

Promoting the Reading Habit

by Richard Bamberger

Unesco

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Preface

The ability to read has long been recognized as essential to personal fulfilment and there is now growing acceptance of the premise that a country's social and economic progress depends in large measure on its people having access to the indispensable knowledge conveyed by the printed word. Removing the barrier of illiteracy, instilling the reading habit and providing an adequate supply of books - these are linked objectives which go to the heart of much of what Unesco seeks to accomplish.

If any doubt existed about the world-wide interest in the rôle of books, it would have been dispelled by the overwhelming response to Unesco's initiative in proclaiming 1972 International Book Year. Almost all of the Organization's Member States launched national programmes based on the main themes of the Year, one of which was the promotion of the reading habit. The experience of the Year showed that there is a considerable amount of research under way on this question, but much is yet to be learned. While it is comparatively easy to teach a child or an adult to recognize letters and words, the skill can be quickly lost. New readers, regardless of age, can become discouraged if reading is not a part of their cultural environment and if books attuned to their tastes are not easily accessible. Even in the most advanced countries, large sections of the population abandon reading once they leave school. International Book Year provided striking affirmation that it is imperative to discover and put into practice new methods to ensure that reading is at once a pleasurable experience and a gateway to knowledge.

Therefore, at the close of International Book year, the General Conference of Unesco called attention to "the general preoccupation with the

promotion of the reading habit and the need to synthesize the considerable body of research already being carried out in this field". This objective was maintained as one of the four main themes of the book development programme being pursued by Unesco for the long-term future.

It is in this context that Dr. Richard Bamberger, a leading international authority in the field, was asked to prepare the present study. Dr. Bamberger is director of the International Institute for Children's Literature and Reading Research in Vienna and author of a number of works on readership.

The author has made every effort in this study to present a summary of the findings of international research and of practical work in progress rather than a personal point of view. Modest in size though it is, the study draws upon voluminous sources from all over the world. This approach was made possible by the help of the International Institute for Children's Literature and Reading Research (Vienna), and the author wishes to record his thanks for the devoted co-operation of the Institute's staff.

Responsive to Unesco's call for international co-operation in the immense task involved in the world-wide promotion of the reading habit, the International Institute for Children's Literature and Reading Research - and the author personally - will gladly comply as far as possible with requests for further information on the questions dealt with in this study.

It is Unesco's hope that the present study will serve as a guide and encouragement to teachers, parents, librarians and a host of individuals around the world concerned with ensuring that the benefits of reading are shared by all.

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I. The Importance of Reading for the Individual and for Society

An examination of variations in reading habits from nation to nation demonstrates that the place occupied by books in the scale of values of those responsible for their promotion is of first importance: all State, community and school authorities, every teacher, parent and pedagogue must be seriously convinced of the importance of reading and books for individual, social, and cultural life if they are to work towards improvement of the situation. This conviction must then be transmitted to students of reading in a way appropriate to their stage of development.

The privilege of reading was reserved for the very few in ancient times before the discovery of printing, and even after the Age of Humanism it was accessible only to an educated élite.

Only in recent decades, when technological and economic development makes continuous demands on the intellectual collaboration of a majority of people, has the question arisen, how the "right to read" for all can be made a reality.

Reading research, one of the youngest branches of science, has thrown a new light on the significance of reading, not only with regard to the needs of society but also for the individual. The "right to read" also means the right to develop one's intellectual and spiritual capacities, the right to learn and make progress.

1. READING - A COGNITIVE AND A LANGUAGE PROCESS

Reading was once valued merely as a means of receiving an important message but, today reading research has defined the act of reading in itself as a multi-level mental process which contributes greatly to the development of the intellect. Great demands are made on the brain by the process of transforming graphic symbols into intellectual concepts; an infinite number of brain cells are activated during the storage process of reading.

Combining thought units into sentences and larger language structures is both a cognitive and a language process. Continuous repetition of this process results in cognitive training of a special quality.

This cognitive training consists of bringing to mind something previously perceived, and of anticipation on the basis of having understood the preceding text; the intellectual effort is increased and secured through repetition. For these reasons reading is an exemplary form of learning. Psychological studies have shown that improvement in the ability to read also leads to improvement in learning ability as a whole, going far beyond mere reception. Good reading is critical confrontation with the material and the ideas of the author. At a higher level and with longer texts, the comprehension of relationships, of construction or structure, and interpretation of the context, becomes more significant. If the new material is brought into relationship with already existing conceptions, critical reading is apt to develop into creative reading, a synthesis leading to completely new results.

Reading is one of the most effective means of systematic development of language and the personality. Work on the language is work on man. If Viennese psychologists have discovered that the language talents of Viennese children today have receded while their technical talents have increased, this fact must concern us as human beings from the viewpoint of general education. This finding also implies that the humanitarian element is weakening, that abilities to share an experience, for sympathy and evaluation, are on the wane. Greater technological understanding can hardly counterbalance this. Every day we are faced with the fact that the technological achievements of the present - from atomic energy to space research - contribute little to the solution of the problems of co-existence.

Regressing language talent is certainly not only due to a growing interest in technology. An equally important factor is the flood of visual stimuli which satisfies the child in the form of comics and restricts the linguistic experience potential by weakening the mind's imaginative powers. The fact that man's language powers and consequently his general intellectual powers are becoming impoverished can be counteracted by an increase in the ability to respond to literary experience. Since the opportunity to do so is rarely presented in everyday intercourse, we must depend upon the resources of literature. Early reading should therefore also be considered from the viewpoint of its influence in counteracting linguistic deformation and impoverishment. If we succeed in leading the child systematically to positive language experience before comics, illustrated magazines, and the flood of pictures presented by the mass media have gained possession of him, we shall be assisting him in his development as a human being.

Reading can help to remove the much-talked-about educational barriers, allowing more equal chances in education primarily by the promotion of language development and intellectual training, and reading enhances the possibility of adjustment to one's personal situation.

Books, therefore, do not have less importance today than in the past, but rather more. They are what they have been for centuries: bearers of knowledge from generation to generation (and they can hardly be superseded by any other medium in passing on intellectual achievement), cornerstones of intellectual and emotional life. Good books for young readers correspond to inner needs for models and ideals, for love, security and assurance. Books can help them master the ethical, moral and socio-political problems of life by providing exemplary cases, helping the reader pose and answer questions (and the question is a basic form of intellectual confrontation per se). Books for young readers help us to achieve our educational goal of developing the personality and helping young people to establish a concept of the world at large.

2. THE PLACE OF THE BOOK LIFE-LONG EDUCATION

The society of the future has often been described as the "learning society". Continuous learning is necessary, it is believed, if economic development is to be guaranteed. Today, however, in the face of environmental pollution and energy crises, perhaps more thought is given to safeguarding life; nevertheless, the tasks of learning

and relearning, and adjusting to ever-changing necessities, remain. Technological development continues to determine the change-over from manual work to intellectual work. Sociologists were certainly correct in estimating that approximately 100 years ago 80 people out of 100 worked at manual vocations and that in the near future it will be exactly the reverse: for every 20 unskilled labourers there will be 80 people engaged in intellectual professions.

In this light, then, reading and books have a new significance today and to complete one's schooling alone is no longer adequate. Progress in science and technology is developing at such a rate that the schooling we offer today will not be considered sufficient tomorrow. The task of the future is life-long education, or better still, life-long self-education.

Books have many parts to play in this long life of self-education. First, there is the necessity of meeting individual interests, needs and aspirations through individual selection of reading material. Each human being can be helped by books to develop in his own way, can strengthen his own critical ability, and learn to choose wisely from the general output of the mass media.

If the mass media offer a stronger initial stimulus - provided it is in the right direction - books are indispensable for deepening that impression and furthering individual pursuit of the subject.

For the first time in history reading is not the privilege of a small percentage of our society; it has become a necessity that more people read. Also, given the infinite wealth of subjects and areas of information in constantly growing publishing programmes, individual choice is ever more important.

"As compared to movies, radio and television, reading has certain unique advantages. Instead of having to choose from a limited variety made available to him by courtesy of the advertising sponsor, or from the currently available pictures, the reader can select from the finest writings of the present or past. He can read at a place and a time chosen for his own convenience. He can go at his pace and can slow down or speed up, take an intermission, reread, or pause and think at his own pleasure. He can read what, when, where and how he pleases. This flexibility ensures the continuing value of reading both for education and for entertainment..." (61, p.2)

A good reader is a good learner - this is one of the essential findings of reading research - and this fact is important for success both at school and in later life when we must be ready to adapt to new circumstances. Modern non-fiction books are an excellent aid in this respect.

3. NON-FICTION IN THE PROCESS OF EDUCATION

The main use of non-fiction during the school year is naturally as a supplement to teaching work, increasing interest in a given subject, and encouraging independent learning - even when school days are over.

Research by the International Institute for Children's Literature and Reading Research undertaken for Unesco brought out this point and also stressed that non-fiction develops an inquisitive attitude in the students. Reading of non-fiction improved academic achievement in geography by approximately 30% in one case mentioned in the study.

Incorporating non-fiction into teaching can help to develop talents and interests which last a lifetime and building up solid knowledge is of course a way of developing character. The relativity of opinions has made people uncertain but thorough knowledge in a field encourages strong personal attitudes, a decisive yes or no.

Good authors of non-fiction not only attempt to awaken interest in a field and to present knowledge about it, but also to establish its relationship with other areas. In this way they supplement the knowledge of subjects and systems in every area and establish the relationship between science and life and individual areas of knowledge.

The correct approach to non-fiction, with the teacher keeping independent learning in mind, leads to his pupils' being able to grasp impressions and to process their own knowledge. Only in this way will the use of free time after graduation from school be able to counterbalance the inevitable specialization in vocational training and in the vocation itself.

Of course, non-fiction raises certain problems: it can result in superficial knowledge or amount to no more than a frivolous encounter with the material, undermining respect for knowledge won through hard work. Therefore, the selection of non-fiction and training in its use take on special importance. The teacher must first introduce his pupils to the foundations and tools necessary for independent learning. Used correctly a work of non-fiction has a key position in the transition from general education in school to living popular education. The values to be gained from books and reading are, of course, only accessible to one who has mastered the technical reading skills and has the intellectual ability to read. Throughout the world attempts are being made to improve the teaching of reading, and also through school experiments and research projects to ascertain which methods guarantee the most success. The size of the present work, however, allows only brief reference to these efforts.

II. A Survey of the Reading Situation Throughout the World

Beyond the general dissimilarities in reading behaviour in the various regions of the world, reading culture also changes according to country, area (e.g. urban and rural), as well as within smaller groups such as classroom, family or age group. Many investigations undertaken on individual aspects offer starting points for improving the reading situation in general and for influencing reading behaviour.

1. DIFFERENCES BETWEEN INDIVIDUAL COUNTRIES

(a) Number of books purchased and borrowed annually per reader (10-65 years of age) (according to "Lesen, Leihen und Kaufen von Büchern", 13, p. 35).

	Purchased	Borrowed	Total
Belgium	2.5	3.2	5.7
France	1.7	4.5	6.2
Federal Republic of Germany	2.2	3.5	5.7
Great Britain	2.5	17.3	19.8
Netherlands	6	8	14
United States of America	6.3	6.3	12.6

The purpose of research done in Great Britain Mann-Burgoyne (67, pp. 15-38) was to present a general survey of book reading, combining American and European investigations:

According to a Gallup Organization Survey in the United States of America in 1950 the percentage of people who were reading a book at the time of the investigation was only 32% as compared with Australia 35%; Great Britain 55%; Canada 40%; Norway 43%; Sweden 33%.

On the other hand, F. D. Cleary (31) quotes the following results of a recent Gallup poll: in

reply to the question whether they were reading a book at the time of the inquiry, 83% of the subjects answered "no". Compared with the 1950 findings quoted by Mann-Burgoyne, the decrease amounted to almost 50%.

According to the German study by Schmitthen (See 107), the percentage of the population which reads a book at least three times weekly was: Belgium 20%; France 42%; Federal Republic of Germany 34%; Great Britain 45%; Italy 21%; Luxembourg 41%; Netherlands 45%.

In this context, another research finding quoted by F. D. Cleary is of interest: approximately 25% of the American population have public library cards, but only 10% use them more than once a month.

Statistics on books borrowed in various countries given in "Der Bibliothekar" (German Democratic Republic), issues 3-5/1973, are:

	Number of readers in % of the population	Books borrowed per person in the population
Finland	27.3	7.6
Netherlands	13.3	5.25 (= 40 per reader)
Czechoslovakia	12.7	3.8
Romania	22.6	1.8
Hungary	21.7	5.3

Although these figures must be interpreted with caution (e.g. trade union libraries are included in the statistics for Hungary and are not mentioned for the other countries), the dissimilarity nevertheless deserves attention.

(b) Readers and non-readers

A very recent study by Barker and Escarpit (Unesco, 1973) gives the following figures for

non-readers of books: in Italy 40%, in Hungary 39.4%, in France 53%.

An extensive Soviet investigation (342 p.) "Sovietshi chitatel" (The Soviet Reader), with a noteworthy chapter by S. M. Smirnova, I. P. Osipova and O. M. Smirnova: "Chatatel-rabochi i chitatel-Inshenier" (Workers and engineers as readers; 118, pp. 29-115), unlike the studies cited earlier which were based upon questionnaires or interviews, analysed readers' catalogues in the libraries as well. The study produced some astonishing findings, e. g. that 98% of the books read were works of pure literature, the type of book varying according to vocation and education.

(c) Trends in reading volume

Just as interesting, however, as the absolute number of readers are the trends in readership. Helen Robinson reported in 1956 (96) that in the United States in 1937, 29% of the population read books, while in 1956 the figure had dropped to 17%.

On the other hand, it is reported that in Denmark, the German Democratic Republic, Finland, Czechoslovakia and other East European countries the number of readers has increased in recent years. Comparison of the figures for the Federal Republic of Germany with those for the German Democratic Republic is especially interesting; whereas there was little difference in readership in West and East Germany, now the library statistics of the German Democratic Republic show that more is read than previously, and much more than in the Federal Republic.

Interpretation of the facts

The variations shown in the above-cited studies may be interpreted in different ways. Some of them may certainly be attributed to the varying methods of investigation and the problems involved in such inquiries must also be borne in mind.

As an example of such problems, I refer, inter alia, to two Austrian studies:

(1) In an inquiry by the Sociological Institute of the University of Innsbruck, 29% of the Tyrolese professed to belong to a book society. By questioning the book societies it was immediately discovered that the actual figure was only about 5%. Many of the subjects wanted to appear to be book readers.

(2) According to a poll conducted by the Viennese Fessler Institute for Opinion Research 24% of Austrians regularly read books. On the basis of sales figures and library catalogues, R. Bamberg established that probably not more than 10% can be considered regular readers. The Fessler Institute explained the difference: booklets of 32 pages were considered as books in the inquiry.

Nevertheless, it is certain that a great deal

more is read in some countries than in others, and by a greater proportion of the population. What are the reasons for this difference in reading behaviour?

Investigations and analysis of the individual statistics have ascribed it to the following factors:

(1) The position of books in the country's scale of values as expressed, inter alia, through the proportional financial expenditure on book promotion.

(2) The cultural tradition.

(3) Opportunities for reading, and here the school and public libraries play a decisive rôle.

(4) The rôle of books in the school and educational system.

The difficulty of isolating these factors in practical work can be seen with the help of several examples.

In the "book countries", especially in Scandinavia, about 30% more money is spent on school libraries than in the Central European countries. The reason is not to be sought in the status of books alone, but also in the general teaching methodology.

In the Scandinavian countries, teaching does not depend upon textbooks alone, but also on non-fiction and narrative literature. The teaching profession has "proven" to the public authorities and the government that this is necessary; whereas in most other European countries the school library has not yet become the "intellectual central heating plant" of the school, but merely serves the purpose of entertainment. Often it is not even easily accessible or opened at hours which enable pupils and teachers to supplement their work with suitable reading material regularly.

Another important factor has now come to light - there are still great numbers of non-readers in spite of the many libraries and other opportunities for reading which are available.

It was once believed that non-readers had merely not discovered the right books, but modern reading tests show that non-readers usually read so poorly that they cannot be expected to read books and interest in reading is therefore unable to develop. In short, many children and adults do not read because they find reading too difficult and access to books too complicated.

2. COMPARISON OF READERSHIP OF ADULTS AND CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

In almost every country (with the exception of the Soviet Union) usually twice as many children read as adults. The difference is even greater if one considers the difference between the life span of youth and that of adulthood: 7-16 as compared to 17-70.

In Denmark, 52% of the borrowers are children; they read 59% of the books loaned out. The reason for stopping reading is usually put as having given up the "habit".

Ten years ago in Vienna, 25% of the children used the public libraries; in 1972 only 17%. However, in schools where there is a library in the same building, 80% of the children are readers.

Even more curious is the disparity in behaviour between young readers themselves. In Austria, for example, 20% of children are zealous readers. Nevertheless, within this average there are classes in which no child reads more than three books a year, and others in which 70% to 80% are enthusiastic readers, i. e. reading 30 to 80 books annually.

For F. D. Cleary (31) the "golden age of reading as a leisure activity" lies between the ages of 8 and 13. In this period children show the most interest in reading and visiting libraries. After about the age of 13, however, interest in reading falls off greatly and the relationship to books wanes. In 1959, the "Senior Scholastic Magazine" made an inquiry among teenagers. The question "Did you - not counting homework - read for any period of time yesterday?" was answered in the negative by 54% of those questioned. Cleary traces this primarily to the fact that the reading programmes and opportunities to read at school stop at approximately this time.

Results and implications

These observations show that although it is temporarily possible to interest a number of school-children in reading, it is not always possible to imbed reading interests and reading habits effective

for a lifetime. The reasons for this may be found in the following facts:

(1) Reading in childhood satisfies the needs and interests of the various developmental phases too one-sidedly. When interests later change (love of adventure falls off), many children stop reading altogether. The motivation to read is too weak.

(2) For many children reading is closely associated with the activities and demands of the school; after completing their schooling they stop reading because "life" now means something very different to them than school.

(3) Other entertainment and educational media supplant reading.

Therefore, if we are to inculcate the habit of reading we must go beyond the needs and interests of the various developmental phases and motivate the child to fit his reading material to his changing intellectual needs and environmental conditions. Reading should become a habit determined by permanent motives rather than changing inclinations.

The results of investigations undertaken in Austria which dealt with the differences in reading behaviour within single schools or larger school districts show that those children who read extensively:

(a) usually have a very good rapport with their teacher and that the teacher himself is an enthusiastic reader who sees to it that his pupils experience the same pleasure in reading that he himself does;

(b) attended classes headed by interested, informed teachers and were well provided with reading material (classroom libraries);

(c) were "lured into reading" through continuous acquaintance with books and special methods of modern reading education.

III. Effective Teaching of Reading

GOOD READERS LIKE TO READ

For almost approximately 50 years the motto of library work was "the right book at the right time for the right person". The most important thing was to find books for various groups of people which suited their interests.

Analysis of readership and investigations of reading behaviour have proven, however, that book selection alone does not account for whether people read little or not at all. Austrian studies, especially of young readers, by analysing over 40,000 reading tests in combination with notes about books read, have clearly demonstrated that many children do not read books because they cannot read well.

No one likes to do something which is especially difficult for him. Obeying the law of least resistance he will resort to another level of entertainment or information or content himself with intellectual idleness, i. e. will take no interest in continuous life-long education. Cases of pupils who like to read and therefore read a great deal were also examined. It was found that these children usually displayed well-developed reading skills, that they read quicker and understood more than the average pupil. These children also belonged to social groups which later read more than the average, in institutions of higher learning and in professional life.

While systematic curriculum for the teaching of reading cannot be presented here, some guiding principles may be given which are based on the results of practical work in reading education and scientific reading research.

1. THE CONCEPT AND NATURE OF READING

The teaching of reading should correspond to the insights we have gained into the nature of reading. Reading is a complex process which comprises various developmental stages. It is, first of all,

a perceptual process during which symbols are recognized. The transfer into intellectual concepts then takes place. This mental task broadens into a thought process as the ideas are connected into ever larger thought units. However, the thought process does not merely consist of understanding the ideas perceived but also in their interpretation and evaluation. These processes cannot, for all practical purposes, be separated from one another; they fuse in the act of reading.

Perception of printed symbols takes place during the "fixation pauses" as the eye moves forward. The inexperienced reader only perceives one or two letters in a single fixation pause. Practice leads to a larger "fixation span", in which two or three words can be perceived at once.

With the addition of anticipation on the basis of groups of signals, more than 30 letters can be perceived "at a glance".

Perfect reading skill does not, therefore, consist of a well-trained ability to "combine sounds into words and words into thought units" (as was previously believed!), but rather of "immediate recognition of stored-up word groups". Broadening the span of fixation and the storage capacity are the result of a "practice effect", ensuing from extensive silent reading. Special exercises (flash exercises) can also produce improvement.

2. THE GOAL OF TEACHING READING

In addition to orientation as to the nature and process of reading, the goal of reading education is also important for effective teaching. R. Staiger (120, pp. 61-68) emphasizes four points:

(a) encouragement of the full use of the individual's capacities in his reading, so that it will have maximum influence on his welfare and also lead to self-realization;

(b) efficient use of reading as a tool of learning and inquiry; and also for relaxation and escape;

(c) constant broadening of students' reading interests;

(d) encouragement of an attitude toward reading which will lead to a lifetime interest in reading of many kinds and for many purposes.

3. SPECIAL TASKS AND METHODS FOR TEACHING READING

Although the method is highly dependent upon the teacher and the reading material available, nevertheless, certain fundamental principles are always important:

(a) Furtherance of reading readiness at every level. Whereas reading readiness was previously defined as the state in which a child is ready to learn to read, today attempts are made to determine reading readiness at every stage of development in order to set the standard for teaching reading for every individual pupil. Reading readiness itself can also be influenced at every level. At the pre-school age and during the first years of school, telling and reading stories aloud and talking about picture books are extremely important for the development of vocabulary, and even more so for motivation to read.

(b) Overcoming methodological dogmatism in teaching beginning reading. Since research has proven that children perceive integrally as well as synthetically, dogmatism in methodology (strict synthetic method or strict integral method) should be avoided. The approach to all pupils should be many-sided and the methods used should be eclectic.

(c) Reading in thought units. In teaching reading, ways should be found from the very beginning to avoid mechanical reading of syllables and words and to improve comprehension. When reading aloud is done well, the stored word groups are perceived in two-stroke thought units, visually and through pronunciation. The following flash exercises is most important for the first years of school: the lines, which consist of a single thought unit, are repeatedly covered with a card and uncovered. The teacher leads the following exercise: uncover - read! cover - speak! This exercise is both an excellent prophylaxis against dyslexia and good practice for correct silent reading in thought units.

(d) Reading aloud or silent reading in a classroom? In many countries reading in the classroom is usually done aloud. This trains the pupils unconsciously to read word by word rather than to grasp thought units. Reading aloud thus frequently results in regression and reading errors are introduced which can last a lifetime. In later life silent reading predominates, and this should also be the case in the classroom.

Practice in silent reading before beginning a reading task is extremely important for research has proven that comprehension is better in silent reading. Also, the children can work more actively than when one reads and the others listen (if

they do!). Silent reading is the basis for individual reading education.

Some reading aloud should nevertheless be practised as it furthers speech education and the aesthetic experience of the literary work of art.

(e) Individualized teaching of reading at every level of school. Research reports agree that pleasure and interest in reading and development of the reading habit can be attained far better through the individualized method of teaching reading than through systematic teaching of the whole class.

Nevertheless, individualized reading education should not become a dogma. There are situations in every classroom in which the teacher works with the whole class; sometimes group work dominates and frequent use should be made of individualized reading, with each pupil reading from the book he has personally selected.

Group structures in the class should not be based upon achievement alone, they should sometimes be founded upon reading interests or specific assignments.

(f) Suiting reading skills to the reading material and goal. Perfection in reading can best be judged by considering how well the reader can suit his reading skills (speed, concentration in comprehension) to the difficulty and importance of the material and to his own intentions in reading. For this reason, exercises in reading for quick information and exact comprehension of contents, as well as critical and creative reading, should begin early.

(g) Systematic training of reading achievement.

(1) Reading speed. Through training of reading skills (broadening the fixation span and increasing concentration - therefore less "regression") reading speed can be systematically developed. For a large number of children in the lower or middle attainment group the goal should be to reach the standards of the best group; and many poor readers should strive to reach the standards of the middle group. The "good readers" should, by the time they reach the eighth grade, have acquired a speed of between 200 and 300 words per minute for easy texts; with special training very good readers should be able to read more than 400 words.

(2) Comprehension. Coming to grips with the meaning of the text should progress as the concept of reading progresses, advancing from comprehension of words to understanding, interpretation, informative, critical, creative and aesthetic reading. Reading as a "thought process" is furthered by motivations and a questioning attitude. Exercises in comprehension, critical reading, etc., should be included, in particular, in the teaching of languages. Questioning by the teacher, discussions about what has been read and tests are all methods of evaluating progress. The quality of comprehension is more important, of course, than reading speed.

(3) Informative or fact-orientated reading. This is primarily reserved for the fifth through ninth years of school and should be developed in combination with the individual subjects.

Tasks: development of a "key vocabulary" for each subject; questioning reading by recalling previous knowledge of the subject; asking questions, initial quick scanning. Research in reading skills has developed various "formulae" for fact-oriented, "working" reading such as the SQ3R Formula survey, question, reading, reciting, reviewing. Short factual texts and later textbooks and non-fiction are used in training in information or fact-oriented reading.

(h) Measuring and evaluating achievement. Since reading education must revert to the standard reached by the individual students, regular measurement of achievement and interpretation of the results are extremely important.

Research by the International Institute for Children's Literature and Reading Research on the reading achievement, comprehension and reading habits of schoolchildren has clearly shown that the majority of the quicker readers usually also comprehend better. Quick readers usually read with better concentration, but they also perceive more words per fixation pause, which furthers understanding. For this reason, reading speed tests should also be given regularly in addition to comprehension tests. Experience has shown that children are especially interested in these tests, since they are able to see their own improvement.

By fourth grade, most good readers attain 200 to 300 words per minute. Comprehension can be measured by various kinds of tests. Mechanical testing of words, comprehension, etc. is less effective than ten questions about an interesting short story of 460-800 words. The questions must be chosen carefully, directed more to the relationships in the story than to individual details so that every correctly answered question means about a ten-per cent comprehension of the whole text.

In the upper grades tests for critical reading are also employed.

(i) Selection of reading material for teaching. In addition to the usual primers, home-made texts in the children's language (personal primers) and texts taken from practical life should be used from the start. The children learn in this way that reading is also essential for practical goals: they read work instructions, traffic signs, prohibitions, travel guides, shopping catalogues, etc. However, it is essential that a great deal of reading material which interests and delights the pupils be offered, leading not only to better reading ability but to a permanent reading habit.

Good children's books are therefore the foundation of reading education. Interest in the plot and the fate of the characters challenges the child to finish the book within a short time. In so doing, the prac-

tice effect is attained so necessary for comprehension in reading. It is here that classroom influence is combined with impulses from the personal sphere. But, more important than all the reading done in school is the teacher's influence on private reading habits. A good way of combining tendencies at school with private reading is the use of "reader" passports".

The reader passport

The reader passport was developed in Austrian schools on the strength of an experiment carried out at the reading laboratory of the Science Research Association in Chicago. The reader passport helps the child measure his own individual reading achievement and offers clear motivation to improve it. The goal and method of the reader passport are explained in the introduction written for the children:

When we want to travel to another country we need a passport. In the same way the reader passport will help us go to another land - no, to many other lands. These lands belong to a huge world: the world of readers.

When one can read well there are no borders. He not only travels to other countries, he travels in the past, in the future, in the world of technology, in nature, to outer space as well. He also finds the path to the innermost part of the human heart and becomes better acquainted with himself and others.

A good reader not only has more pleasure with books, he can also think better and learn better. That is easy to understand: people who read word for word very slowly do not understand the story nor the ideas. With practice one can read a group of words which belong together all at the same time, read quickly without hurrying and also understand better what one reads. For this reason our reader passport is a tool which teaches us to read more quickly and better and which helps us improve step by step. In order to see for yourself how much you learn during this school year, you can test your reading speed with the reading tests. Later you can then compare how many words you read each minute.

More important than reading quickly, however, is understanding what you read. Therefore, after you have read the text you receive a sheet with 10 questions. Under each question there are four answers. You must look for the right one and mark it.

When the answers are corrected in the classroom, you can see how many you marked correctly. For every correct answer you may enter 10 points. For example, if you have eight correct answers you have eight times 10 points - that is 80 points. You get the final number of points when you add the points for reading speed

and the points for the correct answers together.

It is very good if each reading test is a bit better than the one before it. But you need not be so disappointed if you do not always do better. (Maybe you do not feel well or are tired from gymnastics!)

You certainly also want to know what you can do to read better and more quickly. The best thing is to practice as much as possible.

Whoever reads half an hour each day will be surprised how much better his reading achievement is. Those pupils who can enter a large number of books in the list of books read on the next pages will soon be genuine "reading artists".

And which books should you read?

Begin with those which are best suited to your reading level. Compare the number of points you had in the last reading test, and then look for booklets and books which are given for this score on the back cover of the reader passport. They are not too difficult for you and you will like them.

Six more pages follow: Four pages for entering the books read voluntarily, in which the child notes how well he liked each one using figures corresponding to the marks given in school. The last two pages include titles of reading material arranged according to difficulty, which can be chosen by the child in light of the points he attains in the tests.

The reader passport helps the child not only to achieve regular success but also to recognize his own potential. In other words, every child should become acquainted with his weaknesses and his strengths.

The ascertainment of success by means of the reader passport is something different than the previous ambition to achieve a good grade. In the latter the pupil is involved in competition with others (often under very unequal conditions which simply cannot be surmounted); with the help of the reader passport he sees his own progress. When he knows that he now reads better than he did a month ago, it is a challenge for him to try to progress even further in the next month. In place of the previous feeling of uncertainty and dissatisfaction, frustration and embitterment, he now has the certainty that he is on the way up, and he will set himself the task of mastering his progress.

He also recognizes that reading becomes all the easier for him the more books fill the pages of his reader passport. In the upper classes the test results become less important for skilled students as compared to the book entries. The pupil will see that the level of his books improves, that he has, through his books, a window to the world, that he has developed personal preferences; in short, that he has become a "reader".

IV. Results of Research on Motivations for Reading and Reading Interests

"Interest is the touchstone to reading achievement, reading enjoyment and reading usefulness. It is the generator of all voluntary reading activity."

N. B. Smith

The chapter dealing with the importance of reading (Chapter I) was intended for those who are responsible for the teaching of reading. The young reader himself, does not read because he recognizes its importance, but rather from various motivations and interests corresponding to his personality and his stage of intellectual development.

Insight into these motivations and interests lightens the teacher's task of training successful young readers by presenting them with the right reading material, so that success not only includes good reading skills but the development of life-long reading interests as well.

We differentiate between general permanent reading motivations and interests and those which are characteristic of definite age levels (reading phases).

1. MOTIVATIONS TO READ AND READING INTEREST IN GENERAL

The concepts "motivation" and "interest" are often used in research with almost the same meaning. With "motivation" we think more of logically determined drives and intentions which guide behaviour, whereas emotional attitudes and experiences are the determining factor for "interests". An individual's interests and motivations are reflected in his way of life as a whole. What a child learns or does not learn at school often depends more upon his interests than his intelligence. This is evident both in the child's better achievement in his favourite subjects and in his choice of leisure-time activities.

Interest cannot, however, be defined as preference. Preferring one thing to another - granted there are various possibilities - is a relatively passive affair, whereas interest is dynamic and active; one not only chooses, but also chooses one's goal, creates the possibilities for attaining one thing or another. In the context of reading,

most research agrees in the following results:

(a) The first motivation to read is simply the fun of practising newly-acquired reading skills, the delight in the newly-discovered intellectual activity, and in mastering a mechanical skill. If the teacher responds to this motivation with easy, exciting reading material appropriate to the specific age group and continues to build upon this first material with books of increasing difficulty, the children will usually become good readers. A good reader likes to read.

(b) The drive to use and train the intellectual-spiritual aptitudes like fantasy, thought, will, sympathy, the ability to identify, etc. Result: development of aptitudes, expansion of the self.

(c) The need to become acquainted with the world, to enrich one's own ideas and to have intellectual experiences. Result: formation of a philosophy of life, understanding the world around us.

(d) These inner motivations and interests, usually not consciously perceived by the child, correspond to definite conceptions of experience by the child: delight in encountering familiar things and people (environmental stories) or unfamiliar and new things (adventure books), the longing to escape reality and live in a world of fantasy (fairy tales, fantastic stories, utopian books), the need for self-assertion, the search for ideals (biographies), advice (non-fiction), entertainment (sports books, etc.).

These motivations to read and the reading interests intersect with one another; nevertheless, the teacher should attempt to discover the dominant drives and interests of the young reader.

2. READING PHASES

"The education of the individual is only possible through those cultural goods which have an intellectual structure fully or partially adequate to the structure of the level of intellectual development of the individual." (Kerschensteiner)

After years of overestimating the importance of the psychological "reading ages", the present-day point of view, on the other hand, underestimates the tendency to read books typical for a certain age. Analysis of the lending records for thousands of books easily proves, however, that there are prevailing tendencies in developmental phases with of course individual exceptions.

We must strive to be just to both. Theorists working with children's literature agree that every teacher should also make his own observations and investigations in order to differentiate the individual deviations of single students from the "average" reading interests of a developmental phase. Interpretation of "reading diaries" or the lending catalogue, in which the pupils state how well they like the book by means of numbers from 1 to 5, is the easiest method.

The following characterization of reading phases follows the definitions of Schliebe-Lippert and A. Beinlich (103; 15):

(a) Picture book and nursery rhyme age (from 2 to 5 or 6). Characterized by Beinlich: "integral-personal, self-centred starting phase". The child makes little differentiation between the inner and outer world; he experiences his environment only in relationship to himself (age of magical mentality). The developmental task is to separate the ego from the environment. Picture books help if they present single objects from the child's environment by themselves. The next step is to put objects which belong together into groups and show the child in his relationship to various things in his environment. The child is less interested in the action of the plot than in the individual scenes. He loves the nursery rhyme because of its rhythm, the strong plastic power of the ideas, the rhythm of the play on words and their sounds.

His first interest in factual knowledge is met by the simplest of non-fiction picture books. With the first signs of independence and defiance (four years old), independent "games" with picture books are also important for educational purposes.

(b) Fairy tale age (5 through 8 or 9). Beinlich's characterization: "Reading age of magical realism". At this phase of development the child is primarily susceptible to fantasy. This is true for all school subjects, even for geography and science.

At the beginning of this period the child especially loves fairy tales which come from an environment familiar to him. The more he grows away from identification with the fairy tale figures and enjoys fairy tales as games of fantasy, the more he favours figures and stories from a far-away world of wonders. The delight in rhythm and rhyme and the love of poetry continue.

(c) Environmental story age of the "factual" reading age (9 to 12). Characterized by Beinlich: "Construction of a realistic, rationally-ordered,

practical façade in front of a pseudo-realistically masked adventure-magical background".

The child begins to orient himself in the concrete, objective world. More and more frequently the questions "how?" and "why?" are added to "what?". The curious child grasps the things in his environment with passion; these should not, of course, be offered in dry descriptions, but rather as stories, as living events. Interest in fairy tales and sagas is still evident in this factually-oriented intermediate phase but the longing for the adventuresome also begins.

(d) Adventure story age: adventurous realism or the "apsychological sensorially-oriented reading phase" (12 to 14 or 15). During the pre-adolescent developmental processes the child gradually becomes conscious of his own personality; he loosens or undoes previous bonds (the second age of independence and defiance). This is the age at which displays of toughness and gang-forming predominate. Readers can be interested primarily through plot, events, sensationalism. With girls, the "devilish child" (Beinlich) is often in the foreground as well as interest in cheap sentimentality and self-adulation. General interests: adventure books, sensational novels, travel books, trash and cheap sentimental stories.

(e) The years of maturity or the "literary-aesthetic sphere of reading development" (14 to 17). The discovery of one's own inner world of critical self-centredness, development of a plan for life, development of various scales of values.

Besides plot, form and content are also valued in reading material. Interest in the outside world is replaced or supplemented by participation in the inner world and the world of values. Reading interests: adventure with more intellectual content, travel books, historical novels, biographies, love stories, topical subjects, engaged literature, factual material which often has to do with vocational preferences.

3. THE READER TYPES

Reading motivations and interests differ not only with the various age groups, but with individual reader types as well. The typology is based either upon reading techniques, the reading intention or the preference for a certain kind of reading material. It can be considered as a new field of research, the findings of which nevertheless are important for motivation to read and habit-forming in this area. C. S. Lewis (79), for instance, differentiates between literary and utilitarian reader types, R. Escarpit (44) between "connoisseurs" and "consumers".

In advising readers, R. Bamberger (3) emphasizes four types, based upon the character of reading matter favoured:

(a) The romantic type. Preference for the

magical. This type is especially conspicuous between the ages of 9 and 11, when other children are more susceptible to environmental stories or non-fiction.

(b) The realistic type. He is above all recognizable by his rejection of the so-called fantastic book - "Alice in Wonderland", "Münchhausen", "Don Quixote", etc. The love of fairy tales and improbable adventure stories is also missing. This type is especially conspicuous as an exception in the second and fourth reading phase.

(c) The intellectual type. He looks for reasons, wants to have everything explained, loves instructional material, seeks the moral of a story or the practical advantage. Therefore he prefers non-fiction and wants to learn early. Above all, he stands out from the average reader in the fourth and fifth reading age.

(d) The aesthetic type. He loves the sound of words, rhythm and rhyme. A special liking for poetry, loves to memorize poems, copies the "pretty parts" out of books, often rereads books. Rare, but found in every age group.

Of course, these types rarely appear in "pure" form. In practical work "mixed types" are found in which one tendency or the other dominates. The pioneer of the German "Jugendschriftenbewegung" (activities in the field of children's literature), Heinrich Wolgast referred as early as 1896 to the importance of reader types:

"The diversity of reader types among young people must be taken into account in the school library. The child should be made happy in his own fashion within the limits of good taste. The child's right to reading material fitting his tastes and nature should be emphasized more than ever in an era when everything is pushing towards mass culture." (138)

According to Wolgast, one could differentiate between the reader addicted to marvels, trash or adventure, and the realistic or aesthetic reader. A differentiation between quick, slow and fluctuating readers is especially useful.

4. THE SOCIOLOGICAL ASPECT OF READING MOTIVATION AND INTEREST

(a) The socio-economic viewpoint

Most research in this area has primarily compared the social position of various population groups with their relationship to books. For instance, the American reading theorist, W. Gray (57) investigated five different social classes, drawing upon the situational research "Elmtown Youth" by A. B. Hollingshead (65). "Reading environments" are explained through differences in the bases of experience and education and patterns of behaviour are characterized. It is a task of society, and of the school as well, to give every

child an equal chance, i. e. to make the most of the reading potential of every child by furthering his reading interests. Those children whose experiences before and outside of school have not been positively influenced in the direction of reading need special help.

Interesting in this context are the findings of two Austrian investigations which discovered that the socio-economic aspect is perhaps not as decisive as has been thought until now, and that with special efforts it can be made still less important.

Dr. Otwald Kropatsch worked with a team of 80 teachers in Styria on the "Reading education of 10 to 14 year-old children" (75) and found in the course of his four-year efforts that socio-economic disadvantages can be overcome to a great extent through special endeavours by teachers and the community as a whole. While the differences between the various social classes remained relatively the same in the control groups where no special effort was made, with those children who were paid special attention by their teachers and, above all, who were given an abundance of books, the differences between the social classes vanished almost completely (the attainment of children of every social class and their relationship to books could be greatly improved).

In the same context the Austrian research project on reading attainment, reading interests and reading behaviour of ten year-old children, completed in spring 1974, discovered that the following factors are decisive for reading achievement and developing reading habits, in this order:

- (1) the number of books with which the child is acquainted,
- (2) the stage of language development,
- (3) intelligence and, only in fourth place,
- (4) the father's vocation, i. e. the socio-economic factor.

The influence of (1), the number of books put at the child's disposal, can also be considered a result of "teacher influence". The teachers not only knew how to awaken interest in reading but also presented the children with the right reading material.

(b) Reading as a status symbol or a social value

In the investigation by Mann-Burgoyne (85) quoted above the following sociological model (see page) was developed. The novel thing about this model is the middle group, "social reading", which Mann describes as "status-conferring". This group reads best-sellers primarily, and other books which one can "talk about". This motivation often also leads to reading classics and other higher literature in the hope of suggesting one's personal status in this manner.

A SOCIOLOGICAL MODEL FOR THE ANALYSIS OF LEISURE BOOK READING

Work	"Utilitarian" Reading	"Social" Reading	"Personal" Reading	Leisure
	← Extrinsic	Books reviewed and recommended by opinion leaders	Intrinsic →	
 Work books Texts Manuals Reference books	 Home manuals and reference Cookery Car manuals Guides Hobbies	 ← Self-improvement → Non-fiction History Biography Memoirs Travel Fiction "Good" novels		 Distraction Romances Mystery Detective
		Status-conferring books		Only inverted status
For reference only		May be read and re-read		Read once
Buy to have at hand		Buy or borrow for self. Perhaps buy after reading borrowed copy		Buy paperbacks Borrow from library or friend "Throwaway" Doubtful as present
Borrow to extend knowledge		Buy as present if recipient's taste known, but status present anyway		
Buy good ones previously borrowed		Buy as present only if recipient's tastes very well known		
Buy as gifts		Challenge the reader's attitudes and beliefs		Reinforce the reader's attitudes and beliefs

(c) Reading according to vocational groups

This question has been dealt with in the most detail in the extensive sociological investigation in the Soviet Union quoted above, "The Soviet Reader" (118), which combined inquiry methods with the analysis of readers' catalogues in the libraries.

The investigation showed that 98% of the subjects read purely literary writings; only the type of books varied according to vocation and education.

Of the authors named, approximately 100 were from the period prior to the revolution, approximately 80 foreign classic authors, about 90 modern foreign writers. Comparison of answers with the readers' catalogues in the libraries showed for the workers:

80% read pre-revolutionary books (according to the readers' cards 22%);

77% read Soviet books (according to the cards 89%);

60% foreign classic authors (according to the cards 38%);

39% foreign modern authors (according to the cards 63%).

Questions: can the differences be explained by ownership of books? (More classics are owned than modern works?) Do the catalogue cards show that oral statements must be treated with caution? (This is certainly very probable! The

wished-for image plays a large rôle, especially with the classics.)

Contrary to the western countries where pure literary writings dominate unequivocally, the engineers and workers in the Soviet Union read almost as many factual books: over 80% read professional literature and non-fiction of all kinds; socio-political literature is read by 85% of the workers and 93% of the engineers (according to the catalogue it is 80% and 73%!)

The book can certainly also be viewed as a status symbol in the Soviet Union: people who read are considered educated. (This point of view is certainly not unimportant for furthering motivation to read.)

The general appreciation of education and books in the Soviet Union has a very special influence upon the motivation to read. The study proves that the observation often made by visitors is correct: in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics one sees more people reading books in trains, subways, etc., than in any other country.

The example of the Soviet Union also proves, however, that the number of people who read is less dependent upon "natural factors" than upon the position of books in social life and the personal desire for education. "Interest" in definite types of reading materials is less decisive here than the motivation to read in itself.

Studies in the United States of America quoted

by F.D. Cleary show - although they are based on other conditions - that a great deal can be achieved through the right education. This research clearly demonstrated that people with more education read more. Of the college graduates questioned, 75% had read at least one book in the year prior to the inquiry, whereas only 43% of the high school graduates and 12% of the subjects with eight years of school had read a book in the previous year.

5. PRINCIPAL TYPES OF READING AS AN EXPRESSION OF MOTIVATION

The reader types are closely related to the motivations to read, as reflected in the various kinds of reading chosen. Giehrl refers in his study "Der junge Leser" (52, pp. 31-37) to four primary types, which usually are found in reality as "mixed types". He differentiates, according to the predominant motivation or intention in reading, among

(a) Informative reading - thought by Giehrl to be the most frequent and comprehensive type. This holds only for adults, of course. The primary motivation for informative reading is the need for orientation in life and in the world. Written information is more trustworthy than oral, the former being in "black and white" and therefore easier to remember and verify. It also has this advantage over audio-visual information which is usually only given incidentally through television.

"The importance of informative reading is explained by the extraordinary importance of information for our personal life and life in the community." (Giehrl)

The need for information can also have negative effects if it becomes a means of satisfying curiosity and the desire for sensationalism as expressed in reading news about crime, etc.

Guidance in the correct use of information, comprehension, interpretation and analysis of contents is therefore an important element in the cultivation of motivation to read.

(b) Escapist reading - is traced back to the need for fulfilling wishes. This type certainly dominates with children. The person wants to escape reality, to live in a world without responsibilities and limits. The love of all the peoples of the world for fairy tales, which later were taken over from adults by children, is proof of this. Considered purely from its content, escapist reading is predominantly negative. Flight into a dreamworld, into "atmosphere, illusion, sensation, tension and erotic stimulus" are in the foreground. What is not found in life - success, prestige and pleasure - is sought in reading material. Picture magazines and cheap novels owe their existence to the addiction to escapist reading.

(c) Literary reading - too, is a search beyond reality. It seeks inner meaning, recognition of

the typical in the everyday event. When we think of a "good reader", we think of a literary reader for whom reading is an aesthetic experience.

Unfortunately, hardly 5% of people are life-time readers of this type, although this is the primary aim of reading education. Anyone familiar with practical work must ask whether study of literature in school does not lead away from it rather than to it. In this context it is also interesting that, in spite of the great development which interpretation of literature has made in recent decades, the "capacity for literary reading and the love of literature have not grown at all" (Giehrl).

If we want to cultivate literary reading we must remember that literature offers sufficient possibilities so that every reader can draw from it according to his needs and methods, and that we should be cautious in helping the reader discover his method.

(d) Cognitive reading - has the same motivation as philosophy; longing for knowledge about and understanding of oneself, others and the world. "Cognitive reading is basically interrogative reading which demands a great deal of intellectual activity by the reader, critical open-mindedness and receptive ability." (Giehrl, p. 47) Cognitive reading is nevertheless not limited to philosophy. Information from a newspaper can lead to reflection as does scientific literature, religious material, or pure literature.

6. SOME RESEARCH RESULTS IN THE FIELD OF READING INTERESTS

Besides the general investigations on the concept and nature of reading interests, results of research are available concerning factors having an influence on reading interests and on various special areas within this field. Many studies - primarily American ones - deal concretely with one preferred book type or another or attempt to explain the differences between reading interests of males and females or correlations between reading interests and other personal or collective traits.

(a) Sex differences

Of interest in this context is George W. Norvell's investigation quoted by N. B. Smith (117, p. 409) which examined the interests of approximately 24,000 children in the third through sixth grades and arrived at the following result: the children preferred "adventurous action, physical struggle, human characters, animals, humour, courage and heroism, patriotism. The unfavourable items mentioned for boys were description, didacticism, fairies, romantic love, sentiments, girls or women as leading characters and physical weakness in male characters".

Norvell also referred to the fact that the differences in interests between boys and girls are noticeable at an early age. "Girls favoured lively adventure, home and school life, human characters, domestic animals and pets, romantic love, sentiment, mystery, the supernatural and patriotism. These items were disapproved of by girls: violent action, description, didacticism, girls and boys younger than the reader (except babies), and fierce animals." Similarly, Harris (61, pp. 452f.) summarized the general reading interests of children: "Primary grade children generally enjoy short, fanciful stories involving talking animals, fairies, and other mythical creatures".

Following a study by J. O. Butler (27), Harris writes that second grades give "preference to fantasy, followed by fairy tales, animal stories, and home and school life; the lowest category was science and nature". Interest in the fanciful usually increases until the age of eight or nine and then gradually declines. In this age group sex differences are still very slight. They become noticeable at the age of nine or ten. Boys begin to be more enthused about adventure and mystery tales; they also like historical stories and biographies; factual books about technology, science, inventions and books dealing with their hobbies also appeal to many of them.

Girls prefer emotional stories, family and school stories and, between 11 and 14, are primarily interested in romantic stories. Although they share the boys' interest in mystery and adventure, scientific and factual reading material usually has little appeal to them. On the other hand, boys care little about human interest stories. "Probably the most important finding about reading interests, however, is the tremendous range of individual differences both in amount of voluntary reading and in the specific interests that are expressed. Even in a group of children who are similar in intelligence, age and cultural background, the range of individual preferences is tremendous. While a knowledge of the general trends is helpful to a teacher in allowing him to anticipate the interests of his pupils, it does not relieve him of the responsibility of trying to discover the particular interests of each pupil." (p. 455)

(b) Expectancies

The Hamburg study by Malte Dahrendorf (34) also defined the reading interests and motivation for reading from the point of view of what children expect from reading. He found that children seek:

Excitement and adventure	41.3%
Learning, in particular about their hobby	34.5%
Escape from boredom or amusement	31.5%
Fun and pleasure	0.5%

What they like, what interests or entertains them	15.4%
Humour	9.1%
Advantage for schoolwork	6.1%

Here, as in the American studies, information clearly plays a small rôle. It obviously does not fit into the youthful developmental phase. It will therefore be necessary to bring reading into relationship with this need when it arises later in life.

Dahrendorf also interpreted as follows some statements by children about what gives them pleasure in reading:

- (1) the feeling of being able to master the book alone;
- (2) books which appeal to their personal interests;
- (3) to satisfy the child's need for experience, books should be clearly written, exciting and understandable;
- (4) with the help of books the child wants to escape everyday monotony. The young reader demands the unusual, release from his everyday world, intensified life. This should not be understood (and criticized) as mere escapism, but rather as the expression of the attempt to expand and grow beyond oneself;
- (5) through books and the dialogue with them one hopes to overcome loneliness;
- (6) children find pleasure in putting themselves in the place of the figure in books, in feeling and experiencing with them. They want to identify, to be personally addressed, to take part in the events in the book;
- (7) many children like to exercise their powers of fantasy and find delight in being able to imagine everything so well;
- (8) adolescence, with its ability to understand psychological motives and to interpret human behaviour, is characterized by curiosity about oneself, which can be satisfied in part through the experiences of others;
- (9) reading for one's hobby, as contrasted with reading as a hobby; the latter is a reading phase which many children - primarily, but not exclusively, in non-classical secondary schools - reach at about the age of 14. Such readers have already taken an important step in developing permanent reading habits.

Of special importance is Dahrendorf's repeated statement that children develop little pleasure in reading if reading is difficult for them. Children themselves often express this: "I have no perseverance and no pleasure. And I can't read well either", writes a 13-year-old girl. Just as important are those statements which show that the way reading material is dealt with at school ruins reading for many children. It is evident that teaching work should take the children's reading interests into consideration.

The investigation by the Finns A. Lehtovaara

and P. Saarinen (78) is also related to this problem. The authors attempted to examine the factors which determine reading interests. With 13- and 14-year-old children they discovered five basic needs which can be satisfied through reading:

Factor I: Adventure and excitement. This wish is probably present in anyone reading for entertainment: in the case of young people who still have insufficient vents for tension in their own instinctive make up, this wish becomes more prominent.

Factor II: Sentimental fantasies; i. e. desire most clearly expressed in day-dreams, a retreat into an imaginary dream-world where the emotional content of infancy becomes possible in an adult sphere (being loved and coddled, preference without achievement, security).

Factor III: Emotion with an erotic component.

Factor IV: Symbolic-aesthetic leanings.

Factor V: The need to assimilate knowledge in narrative form, to acquire facts, and to understand relationships - i. e. cognitive curiosity.

(c) Motivations and interests in relationship to the needs

M. D. Glock (55, p. 65/1) relates motivations and interests to individual needs and those determined by developmental phases:

"A common method of analysing motivations is presented by the need theory. An individual presumably behaves as he does in order to satisfy a need. Some of the prime motivations of behaviour in our culture are the needs for affection, belonging, approval, independence and adequacy ...". "By learning to read well, the pupil discovers ways of satisfying these important needs."

P. Witty (133, p. 141) emphasizes that it is the teacher's task to judge the importance of the various interests, and he, too, discusses the relationship of interests to needs:

"If we analyse the lists of favourite books we will find many titles whose popularity depends upon the reader's identification with the book's heroes. If we examine the reasons for this identification, we see that the figures in the book satisfy those needs which have a primary place among the wishes and hopes of the reader."

(d) Summary of the results of research on reading interests of groups

The first extensive summary of interest research was published in 1941. L. Thorndike (124) gathered

the findings of two decades of American research. He arrived at the following generalizations:

(1) If books are classified into types according to subjects, it is found that the most frequent choices of bright, average and dull children fall in the same categories. In the upper elementary grades, adventure and mystery stories in the case of boys, and these, together with home and school stories in the case of girls, account for the largest proportion of choices at all levels of intelligence.

(2) The reading of bright children, however, includes a wider range of titles, more science, biography, informational material, and a generally higher quality of material.

(3) Very bright children are differentiated from average children less by the material they read than by the age at which they read it. Titles which are read by the average child of 11 or 12 are read by the very bright child at the age of 8 or 9.

A survey of the research in the German-speaking area was given by Ursula Wölfel in 1961.

An attempt was made to gather insight into the various areas of work with young readers, primarily through investigation of the reading interests of urban and rural children, of northern and southern German children and of young people in special developmental phases (e. g. in the "years of indiscretion"; H. Schmidt). A summary of the findings verifies the trend proven by research in other countries that general interest in reading falls off with advancing years (approximately 16 years of age) and that the reading interests are generally related to education (type of school) and opportunities to read (lack of opportunity in rural areas).

This means therefore that to date attempts have only been made at summarizing American and German research. The task is still open for other countries or for an international survey.

In a project commissioned by Unesco on "International Aspects of Children's and Young People's Reading", the International Institute for Children's Literature in Vienna investigated which children's books were read most in five countries - Denmark, Czechoslovakia, Spain, Hungary and Austria - and arrived at the surprising finding that both the very good and the inferior books which topped the sales and reader figures were almost exclusively "international" ones, i. e. translations read in all five countries.

Further research on this question would be especially interesting.

V. Factors which Influence Reading Interests

It is not only the contents and themes of reading material that are decisive for reading interest but several other factors which are of special importance for the young, unskilled reader.

1. SELECTION OF TYPE AND LINE LENGTH

For the first reading years all books must be published in large print: for the first school year 16-point, for the second 14-point, and for the third and fourth 12-point. This ensures easy and certain eye movements. The lines should also be kept as short as possible. Important for the first two years of school is printing in thought units, each line consisting of a single unit (later two), making it easier for the child to grasp relationships.

Larger spacing between lines and division of the text also have a positive effect upon the desire to read.

Progress in reading skills can be gauged by noting how quickly children become accustomed to smaller type, and lines that are closer spaced and longer. Good readers can easily do so in the second year of school but for the normal average child this is accomplished in the fourth year.

2. ILLUSTRATIONS IN CHILDREN'S BOOKS

The language of pictures is encountered by the child before that of letters. Since he has already learned to grasp the meaning of pictures, beginning reading material should have many of them.

Illustrations have a double attraction for beginners and for poor readers: they decorate the text, stimulate interest and divide up the book so that the child can turn the pages often and have the feeling of reading quickly.

The pictures help make the text understandable.

The general guiding principles which apply to the problem of relationship between illustrations and texts are as follows:

At the beginning picture books with text predominate, with 50% to 70% of the volume devoted to pictures.

The next stage comprises illustrated texts with the share of pictures amounting to 50%, preference being given to large illustrations.

By the third and fourth years of school illustrations make up only about 25% of a book.

It is usually better to have a few large pictures rather than a great many small ones. For children who read well and like to read, type and illustrations have a less important rôle. They also read books with small print and often even prefer non-illustrated books. With very interested readers this sometimes happens by the second year of school.

Indifference to type size and illustration is a standard for reading readiness, reading ability and interest in reading.

3. OPPORTUNITIES FOR READING OR THE AVAILABILITY OF BOOKS

Research has verified the fact that the "opportunity to read" or the availability of books plays an important rôle in awakening reading interests. The number and type of books read is determined to a great extent by the reader's "book environment".

Well filled central school libraries are considered essential by schools in the "book countries". Furthermore, especially in Sweden, Great Britain and to some extent in the United States, additional well-stocked classroom libraries are also the norm. In Denmark, good classroom libraries are obligatory for the first through fourth grades and recommended for the upper grades.

In Austria, the following solution has been found: the goal is to have both a central school library and individual classroom collections. If financial means are inadequate, the classroom library has priority. In this way the children are constantly surrounded with books, the teacher can advise them at any time, and he also sees how many and which books each child uses for school work or takes home.

I found a typical example for "opportunity" in Alma Ata, the capital of Soviet Kazakhstan. Books accompanied children everywhere - at home, at school, in the Pioneer Club, in kiosks, at the parks or swimming pools, in the hospital and even in the huts near the fields where the children often waited for their working parents. Very inexpensive books were sold in shops of every kind, and I often saw parents buy such booklets for their children while shopping.

4. TIME FOR READING

Of what use are all the "opportunities" if there is no time to read? We have repeatedly spoken of the importance of the practice effect, usually relating this to the volume of material read. The time spent by the child reading is just as "measurable".

In those countries where a great deal is read the curriculum allows more hours for reading. In France, for example, in the first grade there are four whole half-hours daily set aside for reading. Combined with language, arts, geography, etc., it happens that almost half the time in the first grade is spent in reading. In the years following, too, much more time is devoted to reading in French schools than, for instance, those in Central Europe. It is nevertheless interesting that in the countries where more time is devoted at school to reading, the children also read more at home, see "Books and Readers in France" (108).

Of the 300 children and young people questioned, 19% read at least seven hours weekly; 36.5% read between five and seven hours weekly; 28.5% read between one and five hours weekly; 16% read less than one hour weekly.

It is also useful to know that children who spend more time on reading, more frequently read books rather than magazines, booklets, etc. Similar observations have been made in Scandinavia and Great Britain. In addition, the many "papers" the children work up alone are done in connexion with books.

Much sociological research in recent decades has been devoted to discovering how children spend their time. In previous years reading topped the list for many children, followed by games,

sports, making things, movies, etc. Recently the situation has changed immensely. In some countries, as in the United States, children spend on the average as much time watching television as in the school. How then can the "practice effect" be attained so that these children really learn to read?

The question of young people's reading is taken especially seriously in Japan. Downing (40) reports on inquiries which showed that most parents were interested in their children's reading and were also aware of the books they read. Not a single reply to the question was "I don't know". Nevertheless, here, too, the time spent reading had clearly decreased between 1960 and 1965. In 1965, only 13% of the elementary school pupils read from 30 to 60 minutes daily, whereas in 1960 it was still 40%. In 1960, however, only 23 people out of 100 owned a television set; in 1965 the number had increased to 83!

The task for the future is therefore to guide children to regular reading and gradually to expand the time which is daily spent in reading. If reading time is left to chance, television and other occupations will prove themselves more inviting. The task of gaining time for reading applies both to school work and free time.

5. READING INTERESTS AND TEXT DIFFICULTY

It is a setback for reading development if a child begins to read only to put down the book again almost at once. Examination of individual cases brings an important fact to light: the reason is usually not that the book is not interesting enough, but rather that it is too difficult and overtaxes the child's reading skills. Selection of books according to their level of difficulty is therefore extremely important, especially when dealing with children with reading problems.

The goal of readability research, under way primarily in the United States, Sweden, Denmark and Austria, is to determine the difficulty of a text from various points of view:

The difficulty of the text from the point of view of form: decisive are the average sentence length, average word length, word frequency (determined with a frequency dictionary), frequency of word repetition (a criterion for the facility of a text).

The difficulty of the text as regards content can only be estimated in the context of the stage of education of the reader. Not only his formal training but also his interest in certain subjects play a rôle here. Readers who are interested in historical books, for instance, can master more difficult works with pleasure.

The text's emotional appeal or the human elements.

Research on the influence of reading done in

the United States, Germany and Austria has shown that certain qualities of reading material are especially important both for motivation to read as well as for the effect of reading. In this context, Ethel Newell (89), who has worked extensively in the field of bibliotherapy, emphasizes emotional factors and vividness of description. Douglas Waples (128) likewise emphasizes vividness, novelty and emotional charge. The study by the International Institute for Children's Literature and Reading Research on the most popular children's books in several countries quoted above also showed that the books preferred all were vivid and had emotional appeal. Various readability formulae have been constructed in order to help determine the difficulty of a text objectively. In the United States there are over fifty such formulae. That of Spache is especially good for the first reading age and that by Dale-Chall for the middle and upper levels. The Cloze test method is most suitable for upper age groups. In Europe, the Lix Method has been developed in Sweden. The Viennese International Institute for Children's Literature and Reading Research is working at present on the development of several possibilities for the German-speaking area, combining text form and reading achievement (tests) as well as language development (Cloze methods).

6. FACTORS WHICH INHIBIT THE DEVELOPMENT OF READING INTERESTS

"The Good, one is assured, is always Evil that's ignored".

W. Busch

The factors which it is almost impossible to influence - such as intelligence, social status, etc. will not be taken into account. Emphasis will be given rather to problems for which human beings are responsible which may limit natural development and render difficult or ineffective measures intended to develop reading interest.

Very generally, any influence should be avoided that works against the natural development of reading, in particular against motivations and interests. A few important points are mentioned here:

(a) Children are not "miniature adults" and motivations based upon reason are therefore for the most part ineffective. Predominance of the "drive to play" in the first years of school is, however, often not taken into consideration. Mistakes are made here primarily by overemphasis of exercises in reading skills.

(b) The fundamental idea that it is necessary to train individual aspects of reading technique to a special extent can ruin the development of interest in reading.

The author has visited various "reading clinics" in the United States, where hours of auditory training, visual training, then training for letters, then for word comprehension and finally for understanding systematically follow one another. No wonder the children master the skills but never want to read again.

(c) Traditional habits in the methodology of reading education in Central and Southern Europe (similar examples can also be found in India) divert the child from the content of the text and therefore from interest in reading:

A text is read automatically in succession. The teacher merely says "further" and the next child begins. (The pupil's attention is devoted to seeing that he begins reading in the right place (when he is called upon!).)

In reading aloud another pupil is called upon after only a few sentences. (The reader cannot experience the atmosphere and rhythm of the text and consequently will not learn to value this.)

Many schools have a single reading book for the whole school year, thus frequent repetition of individual texts is necessary. Interest in the text then becomes distaste and antipathy.

If only one reading book is used familiar texts are read again and again. Why should the children listen with interest? Reading unfamiliar texts is the only way to establish the relationship between reader and listener and interest in the contents.

Teachers often immediately correct (or let other pupils correct) every mistake made in reading aloud. The reader therefore is so involved in making certain he makes no mistakes that he can hardly think about the meaning of the text. The mistakes should be discussed after the piece is finished, emphasizing general advice rather than single errors.

(d) Strict separation of school and private reading. Only the teacher who considers a student's reading as a whole will really be able to educate readers. Unfortunately, often students believe that what is read at school is only important for the "grade", that it is boring and has nothing to do with real interests. The teacher has no influence upon the principal kind of reading, leisure-time reading.

The idea that only short texts should be used at school because only thus can the teacher really help with his explanations is contrary to the principle that the child should work independently with a text.

To ignore the child's private reading limits the teacher's contact with him and gives the teacher no opportunity of motivating the child or advising him on more extensive reading material.

(e) Reading age and reading type must be given special attention in selection of reading material. Didactic or informative reading material is

scheduled too early, at a time when the child primarily seeks lively, fanciful stories. Paul Hazard (62) describes the result: "Instead of stories which give pleasure to their spirits, they quickly present them first of all with a proper piece of solid and most indigestible knowledge, and further with a proper piece of authoritarian morals which is forced upon them from outside without inner agreement. It is as though one hears a dialogue with poorly harmonized voices: the children and adults speak with one another, but without comprehension".

If factual knowledge is introduced to the child in his early years, then it should be in a form suitable for the child. Selma Lagerlöf's book about Nils Holgerson includes an example of how geography can be made a real experience.

Students in the "adventure age" are often forced to read a great deal of classical literature, making great demands of the child's aesthetic understanding which is not yet fully developed.

The main mistake here is that it is thought that a whole class will find pleasure in a drama by Shakespeare or Schiller, whereas in reality only about 20% of the children have the prerequisites for doing so, and they, too, lose interest in the face of the negative attitude of the rest of the class. In advising the individual student the needs corresponding to his reader type are often ignored. This can have negative consequences when a child cannot read well enough to do without strong outside motivation. (Later it is necessary to go beyond the interests dependent upon disposition.)

Still more important than suiting the method of reading education to the level is suiting the material to it, otherwise total distaste in reading is the result.

(f) Disregard of the various levels of attainment. Especially at the beginning the less talented children are frustrated and the talented ones often not challenged to achieve their best. Both factors are unfavourable for later reading development. Retarded children must be given more attention and time as well as very simple reading material.

(g) Teaching without differentiating methods. Homogeneous methods do not take into considera-

tion dissimilarities in the children's talents, achievement and interests. The poorest pupils are constantly compared with the best ones in uniform instruction; never having the experience of success they lose every pleasure in reading. If the children are taught by the differentiated method, however, they constantly compare their last achievement with the new one and see that they have improved.

(h) Dangers arising from over-consideration of the reading interests.

Children become familiar with only that small share of the world of books that happens to suit their present interests. If these interests alter in the course of their development they stop reading.

If too much attention is paid to reading interests which are closely related to the desire for self-assertion, this can have a negative effect upon social behaviour (egoism, chauvenism, etc.). The advantage of reading is outweighed by the damage done to the character.

Children use reading as a sort of drug. They do not think, but rather let books think for them. The reader is alienated from his social task and loses intellectual and spiritual drive. He will never experience the delight of searching, inner growth and exchange of ideas.

One-sided regard to reading interests can also lead to a life-long addiction to a single kind of book: crime stories, sentimental love stories, etc. which often means intellectual impoverishment. One-sided reading also leads to a one-sided view of life and makes the individual incapable of fulfilling his social responsibilities.

It is especially dangerous when interest is primarily directed at simple, weak reading material, such as comics. The fantasy moves constantly in the same cliché, ruling out further development, and the view of the world and of people remains superficial and unreflected.

The goal of reading education - the development of literary taste and critical abilities - can only be reached if one begins with existing interests, endeavouring constantly to expand their horizon.

VI. Methods for Determining Individual Reading Interests

Up to now we have dealt primarily with general statements about reading interests and reading habits; however, individual cases, always mean exceptions and deviations from the norm. In order to determine such deviations teachers and librarians should be familiar with the various methods of interest research:

(1) Individual observation and discussion at every opportunity

At recess, on walks, but especially during personal conversations with single students when the class is engaged in silent reading, the teacher can learn the child's opinions, what he is looking for in books and what especially appeals to him.

(2) Notes on the individual courses of reading

An attempt is made at gaining insight into a child's total reading material and how he sees it. The best method is the "reading diary" kept by the young reader himself. Every book he reads is listed: author, title, publisher, number of pages, followed by a short characterization and evaluation of the book (the latter can be done according to a numerical scale, as discussed in connexion with the "reader passport" Chapter III).

(3) Studies on the reception and/or influence of reading

Each reader reads differently, taking from a book what especially appeals to him and corresponds to his interests. Discussion of what most impressed the reader and what is his interpretation can be most informative.

The teacher should attempt to grasp the elements of the book objectively; which aspects rouse the imagination, which ones the spirit of adventure, which are socially relevant, etc. By comparing differences of analysis he learns more about the reader and what he has put into and taken out of the book.

(4) General interest tests

Books should not, however, always be the starting point, because interests which have not been

satisfied through books remain unnoticed. Various interest tests have their place in this context, an area developed primarily by American psychologists. In this regard, A. J. Harris quotes (61, p. 465) the "Incomplete Sentence Projective Tests" developed by T. Boning. It consists of 42 sentence beginnings to be completed by the student. Some examples are given below:

- (1) Today I feel...
- (2) If I should read, I...
- (3) I am angry when...
- (4) When I grow up...
- (5) My favourite occupation is...
- (6) I don't understand why...
- (7) This weekend...
- (8) If I didn't have to go to school...
- (9) When I read...
- (10) I hope I never have to...
- (11) I'd like to spend one day...
- (12) I like to...
- (13) I like to read when...
- (14) I want to...
- (15) I wish I could...
- (16) Books which teach something...
- (17) I often get upset when...
- (18) Entertaining books...
- (19) I am looking forward to...
- (20) I read more when...
- (21) I'm sorry that...

(5) The composition as a key to interests

Many teachers have their pupils write a composition entitled "One Day As...", which gives an opportunity for the children to say who they would wish to be - from the point of view of career, an ideal, a character from a story with whom the child identifies. The essay often reflects the general direction of the child's interest (e. g. in various activities, in travelling, in the Wild West, or in fairy tales, fantastic stories, etc.), and also often points out certain concrete book interests, since

some children identify with individual fictional heroes. Many children write about Tarzan, a pirate, etc., but routine vocations like teaching or post office work are rarely mentioned.

(6) The book title test

Sheets listing some 30 imaginary book titles relevant to various spheres of interest are handed out, and the children check the three they would like to have. An extensive investigation of this type was made in Germany by H. Bodecker (20). The book title test has also been used successfully, e.g., the 88-point annotated questionnaire of R. Thorndike (124).

(7) Using illustrations as thematic material

In her paper "Discovery and Measurement of Interests in Reading" (69) E. Jan-Tausch discusses the possibilities offered by illustrations for determining reading interests. She used 36 illustrations arranged in 12 subject groups and found by comparing them with the child's reading, that preference for a group of pictures runs parallel with the literature preferred. She therefore believes that her method offers rich possibilities for further research.

(8) The reader passport in interest research

The reader passport developed in Austria (See Chapter III) makes it possible to combine practical teaching work and leisure-time reading pleasure with the discovery of individual reading interests:

- (a) Test results are usually better with technically more difficult but interesting texts.
- (b) Voluntary selection of reading material as seen in the entries in the reader passport implies certain expectations.
- (c) Books are rated by the children in the column "how I liked it" as follows: 1 - very much, 2 - good, 3 - okay, 4 - not much, 5 - not at all .
- (d) On the basis of these results, present reading phase and individual reading interests can be determined.

Finally, regardless of the importance of methods and possibilities of registering general and individual reading interest, the interest of the teacher in each one of his pupils is still the most important element. He must learn to understand the child, his social and cultural background (parents, friends, etc.) and, above all, show interest in each child's personal reading and encourage him to continue on his own.

VII. Promotion of Developing Reading Interests and Motivation and the Reading Habit

As in every other didactic task the first step is to become acquainted with the child, which means learning about his interests, basing work upon them, and developing them as much as possible. Even valuable motivations, interests or habits should never be "impressed" upon the child, and if the child's inclinations might create problems for his own development or for society, they must be sublimated by other positive interests. Here too, such interests must not merely be pushed upon the child; one must discover his propensities and try to expand them and finally help him to take the desirable path.

This does not mean, of course, that a child should not become interested in subjects or goals for which he lacks the prerequisites. No one can desire things unless he knows about them and every child must be presented with a wealth of possibilities in the hope that he will expand his circle of interests.

In the history of education often young people have been so completely distracted from their path by a new encounter that they have also followed quite new interests, sometimes positive but frequently with a negative effect on others and on society. In any case psychologists have found that the earlier children are influenced the more effective this is: "the child is the father of the man".

1. DEVELOPING READING INTERESTS AND READING HABITS AT VARIOUS AGE LEVELS

The suggestions given below for each individual age group are, of course, only valid in a general sense and many possibilities open to a certain age group can - sometimes with slight variations - may also be successfully tried out with the next.

(a) The pre-school period

During this period reading readiness should be encouraged by concentrating interest on book con-

tents and by language training. If parents and kindergarten teachers are made aware that the earlier encouragement is the most effective and that the language training is especially necessary, they will encourage children to look at picture books (which inspire the desire to read and also offer "book experiences"), and practice more story-telling and reading aloud. Phonograph records, radio, television and various teaching games can also further reading readiness. One of the main tasks for the pre-school period is to encourage the child's anticipation in learning to read, which will make the teaching of reading in the first years of school easier. In all of the activities in this area, however, the danger of overburdening the pre-school child should be kept in mind.

(b) The first years of school

In these years, too, the child is primarily a "playing child" who spends a great deal of his time in the world of fantasy. This is the starting point for educational influences, even though it will soon be necessary to present the child with factual information commensurate to his intellectual development and interests.

Later success - and later failures - depend to a great extent upon the first year of school. If the teacher can observe, praise and develop every success made in reading, the child will have a positive, optimistic attitude towards the subject. But, if he experiences failure in reading and, even more, is punished or scolded for it, he will reject and mistrust reading as the cause of his unpleasant experience. The teacher's assistance in developing interests and the reading habit is especially necessary with poor readers. Self-confidence and pleasure in reading should be intensified through frequent praise. In the first years of school special consideration should be given to the following:

- (1) Activities from the pre-school period should

be continued, especially story telling and, with it, "word collecting", i. e. vocabulary expansion as the most important foundation for reading education.

(2) As initial steps in learning to read, games with technical exercises usually appeal to children immensely. This delight in the new technical skills must soon be combined with interest in the contents of what is read, therefore the material should correspond to the needs and general interests of the child.

(3) The teacher's example and "image" have great influence during the first years of school. If, in identifying with his teacher, the child identifies with a person who likes to read, his reading development will be favourably influenced.

(4) In selecting reading material, the developmental stage and the dominating interest of the children should be considered.

(5) Synchronization of reading material with definite curriculum units is not optimal as far as winning over readers is concerned.

(6) Various activities which develop reading interests and the reading habit starting in the first years of school are:

Encounters with books should be truly active experiences for the children whenever possible.

Book displays in the classroom, drawing pictures and writing compositions about books are an interesting addition to the regular curriculum. Sometimes the same book presents "game material" for reading, drawing, gymnastics, arithmetic, and singing, teaching the children that the book experience never ends.

Besides pleasure in the contents of the book, children should also become interested in the author: Readings by authors further interest and lure the children to read many books by the writer they have met personally.

Reading aloud should not be "testing", but rather experiencing a text together with others.

The children can take on the rôle of the illustrator and draw pictures for the stories they have read. Exhibitions and discussions of the drawings encourage further initiative.

In order to gain time for lively, interesting reading, exercises in comprehension should often be shifted into grammar, speech, or composition periods.

Parents are especially interested in school and their child during these first years. They gladly accept advice on book selection for their children and should be invited to school for "reading celebrations", book exhibitions, etc.

Retarded readers present a special problem in these years. Over-emphasizing mechanical exercises can ruin their pleasure in reading. The main thing is to find very simple material in which language structures repeat themselves. Large letters and short lines consisting of sin-

gle cognitive units are also extremely effective, as are flash exercises: uncover: read - cover: speak.

(c) Fourth and fifth years of school

The years of transition from the "fairy tale age" to the "adventure age" are especially important for the teaching of reading and developing reading habits. On the basis of broad experience it can be said that if by the fifth year of school a child is not an enthusiastic reader and has not developed any special reading interests, there is little hope of the situation changing later.

The problematical thing about these years is the great variation of talents and interests: many children are real "fairy tale children"; others have already reached the "adventure age"; in between is the majority who usually prefer exiting realistic stories about interesting children. Animal stories, too, and interesting non-fiction appeal to the children:

(1) One main task is to combine "conquest of the environment", an important aspect of this developmental phase, with books. Similarly, the children should be taught to choose among the possibilities presented by the mass media and books and to combine them with one another meaningfully.

(2) The children take over the rôle of "critics" and often report on books which especially appealed as well as those which bored them.

(3) During this period no special effort should be made at school in the area of "literary education" since the aesthetic sense is not yet highly developed. Aesthetic literature should therefore be carefully selected, and that chosen should deal with children's experiences.

(4) Differentiated and individualized teaching of reading must not only consider the various levels of achievement but also the various interests. In this way the pupils do not feel themselves discriminated against, although the teacher can observe the varying levels of attainment in the children's selection of reading material without their knowing it.

(5) Clique-forming, which is characteristic for this period, should be used in setting up reading groups. Various groups separately prepare their contributions for a reading celebration or parents' evenings, for instance.

(6) Besides consideration of reading skills and groups on special themes, quality reading material should always be used in order to make the child more conscious of its importance. This process should, however, be less dependent upon conscious literary education than upon careful selection of material and habituation to it. Care must be taken that children are challenged to "stretch" themselves in order to avoid what usually occurs: Following the law of least resistance, the child seeks easy

material which to a great extent is also inferior material.

(d) The seventh, eighth and ninth years of school

In the years of adolescence it is important that both boys and girls are aware of as little outside help as possible. However, they need this help more than at any other developmental phase because the various crises of this period make them uncertain. For a young person at this stage it can be a great help to choose one's own book.

(1) We must try to let young people of this age know that books are waiting for them, that they can help them answer their questions and point to solutions.

Special attention should also be given to reading motivations which are based on the students' individual interests. Through discussions, compositions and observations, the interests of each pupil are discovered, and then the discussion is brought to a point where the question of more knowledge about a subject automatically comes up.

Sport, for example, occupies the interest of many children of this age (of adults as well). Sport fans will master books about world records, individual types of sport, etc., mastered even if they are somewhat more difficult than the usual reading material. Books about animals and keeping pets also have a special appeal and reading becomes integrated into leisure-time activities.

Motivated reading should gradually supersede accidental reading. Discussion of books brings to light what the book offered the individual readers.

(2) Motivations for reading grow out of discussions about general questions, careers, or in respect to special difficulties. Young people should also become acquainted with biographies.

(3) Discussion of books should now lead to the language inventory that they will need their whole life in conversations about books. Terms like content, form, themes, structure, idea, tension, etc., can be brought easily into the discussion.

(4) Critical and literary reading has an important rôle; thus selection from the wealth of reading material available in paperback form is important.

Pocket books are "pocket money" books - this motto is also an appeal for book purchase with a plan.

(5) A good means for developing interest in reading at this age and for strengthening this interest later is to compile with the students reading lists giving short descriptions of the books. Such an assignment can also be given a social aspect by having the book list serve for buying library books or advising the parents through the parents' association.

(6) A look at the author's workshop is usually

very interesting for students of this age. The class might write a letter to an author asking him, for example, why he wrote a certain book or which experiences from his own life are found in it.

(7) Contests for choosing a "book of the week" or "book of the month" might be held, the winning book then being posted on the school bulletin board with a brief description of its contents.

(e) Young people and adults

Developing interests and habits which will have an influence upon later life is of special importance during the last years of school. However, we must first of all concentrate upon furthering the existing interests.

If books present the kind of ideas and values which preoccupy them at this stage, i. e. questions of finding oneself, of knowledge of the world, of a philosophy of life - young people will become interested. Social problems and responsibilities also find an echo. However, these questions are of primary interest to the more talented students and the majority of young people - especially those who have not as yet read many books - have very primitive interests and still need simple adventure books, as in puberty. If they do not find them at school or in the library, primitive crime and detective stories will comprise their only reading material and this may last their whole life long.

Special tasks and activities

1. Young people of this age also show interest in group assignments which can be combined with books. Reading clubs, especially pocket book clubs, are popular with youth.

2. The teacher in dealing with this age group should make himself as inconspicuous as possible. For example he should allow the students to hold discussions under the leadership of one of their peers, he himself taking part merely as a partner.

3. In the context of the club idea, books can also be related to young people's hobbies and used as the basis for discussions, exhibitions and other activities, perhaps in photography, sport, film, etc. Often sixteen-year-olds who had hardly looked at a book suddenly begin to read about their hobbies or vocational interests as they discover that books can give them great help.

(f) For every age level

Books should not be considered as "school work", but rather as companions. No attempt should be made to "exhaust" books in discussing them. What a book has to say to students about their lives, their problems, and their questions, should be their personal discovery. Discussions about books should also lead to self-recognition and the teacher's

rôle here is not to be an instructor or an examiner, but rather a person for whom books are important, not only will he have his pupils speak about their experience with books, but he will occasionally relate himself what a book has given him.

It cannot be repeated often enough that habits can only be formed through regular activity. More important than every activity based on books, more important than the best discussion, is reading itself. It must become a maxim that it is better to read for fifteen minutes each day than half an hour every other day. It is better to read for half an hour every other day than an hour once a week, and so on. Regular practice is the prerequisite for habit-forming.

Habits are best taken over as behaviour patterns from the environment, from the "ideals" presented by parents, teachers and especially the group in which the young person moves. Habit is one of the most important results of socialization.

Habit, regular activity, will of course only become reality if the individual feels it is worth while, in this case, if he has seen what reading can do for his personal, vocational, and social interests. This begins with the fulfilment of innate interests and needs, followed by insight into the profit reading brings, and leads finally to regular association with books. Only in this way will reading and books attain a firm and permanent position in the hierarchy of habits.

2. EDUCATIONAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL INFLUENCES IN THE PROMOTION OF INTEREST IN READING

(a) Promotion by parents

Reading readiness is determined to a great extent by the book and language climate in the child's home.

Through parents' education (lecture evenings, television, special books, conversation with the teacher, etc.) parents should learn to recognize that reading education begins as early as the child's first year. One of the first things that children should grasp and see are picture books. Even before the child is really able to understand the text, parents should read aloud and tell the child about it, looking at the pictures with him and naming the things in them. In this way the child's language develops together with his interest in books. If the parents point out the words which explain the picture books, interest in reading will also be awakened and the first "eye vocabulary" will be built up, which is a good preparation for reading.

By furthering reading readiness in this way and through vocabulary development, beginning

reading is made easier for the child. He will be successful, and the experience of success is the best motivation for developing interest. The help of the parents is also necessary even after the child has learned to read. He should be able to feel his parents' interest in what he reads, but never in the form of parents questioning and testing the children about what they have read.

Building up a small personal library for the child with gift books and books bought with his own pocket money is one of the best means of promoting reading development.

"Whoever loves books wants to own them,
Whoever owns books will love them."

Parents should also see to it that their children become users of the public libraries early in life.

If the mother and father read their children's books themselves now and then it both encourages the children to read and provides a basis for discussion. The parents understand their children better and the significance of books for their development.

Advice for parents:

(1) Parents should tell stories and read aloud to their children as often as possible;

(2) Parents should set up a personal library for the child appropriate to his age, wishes, needs and developmental phase;

(3) Parents should train their children to spend a share of their pocket money for books. (Pocket books are "pocket money" books!);

(4) Parents should see to it that a fixed time is reserved for reading on as many evenings as possible, with every member of the family reading his book;

(5) Parents should participate in their children's reading, i.e. speak with them about what they read;

(6) Parents should help their children recognize that they can apply and use what they read; that books secure, lighten and beautify their lives.

As with teachers, the parents' function as ideals is decisive, i.e. if they are readers themselves they can easily win over their children to reading regularly. Enlightenment and information given by parents is a prerequisite for effective reading education. There are many ways of doing this which have been successfully tested in various countries:

Parents' magazines such as the very popular one published by the Swiss Parents' Association or those by the American Parent-Teachers Association;

Special introductory works on children's literature, such as Nancy Larrick's "A Parents Guide to Children's Reading" published in the United States of America. Similar annotated book lists with information introductions are to be found in many countries.

Parents' year books like those put out in Austria

by the Austrian Children's Book Club. They include a survey of recommended books for children as well as articles on the various possibilities for promotion.

Fundamentally, there are few parents who do not consider their interests in their child their most important task; but many of the best intentions are simply lost in the contemporary oversupply of stimuli. Therefore parents need to give more time to their child; not in the sense of creating a better standard of living for the child, as is often the case, but rather more time to learn about his interests in order to take them into consideration in games, playing and reading together and buying books.

(b) Possibilities for promotion in
nursery school and kindergarten

An attempt is made in kindergarten and nursery school to take the place of parents as well as possible. Fundamentally, the educators here have the same tasks as the parents: promotion of reading readiness by helping the children become accustomed to listening and looking at picture books, expanding vocabulary and awakening interest in books. The means of promotion must be altered a bit. In modern pre-school work the child receives much individual attention, so that a genuine family situation is established. But it is also possible to use group work for the developing of reading readiness and reading interests.

The atmosphere of the nursery school or kindergarten is of primary importance: pictures on the walls, picture book lists, many hours of storytelling and looking at picture books give the children the feeling that their nicest experiences with the language are combined with books.

Whether learning to read should be begun systematically in the pre-school period and in kindergarten (or with the parents' assistance) is still contested. Success has been had in England, Japan, Israel and other countries. Experiences with the early reading movement have shown that children can successfully be taught to read after the age of three if the right method is applied. From personal experience, the author is in favour of careful, playful promotion before beginning school.

Main rules: so as to avoid inhibition or blocking, which have a negative effect upon further development never overtax a child. But children must be sufficiently challenged to learn to take pleasure in achievement and to make further efforts so that their development is not inhibited. (This rule is also valid for the first years of school).

(c) The influence of the teacher

The teacher must ask himself why some children

become readers thanks to the efforts of the school and why others remain non-readers for all practical purposes. He knows that almost every child begins school in anticipation of soon being able to read. Some children find this expectancy soon fulfilled, but many others must wait a long time and some give up waiting. The development of children in regard to speed and degree of comprehension differs greatly, and these differences increase still more in the course of schooling.

Teachers who give their students "small doses" of the importance of reading every day - in their encounter with literature, as support for their school work and personal interests in every school subject - teachers who try to make these little "habit doses" effective in daily leisure-time activities and as homework, teachers who do this systematically throughout the child's school career - without forcing, but naturally - these teachers will have made a majority of their pupils so accustomed to working with books that they will not give it up later. This is especially important in the last year of formal schooling when the students are thinking of their future. They learn what assistance books can offer in the vocation they plan to take up. Utilitarian reading is therefore best introduced toward the end of the school career. Of course, the teacher's work is not limited to awakening conviction in and enthusiasm for the importance of books: he must be in a position to present the children with specific books and must therefore have read a sufficient number of children's books himself. If the children sense in classroom discussions that the teacher is not merely generalizing but is encouraging them to read one book or another, his contact with his students will be strengthened and they will both accept his advice with trust and actually seek it.

Pre- and in-service training
of the teacher

Of course, the teacher's personality, especially his reading habits are extremely important for developing reading interests and reading habits in children; his own education can also contribute essentially to his influence. Unfortunately, the pre- and in-service training of teachers in most countries does not devote the attention to the rôle of reading that it does to teaching spelling or composition. (Perhaps achievement is easier to measure in these subjects.)

The following areas should be dealt with thoroughly in the course of teacher training:

Methods of measuring achievement and improvement in reading;

Modern ways of working with books (class, group and individual reading);

Survey of the findings of the study of young readers

(reading phases; reader types; reading motivations);
 Evaluation of children's literature and a survey of the individual genres;
 Introduction to all the aids available for book work (book lists, professional literature etc.).
 Recent research on the "effect of reading" (especially upon the development of vocabulary and improvement of educational attainment through books in differentiated teaching) will certainly lead to more attention being paid to reading methodology and work with books.

Practising teachers should be offered the opportunity to inform themselves regularly about children's books and modern reading research through meetings, special courses, work groups and seminars;

School experiments in Austria have shown how decisive the teacher's influence can be in reading education when compensation is to be made for the unequal chances of those children whose progress is not being furthered at home. As a result of intensive promotion by teachers in experimental classes, the average number of books borrowed annually per child was 36, a figure otherwise attained only by the best readers. Of the 39 children in these classes, there was hardly one who had been directed to books at home. The parents' occupations were labourers (5), officials and employees (8), independent (5), farmers (5), retired (2); 7 children had no father, 4 came from families with many children.

The teacher also has an important part to play in parental education, giving them information at parents' evenings and in conversations.

Several themes which could be dealt with in lectures delivered at parents' meetings and discussions afterwards are: the place of reading in the child's intellectual development; how can I help my child learn to read? the book in the educational process; reading as worthwhile entertainment; books as aids for all school subjects; correct selection of reading material for children; storytelling and reading aloud; children's books - for parents too? how to recognize and develop our children's reading interests; making books a habit.

(d) The libraries - means for and goal of the development of reading interests and the reading habit

It is hardly possible today to buy all the books one needs for one's enjoyment and work. The various branches of science also develop so quickly that professional literature and non-fiction is soon out-dated and must be replaced by new literature. Only a good library can satisfy all the demands of a reader, and that primarily by means of a library exchange service. Becoming accustomed

to using the library can therefore be called one of the essential goals of reading education.

The school library is not only the school's "intellectual central heating plant", but also the first step for later use of public libraries. Of course, in many countries - in addition to the school libraries - there are public children's libraries or children's departments in libraries for adults.

The problem, "school library versus public library", can only be discussed briefly here. Some people believe that school libraries should not be constructed, but that children should rather become accustomed to public libraries from the start.

For instance, in the Federal Republic of Germany, the Union of German Cities recommended to its members that public libraries rather than school libraries be set up. The result of this attitude can be studied by the example of Vienna, where, as discussed above, only about 17% of the children use public libraries, whereas when the public libraries are housed in the school building it is 80%! The schools' classroom libraries, in addition, are used by all the children, since the teacher sees to it.

For this reason in some countries (e.g. Austria) rather than central school libraries the solution of classroom libraries plus visits to the public libraries has been adopted with success. It is also being discussed in some States in the United States whether public children's libraries should not be discontinued in favour of school libraries only. Investigations have shown that children borrow more books from school than from public libraries.

However, learning to use and love the library is so important that we believe both forms should be available for young people - the school library (contained in part in the classroom library) and the public library.

The primary task of the classroom library is to complement teaching and provide an opportunity to use reference books and non-fiction. Many teachers also feel that the classroom collection should include books purely for reading pleasure, so that they can more easily bring students to read out of interest and not by obligation.

It is also true that an activity of which the importance has become self-evident can also arouse interest. For example, many British children are certainly not enthused about extensive obligatory reading, writing of book reports, etc., but the fact remains that there are few countries where as much is read as in England. This reference to self-evidence and obligation should not be taken as a negative statement as to the importance of interest and pleasure in reading. However, when it is especially difficult to awaken reading interest, other interests being so much stronger, it is often

helpful if the teacher is convinced that every child should use and work with the classroom library. At first, perhaps, only in school work, but later the students should finish reading or working with a book at home.

Unfortunately, the school library has not yet become an accepted fact in many countries. Even in the United States 50% of schools have no library. Since a classroom library collection cannot include enough books to satisfy all the various interests, needs and developmental levels of the students, a central school library is also essential. Here children should, of course, learn library technique, i. e. how to use the various catalogues, etc.

The main deficiency of many school libraries is that they do not offer enough selection. The children must take what they find and if the book does not suit their interests they are disappointed; reading interest and habits are not developed, but rather hindered.

Most school library experts, i. e. the members of the School Library Association, consider that a good school library must have at least 10 books per child.

The public library. How many people will use public libraries throughout their lives depends very much on whether and how they were introduced to public libraries in their youth and how at home they were made to feel about them. Only a few children come to the library themselves or at the suggestion of their family. Initial introduction and regular promotion of interest is necessary. In many countries a class expedition to the library provides this first introduction, often combined with storytelling and reading hours, and talks by the librarians on using the library. The children may also take out a library card.

The budget provided for advertising is a good measure of how important the public authorities consider the library to be. A library which lives and grows must constantly win over new readers, especially young readers. In countries where library work is highly developed various kinds of events are organized to bring the children into contact with the library: story hours, book reports, literary celebrations, book exhibitions, book discussion groups, readings by authors, etc. Such programmes are designed to introduce unfamiliar books, recommend material for personal reading, and deepen understanding of familiar books. The main goal is to arouse interest and pleasure in reading and to make reading a habit. These events are advertised by posters, circular letters, in newspapers, and by announcements at school and their success depends upon planning and preparation.

The story hour. Acquaintance with literature is the goal of the story hour. Since listening is easier than reading and since the reader helps

make the meaning and the character of the text understandable by his voice and facial expression, even those who do not like to read themselves will be delighted.

After the story hour has awakened the children's interest in the books of an author, they will certainly want to read more by him.

Author's readings. These, of course, cannot be held as often as story hours, but if an author replaces the librarian on occasion the children often buy his books first and have them autographed. Then they will also want to borrow his books.

Book shows with discussion. Presentation of a large number of books - spread out on a table or on boards, is especially effective. The librarian first says a few words about the books: what was the criterion for selection - subject, hobbies, etc.? Groups of books on certain subjects can also be displayed - on horses, polar expeditions, exploration of outer space, etc. Usually, however, the latest acquisitions are displayed, showing the children how alive their library is. The librarian describes each book briefly, perhaps indicating which readers it would interest especially. Then the children can browse through the books themselves.

The book discussion. Here, too, there are several possibilities. A single "controversial" work can be placed in the middle of the discussion (with adolescents rather than children) or several books can be compared in the discussion (p. 92).

3. ACTIVITIES FOR PROMOTING INTEREST IN READING

If research in the field of reading and the experience of modern reading education is to be an advantage, ways must be found to apply them in practical work. Activities which confront young people directly and indirectly with books are necessary, especially in school, library and youth groups. We shall begin with the activities mentioned earlier:

(a) Reading aloud and storytelling

Reading aloud and storytelling which offer strong motivation for personal reading are easily undertaken at school, and in libraries, day nurseries and kindergartens. "Reading into" a story, i. e. reading aloud up to an exciting part, so that the children's anticipation is roused to such an extent that they want to read further themselves, is a method which has been most successful. In Austria, it has found special variations in the "Lure into Reading" programmes.

(b) Book displays with book discussions

In the Moscow House of Children's Books, regular

book shows are held at which the librarian introduces several interesting books at a time.

(c) Authors read from their works

Personal contact with the author increases interest. The internationally known author of "The Day of the Bomb", Karl Bruckner, found that about 70% of his young audience who gave him books to autograph had not yet read them but planned to after meeting him personally. Such contacts can be arranged in libraries, schools and kindergartens.

(d) Courses, meetings and other informational events on the subject of children's reading

Books should be taken more into consideration in pre- and in-service teacher training as well as in parents' education. Meetings and seminars, especially when combined with exhibitions and discussions, are highly recommended and the scope should not be limited to school and library work, but should include work in youth groups, clubs and the mass media.

1. Book and reading clubs

In many countries efforts are made to interest children in reading and give them the opportunity to discover the right reading material through membership in book clubs. These clubs are organized in various ways as appropriate to different conditions. In the United States and in Czechoslovakia, for instance, book clubs publish annually a definite number of books and booklets, thus guaranteeing regular provision of books to club members. In Austria, where approximately 90% of the children of compulsory school age belong to the Austrian Children's Book Club, the members make their own selection from a list of recommended books which may be purchased in all book shops at a 25% discount. The Austrian Book Club does no publishing, but rather helps in the selection and (together with publishers and booksellers) negotiates club rights for good books. In addition, yearbooks are published giving excerpts from these books to awaken the interest of young readers. Beyond assistance in making books available, book clubs have also developed a series of other activities for inciting interest in reading. In Yugoslavia, for example, reading contests are held with medals picturing their favourite authors given as prizes to the best readers. In Austria a sort of "book ring" has been set up for the schools (see "Lure Into Reading", p.).

2. Book exhibitions

The best exhibitions are those which are combined with such events as readings by authors, etc.

In addition to the large representative exhibition like those held annually during Book Week and Children's Book Week, it is useful to set up smaller exhibits in schools, libraries, youth groups and individual classrooms. The smaller the group for whom the exhibition is meant, the better the selection of books can be suited to the interests of the visitors. In some schools, upper grade students help prepare and introduce the exhibition to their peers. For practical purposes usually five or more students are responsible for each group of books and are prepared to give information about them. Of course, they must have read the books in their group so as convincingly to advise the other students in regard to contents, excitement and difficulty.

Small displays of books for a special occasion - e.g. vacation reading or books on various leisure-time activities (photography, sports books, etc.) - often interest young people who have not yet found a good relationship to books in general. The goal of such exhibits is not to offer stimulus to "born bookworms" but to those who are primarily interested in other areas.

The book display needs informative and inviting signs and posters, lists and other advertising material are essential as well as a reading corner of some sort where visitors can browse among the books.

3. Listening or looking - reading - discussion

Books and audio-visual media should not be seen as opponents but rather in interaction to which young people should be introduced. The mass media offer "educational impulses", i.e. they stimulate imagination, arouse curiosity and the desire to learn more, but what is heard and seen must be supplemented with books. Let us give one practical example: a television programme is announced about developing countries. The teacher or youth group leader draws the attention of the students to it and announces that the programme will be discussed (or preferably the programme is viewed by the group). The young people are then asked to find books in the library on the subject and read about the problem. The television programme arouses interest, puts questions. Books on the subject are read with interest and in the hope of learning more. Another possibility: in a programme, mention is made of appropriate books for supplementing it and the opportunity is announced for participating in a discussion on the subject to be held on radio or television or in centres for popular education where everyone can take part actively. Endeavours of this kind have had very positive results. Even if great success

is not seen at the start, this type of educational work should nevertheless be patiently and systematically developed. At any rate, the responsible parties should not forget that a single presentation is not sufficient and that the over-abundance of information and educational influences tend to make people insensitive.

Up to now the learner has been primarily a passive perceiver, but through personal work, and through discussion of the problem his knowledge becomes an active possession and true education.

4. Mutual advertisement for books

Information about books often goes no further than the circle of those interested in reading and libraries in any case. Advertising by the publishing houses is usually for individual books and not books per se. There is a genuine need for the latter in many countries.

How successful and animated advertising for reading can be is proven, for instance, by the work of the Children's Book Council in the United States, which publishes an annual series of excellent humorous posters, book marks, etc., with catchy slogans, like

Cool it with books this summer!

Swing into books!

Live - and read!

Three cheers for books!

Books now! Books wow!

Reading programmes and contests are held in connexion with these campaigns. The children list all the books they read during the holidays, for example, on illustrated reading cards.

Many possibilities are offered by advertising in schools, day schools and kindergartens. An occasion for such programmes is, for instance, International Children's Book Day, which is celebrated in many countries on 2 April, Hans Christian Andersen's birthday. Unfortunately, many activities planned for this occasion are again only effective where interest in reading already exists: at school and in the library. Radio and television, which have such an extensive audience, hardly take notice of the occasion - nor does the press apart from the professional periodicals on children's books and library organs.

Further opportunities for more intensive advertising for books are offered by prizes awarded for children's books, a custom in many countries.

5. Book programmes in the mass media

Investigations have proven that books discussed in the mass media and books which provide the basis for films often become bestsellers and are

very popular in the libraries. Many people who usually do not read or are unfamiliar with the possibilities of book selection are often "lured into reading" through presentations in the mass media or through familiarity with the subject and the actors.

In order to promote reading habits, books must be brought much more into children's programmes and educational programmes, both directly and indirectly. These programmes cover book discussions, films, exhibits and reports on exhibits, readings and interviews with children's authors.

6. Book rings or "lure into reading"

One big problem, especially in rural areas, is that too few books are available in the schools, while public libraries are inadequate and children's personal libraries too small. Setting up a sort of "book ring" has proven itself most successful in such cases. One example is the experience of the Austrian Children's Book Club, which has set up a book carton exchange ring. Each carton contains enough books for the whole class or for groups (35 copies each), which are loaned to the schools and then exchanged among pupils. They are introduced to the content by the teacher (or a pupil who has prepared himself), who tells or reads part of the story. They are made curious about how the book proceeds, identify with its characters and become familiar with the vocabulary and rhythm of the language. The children then read silently until the hour ends and enjoy taking the book home with them. By the end of the week most of the children - even those who could not previously be brought to read - have usually completed the book and taken part in the discussion with interest.

The "Lure into reading" programme has three steps:

(a) Introduction by telling about the book and reading aloud;

(b) Silent reading in the classroom and at home;

(c) Discussion at school about a week later.

The Children's Book Club places literacy pedagogical work sheets in every book carton giving information on the content, form and idea of the books, and suggestions for discussion.

Similar programmes are especially recommendable for countries in which the school library system is not yet satisfactory.

7. Methodological possibilities of leading children to books

(a) Playing rôles according to books

Children like to express their imagination and experiences in many ways: by telling stories, in conversation, dance, drawing and playing rôles (children's theatre).

Through books children can have experiences which - thanks to the author's creative power - are often stronger than real experiences from their environment (which have today lost a great many of their possibilities for games and adventure).

Little wonder that children often play the rôle of their favourite heroes, replaying their stories and arousing the curiosity of others who do not know the stories. The teacher can use this desire to dramatize in order to incite children consciously to play the rôles in books. In this way the effect of reading is strengthened and interest in it increased.

A few rules for playing rôles:

1. Books or parts of books should be chosen which contain as much action as possible. Selection should be made by the children and teacher together, this allowing the possibility of critical thought.

2. No child in the group should be left out. In addition to the main characters who have a great deal to say there should be as many secondary rôles as possible. It is even more fun when the teacher also has a part.

3. Costumes and stage sets give the children a chance to make things. The decorations should not be over emphasized, however; if they exist only in the children's imagination and fantasy it may perhaps be even better.

4. The parts should not be memorized, but rather spoken freely using sentences from the book as a basis. However, if the children are so familiar with the story (as is often the case with picture books) that they know the words by heart, it will not matter. Movement (walking, jumping, gesturing) and sometimes even singing should be introduced.

5. Playing rôles can be done both for the children's own entertainment and also for parents or friends. Such events (book festivals, parents' evenings) call for better preparation and even for making a "script".

6. The "scene" of the play is usually the playground or classroom. If there is an audience, they sit around it; a raised "stage" can also be used for "presentations".

(b) Drawing stories

Drawing is considered by modern art education as an important means of freeing fantasy and developing creativity. Drawing figures and scenes from books increases interest in and understanding of the book in question.

So that the children will express themselves spontaneously as little as possible is said about the story and the drawing. No advice should be given about the contents of the picture, but only about selection of materials and technique -

usually large sheets of stiff paper and strong colours.

The children should be told to do a preliminary drawing first with a broad brush and in a neutral colour (brown, grey). This first picture, which serves to organize the drawing, should not include details; these can be filled in later. Crayons are good for smaller drawings.

(c) Books as the basis for discussion

Conversation is an essential for developing genuine common interests and discussion has an important rôle in our society - both for adults and for young people.

Nevertheless, the danger with discussion - especially with unskilled partners - is that it is often carried on at cross purposes and in spite of the common subject, no concrete starting points are found for developing the discussion. Books can help here by creating a sort of "mutual platform" to keep the discussion from running wild.

Good books, written in a lively way with an exciting plot which forces the reader to take part can offer food for thought as well as basic knowledge about a subject. There are various ways of using books as the basis for discussion: either the children all read the same book and then discuss its meaning, or several books dealing with the same subject from different points of view are read and discussed.

The introductory discussion which leads to reading can be inspired by news announced on television or in the newspaper, or general subjects can be chosen of interest to children and providing a good subject for discussion pro and con, e.g. the problem of emigrant workers in economically higher developed countries, racial segregation, etc.

After several opinions have been expressed, the discussion leader introduces the books, reading typical passages building up to a high point of excitement, really "luring" the young people to read further.

After all the members of the group have read one of the books, discussion can begin. Now the questions put at the beginning and the various opinions are repeated in brief. What does the group say now? What was made clearer by the book? How does the author see the problems?

This basis makes it much easier to formulate opinions, giving concrete examples, pointing out reasons, and illustrating statements with sentences from the books.

Finally, on the basis of the results of the discussion the group can try to prepare a programme to which young people and/or adults are invited. A short introductory speech, appropriate songs or recordings and slides or posters made by the young people lend diversity to events of this kind.

At international children's and young people's camps, evenings could be devoted to the literature of one country to give an insight both into particularities in literature and basic elements that many countries have in common (because some children's books are really international!). This also offers possibilities for discussion. Experience has shown that book discussions are stimulating even for young participants who are not declared readers. By linking reading with their other interests, pre-

vious "outsiders" can be interested in reading.

This brief survey of various possibilities for activating book work is by no means complete, nor is it a "recipe for success". An attempt has merely been made to describe activities which have already been tested in practical work, and to provide stimulus for further work in this direction.

The result will be most effective if the suggested programmes and projects are adapted to the local circumstances.

VIII. Tasks for Research

It may be hard to believe but it is nevertheless true that systematic research on the important task of developing life-time reading habits hardly exists. For the past 80 years reading interests have been investigated, but the question of what can be done to awaken interests and strengthen habits has been ignored.

It is obvious that the first research task will be to gather together the existing insights and findings and present them in a lucid survey so that time and financial means can be used to their fullest advantage.

Research tasks on the reading situation, reading interest, and reading habits:

1. Survey of studies on readership in various parts of the world, clarifying the reasons for the differences. This would be an expansion of Chapter II of the present study. The preliminary studies existing in various parts of the world would cover approximately 160 pages. The English books by Mann and the Soviet work "Sovietski Chitateli" offer valuable methodological and thematic assistance.

2. Survey of the research on reading interests carried on throughout the world, pointing out agreement and differences.

This has been partially covered in the present study. It can already be seen that there are only slight differences between past and present research results in various countries. The framework of the present study is, however, too narrow to be able to make unequivocal statements. The works by Thorndike and Wölfel mentioned here could present a starting point.

3. Survey and continuation of the research on the individual and social functions of reading, especially in respect to measurement and interpretation of the influence of reading. Special presentation must be made of the significance of the influence of reading in comparison with that of the audio-visual media and the effect they have and can have on modern society. In this context, critical consideration of black-and-white presentation, persuasion

and manipulation are especially important.

4. Study of the non-reader.

It would be important to investigate further the reasons for not reading, several of which are mentioned in the present study, and to determine how this "non-reading factor" affects the life of the economy and society.

5. Attention should finally be paid to W.S. Gray's statement that there is a need for an extensive study of the characteristic traits of the mature reader. We are convinced that the result would contribute to comprehension of the concept of perfect reading and offer more insight into the importance of reading.

6. Much less is known about the development of reading interests in individual readers, about their causes and influence, than about reading interests in general at the various developmental phases. Pursuing individual courses of reading through many years is therefore an important research task for the future.

7. The investigation of the correlation between various factors which influence reading and reading interests. The following are a few such factors:

- (a) the correlation between reading achievement, reading interest and reading habits;

- (b) the correlation between reading interest and the socio-economic factor;

- (c) the correlation between success in school and reading interest;

- (d) the correlation between vocational success and reading interest;

- (e) the correlation between enlightenment of parents and cementation of the children's reading habits.

8. An especially important group of research tasks is found in comparison of efforts and results in the programmes and activities:

- (a) what are the effects and successes of school and public library programmes for promoting interest in reading?

- (b) how is juvenile reading behaviour affected

through strong guidance and through casual assistance?

(c) comparison of the influence of programmes carried out by adults with activities undertaken by the children alone.

9. The relationship between television and reading.

A relatively large number of investigations have been carried out in this area, primarily in respect to time spent and interest of the audience. They should be summarized in order to be able to investigate unanswered questions by further research. Especially important are comparative studies on the influence of various media as such and on the influence of the combination of the media with one another, e. g. television with book work.

10. Tracing the reading development of groups of subjects in order to determine:

(a) whether it can be explained why a certain number of young readers continue to read books later and why others do not;

(b) what is the influence of regular library use during the school year upon later reading habits (amount and type of reading).

Of course, several of these projects could also be combined.

In carrying out research projects, it is not merely a question of analysing observations, questionnaires, etc., but also of finding ways and means to improve the situation. Investigations must be undertaken with experimental and control groups which will undoubtedly have an important effect on work in this field.

IX. Summary

A brief survey of the basic ideas and resultant activities

I. The development of life-long reading interests and reading habits is a constant process which begins in the home, improves systematically in the school and is carried on in later life through the influences of the general cultural atmosphere and the conscious efforts of public education and public libraries.

II. The decisive factors in this process are delight in books beginning at the pre-school age (through storytelling and reading aloud), reading education accompanied by satisfaction in achievement and success, taking into consideration at the same time the manifold possibilities and needs, and the encouragement of every possible motivation to read.

III. Identification with ideals and reference persons, such as parents, friends, teachers, librarians, etc., contributes immensely to a positive attitude towards reading.

IV. Conditions for development of positive reading habits include opportunities for reading in every possible form: the pocket book as a "pocket-money book", building up one's own library, the classroom and school library, the public library (community, church, firm library, etc.).

V. In order to "lure into reading" various special methods and measures are necessary: classroom reading, group reading and discussion during which the "leaders" stimulate the others or induce them to emulate them, individualized reading in the classroom during which each pupil experiences the satisfaction of discussion with the teacher on a friendly level.

The realization of these and other points depends upon assistance and promotion. Authors, publishers, teachers, librarians, parents, and friends of books should be united in work groups for discovering new and better ways of promoting

books. International Book Year 1972 presented an occasion for forming such work groups and launching effective activities.

The following brief suggestions regarding methods and activities are intended as a survey of the detailed parts of the study so as to simplify practical work. Modified slightly, many suggestions can also be carried out in libraries and youth work as well as in the classroom.

Ideas and tips for determining and developing life-long reading interests and reading habits

- Wear and tear on books - by examining which library books are most worn out and dirtiest one can discover a great deal about their popularity with readers.

- Essay competitions - themes like "a book I liked very much", "a book I didn't like", "one day as ... " (the pupil fills in the name of the person he'd like to be and describes the events which he'd like to experience during his day as that person).

- "Book of the month" - as selected through discussions and voting among the pupils; it will naturally be passed around and read by the majority of the pupils, partially through curiosity, partially through genuine interest.

- Borrowing books - furtherance of borrowing from pupils' libraries and among the pupils:

(a) visits to the public libraries;

(b) pupils tell about books that especially appealed to them;

(c) it is made clear to the pupils that if each one of them lends his book to his schoolmates, the book will get some wear and tear but as a reward for this each pupil can read as many as 30 other interesting books.

- Communicating experiences with books - the pupils in a class or users of a library should share their experiences of books with one another.

- Search for books - the pupils or members of a youth group work together to find really good books. Not only do they become accustomed to using the library but also the various aids such as booklists, etc.
- Promotion of book purchase:
 - (a) book exhibits;
 - (b) classroom discussion about recommended books;
 - (c) furthering pocket books as "pocket-money books".
- Compiling booklists for correct selection.
- Book prizes for every occasion:
 - (a) the birthday book: the class gives each pupil a book for his birthday;
 - (b) books as prizes for special achievement, at report card time, for essay or drawing contests. School authorities (the community), parents and associations of firms (banks) often support such programmes.
- Book quiz games of all kinds.
- Presenting opportunities for reading: in the school, youth clubs, park, etc.
- The regular reading habit: 15 minutes of free silent reading every day in the classroom is more important for the book habit as far as the practice effect is concerned than a single period of several hours.
- Reading festivals. Good readers tell stories, read aloud, dramatize, read poetry, etc., in front of other children, parents, etc.
- Reader passport - this new instrument for measuring reading achievement has also proven to be an excellent means for increasing interest in reading. The child wants to improve his achievement and therefore reads more.
- Reader description sheets - in order to follow the development of reading interests, reading description sheets are set up with entries for all relevant data, especially the books read and their evaluation by the pupils according to numbers. The following entries should be made: name and age of the pupil, reading test results, reader type, special reading interests, book club membership, libraries, books owned.
- Reading diary - the reading diary has proved useful in many hundreds of Austrian school classes

for over a decade. After the pupils have become accustomed to entering every book they read and a great number have been noted, a passion for collecting and competition begins to develop. The "reading diary" incites reading. This expression was chosen to make the pupils feel that this is their own book in which they can converse with the author.

- Mass media - it is unwise to emphasize an opposition between books and other mass media; it is preferable to establish the relationship between mass media and books:

- (a) reference to presentation of books, radio plays, poetry reading, etc., in radio and television;

- (b) reference to complementary reading material on media presentations (the mass media awaken interests; books deepen and broaden them).

- Contact with authors: readings, discussions, etc.

- Poor readers - special help for the "backward" readers: the teacher tells about or reads a large part of the book or story so that the poor reader must only read a small portion himself. As time progresses the "rest" becomes longer and longer.

- Difficulty - the level of difficulty of reading material is decisive for its reception. Care must be taken that young readers are not over-taxed or under-taxed.

- Silent reading - a weekly hour of free silent reading, sometimes substituted by an hour of reading aloud.

- Under the motto "pocket books are pocket-money books" a sort of book club can be founded: the pupils promise to buy at least four books annually from their own savings.

- "Lure into reading" - the teacher or a good pupil tells about the beginning of a book; then it is read aloud for ten minutes up to an exciting part. This method has proven itself a strong motivation for finishing the book at home.

- "We complete the story" - the children read a part of a book and then write to tell the story to the end. The pupil who comes closest to the original or whose conclusion is considered best by the class receives a prize.

X. Concluding Statement

In conclusion, we are well aware of having considered reading and reading habits in their positive aspects only. In order to avoid a biased report we also must consider the other side of the coin:

Some reading material can be extremely harmful. In this context F. Wertham has collected a great deal of evidence against crime comics in his book "Seduction of the Innocent" (just as recent research has stressed the effect television crime films have upon developing cruelty and violence);

Reading, when used as a sort of narcotic, as a means of escape, may also prevent critical thinking;

Uncritical reading can lead to simple mechanical acceptance of arguments and situations. For this reason it is so very important to develop the critical abilities together with reading abilities;

If reading becomes a mechanical routine it loses its function as an intellectual and emotional stimulus and can lead to dulling of fantasy and thinking.

After this brief warning against one-sided interpretation, the question arises how the possibilities pointed out by research and practical experience from many countries quoted in the present study can be realized.

A first assignment is to make known the insight gained into the importance and effects of reading and into the rôle of motivation and interests in establishing life-long reading habits to everyone concerned with education in publishing, library and youth work.

It is especially important that the "mediators" and "propagators" in these areas utilize the research results and practical experiences presented here when they give information on reading and literature. The International Institute for Children's Literature and Reading Research in Vienna possesses hundreds of books on reading instruc-

tion, children's literature and on library work with children's books. But no more than half a dozen of them attempt to "bridge the gap" between the field of reading research and that of children's literature, i.e. they do not merely stress the development of reading skills or the wealth of children's literature but also the importance of motivation to read and use of the knowledge gained through individual reading as well as the necessity of bringing people to books.

We are convinced that this is one of the main areas in which financial investment in education pays the highest interest.

The Austrian research project mentioned above, begun at the suggestion of Unesco, investigated the "effect of reading" on academic output. Test results in academic achievement were compared between classes which worked with additional reading material and control classes instructed conventionally through textbooks. Learning with the assistance of stimulating reading material resulted in an improvement in achievement of more than 30%.

Research findings and practical experience may indeed strengthen the conviction: that reading still has an important rôle in the processes of communication, information and enlightenment (in spite of and often owing to the overwhelming achievement of the mass media); that reading could easily become the most widespread instrument for mental training and the strengthening of the power of imagination (both so necessary for our quickly changing professional and social life); that reading is perhaps the best means of preventing dangerous black-and-white thinking (good vs. bad) and of counteracting the instruments of subconscious persuasion and manipulation.

If these effects of reading were generally known and recognized, the responsible individuals, authorities, and society as a whole would surely do more to develop motivation for and interest in

reading and the development of permanent reading habits by:

providing for effective teaching of reading (providing the necessary time at school and at home, and giving reading a central position in the curriculum);

making suitable and inviting reading material available for all age groups;

developing library service for every reading type, need and interest;

supporting advertisement of books.

The foregoing conclusions and suggestions are all designed in one way or another to promote the reading habit and, in so doing, to help achieve the aim fixed by Unesco for this study. As stated in the Foreword, it is to be hoped that the study will have served as a guide and encouragement to the countless number of people around the world concerned with ensuring that the benefits of reading are shared by all.

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The Children's Book Council. 175 Fifth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10010, U.S.A.

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Haus des Kinderbuches. Ul. Gorkowo 43, Moscow A-47, USSR.

Institut für Jugendbuchforschung. Johann Wolfgang Goethe-Universität. 6 Frankfurt/M. Georg Voigt Str. 6, Federal Republic of Germany.

Institut für Jugendliteratur und Leseforschung. 1080 Vienna, Fuhrmannsgasse 18a, Austria.

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Institute for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults. Takhte Tavous Ave., No. 31, Jam St., Teheran, Iran.

International Board on Books for Young People. Sekretariat 4052 Zürich, Lindenhofstrasse 8, Switzerland.

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The National Council of Teachers of English. South Sixth Street, Champaign, Ill. 61820, U.S.A.

Swedish Children's Book Institute. Tjärhovsgatan 36, Stockholm, Sweden.

Schweizerischer Bund für Jugendliteratur. 3000 Bern, Herzogstrasse 5, Switzerland.

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