

INTERESTS VARY GREATLY

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THE QUALITIES THAT APPEAL TO CHILDREN AT DIFFERENT AGES

This is a psychological problem which can be solved only by a study of the interests and capacities of the children. These interests vary so greatly and make their appearance at such diverse periods in different individuals and in the two sexes, that it is a difficult matter to say with any definiteness just what qualities of literature appeal to children at any particular age. Moreover, the children's environment and previous experiences have a great deal to do in determining these interests and capacities. There are, however, certain characteristics of different periods of childhood which are fairly universal, and which may, therefore, be taken as guiding, determining factors in the selection of suitable literature.

JUNIOR FORMS

1. One of the most striking characteristics of young children is the activity of their imagination. They endow their toys with life and personality; they construct the most fantastic and impossible tales; they accept without question the existence of supernatural beings. The problem for the teacher is to direct this activity of imagination into proper fields, and to present material which will give the child a large store of beautiful images—images that are not only delightful to dwell upon, but are also elevating and refining in their influence upon character. The fairy tale, the folk tale, and the fable, owe their popularity with young children to the predominance of the imaginative element. The traditionary fairy tales and folk stories are usually more suitable than those that appear in teachers' magazines and modern holiday books