

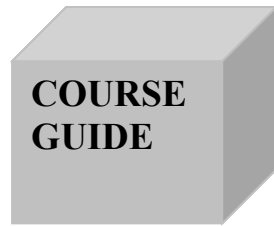


**NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA**

**SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES**

**COURSE CODE:PED635**

**COURSE TITLE:CHILDREN'S LITERATURE**



**PED635**  
**CHILDREN'S LITERATURE**

Course Team            Mrs. Obi, C. (Rebecca Developer/Writer) - ABS  
                                  Dr. Ayanniyi Alhassan (Programme Leader) - NOUN  
                                  Dr. U.S.A. Osuji (Coordinator) - NOUN



**NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA**

National Open University of Nigeria  
Headquarters  
14/16 Ahmadu Bello Way  
Victoria Island  
Lagos

Abuja Office  
5, Dar Es Salaam Street  
Off Aminu Kano Crescent  
Wuse II, Abuja  
Nigeria.

e-mail: [centralinfo@nou.edu.ng](mailto:centralinfo@nou.edu.ng)

URL: [www.nou.edu.ng](http://www.nou.edu.ng)

Published By:  
National Open University of Nigeria

First Printed 2010

ISBN: 978-058-428-5

All Rights Reserved

<b>CONTENTS</b>	<b>PAGE</b>
Introduction.....	1
Course Aims.....	1
Course Objectives.....	1
Working through the Course.....	1
The Course Material.....	2
Study Units.....	2
Text Books and References.....	3
Assessment.....	3
Tutor-Marked Assignment.....	3
End of Course Examination.....	4
Summary.....	4
<b>Introduction</b>	

In this course, we shall discuss a very interesting topic, children's literature. As a concept, children's literature is literature about children. It refers mainly to novels, stories, poetry, rhymes, folk tales, and books exclusively created for and addressed to infants, toddlers, and the young people as the target audience. Children's literature as a class activity, rather than primarily as individual reading offers the child enjoyment. It extends the child's experience and knowledge. It aids the child's reading ability and his use of language. It also stimulates the child's imagination. As teachers, you should give children literature that would please them, stimulate their imagination and build up their sensitivity and perceptive powers to be responsive to the demands of their cultural environment. You must decide what is appropriate for your class at any particular time.

### **Course Aims**

This Course Guide aims at providing you with the awareness of what this course-Children's Literature, is all about. The course provides you an understanding of the basic concepts, the value of children's literature, the characteristics, types of children's literature and the criteria for choosing literature for children. The course will also teach you about as guide helper and clarifier as you decide appropriate children's literature for your class.

### **Course Objectives**

After studying this course, you should be able to:

- explain the meaning of children's literature
- identify and discuss varieties of children's literature
- identify and explain the educational values of children's literature

- identify and explain the criteria for selection of children's literature
- identify and discuss the role of the teacher in teaching children's literature.

## **Working through the Course**

First, before you start studying this course, keep ready on your table a good dictionary, an exercise book for answering your self assessment questions and assignments, a pen and pencil. You should look up unfamiliar words in your dictionary.

Second, study the course, unit by unit. You would be required to spend a lot of time to read through the units to get the best result out of studying this course. You should also read, and note the very important ideas in each unit. Try and observe all the rules stated. Attempt all the self assessment activities given in each unit. Carry out the entire tutor-marked assignments only after you have understood the entire unit.

Third, you are advised to avail yourself of the opportunity of attending the tutorial sessions where you would have the opportunity of sharing and comparing your knowledge with your peers. You should participate actively in all discussions during your tutorials to achieve effective learning.

## **The Course Material**

You will be provided with the following materials:

- Course Guide
- study units

In addition, valuable textbooks which are not compulsory for you to buy or read are recommended and listed as supplementary to this course material.

## **Study Units**

The following are the study units contained in this course.

### **Module 1 Basic Concepts of Children's Literature**

Unit 1	The Concept of Literature and Children's Literature
Unit 2	Kinds of Children's Literature
Unit 3	The Characteristics and Needs of Children's Development

Unit 4 The Role of Children's Literature in Children's Development

Unit 5 Characteristics of Children's Literature

**Module 2 Essential Factors in Developing Children's Reading Skills**

Unit 1 Reading Skill Readiness

Unit 2 Developing Reading interest and Skills in Children

Unit 3 Purposes and Types of Reading

Unit 4 Library use Skill

**Module 3 Presenting Children's Literature**

Unit 1 Strategies of Teaching Children's Literature

Unit 2 Important Considerations in Planning and Literature Lesson

Unit 3 Criteria for Selecting Children's Literature

Unit 4 The Teachers Sanctions in Preparing Literature Lesson

The first module discusses the basic concepts of children's literature. It further introduces you to the characteristics, values of children's literature. The second module introduces the skills children need for the successful reading of literature in school. It further describes how the skill of creative reading and reading in the content areas could be acquired to help children in effective literature reading.

This module also attempts to explain the skill of library use and how it is very essential for successful literature reading by children.

In the last module of this course, you will learn the role of the teacher in selecting and presenting children's literature. You will be exposed to the aspects of Nigerian children's literature through some realistic fiction.

**Text Books and References**

More recent editions of these books are recommended for further reading.

Alan Davies (1973). *Literature for Children*. Oxford: The Open University Press.

Chidi Ikonne, Emilia Oko, Peter Onwudinjo (1992). *Children and Literature in Africa*. Calabar: Heinemann Educational Book (Nigeria) Plc.

Moody, H.L.B. (1971). *The Teaching of Literature in Developing Countries*. London: Group Ltd.

## **Assessment**

There are two components of assessment for this course. The Tutor-Marked Assignment (TMA) and the end of course Examination.

## **Tutor-Marked Assignment**

The TMA is the continuous assessment component of your course. It accounts for 30% of the total score. You will be given 3 TMA's to do before you are allowed to sit for the end of course examination. The TMAs would be given to you by your facilitator and returned after you have done the assignment.

## **End of Course Examination**

This examination concludes the assessment for the course. It constitutes 70% of the whole course. You will be informed of the time for the examination. It may not coincide with the university semester examination.

## **Summary**

This course intends to provide you with some underlying knowledge of children's literature. By the time you complete studying this course you will be able to answer the following types of questions:

What is the meaning of children's literature?

Why is it important that children should read literature in school? Can a child in your class be his own judge of what to read? How much help, guidance, censorship, does a child need in choosing books to read? What are the comics that you have read and what have you got out of them? In what ways do you think that comics have a part to play in developing reading skills? Discuss the steps you will undergo to stimulate readiness and willingness for every student in the class to read literature.

Discuss the elements you may consider necessary and suitable for teaching your class children the study of novel and the study of drama. How would you locate a book written by Atilude William in the library? How would you find a book you need on the origin of the Nupe people

in the library? You are entering the library for the first time to look for books to read in your subject area. What is your best approach?

We wish you success in this course. In particular, we hope you will be able to appreciate the importance of children's literature and the teacher's role as a guide, helper and clarifier to maximize value from children's literature.

We hope you enjoy the course.

Best wishes.

Course Code            PED635  
Course Title            Children's Literature

Course Team            Mrs. Obi, C. (Rebecca Developer/Writer) - ABS  
                                  Dr. Ayanniyi Alhassan (Programme Leader) - NOUN  
                                  Dr. U.S.A. Osuji (Coordinator) - NOUN



**NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA**

National Open University of Nigeria  
Headquarters  
14/16 Ahmadu Bello Way  
Victoria Island  
Lagos

Abuja Office  
5, Dar Es Salaam Street  
Off Aminu Kano Crescent  
Wuse II, Abuja  
Nigeria.

e-mail: [centralinfo@nou.edu.ng](mailto:centralinfo@nou.edu.ng)  
URL: [www.nou.edu.ng](http://www.nou.edu.ng)

Published By:  
National Open University of Nigeria

First Printed 2010

ISBN: 978-058-428-5

All Rights Reserved

<b>CONTENTS</b>	<b>PAGE</b>
<b>Module 1</b>	<b>Basic Concepts of Children's Literature..... 1</b>
Unit 1	The Concept of Literature and Children's Literature 1
Unit 2	Kinds of Children's Literature..... 6
Unit 3	The Characteristics and Needs of Children's Development..... 13
Unit 4	The Role of Children's Literature in Children's Development..... 20
Unit 5	Characteristics of Children's Literature..... 25
<b>Module 2</b>	<b>Essential Factors in Developing Children's Reading Skills..... 31</b>
Unit 1	Reading skill Readiness..... 31
Unit 2	Developing Reading Interest and Skills in Children 37
Unit 3	Purposes and Types of Reading..... 42
Unit 4	Library use Skill..... 50
<b>Module 3</b>	<b>Presenting Children's Literature..... 59</b>
Unit 1	Strategies of Teaching Children's Literature..... 59
Unit 2	Important Considerations in Planning and Literature Lesson..... 63
Unit 3	Criteria for selecting Children's Literature ..... 68
Unit 4	The Teachers Sanctions in Preparing Literature Lesson..... 73



## **MODULE 1      BASIC CONCEPTS OF CHILDREN'S LITERATURE**

Unit 1	The Concept of Literature and Children's Literature
Unit 2	Kinds of Children's Literature
Unit 3	The Characteristics and Needs of Children's Development
Unit 4	The Role of Children's Literature in Children's Development
Unit 5	Characteristics of Children's Literature

## **UNIT 1      THE CONCEPT OF LITERATURE AND CHILDREN'S LITERATURE**

### **CONTENTS**

1.0	Introduction
2.0	Objectives
3.0	Main Content
	3.1 Definition of Literature
	3.2 Definition of Children's Literature
4.0	Conclusion
5.0	Summary
6.0	Tutor-Marked Assignment
7.0	References/Further Reading

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

In this unit, we are going to examine the meaning of the term literature and children literature.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of the unit, you should be able to:

- define and explain the meaning of literature
- explain the meaning of children's literature.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 Definition of Literature**

The word literature is an umbrella term which covers a number of different kinds of activity and this suggests that there are many definitions of literature. At its widest, literature refers to all writings

relating to a matter in hand. For example, all writings on the entry requirements to National Open University of Nigeria mean all the literature on matters relating to entry requirements to National Open University of Nigeria. At its narrowest, literature refers to a special kind of writing of a country like Nigerian literature or French literature. Literature here could also refer to a special kind of writing of a period such as 18<sup>th</sup> century English literature or after the civil war, Nigerian literature.

Literature refers also to the study of books, etc. valued as works of art eg drama prose poetry, it refers, too, to books dealing with special subjects like travel literature or the literature of poultry-farming. Literature, includes not only novels, but also certain stories, letters, biographies, history, and example is Caesar's conquest of Gaul. There is also literature travels example travels on a donkey. Science example is, Darwin's The voyage of the 'Beagle'. Literature also includes the oral tradition, the legends, myths and sages from classical times right through to the folk tales of non-literate societies e.g Brer Rabbit, Anansi, stories, and the reworking of local folk tales by the Nigerian writer, Amos Tutuola. Literature further includes our own living tradition of children's games, songs and stories as in the Lore and Language of school children by Peter and Lona Opia (1959).

You will see clearly that from these definitions and explanations the word literature is used very widely and loosely. One way you will distinguish literature from history is by method and language of the artist. Literature is an art; literature is literature not because of what it is writing about but because of the artistic point of view, the artist's transformation of ideas and notions.

It is worth noting that the word literature can be found in a number of different kinds of statements and human activities. We can talk of literature as something associated with, a characteristic of a particular nation or people or groups of people; for example, Arabic literature, American literature, African literature, Nigerian literature and so on. You are to note that in such cases literature obviously has some kind of collective significance, transcending the particular individuals who produce and consume it. Then again we can talk of the literature of a particular historical period or movement, which may often be found in a number of different cultures; for example, Renaissance (French) literature, Romantic literature, Colonial literature, the literature of independent Africa, and so on.

In a rather different way, we can talk of the literature of a particular subject or topic, examples are the literature of ship-building, literature of linguistics, and the literature of child development. In this sense, of

course, literature means everything of significance that has ever been written about that subject. We can also talk of literature as a school subject on the school time table as a part of the school curriculum, distinctly different from Economics, Mathematics or Chemistry.

From the above definitions, literature often refers to a subject of study, a form of training or written work. In all these forms, the raw material of literature is language either written or spoken. We can even say that literature is language. It consists of certain rather specialized forms, selections and collections of language. By language, we mean, those distinctive speech sounds which are used in various kinds of systematic pattern to communicate all necessary messages.

My Language, of course is based on forms of speech, but most. Languages have developed systems for recording language in more permanent, written forms. Now, language as a means of social communication and control is used countless times each day for greetings, enquiries, instructions, information, news, reports, proposals, contracts and so on. Anyone who is concerned with literature is also concerned with language because literature is constructed out of language. It is with language that literary writers present their views to the reader with one or two emphasis. The first emphasis is on his experience and other people's experience, in which case the reader adds something to his store of knowledge about the world; an extreme example of this might be Daniel Defoe's *'A journal of the plague year'*. The second emphasis is on the experience in such a way as to help the reader learn something more about himself as a human being; an extreme example here might be Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway*. *You will note that we cannot learn more about ourselves in literature except through someone else's experience which in itself enlarges our knowledge about the world; and we cannot learn more about the world without learning a little about humanity and therefore ourselves. Language is the raw material with which literary writers articulate their artistic point of view as a means of furthering experience of the world and as a means of finding out more about oneself. This is the reason literature is defined as language.*

The two criteria are as follows; the first is whether the heroes are children to teenagers.

The second is whether the theme, that is the ideas, relationships and language are simple or complex. Literature is literature for children if the heroes are children and the theme is simple and not complex.

Thirdly, when they teach moral lessons with a view to entrenching the values of the society in them.

### 3.2 Definition of Children's Literature

Children's literature as a concept is defined as literature exclusively about children. Children's literature refers mainly to stories, poetry, rhymes, folk tales, drama, exclusively created for children such as infants, toddlers and the young people as target audience.

Children's literature which is exclusively written for children seems to rest on three criteria: the first is whether the heroes are children or teenagers, the second is whether the themes, that is the ideas, relationships and language, are simple or complex. Simplicity of theme is therefore the over-riding criterion that determines and defines literature as children's literature. Literature is literature for children if the ideas, relationship and language are simple. However, literature is not children's literature if the ideas, relationship and language are found too complex whether oral or written. For example, a classic literature like Gulliver's Travels is admitted into children's literature because of simplicity of its ideas, relationship and language. But the turn of the screw or Lolita, let us say, would not be admitted as children's literature because the ideas, relationship and language otherwise called the theme are complex. Thirdly, children's literature is often aimed at teaching moral lessons.

### 4.0 CONCLUSION

Literature has been variously defined and explained in this Unit. Generally, literature refers to writings relating to a matter in hand. Specifically, literature refers to something associated with a particular nation for example Arabic literature, Nigerian literature, literature also refers to a particular historical period, for example colonial literature. We have also literature of a particular subject or topic; for example literature of ship-building. We also have literature as a subject studied in school distinctly different from other subject like Economics and Mathematics. Thus, literature could mean a subject of study, a form of work or of training. The raw material of literature is language hence literature is language. We also have literature for children or children's literature. It means literature exclusively written about children for children. It refers to novels, books, stories, poetry, folk tales, prose Fiction and Drama specially created for children as the target audience. Its themes, i.e ideas, relationship and language are simple and not complex, and the heroes are children.

### 5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, you have learnt that literature generally refers to anything written relating to a matter in hand. Specifically, literature refers to

writings associated with a particular subject or topic for example children's literature.

Children's literature refers to literature exclusively for children. It refers to Stories, Poetry, Rhymes, Folk tales, Drama to mention but these specially created for children as target audience. The criteria that define literature as children's literature are that: first the heroes are children and two the theme comprising the ideas, relationship and language are simple and not complex. Finally, they aim at teaching moral lessons.

## **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

1. What is literature?
2. What is children's literature?

## **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING**

Ian Davis (1973). *Literature for Children*. Oxford: The Open University Press.

Chidi, Ikonne *et al* (1992). (eds.). *Children and Literature in Africa*. Calabar. Heinemann Educational Books (Nigeria), Plc.

Moody, H.L.B. (1971). *The Teaching of Literature in Developing Countries*. London: Group Ltd.

Hindle, Alan (1971). *The Literature under the desk; Some exploratory notes on a College of Education Course*. 5(1), 46.

Zimet, Sara and Blom, Gaston, E. (1972) Recommendations in Sera G. Zimet (ed.). *What Children Read in School*. New York: Grune and Stratton.

## UNIT 2 KINDS OF CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

### CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Kinds of Children's Literature
  - 3.2 Short Stories
  - 3.3 Folk Tales
  - 3.4 Myths and Legends
  - 3.5 Novel
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

In unit 1 we discuss the meaning of the concepts of literature and children's literature. In that unit/we defined literature as an umbrella term which covers a number of different kinds of activity. Suggesting that there are many definitions of literature one of such definitions sees literature as something associated with a particular subject or topic; examples are literature of linguistics, and children's literature. We also defined literature as a school subject studied as a part of school curriculum distinctly different from other school subjects like mathematics, Economics, History and so on. In this connection sense of course literature is sub-divided into various sub-categories like Poetry, Fiction, Drama, Satire, Tragedy and so on.

In that unit too, we defined children's literature as literature about children. It refers to Novels, Stories, Poetry, Fiction, Drama, Satire, Tragedy, folk tales and so on exclusively created for children such as infants, toddlers and teenagers as target audience.

In this unit, we shall discuss the various kinds of children's literature like; the Novels, Drama, Poetry, Folk tales, Myths and Legends, and real life situations.

### 2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of the unit, you should be able to:

- identify the different kinds of children's literature
- describe the three types of children's literature.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 Kinds of Children's Literature**

There are many kinds of children's literature; examples are short novels, poetry, Drama, Folk tales, myths and legends and real life situations to mention but a few

#### **3.2 Short Stories**

A short story is a kind of children's literature. Story here means account of past events or account of imaginary events. Short stories may be found in special collection but may appear from time to time in periodicals. Since they are short, stories of this kind are usually somewhat restricted in their scope, number of characters, etc. Short stories have the great practical advantage of being more manageable. A story can often be read to a class at a single sitting or studied as a single assignment whether in or out of classroom. The short story, also be experienced simultaneously by the whole class, which often makes discussion easier and invites comparison and imitation. To the child reading means listening to stories acted as well as reading by oneself.

You will note that whenever we talk of children's literature we are thinking of children in Elementary/Primary schools within the age range of 6-14 years as well as those in junior secondary schools. The range of what stories to write and the themes are limitless. Children love school stories, family stories, stories' of adventure which are meant to entertain and amuse, instruct, teach morals, history, geography and problems solving. Children's stories are about what people do, why they do it and what results from the doing and not what people think about what they do for thought processes are generally a bore to the young.

Children too like familiar stories about animals, toys, pets, parents, grandparents. Children also like themselves who get cross, play, play up, get up, go shopping; and who are fed and scolded, loved, taken out and put to bed. Children up to the age of four or time like stories of the familiar. Indeed, at some stage, children love the made up story that is obviously about themselves and their own recent activities. From this delight in the familiar, children move on to the kind of story which opens up in their familiar world a wider range of possibilities than they normally exploit. Children too, like stories of actual children whose behaviour is somewhat unconventional, and who break the rules or are just unable to cope with them, who get into trouble, challenge authority, and triumph over people who are bigger or older than themselves. My Naughty little sister is an example of the kind of story book that bridges the gap between the familiar world of the average child and the

unconventionally familiar world of little people such as Peter Rabbit, little O and the urchin. Stories within this range of experience, and at this level of simplicity, will continue to appeal to children at least up to the age of eight.

### **3.3 Folk Tales**

Folk tales refer to popular stories handed down orally from past generation. Folk tales give children a sense of security as they find that they belong to the life of the different environments that they have to adapt to. Parents tell children these folk stories at home, and then when they go to school, the teacher tells them too. The children go to a new class and the stories are repeated or read or at least talked about. If the stories should feature in the life of the first year of their junior school, they will ease children's transfer from the infants and develop confidence between them and the new teacher.

The child's first experience of the story will be through an adult who tells or reads and shows him pictures. Later he will find himself able to join in parts of the story, to tell parts or all of it himself, perhaps to act it or write about it; and often the greatest thrill comes when he finds that he can read the story for himself in his own book. The story of how the child comes to possess a traditional tale through, perhaps, three years of nursery and infant days may well reflect the history of his whole development as a person during that time.

Children's tastes may move from the very simple rustic tale like 'Jack and the Bean stalk' to the more literary work of Walter de la Mare, Oscar Wilde and Arabian Nights. Folktales like giants, monsters and wicked step mothers for example, can become the source of a rather stereotyped vicarious horror, while a story like 'Beauty and the Beast', which presents the horror figure ambivalently, can start a much needed vein of new sympathy. Between the ages of eight/nine and eleven years, allegorical stories of the type of pilgrim's progress, kind of the Golden River, and The soldier and Death -often tales of moral struggle, following the structure of an arduous journey -can take hold on the imagination of children.

#### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1**

Explain folktales as children's Literature.

### 3.4 Myths and Legends

Myths mean person or thing, etc that is imaginary, fictions or invented. It refers to unreal story, handed down from olden times, especially concepts or beliefs about the early history of a race, explanations of natural events, such as the seasons.

A mythical story is usually an illustration of the origins of life and death and the fundamental pattern of nature. The stories of Persephone, Prometheus and Loki, for example, are metical. Persephone was the daughter of zeus, who allowed her to spend six months of the year on earth and six months in the underworld, a symbol of the buying of the seed in the ground and the growth of the corn. Prometheus made mankind out of clay and when zeus in his anger deprived them of fire, Prometheus stole fire from heaven for them and taught them many arts. If myths embody beliefs about life and the nature of mankind, then legends usually tell of the shaping of a nation through the exploits of its heroes. Legends are often quasi-historical and their characters, their actions and the environment in which they live and struggle are fully realized. The action is rooted in recognizable human behaviour, although this may be transcended from time the time by magic and superhuman powers.

Myths are more abstract than most kinds of stories that the child will meet. Their characters tend to be more unworldly, and the action is often less firmly rooted in the circumstances of a particular environment. For this reason they may seem remote from the child, but they will appeal to some children at a level beyond concrete understanding and are well worth telling to any age group.

The dividing line between myth and legend is blurred for two main reasons. First, both kinds of stories express reflect and communicate a picture of the human condition held more or less in common in the minds of men. Second, myths pervade all language and literature, including legend. In other words, many stories will have a mythological centre, or their heroes will give rise to a myth, the embodiment of a system of values and attitudes to life. For example, Ulysses becomes an archetypal figure giving rise to the myth of cunning, man's resourcefulness and perseverance in the face of adversity.

Legendary stories as those of Robin Hood can be told, suitably scaled to junior school children of any age, but they can normally be explored more successfully in the sustained and coherent way that makes for deepening understanding, with children between the ages of nine and twelve. Legends will provide children with endless material for their own creative work.

### 3.5 Novel

The novel is a kind of children's literature. It is a story in prose, long enough to fill one or more volumes, about either imaginary or historical people. The Novels by Dickens are examples. Novels tend to have fairly complex structures, in which some or other of the following element can be recognized:

- setting,
- characters,
- plot,
- narrative,
- techniques and
- language.

Setting means the geographical, historical, social and political environment or background in which the story is set. The setting of a novel may be unchanged throughout; in many works, however, there may be deliberate contrasts between two or more types of backgrounds. Example could be between life in the urban big city and life in the rural areas as in Cyprian Ekwensi's *Jagua Nana*.

Character refers to an individual who takes part i.e as a *dramatis persona*. Character also refers to indications of special notable qualities, or characteristics of particular individuals. An important part of the reading of any novel is the attempt to determine the valuation which the author has placed upon each character, remembering that it will not be always an absolute clear-cut distinction between bad and good. Very often, it is important to follow the author's explanation of what makes his character what they are:

The interpretation of a character in a novel can be a valuable exercise in the collection and interpretation of evidence. Students should learn to give consideration to the following in interpreting a character:

- (1) What the author himself tells us.
- (2) What a character himself says or does.
- (3) What other characters say about each other.
- (4) What a character is represented as thinking, feeling, doing or Refraining from doing.

It may be useful to observe certain kinds of grouping or patterning amongst characters or types of characters. Always, of course, the reader

will be bounded by what the author has put into the book and represented in the words used. Sometimes, it is quite difficult to remember that characters have no independent existence outside the book. If the reader fails to remember this, his interpretation can easily become distorted by his personal views.

### **Plot**

This is the stay line. The order in which the stories narrated the Narrative Technique is therefore concerned with how we learn what happens for example events normally follow each other in some chronological sequence.

### **Language**

Language is the raw materials for writing novels. In some cases, authors maintain a uniform style throughout. In other cases, authors modify the language they employ, whether in direct speech or narrative, to reflect the thoughts and feelings of particular character at particular moments.

### **Themes**

The culmination of the study of a novel will be to recognize and express, in terms which indicate that we have genuinely grasped the underlying themes which it may embody. Sometime, the themes may be obvious, as for example, in Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* that there is an inevitable conflict between old and new in a changing society. Sometimes the themes may not always be easy to identify. Themes of a novel should be given to the children by the teacher. Children must be allowed to grow into consciousness, as a result of their experience of living through the novel assisted by useful discussion. The children must be seen to grasp relatively simple concepts, as of character, plot, cause and effect, before going on to more high-level abstractions.

## **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2**

Explain the Novel as children literature

### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

There are many kinds of children's literature. These include: short stories, folk tales, myths and legends.

## 5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, we have discussed kinds of children's literature. Which include short stories, folk tales, myths and legends, and Novels?

### ANSWER TO SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

Folk Tales refer to popular stories handed down orally from past generations. They give children a sense of security as they find that they belong to the life of the different environments that they have to adapt to. Parents and teachers tell children these stories at home and in the school. The child's first experience of the story will be through an adult who tells or reads and shows him pictures. Later he will find himself able to join parts of the story, to tell parts or all of it himself, perhaps to act it or write about it, and often the greatest thrill comes when he finds that he can read the story for himself in his own book.

### ANSWER TO SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

A Novel is a kind of children's literature. It is a story in prose, long enough to fill one or more volumes, about either historical people or imaging. Novels tend to have fairly complex structures. The following elements of a novel which can be recognized include; setting, characters, plot, language and themes.

## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Name three kinds of children's literature and describe one of them.

## 7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

Alan Davies (1973). *Literature for Children*. Oxford: The Open University Press.

Chinua Achebe (1986). "What has literature got to do with it? National merit Award Winner's Lecture *ANA REVIEW* VOL. 2 P.W.

Achebe, Chinua (1966) *Chike and the River*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

## **UNIT 3 THE CHARACTERISTICS AND NEEDS OF CHILDREN'S DEVELOPMENT**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Characteristics of Children's Development
  - 3.2 The Needs of Children
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

In unit 2, we discussed kinds of children's literature. You gathered that children's literature is different from adult's literature because children have distinct needs and characteristics. You may be curious to know those children's characteristics and needs which distinguish children's literature from adult literature.

In this unit, we shall discuss the characteristics and needs of children, and the importance of children's literature in meeting the needs.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of the unit, you should be able to:

- describe characteristics of children's development
- identify and explain the various needs of children
- discuss various ways children's literature satisfies the needs of children.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 Definition of Children and Their Developmental Characteristics**

Generally, the term 'children' has been defined by the United Nations Organization as people under the age of 18 years.

Considering the psycho-biological changes that take place in children, their developmental stages are as follows:

When a baby is born, after a short time (about 0-6 months) the mother trains the baby to sit. She continues to do this until the baby is able to sit alone without help. No sooner has the baby learnt to sit than he starts to creep around the floor. From creeping, the baby, with time, starts to hold things around and practice standing with the help of the objects. By the end of the 12 months, the baby can stand and walk around in the room. When the baby continues to perform these tasks we say that he is developing. The baby develops physically, intellectually, socially, emotionally and in other dimension. The periods of development could be: (0-3) years infancy period, (3-5) years early childhood (6 -11) years middle and late childhood (12-18) years adolescence period.

We shall group all in these categories simply, as children. During these periods, children's development exhibit certain characteristics as follows:

- (1) Under physical developmental characteristics, growth in physical dimension during infancy (birth to 2 years) is very rapid to enable the child acquire some measure of individual capabilities. However, in early childhood period (3-5 years) of age, growth changes and slows down and never accelerates as in infancy. At early childhood stage, the child begins to assume the body proportions of an adult. He grows in size and weight. The larger muscles and brain also develop. The child also develops a variety of motor skills such as self-feeding, self dressing, bathing, brushing the hair, playing with toys, jumping, hopping and holding pencil normally.
- (2) The intellectual developmental characteristics manifest in the following:
  - Verbal component i.e understanding and use of words
  - Numerical component -working with numbers
  - Spatial component seeing and manipulating figures and space.
  - Social components -reasoning with problems in human relationships
  - Mechanical component -working with objects.

According to Piaget, intellectual development progresses in four stages namely:

- Sensory motor stage (0-2 years)
- Pre-operational stage (2-7 years)
- Concrete operational stage (7-11 years)
- The formal operations (11-18 years)

The early childhood period (3 – 5) years fall within the pre-operational period of development characterized by rapid development of language

ability and of the ability to represent things symbolically. This is called symbolic function. For example, children at this age would represent a car with a steering movement. Symbolic representation of this nature is called 'signifies' understood only by the child. This is the reason adults have difficulty in communicating with the early childhood school children. This explains the frustration on the part of the children expressed with various outburst of anger which adults see as naughty behaviour of children. For example, a 3-years old child represents a concept in his mind with a bottle top and he asks the mother to call its name. The mother may call it bottle top which may be different from the concept the child had in mind, the child may become annoyed and throw himself to the ground and start crying. This shows that children at this stage, represent the world in ways different from how adults represent it.

At this stage too, children are egocentric, that is, whatever the child has like biscuit or cake must be his and his alone. At this stage too, children are strongly attracted to physical properties of tasks and problems, colour, size and arrangements are the good examples. Children at this stage, tend to focus attention on just one single object or on a particular problem or feature that attract him most. The child's actions are based on trial-and-error process. Representation of reality is distorted. Problem-solving skills is at its rudimentary stage. Conservation ability is absent. The child also lacks operational reversibility in thought and action. The child does not think forward and backward.

- (3) Social developmental characteristics indicate that the child is born in a social environment where his personality development is shaped.

The other characteristics are that:

- feeling of autonomy develops in children. And they begin to explore their environment independently.
- children of both sexes play together without any discrimination.

They actively participate in group games in which physical energy is used; example is hide and seek game. They learn to co-operate with others and make friends on shared interests and similar personality traits.

The child seeks social approval of his actions:

- (4) Emotional development characteristics of children are various.
- The emotional expressions in children are intense, irrespective of the intensity of the stimulus.

- Emotions are frequent and are expressed in relation to the concrete objects.
- Emotions are temporary. It means a child shifts very rapidly. For example, a child of 3 years who is weeping, if given a biscuit will stop crying and become happy.
- Children fail to hide their emotions but express them indirectly through different activities such as crying, nail biting, thumb-sucking and speech difficulties.

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1**

Outline the developmental characteristics of children and explain one.

### **3.2 The Needs of Children**

Children in general have their basic needs as growing individuals. Needs here are necessities which must be satisfied for the continued survival of the child. Children's needs tend to be physiological and psychological. We shall now discuss these two major categories of children's needs.

The following are the physiological needs of children:

1. Need for food: Children need food for nourishment to grow and develop normally. Children who are not properly fed but are sent to school gain very little from the activities undertaken in the school. They are often restless and very irritable. Children need balanced feeding for growth and development and to become effective in their learning at school.
2. The need for activity, quiet time and rest. Children need plenty of activities, thereafter they need enough hours of sleep and rest.
3. Need for elimination of body waste.
4. Children need good health habits and conducive home, school and social environment and sound information about sex differences.

The other needs of children are psychological. Examples are:

1. The need for affection: This refers to children's need to receive love from those around them -such as parents, siblings, age-mates, school mates, and teachers. Children tend to show love to those who love them and show hatred to those they feel to be their enemies. Children like to experience love demonstrated in parental and teacher actions through companionship,

conversation, playing, answering their questions and involvement in household chores like dish washing, emptying waste bins, reading with them and taking them out on trips.

2. The need for belonging. Children need to be reassured that they belong to the group. They get this reassurance when they notice that people around them need them and their services. Children need to feel that they are accepted as members of a group. Ridicule by adults around them can make them feel unacceptable.
3. The need to achieve and be recognized. Children have the natural urge to achieve and be recognized as they achieve. Children should be praised for very little effort exhibited to achieve.
4. The need for independence: Children need independence. They reject adults meddling with their business. Parents and teachers should encourage the children to tackle appropriate tasks when there is no danger or physical injury involved in the task performance.
5. The need for status: Here as children grow they develop individually the concept of self-identity. With the development of self-identity, every home the child needs the recognition of parents. On the play ground he recognition from his teacher. Any child who is denied this need of recognition and status may begin to seek other ways for its gratification.

Generally, the child may resort to anti-social activities like bullying or even stubbornness to the teacher, peers or parents. However, if the recognition status, that is, recognition and attention is gratified, the child will become satisfied and even spurred to further achievements.

## **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2**

Explain the child's need for belonging.

### **3.2 Importance of Children's Literature in Meeting the Needs of Children**

What is children's literature? Children's literature refers to any book for children which contain short stories, fables, legends, folktales, etc, to be read, or acted or listened to. Children's book includes picture books for young children. They are books written from the heart and from at least some memory of and contact with childhood. Children's literature or children's books are written to meet the needs of children. Such needs are children's mental health, security, to love and be loved, to achieve, the needs to know and the needs for aesthetic satisfaction.

Children's literature plays important roles in meeting the above needs. For example, generally, children's literature creates a unique world into which the child will go willingly and actively. They contain some portions of adult comments delivered from one intelligent individual to another without condescension.

Specifically, children's literature or books foster reading habits in children to provide pleasure entertainment and enhance their educational development. It is believed that success in many academic subjects later in life is dependent upon the children's reading ability fostered by children's literature. Literature written for children can help to fulfil a child's need for security, to love and be loved, to achieve, to know and the need for esteem, independence and aesthetic satisfaction. Furthermore, other important outcome of children's literature reading are: extension and enrichment of children's experience of complex ways of man's living. Gaining insight into one's personality and problems. Giving opportunities to relieve and experience the adventure and ideas of others. Providing materials which help to create an appreciation and understanding of the problems of others. The development of love of country and democratic ideas. The discovery of ethical values which are common to different creeds and which form a foundation of good character in the modern world. Providing opportunity for fun and escape. The development of worthwhile tastes and a permanent interest in good literature. A reading programme aided by children's literature can contribute to positive mental health. Reading disability produces in most cases personality maladjustments so that normal mental health cannot be maintained.

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3**

Explain the role of literature in meeting children's psychological developmental needs.

### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

Children have various needs and characteristics that are recognized and satisfied by literature.

### **5.0 SUMMARY**

In this unit, we have learnt that children have physical, social, emotional, intellectual needs which literature satisfies.

### **ANSWER TO SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1**

Children's developmental characteristics include; physical development, intellectual development, social development and emotional development. Each of these is explained below:

### **Social Development Characteristics**

Social development characteristics indicate that the child is born in a social environment where his personality development is shaped. The child actively participates in group games in which physical energy is used. They learn to co-operate with others and make friends on shared interests and similar personality traits.

### **ANSWER TO SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2**

Children need to be reassured that they belong to the group reassurance why they notice that people around them need them and their services. Children need to feel that they are accepted as members of a group. Ridicule by adults around them can make them feel unacceptable.

### **ANSWER TO SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3**

Literature at different stage' affect children's interest and enthusiasm. These in turn affect their readiness to co-operate, powers of memory, willingness to make the efforts requested by the teacher and the possibility of finding significance in what they are invited to read.

## **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

List (a) The physiological and (b) the psychological needs of children.

## **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING**

Chauhan, S. S. (1978). *Advanced Educational Psychology*. New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House PVT LTD.

Eke, E. and Esuman J. K. (1974). *Child Development in a Changing Cultural Contexts* Ibadan: Heinemann (Nig.) Educational Books.

Piaget, J. and Inhelder B. (1969). *The Psychology of the Child*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

## **UNIT 4 THE ROLE OF CHILDREN'S LITERATURE IN CHILDREN'S DEVELOPMENT**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 The Role of Children's Literature on the Development of Children's Perception
  - 3.2 The Role of Literature in Meeting Children's Psychological Development
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

In unit 3, we examined the characteristics and needs of children's development. It is assumed you gathered that children's intellectual, physical, social and emotional developments have specific characteristics. You also gathered that children have physiological and psychological needs, which literature play some roles in providing for children. In this unit, we shall discuss those roles literature plays to satisfy children's developmental needs.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of the unit, you should be able to:

- identify and discuss various roles literature plays to satisfy children's developmental needs.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 The role of literature in the development of children**

##### **(a) Perception**

Literature can provide materials, opportunities and encouragement for children's intellectual development.

For example, the study of literature can be used to extend the range of perceptions of all the senses of sight, hearing, taste, scent and touch. Following many literature writers' insights and interpreting words they

have used, children are led to recognize an ever-extending range of perceptions and distinctions, as for example, between yellow and golden, loud and stirring; fragrant and odorous and countless others.

**(b) Sensory Motor**

Similarly, literature can make a fundamental contribution in providing sensory motor physical activity through drama to train the human body to express itself.

**(c) Intellect**

Literature helps to train children's intellect. For example, literature trains the child in the logical process which depends on such things as accurate perception, precise interpretation of language, the grouping and classification of data, the drawing of correct inductions and deductions, judgements of various kinds and the formulation of appropriate course of action. No child on entering secondary school is expected to confront all these weighty responsibilities from the very beginning, however, teachers of literature can encourage respect for facts, distinguishing between what is certain and what is conjectural, establishing the evidence for an opinion, recognizing fallacious methods of argument, and so on. Literature is a discipline. Discipline is concerned with learning to do something in accordance with a body of well-established rules or standards. Literature as a discipline provides opportunities expression, exploration and imitation. It helps children to learn to solve problems, how to get things done right, and test the degree of success.

**(d) Emotions**

Literature helps in the training of children's emotions. Literature certainly presents us with a wide range of situations and predicaments which seem to stimulate some kind of emotional response; and also that on the whole the writers of literature present these situations in ways which enable us to explore and develop our feelings in an appropriate humane way.

You will have to note here that the culture of the feelings, the training of the emotions is more frequently associated with the study of literature. Certain feelings are very complex and intricate element in human behaviour. To a large extent, any society is concerned with the training of the feelings of its members, inducing people to like what they ought to like, and discourage them from liking what they ought not to like. For example, the sight of a grown man beating a small boy seems to demand our indignation, whereas the sight of the sea breaking upon a rocky

coast demands our awe and admiration; and we can say that anyone who fails to make these normal responses was less than human.

**(e) Social Awareness**

Social awareness here means to have a comprehensive awareness of other people. Social awareness is effective understanding of other people and this can only be based on understanding and appreciation of oneself and of one's own culture.

A successful educated person is one who has achieved an attitude of respect towards all other people in the world, which include at first his own family, his own friends, his own village, his own tribe, but then beyond that, all the other tribes, nations, and roles he may encounter in the world. A mature attitude is based on understanding and interest, and expresses itself in tolerance and friendliness. To be effective, this understanding must embrace all aspects of the ways of other people, including their work, their behaviour, their customs, their religion and so on.

This social awareness attitude is not in children. A newly born infant has no conception of the world apart from its own needs, and all its activities are directed towards the satisfaction of its egocentric requirements. The process of growing up for the human individual is a very long one especially where it is, concerned with the recognition and appreciation of other people, and of course, this is often quite a painful process involving conflicts, clashes, and friction of many kinds.

Literature is used to produce a comprehensive awareness of other people. For example, modern writers have done much to stimulate interest in and sympathy for the problems of the unfortunate, the oppressed, the unsuccessful, the deranged, the offender against society. In literary writings, these writers have great capacity for identifying themselves with other people, putting themselves into other people's position for seeing into the heart of a problem. A teacher of literature, by making a judicious selection, can do a tremendous amount to help his students understand other people, and in the process understand themselves also.

**(f) Character**

Literature shapes children's character. First, study of literature is likely to develop a keener sense of values in children who gain an intimate acquaintance with it. More than most other kinds of studies it acquaints us with the whole range of possibilities of human life: from happiness, achievement, ecstasy, joy, love, freedom, friendship, self-respect to

greed, defeat, despair, apathy, hate, disintegration, death. We may reason that a person who has been through the reading of a number of works of literature is likely to have a better sense of what is worth-while and what is not. The general probability is also that he will thereafter look upon the complexities of life with much greater understanding insight, tolerance and sympathy.

Secondly the character training possibilities of literary studies is that they can contribute to the development of personal qualities which include such things as perseverance, resourcefulness, imagination and creativity. Literature therefore is an excellent means of children for character development.

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1**

Explain perception as one of the roles of literature in the development of children.

### **3.2 The Role of Literature in Meeting Children's Psychological Development**

We appreciate that children are quite different in their psychological make up and that they develop through fairly distinct stages. For example, excluding the years of infancy, children (8 or 9 years of age) are in the autistic stage. Here their imaginations are not yet initiated into the world of reality, but delight in many kinds of fantasy.

(About 10 -12 years of age), children are in their romantic stage where they develop the grasp of reality, but see the world in highly simplified categories. At this stage, children love stories of heroic exploits, during adventures, dastardly villains, and so on.

(13 -16 years of age) children are in their realistic stage. By now children have moved out of the stage of fantasy, and are keenly interested in what really happens. Is it true? How does he do it, they wish to know and are ready to follow up with the detail which seems to explain actual affairs of life.

(From 16 onward) children at this stage are not only interested in practical details, but are prepared to abstract, to generalize, to search for the underlying causes of phenomena, to make moral judgements, and generally to philosophize. Hence this stage is called generalizing stage.

These stages determine the works of literature that are chosen for children because they affect children's interests, enthusiasms and aversion. These in turn affect their readiness to co-operate, ginger their powers of memory and willingness to make the efforts requested by the

teacher and the possibility of finding significance in what they are invited to read.

Literature selected for study make their appeal at children's stage of physiological development which a particular class has reached.

## **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2**

Explain the role of literature in meeting children's psychological development.

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

Stages of children's development guide the teachers of literature in choosing appropriate literary works for children.

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

In this unit we have learnt the roles literature performs in the children's development.

## **ANSWER TO SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1**

Literature can provide opportunities and encouragement for children's intellectual development. For example, the study of literature can be used to extend the range of perceptions of all the senses of sight, hearing, taste, scent and touch. Following many literature writers' insights and interpreting words they have used, students are led to recognize an ever-extending range of perceptions and distinctions, as for example, between yellow and golden, loud and stirring fragrant and odorous.

## **ANSWER TO SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2**

Literature at different stage affect children's interest, enthusiasm and aversion. These in turn affect their readiness to co-operate, powers of memory, willingness to make the efforts requested by the teacher and the possibility of finding significance in what they are invited to read.

## **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

List the areas literature can make contribution -in children's development.

## **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING**

Moody, H. L. B. (1971). *The Teaching of Literature in Developing Countries*. London. Group Ltd.

## **UNIT 5      CHARACTERISTICS OF CHILDREN'S LITERATURE**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objective
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Characteristic of Children's Literature
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

In Unit 4, we discussed the roles of literature that satisfy children's developmental needs. You learnt that literature provides materials, opportunities and encouragement for the development of children's perception intellect, emotions, social awareness and character. Literature too promotes the psychological development of children.

In this unit, we shall discuss characteristics of children's literature that distinguish it from adult's literature and enable it to help children's development.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVE**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- describe the characteristics of children's literature.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 Characteristics of Children's Literature**

Children's literature is literature specifically about children. Two criteria characterize children's literature. The first is whether the heroes are children. The second is whether the themes i.e. the ideas, and relationships as well as language are simple and suitable for children's enjoyment.

Children's literature is produced largely with a child's interest and needs in mind, one that deals honestly with children, portrays them candidly and in a medium to which they can respond with imagination and pleasure. A writer of children's literature is always aware of the mind,

psychology and understanding of the child. He recognizes the differences in the children's psychology, needs understanding and interests of the various developmental levels. All writers of children literature must of necessity be aware of children's peculiar characteristics and should not allow their own tastes and interests to influence how a child will react to a particular book of short-stories, folk tales and so on. The writer should be aware of the implications of children's difference<sup>5</sup>and should be able to envisage the nature of a child's world and predict his interests, responses and feelings. This is the only way he can produce convincing pictures of children as beings capable of distinct and individual experiences.

Literature that is written for children should not be junk or mediocre material but should please them, stimulate their imagination, build up their sensitivity to experiences of all kinds, develop their perceptive powers and help them to grow up in a cultural environment responsive to African and international world.

The themes should revolve around the local life stories which try at the same time to project the African or Nigerian culture, pride and self identify.

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1**

Describe the characteristics of children's literature.

One of the primary objectives of children's literature is provide pleasure for the children. In order to achieve this, the author must consider the audience and relate the theme to children's culture and age so that they will benefit from what they read.

Additionally, children's literature helps in transmission and reinforcement of customary values and attitudes to children. For example, in a traditional society where schools are devoted to the study of religious texts in foreign tongue, folk tales, proverbs, historical legends and etiological narratives that represent approved and deviant behaviours and their consequences are, virtually for lack of competition, among the most influential instrument for transmission and reinforcement of customary values and attitudes among children growing up. You will note this point in Edgars "Hausa Tales and Tradition", in a traditional preliterate society folk education consists mainly in the transmission and reinforcement of stereo-typed folk attitudes, values and conceptions, rather than in the transfer of technical knowledge, data or moral maxims. Children's literature could also foster education of children early on institutions of our society, inter-ethnic

relations and social stratification, values, belief, social orientations, social history, culture and development.

You will remember that folktale, as a particular genre of children's literature even when dealing with fabulous creature and events as in "Amos Tutuola's *The Palm Wine Drinkard*" serves as media for the socialization of successive generation of children of an area who are gradually inducted from realm of cultural fantasy in which animal talk and act like adults into the love of white (good) and black (bad) spirits, of magic and the mysterious, and so, with certain transformation and changing stress, into the complex work in the society, when differential of birth, status and power are often interpreted in mystical terms.

Similarly, Harold and Ruth aim of writing a collection of TIV tales were to encourage interest in traditional culture as revealed in oral literature, as well as provide stimulating reading practice for school children.

In a similar vein, Manton in his book of tales states that his motives in writing the book were to enable the reader learn cause and meaning of all things, how the earth and the stars were created or water divided from dry land, how their own cities were founded, why some people seemed by nature to be brave and generous and others small-minded and mean.

Beyond these, children read folk tales, novels, myths, legends, etc. They love books that reflect children's perception of the world in which there are characters they can identify with. They read stories about other children; those that deal with youthful problems and those concerning their forbearers and these problems are solved. Such literatures add to the status of the child who has read them. He is a little more capable of enjoying new impressions and receiving new ideas which will illuminate his next new experience whatever that may be. The child is able to gain something permanent which can never be taken away from him.

Finally, a child's experience of life is confined within the narrow hints of his environment. What he is looking for is a swift passage beyond its boundaries. Children's literature books give him this opportunity for transition. And he is able to gain something permanent which can never be taken away from him or her.

Children's literature fosters creativity in children. It draws out knowledge from children by encouraging creative thinking in our young ones through imaginative writings.

Children's literatures are the books that children read to satisfy their spiritual, emotional and intellectual needs irrespective of their content. It

provides pleasurable and instructional values to children and satisfies children's curiosity.

Children's literature in Nigeria is reclaiming our lost pride, re-affirming our cultural heritage in order to build a consciously aware future. It feeds Nigerian children on their glorious history and culture with recourse to the numerous myths, legends, and folktales in our traditional societies.

You are to note that at (2-10 years age group) the Nigerian child is exposed to foreign literature that demeans his humanity which makes him bereft of a cultural base and personality. What today obtains in many qualitative International Nursery/Primary schools speak volumes of this situation. But, despite this sad state of affairs, modern Nigerian writers have pursued vigorously the task of writing good literature for children.

By their literary contribution, children are motivated to see themselves as the pillar in the building of a solidly happy future. Also, children gradually are becoming politically sharp, critical and witty. Children's literature is waging a kind of cultural battle in raising generation of school children as vessels of visionary optimism of the adult world with promise of better tomorrow. This is one sure way of overcoming those nightmarish years of denigration.

Children's literary works like Mamman Vasta's *Constitution, Soldiers' Children as Poets* and Anezi Okoro's *Education* are stimulating, educative and motivate children to see themselves as the pillar in the building of a happy future.

The corpus of children's literature beginning from Cyprian Ekwensi's *An African Night Entertainment, The Drummer Boy, The Passport of Mallam Iliya, Samankwe and the Highway Robbers*, Nkem Nwankwo's *Tales out of School* and Onuora Nzekwu's *Eze Goes To School* and so on have honestly chronicled the historical past of their environment, revealing the beauty and uniqueness of the Nigerian culture to recreate the past epochs in the present, in order to instruct and entertain the child and restoring his confidence in his cultural heritage.

## **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2**

Write five other characteristics of children's literature.

## **ANSWER TO SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1**

Children's literature is that which is written and published about children for children. The themes should revolve around the local life stories which try at the same time to project the African and Nigerian culture. Children's literature is deliberately written for children's readership to satisfy their specific individual's interests, tastes and experiences, their general features of development and their individual differences.

### **Other Characteristics of Children's Literature**

- Pictures stories for pre-reading age and beginners in reading are usually colourful and attractive. Fantasy stories should stimulate children's imagination. Humorous books should arouse laughter and sense of humour in the children. Poetry should stimulate children's imagination sense of beauty and inward vision of understanding. Rhymes should teach children to appreciate the beauty of rhymes and rhythm. Folk tales from oral literature should have moral undertone, e.g good triumphs over evil.
- Fables, myths and epics are legends and stories of supernatural events or long narrative poems meant to explain certain beliefs, practices and natural phenomenon. Animal stories should be built around animals, pets and wild creatures to show friendship, loyalty, tragedy and sadness in some cases. They inculcate in the children the desire to protect and care for others. Realistic stories should be based on real life events and life history of real people to convey a sense of historical past to the children. Adventurous tales should be built around action, suspense, danger, mystery, success based on courage, perseverance of individuals. Information books should give information on data, facts and figures like handbook, experimental and reference books etc.

## **ANSWER TO SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2**

Pictures stories, for pre-reading age and beginners in reading should be colourful and attractive.

Fantasy stories should stimulate the children's imagination. Folk tales from oral literature should have moral undertone those good triumphs over evil. Humorous book should arouse laughter and sense of humour in the children Rhymes should teach children to appreciate the beauty of rhymes and rhythm.

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

Children's literatures have characteristics that distinguish it from adult literature.

#### **5.0 SUMMARY**

In this unit, we have learned about the characteristics of children's literature.

#### **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

Identify three characteristics of children's literature.

#### **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING**

Datus, C. and Smith Jr. (1990). *A Guide to Book Publishing* Lagos: Universally Press.

David Diop (1971). 'Africa' in *a Selection of African Poetry* (eds.). Senanu and Vincent.

## **MODULE 2      ESSENTIAL FACTORS IN DEVELOPING CHILDREN'S READING SKILLS**

Unit 1	Reading Skill Readiness
Unit 2	Developing Reading Interest and Skills in Children
Unit 3	Purposes and Types of Reading
Unit 4	Library Use Skill

### **UNIT 1      READING SKILLS READINESS**

#### **CONTENTS**

1.0	Introduction
2.0	Objectives
3.0	Main Content
3.1	Definition of Reading and the Concept of Readiness
3.1.1	What is Reading?
3.1.2	What is Reading Readiness?
3.2	Important Pre-Reading Skills
3.3	Developing Reading Readiness through Activities
4.0	Conclusion
5.0	Summary
6.0	Tutor-Marked Assignment
7.0	References/Further Reading

#### **1.0      INTRODUCTION**

The goal of any children's literature reading programme is to successfully teach children how to read. As a teacher of children's literature, you will ask yourself a number of questions: Are these children ready to start the task of reading literature? How do I know they are ready? How can I help them if they are not ready? This unit is meant to help you in answering these questions. In this unit, we shall examine the meaning of the terms reading and reading readiness and identify some factors related to learning how to read.

#### **2.0      OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- define reading and the concept of reading readiness
- identify readiness factors related to learning how to read
- discuss activities to develop reading readiness in children.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 Definition of Reading and the Concept of Readiness**

##### **3.1.1 What is Reading?**

Reading is the interaction between the reader's resources and the text data. The reader's resources are his knowledge about his culture, his family, community, their economic and social activities and his language. The text data are the properties of the printed words such as the words and the sentences, how words are linked together, to form sentences and how they are organized in novels, short stories, folk tales, myths and legends and soon.

##### **3.1.2 What is Reading Readiness?**

Reading readiness here means that children are psychologically and intellectually ready to read. We may illustrate further the meaning of reading readiness. Imagine you are a parent living in a rural village. You have a strong, six-year old son whose task is to fetch water from a stream about a half kilometre from your home. Every morning at 6 a.m, he carries a plastic bucket along the path to the stream and fetches water for you. This boy is fetching water for you because he is in physically ready to fetch water for you.

But you did not send him to fetch water when he was three years old because he was not strong enough to carry a bucket filled with water or able to know his way to the stream. He was too young then to understand that he must wait for his turn if many others were in the stream before him. Here the boy is not ready to fetch water fro you.

In the example above, you as a parent observed the child's physical strength and social maturity before assigning the water fetching task to him. As a literature teacher, you will also use different ways of observing to determine when your pupils are ready to read children's literature. You will first need to define the task of reading and then you will consider which abilities or experiences are necessary for children to be successful at the task of reading children's literature.

#### **3.2 Important Pre-Reading Skills**

There are some skills that are important to consider when trying to determine if a child is ready to read literature. These are the child's:

- (1) oral language ability

- (2) experimental background
- (3) auditory and visual discrimination skills
- (4) intellectual ability
- (5) positive attitude towards and interest in reading
- (6) emotional and social maturity

Let us examine each factor

### **Oral Language Ability**

The Nigerian child is expected to be fluent in his mother tongue by the time he enters school. He may communicate a little or not at all in English. You must ensure that your pupils are able to speak enough English to recognize the words in print. This is why you must make every effort to encourage children to talk and use English in oral drills and conversation in your literature class.

### **Experiential Background**

When a child reads about what he has also experienced or done, he has a greater depth of understanding about what he has read. The more activities or experiences a child has had in life before coming to school, the more stories he will be able to relate to because the story will be about something he is familiar with. Therefore, he will find it easier to read with understanding. Thus, his background knowledge will aid his comprehension.

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1**

List the factors that are important to consider when trying to determine if a child is ready to read literature.

### **3.3 Activities for Developing Pre-Reading Activities**

#### **Oral language and Experimental Background Activities**

Every day, time should be allotted to discussion, first in the vernacular and gradually in English. The activity of 'show and tell' can encourage children to talk. Each week different pupils can be asked to bring items from home to class. These items are shown to the class while the owners tell something about them. Examples are favourite toys, pets, a special article of clothing for exhibition and discussion.

### **Visual Discrimination Activities**

A variety of sorting activities which require pupils to sort objects/things into similar groups gives visual discrimination practice. Different types of bottle caps, buttons, seeds and other common objects from home or school can be utilized. Sorting can be done on the basis of size (small or big), colour (red, blue, or yellow, etc), shape (round, square, fat or thin, long or short etc)) too~' use (in garden, kitchen, classroom or market). The objects can be stored in the class in cartons or bags to be used over and over again.

### **Auditory Discrimination Activities**

This activity usually starts with listening to sounds of a general nature and imitating sounds like animal sounds. What noise does a duck make? A dog? A cat? A bird? A rooster? From general sounds, you move to listening to the sounds of the English words. You can use words that rhyme like red-bed, boy-toy, fish-dish, Jack-Jill. Or words with the same beginning like children's names: Chioma-Chinyere, Moji-Moses, and so on. Remember you are a model. Whatever you do, your pupils will do it. If you practice so will your pupils.

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2**

Describe some activities you will use to develop auditory discrimination

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

There are many activities you can do to increase your children's literature reading readiness. They include-oral language, visual discrimination, and auditory activities.

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

In this unit, you have learnt that:

- before children read literature, you need to check to see if they are in fact ready to read.
- when your pupils speak well, have had a variety of experiences (rich background), can tell the difference. between similar sounds and shapes, are smart and alert, are interested in and excited by books, get along well with classmates, they can be said to be ready to learn to read children's literature. However, when they are not ready, you have to develop the necessary abilities through a variety of activities discussed in this unit.

## **ANSWER TO SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1**

These factors are; 1. oral language ability 2. Experimental background 3. Auditory and visual discrimination skills 4. intellectual ability 5. Attitude towards and interest in reading 6. Emotional and social maturity.

### **Auditory and Visual Discrimination**

The English alphabet contains 26 letters, but there are nearly twice that number of consonants and vowel sounds. Most of the vernacular languages in Nigeria which have a written orthography use the English alphabet system with modifications to show where a sound is not present in English but appears in the vernacular. It is easier for your pupils to differentiate different sounds in English when they are also present in his mother tongue (the vernacular). Problem arises when the similarity in the sounds of many letters or word in the two languages is minimal. Skill in identifying similarities and distinguishing differences in sounds and word shapes is very important for decoding words in print when learning to read.

### **Intellectual Ability**

Although every child can learn to read, whether he is of low, average or high ability, it is generally agreed that children of average or above average intelligence will have less difficulty learning to read literature.

### **Emotional and Social Maturity**

Learning to read is done in a classroom environment. Part of classroom etiquette requires that children accept direction and guidance from the teacher. It also requires that the child cooperates with other children or classmates. Examples of behaviours which show immaturity or emotional problems are withdrawal, aggression, extreme shyness or inability to sit quietly and listen. These negative characteristics can prevent the learner from using the other five factors above and thus hinder or even stop the learner from succeeding in the task of reading.

## **ANSWER TO SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2**

Making the pupils listening to sounds of a general nature and imitate sound like animals' sounds. From general sounds, you move to listening to the sounds of the English words. You can start with words that rhyme like red-bed, boy-toy, fish-dish. Or words with similar beginning like children's names; Chioma-Chinyere, Moji-Mose and so on.

## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

When will it be said that a child is ready to read?

## 7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

Burron A.A. and Claybaugh, A.L. (1977). *Basic Concept in Reading Instructions: A Programmed Approach* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Columbus: Merrill Publishing Co. pp. 23 -39.

Karlin C. (1975). *Teaching Elementary Reading*. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich. Inc.

## **UNIT 2 DEVELOPING READING INTEREST AND SKILLS IN CHILDREN**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Developing Reading Culture in Children
  - 3.2 Stimulating Reading Interest
  - 3.3 Developing Reading Skills in Children
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

In unit I, we examined the concept of reading and reading readiness. You learnt that reading is the interaction between a reader's resources and the text data. You also learnt that reading readiness refers to the reader having essential pre-readings skills such as oral language ability, auditory and visual discrimination skills intellectual ability etc.

In this unit, the skills that will help you develop and sustain reading interests in your pupils are dealt with.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- discuss the need for developing reading interest in children
- explain ways of developing reading interest in children
- identify skills that will help you develop reading interest in children.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 Developing Reading Culture**

Reading can be fun, a source of pleasure and for language development. As a student, you need to read to obtain information and ideas to enable you pass your exams. As a professional, you need to read to update your knowledge of facts and ideas to help you develop on the job. As a citizen, you, need to read to keep abreast of news and events of your country and the world. For these reasons you need to imbibe the reading culture. In other word, you should become interested in reading various

texts. The choice should be a personal one. It should arise out of voluntary force of habit.

By making reading a regular and happy habit, you are directly and indirectly establishing close links with minds far and near, minds high and developed, pleasant and pleasurable, serious and humorous. Reading provides useful diversion, away from the strains and stresses of modern living. You may be alone in the home, farm or bus, but you are in good company, the company of the writer or those taking part in the events you are reading. That is the intellectual thrill that reading provides for you. All these should lead you to developing various reading interests in children.

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1**

Explain the needs for reading.

### **3.2 Stimulating Children's Reading Interests**

#### **(a) Allow the child to read what he/she likes**

Children have their own tastes and interests. Choose the reading materials that interest them most to read. If a child finds a piece rather boring after spending a short time reading through, guide him to put it aside and look for something else. Children should enjoy what they read, particularly at the early stages of forming the reading habit, and when they are new to the reading culture.

#### **(b) Choose materials within level of language**

You need not start with difficult texts that require frequent reference to the dictionary. It will become tedious and boring for the children. Select materials that they can easily comprehend and enjoy. Select simple readable texts that would help develop their vocabulary and power of expression.

#### **(c) Allow children to read whenever they like**

Allow children to read when they feel like reading, but encourage them to develop the habit of reading frequently and regularly. Encourage them to read anywhere, in the library, at home.

#### **(d) Sourcing Reading materials**

You could buy some whenever you can afford to. You could register with some nearby libraries and make regular borrowing to read and return a habit. If there is a book club nearby, join it and use its facilities. Borrow reading materials from friends but always keep your promise to return and keep the date. Teach and encourage your pupils to borrow from libraries too.

**(e) Encourage children to develop the desire to read more**

Try to develop in children the will and the desire to read more. It requires a deliberate effort at the early stages of their reading habit formation. Reading is like travelling, a sort of excursion into other worlds. Children are transported beyond their actual environment, into experiences beyond their physical reach. Reading enables children to enlarge their ideas and their personal experience. The more children read, the wider their experience and their outlook, because their minds become more open to deal with the problems and prospects of life and living.

- (f) Encourage your pupils to mix reading for academic purposes with reading for general information, pleasure and recreation. They should read novels, plays and poems, story books, cartoon strips as well as simple articles in the Newspaper and Magazines; discourage them reading obscene texts that do not add anything positive to the development of their mind.

### **3.3 Developing Reading Skills in Children**

You should train the children to distinguish between fact and opinion, objective and subjective or biased reporting. Teach them to distinguish between real events and fantasy, serious and humorous comments, irony and straight forward implications. Guide children to ask questions based on what they have read. This has to do with reading and thinking. These are self-probing questions which may arise from children's reactions to the piece of text they have just read. Pay attention to language, children may use the dictionary occasionally, where they have the opportunity to do so. Help and encourage them to become sensitive the way language is used in the texts. Allow their minds to rest fairly well at points containing usual expressions, new words, and new structures. Teach children not to spend too much time labouring or striving for comprehension of difficult words. It is better and more rewarding for them to take on larger units of meaning than small bits if a word blocks their way because it is new. Children may look up difficult words later in the dictionary, when they take a break from reading the text. Encourage children to read extensively and intensively.

## **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2**

How do you develop reading Skills in children

### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

To enjoy and learn from literature, you must help yours pupils to develop the culture of reading for pleasure and academic purposes. This will require that you stimulate their interest in reading.

### **ANSWER TO SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1**

Reading can be a fun, a source of pleasure and for language development. As a student, you need to read to obtain information and ideas to enable you pass examinations. As a professional, you need to read to update your knowledge of facts and ideas to help you develop on the job. As a citizen, you need to read to keep abreast of news and events of your country.

### **ANSWER TO SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3**

You can develop reading skills in children through developing critical skills such as:

- i. asking Children questions based on what they have read,
- ii. asking children to pay attention to language,
- iii. advising children not to labour or strive for comprehension as they read extensively
- iv. Guiding children to practice extensive reading and intensive reading.

### **5.0 SUMMARY**

In this unit, you have learnt some things about developing reading interest and skill. It is hoped you gathered that.

- Reading habit can develop into a whole culture of reading which is needed by children.
- Reading interests can be developed for general knowledge, information, intellectual and professional development.
- There are various reading skills to be developed and applied to reading activities based on the interest areas like children's literature.
- There are various ways of developing children's reading.

## **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

1. Make a list of seven ways by which you can develop reading interests in your pupils.
2. Make a list of five ways in which reading can help you develop your language ability.

## **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING**

Kai-Fat, Lue and Fleming, P. (1978). *Better Reading Skills*. Hong Kong: Oxford University Press.

Francoe Greller (1981). *Developing Reading Skills*. Cambridge: University Press.

## **UNITS 3 PURPOSES AND TYPES OF READING**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Purpose and Types of Reading
  - 3.2 Factors Affecting Reading Comprehension
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 Reference/Further Reading

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

In unit 2, we examined developing reading interests and skills. In this unit, we shall discuss purposes and types of reading. The unit also provides you with a number of ways to developing vocabulary skill.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- discuss the various purposes for reading
- identify the four types of reading
- describe each type of reading
- explain some of the practical skills required for each type of reading.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 Purpose and types of reading**

##### **Purposes of Reading**

We may begin our discussion here by posing some relevant questions such as:

Why do we read? Why do I read? Why am reading this course book?

The answers to our questions may be that most people who read do so for the following reasons:

- To obtain information.
- To acquire new ideas and new knowledge and skill.

- To derive pleasure from new experiences.
- To be critical of other people's ideas, thought-and actions.

We may ask another question such as:

What do we do when we read? Our answer to this question may be that when we read our eyes come in contact with words which are made up of symbols. These are letters of the alphabets. They are the living words of the language when we listen and hear a person speak we do not listen to individual words, but full statements or utterances. Therefore, when we read the language that is written down our attention is not on individual words but on a stretch of words that gives us some information.

You should notice that in one sense, reading is like hearing the writer talk to us when we read. We could hear the sounds of words and stretches of words and statements which carry information to us. We think of the message or information and we react to it in our minds. We can not talk to the writer immediately, because he or she is not physically present in this situation. In this sense, the writer is communicating with the reader, even though the reader does not respond as in a face to face conversation.

The implication is that the writer of what we read do so for a number of reasons which include the following:

- to give information to people they cannot talk to directly, because they are separated by distance and time
- to affect minds and behaviour of others who are reading their material
- to give their thoughts and ideas some permanence.
- to keep permanent records (e.g. of business religion, politics etc.)

You must notice here that there is a kind of close relationship between people who write and people who read as they enter into some form of communication.

Thus the writer has purposes for writing and the reader has purposes for reading.

For students like you, your purpose engage in reading activities is to get information and new knowledge.

This means that we all have our purposes for reading. Our purposes of reading determine the type of reading activity we undertake. We shall discuss four major types of reading activities here. These are:

- i. Skimming
- ii. Skimming a Text
- iii. Scanning,
- iv. Reading to study/learn
- v. Reading critically
- vi. Intensive reading
- vii. Extensive reading.

## **Types of Readings**

### **1. Skimming**

To skim in reading means to look at briefly. Skimming involves the act of the book or page quickly in order to have a general idea of the content. The purpose of skimming is to identify information in its broad from quickly.

### **2. Skimming a Text**

The text may be a chapter of a book or just a page. The purpose here is to look for what it contains briefly. You may look at the title of the chapter to see what topic is discussed in that chapter. Then you read through to see if the chapter is divided into sections and whether each section has a sub-title or sub-topic discussed. You check the end of the chapter is given. If the chapter is presented in continuous paragraphs without labelled subsections, you look at the opening sentence of each paragraph to have a general impression of what the paragraph deals with. If there is a summary, you look at the beginning and end sentence of the summary.

By the time you do these activities, you are skimming. At the end of the skimming activities on the text, you should be able to say in one or two sentences what the chapter or page about. This will be able you to decide whether you need its detailed information or not.

Here are 'examples of skimming activities:

- Mma wants to buy only one newspaper and she stops the vendor who puts three different newspapers in her hand. Mma opens each newspaper quickly and skims its pages, looking news headlines. A news item in one of the papers attracts her but it contains a long detailed report. She chooses to buy the paper and returns the others to the vendor.
- Adulugwa is a student visiting a book shop. He looks through the shelves of books 'displayed. He comes to the Economics section and skims the titles. One title reminds him of the list of recommended books from the lecturer. His purpose is to decide whether the book is relevant to his course. That purpose required him to look for the following information from the book:

Author – is he a familiar authority on the subject? – Year of publication – could its information be outdated or recent? – Edition – is this copy the latest edition? – Table of contents – what are the topics not listed in the table of content? – Adulugwa selects some randomly pages – to see if there are useful Illustrations – A few sentences from the preface to see if the author indicates the level of readers or students for whom the book is intended. Finally, Adulugwa skimming may decide to buy the book or leave it, on the strength of the information he has had by skimming the book. Note that again knowledge by skimming books at bookshops, newspapers and magazine stands.

## ii. Scanning

To scan in reading is to look for a specific information discussed in a text with minimum of time. Before you set out to scan a text, you must be sure what items of information you are looking for. Scanning requires rapid reading of the text in order to reach the information you require. In this way, it is possible for you to assemble a number of points you need about a given topic. For example, if you require the definition of inflation in economics, you can scan three or four different books to see how each, author defines it. In this case, you are not looking for the consequences of inflation but – the definition. You do not stay your eyes on that information when you are scanning definition. Scanning is like looking for your child in a large crowd. You watch out for your child's features. You do not see other children's faces at that moment.

To help the reader to scan easily, authors usually present texts in certain patterns. Examples of such patterns are:

- Text contents are organized in paragraphs, each paragraph deals with an aspect of the topic discussed. In a paragraph, one of the sentences usually gives out the main point of the paragraph.
- Varying of font size e.g, some are in italics or bold letters to direct attention to important points. Varying of colours, letters and diagrams in a piece of advertisement in such a way that some parts catch the eye of the reader before other parts.

### **iii. Reading to Study/Learn**

This is the most important type of reading activity in which the reader is required to read and search text slowly in order to:

- gather information by looking main points and supporting. Details;
- organize the Information In form of notes and make It part of his new knowledge;
- apply his new knowledge to deal with immediate and subsequent problems;
- learn to discriminate between facts and irrational propositions and mere opinions.

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1**

What does reading to learn involve?

### **iv. Reading Critically**

Critical reading means reading and thinking about what the writer wrote using your power of reasoning to identify false information, facts fiction or opinion as well as identify true information.

Critical reading requires you to take the passage you are reading to pieces, analyse the parts, by interpreting the writer's thoughts and arriving at your own conclusions leave out un-required details, reject weak points and so on.

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2**

What does reading critically involve?

**v. Intensive reading**

This is a deep reading of the text requiring that you get as much information from the text as possible. Unlike for skimming and scanning, intensive reading requires you go at a slower speed.

This is the type of reading you do when you are studying to learn or to critically analyse the author's ideas or thoughts.

**vi. Extensive Reading**

This is the method used in the training for fast reading. The purpose may be to enhance fluency, faster reading or for pleasure. It is a private reading activity which involves silent reading and is purely done by the individual. Extensive reading is used in teaching children literature especially at the beginning stage. Speed is a very important aspect of this type of reading.

**3.2 Factors Affecting Reading Comprehension****Comprehension Breakdown**

Comprehension breakdown here means lack of understanding of what is being read. Comprehension breakdown may set in when the reader is not familiar with the topic or theme of the text. It may also be due to length and complexity of sentences, too many unfamiliar words, organization of the material, complexity of idiomatic expressions, and difficulty of the concepts presented by the author.

Comprehension breakdown may also be caused by failure to identify author's attitude and mood as well as insensitivity to author's ironic humorous, deadly serious or light hearted attitude.

Additionally, some practices by the reader such as sub-vocalising, finger pointing and regression can make reading whether alone or in groups slower and delay comprehension.

**Sub-Vocalising**

Means murmuring the words you read to the hearing of the other person next to you. It is a mark of poor reading.

**Finger Pointing**

This is using the finger or any pointer (Pencil, ruler, etc) to point at the word being read. It leads to word by word reading which slows reading and also comprehension and understanding.

### **Regression**

This is the habit of letting your eyes to move backwards over what you have read instead of going forward. It is done sometimes for the purpose of discovering a particular answer to a question, but it is a mark of laziness and aid to poor comprehension or understanding because it interrupts progress in thinking.

### **Effective Reading Technique**

One of the popular techniques used in achieving effective reading is the SURVEY, QUESTION, READ, RECITE AND REVISE (SQ3R) technique.

#### **Survey**

You read the whole text so that the general picture of the material and the subject matter is identified.

#### **Question**

Here you raise questions on the subject matter eg about main and supporting ideas, author's purpose attitude, relationship of ideas, seamence of events etc.

#### **Read**

You now read the text. And read it again to find the answers to the questions posed

#### **Recite**

Here, you discuss with friends and colleagues so that you become more familiar and more knowledgeable with material.

#### **Revise**

You re-read the text again, ensuring that you have answered the questions you posed above.

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

There are various purposes of reading and various types of reading. You must as a teacher of children's literature understand this so as to know how best to teach your pupils how to read and enjoy literature.

## 5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, we have learnt that there are six types of reading namely skimming, scanning, reading to study, reading critically, reading intensively and extensively. We also learnt that there are factors that impede reading comprehension as well as a procedure for effective reading.

### ANSWER TO SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

Reading to learn involves doing any or all of the following:

1. Gathering information by looking for main points and supporting details.
2. Organizing the information in form of notes and making it part of your new knowledge. Applying your new knowledge to deal with immediate and subsequent problems. Learning to discriminate between facts and irrational propositions and opinions.

### ANSWER TO SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

Critical reading enables you to use your power of thinking and reasoning to identify facts, false information, fiction or opinion. Critical reading requires you to analyse the passage you are reading by interpreting the writer's thoughts and arriving at your own conclusions.

## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Give three reasons why you read?
2. Name and describe four types of reading.

## 7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

Dawson M. A. and Henry A Bamman (1959). *Foundations of Basic Reading Instruction*. Longman.

James, Sybil (1984). *Reading for Academic Purposes*. Edward Arnold.

## UNIT 4 LIBRARY USE SKILL

### CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 The Meaning, Objectives and Functions of Library
    - 3.1.1 Types of Libraries
    - 3.1.2 Types of Library Materials
    - 3.1.3 Use of the Library
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

In this unit, we shall discuss the meaning and the use of the library.

### 2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain the meaning of library
- describe the objectives and functions of a library
- identify types of libraries and their organizational structure
- explain types of library materials
- describe the use of the library.

### 3.0 MAIN CONTENT

#### 3.1 The Meaning, Objectives and Functions of a Library

##### A. What is Library?

- Library is a collection of materials such as books, journals, newspapers, magazines, monographs and non-books materials such as films, microforms, tapes, film stripes, compact discs, computer soft wares and photographs. A library is a place where people go to source information in virtually every area of life.
- A librarian is a person who is trained to provide library and information services to library users.

- Library users are persons who make use of a library collection or services. Library users are also called readers, clients, and patrons.

## **B. Objectives of the Library**

Every library is usually established with certain objectives in mind. The following are some of the objectives of the library:

- To determine the information needs of users through user study
- To identify and select books and other non-book materials through purchase, bequeath, donation, legal deposit or gift and exchange.
- To properly organize these materials so as to make them accessible to use.
- To ensure that people are assisted to use these materials by drawing their attention to them.
- To provide materials promptly to satisfy the information needs of the people.
- To preserve for future generation all information materials stored in it.

## **C. Functions of the Library**

The functions of different libraries are usually geared towards achieving the objectives for establishing them. The Encyclopaedia Americana. (1980) has categorized library functions into four broad areas as shown below:

- (i) Development of resources, resources here means the totality of information materials in the library.
- (ii) Organization of materials
- (iii) Services to users
- (iv) Administration

## **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1**

Explain some of the objectives of the library.

### 3.1.1 Types of Libraries

There are different types of libraries serving different categories of users. Libraries are often grouped according to the category of people that are meant to serve. Generally, six different types of libraries exist. They are as follows:

#### (i) Academic Libraries

This refers to all libraries that are found in institutions of learning. Libraries that are established in Primary and Secondary School, Universities, Polytechnics, Colleges of education are all known as academic libraries. Examples are Abia State University library, Nnamdi Azikiwe library of the University of Nigeria Nsukka, Kenneth Dike library of the University of Ibadan, Alvan Ikoku College of Education Library, Owerri etc.

Academic libraries serve the library and information needs of the undergraduate, postgraduate and diploma students, lecturers and non-academic staff of the universities. The libraries take into considerations the different courses offered by the institutions in rendering its services, so that every student or staff has books and other materials relevant to his or her course of interest.

#### (ii) National Libraries

National libraries are established and managed by a State or Federal government. Their main purpose is the collection and preservation of the nation's cultural heritage for future generation. To achieve this purpose, every national library attempts to achieve the following objectives:

- to acquire all materials published within the country
- to acquire all materials written by citizens of the country regardless of place of residence. To acquire all materials written and published about the country including those by citizens of other countries.

There is usually one national library in every country. The National Library in Nigeria is located presently at Abuja with branches in some state capitals. The National library for United State of America is called the library of Congress, that of Britain is called the British library and France calls its owe Bibliotheque Nationale.

**(iii) Private Libraries**

Libraries owned by individuals are known as private libraries. Private libraries usually reflect in their collection of books the subject areas of interest of their owners. For example, a private library owned by a politician will contain mainly books on politics and that of a lawyer will contain mainly law books and materials.

**(iv) Public Libraries**

These are established with public funds and maintained by state governments. There is no restriction to those who use public libraries. The public library uses mobile library van to take books and information bearing materials to prisoners, hospital patients and rural dwellers who may not be able to visit the library. It uses video films and television to serve those who cannot read and provides Braille materials for the blind users.

There is also a section of the public library known as CHILDREN'S LIBRARY. It provides books for children and offers story hours. Public library services are essentially free of charge as they are sponsored by the government. Most states in Nigeria maintain public library services. Examples of public libraries in Nigeria are the Abia state public library in the capital city, Umuahia. Lagos and Kano states each has hers. Public libraries are expected to have branches located in towns and villages of each state.

**(v) School Libraries**

Libraries located in primary and secondary schools are called school libraries. They are meant to house materials that promote learning in the schools. Every school library has its main users: the students or pupils, the teaching and non-teaching staff of the school. It provides materials for them to do their homework and class assignments, further reading, self development and relaxation. It also provides a conducive reading place for students and staff. Students' of one primary or secondary school do not enjoy automatic right to use another school's library. They require special letter of introduction before they are admitted. Libraries are usually managed by professional librarians. However, In the case of some school libraries in Nigeria it is different. As a result of insufficiency of funds, many school libraries in Nigeria engage classroom teachers to perform the duties of librarians. These teachers who combine their jobs as teachers with the management of the schools libraries are called teacher librarians. They are often assisted by library prefects.

### (vi) Special Libraries

Libraries are called special when the collection and users are restricted to certain types and categories. Special libraries are established and funded by corporate bodies such as banks, companies, institutes, media houses, government ministries, agencies and parastatals. The main aim is to acquire and disseminate information to their staff. The collections of special libraries are dominated by the subject matter in which the funding organization is interested. A bank library for example will consist of a collection of books on banking, finance and related. A Ministry of Agriculture library will be made up largely of books on farming, fishing and horticulture.

In Nigeria, special libraries are the best funded type of libraries and some of them have taken advantage of that to computerize their operations. Examples of special libraries are the libraries of international institute of Tropical Agriculture, Ibadan; Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, Lagos. Others are Central Bank of Nigeria, Abuja, Ministry of Justice special library, Umuahia etc.

### 3.1.2 Types of Library Materials

Library materials include books, serials, microforms, tapes and discs among others. The importance of library materials can be seen from the fact that if they are removed, the library ceases to exist as what will be left is only a building. The library is made up of both the building, staff and the materials and none of them can function effectively without the other. There are many types of library materials. They are usually categorized into two broad terms of print and Non-print materials.

Print materials consist of:

- Books

A book is a print material usually bound in one or more volumes. Books are categorised into two groups, reference and non-reference books. The reference books are those that are meant to be consulted or referred to for a definite piece of information as their nature and size do not make for cover to cover reading. Examples of reference books are:

- (1) Encyclopedia which provides background information for both the specialist and the layman.
- (2) Dictionary: e.g Advanced Learners 'Dictionary

- (3) Directory: is a reference book that lists persons, companies, institutions and organizations giving their names and addresses.
- (4) Almanacs and year books
- (5) Handbook and manuals are reference books
- (6) Serials -they are materials published daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly or annually and intended to be continued indefinitely serials are also called periodicals. They include journals, newspapers and magazines.
- (7) Maps, Atlases, pamphlets and clippings. A pamphlet is a booklet or piece of writing appearing with soft covers that deal with an issue of current interest. Clippings are piece of paper cut out from newspapers or magazines. Clippings which are also called cuttings contain very important information of current interest such as job advertisement.
- (8) Manuscripts: These are books or papers written by hand or with typewriter intended for publication. It is from manuscript that books are subsequently published.

The Non-reference materials are those that are meant to be consulted or referred to cover to cover in search of information education and inspiration. Examples are textbook and novels.

### **Non-Print Materials**

These are library materials that are not printed on paper. They include:-  
Audio materials -audio tapes, phonodiscs, radio cassette, record player.

- Visual materials -example: Transparencies with images that can be seen only when light is passed through them. They include slides and filmstrips.
- Microforms: These are materials that contain information in greatly reduced form. Microform is composed of microfilm, microfiche and micro cards. Microfilm saves space for computerized libraries as it is used to store back stock of newspaper with minimal space.

### **Audio -Visual Materials**

These are materials that combine both the audio and visual effects in the transmission of information. They include television (TV), motion

pictures (sound films), Video films and video discs, computer aided compact ideas (C.D) and video compact discs (VCD). Equipment required to use these materials include film projectors, video players, compact disc players and computers. You should note that due to the high cost of these equipment and audio- materials are not commonly found in libraries of developing countries like Nigeria.

### 3.1.3 Use of the Library

The library offers many services and opportunities for the intending users and it becomes the choice of users to decide the type of use they may wish to make of the library. The use to be made of the library by a library user is determined by a number of factors including his level of education, occupation, status in the society, environmental influence and lately computer literacy. For example, the manner of use of the library by a professor will be different from that of a student or a farmer. The different ways of using the library and materials include the following:

- (1) **Internal Use:** This is the use of library books and materials within the library building without any intention of borrowing them. This type of use involves those that visit to read library books for class assignments, research, preparing for examinations.
- (2) **Reference use and consultation:** Here readers use the library for reference purposes and for consultation.
- (3) **Relaxation:** Libraries can be used as a place for relaxation and leisure spending. Some of the materials used for leisure and relaxation are novels, newspapers and magazines.
- (4) **Reading Place:** Libraries provide good places for reading. It provides reading tables, chairs, good lighting and noiseless environment.
- (5) **Borrowing of Materials:** Most libraries allow users to borrow library books for home use. It is only references and reserved books that cannot be taken outside the library.

### SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

Explain different uses of the library

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

Library means a collection of books and other materials properly organized for effective use. There are six types of libraries and two major types of library materials; Print and non print-materials. Users of library use it for many purposes and in different ways.

#### **ANSWER TO SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1**

The following are some of the objectives of the library.

- i. To determine the information needs of users through user study
- ii. To identify and select books and other non-book materials through purchase, donation, legal deposit or gift and exchange.
- iii. To properly organize these materials so as to make them accessible to user.
- iv. To ensure that people are assisted to use these materials by drawing their attention
- v. To preserve for future generation all information materials stored in it.

#### **ANSWER TO SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2**

The uses of the library include the following:

- i.. Internal use: it involves the use of library books and materials within the library building without any inters ion of borrowing them.
- ii. Reference use and consolation: Here readers use the library for reference purpose and for consultation.
- iii. Relaxation: libraries can be used as a place for relaxation and leisure spending.
- iv. Reading place: library provides good places for reading.
- v. Borrowing of materials: most libraries allow users to borrow library books for home use.

## 5.0 SUMMARY

A library is a collection of books and non-book materials orderly arranged for accessibility to users. Every library is established with the basic objective of providing library and information services to the people who use the library. There are six types of libraries: academic, national, private, public, school and special libraries, library users use it for internal use, references, relaxation, reading place and a source of borrowing of book or non-book materials.

## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Describe libraries that admit every to use their collection.
2. Identify 2 main types of services a library can render to users.
3. What are the objectives and functions of a library?

## 7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

Kent, A & Lancour, H. (1969). *Encyclopedia of Library and Information Science* vol.2 New York: Marcel Dekker.

Nwokocho, U. (1999) *A Foundation Text in Use of the Library*. Owerri: Whyley Prints.

## **MODULE 3      PRESENTING CHILDREN'S LITERATURE**

Unit 1	Strategies of Teaching Children's Literature
Unit 2	Important Considerations in Planning and Literature Lesson
Unit 3	Criteria for Selecting Children's Literature
Unit 4	The Teachers Sanctions in Preparing Literature Lesson

## **UNIT 1      STRATEGIES TEACHING CHILDREN'S LITERATURE**

### **CONTENTS**

1.0	Introduction
2.0	Objectives
3.0	Main Content
	3.1 Strategies for Teaching Children's Literature
	3.2 Controlled Reading
4.0	Conclusion
5.0	Summary
6.0	Tutor-Marked Assignment
7.0	References/Further Reading

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Modules 1 and 2 of this course material dealt with basic issues about Children's Literature Module I dealt with Concepts of Children's Literature and Module 2 dealt with ways factors in developing children's reading skills.

In this module, the emphasis is on presenting children's literature. Thus unit I of this module deals with strategies of teaching children's literature.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- compare individual reading, group reading and controlled reading strategies
- identify and deal with reading problems.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 Strategies for Teaching Children's Literature**

Successful teaching of children's literature must be based on two important factors. The first is that the teacher must be knowledgeable about different purposes and types of reading. You should read again the content of unit 3 of module 2 of this course material which dealt with this to refresh your mind. Another important factor concerns choosing appropriate strategies in form of relevant meaningful activities to use to teach the pupils. The purpose of this unit is to present to you some strategies/activities you can use to teach literature.

##### **Individualized Learning**

This is one person pupil reading with same guidance. The attributes of individualized learning include children assuming responsibility for their learning, proceeding with activities and materials at their own level or rate in school, home, elsewhere. Choice of learning experiences is made by the children.

The role of the teacher involves:

- stating lesson object pre-testing the children to permit skipping objectives known by them, including activities to elicit children's active participation Correction of performance is immediately made available to children. If evaluation result is not satisfactory, the child may re-study and be retested by the teacher.
- Giving follow up projects to permit children to apply learned knowledge and skills.

##### **Groups Reading**

Group reading means a number of persons placed or gathered together and assigned to read about a topic and give a report after. You have to note that whether it is group reading or individual reading it is the individual in the group who reads.

#### **3.2 Controlled Reading**

The literature teacher should at any given time control the reading activity of the class through the following:

##### **Control of individual reading**

The teacher could provide guided questions which will provide clues to what he wants the individual to read. With these questions, the pupils

can read for specific information from the text. Such questions are usually given before the text or passage is read so that they stimulate, encourage and guide the individual reader on the directions the teacher wants him or her to go.

Examples of guided questions are

- What does the passage or text say about Mr. X? How many children has he? Which school did he attend? Is he lazy or hardworking? Etc. Individual pupils should find the answers to these questions as he or she reads the passage or text at home.

### **Control of Group Reading**

The teacher can control the group reading activities of his or her class by grouping the class. Various group leaders can be assigned to take control of the groups. The various group leaders may act as the speakers of the group. The teacher can assign a text or novel or poetry to each group. Children will read the assigned books at home or the class. The group leaders will summarise the books they have read to the whole class. The groups can be asked questions on differences and similarities existing between one group and another.

### **Formation of Discussion Groups**

The teacher can also decide to organize discussion groups on what was read from a text or passage or novel, or poetry or short stories. The teacher may give a guide question like "What would you have done if you were in a similar situation? The teacher can decide to allocate marks to the groups. This will create healthy competition and lively discussion in the class.

### **Formation of Drama Groups**

The teacher can form drama groups in the class and every member of the group would be given a portion of his or her reading which he or she will memorize. Pupils are given specific roles to play so as to dramatise the characters in the novel or story read.

In all these activities, the teacher of children's literature is a guide. The teacher should not dominate the activities, but bear in mind that the children are learning and participating actively. He initiates, motivates and encourages the children to ask question, participate in discussions, and act their roles in plays. His or her involvement at intervals is to ensure the literary activities of children do not derail.

The teacher should take care of individual differences e.g sex, age, background etc. He should create a positive attitude in the minds of the reader. He should provide interesting novels, texts, short stories, etc. He should train children to read a variety of texts.

He should motivate children to read, let the children see the purpose of reading.

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Explain formation of discussion group as a class control activity of the teacher.

### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

Individual reading is one person reading while group reading refers to a number of persons gathered together and assigned to read a story or text and give a report after. Controlled reading refers to the teacher controlling the reading activities of the class.

### **5.0 SUMMARY**

The following are some important reading methods:

- Skimming, scanning, intensive reading, extensive reading.
- The reading problems are: sub-vocalising, finger pointing and regression.
- The individual or group reading is controlled by the teacher.

### **ANSWER TO SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

The teacher can organize discussion groups on what was read from a text or passage or novel, or poetry or short stories. The teacher may give a guide question. He can also decide to allocate marks to the groups. This will create healthy competition and lively discussion in the class.

### **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

Compare and contrast individual and group reading.

### **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING**

Abbott G and Wingard, P. (1981). *The Teaching of English as an International Language: A Practical Guide*. Ibadan: Collins.

William, D. (1990). *Language Teaching: An Integrated Approach*. Ibadan: Spectrum Books.

## **UNIT 2      IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS IN PLANNING AND LITERATURE LESSON**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Factor to Consider in Presentation to Literature Children
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

In unit 3, we discussed suitability, enjoyment and availability as criteria, among others that influence choice of children's literature in school. It is hoped that you gathered that criterion of suitability helps us to determine the extend literature theme, treatment of ideas, level of language, characters and plot, suit the children's developmental levels, maturity, needs, interests, personal problems, social situations, feelings and creative abilities etc. The criterion of enjoyment determines literature children enjoy to read and availability determine and provision of children's literature. These criteria should influence choice of children's literature and not teachers taste and preconceptions.

In this unit, we shall discuss the criteria for choosing children's literature

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- identify the criteria for choosing children's literature
- discuss the criteria for choosing children's literature.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 Factor to Consider in Presentation to Literature Children**

One factor to consider in presenting literature to children is for the teacher to be widely read in children's literature. This will enable him to match the literature to the individual child's needs and interests. Another

factor is for the teacher to systematically plan the lesson so as to satisfy the needs and interests of the children. Successful literature lesson plan would start with posing and answering the following questions:

1. **What types of literature should I teach the children?** – Short stories, novel, folk tales, myths and legends, Real-life situations, poems and drama etc? The scheme of work will help the teacher to choose the topic if there is one.
2. **The second question is:** To whom do I teach this topic? To find answers to this question demands the teacher conducting a needs analysis of learners by examining the characteristics of his pupils such as their names, age, developmental levels, gender, socio-economic background, literacy level, urban/rural status, etc.
3. **The third question is:** What are the literary content tasks to be treated. This would lead to the subject content task analysis of the content of the literature material. This is followed by the question: What do I want the children to learn or be able to do after the literature lesson? The answer to this question demands stating the objectives of the lesson in behavioural terms in the three domains (Cognitive, Affective and Psychomotor)

Through pre-testing the teacher determines the readiness of the children for studying the chosen topic. From the stated objectives, the teacher will select what teaching methods, media and teaching skills that needed for the presentation of the literature lesson. The teacher will now decide how to encourage literature reading through drama, creative writing, poetry or tape-recorded versions of episodes. He will now decide whether the lesson will be presented to a group of children or to the individual child. What useful activities (improvised drama in the classroom, television and radio, poetry; children's writing, and reading stories aloud etc) should be provided to encourage children's interest? The books theme, treatment of ideas, language level, character and plot must suit the maturity, interest and emotional capacity of the children. For example, children up to the age of five like stories of animals, toys, pets, parents, grandparents, and children like themselves who get across, play, get up, go shopping and who are fed and scolded, loved, taken out and put to bed. Sometimes, children love made up stories that are about themselves and their own recent activities.

From this delight in the familiar animals etc, children move up to the kind of story which opens up in their familiar world a wide range of possibilities than they normally exploit. They like little people - sometimes animals and fairy creatures; but often actual children –whose behaviour is some what unconventional, who break the rules; or are just

unable to cope with them, who get into trouble, challenge authority, and triumph over people who are bigger or older than themselves. My Naughty little sister is an example of the kind of book that bridges the gap between the familiar world of the average child and the unconventional familiar world of little people such as Peter Rabbit. A book such as the Seven White pebbles identifies situations where the child's fears and anxieties are very real, and this is a preparation for the naturalism that will come into his stories as he grows older. Stories within his range of experience, and at this level of simplicity, will continue to appeal to children at least up to the age of eight.

Between the ages of nine and ten years, children enjoy folktales of the kind found in the collections of Joseph Jacobs and Andrew Lang. They give the child a sense of security as he finds that they belong to the life of different environments that he has to adapt to. The child's first experience of the story will be through the teacher, who tells or reads and shows him pictures. Later he will find himself able to join in the parts of the story, to tell parts or all of it himself, perhaps to act it or write about it; and often the greatest thrill comes when he finds that he can read the story for himself in his own book. The story of how he comes to possess traditional tale through the, perhaps, three years of nursery and primary school days may well reflect the history of his whole development as a person during that time.

In finding stories for his class, the teacher can explore collections of folktales from many sources. Many teachers find that children enjoy the repetition of a small selection of old favourites, but there is a need to bring variety to the child's experience of story, if only to move away from fixed responses from time to time.

At 11 years, allegorical stories of the type of Pilgrims Progress – often tales of moral struggle, following the structure of an arduous journey can take hold on the imagination of the children.

The teacher should note that an average child's experience of literature in school is very largely a shared experience. Consequently, the teacher and the class children should regularly and frequently share stories. With selection of literary materials over, the teacher will pose and answer the last question in his lesson plan.

How do I determine the extent to which the learning has been achieved? To answer this question, the teacher prepares to evaluate students learning in terms of the achievement of set lesson objectives, with a view to re-planning, re-teaching and re-evaluating any phases of the lesson plan that need improvement.

## **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Explain the teachers' role in presenting literature to children.

### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

There are three broad methods within which most learning takes place:

- (1) Presentation of information to large class group of students
- (2) Self-paced study or individualized learning with each student studying at his or her own rate or pace.
- (3) Small group discussion/interaction between teacher and student or among students. There is now a shift from large class teaching to more emphasis on self-paced learning or individualized learning.

### **5.0 SUMMARY**

The teacher's role in planning literature presentation to children starts with systematic planning of the lesson. The lesson plan assists the teacher to identify the needs and interests of children so as to suit children's literature to their needs and interests.

### **ANSWER TO SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

The teachers has to be widely read in children's literature. This will enable him or her to match the literature to the individual child's needs and Interests. Another aspect is for the teacher to systematically plan the lesson so as to identify the needs and interests of the children. Successful literature lesson plan would start with posing the following questions:

- i. What type of literature do I teach children?
- ii. To whom do I teach?
- iii. What are the literary content tasks to be treated?
- iv. What do I want the children to learn after the literature lesson?
- v. How do I determine the extent to which the learning has been achieved?

## **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

Identify and describe elements of planning a literature lesson for children.

## **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING**

Moody, H.L.B. (1971). *The Teaching of Literature in Developing Countries*. London: Group Ltd.

Jerrold Kemp and Dayton Deane (1980). *Planning and Producing Instructional Media*. New York: Harper and Row, Publishers.

## **UNIT 3 CRITERIA FOR SELECTING CHILDREN'S LITERATURE**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Criteria for Choosing Children's Literature
- 4.0 Conclusions
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

In unit: 2, we discussed the importance of children's literature in meeting children's needs. It is hoped that you gathered that children's literature among others, satisfy children's curiosity, security needs, affection needs, spiritual, emotional and intellectual needs. It provides also fun for children and restores children's confidence in their cultural heritage.

In this unit, we shall discuss the criteria for choosing children's literature.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- identify the criteria for choosing children's literature
- discuss the criteria for choosing children's literature.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 Criteria for Choosing Children's Literature**

The following are the criteria for choosing literature for children:

- (i) Suitability
- (ii) Enjoyment
- (iii) Availability

We shall examine these three criteria.

## **Suitability**

The most evident general criterion for choosing literature for children is suitability. The criterion of suitability poses the question: How do the literature theme and treatment of ideas, characters and plot and the level of language suit the child's or children's maturity and interests, personal problems, social situations, creative abilities, understanding, responses and feelings? Overall, this means the suitability or the appropriateness of the literature (novel, short stories, drama, folk tales, legends, myths poultry etc) to the child or children.

The criterion of suitability demands that a book or novel, short stories, drama, folk tales, legends, myths poetry and so on should be produced largely with a child's developmental needs. Indeed, such literature must be one that deals honestly with children, portrays them candidly and in a medium to which they can respond with imagination and pleasure.

You will recall that children present different levels of development, maturity and interest as well as different relations to the written language of 4 – 5 years, 7 – 8 years and 9 – 12 years. At 7 – 9 years the child's mind is not just impressionable but also stores experiences capable of building up associations when properly stimulated. At 12 – 18 years, as the child approaches adulthood, his psychology, understanding and interest become mature and distinctive more than his linguistic skills and conceptual powers have by now developed sufficiently to enable him derive aesthetic pleasure from his literature reading. All teachers of literature must be aware of these children's characteristics and should not allow their own tastes, interests and preconceptions to influence choosing children's literature.

A teacher must determine the stage of a child's development before he chooses literature that will suit, stimulate and please the child in any genre of literature given to him.

## **Enjoyment**

Enjoyment is the second criterion of choosing literature for children. This is because literature for children or anyone else is to be read because it is enjoyable; if it is not enjoyed it won't be read. For example, books specially written for adolescents should deal with their everyday concerns and problems of adjustment to approaching adulthood, like problems about love, parent-child conflict, careers, and drugs are enjoyable to adolescents.

## SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

Explain suitability as a criterion for choosing literature for children.

### **Availability**

It is one thing to select a wide range of literature to suit needs and experience of children, it is another to see that they are available and they reach the children. A look at book stands, schools and public libraries up and down the country will reveal a dearth of children's literature by Nigerian authors. If the situation is poor in the urban cities, the situation in the rural schools could better be imagined. Many of our children come from impoverished reading background with no opportunities and encouragement to widen their background in primary schools. Those who show initiative have constrain by the unavailability of libraries.

It is also pertinent to ask where the bookshops are in Nigeria, where the Nigerian child can buy books, especially if he lives in the rural area. How many books can he buy with limited funds? And at school how does the child gain access to a library perhaps locked up in principals, offices. Where are the neighbourhood libraries to which he can go to borrow books outside school hours. The answers to all these questions are depressing as the library facilities and bookshops are very few where they exist. There are not adequate children's sections in public libraries. This results in the scarcity of children's books or literature. The result is that children have now very little to read outside their textbooks. They therefore have little to talk about commonly. Since children do not have enough to read, they spend their leisure hours in other undesirable ways. They are easily frustrated and their intellectual growth is stunted.

### **Remedy**

In order to make more suitable reading materials available to children, families, communities, schools and Government should strive to establish more libraries for children at least in every Local Government Area. Authors and publishers could also take the wind out of the sail of apathy towards children's literature by organizing symposia, writing workshop and seminars for authors.

Finally, government has a part to play towards improving the present supply of children's literature. This will encourage reading. Reading is the key to wisdom. If we want good resourceful citizens, then we should provide them good children's literature.

It is desirable for a teacher to allow these criteria to influence his choice of children's literature instead of his own tastes. The teacher is a guide, helper, and clarifier. To be able to decide what literature is suitable or appropriate for his class children at any point in time, the teacher should be widely read in literature for children. It implies that the teacher's task too, is to familiarize himself with a wide range of children's literature, so as to be able to match the literature to the individual child's needs and interests. In doing this, the teacher is putting himself in the best position to know what is exactly right as literature for the direct experience of the children in his class, both as a group and as individuals.

You should note that the range of literature for children either to read or to learn about oneself and others, or for information, fun and for escape is so wide that it is possible to suit the literature to children's needs and experience. The implication is that it is only the literature that satisfies identified criteria that children should be reading and if such literature that meets these criteria for all children are not available then they should be written.

## **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2**

Enjoyment is a criterion for choosing literature for children, Discuss.

### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

The criteria that influence the choice of children's literature are many. These are: suitability, enjoyment, and availability to mention but these.

### **5.0 SUMMARY**

The literature children read must be varied enough to appeal to the many reasons for reading; reading to learn about one self and others; reading for information, or for fun and escape. What literature to read to precisely suit personal needs and experience, personal interests, particular creative abilities and social situations etc. makes suitability the first criterion for choosing children's literature. This is followed by other criteria like enjoyment. Literature chosen can only be read by children if it is enjoyable. Then what is suitable and enjoyable should be available. To answer this question makes availability an important criterion for choosing children's literature.

## **ANSWER TO SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1**

Suitability means how literature theme and treatment of ideas, characters and the level of language suit children's maturity and interests, personal problems, social situations, creative abilities etc. This also means the

appropriateness of the literature to the children. It demands that a book or novel, short stories etc. should be produced largely with a child developmental needs such literature must be one that deals honestly with children, portrays them candidly and in a medium to which they can respond with imagination and pleasure.

## **ANSWER TO SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2**

Enjoyment is the second criterion of choosing literature for children. This is because literature is to be read because it is enjoyable, if it is not enjoyed it won't be read. The literature must relate to the children and be enjoyable to them.

### **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

1. List three criteria for determining the worth of literature to be chosen for children.
2. Explain (a) One thing the teacher must avoid and (b) One thing he must do in choosing literature for children.

### **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING**

Alan Davies (1973). *Literature for Children*. Oxford: The Open University Press.

Chidi Ikonne (1969), Emelia Oko, Peter Onwudinjo (1992). *Children and Literature in Africa*. (ed). Calabar: Heineman Educational Books (Nigeria) Plc.

## **UNIT 4 THE TEACHER'S FUNCTIONS IN PREPARING LITERATURE**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objective
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Teacher's Role in Novel Presentation of Literature to Children
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

In unit 4, we discussed important considerations in planning presentation of literature to children. It is hoped that you gathered that literature lesson planning starts with identifying the type of literature to teach student from the literary scheme of work; examining the characteristics of the learners and assessing their needs so as to suit the literature to the learners' needs and interests. This is followed by the subject content task analysis, statement of objectives, which determine the teaching methods, materials, teaching skills and evaluation criteria.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVE**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain the teacher's functions in presenting literature (Novel) to children.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 The Role of the Teacher in Novel Presentation to Children**

The novel is a form of prose fiction literature capable of providing learning experience of unique value. If well selected and imaginatively taught, this form of literature can develop considerable enthusiasm and interest in students and will easily lead to extensive personal reading at the natural speed of the individual reader.

The teacher's role in teaching students novel is first to accept that prose fiction is a field which demands a good deal of flexibility from the

teacher and that some degree of individual and group work may be necessary. The teacher should encourage intensive and extensive reading so that everybody is actively participating with nobody left inactive. The teacher is expected to foster a general reading habit in the children. The teacher observes certain basic principles to solve problems usually involved in the development of general reading habits. These basic principles are as follows:

- (1) Teacher must give children demonstrations and examples
- (2) Give suggestions
- (3) Make provisions,
- (4) Reinforcement

We shall explain these concepts:

**EXAMPLE:** The teacher imparts the habit of general reading by a process of demonstration and example to stir the basic interests and readiness of his students. The teachers example will comprise producing from time to time a new story, essay or poem which surprises children by its appropriateness to what concerns them (their personal problems, social situations and the world in general as they see it). The teacher will also judiciously make use of allies among his students. Those who show most resourcefulness should have opportunities of presenting their discoveries to the class, and if spontaneous admiration is evoked in the class, the teacher should praise the effort. To encourage a readiness to contribute, it is good a idea to make occasions for every student or child in the class to produce something he or she has come across, of interest, allowing perhaps an average of 5 minutes each or even less and showing appreciation of everybody's efforts, no matter how modest.

### **Suggestion**

The teacher must do more than give examples to students. In proportion as he manages to stimulate willingness, he must also suggest how it can be followed up. The teacher must suggest what books, stories etc might be read, and also where they can be found. The most helpful thing he can do is to provide a reading list of authors, titles, and topics which are likely to have a genuine appeal to students at any particular level. The reading list should be duplicated so that each student can have his or her copy, and may perhaps kick off items as he or she reads along.

### **Provision**

Reading lists should always be linked as closely as possible with what students can be expected to find available in the library or bookshops without undue trouble or expense. In some places, there may be public libraries, and teachers should make it their business to know what IS available there, and make suggestions to the school authorities of what they would like to see added. In other cases, the school itself should endeavour to purchase these books.

Government, school authorities and teachers should ensure that funds, premises and personnel are available, according to local means, for the provision of libraries which are well cared for, well stocked and convenient. Efforts must be made to encourage the use of libraries for general reading, not only for the writing of assignments. In some cases, teachers may be able to establish class libraries as well, so that the supply of books for general reading can be closely linked with the rest of the programme of study. The books available must be of a kind that students can easily cope with on their own to promote compulsive reading.

### Reinforcement

The enthusiastic teacher will find various ways not only of creating a reading habit, but of maintaining and extending it. Not making it seem too much of labour. What is meant here is that the teacher works with students by praise and encouragement rather than by blame and compulsion. The teacher can get students to keep records of what they read, and even provide special exercise books or loose – leaf folders for the purpose. This can be made into a practice which promotes a degree of personal pride in achievement. Such students' records could include information such as:

1.	Title	6	Principal characters or topics
2.	Author	7.	Brief outline of story theme
3.	Publisher	8.	Points of interest or disapproval
4.	Date of publication	9.	Memorable quotations or extracts
5.	Date read	10.	Opinions expressed about the book others etc.

The teacher should create a healthy interest in students when they read books for the sake of reading not for examinations and marks or grades. Students should read for fun, for enjoyment and information. Teachers may also consider various ways of socializing the reading habit of children, for example, by encouraging children's membership of literary societies and related activities both inside the school and in a wider societal basis. Teacher may organize various kinds of inter-school

literary functions, possibly a famous literature writer can be invited to school to talk to say final year students in a particular locality.

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Explain suggestion as a role of the teacher in the presentation of a novel.

### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

The teacher of literature performs various roles in the course of teaching children's literature.

### **5.0 SUMMARY**

The roles that teachers of children's literature perform include:-

- Encouraging students to do intensive and extensive reading.
- Giving students demonstrations and examples, suggestions, provisions and reinforcement. Explaining the setting of novel character's narrative, the language, making it real and talking it over so as to achieve set objectives.

### **ANSWER TO SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

As the teacher manages to stimulate willingness in the children, he must also suggest how it can be followed up. The teacher must suggest what books, etc, might be read and also where they can be found. The most helpful thing the teacher can do is to provide a reading list of authors, titles and topics which are likely to have a genuine appeal to students at any particular level. The reading list should be duplicated so that each student can have his or her copy, and may perhaps kick off items as he or she reads along.

The Teacher and the study of a novel:

The teacher should explain the structure of a novel to students as follows:

- Setting – this means the geographical, historical, social, sometimes political environment or background in which the story in the novel is set.
- Character here refers to the persons in the story.

The teacher should teach about the characters using the following:

1. What the author himself said
2. What the main character himself says or does or who he/she relates with others
3. What other characters say about one another
4. What a character's presented as thinking, feeling, doing or refraining from doing.
5. How is the story in the novel presented? Teacher should teach - the students need to be to observe matters of personal attention as well as note that events can be influenced by social machinery like in the duties of police officers, flood or a plague.
6. Use of language – teacher to explain the use of language e.g sub-families, dialects, registers and personal idiolects which may be employed in the course of a single novel.

The teacher aids the study of a novel with:

- choice of edition getting off to a good start by reading passages from the book before students ever see it: any visual aids is introduced at the right time. Providing a structure of the study. In the course of his preliminary assessment, the teacher will have considered how the book can best be divided into sections. Making it real -The need for helping students to grasp a work of literature by making sure that they have an adequate and correct idea of any fundamental problems or concepts that have been emphasized.
- **Varying the method:** since the reading and study of a novel is often an extensive journey, the teacher can help a great deal by .using different methods in dealing with various parts. The bulk of the reading will be done by students individually or privately. The teacher may decide to read some parts aloud to the class, especially if there are effects of drama or humour which he can bring out. The teacher can introduce variety in the methods used to test or assess the reading of various sections. Keeping stock – As a book is of some length and complexity, it is necessary for students to retain some impressions of what has gone before and it is usually helpful to compile the list of characters, with a few comments on each.

Discussion, and the leading of discussion, is one of the subtle arts which a teacher of literature needs to develop to a high degree. The teacher

should avoid monopoly of the discussion by one or just a few individuals in the class or by himself. Discussion should be guided by two important principles. First, to arrive at the truth, as far as possible – and second, to bring in as many individuals as possible. Discussion best arises out of questions and a Skilful teacher will devise sets of questions which pass from factual, to the interpretative and finally to the speculative. It is important to the teacher to know how to formulate the fundamental issues present in a book. The teacher should bear in mind that critical books are a means to study, not an end in themselves.

## **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

Take a published novel or story for children and describe four you will teach the content to your pupils.

## **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING**

Moody H.L.B. (1971). *The Teaching of Literature in Developing Countries*. London: Group Ltd.