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Children's Literature: Its Impact On the Mind
Of the Child Reader

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Abstract

The overall focus of this study is to assess why Children's Literature, Children's Cartoons, Children's Drama etc., are appealing to children - whether this has to do with their mental process or cognitive development. Obviously not all literature meant for children is attractive: however, we find children enjoying stories tremendously.

An attempt therefore is made in this research whether children love or reject these stories (literature) for reasons related to their mental process, whether the given literature has something to do with their cognitive level or understanding.

The study consists of two major sections. The first section which is from chapter one to chapter three, deals with the general theories on children's literature, on their types, genres, history etc. The second section presents a conceptual framework that has two subsections.

The first subsection deals with some popular children's literature and the elements that contributed to their popularity.

The second subsection presents the experiment (a tool used to validate the assumptions that were made in the conceptual framework). A simple experiment with groups of children was conducted and their results are shown in Tables.

It is hoped that the study, will throw some light on the relationship with and impact of children's literature on their cognitive ability.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

In this chapter an attempt is made to discuss the background of the study.

As a child almost everyone from any part of the world has heard or read stories of one sort or another. Stories and narrations are part of our childhood memories. They entertained and appealed to our minds and remained part and parcel of our early days.

Some of us had laughed or cried our hearts out, listening to or reading those works of literature meant for children. Those lovely tales would lift up our hearts and minds, bringing us to a dream - like land or taking us back to the ancient or far off times. In those stories, we read about queens and kings, magicians and fairies, witches and beasts, who would turn a fortunate little boy or girl into a beautiful prince or princess. Some of us would love to read such stories even today because they bring out the child in us and the memories of our 'sweet innocent childhood.'

Thanks to the awareness prevailing these days on the need of such stories for children. Unlike olden days we find various types of books for kids – from the preschool child to the adolescent. These books contain various kinds of stories in terms of content and style.

The reason for the increase in the volume of children's literature (by literature, I mean to say the 'imaginative literature' like stories, poems, plays, tales etc., which are meant only for reading and entertainment purposes) is due to the awareness and realization of its impact on the

development of the mind of the child reader. Parents, teachers and anyone who happens to spend most of their time with children are the ones who make the most use of such literature to entertain, instruct and inform them. These people specially are ever grateful for the way such literature widens the scope of the child's world. The best way by which one reaches the mind of the developing child is by making them read such literature consisting of stories and tales which are suitable to their age and level of understanding. This is to say that one can really appeal to the mind of the child reader and convey the desired message by way of entertainment without boring him.

The common types of literature we find for children include fairy tales, animal stories, adventures etc., the ultimate purpose of which is to impart knowledge by way of entertainment.

No one knows for sure how children's stories emerged especially before the advent of printing. However, there are assumptions as to their close association with ancient tales, myths, legends and the like in oral literature or folklore that turned out later into stories for children.

In the ancient world, where there was no documentation in written form, the elders used to pass on their beliefs and experiences to the young ones. This mainly consisted of myths (such as explanations as to why certain natural phenomena are happening, like why the lightening occurs, why seasons change etc.) After many generations, such descriptions mingled with creative imagination turned out to become tales and legendary stories. Such legends became popular among the child listeners. As time passed by, the children's craving for such stories led to the emergence of narration and stories meant for children only.

Most of the stories however were didactic in nature. They tried to instill value, educate the child and provide possible answers to their quest for knowledge.

When the child becomes fascinated by these stories - he will be interested in his home and family life, in the animals he sees, in the flowers he smells and the food he eats. The child probes his environment in order to understand it, organize his experience in it and make sense of it – thus becoming very curious seeking answers to his questions.

Some children's stories tried to find answers/ solutions to children's quest by way of entertainment. The story of the dog, the donkey and the goat is one such example. One day the three animals decided to travel by bus. Once they were on board, the donkey and the dog paid for their tickets. The goat, having nothing to pay remained seated. However the dog was expecting a small change to be returned and he was told he would be paid later. When they reached their destination, they started alighting when the dog – remembering his change asked for it again. The bus however left off ignoring the dog. That explains why dogs always run barking after a moving vehicle (still expecting to get back their change) why goats run away from it (thinking they would be caught and punished) and why donkeys are adamant about an approaching car (since it has nothing to worry about).

The story about the lion and the woman also is one such example, which has a didactic value. The woman whose husband never gave her love and attention, decided to do as she was told by a wise man- to try to bring a piece of hair from a lion. The first day she brought meat to a certain lion and watched him from a distance. The next day she did the same but approached him a little. For five days, she did the same thing

approaching it little by little and finally managed to cut a piece of hair from it. When finally she brought it to the wise man- he told her that she could do the same to her husband as she did with the lion – whom she could tame and make him love her if only she could wisely device a way.

Such were the stories told to children in the past. Today we find lots of stories which are quite fascinating and different in content and style. They are intended to be a source of knowledge and enjoyment. As Sutherland observes:

Like adults, children read for many reasons: to dream, to learn, to laugh and to enjoy the familiar and explore the unknown. They read for sheer pleasure and they absorb in their reading those facets of books that reflect the developmental values appropriate to their particular stage of growth. Books may help children build a concept of the society, they help shape and sharpen their concepts about other people and may contribute to their self understanding (Sutherland:1997:10).

What one reads as a child tends to become inspiring and influential as he grows up which explains why most of us still recall some stories vividly till date. As Landsbergs states:

.....the books I read as a child, transformed me, gave meaning and perspective to my experiences and helped me to mold whatever imaginative, intellectual or creative strength I can lay claim now. No doll or game had that impact on me... no pair of new jeans ever changed my life (Landsberg 1987:7).

Today, we do have plenty of varied children's literature. However, unfortunately, not all literature can impart knowledge as a desired end result due to various reasons. For instance, some works may contain incomprehensible language which makes it difficult for the child to understand the subject matter. As a result, the child will come to dislike reading in general. Similarly, some books may arouse a great deal of anxiety – because of the craftsmanship of the writer who does not relate his writings to the psychological dispositions of the child. For instance,

ghost stories – dealing with the fears of the dark might be told with such vivid exaggeration that they increase such fears rather than help the child to overcome them.

Some authors of children's literature are of the opinion that children's books should serve as instruments for the confirmation of childishness i.e. to preserve the guileless and the ingenious. On the other hand some authors suggest that children's literature should take into account the realities of the human condition which consists of hope and fear, doubts and reassurances, needs and fulfillment so that the child reader will be able to know his surroundings and prepare himself to face the complexities of life. Consider the following opinion of Sutherland:

Like adult's books, children's books range from the inaccurate and mediocre to the reliable, the beautifully written and the permanently magnificent. Like adults books, children's books have become more sophisticated and frank in their use of language, and treatment of subjects once considered taboo (Sutherland 1997:22).

Therefore whatever literature children are given it should be very carefully selected and should be appropriate to their level of understanding. It should also consider the fact that children are quick to grasp and register the good as well as the bad, a fact which calls for more attention regarding the literature we choose for them. West's ideas in this respect, are worth quoting:

Each child has a unique view of our world. Our world that is for now. In the mean time we have a clear duty to help sustain the openness of a child's pure vision and its wholesome acceptance of what it sees and feels in the world around it and within its own world... In a child we are presented with the clean slate, the processor of potent senses, the ready absorber of the slightest whim. We must realize that every confrontation, every spark of human intention and every touch is registered by a miracle and the life force within it, will use whatever it can grasp to further the motive of a tender captive mind....The best of children's books are a secret door (which you can enter if

you believe what is on the other side.). They are readily available with a child and yet inaccessible if you spurn the child's natural delight in the possibility of everything impossible (West:1988:42).

There are opinions as to the nature of good books for children. Most would like to see in these books much of delight and fantasy that would only please the child. They believe that a child is entitled to happiness and joy and that he should never be made to know the unpleasant facts of life.

But according to Sara Inns:

When dealing with children, there is a very dangerous tendency to oversimplify and to avoid areas that are unpleasant or difficult. This often derives from too much emphasis on their smallness and lack of ability and are not on their growth and acquiring ability. This tendency can negate the very essence of the value of literature to children. For it can lead to an omission of those things that are of the greatest importance. Instead of children's literature being the stairway to knowledge of the adult's world and a guide to mastery, these tendencies emphasize the difference between adults and children and increase the feelings that adults wish to hide knowledge rather than convey it (Inns:1967:40).

Authors of children's literature therefore must take into consideration the outstanding characteristics of children- what most markedly differentiates them from adults, in what subject matter the child's sphere of interest is – whether it is manageable and conducive to a meaningful experience, what solutions are available by taking into account their psychological make up.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The child is a physically and mentally tender being who is dependent on his/her parents, teachers or elders for the development of his/her body and mind. But he/she is also a person who is constantly growing –

growing to become an adult. What he/she will become tomorrow depends on how he/she is raised today.

A child is the reflection of his/her upbringing – one can tell from what background he/she is coming from by simply observing his/her reactions and attitudes towards the challenges of life. A man whose childhood background is filled with memories of love, fun, discipline and truth will certainly turn out to become a productive and psychologically healthy being that would be a blessing to his family, community and the nation at large. The reverse is also true of a person coming from a love-less family or lacking the proper care, understanding and values.

Although the family is the first institution responsible for the appropriate development of the physical and mental growth of the child, literature can be considered as another best means by which the child acquires knowledge and learns much.

Children's literature contributes to the mental development and growth of the child. Such literature can help children realize the reality and provide them with the mechanism of how to cope with it. It teaches them the do's and don'ts of their society, broadens their view of life, informs them what is going on in the world and answers their quest for knowledge.

A child used to reading books (i.e. literature) is by far better off than a child who is not exposed to them, in his understanding of various aspects of life – like the experiences of people in the other parts of the world, some historical events, real life experiences etc.

In this connection Mark West said:

The person who is what I call a fit reader has a terrific advantage over people who are not readers. Life becomes richer if you

have the whole world of books around and I will go to practically to any length to bring this world to children (West 988:74).

The argument underlying the present study therefore is that literature meant for children should take into account the psychological make up of the child- that it should be able to consider the child who is small in mind but who is also growing, who is always curious and hence full of questions that require truthful answers (presented in a pleasant manner), who needs an entertainment of the mind but not an ecstasy, who needs to be informed about realities and problems of life but also needs to be provided with solutions.

The study is directed towards an analysis of the relationship between the reading pieces of children's literature and their mental capacity, what the authors of such literature should consider about their intended readers – how their cognitive understanding functions at different stages of their lives so that their writings appeal to the intended child reader and contributes to the advancement and progress of the mental health of child readers.

In the light of the above argument, an attempt will be made in this study to analyze a number of works of children's literature in relation to their psychological significance for the particular group of children for whom the literature is intended.

1.3 Objective of the Study

Anyone who is interested to instill values and impart knowledge to children through literature will have to get a glimpse of the positive impact and significance of the various type of literature meant for children. The study will give an insight into which type of literature has a positive impact on the child reader depending on the content and subject matter of the writing. This will be made possible once the

cognitive development of children at various stages of their life is well understood. In other words, the study aims at identifying features of literature which would have a positive impact on the child reader during the different stages of his growth into adulthood.

1.4 Significance of the Study.

The knowledge of the positive/negative impact that literature has on the mind of the child reader is very significant for those who believe that children need (like any one of their basic needs) to read literature for the positive development and progress of their minds. As a result, they will be selective in their choice of literature. Secondly, it provides some insights for writers of children's literature to make their writings not only impressive and exciting but also write as per the need and requirement of the cognitive level of the intended child reader. Thirdly, it will also enable parents, teachers, elders, policy makers and other stakeholders in children's literature to select and produce such literature in view of the child's individual development and that of the community at large.

1.5 Scope of the Study

The study is delimited to children (i.e. psychologically healthy and normal children) from the early childhood to later childhood (preschool children to children aged 12 - or children from 3-12 yrs.)

The study is also confined to the 'imaginative literature' which are not found usually among the textbooks of school children.

1.6 Methodology of the Study

The device that will be used for this paper is library study, textual analysis of selected works based on experimentation and data collection from field survey.

For the purpose of this study, children of three different age groups (i.e. 3-5, 6-9 and 10-12 yrs.) have been selected from the non-public or private schools in Addis Ababa (About an average of 120 children from each group).

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

The area of study i.e. children's literature, although very fascinating, is short of resources.

Not much information is available by way of criticism on children's books. A few sources are here and there but they are not sufficient. This is the major problem the researcher encountered while pursuing this field of study.

That being the case, an attempt is made, to dig out sources from the few books available in the libraries, some internet sources and from books acquired from abroad.

2.1 A Brief Review of Children's Literature

The following review, may give one a glimpse of what is to come in the following pages.

Starting from the definition of children's literature, one can say it is very controversial in that it demands a proper understanding of who children are and also the boundaries set for their reading. In other words, questions like what makes a certain literature children's or adult's is the major area worth discussing. Children's literature does not depend only upon the author's intended writings – since many writings intended for children end up being popular among adults. (e.g. The Hobbit). On the other hand, some literature meant for adults turned out to be popular among children. (e.g. Robinson Crusoe). Another problem lies in differentiating books used for 'didactic or educational purpose' from 'books meant for amusement and pleasure.' The following observation made by Darton is worth quoting in this context:

By children's books, I mean printed works produced ostensibly to give children spontaneous pleasure and not primarily to teach them nor solely to make them good nor to keep them profitably quiet (Darton 1982:1).

Publishers usually describe on the book jackets whether a book is intended for children or for adults and based on such descriptions, librarians, teachers, parents and the like decide the level of the book. But still we find such decisions to be of the publishers only and may find these books to be popular among the 'unintended group' of either children or adult readers.

In sum it is easy to say where children's literature begins- with books for infants and toddlers. It is not easy to say where it ends and young adult literature begins although the books themselves may have been published as distinctly labeled entities or shelved in separate parts of a school or public library (Sutherland, 1997:5).

Thus one finds it difficult to have a distinct demarcation between the children and the adult literature for reasons mentioned above. However, a closer study of the cognitive development of children at various stages of their lives may give one an insight as to what is appealing and attractive to their mind and what is difficult or beyond their scope of understanding and enjoyment, and this also with convincing psychological causes. This in turn helps us know which stories are appropriate for children or which are worth reading, or which are not recommended for children. In other words, one will definitely come to understand why certain books are popular with children than others.

Why defining children's literature becomes a difficult task can also be attributed to the fact that it is written and produced by adults who believe that they know what children want or what is appealing to their mind. Stienberg explains this difficulty as follows:

Books written for children differ fundamentally from those written for adults in two respects. The range and concept and language available to the writer is limited by the immediate understanding

and taste of his expected readers, and secondly the total operation of writing, producing, publishing, marketing and even buying children's books is carried out by people other than the ultimate consumers- the children. Neither of these factors necessarily affects the quality of the literature intended for children but in practice their presence has led to the appearance of much material that is either sentimental or condescending or is composed from motives of a strongly educative didactic nature (Steinberg,1973:40)

An appropriate way to judge whether a piece of literature or any children's book is good or not so good is by simply observing how children respond to that particular book/literature. Arbuthnot says that one can classify a book as 'good' when children enjoy it and 'poor' when even adults rate it as classic and children are unable to read or are bored by it.

.....the question one should ask would be: Will this book call into play my child's imagination? Will it exploit his capacity for being curious? Will its language challenge his awareness of rhythm and structures? Will its characters and events call and even strengthen his understanding of human motives and circumstances of causes and effects? And will it provide him with a joy that is in some part the joy of achievement of understanding of triumphant encounter with the new? (Inns1967:43).

Although various opinions are forwarded as to the nature of children's literature, one can draw some common elements inherent in them: the elements of curiosity, surprise, beautiful illustrations and the like. A good children's book does more than entertainment- it also enlightens the child reader and encourages him to seek more of such literature .As West observes:

When I am writing for adults, I am just trying to entertain them. But a good children's book does more than entertainment. It teaches children the use of words, the joy of playing with language. Above all, it teaches children not to be frightened of books...If they are going to amount to anything in life, they need to be able to handle books. If the books can help children become readers, then I feel I have accomplished something important (West 1990:66).

What should be included and excluded in children's literature is also another issue worth examining here. There are arguments as to what the common themes or subject matter of children's literature should be.

Some are of the opinion that children need not read stuff beyond their familiar experiences and even literature should make no demands upon them to transcend the literal limits of their own experience. In other words, children should only read literature that tells about anything within their experience, their environment, their country, their people, the fauna and flora they are familiar with and nothing more. This idea is originated from the belief that childhood should be preserved and cherished and therefore introducing the adult 'facts of life' to the child will somehow corrupt the child's innocent mind. As Egolf points out:

I think we are possibly inclined, in a child's reading to shelter him too much from the harder facts of life. Sorrow, failure, poverty and possibly even death if handled poetically can surely be introduced without hurt. If no hint of the hard world comes into these books, I am sure that we are not playing fair (Egolf 1980:293).

In a similar vein, Townsend states:

.....what I believe is that children's books should never minimize the fact that life is tough and virtue ought to triumph in the end because even the best regulated children's lives are so insecure that they need reassurance but there is no point in pretending that wickedness and hardship don't exist. And one should never write to a hypothetical children's level or reduce one's vocabulary.... Really the main thing is just to shove all theories aside and enjoy the writing... That is the only way to produce a good work (Townsend 1971:25).

Unlike what the layman thinks of the elements of good children's literature, as one that always reflects the good and not the evil side of life, another critic suggests:

I don't think a happy ending should be one of the requirements of children's books. Kids want their books to reflect reality. They

know that the bully doesn't always get his comeuppance in the end (West 1998:30).

The following scholar is also of the same opinion:

Children's literature speaks not only of that, which is beautiful but also intrigue, tension, and fear of social consciousness and of the nobility or morality of its characters of the horrible, the painful and the undesirable (Forum anthology vol.1 (1984-1988) In: The Range of stories for children, Selected articles from English Teaching, US Information Agency Washington pp.113).

Sara Inns supports the above remarks:

...it seems to me that the proper satisfactions of reading, even in the newly illiterate child even indeed in the non-literate story listening child – provide a robust affirmation of our common humanity, or capacity, whether we are young or old, to understand and to be moved and to gather to ourselves the products of the creative imagination (Inns: 1967:44).

Almost all writers on children's literature gave their opinions as to how it should be written in relation to their cognitive development. Although not directly stating their primary concern which is the enjoyment of a piece of literature by the child, the fact that literature should bring the child's mind to play, song or bright colored illustrations, that it should provoke the child reader's curiosity etc. confirms the fact that children's literature is not merely like adult's literature but is directly related to their cognitive level of understanding.

In view of the above-mentioned opinions, it would only be appropriate at this stage to give a simple definition of the meaning of children's literature as follows. According to Funks and Wagnall's Encyclopedia:

Writings designed to appeal to children either to be read to them or by themselves including fiction, poetry, biography and history. Children's literature also includes riddles, precepts, fables, legends, myths and folk poems and folktales based on spoken tradition. Ancient literature such as the 'Homeric stories' is often adaptable to children's reading because of its simple narrative forms.

Based on the above mentioned definition, an attempt will be made in this study to show the various types of children's literature and their psychological implications.

2.2 Related Essays

As already mentioned above, there are only a few research studies on children's literature by the former graduate and undergraduate students of the Addis Ababa University.

A study conducted by Mesfin Melese (1983) briefly mentions the fact that authors of children's literature should always take into account the psychology of their intended readers - the children- for such knowledge enables them to write what is appealing to their mind. According to him, the authors are able to gain such knowledge from their own experience and insight.

However, only the experience and knowledge of the author regarding the mindset of children would not necessarily make the author a producer of wonderful and popular children's literature. A further study of the cognitive development of children at various age groups is one good way by which an author can gain more valuable insights into the world of children.

Fekade Terefe (1992) in his essay 'Children's Literature, Content and Language' emphasized the psychological significance of children's literature, how it is important for the authors of children's books to ensure that children get the intended message by using language appropriate to their understanding. He also asserted that the content of such literature becomes an important consideration as one writes for children. But in this essay, no detailed description of the working of the

child's mind in relation to the suitability of the literature is given. The major emphasis is on the language and content of such books.

A study by Derje Melaku (1994) reveals how the non-availability of solutions for problems posed in children's literature affects the child reader. But the issues of how one could feature problems in such literature and how to provide solutions at the same time without affecting children have not been elaborate. The study's main emphasis also is on children's books in Amharic.

CHAPTER THREE

HISTORY AND TYPES OF CHILDRENS' LITERATURE

Before examining the stages of the child's cognitive development and the literature suitable for their reading, it is necessary to understand what childhood means.

3.1 Definition of Childhood

Childhood is a world of miracle and wonder as if creation rose, bathed in light, out of darkness, utterly new, fresh and astonishing. The end of childhood is when things cease to astonish us. When the world seems to be familiar, when one has got used to existence, one has become an adult (Papalia D.E. et al. 1999: 309).

There are a number of definitions to the term 'childhood.' Most of them try to define it in terms of the age. Others relate it to the mental maturity of the children under discussion. Still others consider it as a time of physical growth of children whom they consider as 'miniature adults'.

Fekade Terefe (1992) in his senior essay described the various opinions forwarded regarding the beginning and end of childhood. According to him, the educationalists suggest childhood to be up to 12 years of age, the psychologists up to 13 years, the physicians up to 13 years and according to the Ethiopian proclamation of Children's Commission, childhood begins and extends from birth to 14 years.

What the various psychologists suggest however is relevant to this study. Developmental psychologists divide the period of childhood mostly into four periods and they provide the physical, mental, social and emotional developments of each period in detail.

Accordingly, the following groupings into various ages seem to be very common among them. According to William A. Kelly and Kelly M.

(1938), this division is also based on the children's level of mental as well as physical development. The following are the major division according to the above writers:

- | | |
|---------------------------|---------------|
| 1. The Period of infancy: | Birth -3 yrs. |
| 2. Early Childhood | 3 -5 yrs. |
| 3. Childhood Proper | 6 - 9 yrs. |
| 4. Later Childhood | 10 - 12 yrs. |
| 5. Adolescence | 12 - 21 yrs. |

From the above groupings, we can see that psychologists view childhood to be from the age of 3 up to the end of adolescence. The study has taken this division for the purpose of this particular study, and it would underline the research conducted in the psychological and literary exploration of children in the ensuing chapters.

3.2 A Brief History of Children's Literature

The various sources we find regarding children's literature reveal the trends in the origin and growth of literature meant for children, in Europe.

Children's literature can be traced back in its origins to the oral culture of old times. People used to maintain their tradition, religion and beliefs through narration of these beliefs and experiences to their young ones in the form of stories. The teachings were mainly in the form of poems and songs which makes it possible to make them last for longer generations. As Obersteins remarks:

It was in this oral culture we are told, poetry became an invaluable aid to memory in dispersing not only the tales of the Gods and famous men but also the words of hymns and prayers and details of rituals (Obersteins: 1994: 37).

This was especially true of the Greeks and the Romans. With the emergence of Christianity, came the teachings to children of the

Christian faith and with it the readings of the holy books - the Bible, the hymns, the psalms etc., to children. As the same scholar adds further:

Memorization of parts of texts was the method of learning in the earlier stages particularly for children and these same texts would then be encountered throughout the duration of education (Obersteins 1994: 46).

Before the invention of the movable type, all books were instructional and written by monastic teachers, intended for wealthy families beginning the tradition of didacticism in children's books.

In the 15th century, with the coming up of the movable type (in Germany) emerged the courtesy and behavioral books. These were books meant to inculcate discipline and values to children.

According to (Thawait M.F in his book 'From Premier to Pleasure' (1963)) the emergence of the Printer in the 18th century gave impetus to publication of children's books. The influence of Lock and Rousseau regarding the teachings of children to instill knowledge and discipline also greatly affected the nature of children's books published in those days.

Children's books flourished in the 19th century. Most books however were published to support formal school curriculum in developing countries. Most children's books in Africa and the colonial world had European influences. The European missionaries played a great role in this respect.

Towards the end of the 20th century, with the technical advancement, there emerged the production of color books at an economic price.

The reason for the great leap towards children's literature in the 20th and 21st centuries is the fact that scholars realized the importance of the elements of amusement and pleasure in children's literature as in adult

literature. Jean Jacques Rousseau and John Lock take the credit for this education/amusement divide in children's literature.

Today we find many books for children all over the world with various themes and styles. Children enjoy the variety of books and select especially some literature that is very popular among others.

Some of the popular children's literature we find today include Aesops' Fables, Hans Anderson's Tales, The Arabian Nights, other popular myths and legends.

3.3 Types of Children's Literature

Children's literature today varies in its type, content and genre. Poems, folktales, animal stories, fables, historical fiction, biography and the like are among the common ones.

The following description gives a general idea about the nature of such literature.

3.3.1. Animal Stories

These are stories for children using animals as the main characters. Children cherish such stories because they initiates their desires to nurture and protect the animals they closely know through these stories. These stories also enable them to acquire the names of domestic animals and beasts if the stories specially involves pictures. Some of these books in a way teach readers how to train these animals that may help interested children to do so with their own pets.

But why children like such stories is mostly because they see in the action of the animals some admirable qualities like love, courage, loyalty etc., which are pleasing to them. As Arbuthnot says:

Best of all, these four-footed heroes display the very qualities that children most admire in human beings, courage in the face of danger, fortitude in suffering, loyalty to cubs, mate or master and finally a gay zest for life that is much like the child's own frisky coltish enjoyment of each day (Arbuthnot: 1964: 419).

Arbuthnot again classifies these animal stories into three groups - 'Talking beasts', 'Animals as Animals but talking' and 'Animals as Animals objectively reported'.

In the first category - (the 'Talking beasts') animals are given a human character and the stories are meant to impart knowledge of the common human follies and the struggles for survival. They are similar to fables and Arbuthnot calls such stories of talking beasts to 'ourselves in fur' - depicting the nature of man in the animal characters.

In the second category, we find 'animals as animals but talking.' These stories tell us what the animal is feeling, what it is thinking about and what it intends to do without being given an extra power of speaking as in the first group. In other words except that we are told about the thoughts of the animals, the story is true to the lives of these creatures. An example of such literature would be *The Jungle Book* by Rudyard Kipling.

In the third category comes 'animals as animals objectively reported'. In these stories, we find animals as we see them in the real world. They do not talk but simply make noise- for example we read the dog in a story barking, the horse neighing or the birds

singing. Such stories mainly deal with domestic animals, pets, kittens, horses or dogs. In these stories, the child reader tries to guess at what the dog is pleading with his master to do, or tries to guess at possible solutions to the dog's difficulty. It is the element of uncertainty in these modern animal tales that makes them more exciting than others.

3.3.2. Picture Books

These are books meant mainly for preschool children. They consist of bright colored pictures with small illustrations describing the story of the characters in the given pictures. The bright colors in red, blue and yellow as frequently employed in these picture books, are always eye catching and enchanting for preschool children. The illustrations are simple and are supportive of the stories.

3.3.3. Fables

They are simple stories that incorporate characters - mostly animals whose actions teach a moral lesson or universal truths. As Sutherland points out:

Fables are brief narratives, which take abstract ideas of good or bad, wise or foolish behavior and attempt to make them concrete and striking enough to be understood and remembered. The chief actor in most fables is an animal or inanimate object which behaves like a human being and has one dominant trait (Sutherland 1997:225).

Fables have a likeness to proverbs and parables – they embody universal truths in a brief striking form. Fables are said to be one of the ancient writings that emerged after the oral literature. History has it that it started with Aesop's fables - who was a supposed to be Greek slave. He used fables for political purposes (because free

speech under the tyrants was a risky business, protecting himself and veiling his opinions behind such little stories.)

There are various types of fables. Apart from Aesop's fables we have the Panchatantra (Indian stories composed in Kashmir around 200 B.C), the Jataka (the Buddhist stories concerning the rebirth of Buddha many times in the form of animals until finally he became the Buddha - the 'enlightened one') the La fontain (a French writer and poet who wrote fables in graceful verses)

The essential elements of a true fable according to Sutherland are:

- i) Brevity in telling, clarity of style, animal characters with human attributes, pithy lessons about human conduct.
- ii) There is little of high ethical purpose in the episodes; they are more like a fascinating looking glass reflecting the follies of mankind.
- iii) They are both didactic and universal; their universality makes their didacticism bearable. Children are made uncomfortable by stories that preach directly but if they see that the lesson of the fables apply to everyone, they can better appreciate the wisdom and humor of these tales.

The following two are examples of fables taken from the Panchatantra and from Aesop.

The Pachantra - a textbook on the wise conduct of life; (as quoted by Arbuthnot, 1964):

A friend in need is a friend indeed
Although of different caste.

The whole world is your eager friend
So long as riches last.

Another of such fable from this same book reads as follows:

Make friends, make friends, however strong or weak they be:
Recall the captive elephants
That mice set free.

The following is another fable taken from Aesop's.

The story of the Hare and the Tortoise – (please refer the appendix for the original version) where they join in a race. Because the hare was over confident of its ability to win the race, it decided to sleep for sometime after the race had begun. To its dismay, the hare woke up to find the tortoise almost on the finishing line. Then the hare ran as fast as it could but in vain - the tortoise had already won the race. (Please refer to the appendix a version of the story)

The lesson is crystal clear - similar to the proverb that says 'Pride Precedeth Folly' or 'Slow and Steady Wins the Race'

3.3.4. Folktales

According to various scholars folktales sometimes are referred as 'traditional literature' these are ancient stories and poems that grew out of the human quest to understand the natural and spiritual that was preserved through time by the oral tradition of story telling before being eventually written down.

Although originally not meant for children, folktales remain to be the favorite of traditional literature even to this date.

Historically, the nobility and their couriers - used to hear folktales of heroism, valor and benevolence of people like themselves. In contrast, the stories heard by the common people portrayed the ruling classes as unjust or hard taskmasters whose riches was fair game for those common folk who were quick witted or strong enough to acquire them.

Folktales around the world have a universal nature, regardless of geography or cultural differences because of the appeal to all people in general.

Folktales are sometimes referred to as the 'mirror of the people' since they reveal the thoughts and beliefs of a particular society. They are also referred to as the 'cement of society' as they keep intact the conduct and traditional thoughts of a societal group.

Arbuthnot, in explaining why folktales are still popular with children elaborates the structure that makes up the folktale, which according to him, is the reason for their popularity. Accordingly, folktales have three major parts.

- i. *The Introduction:* This part introduces the characters, the time and the place of the story, the theme and the problem to be solved. It usually starts with the enchanting words of 'Once upon a time' or 'Long ago...'
- ii. *The development:* this part is the plot, which in folktales is full of suspense and action that appeals to young readers.
- iii. *The Conclusion:* This part, the conclusion, usually comes swiftly and is as brief as the introduction.

There is a tendency among most people of using the terms 'folktale' and 'fairytale' interchangeably. But fairytale is just part of folktale having characters called 'fairies'.

Folktales, according to some scholars, in children's literature, are of different types- the major ones being the following (As quoted by Brown C.L. et al 3rd ed, V. 1999: 100).

- i) *Cumulative tales*, are tales that use repetition, accumulation and rhythm to make an entertaining story.
- ii) *Humorous tales* revolve around characters incredibly stupid and making funny mistakes (Such tales are also known as 'noodle heads', 'sillies', 'drools' etc).
- iii) *Beast Tales* have talking animals and overstated action having comic appeal and guaranteed laughter.
- iv) *Pourquoi tales*: The word "Pourquoi" in French stands for 'why'. These tales provide primitive explanations for the many 'why' questions early humans asked. However, unlike myths, the deities play no role and the setting is earthly.
- v) *Realistic Tales*: These are tales where characters, plots and settings could possibly have occurred. Exaggeration is limited and there is no magic whatsoever in these stories.
- vi) *Religious tales*: These are stories that contain religious doctrines in a narrative form (parables) or stories based on religious writings from religious manuscripts. (e.g. The Parable of the Prodigal Son in the Bible)

vii) *Magic Tales*: These are also called 'fairy tales' or 'wonder tales'. They contain elements of magic or enchantment in characters plots or settings.

Consider this definition:

The modern word 'fairy' comes from the French word 'fee', a name for a variety of supernatural creatures who inhabited a world known in French - 'fiere'. Into the word have been given wider meanings borrowed from the Medieval Latin fatum, 'fate' or 'destiny'. These ideas all enter into our concepts of fairies as supernatural creatures - sometime little and lovely, sometimes old witch wives or sometimes wise women like the Jutes who have the power to enchant or to cast spells on human beings (Forum Anthology vol. 1 (1984-1988) In: The Range of stories for children: Selected articles from English Teaching. US Information Agency pp.113 pp. 272).

Fairy tales are appealing to most children. In them there are various characters created by the imagination apart from the fairies in which magic and fantasy intermingle. They have great cultural value and play a role in the building of character as they are written in poetic form. They embody universal truths that have a positive impact on the emotional development of children. The following definition is useful in this context:

Fairies, elves, fixies, brownies, witches, magicians, genies and fairy godparents are pivotal characters in these stories and they use magic objects or words to weave their enchantments. Talking mirrors, 100yrs. nap, glass palaces, enchanted forests and magic kisses are the stuff of magic tales (Brown C.L. et al. 1999:100):

3.3.5. Myths:

These are stories that recount and explain the origins of the world and the phenomena of nature. They may have originated in ancient religious rituals. According to the Encyclopedia Britannica (as quoted by Arbuthnot):

Cosmic phenomena (how earth and sky came to be separated.) Peculiarities of natural history, the origin of human civilization, the origin of social or religious customs the nature or history of objects or worship.

The characters in these stories are mainly gods and goddesses with occasional mention of humans. The setting is above or away from the earth, in the home of the gods.

Myth is very complicated. Sutherland states that it attempts to explain in complex symbolism the vital outlines of existence. The complexity and symbolism often found in myths make them appropriate for an older audience than is usual with other kinds of literature. When some myths get simplified for a younger audience the oversimplification robs these stories of their power of appeal.

3.3.6. Epics:

These are stories about human heroes, their adventure and activities as super men that are sometimes part of the story. e.g. Ulysses, Beowulf, Robin Hood etc.

Because of their length and complexity, epics are more suitable and enjoyable for older children.

Tales of human heroes buffeted violently by gods and humanity but daring greatly suffering uncomplainingly, and enduring staunchly to the end. Such tales, having a human hero and embodying the ideas of a culture are called epics. The heroes of epics often emerge as legendary characters, humans who are said to have accomplished memorable and often impossible feats (Sutherland 1997:211).

3.3.7. Legends

They are more or less the same like the epic stories with insignificant differences.

They are stories based on either real or supposedly real individuals and their marvelous deeds. Legendary characters like King Arthur, Lancelot and Merlin and legendary settings such as Camelot are a tantalizing mix of realism and fantasy (Brown C.L et al 1999:99)

3.3.8. Poems

These are stories in versification. Their special effect is as follows:

.....and like our ancestors who did not read, children react with great joy and pleasure when they hear selections in verse. 'Say it again, say it again'... they will say as they move and sway their bodies to its rhythm and music making time and chanting the words themselves (Brown et al. 1999:40).

Children (especially small ones) like poetry or non-sense verse for its music and rhyme. Of course the poetry meant for them is usually simple and easy to understand with rhyme and rhythm that is pleasant to the ear. We do not find blank verse or free verse written for child audience:

Poetry is a natural beginning to literature for young children and an enjoyable literary form for all ages. In their earliest years, children acquire language and knowledge of the world around them through listening and observing. Poetry, primarily an oral form of literature that draws heavily on the auditory perceptions of the listeners is ideally suited to children at this stage (Brown C. L. et al 1999:40)

Historically poetry for children is said to have began centuries ago in the form of nursery rhymes that were recited to babies and toddlers by caretakers. Later on these collections were printed in the form of a book which later came to be called 'Mother Goose Rhymes'. The period that follows from the middle of the 19th century to the 1920's saw flourishing of such poems ranging from moralistic poetry to a totally different type that describes beauty of life and nature.

Today, in an age when children are exposed to TVs, radio and some other media, poetry is losing its former popularity because it could not possibly beat the competition.

However, good poetry can still win the hearts of children if properly chosen.

Good poetry for children has the following elements (according to Brown C.L. et al 1999:45).

- i) the ideas and feeling expressed are worthy, fresh and imaginative;
- ii) the expression of the ideas and feelings is unique often causing the child to perceive ordinary things in new ways;
- iii) the poem is appropriate to their experiences and has no sermon like elements;
- iv) the poem presents the world through a child's perspective and focuses on children's lives and activities as well as on activities to which people of all ages can relate;
- v) the poem contains singing quality and melodious movements; and
- vi) the poem uses strong, vigorous, warm, delicate and precise words that are written with accurate perfection;

3.3.9. The 'NonSense Verse'

These are poems meant to entertain and fill children with laughter. The words used do not usually make any sense but are easily understandable. The non-existent words and the way in which they are applied to make a statement are quiet unique and indeed interesting.

The following is a non-sense verse by Mrs. Richards as quoted by Arbuthnot (1964); it reads as follows:

Elephaony

Once there was an elephant,
Who tried to use the telephant,
No, no! I mean an elephone
Who tried to use the telephone
(Dear me! I am not certain quite
That even now I've got it right.)

Howe'er it was, he got his trunk
Entangled in the telephunk;
The more he tried to get it free,
The louder buzzed the telephee

(I fear I'd better drop the song
Of elephop and telephong)

Such is the kind of nonsense verse, which is striking for its use of nonsense words creating humor. According to Arbuthnot, nonsense verses are important for the child as it relieves him of tension and every routine, gives time and a release of the mind.

If nonsense verse provide such a release, blessed be nonsense, (Arbuthnot 1964: 118).

Children can be encouraged to love poetry if they keep reading such nonsense verse.

3.3.10. Fantasy

These are stories dealing with the unique or new experiences of life as invented by the author. As Smith points out:

The world of fantasy is the world we create, imagine, makeup - a world that never was until we summoned it into being, but then continues to exist as a mental reality (Smith 1967: 172).

Stories of fantasy have the power to excite, to astonish and to amaze the reader. This is because of the newness of the idea, the invention and the discovery of events that stirs the imagination and fills the hearts with excitement.

Such stories may create a world of their own, either on earth or in the air. People may get transformed into animals, animals into people. There could be a number of stories with a magic touch. Through the power of magic, inanimate objects can speak, older people can be transformed to young etc. Every event is fanciful. This is what makes a fantasy:

The primary elements of story - setting, character, and time are the elements most writers manipulate in order to create fantasy. Other worlds could be other planets. The supernatural character is another choice for achieving fantasy (Sutherland: 1997:228).

Historically, Hans Christian Anderson is credited as the originator of fanciful tales. He started with adaptations of the traditional tales, new stories in folktale style and through his creative power elevated such tales to fanciful tales.

The essence of fantasy for children is that it creates laughter and its deviated nature enables them to relax and dwell upon the unusual and relieves them of the day to day routines of life:

Children need the therapy of laughter that is to be found in modern fantasy ... fantasy as a corrective for the too tight literalness that is a frequent product of our mechanistic, science conscious age. (Forum Anthology Vol.1 (1984-

1988) IN: Selected Articles from the English Teaching Forum, US Information Agency, Washington, pp.23)

Examples of fanciful stories are the "Sleeping Beauty", "Snow White". etc.

3.3.11. Mystery

The mystery tales are usually the adventure stories with plenty of breath-taking action to keep young thrill seekers absorbed.

Such stories, because of the thrill and excitement they create, help establish the reading ability of children - as they try to eagerly know the end of the story and therefore they tend to rapidly finish the book. Thus, unconsciously, they will improve their reading ability.

As an example of good adventure literature one may mention Robert Louis Stevenson's Treasure Island.

3.3.12. Historical Fiction and Biography

These are informative books that create in the child the awareness about people like himself residing in other parts of the world or in other eras different from his own. (an example would be for an Ethiopian boy, a story of a boy residing in Kenya, how he looks after his cattle, how he spends his days, etc.) Such books provide him with information about other cultures, other ethnic groups in other parts of a society. They impress children with a sense of reality of 'other days' in 'other places'.

CHAPTER FOUR

AN OVERVIEW OF CHILD'S DEVELOPMENT: A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The study of child's development is mainly concerned with the scientific study of ways in which children change or stay the same from conception through adolescence.

All major studies on child's development however provide three major aspects of development: (As presented by Papalia D.E. et al. 1999).

- The Physical Development
- The Cognitive Development
- The Psychosocial Development

The present study deals mainly with the cognitive development of the child although all the three aspects are interrelated.

Developmental psychology is a field of study that is mainly concerned with the study of the developing child, the child's thinking, understanding, learning, perception, emotion and other activities that make it differ from those of an adult not only in quantity but also in quality. However, we find a number of variations among the developmentalists in their approach to the study and the emphasis they give to certain factors in the development of the child.

Some influential theories and perspectives that underlie research in the child development (as presented by Papalia D.E. et al. 1999: 309) are discussed below in a brief manner.

4.1 Psychoanalytic Perspective

Originated by Sigmund Freud in the 20th century, the main objective is aimed at giving people insight into the unconscious emotional conflict. This perspective provided awareness about the unconscious thoughts and emotions, the ambivalence of early parent - child relationships and the presence of sexual urges from birth.

4.2 Contextual Perspective

It emphasizes that development is inseparable from the social context, that child's development should always be seen in relation to the socio-cultural environment in which the child is reared.

Vygotsky, (as stated by this same source,) the proponent of 'socio-cultural' theory, said that the development of children from one culture or one group within a culture may not be an appropriate norm for children in other society.

4.3 Ethnological Perspective

The main emphasis here is on the biological and evolutionary bases of behavior. It deals with comparative research to identify, which behavior is universal and which are specific to a particular species. They identify behaviors that are adaptive at different parts of the life span.

4.4 The Learning Perspective

It is a view of development concerned with changes in behavior that result from experience or adaptation to the environment.

4.5 Cognitive Perspectives

It mainly deals with thought processes and the behavior that reflects those processes. Jean Piaget (1896-1980) is the originator of this theory.

The main emphasis of this theory is on the internal mental processes as opposed to external influences and overt behavior:

Piaget describes cognitive development as occurring in a series of qualitatively different stages. At each stage, a child develops a new way of operating or thinking about and responding to the environment...Piaget's careful observations have yielded a wealth of information including some surprising insights. He showed us that children's minds are not miniature of adult's minds. Understanding how children think makes it easier for parents and teacher to teach them. (Papalia D.E. et al 1999: 311).

Whatever is known today about how children think is explained by the theory of 'cognitive development'

Apart from these influential theories, there are certain developmental issues that are almost always cited in relation to the development of children. The same sources state again, that the main issues on development are the following.

- i. Whether 'nature or nurture' is important or whether 'heredity or environment' plays a major role in child's development;
- ii. Whether development is 'active' or 'passive' i.e. whether children are active initiators of their own development or 'passive sponges' soaking up influences; and
- iii. Whether development occurs in stages with 'rests' on the 'landings' or whether it is continuous, always governed by the same processes allowing perdition of earlier behavior from later one;

A number of other perspectives are also forwarded by scholars. But one cannot say which one is the most correct, because each theory has its own contribution.

No one theory of human development is universally accepted and no one theory explains all facets of development.....Different investigators look from different perspectives at how children develop. These perspectives which are generally affected by the culture, in which they arose, influence the question researchers ask, the methods they use and the ways they interpret research, it is important to know the theoretical perspective on which it is based. (Papalia D.E. et al 1999:309).

As stated earlier, this study makes use of the 'cognitive perspective' as it is directly linked to the thought processes of children and answers the question why children think the way they do. This indirectly answers the question why children are attracted to cartoon films, to pictorial and colorful illustrations, artistic yet simplistic plots etc., and why the same tastes and preferences change as children become older.

CHAPTER FIVE

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT AND READING INTEREST OF CHILDREN

This chapter describes in detail the typical characteristics and mental processes of children at particular stages of their lives – that is the result of their cognitive development. The reading interest of these same children also changes with the growth of their mental process. How one affects the other is the core of these chapter.

5.1 Cognitive Development of the Preschool children (aged 3-5)

Following is the description of some of the major characteristics of preschool children which is the result of their mental process - as studied by developmental psychologists. Children at this stage display a number of characters,

They remember events that impress them most. They are able to recognize objects but recalling them may not be possible because of their short memory span. The following is the major characteristics of preschool children as described by (Papalia D.E. et al. 1999: 309).

They are egocentric and therefore all of their actions are self-centered. They believe people think the same way as they themselves do.

They have what psychologists call 'centration' which means they see objects only from their own perspective. They focus on one aspect of a situation only. (an example would be a preschool child whose banana is cut into two will think that these two pieces are different from the previous one.)

For them fantasy and reality sometimes become one and the same. What they imagined or heard in the story sometimes gets confused with reality. That explains why most children in this age category have fear of the darkness, thunderstorm etc.

Curiosity is one main feature of their character – they like asking questions and exploring their surroundings.

They believe that inanimate objects, animals and plants have a life-like quality and are able to talk or feel like human beings.

Increased vocabulary is witnessed in the preschool years. Each day they acquire new words and develop their speaking ability.

Cognitive play, which is 'imaginative, pretended play, dramatic play or the make believe play' is the popular play of the kids at this stage.

5.1.1. Reading Interest of the Preschoolers

These children are generally not able to read at this stage. But as stated in (William A. Kelly & M.R. Kelly 1938:141), children develop reading interest even before they begin to read. That is why they appreciate stories read or narrated to them at this early stage.

Scholars studied the reading interests of children at various stages of their lives. According to their study, preschoolers commonly like books of the following types.

They favor picture books with illustrations. The same sources state that although they are unable to read or are just beginning to acquire reading skills, they like stories read to them with pictorial

explanations. Pictures should contain bright colors of mostly red and blue that are pleasant and eye-catching.

Since these children get pleasure out of handling books, the books meant for them should be of hard cover that should last for a longer time.

5.1.2. Relationship between Children's' Literature and their Cognitive Development

Children under this age category have a short memory span (Papalia D. E, Olds S. W, Feldman R. D. 1999: 309) – thus they cannot grasp a story with longer details. The stories meant for them therefore should be repetitive (like in the nursery rhymes, non- sense verses, fables etc.)

Most of their thought is fanciful. For example a sun could have a blue color, the tree may be red and any color and fanciful thought is attributed to anything. That explains why children need bright colored pictures for their books and cartoons.

Their curious nature about even the smallest details of their surroundings tells us something about them. They are just beginning to get acquainted with the world. Everyday reveals new wonders and miracles of life. Their stories therefore need not be on the dreamlike and fairy worlds of the fairies and the superman. They need to know about their environment – the trees and the flowers, the cat and the dog, the moon and the stars, their mommies and daddies presented in fantastic elaboration.

As stated earlier, these children are carried away by their imaginary thoughts and fantastic ideas as written in their stories. Therefore the

inclusion of fearful and unpleasant ideas may have an undesirable impact on their minds as they most likely take them to be real.

It is common to find literature for these preschoolers with animal stories. The reason is the fact that they promote the young reader's desire to nurture and protect these animals. These stories also are generally enchanting to children as long as they are short and clear. (Forum Anthology (1984 – 1988). The Range of stories for children In: Selected articles from English Teaching US Information Agency, Washington. pp. 22).

Very short stories are favored by children that should feature action and sense impression.

5.2 Cognitive Development of the Middle children (aged 6-9)

Some scholars on child development have something to say about the main characteristic of these children the result of which is their mental growth.

They become less egocentric unlike in their preschool years. They can now think logically (because they can take the multiple aspects of a situation into account rather than focus on only one aspect)

They become flexible in their communication because they are able to understand people's viewpoints. They also distinguish between reality and fantasy.

These children understand the 'cause' and effect' relationships of events. They develop long term memory (W.Sontrock J., 1997:281-282)

However they are limited in their thinking about real life situations of the here and now. They cannot yet think abstract idea.

They also demonstrate tremendous language development, are able to understand complex syntax at the age of nine.

5.2.1. Reading Interest of the Middle Children

They like reading stories about children who are of the same age like them. They specially love stories of children in other lands. (William A. Kelley and A.M. Kelly 1938:163-167)

Their favorite stories at this stage is most likely the 'fairy tales', the 'fanciful or fantasy tales'. They reach the 'peak' of interest for such tales especially at this stage in their lives.

Simple language (not beyond their language capacity) and logical explanations appeals to them.

5.2.2. Relationship between Children's Literature and their Cognitive Development (Middle Children)

Longer tales are appealing. Now that they have a better memory span than from their previous years, they are able to follow up reasonably longer stories.

They are able to clearly define the fantastic world of the fairies and the real world events. They can therefore enjoy 'fairy tales', 'fantasies' and the like without being carried away and getting themselves confused like the preschoolers. In fact according to most scholars on the field, their interest for such stories reaches its' climax.

Why especially stories of children in other lands are appealing is because they are beginning to develop an interest in the outside world, away from home and from the familiar. They have grown up

and do not get surprised by their surroundings anymore. The unfamiliar starts rather to be very appealing.

5.3 Cognitive Development of children in later childhood (aged 10-12 years)

Same sources from scholars again depict the developmental characteristics of children at this stage. The following are major characteristics these children.

This is the period of culmination of the stages of childhood. It is the period of individualism, self-assertion and readjustment. Their verbal memory is also excellent.

The period is marked by the foundation of reading interest. It is a time of hero worship (heroes could mean those who do things successfully, people who make achievements etc.)

Predominantly it is a time for training the memory (since the child acquired a great deal through perceptual experience and memory has improved a lot when compared to previous days).

5.3.1. Reading Interest during the period of later childhood

Their reading interest shifts from fancy to fact. (William A. Kelley and M.R. Kelley 1938) For girls, stories of real home life, school life and stories of this sort from other lands are very fascinating. For boys, stories of invention, aircraft, forestry, biographies and history are enjoyed.

But girls still retain an interest in fanciful tales and fantastic stories which are discarded almost entirely by boys at this age.

Most significant elements in such stories are conversation, realistic action, vivid setting and concrete details along with qualities which mark successful stories.

Series books are favored most because once they become interested in reading books, they devour avidly series stories and ignore books of other types.

They specially admire the 'leader' or adventurer of a story (history of real life) and legends are popular and may be selected for imitation.

5.3.2. Relationship between Children's literature and their Cognitive Development

Stories could be series of events and adventures as they have the potential to remember and follow up a story.

Real life-like stories are appealing because they have acquired great knowledge of the real and tangible world- stories with realistic nature therefore are very appealing as it will give them the chance to relate it with their own experience.

They also enjoy stories of adventure, stories of heroes and heroines, since they like to identify themselves with them.

Language can take a more advanced level as they will have significantly increased their language proficiency at this age.

CHAPTER SIX

SELECTED LITERATURE FOR CHILDREN AND THEIR ANALYSIS

The following chapter is concerned with the nature and appropriateness of children's literature to the intended child readers. The selected stories are widely known to children all over the world – although they are widespread in their English version, most children today are able to read their translated versions in their respective languages. An example could be the Ethiopian 'reading children' who have heard or read the same stories in Amharic from the Amharic translations.

As mentioned earlier, the criteria for selection of these stories is firstly, their **popularity** among children, secondly the **length and type** of the literature, and thirdly the **complexity of the plots**. Of course these are the major parameters for selection as each story has appealing effects because these factors are inherent in them. This in turn has psychological implications as described in the preceding chapters.

In the following, some stories from each category of children are analyzed (see appendices for the text of the stories).

6.1 Two Stories for preschool children: Analysis

Two stories are selected for these children because each story is very short and are easy to narrate within a short period of time.

A/ The Dog and the Shadow

This story is grouped under 'fables' category because of its subtle ways of conveying a 'clear message' and the use of 'animals' as the main characters.

Animal stories are what preschool children mostly like to have in their literature. They love to hear animals speaking, want to know what they are possibly thinking, and why they do their things the way they do. The story is too short and easy to grasp because of the less complex nature of the plot. This explains why the story is selected for children in this age group.

There is a message for children in the story. 'Greed will rob one off his own possessions'. Greed is prevalent among men with many possessions and wealth. It is one of the 'negative aspects' of amassing too much wealth. The causes for 'greed' could also spring from extreme hunger and poverty. One needs to survive – eat and drink- to sustain oneself, hence the use of force or robbery to fulfill these needs.

What happens to the dog in the story is the same as what is stated above. The dog was extremely hungry that he had to steal a piece of meat and then he ran away. What he stole was too much for one dog. He became rich overnight. While contemplating on how he would enjoy this delicious meal - he thought- he came across another dog with a bigger piece of flesh. He could have done without it - but greed took the better of him and he decided to snatch away and add it to his great meal. Down came his meat falling from his mouth into the flowing stream - he only saw a reflection of his image in the water. He had to go with an empty stomach.

Children will surely get the message. They will of course sympathize with the 'foolish dog'. But they also realize that had it not been for his greed, he would not have lost his meal.

B/ The Hare and the Tortoise

This animal story is more or less similar to the above story. It has three important elements. Firstly it is short, secondly it has an uncomplicated plot, and being an animal story thirdly, the type is suitable for preschool children.

A humorous story of two opposite characters. The Hare – a character representing the so called 'successful people' because nature has provided them with the 'essentials of life.' The tortoise on the other hand represents the 'not so fortunate people' who should really work hard to overcome struggles of life. The hare, always boastful of his abilities to run fast and do things promptly, gets on the tortoises' nerves. Very much determined to embarrass the hare, the tortoise decided to compete in a race with the hare. To the hare's surprise, the tortoise won the race.

The message is clear. 'Slow and steady wins the race' or 'Pride precedes folly.' Modesty is what children should develop early from childhood. The story has a great message indeed!

6.2 A Story for Middle Children

Only one story is selected for this category because it is fairly long and hence no need for two such stories to find out the psychological implications.

'Little Red Riding Hood'

This is a very popular story of a possibly small and obedient child, who is cheated by an unworthy and dishonest friend – the fox.

This story is enchanting for middle children for the following reasons. Firstly it is a 'fantasy or fairy tale' as it is mostly grouped by scholars in

children's literature. Fantasy tales are attractive to these children. The idea that any child is able to talk with a wild animal is very appealing. Children also love to hear stories of 'ancient times' or 'other lands' – which is the case for this story. The story took place in a house located nearby a forest where one can easily find a wild animal like the fox in the story. Secondly it is longer – longer than the previous 'fables' and children love stories of children in other lands. The turn of events (i.e. the plot) is slightly complicated as compared to the fables above and these particular children are able to follow it.

As obedient as she was, the girl in the story was not careful in carrying out the 'strict commands' of her mother (not to stray off the road). However, she decided that she will shortly come back with the flowers for grandma- who will surely feel happy at the sight of the beautiful flowers. The story tells us that she however faced the consequences.

The message can be likened with 'Obey your mother and father.' The protagonist represents the 'innocent children' who cannot cope with the subtleties and crooked ways of the world. The fox on the other hand represents the sinful and unkind nature of most people.

Therefore children need to strictly observe their parents' rules and commands so that they will be spared of certain catastrophic incidents. A pleasant story with a clear message!

6.3 Two Stories for Later Children

Two stories are selected for this category of children because of the difference in the reading interests of girls and boys. The first story is supposed to interest 'girls' and the second 'boys'.

A/ Beauty and the Beast

Known for its interesting turn of exciting events, this story is indeed appealing to these children. The story is quite long and fascinating so that children would not stop reading until they finish the story. It is full of adventures and breath taking events. One event leads into another as the story unfolds. In other words, the story has a bit of a complicated plot.

The protagonist, the loving and sacrificial daughter, decided to lead an unpleasant life with a 'beast' to spare her father's life. However, things turned out for the best and she finally became the wife of a 'Prince'. How she managed to overcome the unpleasant experiences of life and came out triumphantly is the core of the story.

Children at this stage love adventure stories, stories with domestic activities and school life situations (especially girls at this stage have a taste for such type of stories.) Thus the story of a family like this one is very appealing. The exciting element is attributed to the adventures of 'Beauty' as she daringly decides to spend the rest of her life with a 'Beast'. Adventurous action!

The message is crystal clear. 'to persevere is to triumph' that 'virtuous deeds and actions have a pay back'.

Children will surely get the message as they can now comprehend lessons from stories better than their previous days.

B/ Ali Baba

A story full of adventurous actions, witty minds and crooks. This story has a special appeal for boys in this age group. It is the longest story of

all with a series of events taking place. The story has an interesting and complex plot.

In the story we find two main characters- Ali Baba and the servant girl. Ali Baba, a kind and generous man with little or no knowledge about how people could be dangerous - is the protagonist. The servant girl, who happens to be quick witted and wise, saved Ali Baba's family from dangerous men. He thus rewarded her with the privilege of being his daughter-in-law. How she came across people with unpleasant motives for Ali Baba's family, the methods she uses to destroy them and how she finally saved herself from the dangerous thief makes the overall story wonderful. Full of actions and wise deeds. As mentioned previously, children in this age group are fascinated by this type of stories

The message one gets from the story are two: 'kindness is rewarded', and 'one needs to be very wise about his/her dealings with people'.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE IMPACT OF LITERATURE ON COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CHILD READER: AN EXPERIMENT

The main objective of the present study is to explore how children's imaginative literature affects their cognitive development. To find out how, the researcher has consulted a number of works that deal with children's reading interests and also children's cognitive development at various stages of their life. By doing so, it was possible to find out evidence that children's reading interests differ as they grow older and this has to do mainly with their cognitive development.

To explore this, it was felt necessary to study children of different age groups namely (preschool children to later children)

For this purpose, the researcher visited certain schools, (because schools happen to be the best places where one can find children of similar ages gathered in groups) and children of various classes.

Three different elementary schools were visited – girls' school, boys' school, and one girls' and boys school. (The schools are 'Nazareth School', 'St. Joseph school', the 'Kebena Adventist Missionary school'). The reason for such a selection was to find out the various reading interests of boys and girls, boys' reading interests, and girls' reading interest separately. (since in the period of later childhood reading interests of boys and girls become slightly different.

The selected stories were narrated to each group. These stories were translated into Amharic as the original stories were in English. At the same time, the teachers concerned were asked questions to find out their perception about this very issue (assuming that they also would use such

'imaginative literature' apart from the usual textbooks with the aim of improving children's language development.)

For all groups of children, the selected stories were narrated orally or read for each group in accordance with their age and mental capacity.

For preschoolers, questions were asked to test whether they have understood the stories, whether they are impressed or whether they have grasped the message conveyed by each story.

For the other two groups, questionnaires were distributed after the narration or readings, and through their answers, it was possible to find out whether their responses matched with the assumptions underlying the present study (see chapter 6).

7.1 Analysis and Interpretation of Children's Responses

The questions for the children are basically the same with slight differences and directed to different groups – for the preschool children, for the middle children and for children belonging to the later childhood.

The questions consist of two sections. The first section is 'comprehension questions' which examine whether the children have followed and understood the stories presented to them. The second section consists of four basic questions that give us a glimpse of their mental process in connection with their reading interest, whether children's literature has any impact on their cognitive development and vice versa.

On the basis of data obtained, an attempt is made in this section to analyze and interpret the data and explain the outcome of the experiment.

Table – 1: Pre School Children

No. of Children 136	Interest in the Stories		Accuracy in Retelling the Stories	Not Accurate	Comprehended the message in the story	Not Comprehended the message in the story
	Yes	No				
1. Do you like the story?	100%					
2. Can you narrate the story (one event at a time)?			90%	10%		
3. Would you like to listen to another story?	100%					
4. What is the moral of the story?					90%	10%

7.1.1. Preschoolers (aged 3-5).

The story of 'The Hare and the Tortoise' and the 'Dog and the Shadow' were the stories narrated to these children which are very short with very simple plots. The main reason why these stories are selected for these particular children is because firstly they are very short, easy to remember and do not require long-term memory. Secondly, ideas are easy to transfer. Thirdly, children like animal stories at this stage.

The following is the analysis and interpretation of the results found through this experiment.

Note that for the purpose of convenient analysis of the 1st comprehension question, (of section 1 of the questions) it is presented in its' summarized form. (Question No. 2). Of course, the results obtained from answers to these questions are presented in

the data. Note that these children were made to answer the questions orally as they are not able to write.

i. Question No. 1/ Do you like the story?

After they heard the story quietly all children (100%) in the three schools unanimously said that they liked the story. They even made remarks about the foolishness of the dog and the vain boastfulness of the hare in the story.

From their answers, it can be concluded that children at this age group like short stories with simple plots.

ii. Question No.2/ Can you narrate the story?

This question in a way tells us whether the children have comprehended the story. In order to find out whether each child followed the story correctly, a number of children were made to tell part of the story – one event at a time and then another child continued from what the previous child left off. This way most of the children got the chance to narrate the story.

In this experiment, it was found out that 90% of these children remembered and recounted the two stories accurately. The remaining 10 % were not accurate in their narrations.

This clearly reveals that preschool children are indeed fond of short and uncomplicated stories presented in an interesting manner (which is why they were able to follow and recount the stories accurately)

iii. Question No. 3 Would you like to listen to another story

Every one of them (100%) said they would love to listen to other stories.

This question is presented to confirm the previous finding, namely children like to have more of such stories and that the stories already narrated were appealing to them.

iv. **Question No. 4. What is the moral of the story?**

The question is intended to draw from these children whether they have got the real message of the story.

The message in the story of the 'Hare and the Tortoise' is obvious- 'Slow and steady wins the race'. And the message in 'The dog and the Shadow' is, 'Greed destroys your possessions'

In their own way, about 80% of the children understood and explained these messages. The rest (20%) did not get the message clearly as the others.

The conclusion is that one can surely transfer the desired message to preschool children through these types of literature by way of entertainment.

Table – 2: Middle Children

No. of Children 156 Items	Interest in the Stories		Character Analysis of main Characters		Comprehended the message in the story	Not comprehended the message in the story
	Yes	No	Accurate Analysis	Inaccurate Analysis		
1. Do you like the story?	100%					
2. Can you narrate the story (one event at a time)?			85%	15%		
3. Whom do you like best the story?/Why?			85%	15%		
4. Would you like to listen to another story?	100%					
5. What is the moral of the story?					80%	20%

7.1.2. Middle Children (aged 6-9).

The famous story of the 'Little Red Riding Hood' was the story read to this group. Most scholars on children's literature classify this story under the 'fairy tale' or 'fantasy story'. This explains why this story was presented to this particular group. It is because children favor most fanciful and fairy tales at this stage in their lives.

The following is the analysis and interpretation of the data obtained from the questionnaire given to this group. It was noted during the reading time that all were immersed in the story and by the end of the reading, they looked happy and satisfied with the turn and twist of events and the happy ending of the story. An analysis of their responses is given below.

i. Question No.1. Do you like the story?

The answer was a 100% 'yes'

This validates our previous analysis that the appropriate story /literature for the appropriate age group is indeed attractive and enchanting not to mention the moral value it contains.

ii. Question No.2. Can you narrate the story?

About 85% of the children were able to narrate the story accurately. (The remaining 15% could not narrate the story accurately.

This tells us that these children are able to follow up longer tales with a bit of complex plot. This is because they have a longer memory span and therefore they will be able to remember stories (events) correctly unlike the preschool children.

iii. Question No. 3. Whom do you like best in the story? Why?

This is a question to prove their ability to identify a good character from a bad one – a method to prove whether they are able to identify the 'good' from the 'evil'.

Quite a number of students (i.e. 85%) were able to name their favorites from the story. The popular characters, although not strictly uniform, have similarities. The main concern of the question was not only on 'whom they like best' but also on 'why they like them.'

From their answers, one is able to find out the reason behind their favoritism, which are the attributes of the characters. This confirms our assumptions that children at this age are able to recognize the 'good' from the 'evil' in clear terms. It also depicts that these children are able to support

their answers with logical explanations – a fact which confirms the theoretical assumption about their cognitive development.

In conclusion, it can be said that these particular question enabled us to test and prove our previous assumptions that children at this stage preferably enjoy 'fairy tales and fantasy tales' that they have remarkably grown from their preschool years, that they are able to explain in clear terms their likes and dislikes and are able to support this with logical explanations. Stories meant for this group therefore should take into account the above points.

iv. Question No 4. Would you like to listen to another story?

This of course is a question that enables us test whether the story is appealing to them. According to the data, most of children (85%) were attracted and were interested in the story – a fact that such fanciful or fairy tales are really appropriate for this age group.

In conclusion we can again say that this finding is in conformity with our previous assumption that children reach the 'peak' in their love for these types of tales particularly at this age.

v. Question No. 5. What is the moral of the story?

The message of the story of the 'Little Red Riding Hood' is that 'Violating the advice of parents has negative consequences'.

The data collected depicts that most of the children (80%) got this message right.

The conclusion is that the story is in accordance with their ability and interest and therefore a story that takes into account of these factors can surely convey a message that would otherwise may not have been successfully conveyed.

Table – 3: Later Children

No. of Children 160 Item	Interest in the Stories		Character Analysis of main Characters		Comprehended the message in the story	Not comprehended the message in the story
	Yes	No	Accurate Analysis	Inaccurate Analysis		
Do you like the story	100%					
Can you narrate the story (one event at a time)			90%	10%		
Whom do you like best the story?/Why?			90%	10%		
Would you like to listen to another story	100%					
What is the moral of the story					90%	10%

7.1.3. Later Childhood (Aged 10-12).

The famous tales of 'Beauty and the Beast' and 'Ali Baba' were the stories chosen for this group. Of the three schools, 'Ali Baba' was read for children in the boys' school. The reason for the difference in the selection of the stories is because of the slight difference in the themes of the stories (to the taste of boys and girls) as they reach this age. Thus boys of this age group prefer adventure stories while the girls may still favor the fanciful tales and domestic stories of home life or school life etc.

Why 'Beauty and the Beast' was read to children in the boys' and girls' school was because the number of girls in this particular class

was greater than the boys' - hence the more appealing story to most of the children in that class would be this story.

These stories are especially longer as compared to the previous stories the reason for their selection being the improved memory capacity to follow up and recall the various events in the stories.

i. Question No. 1/. Do you like the stories?

According to the data, everybody in the group enjoyed the stories (100%) – a validation of our previous analysis that these stories are right for this age group.

ii. Question No. 2. Can you narrate the story?

This is the analysis of the responses to the comprehension question collected from the children.

The data shows that about 90% of the children answered the questions correctly which means they are able to follow the story, are able to recall and relate the events with no mistakes.

This proves the assumption that these children are capable of reading longer literature with interesting events. In addition, one can be sure that these stories are in accordance with their age level and cognitive development.

iii. Question No. 3. Whom do you like best in the story? Why?

The answers to this particular question were very interesting. About 90% of the children said they love the 'protagonist' or the 'hero' of the stories - a proof of what we said earlier in the conceptual framework (Chapter 6), namely that children at this stage indeed begin to be 'hero worshippers'.

The reason for their favoritism is the outstanding performance and actions of the characters that made the overall stories fascinating.

This tells us something about the children in this age group - they would love to have heroes and heroines in their stories - a confirmation of what is stated in the chapter 6 earlier.

iv. Question No. 4. Would you like to have another story read to you?

From their answers – which are a 100% 'yes'- one can conclude that they are truly attracted to the stories and are entertained by them.

It can be concluded from the above data that these stories are in accordance with their mental capacity and reading interest.

v. Question No 5. What is the moral of the story?

'Beauty and the Beast' has a lesson similar to 'Love conquers all' while the story of 'Ali Baba' has a message similar to ' Kindness Vs. Evil'.

In their own ways, most students (90%) stated the same thing - like ' kindness and generosity are virtuous' or ' kindness and helpfulness' have their rewards in the end' and so on.

The conclusion is that despite the nature of the stories, which are long and eventful, we can say that as long as stories are in accordance with the level of mental capacity (which has an influence on their reading interest,) they have the potential to appeal to the children, while at the same time providing a moral message. In this respect, gender seems to have no special role to play

Table – 4: Preschool Teachers

S.No.	Item	Type of Literature				Teachers' Response			Developing Skills			
		Fantasy	Realistic	Moralistic	Other	Yes	No	Any Other	Reading	Listening	Speaking	Any Other
1	Type of stories	40%	20%	30%	10%							
2	Which type do children favor most?	50%	10%	30%	5% All 5% Fiction							
3a	Any illustration in the textbooks?					80%	20%					
3b	If no, do you use any additional materials?	-	-	-	Picture cards & the like 20%							
4	Your opinion on the role played by story?									90%	10%	
5a	Do you think stories can be used effectively to teach language skills to children?					100%						
5b	If yes, name skills?									90%	10%	
5c	If no, how do you compensate?											
6	You think stories can be used to familiarize children with the variety of human character?					100%						
7	Do you think stories teach children to face life courageously & solve problem?					70%	30%					
8	You like reading stories					50%	50%	-				
9a	If yes, type?					30% Children's literature, love stories, etc.		20% Fiction				
9b	If no, what kind of reading do you like?							Journals News papers etc. (50%)				
10	How do you use your spare time?								50%			50%

7.2 Teachers' Perceptions

Teachers (especially language teachers) use various methods of improving language skills apart from their basic textbooks for class teaching. Their main concern is to enable the children know the rules of the language as easily as possible. One good way to do this supplementary teaching is by using 'imaginative Literature' as part of their language teaching.

Teachers of five private elementary schools were given the questionnaires (whose teaching experiences was over 10 years each) of whom only three were able give their responses. The reason for such a selection of teachers from these particular schools was the assumption that private schools give much emphasis especially to their language classes and therefore use extra materials other than their textbooks to enhance their students' language skills.

The following table (No. 4) shows the data collected from the questionnaires distributed among these teachers.

Table – 4: Preschool Teachers

S No	Item	Type of Literature				Teachers' Response			Developing Skills			
		Fantasy	Realistic	Moralistic	Other	Yes	No	Any Other	Reading	Listening	Speaking	Any Other
1	Type of stories	40%	20%	30%	10%							
2	Which type do children favor most?	50%	10%	30%	5% All 5% Fiction							
3a	Any illustration in the textbooks?					80%	20%					
3b	If no, do you use any additional materials?	-	-	-	Picture cards & the like 20%							
4	Your opinion on the role played by story?									90%	10%	
5a	Do you think stories can be used effectively to teach language skills to children?					100%						
5b	If yes, name skills?									90%	10%	
5c	If no, how do you compensate?											
6	You think stories can be used to familiarize children with the variety of human character?					100%						
7	Do you think stories teach children to face life courageously & solve problem?					70%	30%					
8	You like reading stories					50%	50%	-				
9a	If yes, type?					30% Children's literature, love stories, etc.		20% Fiction				
9b	If no, what kind of reading do you like?							Journals News papers etc (50%)				
10	How do you use your spare time?								50%			5%

i. **Question No. 1. What type of stories do you teach?**

Most teachers use fables of fantasy (40%), animal stories, and some tales in their language class. The reason for including narration in their class is because it enables them exercise the rules of the language thoroughly. The remaining teachers said they teach realistic (20%) and moralistic (30%) tales. By doing so, they pass 'discipline and values' to their students through literature.

We can conclude that the type of stories these teachers use is exactly what we said earlier in the theories about the relation of their cognitive development and their reading interest. These children are attracted to animal stories and the like at this stage in their lives

ii. **Question No. 2. Which type of stories children like most?**

Most children (50%) at this stage favor the fantastic and moralistic tales, i.e., those stories based on imaginations (animal stories, fables, which are referred here as 'fantastic' tales) but conveying moral lessons. Stories of the real life situations may not be so popular at this stage in the sense that they may lack the exciting element of the 'the talking beasts' or 'talking plants' etc. Therefore one can conclude that fantastic animal tales are appealing to children of this age.

iii. **Question No. 3a.& b Do you use any illustrations? If no do you use any additional material?**

Most teachers agree (80 %) to the importance of the use of especially pictorial illustrations in their story class. The reason is their special appeal to children's minds, their power to attract and present visual details of the story. Almost all teachers agree that their stories include illustrations - a fact that confirms these children are attracted to colorful or pictorial

expressions. Those who do not use such illustration (20%) use some other visual aids – a fact that supports that these children somehow need some visual expressions.

iv. **Question No. 4. What is your opinion on the role played by stories?**

The realization of the importance of literature to children is very high (90 %) among these teachers as they are greatly assisted by such literature in carrying out the task of improving the children's speaking and listening ability – a fact that literature not only entertains and transfers knowledge but also improves language skills.

v. **Question No. 5a & b. Do you think stories can be used to teach language skills effectively? If yes, name the skills**

Preschoolers who are just beginning to attend the kindergartens, hardly know the skills of reading. However listening to the stories read to them, they will begin to enhance their 'listening ability' and later on when they reflect on these stories, they may begin to improve their 'speaking skills'. The data shows that all teachers agree that literature enhances language skills.

From this analysis, it can be concluded that children's literature has multiple advantages, like entertainment and attainment of additional skills.

vi. **Question No. 6. Do you think stories can be used to familiarize children with the variety of human character?**

All the teachers (i.e. 100%) stated that children learn to get acquainted with the variety of human characters and are made aware of the real life situations.

Conclusion is that literature has a way of familiarizing children with the variety of human characters that it enables them to comprehend the complexities of human nature and gives them awareness as to the possible encounters of unique characters.

vii. **Question No. 7. Do you think stories teach children to face life courageously and solve problem?**

Majority of the teachers answer with a positive 'Yes' (70%). However (30%) of the teachers said children need much more than literature to face life courageously.

By taking the opinion of the majority, we can conclude that literature is the powerful tool by which children learn the mechanism of how to cope with the challenges of life.

viii. **Question No. 8. Do you like reading stories?**

These questions are directed towards the teachers themselves – those who spend most of their time with these children. About 50% responded positively. A fact that not all teachers need to be 'readers' or 'lovers of books' in order to make use of literature, to make their classes interesting, and to draw the advantages of learning through literature.

9a. If yes, what type?

As can be observed from the data, the 50% who responded positively said they have their choices and preferences for literature. They said they like reading various stories, from love stories to children's stories. That explains why these teachers use literature (apart from their textbooks) to enhance the language effectiveness of their students.

Conclusion is that (as stated previously), literature is still a good way of transferring a desired message through entertainment and – a fact that anybody even if they are not ‘book warm’ can understand the powerful effect literature has on children – a fact that anybody who spends most of his time with children needs to know.

9b. If no, what type of stories do you like?

The others (50%) do not make reading their top most priority. They said they read materials to get information (like news paper, journalist etc.)

This shows that teachers, parents... whoever is responsible to teach the child should not be a ‘reader’ in order to make use of literature to transfer knowledge and improve language skill – a fact that anybody who spends most of his time with children needs to know

ix. Question No. 10. How do you use your spare time?

Like anybody else, these teachers have got their own pass times, hobbies (of course including reading books like love stories, children’s stories etc.). Only 50% said they spend their spare time reading. The rest (50%) said they spend their times doing other social activities - an indication that any adult could still be made to inculcate the habit of reading literature and ‘transfer ‘knowledge’ to these children although he himself is not crazy about books.

9.2.2. Analysis and Interpretation on Teachers' perception and for Middle Children

Table – 5: Teachers for Middle Children

S.No	Item	Types of Literature					Teachers' Response			Developing Skills			
		Fantasy	Realistic	Moralistic	Religious	Other	Yes	No	Other	Reading	Listening	Speaking	Other
1	Type of stories you teach?	60%	25%	10%		5%							
2	Which type do children favor most?	80%	20%										
3a	Any illustration in the text books?						50%	50%					
3b	If no, do you use any additional materials?							100%					
4	Your opinion on the role played by stories?									50%	30%	10%	10%
5	Do you think stories can be used effectively to teach language skills to children?						100%						
6a	If yes, name skills?									70%	20%	10%	
6b	If no, how do you compensate?												
7	You think stories can be used to familiarize children with the variety of human character?						99%		1%				
8	Do you think stories teach children to face life courageously & solve problem?						99%		1%				
9	You like reading stories?						70%	30%					
9a	9a. If yes, what kind?						love children's mystery, Adventure						
9b	9b. If no, what kinds of reading do you like?								30% Science fiction, Journals etc.				
10	How do you use your spare time?									80%			20% (Swimming, social activities etc

i. Question No. 1. What type of stories do you teach?

Most teachers (60%) said they teach 'Fantasy' for these children. The rest said they teach realistic (25%) and moralistic (10%) tales. About 10% of the teachers say they use other types of stories outside of these category. We can conclude from the data that teachers use mostly 'fantasy stories' for these kids since it is appealing to them – an evidence of the fact that children reach their 'peak' of interest at this particular age.

Through these stories, teachers teach whatever language skills they intend to teach and whatever moral lessons they want to convey to these children.

ii. Question No. 2. Which type of stories do these children favor?

These are children from age 6 - 9, an age where their interest for fanciful tales reaches its peak. From the data, we see that most children (80%) are attracted to such fanciful tale. The rest 20% like realistic tales – they make fairly reasonable use of such type of literature to teach them.

The conclusion is very easy to draw – that children are attracted towards fanciful and fantastic stories at this stage in their lives.

iii. Question No 3a. Do you use illustrations during your class?

The use of illustrations for such group is not very common (only 50% said they still make use of these illustrations - the illustrations are still supportive of the literature like the preschool teachers) - a fact that such children are grown ups and can do without much illustrations. The reason is they can digest a story from their mere readings and comprehend it easily without visual support – a point that validates the previous theories of how children at this age love the fanciful tales and like to dwell on such fantasy.

3b. If no, do you use any additional materials?

Those that do not use any illustrations also said they do not neither use additional materials to compensate for the illustrations. As mentioned above, the children according to these teachers are fine without the illustrations.

iv. Question No. 4 What is your opinion on the role played by stories?

The role of literature for these children (according to these teachers) is to enhance specially the 'reading skills' the 'listening and speaking skills' to some extent. 50% said literature is mostly used to enhance reading skills. The remaining teachers said that literature helps increase the reading, speaking and other skills. (30%, 10% &10% respectively.)

The conclusion from the above data is that these children who just started reading will benefit most from their literature class for the advancement of their reading and other skills.

v. Question No. 5. Do you think stories can be used effectively to teach language skills to children?

As stated previously, since children are able to read at this stage, the literature contributes to their reading skills. All the teachers (100%) said literature increases language capacity. Skills like listening and speaking' skills are encouraged as they try to follow up the stories read in the class and later on reflect on them.

vi. Question No. 6a) If yes, name skills?

Reading skills, according to the data is 70% and other skills (listening and speaking skills are about 30%)

The conclusion is fanciful tales are appealing to this group as stated in the previous theories (chapter 7) and literature consisting of such tales add to the reading skills mostly and to other skills as well.

6b) If no, how do you compensate?

All teachers believe that literature increases language capacity hence no answer was provided.

vii. Question No.7. Do you think stories can be used to familiarize children with the variety of human character?

As we can see from the chart almost all teachers (99%) agree that through literature they can have a wider view of the complex nature of human beings, - through the lovely tales which are at the same time entertaining.

viii. Question No. 8. Do you think stories teach children to face life courageously and solve problem?

The answer is the same with the above one – a positive 'yes' (99%) Literature gives them awareness of the ups and downs of the real life situations.

The conclusion is that literature can best be utilized for the effective role it plays in enhancing the above skills and also in providing them lesson through entertainment.

ix. Question No. 9. Do you like reading stories?

Most teachers (70%) answered 'yes' while the remaining (30%) answered negatively. As stated earlier, one need not be attracted to imaginative literature in order to have the awareness that literature is a very good way of teaching the realities of life to these children (in addition to other language skills)

9a. If yes, what kind?

The 70% teachers, who said they love reading, also said that their preference is for children's literature, mystery and adventure stories.

What we see here is that these teachers are no different from other people and their preferences also differ with their own personality -- a good thing to know that anybody with a different attitude and different mental make up, can still make use of literature to instill value and improve language skills.

9b. If no, what kind?

Only some (30%) of the teachers said they love to read informational materials like science fiction, journals etc.

Conclusion is one can use the 'imaginative literature' for the many advantages it provides - to the teaching of language and transferring of values and knowledge even if he/she gives not much priority himself to such literature

x. Question No. 10. How do you use your spare time?

Most teachers for these children (80%) happen to be somehow 'Book lovers' relatively speaking – although it is not in their top most priority. Like anybody else they have their own hobbies and entertainment choices. Their choice of literature varies from love stories to scientific journals.

What we can conclude from the above is (like the preschool teachers), one should not be a 'fan' of imaginative literature in order to effectively use literature to inculcate knowledge and widen the scope of the child's world.

9.2.3. Analysis and Interpretation of Teachers' perception on Children's Literature for 'Later Children'

Table 6: Teachers for Later Children

S.No	Item	Types of Literature					Teachers' Response			Developing Skills			
		Fantasy	Realistic	Moralistic	Religious	Other	Yes	No	Other	Reading	Listening	Speaking	Other
1	Type of stories you teach?	10%	80%	10%									
2	Which type do children favor most?	10%	80%	10%									
3a	Any illustration in the text books?							100%					
3b	If no, do you use any additional materials?							100%					
4	Your opinion on the role played by stories?									60%	10%	30%	
5	Do you think stories can be used effectively to teach language skills to children?						100%						
5a	If yes, name skills?									60%	10%	30%	
5b	If no, how do you compensate?												
6	You think stories can be used to familiarize children with the variety of human character?						90%	10%					
7	Do you think stories teach children to face life courageously & solve problem?						90%	10%					
8	You like reading stories?						60%	40%					
9a	If yes, what kind?						Novels, mysteries, Adventures etc (60%)						
9b	If no, what kind of reading do you like?								News paper, journals etc (40%)				
10	How do you use your spare time?									50%			Spending with friends, social activities, watching film etc (40%)

i. Question No. 1. What types of stories do you teach in the class?

Most teachers for these groups (80%) say they use some literature available in the text books that are realistic stories (like Scott Foresman textbooks and library books). The remaining (20%) said they use fantasy and moralistic tales.

Conclusion is that since children at this stage are grown ups their tastes and preferences also change drastically from the animal stories to realistic ones. Therefore teachers mainly use realistic stories to reach their students - a fact that their cognitive level contributes to their tastes and preferences.

ii. Question No. 2. Which type of stories do children favor?

The literature favored by such children mainly consists of the 'Realistic stories' (80%). The reason is crystal clear- these children have grown a lot from their preschool years, have come to lose interest in the 'fanciful tales', and start to admire stories of real life situation. For this reason, they prefer 'realistic stories' to others.

In conclusion, we can say that their reading preference has direct relationship with their mental growth.

iii. Question No.3a. Are there illustrations in these books?

Not much emphasis is given for illustration in the literature for these groups. All said they do not use any illustration (100%) - the reason being the ability of the children to discern stories and plots without much aid from illustrations.

This shows that we can conclude that children in this age group demonstrate higher level of understanding complex plots without much use of illustrations – this tells us something about their mental growth.

3b. If no, do you use any additional material?

These teachers said (100%) that they do not need to use additional illustrations' – a fact that these children comprehend complex literature without visual aids.

iv. Question No. 4. What is your opinion on the role of teaching literature to children?

All teachers believe that, literature enhances the language development of children – they believe literature plays a great role in improving various skills. 60% of teachers said literature enhances the reading skills, 40% said it improves listening and speaking skills respectively. Therefore literature has a great role in improving language skills.

v. Question No. 5a&b. Do you think stories can be used effectively to teach language skills to children? If yes name skills.

Yes – (100%) agreed unanimously. The skills of reading, listening and speaking are greatly assisted through the reading of literature. All the six teachers agree to this. According to the chart, we see 'reading skill' given more weight than the other skills (40%). Their reading preferences similar to the real life situation (like adventures, school life, history, biography, etc) initiate their reading speed as they find stories to be breath taking. They do not want to pause once they start reading as they will become excited and eager to finish the story – thus improving their reading skills extremely. Other skills like listening and speaking are also skills that are greatly enhanced through reading of such literature. These skills accordingly have been given 60% totally.

In conclusion, we can say that a real 'reading foundation' can be laid at this stage if appropriate literature are provided.

vi. **Question No. 6. Do you think stories can be used to familiarize children with the variety of human characters?**

Most teachers (90%) agree except few (10%) who said that children need much more than literature to familiarize them with human characters. However, by taking the majority's opinion, we can conclude that children need literature to get acquainted with the complexities of human nature.

vii. **Question No. 8. Do you think stories teach children to face life courageously and solve problem?**

The opinion of most of these teachers validates our previous assumptions that literature portrays the real life situations and provides insight into the harsh realities of life, enables children to adjust with the various human characters etc. However 10% of the teachers do not believe that.

Our conclusion is based on what the majority responded – that literature is a powerful tool that helps children to be aware of the real life situations and provides solutions as to how to cope with them.

viii. **Question No. 9a. Do you like reading stories? If yes what kind?**

The teachers for these groups are by no means different from the other teachers. Reading Literature is not their top most preference. Accordingly only 60% said they like reading. The remaining (40%) said they do not like 'reading'.

What we can conclude is that anyone who is closely associated with children can know the use of literature for the various skills and values it provides to them – even if he does not give priority to reading of such literature

9b. If no what kind of reading do you like?

Only 10% said they like reading news papers, journals for the purpose of getting information.

The conclusion is the same for the above question. One who is involved with children, can reach their minds through such literature and love of reading literature should not be in his top most list.

ix. Question No.10. How do you use your spare time?

The same 60 % teachers said they love spending their time in reading - they said they read novels – of mystery, history, anthropology which are few among others. The remaining said they have their social activities, household chores etc. like any other person.

However we can still draw some facts from all of these – that one need not be 'book warm' -as it is called - in order to make use of literature to develop and enhance the mental process of the developing child.

CHAPTER EIGHT

CONCLUSION

First and foremost, children need literature as much as they need to learn to read and write. Literature (i.e. imaginative literature) is a powerful tool that can be used to transfer knowledge while at the same time it entertains the mind of children.

Children's literature enables children to get acquainted with their surroundings, with the norms of the society in which they live, provide answers for some puzzles of life, and help them explore the outside world (for example, children in other lands, their home and school life etc.)

Such literature does not only increase their knowledge of the world but also serve as a 'release' from the daily routines of life - not to mention the reading and other skills they develop from them.

Love of reading will gradually develop as they frequent these literature, become knowledgeable about life and the world in which they live. Moreover, they can inculcate the values of good manners. Instead of trying to make children behave by the usual method of 'do's and don'ts', one can easily convey the message that having good manners has its rewards and bad manners its consequences. Reading literature has multiple advantages indeed!

But all this is possible as long as the literature presented to them take into account their level of understanding. There is a direct relationship between the reading interest of children and their developing mind. What a preschool child would like to find in the stories may never appeal to children in the later childhood. The reason is because the child (in the later childhood) has come a long way from his preschool years has a developed mind and hence needs a 'developed idea'. His cognitive ability has progressed and therefore needs literature of a different sort.

Literature that incorporates this major fact will surely appeal to children and will obviously bring positive impact on their mind.

The reverse is also true of literature that has a negative or rather undesired impact on the mind of children. Stories dealing with 'darkness' or 'ghosts' for preschool children - who may usually take such tales to be true, - may harm the children tremendously. An author who is aware of the negative impact of such stories will never contemplate, in the first place, to write such stories for children.

Thus, children's literature can have a positive or a negative impact on the mind of their intended readers. Cognizant of this fact, one should be able to select such literature that has a positive impact by relating the literature of these children to their cognitive development or their mental make up at various stages of their lives.

The present study has proved the above facts beyond any doubt. Hence, it can be stated finally that good literature for children presented in accordance with their age and corresponding cognitive development, will definitely contribute not only to the growth of the child's personality but also to the child's language skills and language proficiency. Therefore the stakeholders in this area like parents, teachers, authors and the community at large should bear this in view.

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APPENDIX – B

LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD

In a small village at the edge of a big forest lived a little girl and her mother. The girl had a red, velvet riding cloak with a hood that her grandmother had made for her. She looked so pretty in the cloak and wore it so often, that everyone called her Little Red Riding Hood.

One day, Little Red Riding Hood's mother said, "Take this basket of bread and butter to your grandmother's house for me. Your grandmother has not been feeling well and has not been able to cook for herself."

Now the grandmother's house was on the other side of the forest. Little Red Riding Hood knew the way through the forest, because she went there often. She wasn't afraid. But her mother knew that the forest could be dangerous. "Go quickly," she said "And stay on the path."

"I will," said Little Red Riding Hood. And off she went, carrying the basket of bread and butter.

She had not gone far when she saw a wolf.

"Good morning, Mr. Wolf," said Little Red Riding Hood.

"Where are you going?" the wolf asked. "And what do you have in your basket?"

"I am going to my grandmother's house," said Little Red Riding Hood. "I am taking her these bread and butter because she has been sick."

Now the wolf hadn't eaten in several days. Bread and butter would make a tasty snack, thought the wolf, but what I really want to eat is a tasty little girl! And I have a plan.

"Since your grandmother has been sick, perhaps she would like a bouquet of wildflowers too," suggested the wolf.

Little Red Riding Hood looked around. The forest was filled with wildflowers of all colors. "Why, that's a lovely idea, Mr. Wolf," said Little Red Riding Hood. "But my mother did tell me not to stray off the path..."

"Well," said the wolf, "I'm certain that if your mother had thought about a bouquet of wildflowers, she would have agreed to let you pick some. Why don't you start with those red ones over there?"

"All right," said Little Red Riding Hood, and she left the path through the forest to wander under the trees looking for flowers.

When the wolf raced down the path to the house where Little Red Riding Hood's grandmother lived, he caught his breath and knocked on the door.

"Who is there?" called the grandmother.

"It's Little Red Riding Hood," said the wolf in a high, squeaky voice. "I've brought you some bread and butter."

"Then lift the latch and come in, dear," said the grandmother. She was tucked into bed and did not want to get up. But when the door opened and the wolf walked in, she sat straight up and then fainted from fright.

The wolf was not interested in eating the old woman, only Little Red Riding Hood. So he rolled the grandmother under the bed. He put on her lacy nightcap and jumped into her bed, pulling the covers up to his chin. Then he waited for Little Red Riding Hood to arrive.

When Little Red Riding Hood had picked enough wildflowers, she found the path and went on her way to her grandmother's house. She knocked at the door.

"Who is it?" called the wolf in his best grandmother voice.

"It's Little Red Riding Hood," answered the girl. "I've brought you some bread and butter and a bouquet of wildflowers."

"Lift the latch and come right in, dear," said the wolf.

Little Red Riding Hood went inside. "Come closer, my dear," said the wolf. Little Red Riding Hood went closer, but not too close.

"My goodness, Grandmother," she said. "What big eyes you have!"

"The better to see you with, my dear," said the wolf.

"And what big teeth you have, Grandmother," said Little Red Riding Hood.

"The better to eat you with!" cried the wolf. He sprang out of bed and tried to grab the little girl, but she was too quick for him. She dropped her basket and ran out the door.

A hunter who was passing through the forest saw Little Red Riding Hood run outside with the wolf close behind her. The hunter chased the wolf deep into the

forest. When the hunter came back, he went inside with Little Red Riding Hood to help her look for her grandmother. They found her standing beside her bed, looking quite shaken.

"The danger is over now," said the hunter.

"The hunter chased the wolf away!" cried Little Red Riding Hood.

"Thank you for saving Little Red Riding Hood, sir," Grandmother said to the hunter.

"Please stay and join us for tea."

So the hunter sat down with Little Red Riding Hood and her grandmother and drank tea and ate bread and butter. The bouquet of wildflowers looked lovely on the table. And Little Red Riding Hood never strayed off the path in the forest again.

APPENDIX - C

A) *BEAUTY AND THE BEAST*

Once upon a time...as a merchant set off for market, he asked each of his three daughters what she would like as a present on his return. The first daughter wanted a brocade dress, the second a pearl necklace, but the third, whose name was Beauty, the youngest, prettiest and sweetest of them all, said to her father:

"All I'd like is a rose you've picked specially for me!"

When the merchant had finished his business, he set off for home. However, a sudden storm blew up, and his horse could hardly make headway in the howling gale. Cold and weary, the merchant had lost all hope of reaching an inn when he suddenly noticed a bright light shining in the middle of a wood. As he drew near, he saw that it was a castle, bathed in light.

I hope I'll find shelter there for the night, "he said to himself. When he reached the door, he saw it was open, but though he shouted, nobody came to greet him. Picking up courage, he went inside, still calling out to attract attention. On a table in the main hall, a splendid dinner lay already served.

The merchant lingered, still shouting for the owner of the castle. But no one came, and so the starving merchant sat down to a hearty meal.

Overcome by curiosity, he ventured upstairs, where the corridor led into magnificent rooms and halls. A fire crackled in the first room and a soft bed looked very inviting. It was now late, and the merchant could not resist. He lay down on the bed and fell fast asleep. When he woke next morning, an unknown hand had placed a mug of steaming coffee and some fruit by his bedside.

The merchant had breakfast and after tidying himself up, went downstairs to thank his generous host. But, as on the evening before, there was nobody in sight. Shaking his head in wonder at the strangeness of it all, he went towards the

garden where he had left his horse, tethered to a tree. Suddenly, a large rose bush caught his eye.

Remembering his promise to Beauty, he bent down to pick a rose. Instantly, out of the rose garden, sprang a horrible beast, wearing splendid clothes. Two bloodshot eyes, gleaming angrily, glared at him and a deep, terrifying voice growled: "Ungrateful man! I gave you shelter, you ate at my table and slept in my own bed, but now all the thanks I get is the theft of my favorite flowers!

"I shall put you to death for this slight!" Trembling with fear, the merchant fell on his knees before the Beast.

"Forgive me! Forgive me! Don't kill me! I'll do anything you say! The rose wasn't for me, it was for my daughter Beauty. I promised to bring her back a rose from my journey!" The Beast dropped the paw it had clamped on the unhappy merchant.

"I shall spare your life, but on one condition, that you bring me your daughter!" The terror-stricken merchant, faced with certain death if he did not obey, promised that he would do so. When he reached home in tears, his three daughters ran to greet him. After he had told them of his dreadful adventure, Beauty put his mind at rest immediately.

"Dear father, I'd do anything for you! Don't worry, you'll be able to keep your promise and save your life! Take me to the castle. I'll stay there in your place!" The merchant hugged his daughter.

"I never did doubt your love for me. For the moment I can only thank you for saving my life." So Beauty was led to the castle. The Beast, however, had quite an unexpected greeting for the girl. Instead of menacing doom as it had done with her father, it was surprisingly pleasant.

In the beginning, Beauty was frightened of the Beast, and shuddered at the sight of it. Then she found that, in spite of the monster's awful head, her horror of it was gradually fading as time went by. She had one of the finest rooms in the Castle, and sat for hours, embroidering in front of the fire. And the Beast would sit, for hours on end, only a short distance away, silently gazing at her. Then it started to say a few kind words, till in the end, Beauty was amazed to discover that she was actually enjoying its conversation.

The days passed, and Beauty and the Beast became good friends. Then one day, the Beast asked the girl to be his wife.

Taken by surprise, Beauty did not know what to say. Marry such an ugly monster? She would rather die! But she did not want to hurt the feelings of one who, after all, had been kind to her. And she remembered too that she owed it her own life as well as her father's.

"I really can't say yes," she began shakily. "I'd so much like to..."

The Beast interrupted her with an abrupt gesture.

"I quite understand! And I'm not offended by your refusal!" Life went on as usual, and nothing further was said. One day, the Beast presented Beauty with a magnificent magic mirror. When Beauty peeped into it, she could see her family, far away.

"You won't feel so lonely now," were the words that accompanied the gift.

Beauty stared for hours at her distant family. Then she began to feel worried.

One day, the Beast found her weeping beside the magic mirror.

"What's wrong?" he asked, kindly as always.

"My father is gravely ill and close to dying! Oh, how I wish I could see him again, before it's too late!" But the Beast only shook its head.

"No! You will never leave this castle!" And off it stalked to the girl.

However, a little later, it returned and spoke solemnly to the girl.

"If you swear that you will return here in seven days time, I'll let you go and visit your father!" Beauty threw herself at the Beast's feet in delight.

"I swear! I swear I will! How kind you are! You've made a loving daughter so happy!" In reality, the merchant had fallen ill from a broken heart at knowing his daughter was being kept prisoner. When he embraced her again, he was soon on the road to recovery. Beauty stayed beside him for hours on end, describing her life at the Castle, and explaining that the Beast was really good and kind. The days flashed past, and at last the merchant was able to leave his bed. He was completely well again. Beauty was happy at last.

However, she had failed to notice that seven days had gone by.

Then one night she woke from a terrible nightmare. She had dreamt that the Beast was dying and calling for her, twisting in agony.

"Come back! Come back to me!" it was pleading. The solemn promise she had made drove her to leave home immediately.

"Hurry! Hurry, good horse!" she said, whipping her steed onwards towards the castle, afraid that she might arrive too late. She rushed up the stairs, calling but there was no reply. Her heart in her mouth, Beauty ran into the garden and there crouched the Beast, its eyes shut, as though dead. Beauty threw herself at it and hugged it tightly.

"Don't die! Don't die! I'll marry you..." At these words, a miracle took place. The Beast's ugly snout turned magically into the face of a handsome young man.

"How I've been longing for this moment!" he said. "I was suffering in silence, and couldn't tell my frightful secret. An evil witch turned me into a monster and only the love of a maiden willing to accept me as I was, could transform me back into my real self. My dearest! I'll be so happy if you'll marry me..."

The wedding took place shortly after and, from that day on; the young prince would have nothing but roses in his gardens. And that's why, to this day, the castle is known as the Castle of the Rose.

B) Ali Baba

There were once two brothers. Kassim was rich and greedy. His brother Ali Baba was kind, and he worked very hard, but he was poor. Every day Ali Baba went to the forest with his donkeys. There he cut wood which he sold in the market.

One day Ali Baba was cutting wood when he saw a big cloud of dust in the path in front of him. It was a wild, lonely part of the forest and Ali Baba was a little frightened. He hid his donkeys behind a big rock. Then he climbed a tree and hid among the branches.

Through the young leaves he saw forty men on black horses. They stopped just under Ali Baba's tree, but they did not look up. They looked at a big wall of rock a few yards away.

'Open Sesame!' called the leader of the men. The wall of rock opened wide and Ali Baba saw a huge black cave*. The men took some heavy bags off their horses and carried them into the cave. They were robbers, and the bags were full of gold, silver and jewels.

'They are hiding their treasure,' said Ali Baba to himself. He saw the robbers come out again. They climbed on their horses. Their chief called 'Close Sesame!' and the door of the cave shut like magic. Then the robbers rode away in a cloud of dust.

When the air was still and quiet again, Ali Baba climbed down from his tree. He stood before the wall of rock and said, 'Open Sesame.' At once the cave door opened and Ali Baba went inside. The cave was full of treasure. Ali Baba took a small bag of gold. It was almost too heavy for him to move, but he got it treasure on the back of one of his donkeys. He arranged some wood on top, and then he went home.

His wife was very excited and she began to count the gold. There was so much; she got as far as a hundred, then she forgot, and had to start again. 'I can't count all this gold,' she said to her husband.

'There is enough to make us rich,' said Ali Baba. 'Why do you want to count it?'

But his wife was unhappy. She needed to know just how rich she was. She went to Kassim's wife and borrowed her scales*.

'Why does Ali Baba's wife want my scales?' said Kassim's wife. She rubbed a little butter on the scales. Kassim's wife hated mysteries; she had to know all about everything.

Ali Baba's wife ran home and weighed the gold coins. Then she gave the scales back to Kassim's wife. She did not notice that a small gold coin was stuck to the scales.

A greedy man

Kassim's wife showed him the coin. 'I thought your brother was a poor man?' she cried. 'But now his wife has so much gold that she has to weigh it!' Kassim was angry.

'Where did you get your gold, brother?' he asked Ali Baba. Ali Baba had to tell him the story of the robbers and the cave. At once Kassim wanted the whole treasure for himself. For days he followed Ali Baba. At last Ali Baba went to the cave to get another small bag of gold. Kassim hid behind a rock and watched him. 'Open Sesame,' said Ali Baba, and the door of the cave opened. 'I must remember those words,' said Kassim to himself.

Next day he went to the wall of rock and said, 'Open Sesame.' The cave door opened and Kassim ran inside. 'Close Sesame!' he called. Now he was alone with the treasure. He filled a huge bag with jewels and went to the door of the cave. But he could not remember the magic words!

'Open coffee!' he shouted. Nothing happened. 'Open genie!' said Kassim. Still nothing happened. He tried again and again. At last the door opened and the robbers came in. They were bringing more treasure to the cave.

Cut into pieces

When the robbers saw Kassim they took their knives and cut him into small pieces. Then they went away again.

Night came, and Kassim did not come home for dinner. His wife went to Ali Baba. Ali Baba realized that his brother was in danger. He hurried to the cave. He found Kassim's body in pieces on the floor. He collected the pieces and took them home.

As soon as he was rich enough, he found a good, clever servant girl. Her name was Morgiana and she helped Ali Baba's wife in the house. When Ali Baba came home with his brother's body, he asked Morgiana to help.

'Sir,' she said, 'you and your wife have been very kind to me. I will do anything you ask me. I want to help.'

Ali Baba showed her the little pieces of Kassim's body. 'What can we do?' he asked. 'People will ask questions. Perhaps the robber chief will hear about it. Then he will come and kill us all.'

'Leave it to me,' said Morgiana. She found a clever tailor. She covered his eyes and led him at night to a dark room in Ali Baba's house. There, in the dark, the tailor sewed the body together.

'No one will know that Kassim was the body in the cave,' said Ali Baba to himself. 'There has been an accident,' he told Kassim's wife. They buried the body very quietly and no one asked any questions.

When the robbers came back to the cave, the body was gone!

'Someone came in while we were away,' said the chief. 'That means someone knows the magic words. We must find him and kill him.'

The robbers asked a lot of questions in the town. 'Did anyone bury a body that was cut up in pieces?' they asked. No one knew anything. Then one day the robber chief tore his coat.

The tailor who sewed it together worked by a very small, weak lamp.

'How can you sew with so little light?' asked the robber chief.

'I don't need much light; I can sew with my eyes shut. Last week I sewed a man's body together in the dark!' He told the robber chief his story.

'Lead me there,' said the robber chief. He gave the tailor a gold coin and covered his eyes with a cloth. The tailor led him to Ali Baba's house. The robber chief took a piece of chalk out of his pocket and marked a large, white cross on the door.

Morgiana saves everyone

'Tomorrow,' said the robber chief to his men, 'we will burn that house – and our enemy too.'

Early next morning Morgiana went outside to clean the door-step. She found the white chalk cross. She did not know what it meant, but she did not like it. She took another piece of chalk and marked every door in the street.

When the robbers arrived, they did not know what to do. Their chief went back to the tailor. Again he paid the tailor to lead him to Ali Baba's house. This time he was sure about it.

'Listen to my plan,' he told his men. 'I shall pretend* that I am selling oil. We'll get twenty donkeys and forty oil jars. Each of you must hide in one of the jars. When it is time to attack, I will lift the lids. Then you must jump out and kill everyone.'

The forty oil jars

The thirty-nine robbers hid in the oil jars. Their chief filled the fortieth jar with oil. That evening he knocked at Ali Baba's door.

'Good friend,' he said, 'my twenty donkeys and I have nowhere to spend the night. If I give you this jar of oil, will you let us sleep in your yard?'

'Keep your oil, my friend,' said Ali Baba. 'You are welcome. Give water to your donkeys, then come and eat with us.'

Morgiana was cooking the dinner. She needed more oil and the shops were already shut. 'There are forty jars of oil in the yard,' she said to herself. 'No one will mind if I take a little.'

She took a cup out into the yard. She opened the nearest jar. 'Is it time?' said a man's voice. At first Morgiana thought it was a genie. But she was brave as well as clever. 'No,' she said to the robber in the jar. She went to the next jar, and the next. The same thing happened. At last she found the one jar that contained oil.

Morgiana took her cup of oil into the kitchen. Men do not usually hide in oil jars, she thought. I must do something about this! She took her biggest pot from the kitchen and filled it with oil from the jar in the yard. She put the pot of oil on the kitchen fire until the oil was boiling. Carefully she carried it out into the yard. Carefully she poured a little hot oil into each jar. Then she went back to the kitchen and finished cooking the dinner.

The robbers are dead

When everyone else was in bed the robber chief went out into the yard. He lifted the lid of the first jar. 'It is time,' he said. There was no answer. The same thing happened the next time, and the time after that. All his thirty-nine men were dead.

The next morning Ali Baba's guest appeared to be in a great hurry. He forgot to thank Ali Baba for his kind welcome and good dinner. He just rode away with his twenty donkeys and his forty jars. Ali Baba and his wife felt hurt and said. Only Morgiana understood.

Later she told Ali Baba her story. 'You have saved our lives,' said Ali Baba. 'You are not my servant any more. From today you are my dear daughter.' Ali Baba's

wife was very pleased, and so was his young son. Morgiana was pretty as well as clever, and the young man fell in love with her.

For a whole year they all lived together in peace. But one day the robber chief came back. This time he wore the clothes and jewels of a rich man. He pretended to feel ill outside Ali Baba's house. Of course, Ali Baba invited him to come in.

That night Morgiana cooked a wonderful dinner. The stranger saw her pretty face and ate her good food. He at once offered Ali Baba a good price for her.

'I cannot sell Morgiana,' said Ali Baba. 'I have accepted her as my daughter.'

'Then let me make her my wife,' said the stranger. Ali Baba's son gave him a black, angry look. Ali Baba was very unhappy. In the East, no one likes to say 'No' to a guest.

Morgiana's dance of death

'Would you like to marry me, my little sugar-cake?' said the stranger. Morgiana pretended she was pleased, but her eyes were hard and cold. The stranger tried to take her in his arms. As he did so, his coat opened. Morgiana's quick eyes saw a long knife in his belt.

'Let me dance for you,' she said to the stranger. She went to her room and put on a beautiful dress and a veil of many colours. She carried a little silver drum in one hand and a small knife in the other.

Morgiana danced like a leaf in the wind. As she danced she beat the drum and waved the knife above her head. Faster and faster she flew. The rich stranger tried to catch her; he wanted to hold her beautiful body in his arms.

Suddenly Morgiana threw herself at the stranger. She buried the knife in his heart.

'What have you done?' cried Ali Baba.

'It is the robber chief, father,' said Morgiana. She opened the dead man's coat and showed Ali Baba the knife.

Safe at last

'Now we can live in peace at last!' said Ali Baba. 'And Morgiana saved us all.' She married Ali Baba's son'; it was a happy wedding. For a long time they lived together in peace.

After a year Ali Baba felt brave enough to go back to the magic cave. Long grass and tall plants covered the wall of rock. But when Ali Baba said 'Open Sesame' the cave opened as easily as before. Once more the treasure lay at Ali Baba's feet.

Ali Baba became the richest man in the city. No one was unhappy with him because he was never greedy. He built a palace for his wife and himself. He bought a farm for his son and Morgiana. He also gave a lot of money to the poor and the sick people. Every night he knelt down beside his bed and thanked God for his good luck.

APPENDIX - D

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR MIDDLE CHILDREN ON 'LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD'

I)

1. ዋናዋ ባለታሪክ ማናት?

- ሀ) የታመሙት አያት
- ለ) የልጅቷ እናት

- ሐ) ባለ ቀይ ካባ ልጅ
- መ) እንሰላት አዳኝ

2. ባለቀይ ካባ ልጃገረድ እናቷ ወይም እንድትሄድ ነገራት?

- ሀ) ከጎረቤቶቿ ጋር እንድትጫወት
- ለ) ወደ አያቷ ዘንድ ምግብ እንድታደርስ

- ሐ) ከቀበሮው ጋር እንድትጫወት
- መ) ወደ ት/ቤት እንድትሄድ

3. ልጃገረዱ ቀበሮውን የት አገኘው?

- ሀ) ትክክለኛውን ጎዳና ለቃ ወደ ጫካ ውስጥ ስትገባ
- ሐ) አያቷ ጋር ስትደርስ

- ለ) ቀበሮው ወደ እሷ ሲመጣ
- መ) አያቷ ቤት ውስጥ

4. ቀበሮው ልጅቷን እንዴት አታለላት?

- ሀ) ለአያቷ አበባ እንድትወስድላቸው በመንገር
- ሐ) ወደ ቤቷ እንድትመለስ በመንገር

- ለ) ከሱ ጋር እንድትጫወት በመንገር
- መ) ጫካው ውስጥ እንድትተኛ በመንገር

5. ባለቀይ ካባ ልጃገረድ ቀበሮው እንዳታለላት እንዴት አወቀች?

- ሀ) አያቷ ቤት አያቷ መኝታ ላይ ሆኖ ሲበላት ሲዘጋጅ
- ሐ) አበባውን ስትሰበስብ

- ለ) ጫካ ውስጥ ሲያገግራት
- መ) መልስ የለም

II)

1. ልጅቷ ይህ ሁሉ ችግር የደረሰባት ለምንድን ነው?

- ሀ) እናቷ መንገድሽን ሳትለቁ ወደ አያትሽ ቤት ሂጂ ያለቻትን ምክር ባለመቀበሏ
- ለ) ለአያቷ ደግና የምታዝን ስለሆነች
- ሐ) የእናቷን ትዕዛዝ በትክክል ባለመከተሏ
- መ) ሀ እና ሐ ልክ ናቸው

2. ታሪኩ ምን ያስተምረናል

- ሀ) የወላጆችን ትዕዛዝ መቀበል እንዳለብን
- ለ) የወላጅን ምክር አለመስማት ችግር እንደሚያስከትል
- ሐ) ቀበሮ አታላይ እንደሆነች
- መ) ሁሉም መልስ ይሆናል

3. ታሪኩን ወዳችሁታል

- ሀ) በጣም ወድጀዋለሁ
- ለ) ብዙም አልወደድኩትም
- ሐ) ያስፈራል
- መ) አልወደድኩትም

APPENDIX - E (A)

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR LATTER CHILDREN ON 'BEAUTY AND THE BEAST'

1) ዋናዋ ባለታሪክ ማናት?

ሀ) ቢውቲ

ለ) ሁለቱ ትልልቅ እህቶቿ

ሐ) አባትየው

መ) አውሬው

2) ስንት እህቶች አሏት?

ሀ) ሁለት

ለ) ሦስት

ሐ) አንድ

መ) እህቶች የሏትም

3) አባቷ ከገዛው ሲመለስ ምን እንዲያመጣላት ጠየቀችው

ሀ) የአንገት ጌጥ

ለ) የጆሮ ጌጥ

ሐ) ፅጌረዳ

መ) መፅሀፍ

4) አባቷ ስጦታውን አመጣላት?

ሀ) አዎ

ለ) አላመጣላትም

ሐ) ሀ እና ለ

መ) መልሱ የለም

4.1 መልሱ አላመጣላትም ከሆነ ለምን?

ሀ) ስለረግጠው

ለ) በአውሬው ምክንያት

ሐ) ስላላገኘ

መ) መልሱ የለም

5) ቢውቲ አባቷን ለማዳን ምን አደረገች

ሀ) ምንም አላደረገችም

ለ) ለአውሬው ስልክ ደወለች

ሐ) ራሷ ከአውሬው ጋር ለመኖር ወሰነች

መ) መልሱ የለም

6) ከአውሬው ጋር መኖር ከጀመረች በኋላ በተሰማን ለማየት ምን አደረገች?

ሀ) ለቤተሰቧ ስልክ ደወለች

ለ) አውሬውን አምልጣ ሂደች

ሐ) አውሬውን አስፈቀደችው

መ) መልሱ የለም

7) አውሬው እንዴት ለቀቃት?

ሀ) ተመልሷ እንደትመጣ ቀል በማስገባት

ለ) ከ7 ቀን በኋላ እንደትመጣ

በማስጠንቀቅ

ሐ) ሀ እና ለ

መ) መልሱ የለም

8) ከ 7 ቀን በኋላ ቢውቲ

ሀ) ወደ አውራጃው ተመለሰች

ለ) ወደ አውራጃው ሳትመለስ ረስታ ከብዙ

ጊዜ በኋላ ተመለሰች

ሐ) መቼም ወደ አውራጃው አልተመለሰችም

መ) መልሱ የለም

9) ቢውቲ ወደ አውራጃው ስትመለስ

ሀ) አውራጃው ሞቶ አገኘችው

ለ) አውራጃው በሞት አፋፍ ሆኖ አገኘችው

ሐ) አውራጃው ተኝቶ አገኘችው

መ) መልሱ የለም

10) አውራጃው እንዴት ነቃ?

ሀ) እያለቀሰች አገባህለሁ ብላ ስትለው

ለ) እያዘነች ስታናግረው

ሐ) እያለቀሰች ስታየው

መ) መልሱ የለም

II)

1. ቢውቲ ባለታሪካ ልጅ

ሀ) ደግ ነች

ሐ) ኃላፊነት የሚሠማት ልጅ ነች

ለ) ብልህ ነች

መ) ሁሉም መልስ ይሆናል

2. ታሪኩን ወደኸዋል /ወደሽዋል?

ሀ) አዎ ወደጃዋለሁ

ለ) አልወደድኩትም

ሐ) ያስፈራራል

መ) እርግጠኛ አይደለሁም

3. ከታሪኩ በጣም የወደድከው /የወደድሽው ማንን ነው?

ሀ) ቢውቲን

ለ) አውራጃውን

ሐ) የቢውቲን አባት

መ) የቢውቲን እህቶች

4. ከላይ ስተጠቀሰው ጥያቄ ለመለስከው/ሽው መልስ ምክንያቱን በዝርዝር ግለጽ/ጭ

APPENDIX - E (B)

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR LATTER CHILDREN ON 'ALI BABA'

1) ዋናው ባለታሪክ ማነው?

ሀ/ አሊባባ

ሐ/ የቃሲም ባለቤት

ለ/ ቃሲም

መ/ የአሊባባ ልጅ

2) በታሪኩ ላይ በጣም ደገ ሰው ማነው?

ሀ/ ቃሲም

ሐ/ የአሊባባ ሚስት

ለ/ አሊባባ

መ/ የአሊባባ ሠራተኛ

3) አሊባባ በጫካ እንጨት ሲቆርጥ ምንድነው ያየው?

ሀ/ የዱር እንስሳት

ሐ/ ሌቦች

ለ/ ትናንሽ ልጆች

መ/ ድመቶች

4) ሌቦቹ ምንድነው ያደረጉት?

ሀ/ ከጫካ እንጨት ቆረጡ

ሐ/ ኪስ ተጫወቱ

ለ/ ዘፈን ዘፈኑ

መ/ ዋሻ ውስጥ የተሠረቀውን ወርቅ ከተቱ

5) የተዘጋውን ዋሻ ምን የሚል ቃል በመናገር ከፈቱት?

ሀ/ አፕን ሲሴም

ሐ/ አፕን ዶር

ለ/ አፕን ራስታ

መ/ አፕን ላስታ

6) አሊባባ ሌቦቹ ሲሄዱ ምን አደረገ?

ሀ/ ከጎሳቸው ሮጦ አባረራቸው

ለ/ ዋሻው ጋር ሄዶ እነርሱ እንዳሉት አፕን ሲሴም አለ

ሐ/ ሮጦ ያዛቸው

መ/ ለፖሊስ ተናገረዋቸው

7) ዋሻው ውስጥ እንደገባ አሊባባ ምን አገኘ?

ሀ/ ወርቅ

ሐ/ ነጠስ

ለ/ ስር

መ/ ዋንጫ

8) የአሊባባ ወንድም በሌቦቹ ስለተደበቀው ወርቅ እንዴት ሊያውቅ ቻለ?

ሀ/ የአሊባባ ሠራተኛ ነግራው

ለ/ የአሊባባ ልጅ ነግራው

ሐ/ በሚዛኑ ላይ ያለውን ወርቅ በማየት የአሊባባ ወንድም ሚስት ለቃሲም ስለነገረችው

መ/ መልሱ የለም

9) የአሊባባ ወንድም ስሙ

ሀ/ አህመድ

ሐ/ ቃሲም

ለ/ ነቢዩ

መ/ ሁሴን

10)

አሊባባ ያገኘውን ወርቅ ለማግኘት ሞከረ

ሀ/ የአሊባባ ሚስት

ሐ/ ሁሴን

ለ/ የቃሲም ሚስት

መ/ ቃሲም

11) ቃሲም ከዋሻው ሊወጣ አልቻለም ምክንያቱም

ሀ/ በሩ የሚከፈሉት በትን የምሥጢር ቃል (ኦፕን ሲሴም) ስለጠፋበት

ለ/ ዋሻው ውስጥ መተኛት ስለፈለገ

ሐ/ ዋሻው ውስጥ መኖር ፈልጎ

መ/ ዋሻው ውስጥ ትንሽ መቆየት ፈልጎ

12) ሌባቹ ቃሲምን ዋሻው ውስጥ ሲያገኙት

ሀ/ ከዋሻው አስወጡት

ለ/ ገድለው ሠውነቱን ቆራረጡት

ሐ/ ሳቁበት

መ/ ደበደቡት

13) አሊባባ ስለወንድሙ መሞት እንደሠማ

ሀ/ ለፖሊስ ተናገረ

ለ/ የተቆራረጠውን የቃሲምን ራሣ ጠሠደው

ሐ/ አለቀሠ

መ/ ዝም አለ

DECLARATION

I the undersigned declare that this thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other university and that all sources of material used for the thesis have been duly acknowledged.

Handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Lensie Bekele' followed by the year '2005'.

Lensie Bekele

This thesis has been submitted for examination with my approval as university advisor.

Handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'A. Subba Rao'.

Professor A. Subba Rao