TEACHING AIDS

I. A "Science Shelf" on which childrer place cocoons, fossils, tadpoles, and other treasured "finds" need not be very elaborate. A broad shelf or a small table, available in most schools, provides sufficient space for science materials usually on hand at one time. There is one problem that frequently arises with a science shelf, i. e., how to arrange the objects to keep the shelf always orderly and attractive. Too many things give a clustered appearance; too few make it barren and uninteresting. A class discussion of how to organize materials brought in from time to time will result in a workable plan, such as the following evolved by a group of children.

1. Form committees to keep the shelf dusted and in order.
2. Group like objects together on mats of colored paper.
3. Label each object with a small neat card bearing the object's name and the name of the child who brought it in.
4. Make space for new things by removing old ones when no longer of particular interest.
5. Make exhibits of the things removed by placing them in a hall showcase or science room where the children of other rooms may see them.

Following such a plan results in another important educational outgrowth, i. e., practice in keeping materials so organized to make them usable and attractive.

— From *The Grade Teacher,* December 1946

II. A book club seemed to be the most appropriate solution to a lack of interest in reading among pupils of adolescent age — "A Rainbow Reading Club." To become a member, one had to read a book and report on it. Then a red square was posted after a child's name. Thereafter, for each book read and reported, a color was posted on in rainbow succession. After twenty-five books were read and the colors received, the reader becomes a gold star member. Then he proceeded to work on toward a second gold star. At the end of the year, the one reporting the most books received a book as a prize. When reporting on a book, the reader used the following form: Name of book; author. Name of reporter. Would you recommend this book to any one who might ask you to name a good book? Choose any one of the following methods.

1. Tell briefly the story of the book.
2. Choose and describe the character in the book which you like best.
3. Write an imaginary conversation between two characters of the story.
4. Tell how the story may be dramatized.
5. Relate what seemed to you the most interesting incident of the story.
6. Tell how the author came to write the story.
7. Give a brief account of the author's life. Explain how it may have influenced the writing of the book.
8. Draw a picture to illustrate some important scene in the play.
9. (Non-fiction) Give a list of questions which you could not anwer before reading the stroy but which you now can.

— From *The Grade Teacher,* February 1947

III. Box animals (Good as follow-up activity on "Study of Farm Animals"; appropriate for Industrial Arts.)

To make box animals with movable legs, heads, ears, and tails, secure stout cardboard boxes such as those in which cereal and other foods come. The larger the variety of boxes, the more individual the box animals can be.

Some spools, strong string, a darning needle and a thimble will be needed.

Suppose the first animal to be made is a horse. Use an oblong or cylindrical box for the horse's body. Another box either cylindrical or oblong but proportionately smaller, makes the horse's head. Two empty spools make the neck.

Thread a darning needle with the string, tying a stout knot in the end of the string. From the inside of the box that is to make the body, push the needle out through one end, on through the two spools and through the needle. Draw string tight and tie a knot. The horse now has a movable head and neck.

From heavy cardboard cut two front legs for the horse. Tie a strong knot in the string. Push needle through top of the first front leg on through the lower front of the body and through the second leg. Draw string tight and tie a knot. The horse now has a pair of movable front legs. Make the hind legs in the same way. Also cut a pair of ears and attach in the same manner. For tail, double the string, knot and push out through the body. Cut and fray out ends.

Paste or draw eyes and mouth. If desired boxes can be covered with construction paper before making animals. With a variety of boxes, it is possible to make a menagerie of box animals.

—From *The Grade Teachers*, December 1947

IV. Children and Poetry Writing
(How We May Develop Creative Writing)

Poetry is a storehouse of natural expression for the imaginations of children. Even at an early age, children can be encouraged to record such imaginations in poetry. Regular rhyme and rhythm are not necessary to begin poetry since the free verse form may be used. Children have a native heritage of rhythm, that, added to poetic meaning, is the essence of poetry writing. Poetic meaning then is the important factor in leading children to write poetry. They can capture it from the life and beauty around them before they read poems. A good plan with which to start is to (1) keep a written list of beautiful word pictures. In leading children to do creative thinking, never completely inhibit his free expression. (2) Lead pupil tactfully to pick out the truly poetic expressions. (3) Use the same thought in various forms for practice in word and phrase fluency:—

Examples:

sumac covering hills
hills covered with sumac
hills red with sumac
sumac covering hills

(4) Work together as a group—Group work is very valuable in poetry writing, because many who, in the beginning, do not have the ability to help, gradually get the feel of creative expression. Children also needed help to decide in what order the phrase could best come and what to say for a concluding thought. (This help is

(*Continued on page* 32)