

How to Select

STORIES FOR SMALL FRY

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Let's talk about stories for children. I didn't say "literature"; I said "stories"—the kind you need to know about when you hear, "Tell me a story *now*, please", or "I'll be ready to go to sleep *after* you tell me a bedtime story".

One of the recognized authorities in the field of child development says children enjoy stories from the time they are about 18 months old. Hearing stories *and telling them* from a very early age is an excellent method of developing skill with language. Of course, it also gives the youngsters much pleasure.

As Baby Views It

Many parents would like to help their children with this, but they don't know exactly how. Let's take a quick look at how the baby's idea of language develops, and then perhaps it will be easier to see where and how stories fit in.

First of all the baby learns to name the things he sees, as he has heard them named. If you say cap, he says cap; if you say hat, he says hat.

Next he begins to name the things he wants but does not see—sometimes this naming is in English and sometimes in some unknown tongue—but, nevertheless, he is attaching a word to an idea. This is a discovery of major importance. The baby has found he can do something which really pays off—something which makes it possible to get those all-powerful grown-ups to do things one wishes they would.

Daddy Basis for a Story

Then comes the discovery that language can give yet another pleasure, that of sharing experiences or thoughts with someone. Enter the story!



Mrs. Phyllis Grimes, a UA graduate student in Home Economics, competes with the photographer for the attention of nursery school youngsters during story hour.

Perhaps you have heard, "WAH, I want my daddy. I want my daddy right now!" That young man's mother might reply, "Daddy is at the office. He is sitting at his desk writing a letter. By-and-by he will come out of the office, and he will get in the car and drive home to Bobby."

This is a story. Of course it is a very simple story, but Bobby's mind is distracted from his immediate desire to see his daddy, for he is entertained by thinking of what his daddy is doing.

Or, perhaps, the little fellow comes in from a walk full of excitement from having seen and touched a pet rabbit. "Bobby see bunny! Bobby pat bunny! Fur. Soft!" He has told his first story—with the true story-teller's purpose of sharing experiences.

From such simple beginnings as these, stories develop quite simply and naturally. As the child grows, his stories grow. Soon he comes to enjoy stories about children like himself, about cars and pets or other things which are familiar to him. Later he begins to recognize the difference between things that really hap-

pened and things that might have happened.

Close to His Own Experience

First stories should tie in closely with things which have really happened and which the child has enjoyed. For this reason "home-made" stories are best to begin on. They should be brief, and at first not over one or two minutes in length. They should include action which the child is capable of doing himself, and graphic detail which the child is able to visualize.

We call these "here and now" stories because the youngster can think they really could happen here and now. They are about the world as it really is for this child here and now. Don't worry that he will get bored if you don't give him some of the "highly seasoned" stories—fairy tales and fantasies of various sorts. At his age the whole world is new and wonderful and exciting to him. Besides, for the young child there is more pleasure in familiarity than in strangeness. When he has found something he knows is good, he wants to keep it. Another

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ing of Cotton

Comparison of Growing Costs of Solid vs. Skip-Row Planted Cotton

ITEM	Cost Per Acre of Cotton		Increase (skip-row over solid)
	Solid	Skip-row	
Land preparation	\$ 12	\$ 24	Double
Seed & planting	4	4	Same
Cult., hoe & thin	20	28	Up 40%
Irrig. & ditch labor	8	10	Up 1/4
Fertilizer & application	18	18	Same
Insecticide & application	15	25	Up 2/3
Water	20	27	Up 1/3
Int. on crop loan, Soc. Sec., Ind. Ins.	6	8	Up 1/3
Total Growing Costs	\$103	\$144	Up 40%

This comparison shows an increase in growing costs of skip-row over solid-planted cotton of \$41 per acre, or about 40 per cent. Major increases are accounted for by higher land preparation costs, when all of a field is prepared yet only half is planted to cotton, and by increased costs for insecticides and application where aerial application is practiced. Most of the growers contacted did not increase fertilizer use on skip-row over solid in 1956 but in some cases this may be profitable.

Growers contacted in this study said yield increases of skip-row over solid planting ranged from 1/4 to 3/4 bales per acre in 1956. (The difference in yield between skip-row and solid-planted cotton was somewhat greater in 1955.) Using a net value of \$110 per bale of lint (500

pounds x 30 cents = \$150 less \$40 net harvesting and ginning costs and allowing for seed credits), returns are compared below for three levels of yield increases (a) 1/4 bale, (b) 1/2 bale, and (c) 3/4 bale per acre of skip-row as compared to a yield of two bales per acre from solid-planted cotton.

Comparison of Returns of Solid-Planted Cotton with Skip-Row Assuming Three Levels of Yield Increase

	Solid	Skip-row		
		2 1/4	2 1/2	2 3/4
Yield, bales per acre	2	2 1/4	2 1/2	2 3/4
Net Value of lint (figuring harvest & ginning costs & seed credits)	\$220	\$248	\$275	\$302
Less growing costs	103	144	144	144
Return for land & mgt.	\$117	\$104	\$131	\$158
Advantage for skip-row		-\$13	+\$14	+\$41

On the basis of the above, it appears that skip-row planting of cotton is profitable where a yield increase of half a bale or more is possible and where no profitable alternative crops exist. This is the case in some of the higher lift pumping areas. If a farmer has sufficient water to crop all his land, his decision on skip-row must depend on whether the net returns possible on alternative crops exceed the net returns of skip-row over solid-planted cotton.

tory. Here these college girls take charge of story-telling time, supervise working with clay, finger-painting and other creative activities, watch over playtime outside as pre-school children first learn to play on swings, teeter-totters and other play equipment.

The students learn how to arbitrate childhood disputes, how to comfort little ones away from mother for the first time, how to control the small boy who wants to throw blocks and balls at his playmates or through a window. In future professional life as home management consultants—or with their own children in their own homes—these girls will find valuable use for such training.

Points to Remember

In general, however, what should we advise about stories for young children? When you are selecting stories for little children here are some points to remember:

1. The story should be short and simple, about things with which the child is familiar, and in language which he can understand.
 2. Children like action stories.
 3. Children like stories about other children doing the same things they do.
 4. Children enjoy rhythm, repetition, and humor which is understandable to them.
 5. If the story includes animals, be sure they behave as animals really do. (Avoid big, bad wolves that climb down chimneys, talking snakes, etc.)
 6. Avoid stories about machines or other inanimate objects which talk and think like people.
 7. Avoid stories with a "moral". Pre-schoolers don't learn morals and manners from stories.
- Have fun reading, telling, and listening to stories with your youngsters!

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advantage of these "here and now" stories is that it is so much easier for a child to tell this kind of story. After all, it is just a step further on from his own conversation.

As the child's understanding of the world increases, so will the topics of interest to him in stories. As for humor, a child must have some understanding

of what really and truly is, before he can appreciate the humor of what is fantastically different from the real state of affairs. An older child may be amused if you say you threw a ball up to the moon, but a three-year-old might work away trying to throw a ball so it would go to the moon and be very upset when he couldn't accomplish it.

To learn about these lovable and amazing little tots, University of Arizona students in Home Economics use the university's nursery school as their labora-