and stories of other lands.

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<sup>1</sup>Anderson, Clarence William, Blaze and the Forest Fire (New York: Macmillan, 1938).

<sup>2</sup>Lindman, Maj Jan, Flicka, Ricka, Dicka and the New Dotted Dresses (Chicago: A. Whitman, 1939).

<sup>3</sup>Susanna's Auction; from the French; with il. by M. Boutet de Monvel, (Little Libraries) (New York: Macmillan, 1923).

TABLE XI  
FAVORITE BOOK OF EACH CHILD

BOYS		
Favorite Book	Author	Number
1. Blaze and the Forest Fire	Anderson	10
2. The Voyages of Dr. Dolittle	Lefting	4
3. Tom Sawyer	Twain	3
4. Treasure Island	Stevenson	2
5. Robinson Crusoe	DeFoe	2
6. Fairy Tales From the Swedish	Braekstad	2
7. Sambo and the Twins	Bannerman	2
8. Little Swiss Wood Carver	Brandeis	2
9. The Farm Twins	Perkins	2
10. Modern Story Book	Wadsworth	2
11. Willy Nilly	Flack	1
12. Tale of Peter Rabbit	Potter	1
13. Jerry and the Pony Express	Tousey	1
14. Little Tim and the Brave Sea Captain	Ardizzone	1
15. Safety Can Be Fun	Leaf	1
16. Midget & Bridget	Hader	1
17. Snipp, Snapp, Snurr and the Hobby Horse	Lindman	1
18. Ping, the Duck	Flack	1
19. Bobbsey Twins at the Circus	Hope	1
20. Warpaint	Brown	1
21. Taming Animals	Nida	1
22. The Pickaninny Twins	Perkins	1
23. Book of Cowboys	Holling	1
24. The Tree Boys	Nida	1
25. A Visit to Grandmother	Smith	1
26. The Cave Twins	Perkins	1
27. In Country and City	Smith	1
28. The Indian Twins	Perkins	1
29. Let's Take Turns	Nemec	1
30. Enjoying Our Land	Bush	1
Total		51

TABLE XI (Continued)  
FAVORITE BOOK OF EACH CHILD

GIRLS		
Favorite Book	Author	Number
1. Flicka, Ricka, Dicka and the New Dotted Dresses	Lindman	4
2. Susanna's Auction	French	4
3. Grimm's Fairy Tales	Grimm	3
4. Junior	Lattimore	3
5. Voyages of Dr. Dolittle	Lofting	3
6. Angus and the Cat	Flack	2
7. Jean Wanted a Kitty	Gemmill	2
8. Little Pear	Lattimore	2
9. Midget and Bridget	Hader	2
10. Tom Sawyer	Twain	2
11. Little Ann of Canada	Bailey	2
12. Heidi	Spyri	2
13. Smiling Hill Farm	Mason	1
14. The Like-to-do-Stories	Smith	1
15. Snipp, Snapp, Snurr and the Hobby Horse	Lindman	1
16. Indian Twins	Perkins	1
17. Thimble Summer	Enright	1
18. Big Miss Library	Baisden	1
19. Children of the Prairie	Curtis	1
20. Sambo and the Twins	Bannerman	1
21. Bunny Brown and His Sister Sue	Hope	1
22. Nixie Bunny in Manners Land	Sindlar	1
23. Down, Down the Mountain	Credle	1
24. School Friends	Nemec	1
25. Farm on the Hill	Darrroughorn	1
26. Water Babies	Kingley	1
27. Red Feather and the Star	Maiden	1
28. Mitty on My. Syrup's Farm	Holberg	1
29. Enjoying Our Land	Bush	1
30. George Washington	D'Aulaire	1
31. Little Tim and the Brave Sea Captain	Flack	1
32. Billy and Blaze	Anderson	1
33. Aunt Green, Aunt Brown and Aunt Lavender	Beskow	1
34. On the Farm	Robinson	1
Total		53

### 3. Comic Strips

An exploratory study of fourth grade children's interests in comic strips was undertaken because of the lack of objective information about the nature of these interests. That children enjoy the comics almost goes without saying. They seem to prefer them to many other forms of amusement and read them whether or not they read other parts of the newspaper. The term "comic strip" is used here for want of a better name of identifying the cartoon story. It is a term that is no longer adequate to cover the type of cartoons to which it is supposed to apply. Many "comics" are no longer comical. For example, the content of the comic most popular among the children studied is devoid of anything even remotely humorous.

The comic strip is a distinctive and revealing feature of our American culture. Something of the extent to which it affects us all is suggested by the fact that there are over 1,260 different comic strips and that comics are published in almost all of our newspapers. Roger Gay<sup>1</sup> has estimated that 80,000,000 Americans read the Sunday supplement comics alone. Even the teachers are impressed. An English teacher has asserted that "we Americans do think in comic supplement terms."<sup>2</sup> He goes on to develop the thesis that the comic strips bid fair to become the basis of an American mythology--they are, says he, "genuine materials of the American cult."

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<sup>1</sup>Gay, Roger C., "A Teacher Reads the Comics," Harvard Educational Review, VII (March, 1936), 198-209.

<sup>2</sup>Drachman, Julian M., "Prospectus for an American Mythology," English Teachers Journal, XIX (December, 1930), 781-788.



Table XII shows the comic strips most frequently read by both boys and girls. Superman ranked first with the boys by a wide margin. Blondie and Dagwood ranked first with the girls. Dick Tracy ranked second with both boys and girls.

The preference of the girls for comics of romance and family is indicated by their favoring Blondie and Dagwood over the boys' choices for comics of adventure such as Superman.

It is evident that the boys were particularly attracted by action, adventure, fighting, feats of strength and daring, fantastic tales of life, and thrilling escapades which are all involved in the one comic strip, Superman. Nineteen comic strips were chosen by the boys and girls as their choice for the most popular comics. Little Henry is the only comic in this list that is almost entirely in pantomime. Twelve of these comics are stories of adventure, three are animated cartoons, two are cartoons of child life, and two portray family life.

Many reasons were given for their preferences for certain comic strips. For the most part, comic strips are appealing because they are exciting, mysterious, and thrilling; they are full of action and fighting; they tell interesting stories; they present characters whose bravery, strength, beauty, and unfailing ability to master all difficulties appeal to the young heart and mind. Such reasons cover over two-thirds of the explanations given by the children for their choices. The element of humor, from which these cartoons derived their name, is mentioned very little.

TABLE XII

## COMIC STRIPS MOST FREQUENTLY READ BY THE BOYS AND GIRLS

Comic Strip Preferred	Number of Pupils Preferring		
	Boys	Girls	Total
Superman	23	8	31
Dick Tracy	7	11	18
Blondie and Dagwood	3	13	16
Hiawatha	3	5	8
Katzenjammer Kids	4	2	6
Tarzan	3	1	4
Little Henry	1	3	4
Mickey Mouse	1	2	3
Lone Ranger	2	0	2
Charlie Chan	0	2	2
Little Orphan Annie	0	2	2
Popeye	1	0	1
Joe Palooka	1	0	1
Navy Bob Steele	1	0	1
Sub Zero	1	0	1
Jane Arden	0	1	1
Yankee Doodle	0	1	1
Maggie and Jiggs	0	1	1
Porky, the Pig	0	1	1
Total	51	53	104

## CHAPTER IV

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of the investigation was to discover children's play-, life-, reading-, study-, and school-interests of fourth grade pupils of the elementary school. This investigation was made with the pupils of the fourth grade in the elementary schools in Bristow, Oklahoma, during the school year 1940-41. The 104 children studied in this investigation ranged in age from eight to eleven years. Of this number 53 were girls and 51 were boys.

The data tabulated in this study have several weak points. The main one is the failure to check the reliability by retesting. On the basis of the data presented, the following conclusions may be drawn:

1. Fourth grade boys are interested in the active and dramatic occupations, while the girls show a tendency to choose vocations which require specialized training.
2. Boys have a stronger interest in games involving motor activity, in which they usually excel; while girls prefer games of a more social nature.
3. Children have very definite likes and dislikes so far as school subjects are concerned. Certain subjects were rather consistently appreciated or liked by large numbers of children, whereas certain other subjects were rather constantly disliked or not highly appreciated.
4. It was evident that girls liked school more than boys, although both boys and girls liked school. Association with others, desire for companionship, and thirst for knowledge rank as the three greatest reasons.

5. The reactions of these 104 fourth grade children reveal strong interests in action and exciting adventure, fairy tales, and mystery stories. Studies of magazines show that almost 100 per cent of the younger children look at pictures and cartoons.<sup>1</sup> A greater per cent of girls than of boys read magazines. Types of stories chosen by this group are biography, myth and legend, animal stories, adventure stories, and stories of other lands. "Superman" ranked first with the boys and "Blondie and Dagwood" ranked first with the girls. This shows that girls are more interested in romance and family life, while boys prefer adventure.

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<sup>1</sup>Norris, Ruth E., "A Comparative Study in Children's Magazine Interests," Elementary English Review, (October, 1928), 214.

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