JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL COMPOSITION FOR GIFTED ADOLESCENTS

by

ENOCH BUNTING BROOME

A Thesis submitted for the Degree of
MASTER OF ARTS
in the Department
of
PHILOSOPHY

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
October, 1936.
CONTENTS
1. Chapter I: Introduction.
2. Chapter II: Fostering Creativeness in Adolescents.
5. Chapter V: Prose Composition for Gifted Adolescents.
6. Chapter VI: Classroom Composition Activities.
10. Chapter X: Composition Weaknesses of Gifted Adolescents.
13. Appendix A: Junior High School Verse.
15. Bibliography.
Chapter I.

INTRODUCTION.

In recent years much attention has been paid to the education of pupils of inferior ability. They have been segregated into separate classes and given suitable instruction in work within their capacity. Universities have given special courses to train teachers in abnormal psychology and in the best methods of dealing with these unfortunates. Little attention, however, has been paid to the other end of the scale, and gifted children, at least in British Columbia, have been greatly neglected. The emphasis is easy to understand as society feels that it must give its first attention to the subnormal and the average, to the former because of its incapacity and its latent danger to the future, to the latter because it constitutes the majority.

Few people have given the exceedingly bright students a thought. The general attitude has been that these pupils, being clever, will be able to take care of themselves in any situation that may arise. In British Columbia we have had the anomaly of the intelligence quotients of a class ranging from about ninety to one hundred fifty or sixty. On first thought this does not seem to be nearly so serious a thing as grouping average students with morons, but really it is just as bad. There is always a tendency for the slowest to set the pace for the class. This is a fact well-known to the experienced teacher, particularly when an inspector is favouring him with a visit.
One must be thorough; there must be no suggestion of superficiality; thus, fifteen minutes devoted to the dullest pupil in the class in order that he may understand the difference between the present perfect and the past perfect tense is quite justifiable; in fact, it is an indication of the most commendable professional zeal. Throughout the ordeal the gifted student is suffering from intense ennui; his attention flags; he appears lazy; he clandestinely reads something in which he is interested; he becomes a nuisance, and invents ingenious ways of tormenting his neighbors without, of course, being caught by the teacher; or, worst of all, he develops into an insufferable smart-aleck, showing off at every opportunity.

Yes, little indeed has been done for those of outstanding ability in British Columbia. If there are extremely intelligent students, so much the better: examination results will be good, the school will get a name, and the principal a reputation. Reversing Kant's dictum, one can say that very often pupils have been regarded as means rather than as ends. And the slogan, education for democracy, has often meant endeavouring to bring the intellectually elite to the level of the average. Many of us, I feel sure, are still restricted by the Four-Square Gospel of pedagogical fundamentalism: examinations, formal discipline, standardization, and a devout belief that the only justification of the present lies in preparation for the future.

In certain sections of the United States attention has been directed to the needs of gifted children. Some schools have opportunity classes for pupils with I.Q.'s of 140 and over;
some cities have special schools for the gifted, and some are experimenting with the activity school for the purpose of encouraging creativeness. We, in British Columbia, are somewhat backward in making experiments. I do not mean to disparage our accomplishments. Much has been achieved since the educational survey: the inception of the junior high school, vocational guidance, and improved courses of study. But many things remain to be done, and not the least of these is the making of adequate provision for the gifted student.

The observations in this thesis are the result of six years experience at Terapleton Junior High School, during which time the conclusion has been reached that even in the junior high schools we are not doing all we could for our most intelligent students. It is so easy to disregard individual differences and to instruct all pupils in the same manner.

At the present time the two chief obstacles to educational progress are obscurantism and faddism. If a disciple of the former, the teacher regards himself as the exponent of a divine order, to question which is heresy; if of the latter, he thinks of himself as the saviour of the world and fails because of radical departures from accepted standards. I shall endeavour to avoid both obstacles.

I. According to Bulletin # 7 of the United States Department of the Interior, there are seven special schools for gifted students in the United States and one hundred twelve special classes.
In this thesis the term "giftedness" applies to a combination of special ability in the field of English composition and general all-round intellectual ability. Experience has shown that most students who possess writing powers to a marked degree also have intelligence quotients ranging from 120 to 150 or over, but this is not always the case. Occasionally one has a pupil of pronounced ability in writing who is unable to think up to the level of his style. "An intellectually gifted child may be of any status whatever in respect to special talents for they are independent of general intelligence." This is an extreme statement but there is no doubt that specific abilities are present to a greater extent than general intelligence.

I have in mind a young girl of some talent who made a considerable reputation in Junior High School, a student whose early career seemed to augur a literary future. A short time ago the subject of discussion, now aged nineteen, brought a play for criticism. It seems impossible that the student of such early promise could produce a work of such little merit. The play was entirely out of balance and mawkishly sentimental. I have had fourteen year old pupils who could have pointed out its defects, but this particular person seemed to lack critical insight entirely. It may be that immaturity and inexperience are responsible, but more likely the explanation is an intellectual limitation.

Davis lists the following as evidence of giftedness in children:

1. Ease of assimilation.
2. Power of sustained attention.
3. Intellectual curiosity and initiative.
4. Ability to generalize.
5. Broad-mindedness.
7. Sense of humour.
8. Versatility and vitality of interests.
9. Special talents.

Five characteristics seem to be present in the writing of gifted children. It will be sufficient at this point to refer to them briefly, as they will be elaborated in succeeding chapters. They are:

1. Extraordinary powers of expression.
2. Sensitivity of feeling.
3. Imaginative power.
4. Maturity of thought.
5. Understanding of human nature.

The word "composition", as used in this thesis, includes both oral and written expression. An effort will be made to discuss fully those phases of the subject that provide opportunities for development of gifted adolescents.

Chapter II.

NURTURING CREATIVENESS IN ADOLESCENTS.

Questions have often been asked as to what method should be used to elicit from Junior High School students verses like those in Chapter III. There is no "open sesame" that unlocks the door to creative work. If the ability is present, it is easily encouraged; and, in a sympathetic atmosphere, develops of its own accord. It has been my experience that in any class in which the intelligence quotients cluster around 120 or 125 there is much latent literary ability that needs only encouragement to cause it to blossom forth.

Hughes Mearns in Creative Youth says: "Poetry, an outward expression of instinctive insight, must be summoned from the vasty deeps of our mysterious selves. Therefore, it cannot be taught; indeed, it cannot be summoned; it may only be permitted."

Later he says: "The new education becomes simply, then, the wise guidance of enormously important native powers." Leonard, writing on the same subject, has this to say: "I do not believe that the writing of imaginative narrative or verse should ever be a requirement; it should rather always be permissive with the option of writing some wholly matter-of-fact incident."

Most of those who have written on the subject emphasize the fact that there must be no compulsion, that the really good work comes from the mysterious depths of being and

emerges partly in response to an inward urge and partly in response to sympathetic surroundings. In this connection the teacher is of paramount importance. It is his privilege to foster the first feeble strivings of the creative spirit, and his duty to see that the environment is conducive to creative work. But it is so easy for us teachers of gifted students to adopt an attitude of "laissez-faire" and to be satisfied with very ordinary work. To get the best from his students, the teacher must be constantly on the look-out for unusual ability and must, unless he is a mere pensioner, give encouragement and sympathetic guidance. He will not wait for inspiration, but will search for special talent with an evangelic zeal.

There is really no definite program of development that will inevitably bring results in creative writing. Every teacher must evolve his own technique.

The starting point is, of course, the atmosphere of the classroom as established by the personality of the teacher. If the room is saturated with good literature, and if the soil has been carefully prepared, the time is ripe for creative buds to blossom under the warmth of the student's own enthusiasm. The teacher must be constantly drawing attention to the fact that the harvest for creative work is reaped through the senses and then passes to the alembic of the imagination, that poetry does not merely happen, but is the result of a number of elements, three of which are of especial importance: keen sensibility, the shaping imagination, and apt and original expression. If the personality of the teacher is strong enough,
this will become a gospel among his students, not to be violated unless superseded by something better.

The consensus of opinion among the few writers who have treated the subject of creativeness in children seems to be that assignments in verse should never be required. Frankly, this is contrary to my practice. I endeavour to find the most promising youngsters, and do so through formal assignments, as I have found that otherwise much time is wasted in locating the gifted students, and that sometimes they remain undiscovered. I often commence by assigning a limerick or triolet on some popular topic. The assignment will be well received, as pupils like the novelty of it. The purpose, of course, is not to discover poetical ability but to make a commencement. The first set will almost invariably be poor. This gives the teacher the occasion for pointing out the necessity of watching one's metre and accenting the line properly. The students return to the next one with zest and usually show some improvement. A few of the productions will be good, so good they will be kept. Here is one:

"I'm a pupil at Templeton High;
I study this grammar, but why
I haven't a notion,
I'm lost on the ocean-
But I "guess" I must do-or die."

These poetic trifles may not constitute poetry, but they certainly lead pupils to a realization that more than an inspiration is required to write a poem. It draws their attention

1. See articles op. cit. page 6, note 3.
to matters of metre and rhythm and, if they do nothing else, they assist in developing a knowledge of these things. If no good is served, no harm is done.

These are generally followed by an intensive study of ballads, during which their main characteristics are elicited. I then require an original ballad to be handed in. Pupils are always enthusiastic about this assignment: there is a dramatic situation, a simple verse pattern, and scores of good models.

By this time they are prepared for more original work. If the first steps have been properly motivated, the pupils will likely be requesting it. At this point I often make assignments, giving students the option of choosing any other subject they prefer. In this way much old work is brought to light. It is not long before the talented persons are revealed, and afterward it is just a matter of sympathy and encouragement.

A warning must here be given. Teachers sometimes commit an error more serious than neglect, that of over-assiduity. The pupil must not think that the teacher is probing into the secret recesses of his mind; rather the relationship should be one of mutual understanding and confidence.

The next step, which always flatters, is inviting the gifted children to contribute to the school magazine or paper. More will be said of this in a later chapter.
Chapter III.
WHAT GIFTED ADOLESCENTS WRITE ABOUT.

NATURE.

In my estimation not nearly enough attention has been paid in books dealing with the interests of adolescence to the part played by nature in the lives of children. At this time there is a stimulation of perception; things are noticed and admired that before had been unobserved or just taken for granted. Hiking becomes very popular, nature clubs are in demand, and books treating of the outdoors replace the early juveniles. Adolescents, particularly girls, are ardent nature worshippers, and often express their feelings in verse.

Mary, writing about the subject of spring, gives us the following:

April.
I have walked so far to-day,
With the wind in my face and the sun on my back;
The newness of spring sang in my heart
As I followed the faint and winding track.
For where the breeze has stirred the grass
I have seen young April pass.

I have seen her misty eyes,
And the full young beauty of her lips,
Breathed the sweet glory of her hair
Unbound, as from it slips.

I. According to the findings of R.S. Malmsud in the Journal of Educational Psychology for October, 1930, of 1917 elementary and high school verses examined, 44% deal with subjective themes and 51% of the remainder with nature.
The fragrance of the new-turned earth,
The secret of a flower's birth.

I returned from afar to-day,
When the wind dropped and the sun went down,
And April came through the perfumed dusk
And sang her song o'er the twinkling town.
Then, through my garden, hushed and still,
There echoed the song she sang on the hill.

There is no doubt, to my mind, that this poem shows a true affection for early spring. It is not a mere repetition of hackneyed sentiment tritely expressed. There is a freshness and beauty about it that mark it as an artistic expression of deep personal feeling. The metre is faulty in places, but the total effect is one of sincerity; and the poem, like most true poetical achievements, gives us the writer's experience vicariously.

Here is another, written by Eileen, a less mature girl in grade eight.

Frost Fairies.

Old King Frost is here again
With a band of elfin folk;
They love to paint on the window pane,
And the naked trees to cloak.

They cover the ground with silver lace;
The roofs of the houses too,

I, Mary M. E., grade 9, 1932.
And on the fences patterns trace
In glistening, crystal dew.

Over the land they make their way,
Dancing with frosty glee,
Leaving their footprints sparking white
For everyone to see.

I remember asking Eileen to write a poem for the "T.J.", the school paper. She replied very seriously that she would do what she could, but that she was afraid she would be unable to comply with my wishes as she could write verse only when she felt like it. Sometimes, she said, she had a poem within her and could write it down very quickly; at others she couldn't write anything. It occurred to me that her attitude was exactly that of one type of creative artist.

The poem just quoted is a good illustration of a tendency noticeable in the verse of many young writers; namely, the constant personification of aspects of nature in the form of fairy folk. This cannot be explained on the same grounds as "rosy-fingered dawn", "ruby lips", etc. The most original students who deride the use of trite expressions cannot keep away from personifications of this kind. The explanation is likely the adolescent attitude towards nature. To boys and girls of this age nature is not just a beautiful thing to be admired; she is vibrantly alive, and has many moods and many voices which one can hear if he understands and gets "en rapport" with her.

Hence the constant personification.

I. Eileen P., grade 8, 1931.
The maturity of some of our gifted adolescents is a source of surprise and sometimes of consternation. They commence thinking about life seriously and consider fundamental problems to a greater degree than their parents or teachers suspect. As the result of a questionnaire given to my grade nine classes, I found that one fourteen year old girl was familiar with the major works of Scott, Stevenson, and Dickens; had read *Tess*, *Jude the Obscure*, *The Return of the Native*, *Vanity Fair*, *Babbit*, *Elmer Gantry*, *Toilers of the Sea*, *Les Miserables*; and in poetry, most of Coleridge, *Endymion*, *Ode to a Nightingale*, *The Spoon River Anthology*, and *Leaves of Grass*. Another girl had in her list *Paradise Lost*, *Paradise Regained*, and the complete works of Keats. All gifted children are not as mature as these two girls of fourteen (or fifteen), but the level is very high. Most teachers—even most English teachers—would be put to shame by the reading maturity of Alice and Mary.

One of the best expressions of this concern with the deeper things of life is the following unsolicited poem.

**Said the Carpenter to Me.**

"What this house is going to be,"

Said the carpenter to me,

"From the plan I cannot see;

With my hammer, saw, and plane

I can build it to remain

Long to buffet wind and rain.

---

"Square the room and strong the roof;
I can make it weather-proof,
True below and fair aloof;
But I cannot guarantee
That this house shall lovely be,
Filled with joy and sorrow-free.

"I have tried to build it well;
But shall beauty truly dwell
'Neath this roof, the years must tell
By the tenderness displayed,
By the brave souls unafraid
I.
Must this home at last be made!"

Without this poem no one would have suspected what was going on in Andrew's mind, as he appeared the antithesis of a sensitive person. His manner was brusque almost to the point of unmanliness, and his general attitude bespoke bored indifference. But underneath the leaven was working.

An interesting phase of this work is its technique; it is free from the crudities that so often mar adolescent productions.

These gifted students of the poetical type have to be handled very carefully. A few of them, more girls than boys, become "sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought". One girl writes:

I. Andrew J., grade 9, 1931.
"I am so insignificant
When the first wind blows the hanging leaves,
And the liquid notes of the first carol
I.
Slip from the sighing green."

This verse was written by a very well-balanced girl, and was likely just the spontaneous expression of a mood of the moment soon to be replaced by others. The teacher of such students, however, should make sure that too much "grave-yard" literature is not studied, because there is danger of inducing a morbid state of mind. The writer on several occasions has been asked whether poets wrote about anything but death and unhappiness.

**IMAGINATIVE VERSE.**

Most gifted adolescents are incorrigible romanticists. The "far away" and the "long ago" have a lure that is often not present to the same degree either before or after the period. The imagination achieves a fine flowering at this time and sometimes gives forth rare blossoms. The following verse, written by Violet, a girl of fourteen, is one of the best imaginative poems I have received from a junior high school pupil.

*From the "Garden of Lost Dream."*

The dew was making crystals to light the golden way,
The sun was making sunbeams to hurry on the day.

---

The grass was making emeralds to line the dreamland street;
It made them soft and shiny for all good fairy feet.
The wind had knocked at Heaven's gates and sought admittance there
to ask the King of Angels to greet the bride so fair;
So God had called his horses and called the golden sun
to drive him to the palace, and stay 'till day was done.
The old moon smiled and shed her beams to light the way for God,
and sacred held for evermore the green spot where He trod.
The fairy brush had swept the sky of all the dark black clouds,
and painted in their stead the blue that drew all fairy crowds.
The bride was Beauty wrapped in light, and Beauty wrapped in love;
She moved, and all the world moved too, and God smiled from above.

Her sparkling eyes were two large stars, the brightest blue that's given;
They made God turn and view again, then use them for his heaven.
Her hair was threads of shining gold, the work of Fairy Sun;
He toiled and toiled for centuries until that work was done.
Her gown was petals of the rose which left their fragrance there;
Her slippers carved from deep-sea pearls, the rarest of the rare.

She bowed, she smiled, she moved away; the dreamland moved along,
And everywhere from out the glen arose a fairy song.
From Heaven's gates the tinkling bells still echoed out their chimes;
From glen to glen they burst once more, and echoed many times.

I. Violet C., grade 9, 1931.
The girl who wrote this surprising poem was the most difficult pupil to handle I have ever taught. She had an undeniable talent and an interest in writing which was almost a mania. She wrote short stories, poems, plays, and novelettes just because she liked doing so. But what an unbalanced nature! She could never be depended on, was exceedingly flighty, could not stand a word of criticism even when she knew it was just, and was so hyper-sensitive that she constantly imagined people were ridiculing her. She lived in a world of the imagination, and never really found out that there was another world of social intercourse, of give and take, in which it is sometimes necessary to restrain one's feelings. When in grade X, she suddenly left school because she "was fed up with the English teacher," and continued writing with more enthusiasm than ever. She will always be to me the example, par excellence, of surprising talent allied to surprising instability of temperament.

The poem given above is an excerpt from the "Garden of Lost Dreams," written to amuse her younger brother. I was never able, although I tried every indirect approach I could think of, to obtain the rest of the poem. The author belongs to what Hughes Mearns calls "a group of inglorious poets who prefer to blush unseen."

THE APPEAL OF BEAUTY.

The appeal of beauty is felt very strongly by pupils emerging into adolescence. From the time of birth the child's interest in the world around him has been increasing gradually,
but at this stage it is considerably accelerated. This interest often finds its expression in nature worship, sometimes in hero-worship, sometimes in a strongly felt nympholepsy and a desire for change, sometimes in less admirable ways such as pre-occupation with self and desire to impress others.

The following unsolicited poem, written by a young girl of fourteen, is the best expression of this I have come across. There are a few crudities of structure in it, the result of immaturity, but it has a haunting beauty and an evident sincerity that augur better things from its author.

**Beauty.**

Beauty I have known—
The heart-break loveliness of some still night
When my soul, flung down the eternity of stars,
Was caught and held suspended in its flight
By the ghostly arms of a tree that fashioned bars
Of silver, woven of the moon’s light.

Beauty I have known—
When April with her laughing face sighed
For a moment, and laid her calm brow
Close to the pulsing earth, and cried
A little moan and murmured softly how
Her heart had wept to make her starry-eyed.

Beauty I have known—
When I saw a dew-wet rose blush
As I walked through the long shadows of the trees

The down wind whispering of the first flush;
Laughter I have known, and my sorrows cease
At the sudden heaven of a bird's song in the hush.

This is a truly remarkable performance for one so young. One hesitates about being too enthusiastic about the works of a favourite pupil, but opinions of disinterested outsiders verify my conclusion that adolescent productions of this quality are very rare. For once, at least, the boundaries of verse have been passed and an entrance made into the land of poetry. It will not be surprising if this is not the last record of such a journey by this gifted young writer.

The poem is interesting, too, because it illustrates most of those characteristics already mentioned as indicative of outstanding ability in English composition. It gives evidence of keen sensitivity of feeling and, in the second verse, an example of that constant personification of nature noted earlier in the chapter. This figure of speech is an excellent illustration of that precocious maturity found in gifted students. In addition, there is a command over language, a felicity of expression that many adults would envy. A remarkable performance.

Reference has already been made to a talented student whose gifts were not controlled by a well-organized personality.
It is pleasant to point out that the writer of these verses was not only the most gifted student I have taught, but also one of the most mature and one of the best-balanced personalities. She was equally endowed in prose and verse, and possessed a true artistic humility rare in young writers. She always felt the inadequacy of her style, was constantly striving for improvement, and was always amenable to suggestion. A great reader, she had an instinct for good literature, preferring Keats to Maupassant and Hardy to Zane Grey. She was proficient in all her studies and finished her high school course in two years. In character she showed the same even balance, escaping the irresponsibility and flightiness so characteristic of adolescent girls. It will be interesting to see whether her talents and character will enable her, in the face of many handicaps, to find a place in modern literature.

NARRATIVE VERSE.

There is no doubt that adolescents have a great interest in narration, as evidenced by the great popularity of Poems Chiefly Narrative, perhaps the best-loved of school texts, and by youthful predilections for reading matter of an adventurous nature; but, strange as it may seem, students very seldom write narrative verse.

A number of reasons can be advanced for this. In the first place, action can generally be told more effectively in prose than verse. In contrast to the wealth of material in lyric and dramatic poetry, narrative is relatively scarce and, with few exceptions, not written by students. 

1. See Chapter VIII, page 76.
exceptions, inferior in quality. In addition to this, adolescents have little experience upon which to base poems of action. Moreover, writing a story in verse is a much more difficult matter than is generally realized, as a narrative poem is not a spontaneous expression of something demanding immediate utterance, but a carefully planned and slowly executed piece of work.

One type of narrative verse that can be attempted by adolescents with some hope of success is the imitation of ballad forms.

**Humorous Verse.**

One of the characteristics that indicates the person of superior intelligence is a sense of humour. As one would expect, this trait is responsible for a good deal of adolescent verse. As no great degree of literary ability is required for verses of a humorous nature, the bright students with no particular writing talent enjoy composing them. In a competition among grade nine classes, the following was given first place.

*Mislaid Pearls.*

Your teeth, my dear, are like the stars
That shine so bright above you;
Their pearly whiteness holds a charm
That makes the whole world love you.

Where'er your eyes look up to mine,
They set my heart a-dancing;

---

But when you smile at me, my dear,
’Tis then you’re most entrancing.

Those lovely teeth, I’ll sing their praise
As long as I am able;
But do you think it proper, dear,
To leave them on the table?

SENTIMENTAL VERSE.

A great deal of sentimental verse is written by adolescents, especially by girls. It is difficult to know just how to receive it, as one realizes its lack of restraint and balance but does not wish to discourage the pupils’ endeavours. And when one realizes that adolescence is essentially a sentimental period, at least for the girls, he hesitates to criticize too strongly. As Hughes Mearns says, “A laugh may seal forever one outlet of the spirit.” I think sentimentality should never be directly ridiculed. It is far better to establish critical standards in the literature lesson. The able student, who usually has a keen sense of the ridiculous, will soon be applying these criteria to his own works.

I have included a number of examples of sentimental verse in Appendix A. For obvious reasons I do not refer to them by page; however, it is unnecessary: they speak for themselves.

1. Elsie H., grade 9, 1932.

Chapter IV.
VALUES OF VERSE COMPOSITION FOR GIFTED ADOLESCENTS.

One day, after a particularly onerous grammar lesson during which a few sharp things had been said, I picked up a crumbled piece of paper and, to my great surprise, found this:

YOU.
I liked you at first:
Your eyes smiled and said nice things;
I worshipped at your feet.
Then I saw you as you were:
Your voice filled the room,
Crowding me into a corner;
Your eyes were dark hollows
Harbouring snakes; they were saying,
"Look at the fool!"
I thought I should have died then,
But I never told you,
Perhaps you would have been interested.

The shock was great. Here I was accused by a ruthless critic of not living up to early promise, of talking too loudly and getting on the nerves of a sensitive person, of losing control of my temper, of using cutting sarcasm and, in the terrible last line of having a typical pedagogical interest in but lack of understanding of my students. Certainly a very serious indictment.
I tried to recollect what had given rise to such a diatribe, but could recall nothing particularly drastic. It occurred to me that poetry often records moods of the moment which quickly give place to others. Perhaps this was one. Surely enough, the next day the pupil seemed to have forgotten all about the cause of annoyance, and even volunteered for some rather arduous work. However, I did not forget the lines.

Worsworth in one of his poems says, "A timely utterance gave my thoughts relief." Perhaps this explains the above verse. Very likely there was annoyance at some thoughtless word of the teacher's, followed by the urge to express. This satisfied, attention was directed to more important things.

Hughes Mearns in Creative Youth draws attention to the important function of poetry in the life of the adolescent. The same author tells us that he was surprised to find that many of his students had written a great deal of verse without any encouragement from the teacher. My experience has been the same. Many pupils, I have found, have pages of manuscript hidden away where no one can find them. Why is this? These are not conscious strivings towards poetical perfection with thoughts of publication in view. When the young girl writes the invariable doggerel to spring or, more likely, to her "girl friend," she has not, in the manner of some poets, thoughts of the April edition of a Canadian magazine or the Sunday supplement of a daily newspaper. No, it is not that. It is rather
an urge within, driving her to express herself, an urge that
does not leave her content until it has been satisfied. The
result may be, generally is, exceedingly bad, but it is the same
urge that produces some of our best poetry.

The adolescent period is one of the most poetical in life.
Daily one becomes conscious of vistas never before suspected.
Every adolescent is an Elizabethan living in a gradually ex-

panding world. The world is new and not half revealed. We are
young with the verve of youth coursing through us. New worlds
unfold before us bringing new wonder and new beauty. There is
much to be done, there are uncharted seas to sail, and strange
peoples and exotic lands to discover. There are storms often,
sometimes even shipwreck, but, above all, there is zest and en-
thusiasm; it is a glorious thing to be alive in an enchanting
world. We return from our journeyings with enriched experience
and with enhanced knowledge. And after the voyage is over,
what is more delightful than to ruminate over one's experiences,
to fall under the spell of "emotion recollected in tranquillity;" to
recall the wonders encountered on the way, and to endeavour
to give adequate expression to them?

The writing of verse by adolescents has a number of
values. Not least among these is that thoughts and feelings
that have been slowly germinating come to life and take a
recognizable form. The relation between language and thought
is a very close one. The student through endeavouring to give
expression to his own ideas, not only receives practice in
writing, but also clarifies and develops his own thoughts. The
attempt at creation thus becomes an agent of self-realization.

Another worthwhile value is that original attempts at verse-writing inevitably bring a deepened appreciation of the poetry of others. No person can attempt to record a feeling of his own without realizing, through comparison, the intensity of the experiences of others and the felicity of expression that gives utterance to them. Such poems as The Ode to a Nightingale and the Ode to the West Wind are seen in a new light in which many things stand revealed.

In addition to this, is the fact that practice in the use of verse patterns is instrumental in emphasizing that a strict economy rigidly excluding all non-essentials and carefully weighing the aptness of each word, is the surest way to effectiveness of expression. It will be shown that gifted students are often careless in matters of form. The attention that verse writing necessitates to ingenuities of economy is one of the best remedial devices for this tendency.

Chapter V.

PROSE COMPOSITION FOR GIFTED ADOLESCENTS.

When pupils enter junior high school they are in possession of certain skills in composition. They usually have some knowledge of the elements of the sentence. They know there are declarative, imperative, interrogative, and exclamatory sentences; and understand how to punctuate these, and that they should have subjects and predicates. In a rather vague way they realize what a paragraph is, that it treats of only one topic, and that generally it has a topic sentence. They can spell the simpler words of the language quite well, and can handle quotations in a very commendable manner.

The writers of texts on junior high schools make much of the fact that the three grades, seven, eight, and nine, form a psychological unit, that of early adolescence. This does not not seem to be the case at Templeton; there appears to be a decided gap between grades seven and grades eight and nine. This is particularly true in the brighter classes, as acceleration has caused them to enter a year or so before the general age of admission. Some pupils have arrived at ten years of age and a large number at eleven. Whether this is good grading or not is not the question that concerns us here. What does concern us is that this early entry has an effect on the composition course.


Davis C.O., Junior High School Education, ch. 3; World Book Co., New York, 1925.
Pre-adolescent children are very different from adolescents, and this difference is reflected in their school programs. Until the junior high school age the curriculum is chiefly concerned with subjects of the "drill" variety, and fortunately, elementary school pupils usually find such subjects interesting. Thus, in grade seven, it is a good idea to concentrate upon the mechanical phases of composition: direct and indirect narration, details of sentence and paragraph structure, etc. When the student enters grade eight, he will be well grounded in the fundamentals of the sentence and the paragraph, and will be ready for an adolescent program.

DESCRIPTION AS THE STARTING POINT OF COMPOSITION COURSE.

I have done a considerable amount of experimenting with various types of composition courses for gifted children, and have come to the conclusion that one with description as its starting point is by far the most effective. In the first place, the writing of descriptive paragraphs is just and extension of the work done in previous grades. The unity of the simple paragraph becomes the dominant tone or single effect of the descriptive; in fact, all the knowledge obtained in grade seven is relevant to the new work. Furthermore, descriptive themes are directly related to the expanding world of the adolescent. At this time there is a tremendous interest in people and nature, which provides excellent equipment for work that requires keen observation and emotional response. Pupils of this

---

essentially hero-worshippers; they worship their elder brothers, their fathers, older boys at school, and sometimes, strange to relate, even their school teachers. Another very practical reason for commencing with description is that descriptive paragraphs are quite short. Since there is no sacrifice of educational ends, this in itself is ample justification for its position of priority. A teacher who has two hundred fledgelings under his wing has to consider such matters. There is another argument for beginning with description instead of narration or exposition. If commencement is made with narration, much slipshod work is bound to go unchecked, since the teacher cannot give adequate attention to such lengthy themes; if exposition is the starting point, the whole emphasis is on factual statement, the "bete noir" of descriptive writing, the thing the teacher holds up as anathema. I am convinced that description should be studied first, then narration, and lastly exposition. This does not mean, of course, that three months will be devoted to each respectively; variety will be introduced as occasion gives opportunity.

**AN EFFECTIVE METHOD OF TEACHING DESCRIPTION.**

To most of us at school, the composition period was one of inexpressible boredom. How well we remember the hours spent memorizing the rules of paragraph structure. How vividly we recall writing definition after definition one hundred times because explanations were not verbatim. The most optimistic of us would not deny that this kind of thing is still done in some of our schools.

What is wrong with this method of teaching composition
principles? It is far too abstract. Such a method is particularly pernicious for gifted students who have active imaginations that must be appealed to in order that any permanent impression be made.

I have experimented with several ways of teaching description to gifted children and have found only one that is really successful. It is vivid in its presentation and lasting in its effects. I shall outline this method briefly, as it may save someone else from the preliminary failures attending my efforts.

I commence by informing the class that we are going to commence a new phase of our work in composition, but do not tell them what it is. I admit that at first it will not sound like composition at all, but recommend that they give their best attention as the new work is very important and has far reaching influences. Some of the most intelligent, I state, may see the purpose of the lesson before its application. This enlists their interest; here is something different with a mystery to be solved.

I inform the students that Willie (a mythical character met in many exercises) has been left a fortune by a rich relative and has decided to move into a new house in which he has a room all to himself. As he is wealthy, he is able to decorate the interior to suit his individual taste. I here elicit from the class that rooms reveal the individualities of the owners to discerning persons. Then ensues a short discussion as to the personality of our hero's apartment. It is suggested that Willie is primarily an athlete, an artist, a dude, a musician, a sheik, etc.

For a good discussion of concreteness in composition teaching see Webster and Smith, Teaching English in the Junior High School, ch. II. World Book Co., Chicago, 1927.
Eventually the class decides on his identity. This varies with the classes but many choose, in self-pity perhaps, to make him a student and his room a student's room.

At this point I write on the blackboard: "Purpose: to create a student's room."

We then decide that the next step is to buy the equipment, and to select the proper items in accordance with our purpose. The pupils suggest these and they are written on the board under the heading, "Selection of details." Items such as the following will be included: desk, chair, reading lamp, dictionary, Latin Lessons for Beginners (always mentioned), Advanced English Grammar, pictures of famous literary men and eminent scholars, diplomas, etc. Occasionally a question is interjected asking why such and such a detail is included, the answer being that it furthers Willie's purpose. Similar questions are asked as to why certain unsuitable details are omitted.

In response to questioning the students decide that the next thing to do is to arrange these details in the best manner possible, and that the arrangement will be artistic, governed by taste and effect, not scientific, as in the school library or science laboratory, where like things are placed together. I then write on the board, "Artistic arrangement of details."

The class is next informed that Willie, sad to tell, is a very vain person and likes to impress visitors with his scholarly propensities. The pupils, in reply to questioning, suggest that he will endeavour to arrange his details in such
a way as to give strong first and last impressions. To the outline on the blackboard is added "Give strong first and last impressions."

The application is then made. In description we must have a definite purpose in mind; we must select, not all the details, but only those that will bring out our intention most effectively; we must be careful to arrange these details artistically as possible, and must endeavour to have a strong opening and conclusion.

It is better not to make any assignments yet. The next step is to show how superior the method of suggestion is to that of factual statement. One very effective means of making this concrete is to have listed on the blackboard a number of sentences similar to the following:

1. The moon was partly hidden by clouds.
2. She looked down the river with a fixed expression.
3. The leaves along the brook are very withered.

The pupils are then required to quote passages from the literature studied during the year that express similar ideas. Gifted students enjoy doing this as it presents a challenge to their abilities. Eventually the sentences are matched as follows:

1. The moon was a ghostly galleon tossed upon cloudy seas.
2. And down the river's dim expanse
   Like some bold seer in a trance, etc.
3. Brown skeletons of leaves that lag
By forest brook along.

As a result of observation and discussion, the class decides that suggestion is better than factual statement because the reader uses his imagination and because a picture is presented which can be visualized. The students then give examples of their own, striving for vividness and accuracy. This is continued until the idea is well understood.

Even now I would not make any assignments that demand written work. A few good models should be studied so that the principles learned can be seen in application. Care must be taken that they are within the rather limited experiences of the children, that they are concrete, and quite short. The study of models should not be emphasized too much, as the “sedulous ape” is to be avoided, if possible. Teachers conversant with the works of Dickens, Stevenson, and Kipling should not lack any number of excellent examples.

When it is evident that the class has some knowledge of description, an assignment should be made on some easy, concrete topic. I often follow up the approach outlined above by assigning, as the first descriptive task, “A Room with a Personality.” While the pupils are working, an outline similar to the following is placed on the blackboard.

1. Have you a clearly fixed purpose in mind?
2. Do the details selected bring out this purpose in the best manner possible?
3. Is the arrangement of details the best?
4. Is there a strong opening?
5. Is there a strong conclusion?
6. Is suggestion used as well as statement?
7. Are vague, abstract words such as "seems", "impression", "nice", "awful", etc. avoided?
8. Are the verbs vivid and appropriate?
9. Do you avoid the excessive use of adjectives? Are the ones used necessary and vivid?
10. Is there variety in your sentence structure?

It is very important that the first few sets of descriptions be read carefully by the teacher so that bad habits be eradicated before deeply ingrained. The best compositions should be read to the class as this provides an incentive to good work.

As soon as possible, assignments in describing people and nature scenes should be given, as these are two of the engrossing interests of adolescents. At first well-known types such as pirates, old maids, crooks, school teachers, etc., will be very popular; then, when a greater knowledge of the art is obtained, there will develop a tendency to describe scenes of local interest, one's classmates, and persons of one's acquaintance.

Here are two examples of what can be done in descriptive work by junior high school pupils.

**A Witch.**

She was the ugliest of the ugly; the evilest of the evil. As I gazed upon her shrunken figure bent low over the dying embers, I was reminded of a twisted tree in some dark forest. Long gray hairs, matted together like a piece of felt, clung...
round her parched and withered face. Small red-rimmed eyes
glinted like those of the little mice that shared her abode
and, sometimes, as if anticipating some wicked deed, a malignant
smile would wreath her sinister features, revealing a lone sabre
tooth much yellowed and decayed. Now and then she would croak
in a hollow voice some magic spell that had brought sorrow and
distress to many a brave knight and innocent maid.

The Derelict.

He stood in the half-light of early morning with his chin
sunk on his breast, hands deep in the pockets of an old gray
cost, and a drawn look on his face. A long hooked nose and hunched
shoulders made him not unlike a weary bird of prey. Not a vestige
of colour relieved his sombre countenance but, as he raised his
queer eyes, they flashed with a strange blue fire as if resenting
my idle curiosity. A cynical smile twisted his lips and his sh
shoulders shrugged defiantly.

The sun rose higher and, as it touched the haze of smoke
and the grim buildings, the scene was changed to one of ethereal
beauty. Castles with shining turrets and cloudsof pink and gold
predominated. The man gazed over the city with glowing eyes, a
spot of colour high on each cheek. Suddenly he wrenched his hands
out of his pockets and reached up as if to entangle some of the
beauty in his fingers. They fluttered a moment like birds on the
wing while I watched fascinated. Long and white they were, sen-
sitive hands, almost transparent. As the cloud turned again to

I. Anna R., grade 9, 1932.
gray, he hunched himself once more and shuffled down the street. Turning to a passer-by, I asked who he might be.

"Oh, him?" he asked, "He's a crazy artist."

These descriptions are typical of what the teacher of gifted students can expect from his most talented pupils. Both show a good knowledge of descriptive method, both sustain a single effect throughout, in both there is a selection of significant detail well-arranged, in both the choice of words is excellent, and both by means of carefully chosen figures suggest the atmosphere the writer wishes to create. "The Derelict," in particular, gives evidence of that maturity which we have noted as one of the characteristics of gifted children.

There must be variety in descriptive assignment if the teacher wishes the class to retain a favourable attitude towards this kind of work. Gifted students are always very imaginative, and are apt to expect the same amount of imagination and intelligence in the teacher as they have themselves. If disappointed, and if given the same kind of theme time after time, they lose interest and become inattentive.

An interesting variation is to tell the pupils to write upon anything they wish, but not to state anywhere what the subject is. Later, when the description is read, the class endeavors to supply a title. This is a very effective assignment; it is interesting to the pupils, and it is a good test of one's descriptive powers as he is forced to suggest rather than to

I, Mary M., grade 9, 1932.
state facts. In the same way, an assignment requiring the description of some member of the class can be given with, of course, the title omitted. It is necessary to give a warning that no one's feelings are to be hurt, as bright pupils will go to caricature if permitted. It is equally necessary to forbid the description of the English teacher.

Here is an example of this kind of assignment.

???

"He was tall and gaunt and brown, and he looked at me with glittering eyes. His countenance was drawn and full of a nightmarish intensity that repulsed even while it fascinated. He laboured under an overpowering emotion that seamed his face with deep lines that accentuated the pigment of his parchment-like skin. A long, skinny hand, thrust before him as if to detain my contemplated flight, trembled like a lone leaf before winter's blast. I stood irresolute; an invisible fetter bound my limbs. As if in a dream I listened, his voice cleaving the thick fog of my consciousness."

After a little thought, the reader is aware that the above is a description of a character in a long narrative poem.

OTHER TYPES OF IMAGINATIVE WRITING.

In a recently conducted survey in the United States, in which a questionnaire was sent to thirty junior high schools representing ten thousand pupils, some valuable evidence was obtained about the composition preferences of adolescents.

---

I. Page 78, op. cit. on page 30.
The results were:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>% choice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Personal experience topics</td>
<td>70.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Imaginative themes</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. How to do or make things</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. School expeditions or community enterprises</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Current events or community problems</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I have given the same questionnaire to classes of gifted students and have found that 1 and 2 are always favoured; sometimes personal experience topics are placed first and sometimes imaginative themes. The others have varying positions but are always well down the list.

The tendency, judging by experimental questionnaires and pupils' preferences when allowed to choose their own topics, is to prefer those based on personal experience, which they will almost invariably treat imaginatively or humorously. Even the formidable assignment of writing "A Paragraph on the Paragraph!" which appears purely factual, becomes a task of interest to gifted students. This theme was treated imaginatively or humorously by over 50% of Class One. No definite instructions were given; the pupils were told to write on the topic in any way they wished.

Here is the shortest treatment, written by a very bright
Paragraph Village.

Paragraph was a little village situated near the bigger city. It was quite a small town, the only inhabitants being Mayor, Mr. Unity, Mr. Continuity, Mr. Repetition, and Mr. Explicit Reference; and to make matters worse, the people did not have any community spirit at all. The village did not progress and the small town's backwardness was very noticeable. The people were poor and were unable to make a success of any business. Many years went by and they drifted more and more from each other, until one day the mayor, understanding the reason for this, held a public meeting which all citizens attended. He talked about the poor co-operation among the inhabitants; and for the first time, they realized why they had never prospered. From that day they all united as one to make Paragraph Village a big success. All having a clear notion of each other's duties, before long every thing was running along smoothly.

Teachers of gifted students should constantly bear in mind this interest in the imaginative, and should exploit it for educational ends.

NARRATION

All imaginative pupils love to tell a story, and should be given opportunity to do so occasionally. I am not one of those who think that all assignments should have a narrative basis, as I think I have made clear; but to deny a place in the composition course for narrative themes would be going contrary
to a trait of human nature. It has been my experience that descriptive themes gradually merge into the story form; pupils unconsciously giving a narrative framework to their pictures. From this it is very easy to branch out into story.

A type very popular with junior high school pupils of marked ability is the writing of a story with a dramatic climax. A good way to introduce this kind of work is to read a few of O. Henry's masterpieces, "The Two Gun Man," and others of like nature. Too much time should not be spent discussing technique, as the students will be anxious to make their own attempts. Certain standard types are always forthcoming: the story of the man mistaking the cat for a burglar, the boy receiving the delightful surprise when he finds he is not late for school, the pupil suddenly called to the office, etc.; but some really fine pieces of work are written. "The Religion of Humptydumpty" is one of the surprising results of this assignment.

Narrative themes of a humorous nature have a particular appeal to gifted boys; the girls incline more towards the sentimental. One might expect that slap-stick treatment would be very common, but most of the students are saved from this by their intelligence and good taste. A single warning is all that is required. In Appendix B there are several examples of what one can expect in this manner from junior high school pupils.

Stories illustrating proverbs, with the proverb to be guessed from the context, provide excellent imaginative work. This is an extremely effective assignment if not given too often.

I. See Appendix B.
and is equally useful in oral and written composition. Sometimes
the brilliant students will include more than one proverb in
the story. The reduction ad absurdum of this assignment came in
a story written by a highly gifted Chinese girl (grade nine at
twelve) in which she smoothly incorporated twenty-two proverbs
into her narrative.

Some of the topics I have found very stimulating to
gifted students are:

1. School One Thousand Years from Now.
2. A Strange Dream.
3. Little Willie in Difficulty.
4. If I Were a Millionaire.
5. How I Should Cure the Depression.
6. A Visit to Fairyland.
7. An Outdoors Story.
8. If I Had Aladdin's Lamp.
9. Ivanhoe and Joe Louis Converse.
10. My Favourite Age in History.
11. An Original Legend.

A CLASS PROJECT.

Occasionally for variety I institute a class project in
composition. I have before me such a project based upon "Childe
Roland to the Dark Tower Came." I recall the dissatisfaction
of the class with the conclusion of the poem and the demand
that it end more satisfactorily. This provided excellent motivation
for an extensive assignment on the subject. It was decided to
write five chapters, each row being held responsible for one.
The subjects of these were: The Origin of the Quest; The Adventures
of the Band; Childe Roland's Last Attempt; The Fight; The Rescue.
Each pupil was required to write on the topic assigned to his
row and the best ones were chosen by the group method.
tication" committee was appointed to ensure the fusing of the sections; and later, when everything was completed, the result was read in the auditorium.

This kind of work takes a great deal of time and consequently cannot be given too frequently; once a term is often enough. On no account should it be assigned to classes that are not distinctly above average, as it requires an imaginative grasp and qualities of persistence that will likely discourage less gifted pupils.

A useful application of this is the continuing of stories studied in class. Extending Treasure Island, Ivanhoe, and The Lady of the Lake is very popular with bright students.

EXPOSITION.

It is unwise to have classes of gifted students spend much time writing purely expository themes in the English classroom. They will get plenty of practice in this kind of work in social studies and science classes. The English teacher should enlist the support of the teachers of these subjects to ensure observance of an acceptable expository method, and should occasionally examine work done in other rooms to prevent a double standard arising—one for the composition period and one for other classrooms.

USE OF MODELS.

Models must be very carefully used, or they will do more harm than good. They should never be merely displays of unat-

tainable excellence for these will discourage the pupils, however gifted. If properly employed, models can be a source of inspiration providing stimulus to further endeavour.

The success of the model depends upon its fulfilling some need common to the pupils of the class. It must be used in conjunction with a project already instituted, and never as an exercise in formal discipline, for, as in most exercises of this type, there will be no transfer to written work. The use of books of the nature of "Composition Through Reading" is to be deprecated, as such a formidable array of material (in many high schools so many pages each month) tends to make the composition period another but less valuable literature lesson. One should not forget that the purpose of composition is to assist students to develop latent abilities, and the model is justified or condemned to the degree in which it does this.

Often it is a good plan to reserve the study of models till the class has made an attempt of its own so that the exercise will not seem academic and unrelated to the student needs. There is danger that the perfect work might discourage the pupils or else result in slavish imitation, which, despite the illustrious example of R.L.S. often does more harm than good. An assignment for which there is a parallel model should be given to the class; and after everyone has attempted it and a few difficulties discovered, the model should be examined.

1. See page 55 op. cit. on page 28, note 1.
2. Pickles F., Composition Through Reading; Dent and Sons Ltd., Toronto, 1930.
3. Diltz B., Models and Projects; Copp Clark Co., Toronto, 1932, offers a wide selection of good models.
The ensuing discussion will accordingly be intelligent and, arising as it does, from a felt need, the model will provide informative study rather than academic ennui. The students should then make another attempt in the light of the guidance they have received.

The model should be as short as possible. Long examples cause a diffusion of attention, especially when they are written on the blackboard.

Properly handled, the examination of the model assists in the formation of style; it develops a feeling for felicitous expression, assists in expansion of vocabulary, and provides illustrations of variety in sentence structure.

Examples of Junior High School prose may be found in Appendix B.
Chapter VI

CLASSROOM COMPOSITION ACTIVITIES.

THE TEACHER

As the quality of work obtained from gifted students is determined very largely by the influence of the teacher, a short discussion of his position in relation to his pupils and the classroom is in order.

Ideally, the teacher of gifted students should be well-grounded in educational theory and practice. He will not, however, remain static, but will know how to adapt his instruction to the varying needs of his pupils. He will maintain an experimental attitude and, if not subject too much to outside pressure, his procedure at times may be iconoclastic. But he will have a reason for his departure from traditional method.

The scholarship of this hypothetical gifted teacher of gifted students will be exceptional, and will be characterized by breadth of knowledge and profundity of scholarship. As talented pupils have a wealth of association, it is necessary that teachers of such students possess a wide range of information; as they have a ruthless pertinacity in their search for truth, it is equally necessary that he possess an intensive learning. It may seem a truism to say that the person in charge of gifted students should be as intellectually keen as they are themselves, but so prevalent is the idea that anyone can do good work with pupils of this type that it is worthy of mention. It is not long before able students have completed an
inventory of their teacher's strengths and weaknesses, and
their deportment in the classroom is influenced by this to a
considerable extent.

In the matter of personality, the teacher of gifted students
must be enthusiastic, and energetic. Psychologists have pointed
out that such students are superior not only in mental powers
but also in physical endowments. They enter into things with
tremendous gusto and an air of bustling activity. This zest must
be matched by their teacher's, or else his influence will
diminish. He must likewise be resourceful, and must be able to
match his wits with theirs when occasion requires. But above all,
he must be a person of broad human sympathies who commands re­
pect and confidence.

METHOD

Miss Unrich, on being asked to account for the progress
her class of gifted students had made, said: "The gain was made
possible by avoiding all mechanical teaching, appealing to the
reason and judgment of the pupils, reducing all drill to a
minimum, studying carefully in advance the entire year's course,
and selecting kindred facts and subjects. This made much correl­
ation possible, and prevented side-tracking of pupils' energies
by presenting such materials when they could be effectively
assimilated."

One of the most necessary modifications of method for
gifted students is a reduction in the amount of drill work.

I. National Council for the Study of Education, 19th Yearbook,
page 96.
Although this reduction will vary with classes, a conservative estimate is fifty percent. Closely allied to this a minimizing of formal review. It has been found that short intensive drills, frequently used, are much better than longer more formal ones. For gifted students there is also a lessened amount of explanation with a consequent decrease in illustration.

The keyword of the composition period is freedom. "Freedom to develop naturally, to be spontaneous, unaffected, and un-selfconscious, is the first article of faith." An attempt should be made to replace teacher initiative by pupil initiative in such matters as choice of subjects for compositions, the method of development, and correction of themes. Some advocates of the new freedom even go so far as to permit the children to initiate their own course of study, with somewhat surprising results at times. It is possible for freedom to degenerate into license or even chaos, but this happens only when the teacher is weak. The desideratum is an ostensible student initiative arising out of wise guidance by the teacher.

A number of values attach to giving gifted students a greater amount of freedom than is customary. Not the least of these is that the pupil feels a sense of responsibility, and puts more conscientious effort into his work than into the usual teacher-imposed task. Allied to this is the growth of a rigorous self-censorship that sets up its own exacting standards. But of

3. See page 56.
greater importance still is the spur to creativeness that is provided by a free environment.

DISCIPLINE

Discipline in the room for the gifted need hardly be considered, as talented children present few special problems. One point worthy of note is that they must be kept very busy to prevent laxity from creeping in. This, however, is not a problem if the right self-initiating attitude has been developed. It has been my experience that nearly all cases of inattention are caused by pupils already being acquainted with the subject of discussion. The most annoying habit of gifted students is a tendency to interrupt one another, to snap their fingers, and to jump out of their seats in their enthusiasm. These are not serious infractions, since they arise from interest; a gentle reproof is all that is usually required. As a rule, gifted students can be given a great deal of freedom in the classroom because their intelligence prevents them from abusing privileges.

THE CLASSROOM.

Under ideal conditions the classroom for gifted students would be decorated in an artistic way; but since conditions are far from ideal, we must do our best to endeavour to mitigate the jail-like appearance of the average classroom.

There should be a few good pictures, not from popular magazines or Christmas calendars, but prints of works that have stood the test of time. Care must be taken to ensure that they

---

some adolescent appeal. A few that have been found suitable are The Laughing Cavalier, The Mill, The Avenue of Trees, Mona Lisa, The Night Watch. Occasionally the teacher should draw attention to them, pointing out significant features, but he will be careful not to overdo it lest the cancer of "love's sad satiety" should do its destructive work.

In the matter of fixtures, experience teaches that tables with movable chairs mounted on rubber are superior to standard equipment, because this arrangement is better adapted to group work, as the following discussion will show.

A GROUP METHOD OF MARKING.

One of the chief reasons why so many teachers dislike the composition period is that it so often results in the marking of papers. When it is realized that the average junior high school teacher instructs between two hundred and two hundred eighty students, it is evident that reading the pupils' essays is a formidable task. Consequently, this very important function of the composition teacher is often neglected entirely or performed in a perfunctory way.

Nothing will ever entirely replace the criticism of the teacher, which is based upon a profounder knowledge and wider experience than even the most brilliant students possess. But still, there is no reason why he should make a galley slave of himself or drift down the stream of indolence. My practice has been to endeavour to mark one set of papers monthly for each class. Other assignments are corrected by the group method.
This method of correction, I have found, is excellent for gifted and good average classes, but disastrous when used by poorer ones. The reasons for this will become evident as the outline develops.

The pupils are divided into five or six groups and allocated to certain parts of the room where they form into a circle. Care must be taken to see that the groups are evenly balanced from the point of view of intelligence. A pupil with leadership qualities is appointed to each group to direct its proceedings. Each member of the group reads his composition and then the leader calls for suggestions and criticism, which are generally given quite freely. An outline has previously been placed on the blackboard by the teacher, and the pupils refer to this when they wish. After the discussion is ended, the group evaluates the composition, assigning A, B, or C to it according to its worth. This method is followed until all themes have been discussed; the leader's last. The best one, representing the group, is then chosen, after which the pupils retire to their seats to make the necessary alterations in their work.

It may be thought that six groups, all reading at the same time in a small room, would sound like the Tower of Babel, but this is not the case. The pupils of one group become so interested in what they are doing that they do not pay any attention to the others. It is quite possible to have an "activity" period without its deteriorating into a "slactivity" period.

After all the groups are finished, the best compositions are read to the class. These are discussed and criticized as the
others were before.

The group method has obvious advantages when used with classes of gifted children. Some of these are:

1. The students enjoy it and get excellent practice in criticism.

2. All pupils, not just the best, get used to an audience situation. This is beneficial to the timid students.

3. It is an incentive to good work as it is an honour to have one's composition chosen to represent the group.

4. The criticism is more detailed than the teacher would give.

5. It gives practice in leadership to the abler pupils.

6. The two important social drives, competition and cooperation, are utilized.

7. Many more assignments can be given.

If the teacher sees that the same pupils are being chosen constantly, he can change the groupings. Another excellent device is to place those who were chosen as best on a previous occasion in the same group. This makes the others feel as if they are not merely attendants upon superior beings; it is also good for the talented writers, as they compete with others just as gifted.

The group method has a number of other applications outside the scope of this thesis. Briefly they are: for checking memory work, for oral composition, and for drill work.
Chapter VII.

THE AUDITORIUM PROGRAM

In recent years oral composition has been coming into its own. Educationists have begun to realize that it is a rather senseless procedure training pupils in written expression and neglecting oral. A few years ago, anyone who mentioned the new emphasis was looked upon with suspicion as a "faddist"; at present he is accepted as "sound"—so progress is being made.

At Templeton Junior High School, practice in oral composition is given in the auditorium. Each class has one forty-five minute period each week devoted to this work.

The remarks in this section are the result of experience with such periods; they would apply, however, to oral compositions in the classroom, and with equal force to grade assemblies.

Many teachers have no good whatever to say of the auditorium period, and regard it as time entirely wasted. There are a number of reasons for this attitude. Some principals, very unwisely, use it as a teacher-saving device, and send all their classes there regardless of intelligence in order to keep the per capita cost of the school down. Even worse than this is the practice of indiscriminate grouping, which often results in a very bright class and a very dull one participating in the same program. There is also a considerable amount of nervous strain in connection with the auditorium period. Principals will use it as "window dressing" and as a place to take interested visitors, who will be duly impressed by the standard of work being done. Advertising is a curse not limited to commercial
fields alone. Another reason is that auditorium discipline is an entirely different matter from classroom control, as many of us have found to our discomfiture. And moreover, a successful series of programs demands a tremendous amount of organization, a great deal more than lessons in the classroom. This is enough to condemn it with most of us. There is also the additional fact that good sponsors of auditorium periods are very rare, much rarer, I think, than efficient classroom men.

For the highly endowed the auditorium has much of value. No part of the school program offers more in the way of growth or self-realization than this. The student is confronted with a real life situation, one which he will likely meet many times in later years. How many of us in the teaching profession quake inwardly when called upon to say a few words to a P.T.A. or teachers’ meeting. How many of us are incapable of saying anything at all in a new situation with an unaccustomed atmosphere. The auditorium period gives the pupil a composure and self-confidence that elicit the admiration of many adults. It teaches him to organize his work and to think quickly on his feet, as his classmates are unsparing in their criticism. It gives him practice in handling a meeting, in developing good auditorium manners, and in learning matters of etiquette pertaining to speeches, formal debates, toasts, etc. For many it creates new interests, and for nearly all sets standards of taste in speech, in manners, and in entertainment. It is one of the most useful and refining functions of the school.
AUDITORIUM TECHNIQUE.

Many teachers have difficulty with auditorium periods because they have not evolved a successful technique. In the first place, it is necessary to plan the programs in advance. It is a good idea to arrange them at the beginning of the year for the whole semester. This discourages hastily prepared work and ensures the participation of all pupils. It also makes for variety and prevents the ennui so prevalent at many auditorium periods from developing. It is exceedingly important that the teacher insist on the correct procedure from the start, and that he check any departure immediately. He should assume that everyone will take part in auditorium work and should accept no excuses unless sanctioned by the nurse. Most important of all is to award credit for successful participation. This places oral composition on a par with other school subjects and provides a wonderful incentive to good work.

A matter of great importance often neglected by auditorium sponsors is to give the audience something to do. It is expecting too much to insist on perfect attention to ten or twelve speeches, some of which will be indescribably bad, without intermission of some kind. A way of overcoming this, both interesting and educative, is to have each speech criticized by a member of the audience. An outline similar to the following provides an excellent basis for discussion.

Duties of Audience.

1. Give attentive and sympathetic hearing.
2. At conclusion of speech commend excellencies and make suggestions, using the following outline as guide:
   a. Was the talk well-planned? Was the speaker master of the subject or did he depend too much on notes?
   b. Did he talk with ease? Was he interesting? Why?
   c. Was the speaker's voice clear and pleasing? Was his enunciation good? His pronunciation?
   d. Were you pleased with the bearing of the speaker? Was his posture easy yet dignified?
   e. Did he clearly convey his message? Would change of rate, stress, or pitch have helped him at any time?
   f. Did he use good English? Were his words well chosen? Did you notice any particularly vivid words and phrases? What substitutes can you supply for slang expressions or hackneyed terms?

It will often be necessary to give short talks on public speaking, drawing attention to common errors. A poor way to do this is the usual "lecture," berating the students for what is chiefly the result of inexperience; an even worse way is a typical pedagogical iniquity in the form of depressing advice "for your own good." As has been mentioned before, gifted children are highly imaginative, and this imagination must be matched by the teacher of such students. One of the most successful lessons in my experience dealt with this matter of common speech errors. Attention was drawn to them in the form of "Ten Commandments for Public Speaking." Including them here would be an act of supererogation, but I mention them as they illustrate how
gifted students can be appealed to through imagination and sense of humour. Many students requested copies, and just recently a student at the university reminded me of them. A permanent impression was made.

It has already been stated that organization is the key to successful auditorium work. The semester program given below is the result of six years' experimentation at Templeton Junior High School. In all programs oral reproduction of the printed page is deprecated and original presentation encouraged.

The principles upon which the program is based are as follows:

1. The programs must appeal to the imagination.
2. They must be of intrinsic value.
3. They must pertain to the world of the adolescent.
4. There must be variety in program.
5. The programs must lend themselves to original treatment.

A TERM'S AUDITORIUM PROGRAM.

Book Reports.

A program in which reports are given on worthwhile books is not only interesting and instructive but also stimulates an interest in reading. Care must be taken that the books are appropriate and of some literary value, as pupils will often take the path of least resistance and report on an easy juvenile, if not prevented. It is not necessary for the teacher to assign all the titles, but he should give his approval to the pupil's selection.
One of the most effective kinds of book reports does not tell the entire plot; it leads up to a dramatic climax and then stops. This always creates interest and a desire to hear the rest of the story; consequently, the book will likely be in great demand during the following week.

Another interesting way to present the report is for the pupil to identify himself with the book, speak in the first person, and reveal sufficient information for attentive members of the audience to guess its title.

Books of the following types are very popular with gifted adolescents:

- The Three Musketeers - Dumas
- Huckleberry Finn - Twain
- The Benson Murder Case - Van Dyne
- St. Ives - Stevenson

Talks on Authors.

This makes a very interesting program and is, in addition, highly informative as the pupil learns many facts about the lives of important authors. It can be used in conjunction with literature lessons since it provides an excellent basis for classroom discussion.

The program is capable of a variety of treatment:

1. At the conclusion of his speech the student asks a number of questions to test the audience's knowledge of his subject.
2. The speaker does not announce his topic; he outlines
the author’s life, then sees how many can give his name.

3. The speaker talks in the first person about his experiences and the audience supplies the name.

**Original Stories to Illustrate Proverbs.**

A pupil tells an original story, but does not announce what proverb he is illustrating. At the conclusion of the speech, the audience is asked to supply the name. This is a very popular program with bright classes, as it presents an intellectual challenge.

A popular variation of the program is to have short playlets representing proverbs acted, with the audience once again supplying the name. This method has the additional advantage of appealing to the dramatic sense so pronounced in adolescents.

**Magazines Worth While.**

A period spent becoming familiar with worth-while magazines is not wasted. When one realizes that many students know only movie and detective story magazines, he sees the necessity for a period such as this.

A magazine trial is one means of making the program vivid in its presentation and lasting in its appeal. Some carefully chosen periodicals are tried as to whether or not they are suitable for inclusion in the school library. Pupils representing defending and prosecuting attorneys bring out the merits and demerits of the magazines. The audience acts as jury and the chairman as judge. Some magazines will be sentenced to incineration in the school furnace; some, alas, to a none too reverent
interment in the English classroom.

Another means of acquiring that imaginative touch so appreciated by gifted students is to present the program in the form of a salesmanship competition. The speaker dwells on the most desirable features of his journal and endeavours to convince the audience that everyone should buy it. At the conclusion, the students by a show of hands indicate to which periodical they give their subscription. This program, properly motivated, is both constructive and interesting. Often it will be followed by talks on "The magazine, Past, Present, and Future," in which the historical development is outlined and its future course forecast.

In all forms of this program it is necessary to insist that copies of the magazine be brought to the auditorium; otherwise the period will be abstract and without permanent impression.

**Debates.**

Debates give excellent training to those participating, but should not be used too often as only a few can take part. One should insist on the correct procedure from the beginning as pupils get into very slovenly habits if not checked often. Care should be taken to choose suitable subjects for debate, subjects that are related to adolescent experience. Topics such as the following are appropriate:

1. Resolved that, all things considered, the introduction of the talkies has been a good thing.

2. Resolved that public schools are more beneficial to boys and girls than private schools.
3. Resolved that every school should have some form of school government.

An "Interesting" Program.

1. Interesting Characters in Fiction.

Pupils report on characters in fiction they have found interesting. The program is very effective when the speaker does not announce the subject of his speech and elicits the name of the character, book, and author from the audience at the conclusion of his address. This method ensures the attention of the audience, as it provides a stimulus in the form of an intellectual challenge.

One of the most interesting programs I have witnessed was an adaptation of this. After "Ivanhoe" had been studied, a group of pupils modernized the characters, described their occupations, and asked the audience to identify them.

2. Interesting Escapes in Literature.

This is a particularly popular program, especially with the boys. Pupils give reports on interesting escapes in literature and endeavour to make them so attractive that a demand arises for the stories in which they occur.

The following have been found of engrossing interest:

a. The escape of David Balfour from the old tower in "Kidnapped."

b. The escape of Edmund Dantes from the Chateau d'If in "The Count of Monte Cristo."

c. The escape of the prisoner in "The Pit and the Pendulum"

d. The escape in "The Most Dangerous Game."

e. The escape in "The Suicide Club."
Original Productions.

It is a good practice to have one period each term devoted to original productions of the students. If proper encouragement is given, this program is nearly always one of the outstanding successes of the year. Short lyrics, narrative verse, short stories, legends, and short one-act plays have been contributed.

"Author and Book" Period.

In this program students participate in pairs. One represents the author and relates his autobiography; the other represents his most notable work. Both of them speak in the first person, taking care not to announce their identities. At the conclusion of the speeches the audience endeavours to supply the names.

This method, as I know from experience, ensures the closest possible attention and evokes a response that the average report seldom elicits.

Programs for Special Occasions.

A number of interesting special programs can be arranged during the year. A few found to be successful are:

1. Canadian Book Week.
2. Halloween Program.
3. Goodwill Program.
4. Education Week, etc.

Mock Trial.

A mock trial presents an interesting change from more serious programs. When it is properly planned, the pupils should obtain some idea as to how a trial is conducted. One must beware,
however, lest it deteriorate into a roaring farce of the slapstick variety. This is not to say that a humorous touch is undesirable, but to suggest that it should be kept under restraint.

A "Good" Program.

Reports are given on:

- A good detective story.
- A good humorous story.
- A good adventure story.
- A good short story.
- A good animal story.
- A good love story.
- A good biography.
- A good play.
- A good travelogue.

As the aim of the program is to introduce the students to the best that has been written, considerable guidance by the teacher is necessary. He must either select the books himself or insist on pupils getting his endorsement before delivering their reports. If the school library has copies of the books reported on, the program will gain in effectiveness.

A Program for Very Young Children.

The real aim of this program is to acquaint the students with a literary field almost entirely neglected in school life, that of childhood verse. In order to obtain a sensible attitude towards the program, it is well to tell the pupils that the purpose is to provide them with suitable reading for their
younger brothers and sisters.

The program consists of topics like the following:

1. What to read and what not to read to young children.
2. Milne; "Now we are Six"; "When We Were Very Young"; etc.
3. Lewis Carroll and "Alice in Wonderland."
5. Mother Goose Rhymes.
6. Dr. Coleman's verses for children.
8. Verses by Eugene Field.

Modern Poets.

This program is given in conjunction with the study of modern poetry in "Poems Chiefly Narrative". The object is to give interesting accounts of the lives of the poets and some idea of their works. Interest is added to the program if the audience is required to select their "poet laureate" at the conclusion of the program.

Stories from the Classics.

Oral reproduction of the classics provides excellent material for auditorium work. In the first place, it necessitated the reading of something really worth while, and thus establishes a criterion before which insipid juvenile literature seems worthless. This in itself would be sufficient justification for such a program, even if no other values attached to it. But in addition to this, practice is provided in organizing and condensing subject matter; and, as a result of time limitation,
in exercising that economy of expression which is so essential to effective speaking.

Two programs of this type that students always find interesting are given below.

I. Stories from Homer.

This should be given in connection with the "mythical adventure" series in The Canada Book of Prose and Verse, Book II.

Some incidents that have been found interesting are:

a. The siege of Troy: cause, outstanding events, capture.
b. Ulysses' adventures with the Cyclops.
c. Ulysses' adventures with Circe.
d. Ulysses and the sirens.
e. Ulysses' return.

As part of the program, it is a good idea to read Tennyson's "Ulysses"; the ensuing discussion will be very animated, particularly on the part of the girls.

2. Stories from Edgar Allan Poe.

The program based on Edgar Allan Poe's works is always one of the most successful of the year. His works are as thrilling as the familiar "penny dreadful" and just as popular with students. Besides this, they are admirably adapted to the creation of an atmosphere of suspense and mystery. I shall never forget the occasion when the whole audience, teacher included, was held spell-bound by a presentation of "The Fall of the House of Usher! I recall the involuntary gasp at the conclusion of the report and the immediate demand for "Tales of Mystery and Imagination!"

After a discussion of his life, students make reports on
the following:

The Pit and the Pendulum.
The Gold Bug.
The Descent into the Maelstrom.
The Murders in the Rue Morgue.
The Fall of the House of Usher.
The Masque of the Red Death.

Plays.

All writers on adolescence mention the great interest young people take in acting and make-believe. In Grade Seven, particularly, much can be done in dramatics if suitable plays are available, and if the teacher can take time off from the marking of essays, tests, etc., to give guidance to the students. Unless such direction can be given, it is better not to go in for dramatics, as pupils left to themselves produce the most astounding trash; the more so since radio plays have become popular.

Simple dramatizations from the literature course are perhaps the most effective. Treasure Island, Ivanhoe, and The Lady of the Lake abound in suitable passages.

Impromptu Speeches.

A program of this kind makes an excellent review in literature, grammar, and composition; and, moreover, gives training in extemporaneous expression.

Many fine programs can be arranged in co-operation with the social studies department.
Imaginary Banquet.

This provides a situation that will be met later on in life. If the program has been well organized, the pupils learn much about the etiquette for such occasions. Practice in introductions and responses, in making and answering toasts is given.

School Through the Ages.

Glimpses of education at interesting periods of history are given. This program is an excellent one, necessitating many visits to the library.

Often as a natural extension of this follows a program on "School in Other Lands", preferably presented during Goodwill Week.

An interesting point is the close relationship that exists between oral and written composition. Although skill in the one does not always augur skill in the other, some gifted speakers being weak in written expression and some talented writers unable to speak well, the two are certainly complimentary. Oral expression tends to give greater facility in written composition, and written composition tends towards greater accuracy in oral expression. Thus, the person who writes too slowly and meticulously should be given much oral work, since in this he will be compelled to compose more quickly; and the student who talks glibly but carelessly should be given written assignments, for they will emphasize careful organization and exactness of expression. The ideal program will combine both the oral and the written as they are reciprocal.
It is surprising what progress children make in the art of speaking when a varied program which enlists their interest is provided. It is rare indeed for no improvement to take place. The retiring pupils to whom any form of public appearance is anathema learn to control their wavering spirits, and find that the ordeal is not so bad after all. The average student with no particular gift becomes capable of expressing himself adequately on subjects within his experience. The gifted child makes extremely rapid progress, and often amazes his colleagues and his teachers. His presence becomes one of ease and confidence, his delivery improves until it is a pleasure to listen to, and his arrangement of his materials are often models of organization.

It has been a source of satisfaction to follow the careers of some of these talented students. One very gifted Chinese girl, while still in her teens, has been giving radio talks on serious subjects; another has played a prominent part in a socialist party and has made a number of creditable public speeches. These are rare cases, but the self-confidence engendered by auditorium work, the poise acquired, and the standards of speech, behaviour, and etiquette obtained are not rare, but belong to all. The auditorium period is one of the most useful and cultural in the school program.
Chapter VIII.

THE SCHOOL NEWSPAPER AND THE SCHOOL ANNUAL.

No large body of people can act together and claim kinship with each other without some unifying agency in the form of a newspaper or magazine. This is very noticeable in the outside world where every political party, trade, and profession has its own publication, which acts as a medium for recording matters of fraternal interest and for the expression of common ideals.

The school is no exception to this tendency of human nature. In our larger schools, some of which have greater populations than many British Columbia cities, a periodical is necessary for the maintenance of an "esprit de corps" of the right kind. Without it, pupils have a feeling of "not belonging", of being sojourners in a strange land.

The school paper makes it possible for pupils to know and appreciate what is happening around them. In it they read about matters of general interest, of sports, of club news, and of projected enterprises. It not only serves as a source of information, but also as an instrument in arousing enthusiasm for worthwhile projects. It is the integrating centre for school activities.

One of the most useful functions of the paper is that it serves as a record of development and a history of the school. Modern education is not stationary; it moves with the times; and the old files of the school periodical are, in truth, the minutes of its growth.
At Templeton Junior High School, after five years experience with the school newspaper, we found such a demand for information about previous years that we introduced an innovation in the form of an "Archivist's Column," in which excerpts from former "Tee Jays" were given.

This leads us to another important function, intangible and immeasurable as some obscurantist critics measure education, but nevertheless of value; it assists in the establishment of a school tradition. Many educationists have regretted that in the new world there is not that veneration for the institution that is found in the old. A school in its infancy cannot, of course, command this respect, but it can be gradually built up; and the most effective medium is the school paper. In it are found the ambitions and the accomplishments of the past, which are an incentive to the present, which in turn become an inspiration for the future.

The school paper, as has already been shown, fulfills a large number of useful functions, which the limits of this thesis prevent our enlarging upon. One, however, which is relevant to our discussion and, happily, one in which it proves most valuable is that it is particularly effective in developing gifted students. It provides for them an incentive to good work and a recognition of accomplishment. Some flowers, as the poet says, "are born to blush unseen, and waste their sweetness on the desert air," but others thrive only under the genial rays of publicity and the kindly dews of general approbation. By means of the school paper a great deal of latent talent is
revealed that otherwise would have been undiscovered.

It is worthy of note, too, that the school paper provides a real life situation. The contributors feel as if they are not engaging merely in an academic and purposeless classroom exercise, but that they are part of an actual world in which their writing is of some importance. The student who has a poem or article accepted for the school journal has the same feeling of accomplishment, the same exhilaration as the young writer who for the first time sees his name in print.

It would be outside our scope to give a complete outline of the organization of the school paper in this chapter. Attention will be paid only to those parts which offer development to the pupil of superior endoements.

THE EDITORIAL PAGE.

The editorial page gives excellent training in succinct and pointed expression. Under the guidance of the sponsor, the members of the editorial board learn to condense their thoughts and to control the luxuriant verbiage and rambling style that so many imaginative students possess. They learn also that a good editorial is a discussion of a "live" topic which the whole school population is interested in, and that it is the most influential part of the paper as it assists in the moulding of opinion on important matters.

In this connection it develops a feeling of the responsibility that leadership entails, and is good moral as well as literary training.

The editorial board should select its own topics without too much interference on the part of the sponsors. It is surprising how sensible the choice of the students generally is. Here are a few subjects chosen from the "Tee Jay."

1. Armistice Day.
2. Frills in Education.
4. Ave Atque Vale.
5. The True Patriotism.

NEWS ITEMS AND STORIES.

In this category are placed such things as club news, sports items, routine news, personal items, announcements of social events and concerts, reports of debates, interviews, etc.

An interest in sports is basic in adolescent nature and the school paper must take cognizance of this, but a mistake will be made if athletics are allowed to occupy the position of prominence. A good practice is to devote one page in each issue to boys' athletics and one to girls'.

Care must be taken that suitable students be placed in charge of this section. Too often a pupil is given this position because he can play basketball well or pole-vault higher than any other boy in the school. What is really required is a person with an interest in sports who has a gift for writing.

No part of the paper gives better practice in the art of narration and, especially if the number of pages is limited, the writer is bound to put into effect ingenuities of economy and to use a terse quick-moving style with the consequent selection...
It will be necessary to give some instruction to the reporters on the writing of news items. The first thing that has to be emphasized is that the lead or beginning of the story must contain in brief the main events that are amplified in succeeding paragraphs. It must tell with whom the article deals, what happened, where the event happened, when it happened, and why it happened. As the space allowed is limited, it is a good idea to insist on the five important questions “who,” “what,” “where,” “when,” and “why” being answered in the first paragraph.

To prevent the monotonous recurrence of the subject-verb-object construction, it is a good plan to show the reporters by means of selected items from newspapers and magazines that the lead can take many different forms, that it can commence with a subject, a participle, a phrase, a subordinate adverbial clause, an infinitive, a noun clause, and a direct quotation.

Example of News Item Advertising the Operetta, “Zurika”:

“Oyez! Oyez!” Ye students of this mighty palace de la Templeton, ye squires and dames of the fair acres of Grand View and adjoining baronies, we bring ye the most joyous tidings. Our palace halls have become one vast hive of industry in a valiant effort to produce a fitting entertainment for our liege lord and our gracious patrons. Therefore, we now bid ye welcome to the halls of Templeton where, on the evenings of February 9th and 10th, we shall present for your pleasure a most delightful Operetta. Ancient feudal laws compel us to levy a tax of two pieces of silver on children and five pieces of silver on
adults for entrance privileges.

In this operetta you will be enthralled by the pure beauty of choristers' voices. Depression may hold ye in its malignant clutches, but come, and immediately ye soar beyond sordidness on the clear, thrilling notes of the singers. Long ye for other days? Love ye romance? Come, then, and as ye listen ye are caught up on the wings of imagination and whirled away to the very court itself. What court? Ah, come and see.

Doubtless ye expect singers to be of great excellence, and speakers to display marvellous eloquence, and dancers to lend variety to the theme; but rarely has it been the lot of mankind to find all these qualifications depicted by every performer on the stage. Ye who are incredulous, come; we will convince ye. Ye who believe, come; we will delight ye. Come, ye, come ye, and we swear that ye will behold as we have said: vivid scenes, beautiful costumes. To see is to believe."

The student who wrote this surprising composition, a girl of fourteen, was asked to write a short article advertising the operetta, "Zurika," which the school was going to present a few weeks later. She was given no direction whatsoever, but was left entirely to her own resources. A few days later she handed in the article exactly as given. It made such an impression that one of the local papers printed it, thus giving us a great deal more advertising than we expected.

On examination we notice how skilfully constructed the article is. Although all the essential information is given in the first paragraph and the succeeding ones just elaborate it,
they are written in such an interesting way that attention does not flag but is sustained to the end. The article gives evidence of that originality, imagination, and skill in expression which we have noted as characteristic of giftedness in children.

THE BOOK-WORM'S CORNER.

In this section short reports are given on books suitable for pupils of Junior High School age. It is one of the most popular columns and one to which the gifted students, who are nearly always inveterate readers, like to contribute.

It provides good practice for the contributors, making them think seriously about the books they have read and forcing them to condense into a few paragraphs the thoughts they have about them. In addition to this, the writers are compelled by limitations of space to exercise every device for the elimination of non-essentials and the emphasizing of salient features.

As book reports are demanded by the course of study, these supply models which others will strive to emulate.

Scaramouche.

Andre Louis Moreau, the main character, is a humorous young Breton lawyer with a rare gift of stirring oratory, who lives during the French Revolution. A born actor, he veils his sincerest emotions under a quiet Stoic wit.

Provided for and educated by his godfather, Quinton de Kercediou, a feudal lord, Andre-Louis is naturally impatient with the Utopian ideals and rebellious talk of the ardent revolutionists, among whose numbers stands his dear friend, Philippe de Vilmorin.
Why does the cynical young lawyer become a turncoat and denounce the privileged few to the people of Rennes and then, under the title of "Omnes Omnibus" incite to riot the citizens of Nantes? Who is M. de la Tour d'Azyr, whose success Andre-Louis forever bars?

Read of this French hero who is in turn a lawyer, revolutionist, actor, fencing instructor, politician, and lover. All who like tales of adventure and romance will thoroughly enjoy "Scaramouche."

THE EAGLE-EYED REPORTER.

One of the most popular pages is that of the Eagle-Eyed Reporter. In this section short personal items of general interest are reported. They depend for success largely upon effectiveness of expression and thus provide fine training for the students contributing. It is essential that an extremely bright person with a restrained sense of humour be placed in charge of this part of the paper, as nothing taxes the ingenuity of the reporter more than these succinctly worded and often epigrammatic "thumb nail" reports.

LITERARY PAGE.

In this section is published only the very best prose and verse written by students. It is regarded as a signal honour to be given space here, and inclusion marks one as possessing writing ability of a marked degree. Much of the prose and verse in Appendixes A and B was selected from this department.

Some of the most talented students have been revealed
through this page. The writer of the surprising story "The Seeing Eye" was first discovered through a contribution to this section, and the gifted composer of "From the Garden of Lost Dreams" first gave evidence of her ability in verse in a similar way.

At times the contributions to this department are so very good that they not only delight but also astound. The following selection, written by a Grade Nine girl, has been a source of constant encouragement to the writer.

**The Blue Lady.**

Long, long ago when I was so young I could look at the moon between my fingers and see the little man nodding there, I first knew the Blue Lady.

At night, when tired and happy I tumbled into my little room, she would be standing there in the shadows, tall and slender as a willow tree. She would laugh a little laugh and a few tears would sparkle in the grey loveliness of her eyes as she spread the white coverlets down. Then singing a song, a quaint lullaby of her own time, she would move about the room, the golden glory of her hair lighting up the dusk. There was no sound as she moved and the soft blue folds of her gown looked as if woven of moonlight and dreams. She was not real and I never touched her but the beauty of her presence glided through my sleep.

I am older now and the fairies dance no more in the dells, nor do the pictures come down from the walls and do a stately minuet in the patch of moonlight before the window. The Blue Lady faded too like the rest, but sometimes I hear her sing

her song again.

VOICES FROM THE PAST.

This division of the paper arose in response to a demand for contributions from pupils who had left the school. It has justified itself in many ways. It has created a great deal of interest in the school publication, it has supplied goals of attainment for students interested in writing and, of major importance, it has provided a means of keeping in touch with gifted graduates. It is interesting to note the progress made by some students in certain high schools and to see the retardation of others who attend schools where little interest is taken in their development.

Here are two contributions from King George High School.

Dawn.

Night recedes, her grey shadow quivering
Across the glowing beauty of the dawn;
Softly the man-tongued wind of night is singing
On the border, reluctant to be gone;
Huddled the grim silhouettes of mountains sleep,
Rugged-edged against the faint-flushed skies;
Phantoms of smoke from chimneys of the town
Weave strange figures that crumble as they rise;
Morning comes on quiet maiden feet
With promise of new day in her calm eyes.

Sunset.

The sea and heavens were all an overwhelming grey save
where rare patches of whiteness outlined the dim mountains and the blue of the far horizon met the sky. Hushed and expectant, the world waited. Suddenly the blazing disk of the sun appeared behind obscuring clouds and sank in majestic splendor beneath the sea. The farthest waves were pools of blood that spilled into the surrounding waters, shading it to pinks of delicate hue. The clouds that a moment before had been frowning and threatening reflected the crimson of the setting sun. Long ribbons of fire floated free and, as the sun sank lower, changed into a myriad of colours.

Everything that has been said of the school paper applies equally well to the school annual, an extended discussion of which would be merely repetitious. There are, however, a few points that are worthy of notice.

Every annual should have a literary section in which the best prose and verse contributed to the school newspaper throughout the year should be published. Having one's work included should be regarded as the highest literary honour that can be accorded a student, since a certain amount of permanence attaches to the inclusion. Choosing the best contributions gives excellent practice in criticism to the editorial board because, as few can be accepted, their choice must be highly selective.

The literary section should include other compositions besides those chosen from the periodicals. Longer works that were beyond the scope of the school paper can be given space in the annual.

1. A good example is *The Seeing Eye*, in Appendix B.
Short stories which are generally too long for the school journal are the most interesting parts of the annual, and should be featured because they provide fine opportunities for gifted students.

Club news also presents opportunities to gifted pupils. The summarizing of a year's activities is a task that requires patient collecting of material, sound organization to meet the exigencies of space, and terse expression. Particularly the students with a predisposition towards newspaper work can find useful occupation for their abilities.

If properly motivated, the school paper and school annual can be among the most effective agencies for developing gifted children. As has been shown, they provide standards of attainment, incentives to good work, and rewards for achievement. The teacher of such students would do well to consider whether or not the school publications are being utilized to the full.
Chapter IX.

ORAL AND WRITTEN COMPOSITION IN EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES.

In recent years great emphasis has been placed upon extra-curricular activities in the educative process, particularly upon the value of clubs. It is now almost a truism to say that they have a definite place in school life.

Especially are they of value to the pupil of superior endowments. In the club he meets other students of similar interests and talents, and consequently is able to express himself more freely than would be possible in a more heterogeneous group. The restraint of the classroom is removed and he is able to devote himself to his own engrossing interests. An additional advantage is that the teacher finds out the real nature of the pupil and the extent of his special abilities in a much shorter time than he could in the classroom session.

English clubs can be divided into three main groups: reading, writing, and speaking. The limitations of this thesis restrict our discussion to the last two.

The main purpose of the writing clubs is, as the name suggests, to develop ability in creative writing. "The development of research ability, imagination, literary taste, power, and skill in expression is the supreme purpose of this type of club." I. The student chooses his own particular field of writing unhampered by classroom routine, and expresses himself in his own way; and, moreover, receives much useful advice from the members of the club and its sponsor.

My experience has been that the writing clubs should be characterized at first by informality. One year I made the mistake of "organizing" a group in the usual logical manner with a president, vice-president, secretary, etc., and an insistence on formal procedure. The results were disappointing, to say the least. There was always present an air of restraint and a typical classroom frigidity.

After a time I discovered what was wrong and commenced to introduce more freedom into the meetings. I did this gradually so that there would not be a violent swing from extreme to the other. As an innovation we tried alternating chairmen. This improved matters, as children for some strange reason enjoy acting in this capacity. I then discovered something I should have seen from the first: that the real cause of the restraint was the natural self-consciousness arising from a new and personal situation. Consequently a degree of anonymity was introduced into the meetings. Members, as they entered the room, were required to put their contributions into a box near the door. The chairman for the day would then read all the shorter selections, reserving the longer ones for future examination. In connection with these readings, I found it much better to have all the contributions read through without comment first, and then a second time for discussion and criticism. This anonymous approach improved conditions greatly. Often the names of writers would be divulged, sometimes in response to demand, but more often as the result of heated discussion. Occasionally a particularly outstanding piece of work would be placed on the
the blackboard for minute examination. At one of our meetings
someone suggested that the best productions should be honored
by inclusion in a club anthology. I have before me as I write
a number of such selections, many of them quite creditable per-
formances for young persons.

After a time a diversity of interest arose, many choosing
a form of prose, and others being drawn towards drama. Accordingly
it was decided to divide into three sections, each in turn
taking charge of the meeting. The programs immediately improved
and the element of friendly competition between the groups
added much to the interest.

The school journal found the Writers' Club a great boon,
and the closest cooperation existed between them. No longer
was there a dearth of material for publication, since members
felt it an honour to have work accepted.

At this point the problem arises as to whether the
teacher of gifted students should encourage them to send any
of their productions to outside publications. In my opinion the
answer is emphatically, "No!" There has been too much exploiting
of talented students for publicity purposes. This is not good
for them. "The itch for publicity is a dangerous disease in the
young, and the word "poet" turns more young heads than any other;
the poetaster is a doubtful blessing, and only too often needs
no encouragement, and deserves none." 2. Moreover, the adult will
hardly thank us for the printing of youthful verse in the

---

1. See Chapter III and Appendix A.
2. Lyon P. H. B., Creative Expression, page 186; The John Day Co.,
   New York, 1932.
Sunday supplement nor, for that matter, in more dignified places. It must be borne in mind constantly that we educators are concerned with the good product primarily as an indication of student development, and not as an end in itself.

The one exception to this is contributing to a volume such as "Public School Verse," an annual publication in Great Britain, devoted to printing the best poetry from the English public schools. Here youthful writings are seen in the proper perspective, and any suggestion of undesirable publicity and exploitation absent.

As the subject of oral composition has been discussed quite fully, it would be valueless to enter into an extended treatment of the speaking clubs here. They can be dismissed with a word or two.

Under this heading are included public speaking, debating, and dramatic clubs. The aim of these is the discovery and development of speaking ability of various kinds. Some of its objectives are a natural poise, self-control before an audience, an easy and graceful carriage, an effective delivery, clear articulation, and a well-modulated voice. In addition, the acquisition of certain techniques such as orders of procedure and dramatic method is made possible.

Just as in the writing clubs informality is conducive to effective results, so in the speaking clubs a degree of formality is productive of best returns. Careful organization and insistence on traditional procedure will be found necessary for successful work.

---

Chapter X.

COMPOSITION WEAKNESSES OF GIFTED ADOLESCENTS.

WRITTEN COMPOSITION.

Certain weaknesses are particularly noticeable in the written composition of gifted students. The most common of these can be grouped into three general divisions: faults of style, carelessness in regard to mechanics of composition, and sentimentality in treatment of certain subjects. These weaknesses will be discussed in the order mentioned.

Faults of Style.

A very common impropriety among gifted students is affectation of style in the form of euphuism, combined with what one of my brightest pupils described as "sesquipedalianism"—the use of long words, not because they are apt, but simply because they are long and sound impressive to less able students. This tendency is well illustrated by an item in the "T. J.", the school paper. Some simple proverbs had been rewritten in such a way as to obscure their meanings; the task was to recognize them. Here are a few:

1. Those who hold their domicile in crystalization should not actively participate in the upheaval of granite formations.
2. The most degenerate of domesticated felines may focus his gaze upon him whom heredity has decreed should govern a nation.
3. A superabundance of those who prepare varied vegetations and animals of many genera for the digestive processes will ultimately and invariable render these insipid and worthless.

The best deterrent is a mild satire ridiculing the unnecessarily difficult expression, and an insistence upon aptness.
and simplicity. One must be careful not to censure too severely, as this weakness is really the result of a keen intellectual interest in the powers of language. The students is experimenting with words just as in the laboratory he experiments with chemicals. One should not be too critical of the product. Experience teaches the value of accuracy and simplicity, and the general ineffectiveness of euphemistic utterance. With most students affectation of language is just a passing phase, which disappears with increasing maturity.

Another principal defect of style found in the works of gifted students is monotony of sentence arrangement. Talented children seldom have much trouble with the grammatical structure of sentences, but they do show a monotonous iteration of the subject, verb, object or complement order. A good curative process is a number of exercises on the various types of sentence arrangement. It is easy to show gifted students that variety can be obtained by commencing sentences with a noun clause, a participial phrase, and an infinitive or gerundial expression. If necessary, the teacher can insist on these openings being used in assignments.

Another noticeable weakness of style is abuse of the loose sentence; i.e., the sentence ending with subordinate elements. This tendency is explicable by the fact that it is the sentence of conversation, and that by its very nature it encourages rambling through the addition of subordinate and often unnecessary adjuncts. Once again, specific drill is the successful expedient. It must be shown that, although the loose sentence has
the virtues of ease and grace, the periodic sentence, ending with the principal part, possesses a vigour and emphasis that is denied its smoother fellow. Constant drill will elicit the virtues of each, and it will not be long before both will be used in proportion.

Occasionally, it is a good idea to have students analyze the structure of their sentences by answering questions of this nature:

1. How many simple, complex, and compound sentences have you used?
2. How many loose, periodic, and compromise sentences have you used?
3. What kinds of sentence openings have you used?

Carelessness in Regard to Mechanics of Composition.

The gifted student is especially susceptible to careless composition habits. His spelling is often poor, his punctuation often worse, his writing indecipherable, and such things as margins, indentations, and paragraphing often neglected. This, I am sure, results from intensity of interest in what he has to say. His imagination travels faster than his pen, and consequently the mechanics of composition, in which he is not primarily interested, suffer.

In this connection, the teacher is confronted by a dilemma. If he is interested in encouraging the creative urge of the student, he will hesitate to criticize too severely, but still he cannot condone slovenliness. The desideratum is to develop a pride in workmanship that will be its own severest critic.
Until this evolves, the teacher must insist that the dictionary be referred to in all cases of doubt, that misspelled words be written out correctly a number of times, and that compositions characterized by faulty punctuation and poor penmanship be rewritten. This insistence will act as a successful palliative until the permanent cure of self-criticism has been established. Gifted students will soon find that the way to avoid the monotony of correction is to be careful over the mechanics of writing.

Sentimentality.

A weakness very prevalent in the works of adolescent children is sentimentality, the roots of which are imbedded deep in human nature. When one considers how sentimental many adults are, and how little restraint they possess, one does not wonder at finding this trait in teen-age students. The explanation for this sentimentality is partly the effect of the "talkies", partly of the popular novel, partly of inherited human nature. The first two can be minimized by the setting up of standards of taste through familiarity with good literature; the last will be mitigated by experience of the world and the approach of maturity.

ORAL COMPOSITION.

Students find it difficult to prepare a subject adequately; they either overprepare or underprepare. In the former case, the result is a speech that has been entirely committed to memory and which is delivered with the precision of a gramaphone record; in the latter, a speech that sounds well but whose effectiveness is marred by discursiveness. The students who deliver
the first type of address are usually of conscientious nature and of nervous temperament; the pupils who make the second often possess a world of self-confidence and personality but lack the capacity for taking pains with their work.

The teacher of such students has a difficult task to perform. To the one he must show that the delivery of a speech is not a matter of life and death; to the other he must point out that public speaking is not a substitute for an impromptu game of ball on the playground and is not a matter to be taken lightly. The first he must handle carefully and encourage often; the second he must often repress and sometimes reprimand. For the first mentioned the teacher will provide exercises in expressive reading before small groups; from the second he will require detailed outlines of his speeches, each having a definite beginning, middle, and end.

The matter of posture is a troublesome one. Gifted students are often very sensitive, particularly during early adolescence before they have learned to control their embarrassment. They constantly feel the necessity of scratching their heads, of moving their feet, of fluttering their hands, and of staring anywhere but at the audience. In this connection there is little the teacher can do save to uphold the ideal before the pupils until it becomes a reality. On no occasion should he resort to ridicule, as this will intensify the sensitivity and establish inhibitions in connection with auditorium work.

The most common fault in the delivery of gifted students is speaking too fast. This habit is partly a transfer from con-
versation, which does not encourage deliberation and careful articulation, partly an effect of nervousness, but chiefly the result of interest in what is being said. It is a well-known fact that gifted students enter into their activities with more enthusiasm than the average, and often this very enthusiasm is responsible for a delivery that is not only too rapid but sometimes almost inaudible. A good remedy is to instruct the audience to raise one hand if the speaker talks too rapidly and two hands if he cannot be heard.
Chapter XI.

FOLLOW-UP WORK WITH GIFTED ADOLESCENTS.

The heading of this chapter immediately brings to mind certain troublesome questions: Is follow-up work with talented graduates desirable, or even necessary? Should one endeavour to retain these pupils in any way? Is such retention fair to the High Schools to which they have gone, or to their new teachers? Will it not make it more difficult for these pupils to orient themselves in their new surroundings?

These questions are difficult to answer satisfactorily. The Junior High School teacher will hesitate to do anything that will make the position of his colleague in the High School more difficult. These pupils, recently graduated, have spent three years, usually quite happy ones, at the same school, and have gone through the first critical stage of adolescence under its guidance. Often they have a sentimental attachment to the old school and the new is seen in an unfavourable light, partly because the unknown always has something fearsome about it, and partly because they are leaving a place where they were senior students to go to one where they feel unimportant.

There really is no reason why the Junior High School teacher should feel any further responsibility towards these talented children, although he always will retain an interest in their progress. The High School teacher, besides, should be in a better position to assist than the Junior High School teacher. He is generally older and of greater experience; and, moreover,
has more time to devote to them as his teaching day is shorter. What the Junior High School teacher should do is to hand over to the High School teacher all the information at his disposal so that the new instructor will not waste time finding the gifted children.

In a combined Junior and Senior High School such as Kitsilano the same teacher should take these students right through the grades from seven to twelve. This would be the ideal arrangement and would solve many difficulties.

It has already been shown that the school paper is one of the best means of keeping in touch with pupils of outstanding ability. The publication of their work will not only be gratifying to themselves and their former teachers, but will also act as incentives to the younger students.

Occasionally the poetry club could have an after-school meeting and could invite interested former members to attend and bring contributions with them.

The teacher of gifted students will find that, as long as he stays in the same school, his former pupils will take the initiative and keep in touch with him. From time to time they will wander in after school hours with some verse or prose they wish criticized. They change in appearance and acquire more poise and polish as they get older, but they are essentially the same: they are still as sensitive as ever, just as easily discouraged from further effort, and just as easily encouraged to strive towards higher goals. I have had dozens of short

---

1. Chapter VIII.
poems, many short stories, and one long play which was finally performed in the drama festival brought to me in this informal way. And this, in my opinion, is one of the most effective kinds of follow-up work.
Chapter XII.

SUMMARY.

In this thesis an attempt has been made to show that gifted students have been lamentable neglected in British Columbia, and suggestions have been made as to what should be done for those who are talented in English composition.

It has been shown that many of them have considerable ability in the writing of verse, and that this ability flourishes best in a sympathetic, informal atmosphere. Examination of adolescent productions indicates a preference for nature themes and imaginative subjects of a romantic nature. Often their verse is humorous, sometimes sentimental, and occasionally of a surprising maturity.

In the study of prose we found it best to emphasize description, as this is an excellent medium for expressing that interest in nature and people which is so noticeable in adolescents. Investigations point to the fact that personal experience topics and imaginative themes are the overwhelming preferences of children of this age. Accordingly, insistence on routine work and exposition should be minimized, and drill should be applied only in response to immediate situations.

In regard to the composition period itself, we outlined our conception of the ideal, first indicating the qualities we thought desirable in the teacher of gifted students, and then

---

1. Webster and Smith, Junior High School English, page 76; World Book Co., New York, 1927.
mentioning the value of freedom in the classroom. In this connection we noted how freedom with guidance was conducive to developing a sense of responsibility, an attitude of self-censorship, and a freeing of creative energies. Discipline was found to entail few special problems, the only one worthy of note being the necessity of developing a self-initiating attitude in the student.

The conclusion was reached that, if possible, the classroom should have a few good pictures which will justify their presence by stimulating the imaginations and emotions of students.

We showed how the marking of papers provided a fine group activity and pointed out the values of such work.

Oral composition in the form of auditorium programs was examined and found to have much of value for gifted students, as a life situation is faced which assists in the development of self-confidence and self-expression, and which teaches many useful matters of etiquette and procedure. We found that success in this kind of work depends upon the evolving of an efficient technique and upon the programs being well-planned, of adolescent interest, and of varied subject matter.

The function of the school paper and the school annual was investigated, and both were found to be efficacious in developing talented children, since they provide an incentive to good work and a formal recognition of accomplishment. In addition to these values, the school paper is instrumental in
locating the gifted students.

One of the most useful means of encouraging creative writing was discovered to be through the English clubs, which provide an informal atmosphere free from classroom restraints. The opinion was offered that the best products should be sent to school publications or printed in a club anthology. Opposition to encouraging young students to strive for recognition elsewhere was emphatically stated.

A few composition weaknesses of gifted students have been mentioned, chief of these being affectation of style and a general disregard of mechanical elements. For the former, a mild satire was found to be the best curative; for the latter, immediate attention to remedial exercises until the law of effect has done its work.

The feasibility of follow-up work with gifted adolescents was envisaged, and the conclusion reached that the most effective work could be done by the High School teacher in co-operation with his Junior High School colleague.

Throughout this thesis we have reiterated the idea that gifted children are being neglected. This neglect does not present any palpably serious problem as does the neglect of the subnormal which often leads to delinquency, but in a less obvious way it is a very serious matter. If democracy in education means anything, surely it must mean giving opportunity to each individual to develop his capacities to the full, and this is not provided if the most intelligent are put through the same routine as the average and the dull. Individual differences
must be met by individual courses; and those best adapted to
gifted students, as has been pointed out, are programs enriched
in imaginative and emotional content and characterized by a
greater degree of freedom than is usual.

This neglect of gifted pupils is not only unfair to the
students themselves but also to society. "It seems plain that
skill in language has a social value, not merely through the
amassing of its individual benefits, but through a direct con-
tribution to the welfare of society as an institution developed
out of civilization."

Society pays for the education of these students, and
looks for its reward in a more able citizenship which will
have a greater intellectual efficiency in social and political
life because of greater powers of communication, and which will
bring a worthier home membership through increased refinement
and appreciation of the best. And perhaps, occasionally some
flower that might otherwise have "been born to blush unseen and
waste its sweetness on the desert air" may be discovered for the
delectation of humanity.

I. Stephens de Witt, Individual Instruction in English Composition,
page 96; Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1928.
Appendix A.

JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL VERSE.

Bowl of Roses: Dusk.

M. . . , Grade 9, 1932.

The day breathes quietly at its close,
Turning toward the void of night;
A fairy weaver plies with rose
And weaves a shroud of fading light;
The far hills hunch in happy sleep,
Darkened with shadows that downward creep.

A bowl, exotic bauble, flings
Far off countries within this room,
And all its carved loveliness sings
Of ancient peoples in the gloom,
Of other roses long ago
That lent their fragrance to the afterglow.

Into the room the darkness flows,
Quivering with song from celestial choir;
Here in the dusk a softness glows,
A steady flame of Beauty's fire.
And beauty shall give to them who trust
The flame of its flame when roses are dust.
The Moon.
E.P., Grade 7, 1931.

I love you, lady moon,
With your face so bright,
Sending down to earth
Your pretty silver light;
You make a path of silver
Winding over the seas,
And pretty fairy lamps
When you're shining through the trees.
You peep into my window
When I have gone to bed,
And it seems as though you're saying,
"Bedtime, sleepy head."

Elves of the Christmas Tree.
E.P., Grade 8, 1932.

Fat little sprites in coats of red,
Crowned with wreaths of holly;
Prance beneath the Christmas tree,
Imps of harmless folly.

Merrily they wink and grin,
Steal each other's jackets;
Play the game of hide-and-seek,
Or peep into the packets.

Clambering up the tall straight trunk,
On the branches swinging,
Joyfully they dance around,
Each one gaily singing.
Lonely Evening.
M.M., Grade 9, 1932.

My mind is conscious of little things to-night:
The ticking of the clock, the flickering flame's flare,
The rustling of the curtain in the dusk,
The sound of alien footsteps on the stair.

I should look—yet I know I'll only find
Swirls of dust, mocking whispers by the gate,
Where a twisted tree writhes against the wind
And sibilantly rails against its fate.

---

Epitaph.
Y.C., Grade 9, 1931.

Upon this stone they've laid above my head
I do not wish in flowery phrases fine
Sere shallow words of praise for all the dead,
But just these words that I could say were mine:

Spring, friendship, dawn, and music all were one;
She found a little of the joy God meant,
And now in peace she rests beneath this stone,
So satisfied with beauty, so content.

---
That Autumn Evening.
V.C., Grade 9, 1931.

The leaves, the dying laurels of a summer's fading glory,
Dropped in silent earnest token of the pomp that it once knew;
Spread its gorgeous tints, the sunset, on a world that fast was
resting
In the park, that autumn evening when I first met you.

Dipped the sun behind the skyline as a last remembered blessing,
Peeped a pale gold star in wonder from the darkening azure blue,
Beat my heart in rhythm keeping with the song that fast was
swelling
From my dreams that autumn evening when I first met you.

Rose the moon, its silvery splendor cast o'er all the world a
halo,
Made the vanquished rise to conquer, made my wan heart smile
anew,
Lifted from despondent valleys all my thoughts that care had
broken,
When you smiled that autumn evening when I first met you.

Now the years have tolled their blessings and the past has
ranged behind us;
Yet my memory does not falter from the night my dreams came true.
Ah my sweet! a sacred token of our love shall live forever
In a golden autumn evening—when I first met you.
A little elf through the forest ran;  
Under the leaves he hid from man.  
High in the heavens the sun shone down,  
Down on the sunmaid's velvety gown.

On through the forest the little elf went,  
The suitor for whom the sunmaid had sent;  
He arrived at the palace in a woodland glen  
Where it was hidden from eyes of men.

Just then the pretty sunmaiden came  
And said, "Bettina is my name."

The elf replied, "My name is Pinky."

And his eyes were just a wee bit winky.

He said to Bettina, "How lovely you are,  
As beautiful as a heavenly star."

The elf was in love as you must have guessed,  
And was thinking of making a little love nest.

Soon happy and gay  
They both ran away,  
And in a fernglade  
Their wee home they made.
Table Talk.
M.M., Grade 9, 1932.

The talk ran on---------
Each word came and bewildered sank, or flew,
Or half remained before the other's blows;
I could see gay adjectives that rose
In rainbow bubbles, and like bubbles broke
Before that attained their glowing heights;
Verbs, breaking the talk in glittering lights;
Tired, depressed words, hidden all their fire,
That wearily came on marching soldier feet;
Trite coquetting words, drippingly sweet;
Epithets of venom zig-zagged through it all.
It seemed so very futile sitting there
With all the words pressed on me. I gave a cry,
And in the silence saw it twist and die.

Futility.
M.M., Grade 9, 1932.

A child has crept through the darkness
And painted the thousand mysteries
Of the strange night
With a crooked twig dipped in mud.

A fool has laughed madly
At the moon's twisted agony
Reflected in the water,
And counted frog's footprints
Along the cool marsh lands.
Rain!
Gray skies
Spread like a blanket over a gray city;
A misty gray sea; small boats
Tossed and buffeted by the winds,
Their pale lights flickering now and then
Through the mist.
The mountains, gaunt and eerie,
In the distance their weird outlines
Phantom-like.
The trees bare and leafless stand
Bereft of all their beauty, dripping
In the rain.
The birds' song is for once stilled.
Darkness falls.

---

Scarlet Maple.

All day it mocked at me
That laughing tree in crimson hung;
Whispering, cajoling, hindering me,
A taunt to every breeze it flung.
All through the quiet night it sang,
Until my young heart longed to be
A dancing part of that vagrant tree.

---
My Dream Ship.

G.K., Grade 9, '32.

My ship of dreams glides smoothly on
Down fancy's golden-tinted flood
To Grecian Isles and Marathon,
And hillsides red with Persian blood.

O'er yellow sands now waste and bare
Where once great Macedon conspired
Mid gardens bright with flowers rare
That all should do as he desired.

My magic ship would quickly glide,
And now with Arthur's knights I'd roam,
Through mystic woods where dangers hide,
And scaly dragons rage and foam.

October.

E.P., Grade 7, 1931.

Golden October gliding by---
A misty veil she casts around,
The leaves against the hazy sky
Are fluttering to the ground.

The birds are flying to the south,
And butterflies no longer flit;
We gather round the fire at night,
And all the lamps are lit.
Then someone weaves a story strange,
Of pirates bold in days of yore,
Who plundered ships and battles fought
On many a foreign shore.

And so October casts her spell
And leaves us for another year;
The summer long has gone her way
And winter days are here.

---

Forest Glade.
E.P., Grade 8, 1932.

'Tis there I lead my footsteps
Through glade and forest green,
By tiny dells and mossy paths
Where fairy folk have been.
And violets are nodding
As I pass upon my way;
The whole world is enchanted
When the fairies are at play.
The gentle fawn is grazing
Beside the woodland stream;
And, coming through the leaves above,
Darts a sunny beam.

A tiny bobbing rabbit
Goes a-skipping o'er the track;
A little bird is calling,
And the echoes answer back.
The Dark House.
M.B., Grade 9, 1931.

It once had been cheerful a long time ago,
But the house now is shrouded in gloom;
The spirit of death seems to walk to and fro
As he wanders through each lonely room.

Gay parties and dances were held in its hall;
But, where laughter and fun should prevail,
The leaves with the wind do the dances of fall,
And the fog is a damp misty veil.

Many a time have I heard the tale told
With hushed voice and sorrowful mien,
Of the things that happened there long, long ago,
Of things that the dark house had seen.

I do not know one who can go by it now
Without seeing spectre or ghost;
And the whispers of trees seem the cry of the souls
That within the dark house have been lost.

So it stands, and it will till it falls with decay,
The house that is shrouded in gloom,
The house that cold death holds under his sway
As he wanders through each lonely room.
Kay Garden.
M.M., Grade 9, 1932.

Morning in the garden:
Fitful breezes blow
Across the grassy stretches
Apple blossom snow,
To where the little flowers
Nodding in their beds
Hear a robin in the distance
Sing, "Up, you sleepy head!"

Evening in the garden:
The twilight wind sings
Of the joys and sorrows
That to-morrow brings;
The ghost children come
Through the fading light,
Calling, Oh, so softly,
"Garden, good night."

--:--:--:--:

Trees.
M.M., Grade 9, 1932.

Some songs are far too rare for singing.
Such are the songs the trees pantomime
When their leaves are fragile against the sky
Of spring, or exulting with the wine
Of autumn; in winter, when etched
In ebony traceries, a sigh is their
Is their melody, a sorrow stretched
Passively between each naked bow,
With only a joyous lilt then and now
When the sun laughs, and it seems
Wrapped in its mirth a dryad stirs and dreams.

---

Thoughts on Leaving Templeton.
A.D., Grade 9, 1930.

I think my thoughts are what you think,
The thoughts I think in thought;
And thinking as I think I think,
These thoughts my thinking thought.

I cam and worked and went again;
Each day was as before;
Now that June has come three times,
I stand outside the door.

I am not sad nor am I gay,
On thinking of my lot;
But my mind is pre-engrossed;
This is my trend of thought:

The future holds up higher goals;
And towards these I am set;
So meditating on my way,
I leave without regret.

---
On Reading a Rumour about the Prince of Wales.

I wish I were the Prince of Wales;
I'd face the ocean's stoutest gales;
To Argentine I'd turn my boat
And up the Rio Platte float.

Ashore, I'd mount a coal black steed
And o'er the tawny prairies speed;
The whistling breeze would make me free
From court or home diplomacy.

I'd climb the snowy Andean height,
And from the highest summit bright,
I'd watch the surging breakers foam
And pigmy men through valleys roam.

I'd raise my arms unto the sky;
I'd push the downy cloudlets by;
*I*d stoop to let the sun pass o'er
To its well earned rest on western shore.

For I have read in news of late
That matrimony seems his fate;
Now, I don't think that we can spare
Our Prince to any lady fair.

---
White Flowers.
M.M., Grade 9, 1932.

I once saw a woman by a window
Polishing silver and finding it fair;
I saw the song upon her lips,
The long grey strands of her tired hair
That she brushed away from a happy face;
And I knew that she held a coveted place
That only a few can know and share.

I never thought of her name at all,
Nor of the secret places she trod;
But the kindness I saw mirrored there
Was of those who walk with God;
As the silver glinted in the sun,
She smiled in pride at work well done,
And the wind's kiss made a white flower nod.

To a Robin.
E.P., Grade 7, 1931.

The nights are growing longer
As shorter grows the day;
The mountain peaks are crowned with snow;
Yet, little bird, you stay,
The golden leaves have fallen now;
The northern wind blows cold;
But, little bird, though small you are,
Your heart is big and bold.
All winter long you chirp and sing,
A-hopping on the sill;
Down to the south you do not fly,
But linger at your will.

Butterfly
E.P., Grade 7, 1931.

Butterfly, butterfly, where are you roaming?
Wandering, wandering ever.
You fly in the sunlight till day turns to gloaming
On wings as light as a feather.

Butterfly, butterfly, why do you hover
And light on a velvety petal,
Or dance in the sun mid the sweet purple clover?
For never for long do you settle.

Butterfly, butterfly, why do you tarry,
And linger near sweet-scented flowers?
To gather the honey and nectar they carry,
Or while away long golden hours?
The Little Three Year Old.
E.H., Grade 9, 1931.

Bonny little three year old
(Curls of brown with gleam of gold)
Loved a baby fair and small,
But it had no hair at all.

This was very sad you see;
Babies bald should never be!
In his heart his wonder grew,
What would the tiny baby do?

So the merry little man
Hit upon a happy plan;
He would share what he has got
With the one who has it not.

In his tumbling mop of hair
There is many a curl to spare;
"Cut them off," he shyly said,
"And put them on the baby's head."

Ode to Nothing in Particular.
L.P., Grade 9, 1930.

I wish I were a pachyderm,
A blade of grass, a typhoid germ,
A piece of cake, a slice of sky,
A beetle or a dragon fly,
A hunk of cheese, a little flea,
A pool of mud, a bumble bee,
A dish of fruit, a keg of beer—
By this time you must think me queer.
O yes, I am, that's why you see,
I wrote this thing for E.B.B.

(Written in about five minutes at close of examination.)

-:-:-:-:-:-:-:-:-:-:-:-:-:-:-:-

Farewell.
I.L., Grade 9, 1933.

These lines to you, dear schoolmates.
A rue from you to part;
The memory of your laughs and smiles
Will linger in my heart.
We now must cross the Rubicon,
Meet vicissitudes of life;
May the journey be a pleasant one
Devoid of war and strife.

For some the roads are levelled,
For others they're left rough;
No doubt some will find wealth and fame,
And others not enough.
But whatever our environments
Till the reaper takes his toll,
Let us face it like Canadians
Till we reach the final goal.
To the Teachers.
The time has now arrived
For your inept pupil to leave;
I respect your devotion to duty
But your patience I cannot conceive.
Your vocation in life the most noble,
To train the youthful mind
To cope with life's big problems
His proper sphere to find.

For knowledge attained while here
All credit is your due;
Grammar, French, and algebra,
I owe it all to you.
To part from you it grieves me:
In you I've found a friend;
All I can give you in return
Is best wished to the end.
Appendix B.

JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL PROSE.

A Mood.

The dull, leaden sky dropped heavily over a sodden land, while the growl of the receding thunder, like a hungry lion driven from its hard-won prey, threatened ominously. But neither sullen clouds nor menacing thunder prevented that airy-fairy zephyr breeze from bursting through the black bank which guarded the south. Gently, so gently, but nevertheless persistently it made its way through, thrusting to right and left in the most undignified manner the gloomy guards. And, behold! there, clinging to the back of its chariot with warm, rosy fingers, was a saucy, twinkling sunbeam, swirling her gossamer skirts right in the face of the monstrous clouds. Close at her heels trooped her merry maids of honour, clad in radiant hues of gold, crimson, and topaz. With a joyous song on her lips, they caught hands and abandoned themselves to the maddest, merriest dance imaginable. Nor did they cease till exhaustion overtook them and they sank to the flower-strewn earth. But their song could not die. It was eagerly caught up by the silver-throated songsters among the rain-jewelled trees, and the entrancing melody completed the self-imposed mission of the zephyr breeze and the mischievous maids.
The Seeing Eve.
I.L., Grade 9, 1933.

Mr. Jewell's heart hadn't beaten so fast in all of his forty years. He had never proposed before to any woman. And now he was going to propose marriage to a woman he had never seen!

He stepped out into the mild sunlight of a New York afternoon and paid the taxi-driver with a hand that shook.

The apartment house doorman told the flustered gentleman that Miss Arvia Moon expected him. Going up in the elevator Mr. Jewell mopped his face, while the whole wonderful course of this affair seemed to flash by him like a motion picture.

An adolescent disappointment had made him distrustful of women. And later, while building up a successful wholesale lumber business, he had developed on the side a secret life of the imagination. This had led him to become convinced that no woman ever could see life as he saw it.

And then, on his thirty-ninth birthday, he had picked up a magazine and read that story, "The Lonely Heart", by Arvia Moone!

He wrote to the magazine, asking if she had written anything else. The magazine, guided by fate, had forwarded his letter to her. And Miss Moone had replied, explaining that she had published seven novels. Incidentally, she confirmed his impression of a personality somewhat like his own.

So it was only natural, after reading her first novel, to write and say how much he liked the author's viewpoint.

In her reply she had said that it was so rare to come upon a man who realized that life was a great romance, most men
were gross and material, and saw only the surface of things. When she added that he had the Seeing Eye, Mr. Jewell experienced the icy, agreeable thrill of realizing that here, at last, was a woman in a thousand.

Mr. Jewell's business was in Cincinnati. Miss Moon lived in New York. So he had subjugated his gross male curiosity and, instead of inconveniencing himself by trying to see her, had tackled her other six books. The ensuing correspondence between them delved into the most intimate moral and spiritual problems of her characters. Mr. Jewell came to feel that their two beings had met and merged in the spacious realm of the soul.

Then business brought him to New York, and he telephoned her. Magically, her musical voice settled some doubts inside him. It vibrated in a way which assured him that between them, with no need for words, had arisen a knowledge that each required the other. And Mr. Jewell had asked if he might call—his voice saying that he was bringing his heart.

With such a voice and such a soul, Mr. Jewell concluded as the elevator rose, she, of course, would be beautiful. But he wished that he knew, at least, whether she was going to be a blond or a brunette.

The elevator stopped, and as though in a trance he located her suite. He pressed the bell. A full minute dragged by, iridescent with dreams of a lifetime. Then the door opened, to reveal a woman of nearly his own age, with faded, nondescript hair, and a long, plain face. She was dressed in black and, with
the desperation of hope, Mr. Jewell decided that she was the maid.

"Is Miss Arvia Moone at home?" he inquired, his voice breaking in the presence of life's great moment.

"I am Miss Moone. Won't you come in, Mr. Jewell?"

This was terrible! But unable to flee, Mr. Jewell entered, hung up his hat, mopped his face, and followed her into the living room. He sat down and stared at her comfortable, low-heeled shoes. The doubts he had returned and increased. And her embarrassment began to make him acutely uncomfortable. She was talking disjointedly, trying to smooth over this terrible moment.

It did not smooth over for Mr. Jewell. He recognized in her all of the nice things he had expected. Her time-tried and homey room with its lovely blending of quiet tones reflected her deep and understanding personality. But she was certainly not the creature of his dreams. And because she knew that he had come here in a frame of mind personal to the point of matrimony, he must escape.

"I came by," he blurted. "to explain that an important matter has just come up----I will telephone later."

Mr. Jewell discovered himself out on the street, perspiring freely. He had escaped. He need never go back. But he found that he kept walking round and round the block. After all, he and she were remarkably congenial. He had been a bachelor long enough. And he would get used to the fact that she wasn't beautiful. Not many women were beautiful anyway. He'd be better off married. He would go back and marry her.

Mr. Jewell returned and rang the bell. He noticed, when she answered the door, that she had been crying. He felt a brute for
having hurt her by rushing off like that.

"I was so flustered at having seen you," he confessed when they were seated, "that I went and walked away to recover my composure. I have come back," he added, "to ask you to marry me!"

Miss Moone hesitated for a long, long time.

"I will try to make you happy," she said at last.

Mr. Jewell said truthfully that just her answer made him happy. And, now that the tension was broken, they laughed as they had laughed in their letters. Mr. Jewell spent one of the most delightful afternoons of his life. He kissed her ink-stained fingers and departed in a rosy cloud of self-approval.

By being big and generous he had won a treasure. And in return, he was making one woman blindly happy.

After Mr. Jewell had gone, Miss Moone unlocked a leather-bound diary, and thoughtfully picked up a pen.

"He has just gone," she wrote, "and we are going to be married. He is fat and conceited; he is positively ugly, and he wears awful clothes. Naturally, I wept after I had seen him. But he is lovable and kind. And I know I shall be happy in making him happy."
The Religion of Mumptigonia.

L.P., Grade 9, 1930.

"Ay! I've been on many a strange cruise and seen many a strange sight," said the old salt, setting down his tankard and wiping his facial fungus.

Foreseeing a tale of adventure, not to say imagination, I prepared accordingly...

"You may have wondered how I gained my present corpulence," he said. "Well, 'twas on the good ship Harembe, in '87 or mebbe '89 that we sailed for Hydro Phobea, or somewhere else in those parts; we won't bother about small things like that though.

The chief of the place was a funny sort of fellow called Mumptygonia. Years ago, a missionary had visited the island, and his great great grandfather had become a Christian. To show this, Mumpty sometimes wore a frock coat, top hat, and spats; while his cannibal ancestry was represented at other times by a nose ring, grass skirt, and several layers of assorted war paint and dirt over his chocolateihued complexion.

We were welcomed right warmly on our arrival, and given the biggest hut in the town to sleep in. The date, as I remember it, was January 31st.

Next morning being Sunday, we were prepared to sleep late, but our intention was forestalled by what might be termed a most unearthly and unbecoming din.

Enter Mumpty, minus frock coat, top hat, and spats, but making up for this lack of habiliment by fresh war paint, much after the fashion of the fairer sex to-day. He was supported by five bouncin' babies, a fine ad for virol. These prize beauties gazed
at us with not over benevolent eyes.

Perceiving the mate sleeping like dead, except for accompaniment in many a baritone, his well-upholstered sides rising and falling with the exertion, they gave a whoop of joy and speared him neatly through the solar plexus. It must have woke him, 'cause he yawned! They then took hold of the ends of the skewer, and the worthy mate rode out of the hut with hardly a wiggle.

"Oh lor", "groans the captain," there goes barbecue number one."

They tied the rest of us up with grass ropes and gave us the best meal we'd ever eaten.

Every day one of us went for a ride, as they say in Chicago. I was a thin little guy then, so I was fed more than any anybody else in the crew. There was twenty-eight besides me, so I had great hopes that I'd be rescued, or the cook would poison them all before it was my turn. Besides, I turned vegetarian for fear I'd be enjoying a pork chop off my shipmate's milk-fed ribs. My schoolgirl complexion was also becoming muddy from sleepless nights.

At last came the day when it was my turn, and I was feeling downhearted to say the least, and was hoping it would hurt them more than it would hurt me, when in came Mumpty and Co. It was a different Mumpty, however, for 'e 'ad on 'is top hat, frock coat, and all. I was surprised at what I considered to be an honour to my edibility. Instead of a spear 'e 'ad a knife which still more surprised me; but imagine my embarrassment when, instead of removin
my gizzard, he cut the ropes.

They then lead me out on the beach, hailed a passing ship and, bundling me into a canoe filled with presents of gold and silver, rowed me out to the boat. Before I boarded her, Mumpty hauled out a bible and preached a farewell sermon!

His cannibal month was over!

His Christian month was begun.

---

Tundra.
H.K., Grade 9, 1930.

Twilight had drawn her dusky cloak over the vast lonely tundra. Not a sound broke the heavy silence, save the monotonous booming of the surf as the huge mountains of water broke, thundering against the gaunt, grey crags. No living thing stirred. Only the muddy white-capped deep rolled on endlessly, merging with the muddy yellow sky in the distance. The forlorn, mangled, almost lifeless form of a baby seal which had been beaten against the rocks and cast on the stony beach, added the brooding horror of death to the already gruesome spectacle. Blood poured forth from its nose, ears, and eyes, staining the sand to a brilliant scarlet. In its last agony of death it uttered a low moaning sound, not unlike the groan of a sick child. I turned aghast from that loathsome lump of flesh to gaze at the barren cliffs. Not a vestige of a single scraggy plant or hardy weed grew from its rocky walls. Nothing lived in this abandoned land save I. Nothing thrived in this desolate waste of hopelessness save death, and that murderous icy sea whipped into
from by the cutting winds of Thule which blew in whistling blasts across the plains destitute of life. One solitary, miserable, bony wolverine, haggard from long weeks of suffering, echoed and re-echoed its wailing death cry. I turned from the sea and looked over the snowy plains empty save for the abominable rotting carcass of a vile-smelling sea bird. It was a land ruled by Satan. Truly a land of death.

A Find.
D.H., Grade 9, 1930.

Mr. D.C. Jones swung briskly down the hotel steps. His manly chest expanded twice its usual circumference as he noted the adoring glances cast by the female guests. Jones was a director of the greatest entertainment in the world, the movies. No secret was it that he was out for a new "find." But the languishing ladies on the verandah were not to his taste. There's enough of their kind, all eye-lashes and legs, on the screen now, thought he sarcastically.

Thus reminiscing, the director started down one of the mountain trails for which the hotel was so famous. He had not gone far before he heard a beautiful voice singing. The owner seemed to be composing as she sang, for Jones had never heard a song like it. The theme was hauntingly sad, as if the singer had known great sorrow or pain. "Ah! here maybe by search ends," quoth D.C. Jones, in the manner he had taught detectives of the silver screen. Peering through a wall of lace-like evergreens he saw her.
She was seated at the door of a rustic log-cabin. The pale, heart-shaped face was framed in glossy black hair, that was caught in a loose knot at the nape of her neck. As she raised her eyes, Jones saw that they were pools of velvety brown. "Why, she'd make a second Mona Lisa, thought he, as he noticed the wistful, haunting smile tugging at her lips. Had he been closer, the director might have seen the violet shadows beneath her eyes, the transparent, silk-like skin, and the resigned fold of her fragile hands. Around her slim shoulders was carelessly flung a quaint shawl and her black dress fell in ample folds to the floor.

"Humph, good actress," thought Jones. He started forward to speak to her, and saw with horror a small pair of crutches lying at her feet. Now he understood the agony and sorrow in her voice and eyes. She was a cripple.

The Mystery of the Grey House.

The clock in the church steeple boomed out the hour of midnight to a sleeping town. But in the big house on High Street all were not at rest.

Cautiously opening the bedroom door, a pyjama-clad figure stepped into the dim moonlit corridor. The look on his deeply-seamed features was cruel, yet furtive, and it may have been tinged with fear.

He began stealthily to descend the darkened staircase. A board creaked, and he muttered something under his breath.
Down in the shadows below something moved! The man paused and peered over the bannisters into the gloom; then slowly, step by step, went down to meet the unknown!

He reached the bottom. There was a breathless hush, broken only by his laboured respiration. Then—then the coats on the hall stand moved! Across a patch of pale moonlight a shapeless shadow flitted. An unseen body brushed against him. The parlour door creaked, then slowly opened to the touch of an unseen hand. Silence!

For a long time the man clung to the post at the foot of the staircase, striving to pierce the gloom.

Then, with a catlike tread, he crossed the hall to the parlour door. He entered! For a time he remained motionless!

Two green eyes about the height of his waist flickered fiendishly at him from the far corner of the room.

A cry of exultation, of wild triumph, rose from his throat. His body tensed. He sprang at the Horror in the corner. Where the thing had been was a chair! Then his hands came in contact with a soft inhuman shape. A razor-sharp blade lacerated his wrist. A cry, like that of neither man nor beast, rose from his captive.

He dashed to the front door, opened it and threw out a shapeless black mass! He slammed the door, heaved a sigh, and began to suck his bleeding wrist.

Mr. Spifikens had put the cat out!
"How intolerably boring school must have been a thousand years ago," remarked Ethabalfra to Somestina, as she leisurely adjusted her mercurial wings to her dainty heels preparatory to the morning's lesson on Egypt.

"You do think of the most depressing subjects for conversation," returned her companion, as she adjusted her oxygen mask; "who wants to discuss ancient history. Why I——"

But here she was interrupted by the master's voice as he addressed the assembled boys and girls somewhat sternly.

"You are aware that through gross carelessness in not carrying the required amount of oxygen Zedatab Bernstow fell through the stratosphere into the atmosphere above Japan yesterday, and consequently the police squadron of Class Six lost two valuable horses in the rescue. Let this happen again to any member of the class and I shall be compelled to commit the offender to the electric chamber for three minutes' punishment. This morning we shall spend one hour in obtaining all the geographical information we can in the Valley of the Nile. From there we must hurry to Paris in time for our French lesson. Be sure that your thinkographs are firmly attached to your foreheads. Some of you may be able to sue more than one reel. But do think clearly! You know, Exobus, when you turned on your talkophone on Monday afternoon you had pink hug-me-tights mixed with your Greek. To-day we shall fly in goose formation. Follow me; we must be there in five minutes Ready---release controls---"With a gentle whir master and pupils vanished into the blue."

School a Thousand Years from Now——M.D., Grade 9, 1933.

"How intolerably boring school must have been a thousand years ago," remarked Ethabalfra to Somestina, as she leisurely adjusted her mercurial wings to her dainty heels preparatory to the morning's lesson on Egypt.

"You do think of the most depressing subjects for conversation," returned her companion, as she adjusted her oxygen mask; "who wants to discuss ancient history. Why I——"

But here she was interrupted by the master's voice as he addressed the assembled boys and girls somewhat sternly.

"You are aware that through gross carelessness in not carrying the required amount of oxygen Zedatab Bernstow fell through the stratosphere into the atmosphere above Japan yesterday, and consequently the police squadron of Class Six lost two valuable horses in the rescue. Let this happen again to any member of the class and I shall be compelled to commit the offender to the electric chamber for three minutes' punishment. This morning we shall spend one hour in obtaining all the geographical information we can in the Valley of the Nile. From there we must hurry to Paris in time for our French lesson. Be sure that your thinkographs are firmly attached to your foreheads. Some of you may be able to sue more than one reel. But do think clearly! You know, Exobus, when you turned on your talkophone on Monday afternoon you had pink hug-me-tights mixed with your Greek. To-day we shall fly in goose formation. Follow me; we must be there in five minutes Ready---release controls---"With a gentle whir master and pupils vanished into the blue."
The Houseboat on the Styx.
J.J., Grade 9, 1933.

Great Caesar's Ghost! Shades of Confucius! Wisdom of Sages!

Gallantry of Knights!

Yes, meet them all in the "Houseboat on the Styx" where the shadowy inhabitants of Hades meet to argue, smoke, and employ their leisure, eternity. Drop in at the clubhouse and listen while Shakespeare, Baron Munchausen, Sir Walter Raleigh, and Nero argue over the authorship of "Hamlet." Stroll with Queen Elizabeth on the Shores of the Styx, and join in the conversation between her and Mrs. Socrates as to the most fashionable attire for bicycle riding. Lend an ear to the discussion of Burns and Homer, who agree that cooks are very necessary members of society. Enjoy Noah's account of the voyage in the ark with the cargo of animals.

The great characters of all the ages are gathered together in this delightfully funny book, the "Houseboat on the Styx!"

---

A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court.
J.J., Grade 9, 1933.

A very practical "jack-of-all-trades" is transported from modern times to the far-off glamour of King Arthur's Round Table. He immediately gains a reputation as a powerful magician, becomes a knight-errant, and proceeds to renovate the kingdom of the great Arthur very thoroughly. As may be expected in these strange circumstances, his adventures are truly funny. This book also gives a clear view of the darker side of the famous Age of Chivalry, showing the foolishness, greed, and cruelty of the nobles; the hardships of the serfs; and the lives of the commoners.
A One-Act Tragedy.

L.P., Grade 9, 1931.

Scene——Classroom.

Characters——teacher; student.

Enter the student, with shrinking mien. Glides to his seat and endeavours to become as small a part of surroundings as possible.

Enter the teacher, expression on face is pleased and expectant; also slightly malicious. Note book and pencil in hand.

Teacher: (endeavouring to make class jump by use of air pressure)

Those who have not done their punctuation project, stand up! (Student endeavours to hide behind Godfrey and Siddons Elementary Geometry, facial expression like unto a lamb).

Teacher: What have we here.

See here, see here
The student hideth
His worthless carcass
Behind a Godfrey
And Siddons' Geometry.
Seeking to hide
His shame behind
That good and honourable Work.
Speak now, thou knave,
Thou muddy knave,
Why hidest thou
Behind thy Godfrey
And Siddons' Geometry?
Student: Sir, honourable sir,
Who in thy great
Magnificent wisdom
Will doubtless perceive
That I, -Oh great
And honourable sir----

Teacher: In sooth, he speaketh
With tongue
Of gibbering ass;
Speak up, thou
Fool, speak up,
And gargle not
Thy words.

Student: Most gracious sir,
Oh hear, lend ear,
To this my plight;
Last night, kind sir,
I started on
My punctuation project——

Teacher: 'Twere much too late
To start.
Take fifty lines.

Student: 0 wisest sir,
Most darling teacher,
Let my plea be
First put forth:
My sister, she
Did spill the ink;
My brother, he
Did break the pen;
My mother, she
Did burn the paper;
My father, he
Did need my aid
To dig the garden—
Alas, foul garden,
The symbol of
My childhood's woes—
But returning to
My theme---

Teacher: Speak up,
Thou squawking ass;
How much, I say,
How much of this
Punctuation Project
Have you done?

Student: Alas, kind sir,
You'll readily see
That circumstances
Beyond control
Have caused me to—
In sooth, not to
Have started yet
This punctuation project.
Teacher: So this thy plea,
    Thou muddy knave!
    Then come with me!

(Teacher extracts strap from desk; exeunt ils)

Note: The above was handed in as an imposition which was given for neglect of an assignment.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


15. Mearns, H., Creative Power; Doubleday, Page and Co., New York, 1919. This is one of the best books on the subject of encouraging creativeness in children. Chief attention is paid to prose.

16. Mearns, H., Creative Youth; Doubleday, Page and Co., New York, 1919. This is an excellent book devoted to encouraging verse writing among children.

17. National Society for the Study of Education:

(a) 19th Yearbook; Classroom Problems in the Education of Gifted Children; chapter 7 deals with methods of teaching adapted to gifted children.

(b) 22nd Yearbook; English Composition; its Aims, Methods, and Measurement.

(c) 23rd Yearbook; Report of the Society's Committee on the Education of Gifted Children. A thorough investigation into many phases of the problem. Useful as a general background, but little specific work on English.


20. The Progressive Education Association, *Creative Expression*, edited by Hartman and Shumaker; The John Day Co., New York, 1932. This volume is a collection of articles that have appeared in the magazine, "Progressive Education." They deal with the subject of encouraging creativeness in students.


22. Tracy, F., *The Psychology of Adolescence*; The Macmillan Co., New York, 1923. This is the most readable psychology of adolescence. It combines thoroughness of investigation and literary style in a manner seldom found in texts.