PRODUCTION NOTE

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Library
Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books

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EXPLANATION OF CODE SYMBOLS USED WITH ANNOTATIONS

R  Recommended

Ad  Additional book of acceptable quality for collections needing more material in the area.

M  Marginal book that is so slight in content or has so many weaknesses in style or format that it should be given careful consideration before purchase.

NR  Not recommended

SpC  Subject matter or treatment will tend to limit the book to specialized collections.

SpR. A book that will have appeal for the unusual reader only. Recommended for the special few who will read it.

Except for pre-school years, reading range is given for grade rather than for age of child.

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New Titles for Children and Young People


A charming read-aloud picture book. Sherri was afraid of the noises she heard at night; her father and mother were very patient with her. They helped her investigate the causes of the noises, and they stayed up with her. Gradually she became used to the sounds—except one. Finally she realized that the last odd noise was her Daddy's snoring. The story is amusing and it will probably be very comforting to the small child who shares Sherri's nervousness. Enhanced by attractive stylized illustrations.


A most unusual book, beautifully written in a highly distinctive style. This is the story Kamiti tells of his childhood and education in Kenya and in England, of his beloved Waithera who waited for Kamiti during his six years away, and of the great project of forest conservation which became their life's work. Interesting to read, lovely in the simplicity with which the author gives insight into the dignity and humility of his African protagonist. The etchings are magnificent, although there is an odd duplication of one full-page illustration (pages 58 and 59).


A read-aloud picture book with some magnificent aspects and some severe defects. This is the story of Bambino, the little boy who was the baby of a circus family. The five Rollatinis had ridden bareback on Ammonia before Bambino was born, but there is only so much room on a horse's back, so Bambino couldn't ride... until Pappa had a happy idea. The text is amusing, but a good deal of the humor is such as to appeal to the adult reader; this is also true of some of the appealing qualities in the illustrations. Pages alternate in double spreads, first the facing pages with text and line drawing and then a double-page spread of gay stylized illustrations in color. These incorporate number concepts in fragmented presentation. This device tends to become distracting, since the text is quite solid and does not lend itself to interruption.

R Belting, Natalia Maree. *Cat Tales*; illus. by Leo Summers. Holt, 1959. 95p. 4-6 $3.

A delightful collection of sixteen folk tales about cats, garnered from many countries. The selection is varied; the tales are concise yet they capture the folk and the national flavor. The illustrations are attractive in black and white, and they, too, are appropriately varied to suit the tale and have good style for story-telling. No sources for
the folklorist, although there are variants of familiar tales: e.g., an unusual Scottish version of "Bremen Town Musicians."


Indy was the nickname of the Allen's pet pig, Indiana. Indy was named for the state in which she'd been born, but she now lived with the Allens in New Salem, Illinois. So white was her skin that Indy became sunburned if she went outdoors in the strong sun; one day she did go out and she got into all sorts of trouble. Fell into a bin of onions that brought tears to her eyes, was chased by a gander, finally fell into the mud. She was rescued by Mr. Abraham Lincoln, and he gave up a trip to Springfield and got covered with mud himself to rescue the little pig. Actually, the story is less about Lincoln than it is about the pioneer town of New Salem, and the story presupposes (for fullest enjoyment) an acquaintanceship with this period that will not be had by most children of the age to which this tale has greatest appeal. Indy is endowed with human thought-processes: "Today something is going to happen... geese are silly birds." The writing style has a folktales quality; illustrations are completely appropriate.


Kristie, a journalism student, becomes an enthusiastic skindiver. Through this interest, Kristie becomes involved in the mysterious "haunt" of the quarry. In solving the mystery, Kristie helps a professor whose daughter had been her enemy, returns to the college a valuable fossil relic, and re-establishes herself as a reliable reporter. Too many sub-plots, too much coincidence and too little characterization beyond the superficial.


Little Brother was the youngest of eight children, and he hadn't been given a name because his parents couldn't find one that they both liked. He was tired of being called Little Brother, so he went name hunting; he took his first name from Ellery, the jolly horse trader, and he decided that his middle name would be Douglass, like the postman. Ellery Douglass had just announced his new name to his family, when he was told that he had a new baby brother. Although there may be appeal in the child's search for identity, it is probable that this appeal is greater for the adult reader than the small child who is hearing the book read aloud. The writing style is stilted and the book ends quite abruptly.


An excellent addition to the author's series of studies of Indian life. The first chapter gives geographical and historical information about the Indians of the Andes, and chapters that follow are devoted to Inca roads and the system of runners, to family life and patterns of child life, to Andean crafts and to agricultural practices. Sections of the book that explore the craftwork and the ceremonies and legends of the Inca are most interesting; the concluding pages tell of the Spanish conquest in the sixteenth century, of the exploitation of the natives by the conquerors, and of the changes in the economic and social structures that resulted from the new order. Brief mention is made, finally, of the state of subjugation in which Andean Indians have lived in the last two centuries, and of the legend that someday the Inca will be restored. Fascinating material in a text that is serious and packed solid with informational details: not easy reading but most rewarding.
All through the centuries, the beautiful winged white horse named Pegasus had flown over a peaceful world. Until the twentieth century. Then he found that flying between artificial satellites and guided missiles was very uncomfortable, so he came down to earth. A small boy warned him that he would have to try to hide his wings to be accepted and allowed to stay as an ordinary horse, so Pegasus did. Then came the day the boy wanted the horse to fly... but Pegasus had been earthbound so long that he couldn't fly. The boy cried, and a miracle happened: the winged horse flew away and in his place there was a dead carthorse. Rather light until the mysticism of the ending (resembling a Wilde fairytale), which could be understood only by older children, while the format is inappropriate for them. Illustrations are inconsistent in their depiction of Pegasus... first winged, and then with wings missing; it is also confusing to see another winged horse than Pegasus. Time elements at the beginning of the book are not well handled, and the ending is very weak.

The story of a girl whose life was affected by the struggle going on in the New World between the French and the British; captured by the Indians, Jemima was taken from her New England home to Quebec. Here she was at last found by the young man who had loved her at home and had been hunting for her for many long months. Fairly pedestrian writing style and a slight overdose of action and coincidence. Characters are stock figures: bluff Betsey, her villainous brother, the brave French trapper. There is some interesting historical background but it is almost obscured by the embroidery of incidents.

A survey of the progress of communication; here Mr. Buehr has devoted the major portion of the book to the material that was covered in the first chapter of The Genie and the Word and has touched only briefly on the more modern means of communication on which the above is concentrated. The progressive achievements of mankind in written communication are first described, with particular attention to advances made in printing. The pattern of development in messages sent by sound and by sight are then separately examined; mail delivery and the subject of electrical devices in communication are then discussed. Much of the material is examined rather superficially, so that the book is more useful as a quick survey of the topic than as a source of complete information; perhaps its best use is an introduction.

A description of the work of the Map Service of the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, the training of the men in the Service, and the special kinds of equipment they use are described, with a small amount of text and large photographs on each page, and
with additional full-page photographs. Of these, the most interesting are probably those which show the details of the making of maps rather than any of the surveying procedures. A prefatory section describes some of the international cooperation that expedites the surveys, and gives some examples of the need for accurate maps and their uses in expansion and exploration. The book has a somewhat random arrangement.

R Colby, Carroll Burleigh. Plastic Magic; The Material of a Million Uses. 4-7 Coward-McCann, 1959. 48p. illus. $2.
A good introduction to the story of the rapid development of the plastics industry and to the manufacture of plastics and plastics products. A brief historical review of the beginnings of the industry is followed by a very good section on the different basic kinds of plastic, two examples of products of these types, and a series of explanations—with diagrams—of the ways in which manufactured products are made. This is followed by the more usual Colby format of photographs illustrating random aspects of the topic. The center section of diagrammed explanations is very informative and adds greatly to the usefulness of the book.

M Colver, Anne. Secret Castle; illus. by Vaike Low. Knopf, 1960. 113p. $2.50. 3-5
Molly-O and Pip visit the Thousand Islands, and find a mysterious situation which they help unravel. The half-finished castle that Mr. Boldt never finished building after his beloved wife died intrigued the two little girls, and they tried to find out all they could about it. They were also puzzled by the strange behavior of the lad who was teaching them to fish . . . and the connection between the two, when ferreted out by Pip and Molly-O, brings the book to a happy conclusion. The simple clue is so fortuitously found, and the prowess of the children (in the face of adult failure to solve the problem) so forced that the book is weakened, but it is otherwise a pleasant story, with authentic background, credible characters, and an easy, albeit trite, writing style.

R Corbett, Scott. The Lemonade Trick; illus. by Paul Galdone. Little, 1960. 3-6 103p. $2.75.
An entertaining nonsense tale about a magic potion. An eccentric lady gave Kerby a chemistry set, but one of the chemicals didn't work the way the benefactress said it would. It had an irresistible smell . . . and when it was swallowed, Kerby became very, very good. So good that his mother thought he was ill. He tried it out on his dog; he tried it out on some of his friends; and through the effects of the magic lemonade Kerby formed a new alliance with two other boys. An easy and vivacious writing style, and delightfully real boys in a truly humorous book.

NR Doss, Helen. Friends Around the World; pictures by Audrie L. Knapp. Abingdon, 1959. 24p. $1.50. 4-6 yrs. In a commendable effort to promote brotherhood and world understanding, the author has described children around the world as they do some of the things that are universal. All children have favorite foods, although these foods are different in different countries . . . all around the world families go to church, although the houses of worship may be quite different . . . all children like to dress the way their friends dress, although the ways will be very diverse, depending upon the climate. Because the style is so stilted, and because the author has given names to the many, many children she uses to illustrate her point, the book does not succeed in its purpose. It becomes merely a long iteration and reiteration of one theme; the illustrations are crowded and pedestrian.

Yrs.

Nell’s mother goes down to the basement and tells Nell to answer the doorbell; seven times Nell and her dog Tuffy go to the door. Nell knows all the people and animals who arrive, and they all gather happily together. Unrealistic: a mailman and a seller of ice cream are hardly likely to stop and pay a social call on a little girl when they are on their rounds. (To say nothing of it being unlikely that Mother would stay in the basement when there is so much noise being made that Daddy has to climb in the window.) Told in forced rhyme, and with a distracting recurrent shift from past to present tense.


Poems selected by the author from her previous books have been arranged in several sections of cognate material: for example, one section is entitled "Songs of the Saints" and another "Fancies and Jingles." The poetry is lovely, tender and gay; it is delightful to read aloud or to read silently. An index of titles is appended.


The story of a little boy who was different. Pepito used to run away and hide from the other children, who laughed at him because he loved to dance. Only his grandmother understood him and could help him. When the little daughter of the mayor lay ill, none of the children could make her smile—then Pepito danced for her, and she rose from her bed to dance also. Concepts of the story are too sophisticated for the picture book audience, and the author has tried to incorporate too many ideas: the child who is unique, the gift that is more precious than the tangible, the fairy-tale princess. Illustrations are for the most part attractive, although Mr. Fern has used quite a lot of black, achieving some gloomy pages.


A delightful family-plus-mystery story with a pleasant outdoors background. Here three children of a family vacationing in the North Carolina mountains become concerned about the luminous light that emanates from Fiery Gorge. Marjorie and Tom are convinced that some mysterious looking men are uranium hunters; young Jeff doesn’t share his convictions, but he has no doubt that there are men from space about. The mystery, as in this author’s other books, is solved in a perfectly logical fashion. Characters are individual and the family relationships are excellent. The writing style is smooth; the book has humor and, in some passages, evokes appreciation of natural beauties.


Yannis Nikou tells of his life on the island of Mykonos, where all the men become either fishermen or sailors; life here is dominated today as it always has been by the winds and the waves of the Aegean Sea. As in the other books in this series, the boy’s story is told in a rambling, informal fashion; village life, the food, games, education, and home life are described casually. There is in this volume more text devoted to legend (as told by one of the members of the Mykonos community to Yannis) than in other books in the series; while it is not inappropriate in a book about a country which is the home of so much of our mythology, and does give depth to the book, it does make the text less convincing as the utterance of a real boy. Photographs are variable in their contribution as information, but some of those included are among
the most impressive in the series, giving an overwhelming impression of strong sunlight sparkling on the water, of clean white buildings and strong shadows.

R Goetz, Delia. Grasslands; illus. by Louis Darling. Morrow, 1959. 64p. $2.75. 4-6
Excellent informational writing: a smooth and simple style; interesting facts, well marshalled; a concentration on the topic, with no irrelevant details; and a series of striking illustrations that convey the atmosphere as well as implementing the text. Text and illustrations are in soft, appropriate grey-green. The book describes the three kinds of grasslands that are distributed over the world: savannas, steppes, and prairies. A map shows this distribution, and the illustrations make very clear the differences in the appearance of these three types of lands. Miss Goetz has done a superb job in explaining the characteristics of each type, the flora and fauna peculiar to it, and the changes that have been brought about as men came to live and work in these areas.

M Grant, Bruce. Cyclone; illus. by Robert Frankenberg. World, 1959. 190p. 4-6 $2.75.
Young Ward Hampton owned a "paint" mule with blue eyes and a disposition that exceeded every tradition of mulish behavior. Cyclone was an intelligent mule, but he couldn't understand why Bluebell, the mare in the wagon train, didn't reciprocate his affection. So when Cyclone took off after Bluebell, Wade had to follow the wagon train to rescue his mule, and so the boy had an unplanned trek with the train. The writing is permeated with a rather condescending attitude toward the Indian characters, most of whom are described as faintly amusing. The humor in the book is chiefly dependent on Cyclone's antics; since the incidents that involve the mule are somewhat repetitious, the book will appeal largely to animal lovers.

Primer print for easy reading, and a rather limited amount of information about reporters. Don goes with his uncle, a reporter, to the zoo; on the way they see a fire; at both stops Uncle Jack asks questions. He tells Don how he had his own training, and he then takes Don around the plant and shows him how newspapers are printed. More useful as supplemental material for beginning independent readers than for the facts it gives about being a reporter, although there is not usually a great interest in reporting as a vocation at the primary level.

R Grimm, Jakob Ludwig Karl. The Wolf and the Seven Little Kids; a story by the Brothers Grimm; with pictures by Felix Hoffman. Harcourt, 1959. 32p. $3.75.
A read-aloud picture book edition of the old favorite. This version was first published in Switzerland in 1957, when it won the annual Jugend-Buch-Preis. The illustrations are very handsome: colorful, vivacious and humorous. The page layout is attractive and is visually restful; covers are of rather fragile cardboard.

A tall picture book about stilts, telling both the ways in which they are used by children in many parts of the world, and the ways in which children who read the book—or hear it read—may use stilts for play. The mention of geographical place names is inappropriate for the picture book audience, but the information about uses is interesting and highly original. Lack of unity is a serious defect, the text being divided distinctly into two parts. The illustrations have highly individual style, gaiety, and are noteworthy for their color and detail of costume.
Describes the passenger ships and the activities of both crew and passengers in docking: the pilot boat, the routine of customs, etc. The ways in which cargo is handled and the machinery with which it is moved and stored are explained. The harbor itself is described: the piers, the dredge boats, the ferries, and the Harbor Police. The book gives quite a bit of information but it is not well organized, and the details become piled on rather than leading to clarification. The writing style is pedestrian, illustrations adequate; a two-page glossary is appended.

M Havard, Aline. The Two Runaways; illus. by Ronni Solbert. Lothrop, 1959. 3-4 159p. $3.
Tacey lived with her grandmother and was sent to stay with an aunt when Granny became ill; Aunt Fanny was not interested in Tacey, so the child ran off to walk the twelve miles home. She met Tim and his dog—they were running away too, to keep the dog safe from the dog warden. They spent the night under a haystack and were taken in, fed, and returned home by the members of a theatrical troupe; Tacey was a happy girl when she was back with her Granny. Some of the adult attitudes toward children are unpleasantly portrayed. The Negro cook is distinguished by her conversation as a person without education, although she is otherwise sympathetically drawn. The writing style is quite lively. It seems too much of a coincidence that Tacey, who runs away from her aunt's house to return home, has the name of the heroine of Return of the Native, Eustacia Vye.

Ad Havighurst, Marion Margaret (Boyd). The Sycamore Tree. World, 1960. 221p. 7-9 $3.
A Civil War story of romance at the Ohio border, where family loyalties were strained by divided sympathy. Anne, who had been living in the South for four years, and had become a staunch Southerner, came to stay with her childhood friend, Merry. Anne's two brothers were fighting on opposite sides in the War between the States, and all of the young people and their parents had to be patient and tolerant in balancing political alignment against personal allegiance. The author gives a good picture of regional problems of that period, but the characters are fairly stereotyped and the solutions to all problems fairly pat, especially in the development of the double love story.

A picture book for reading aloud, quite reminiscent of A Hole Is To Dig by Ruth Krauss. This book, too, gives definitions, but they are all parts of a person: noses are for roses, necks are for arms to go round, toes are for wiggling. There are imaginative and humorous touches throughout the text, but most of the writing is of only adequate calibre. There is less humor in text and illustrations than is to be found in the Krauss book, but both concepts and style are similar in the two books and the readers or listeners who enjoyed the one will probably enjoy this book as well. This book depends more upon rhyming vocabulary, i.e., arms: lugging, tugging, slugging, hugging. The Krauss book is more simple and graphic.

R Hutchins, Ross E. Insect Builders and Craftsmen; with 70 photographs by the author. Rand McNally, 1959. 96p. $2.95.
Another book of photographically illustrated observations on the intricate marvels of the natural world; this volume is as instructive and as fascinating as the author's first two books. Some of the topics covered are nests, ant cities, capsules on plants which are stimulated by insects and in which they then live, and insect homes constructed of clay, sticks, and stones. The final pages give advice on collection and
preservation of insects and their structures. The index uses italics to mark illustrations. The writing style is excellently suited to the type of material: simple and factual, yet imbued with a communicable wonder and appreciation.

NR Jacobs, Flora Gill. The Toy Shop Mystery; illus. by Sofia. Coward-McCann, 3-4 1960. 96p. $2.75.
While the Adams children were visiting Mr. Yodel's bakery, his little rosewood chest was stolen. The chest had money in it; it also had an extra key to the shop—and somewhere in the shop, Mr. Yodel said, there was a missing family treasure. The clue to the treasure turned up in a toy—part of a miniature toy shop—and the treasure proved to be Mr. Yodel's ring. He had been wearing it for years, not knowing that it was actually the famous Sung-Yu Jade. The ring had been inherited from an ancestor who had picked it up in New Zealand in the nineteenth century. A contrived plot, not helped by superficial characterization and poor writing style. The Adams children and their Siamese cat, Annie, are a bit too cunning to be true.

Ad Johnson, Barbara (Greenough). The Big Fish; with pictures by Mary Greenough K-2 Means. Little, 1959. 43p. $2.75.
The story of Pierre, who lived in the Province of Quebec, and who was the only boy in a family of six children. Pierre's father was a guide at a fishing camp, and the boy was very anxious to go along one weekend. At last the chance came; and Pierre actually caught a large trout and narrowly missed being attacked by a moose. When he came back, Pierre was very boastful to his sisters and they were respectfully admiring; his mother took matters a bit more calmly when he described his big fish; Rather slight, but a pleasing story; illustrations are pedestrian.

Ad Johnson, Crockett. Will Spring Be Early? or Will Spring Be Late? Crowell, 4-6 1959. 48p. illus. $2.75.
With great reluctance, the groundhog prepared to do his duty on February second and emerge to make observations leading to the arrival of spring. He was misled by an artificial flower that had dropped from a truck, and he joyfully proclaimed to all the other animals that spring had already come; but the pig pointed out scornfully that there was snow on the ground and that the flower wasn't real. Dolefully, they all realized it was snowing. It was the pig's fault, they decided; everything had been fine until he interfered. Amusing nonsense, although it gets off to a slow start.

M Kamerman, Sylvia E., ed. Children's Plays from Favorite Stories; Royalty-3-6 free Dramatizations of Fables, Fairy Tales, Folk Tales, and Legends. Plays, Inc., 1959. 581p. $5.95.
Fifty royalty-free one-act dramatizations, some from sources that are classics of children's traditional literature, others taken from less familiar stories. Sources are not given, each play title having listed the name of the adapter. The dialogue suffers seriously from literary attrition. The book is probably not going to instill a desire to read the original; it is less useful than the original as a source for storytelling. Production notes are appended. A collection that will be of most use where interpretation can be guided by a discriminating teacher or recreation leader.

A read-aloud picture book that attempts to evoke imaginative concepts of abstract qualities. Pleasant to read aloud, the text asks of the listener, "What would you be if . . ." you were square, or soft, or red, or loud, etc. In each case several choices are suggested; for example, "If you could be soft would you be the snow - Or twenty-
five pillows - Or breezes that blow the blossoms from the sassafras tree? Who would you - Which would you - What would you be?" The last three questions are used as a pleasing reiterated refrain. Illustrations are varied in technique to conform to the quality being presented. However, the presentations are so brief (one double-page spread for each) and so intangible that it is difficult for small children to grasp the abstractions. Some children, of course, will do so; most pre-school children have difficulty, however, in translating into terms of human behavior a personification of sensual qualities.

Ad Ladas, Alexis C. The Seal That Couldn't Swim; illus. by Marc Simont. Little, 4-5 1959. 56p. $2.75. Rewritten in picture book format, a story based on an actual happening and originally published in Harper's Magazine. A baby seal was rescued by Ladas (then a naval lieutenant) and it became a pet; among the quite humorous episodes about the little seal's training is that in which he learns to swim. The author gives a convincing picture of the baby seal's charm, and the story is engaging. The vocabulary is rather difficult, and prohibits independent reading of the book by the younger child to whom the subject would have the greatest appeal.

R Lifton, Betty Jean. Kap the Kappa; illus. by Eiichi Mitsui. Morrow, 1960. 62p. K-2 $2.75. A delightful and highly imaginative tale about a small water elf. The kappa is an ingratiating creature who must have water in the shallow bowl on his head in order to stay alive. It is this need that eventually discloses to the townsfolk Kap's true nature after he has been living for a time with a family who disguise him as a human boy. Loving and mischievous, Kap is a character to be remembered, and his relationships with land people are warm and enjoyable. The illustrations, brush-painted in black ink, are soft in technique and vivacious in execution.

R Lincoln, Martha. A Workshop of Your Own; by Martha Lincoln and Katherine 3-6 Torrey. Houghton, 1959. 148p. illus. $2.50. Simple and explicit information about basic tools and the correct ways to use them and to care for them. The authors give excellent general information and safety rules about ten tools, suggest simple and inexpensive materials to be used, and then give diagrams and instructions for making various toys. The arrangement of text on the pages is especially good, as is the use (carefully and repeatedly explained) of a boxed sign that says "Careful." Notes for parents, and an index, are appended.

Ad Lindgren, Astrid (Ericsson). Pippi in the South Seas; trans. by Gerry Bothmer; 3-5 illus. by Louis S. Glanzman. Viking, 1959. 128p. $3. Another Pippi extravaganza, with rather uneven humor in the writing: the first half of the book is a series of rather labored episodes, the second achieves genuine humor. In the first half, Pippi and her two friends are at home; all the action is dependent on impossible situations against an everyday background, and the author must exaggerate excessively to get an effect. In the second half of the book, the characters move to the South Seas, and it is, perhaps, because of the exotic background that the mildly stated (and wildly improbable) ploys of Pippi become believable fantasy.

M Melcher, Marguerite Fellows. Catch of the Season; illus. by Stephen Cook. 7-9 Little, 1960. 195p. $3. A summer at Provincetown with Cherry Ormsby and Jeff Hardy proves to be a fairly routine experience, except for the very realistic atmosphere of the shore that is evoked by the author. Summer visitors, smugglers, sailing, a faithful dog, a boy and girl who have spent many summers together ... all familiar ingredients. The characterization is adequate, save for some of the minor characters, who seem quite cari-
catured; the plot is a bit less than credible, with smuggled packages of drugs hidden in masquerade costumes.

Ad Mulcahy, Lucille. The Blue Marshmallow Mountains; illus. by Don Lambo. 4-6 Nelson, 1959. 128p. $2.95.
The story of a newly-orphaned brother and sister who go to the mountain country with their grandfather who is a peddler. There is also a mystery involved: why do the people in the mountain communities seem so unfriendly, when Grandfather has told Paquita and Miguel how hospitable they are? The mysterious disappearance of a church painting is involved, and the children are drawn into the chain of events leading to the discovery of the thieves when they pick up a woman painter who has become ill while hiking. Most coincidental. The mystery is a bit creaky in its structure but the background of the book is interesting. Characterization is not deep or perceptive, but the characters are credible, and the family relationships—especially that between brother and sister—are excellent.

Fifteen plays, each with a brief appended section that gives production notes. The plays are of quite mediocre calibre, dependent on trite situations (assuming two people are lovers because they are overheard reading the lines of a play, for example); the use of "humorous" names is stressed (three ornithologists in one play are named Griper, Groaner, and Grunt). Not good literary quality, but probably useful additional material for groups that have continuing need for new plays.

Starli knew that she wasn't pretty and never would be. Her sister had the beaux and the clothes—Starli helped her Dad take care of the orange grove. Then a new development threatened the successful operation of the grove by affecting air pollution and irrigation. The situation was complicated by the necessity for putting the high school on double session, and—for Starli—by the fact that her father was bitter toward the one boy she liked, because he was from a new family. There are too many complications of plot for a unified effect, and some of the characterization is exaggerated; the heroine is almost too stalwart and sensible. Yet there are aspects of this novel that are regrettably absent from most of the teen-age romances: Starli's problems do not all become miraculously solved, and the pattern of her family relationships and those of other adolescents in the book are much more realistic than are usually found.

A biography of the famous American naturalist and writer, giving—at the conclusion of the volume—twenty pages of excerpts from Walden. While the book gives facts about Thoreau's quiet life history, the writing style is trite and mawkish, replete with generalizations and depending heavily on quotations. Index is appended.

A most unusual story, based on historical incident, of an Indian girl whose tribe was evacuated from her home island. Her small brother being left behind, Karana jumped off the white men's ship and swam back; but her brother was killed by wild dogs, and so the adolescent girl lived for many years, alone, a sort of female Robinson Crusoe. Once some Aleuts came, but she hid, and they went away again; it was eighteen years before Karana saw people. Told in the first person, Karana's record is convincing—a tour de force for a male author—and the writing style is distinctive and appropriate.
in flavor to the background. Since the far greater part of the book is concerned with Karena's long years of solitude, there is perhaps too much time devoted to minute details of hunting, fishing, weaving, etc. But for the reader who spurns teen-age romances, this will be a refreshingly different book.

A third volume in an informative series, written with informal ease and illustrated by attractive black and white drawings of animals and other subjects related to them or to their environment. Each of the four sections of the book describes the varieties of the animal being discussed, their diets, living habits, and environmental conditions. The ways in which the animal is useful to men are also discussed, and the author gives information about other animals of the region. Interesting material, not indexed and not arranged for reference use, but most enjoyable for the casual reader.

R Posin, Dan Q. Out of This World. Popular Mechanics Press, 1959. 180p. 7-10 illus. $3.95.
Title will be familiar to many readers, since the author's television program is so titled. Dr. Posin uses in the book the same kind of diagrams he draws on the blackboard during his shows: sketchy, often humorous, occasionally utterly irrelevant, but more often very clear and simple. A cat, Minerva, figures largely in the text; despite this facetious approach, the material is sound, accurate, and up-to-date. Dr. Posin writes about space with familiarity and zeal, and his approach will undoubtedly attract some readers who are interested in the topic, but reluctant to read other books written in more sober style. The book is hardly for the neophyte, but is admirably suited for the reader who is already interested in the topic.

Ad Price, Olive May. River Boy; illus. by Bill Hamilton. Westminster, 1959. 5-6 175p. $2.95.
Danny, who was twelve years old and an orphan, didn't want to be a bound boy, so he ran away. As a stowaway on a Hudson River trading boat, Danny became a member of the Mollie-O's family; he learned how Captain Molly outwitted the British by covering the picture of General Washington with a picture of the King whenever the boat was in occupied waters. Danny became involved with spies and counter-spies, pirates and rough British soldiers. The plot gets a bit thick and some of the stock characters (rough but kind Old Beaver, an old salt, and kindly Irish Captain Molly) get a bit tedious, but the pace of writing is lively and this is a fairly good adventure story of the Revolutionary War period.

Ad Prokofiev, Sergei Sergeevich. The Story of Peter and the Wolf; illus. by Alan Howard. Barnes, 1960. 32p. $2.75.
The text of Prokofiev's Peter is here presented without the musical themes that were part of the Chappell-illustrated version (Knopf, 1940). While it is true that, as the publishers suggest, that for non-musical children the story is enough in itself, it is also true that the staves of music are no deterrent to any reader and are a welcome addition to some. Neither the text nor the mediocre illustrations here has quite the flavor of the earlier Peter, and there are occasional awkward places in the text. For example, "How the bird did worry the wolf! How he wanted to catch him!"

SpR Reid, Alastair. Supposing; illus. by A. Birnbaum. Little, 1960. 48p. $3. 3-6
A fantasy in picture-book format, generally humorous and mildly therapeutic. Each idea is expressed on a single page, and the ideas are not related, except by the general theme of the book: imaginative dreams of glory, revenge, frustrations, and an occasional non-sequitur. Example: "Supposing I said something I shouldn't have, at
dinner, and Mother kicked me under the table as she sometimes does, and I said in a loud voice MOTHER? WHY ARE YOU KICKING ME UNDER THE TABLE?" Some of the illustrations have humor, but they do not measure up to the text. There is great variation in the degree of sophistication required to understand the motivation of the suppositions. Not a book for every reader, but one that will be very much enjoyed by those who like this rather special brand of humor.

M Robinson, Benelle H. Citizen Pablo; illus. by Jean Macdonald Porter. Day, 4-6 1959. 128p. $3.
The story of Pablo, a twelve-year-old Mexican boy whose family is almost destitute; they finally decide to chance the Border Patrol and cross the Rio Grande without a permit in order to earn money working on a ranch in Texas. Harried and overworked, the family is visited by tragedy when Rosa, the youngest child, dies. After a migration to California, Pablo begins school; first he is put in a class with small children, then into a sixth grade room where he cannot at all understand what is going on. The teacher does not help him—there is not time, so all Pablo does is copy. He doesn't fit anywhere. And so Pablo begins to hate. With some other Mexican boys, he runs away from school; he breaks windows, he is arrested. And at last there is help when a Mexican-American policeman takes Pablo to a special school. Here Pablo adjusts and makes a decision to go back to Mexico, come to the United States legally and become a citizen some day. A sympathetic portrayal of the Mexican worker, and a candid one. The writing style tends to be pompous, and is especially so in the beginning of the book. Here also the author uses many Spanish words somewhat unnecessarily, and this rather labored beginning is too long, so that the exposition of the situation is almost enough to discourage the reader from continuing.

Simultaneously published in England, Germany, and the United States, a picture book by a German author and a German artist. The text tells of a small hedgehog that was captured in a net, taken to the home of a small girl and made a pet. The writing style is sedate. The adventures and misdemeanors of the animal are told with little humorous effect. Illustrations are technically proficient and rather sophisticated lithographs; some are in color, some in black and white—among these are some very handsome pictures.

R Rushmore, Helen. The Shadow of Robbers' Roost; illus. by Albert Orbaan. 6-9 World, 1960. 186p. $2.95.
Based on local legend, this is the story of the struggle in the Oklahoma territory between the settlers who wanted peace, and the notorious outlaw, William Coe. Fast-paced and exciting, with authentic background and good characterization and dialogue. Jonny Hardy's father was a man of peace and refused to take any action against Coe, although he hated to have the man around his trading post. Jonny himself felt that, at the age of thirteen, he wanted to help establish law and order in Cimarron country; he unexpectedly found himself in a situation where he could strike against Coe, and this raid at Robber's Roost was the first incident in a chain of events that brought Coe into the hands of the law. Action is swift and the story line uncluttered; background details of the period are most convincing. The author establishes personalities most deftly—Jonny's small brother is a precocious child and in just a few sentences it is clear that little Matt is a terror, that Jonny resents him, and that the boys' mother doesn't see at all that Matt has really been the innocent appearing provocateur when the boys are scrapping.

3-5  Tuttle, 1959. 120p. $3.50.
A companion volume to Japanese Children's Favorite Stories; both volumes revised from earlier editions and including some new material. Most of the tales are retellings of traditional stories; a few are modern; and one new version of "Urashima Taro" is included. The collection comprises eighteen stories; illustrations are pleasant and are westernized Japanese in effect. The retellings are adequate, but not outstanding, many having an abrupt dénouement.

A truly beautiful book. Beautiful in the literary style, in the understatement of strong emotion, of the relationship between an old man and a boy. Very little happens while the boy and Old Ramon are together: the boy has been sent to learn about shepherding from the wise old man. He does, and he learns a great deal more. In the old man's words there are dignity, simplicity, and deep wisdom; his words are expressed in writing that is tender and strong.

Ad  Schlein, Miriam. Little Dog Little; illus. by Hertha Depper. Abelard-Schuman, 2-3 1959. 93p. $2.50.
A fanciful story about a mouse-sized dog who was stolen from his boy by a ferocious rat who wanted a rug made of dog fur. Escaping from the rat's hole, Little Dog Little had several adventures before he found refuge in the nest of a kind mouse who fed and sheltered him for four days. Little Dog Little was determined to get back to his home, so he started out, guided by Whitetip (a scout mouse) and found the right house; he jumped into a delivery boy's carton and found that it was going to his very own apartment; a happy reunion ensued. Some parts of the book have the warmth of the author's Home: The Tale of a Mouse, but the combination of fantasy and natural animal behavior do not give as unified a piece of writing in Little Dog Little as does the more realistic and consistent writing in Home.

R  Schoor, Gene. Roy Campanella; Man of Courage. Putnam, 1959. 190p. $2.95. 7-10
One of the best of Schoor's series of biographies of today's great baseball players. Roy Campanella's exciting career is told with a liberal sprinkling of good baseball episodes; his role in the breaking of the color barrier in the major leagues is candidly discussed, and it is discussed with honesty and dignity rather than with sentimentality. The only weakness of the book—and to boys who love baseball, this will probably be of minor consideration—is that Campanella emerges as a good and brave man, but he is quite superficially characterized.

As in other recent books by this author, the humorous appeal is based on extravagant—fantastic drawings of mythical creatures. The book is designed to expand the vocabulary of beginning independent readers; the text often uses contrived words that rhyme with familiar words—but the new words are not really those that expand a vocabulary. For example, animals named Wump, Zans and Yop rhyme with the words bump, cans, and hop. The book does not tell a story but devotes each double-page spread to a separate topic, a device that becomes monotonous.

M  Shepherd, Dorothy W. Boxes Are Wishes; illus. by Phyllis Lee. Steck, 1959. 4-6 32p. $1.75.
Debbie and David are given a pile of empty boxes; they invite Terry and Carol to play, and the four children have all kinds of imaginative games. The use of simple material
and imagination in creative play is the mitigating aspect of the book, which is otherwise dull, stilted and poorly illustrated. When the children begin their play, the text is divided in an unsuccessful device: on one page is a black and white drawing, and on the facing page, a drawing in color. The first page uses first person, singular in the present tense ("I want to help the children in school.") and the second page uses third person, past tense ("One and two are three,' said Carol.") This is varied by using first person plural and the whole procedure is confusing both for the child who hears the book read aloud and for the beginning independent reader.

A charming collection of poems about birds, some from modern poets, others taken from authors of past centuries. Each poem is illustrated by a black and white drawing of the bird described. The poetry has been carefully chosen; the drawings are accurate and handsome; page layout is good . . . altogether a delightful book. Some unevenness of quality is inevitable in this type of anthology. Notes on sources are appended.

Ad Sondergaard, Arensa. My First Geography of the Panama Canal; illus. by Mel Silverman. Little, 1960. 60p. $3.50.
A book that is actually a history of the Panama Canal rather than a geography; while the facts it gives are accurate, it is not a comprehensive account of the history of the Canal. The illustrations are poor, and the author has been perhaps overly laudatory in describing Theodore Roosevelt: "Everybody loved him. They all thought that if such a wonderful man was President of the great United States, the canal would surely be built." The description of the background history begins with the discovery of gold in California, and the long trip necessary to get there from the Atlantic coast; it then goes back to the time of Pizarro and the long land trek across the Isthmus; with a brief inventory of other advances in communication and transportation, the stories of De Lesseps and Gorgas then are detailed up to the time of the formal opening of the Panama Canal.

Based on a story published in Germany in 1957, and using the same illustrations made from linoleum blocks. The bright colors and bold designs are almost too strong to be comfortable visually, and the illustrations use stereotyped figures. The text, in rhyme that is not always of the purest, tells of Kasimir's ride on the moon. He sees the Great Wall of China (rhymes with liner), the bullfight in Mexico City, the tepees of Wyoming. (Really) And he returns at last feeling that home is the best place he's seen yet.

A wonderful book about boys and their attitudes toward life, dogs, families, and other boys. Edward was terrified by the bully who lived next door, Martin. He ran from Martin until the day that Martin insulted Edward's beloved uncle Josh. Josh was a wanderer . . . and he had arrived with a dog that won Edward's heart. (No dog, said Edward's mother, until he was responsible enough to take care of one himself.) Uncle Josh's visit acted as the precipitant for the solution of several of Edward's problems—all in a perfectly logical way. The author's great achievement here is in having produced a story that has good ethical concepts, humor, excellent familial relationships, faithful insight into young males; all of these combined in a book with unity of structure and absorbing readability. Some of the concepts uttered by the philosophical Josh
may be beyond some readers, but they do not in the least hamper the flow of the writ-
ing; for those who can appreciate this additional aspect, it can only enhance enjoyment.


A very English family story about the adjustment to a new situation. When Reverend Bell announced the move to a different parish, his four children received the news with varying degrees of dismay. Only when the Bishop appealed to the children to help the new parishioners get to know each other and to work for the town, did the Bell children begin to feel they had a role and a contribution to make. Elaborate plans for a town celebration (successfully executed) are described in the last several chapters: both the townsfolk and the Bells are happy. Family relationships are good, and there is a strong message of community responsibility and of friendship between adults and children. The children are quite precocious, but the author's deft humor and her consistency in portraying the children as distinctive personalities make the Bells credible.


4-6 yrs.
The story of a friendly and courageous octopus who came to live with Captain Samofar after rescuing the captain from the jaws of a shark. Emile proved to be a talented musician (illustration shows Emile playing "La Mer" on three instruments) and, when he turned to the vareer of lifeguard, equally proficient. His last exploit before returning to the sea was to capture a boatload of bandits single-handed . . . eight-handed actually. The book has a zany humor in its combination of bland style and impossible action. The illustrations of this nonsense story are engaging.


A story about a practice teacher who had trouble learning how to get along with chil-
dren in the classroom. Carol Turner was a junior at Northbury Teachers College: a good student, popular with her friends, excellent at the theory of educational work. But her first day as a practice teacher was a fiasco, and she couldn't understand the joy and pride that her fellow-student, Bob Davis, felt in his career. She compared him unfavorably with the glamorous Yale man whose ring she wore . . . but she gradually came to understand what a fine person Bob was. She also learned, partly from Bob, where her own deficiencies as a teacher lay; in fact, Carol grew up. A fairly patterned plot in a run-of-the-mill college and career love story. The most interesting aspect of the book is the detailed account it gives of teacher-training, but the picture is that of a very formal program, that hardly reflects the best programs today. Carol shows some character development, but this, too, is part of the pattern of the great majority of college stories; the suave suitor and the diamond in the rough, the understanding instructor, the difficult room mate . . . all of the stereotypes are here.

The author explains that three things cause weather: sea, sun and air; that heat—mov-
ing the air and water—makes weather, both good and bad. He follows this simplified explanation with an expanded one that is something less than adequate, although it will give the reader some ideas about the relationships between causative effects in meteorology. The text leaves some statements unqualified: it explains that friction causes electricity and that rubbing causes friction, but not under what circumstances. Children may wonder why rubbing causes electricity at some times and not at others. At other points, the text diverges into material that is related but is not relevant: an explanation of snow-crystal formation digresses to mention their prettiness.
Ad White, Anne Terry. *Aladdin and the Wonderful Lamp*; illus. by Vera Bock. 4-6 Random House, 1959. 54p. (Legacy Books) $1.50.

A retelling of the classic tale from *The Arabian Nights*. Illustrations are adequate, but not unusual; the story itself is given in a style that does not quite capture the Oriental or folk flavor. An example of the ornateness that defeats its purpose: "And if you are not willing to strive for the winning of my wish, know that surely I shall die." There are better versions of the tale available (those by Williams-Ellis or the older ones by Colum, Wiggin or Lang), especially for reading aloud.

R Williams, Jay. *The Tournament of the Lions*; illus. by Ezra Jack Keats. 7-9 Walck, 1960. 120p. $2.75.

A tale within a tale. Two young squires, Phillipe and Robert, are in attendance at a tournament at Saumur in 1448. Both fall in love during the forty-day festival, and both win their spurs in combat. During the course of their stay, they are told the story of Roland and Oliver by Sir Bertrand, Master of the Squires. This famous story is extremely well told in this version, and the matrix material is equally well written. The action moves along at a good pace, the language is consistently appropriate, and there is an enormous amount of information about knighthood and the feudal system incorporated with skill.

R Wilson, Hazel (Hutchins). *Jerry's Charge Account*; illus. by Charles Geer. 4-6 Little, 1960. 145p. $3.

Jerry noticed that the grocer gave his charge customers candy on the days they paid their monthly bill, and he wished that his mother wouldn't pay cash. Then he decided that he would keep the cash when he went to the store, charge the groceries, and get the candy when he had to pay the bill, and nobody would lose. But it wasn't as easy as Jerry thought to store all of the money... and his parents didn't quite see his behavior in the same innocent light. Some of the troubles Jerry has are deliciously humorous, family relationships are realistic and pleasant, and the ethics of Jerry's behavior are well handled. The writing style and characterization are both uneven in quality, however; most of the people in the book are quite credible, but there are some who seem caricatured; most of the anecdotes move along naturally, but there are some episodes in which the piling up of redundant detail is quite forced.


A very handsome book, with page after page of beautiful design in red, black, and white. As a story for pre-school children it is not outstanding, many of the pages being merely a rearrangement of the same words (puff) to artistic rather than to literary advantage. Adults are more liable to appreciate the book than are children, and it is interesting as a typographical feat, if not as material for reading aloud to youngsters.


Suitable for vocational guidance rather than for the reader who is interested in the history of inventions. The book contains a considerable amount of information on patents, makes suggestions about useful literature, and discusses the methods used by an inventor. The text includes a sample letter, makes suggestions for training, and organizes information about patents in several helpful question-and-answer pages. The final pages challenge the reader by listing some two dozen suggestions for inventions that are needed, such as an automobile door-lock that cannot freeze, or an erasing key for a typewriter.
Reading for Parents

American Jewish Committee. About 100 Books. An annotated booklist for developing better intergroup understanding in children and young adults. American Jewish Committee, Division of Youth Services, 386 Fourth Avenue, New York 16. $.20 each; quantity discounts.


National Recreation Association. Looking In On Your School. Questions to guide PTA fact-finders. Same address, same price as title above.

