

Reading Readiness Bulks Large In School Program

Readiness—An Important Phase Of Reading Program



Using objects to illustrate reading matter is a part of the preparation of Klamath tots for reading. Here a Mills school group is reading around a miniature farm set-up. Left to right: Douglas Sackett, Dolores Robinson, Ruth Rindal, Jerry English, Janell Finley and Delbert Towley. The teacher is Mrs. Ruth Southwell.

By VERNE SPEIRS
Principal, Mills School
(With article in a series on schools.)
The public schools of any community are a great influencing force upon the lives of the citizens of tomorrow; thus, if the schools are to render their greatest efficiency, every part of the educational program must be given thorough study and consideration. In considering reading readiness, which is the preparation for formal reading, we are presenting only one segment of the entire program but one which has great significance and one which touches the life of every beginning school child. There are two aspects to reading readiness; one deals with the instruction and other pertinent considerations relative to an individual's ability to interpret reading materials at all school levels, including adult education. The second, the one which we wish to consider here, deals with the orientation of children for successful participation in beginning reading activities.

In years gone by it was a common belief on the part of parents as well as school authorities, that the child who became six years of age chronologically, was ready to enter the formal reading program as presented in the first grade of the public school. This is not necessarily true. It is a recognized fact in the Klamath Falls schools as well as elsewhere, that readiness for reading involves a complexity of skills, abilities, attitudes and information. Certain aspects of readiness are brought about by inner maturation or development; other aspects by guidance. From a physical standpoint we know that all children do not learn to talk or walk at the same time. It is just as reasonable to believe they are not all ready to learn the reading process at the same time. On the other hand, early inner maturation may take place but because of an impoverished environment may produce an individual deficient in background of information or language facility. Both nature and nurture as general factors in reading readiness must be recognized.

A program for first grade pupils designed to determine readiness for reading as well as to give initial instruction in reading must be concerned primarily with the welfare of the whole child. His level of mental maturity, his physical and emotional status must be carefully considered. Most authorities are now agreed that readiness needs to be developed in all children and that reading instruction is not to be postponed until some mystical inner maturity takes place. The average child reaches this stage of readiness at about 6 years 6 months of age. While we all realize it may be necessary to correct certain handicaps, in general, reading readiness is a teacher problem.

In Klamath Falls where we do not have a kindergarten system in connection with our public school system, the first grade teacher finds it necessary at the beginning of each school year to spend from four to eight weeks in the development of reading readiness. More often than not, this length of time is far too short for the great task of developing concepts, control over language structure, interest in visual symbols, curiosity about books and about his environment in the school which is an entirely new situation to the beginner.

This year for the first time we are

experimenting with what may be termed a junior first grade. This includes students who are very slow in achieving the desired maturity necessary to successfully enter the formal reading program. Their work is composed of that type which will lead them through the experiences necessary for this readiness we have been discussing.

No part of the educational program is more important than that which deals with the multiple of problems found with the child who is just beginning his school experience. If reading is an adventure in which children experience the thrill of discovery, then the program which prepares them for that adventure must be thoughtfully planned, patiently administered and thoroughly understood by teachers, administrators and boards of education. We believe this to be true in Klamath Falls.

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Venus Dominates March Skies With Brilliant Light

By J. HUGH PRUETT
Astronomer, Extension Division, Oregon Higher Education System

The evening skies of early spring are ablaze with bright stellar lights, but the unusual brilliance of Venus distinguishes it at once as the finest of the starry hosts. Surely no one who "looks up" needs directions for locating this superbly glorious planet at nightfall, for it glows like a little lantern hung high on the western wall of heaven.

At the same early hour, Mars and Saturn, fairly closely grouped, shine with steady radiance in the east. Mars is easily identified as it is distinctly reddish-orange and is the brighter of the two. The star Regulus, less luminous than either planet, twinkles clearly only a little below them.

Jupiter, the brightest star-like object in the morning sky, is now rising in the southeast about four hours before the sun. By sunrise, this old "king of the gods" of Roman mythology has almost reached a southern position.

For the real stars of evening—actual distant suns, not other worlds encircling our sun—let us observe at 7 p. m. The splendid Orion group is high in the south. The short arc of three stars of equal brightness forms this ancient hunter's belt. Considerably above these, two brighter stars mark his shoulders. The red one is Betelgeuse. (Avoid the pronunciation "bee-tee jooes," occasionally heard.) Below the belt are found two others, the unusually bright one being Rigel.

Take a space below and to the east of Orion, we find flashing Sirius, the "dog star" second in brilliance in the evening heavens only to Venus. Procyon, the "little dog star," follows 30 degrees about due east of his noted master, Orion. Considerably above Mars and nearly overhead, the heavenly twins, Castor and Pollux, stand side by side. Pollux, the southern one, is

more orange in color and slightly outshines his brother.

Almost directly overhead there shines the very bright star, yellow Capella. Six months ago at this hour, Capella was just skimming the northern horizon or barely dipping below it, depending upon the observer's latitude.

Somewhat southwest of the zenith (overhead) there is a distinct V made up of several dim stars and the bright, orange star, Aldebaran (accent second syllable) at the upper end of the southern branch of the letter. This group is known as the Hyades (three syllables). And no one can fail to sight the delicate, almost cloud-like, tiny dipper of the Pleiades (Plee-ya-dee), the compact group of little stars somewhat to the right of their half sisters, the Hyades. Some have thought the Pleiades resemble a flock of flying birds.

Note low in the north northwest the bright star, Deneb, which heads the Northern Cross. And do not forget to see the familiar Big Dipper, balancing uncertainly in the northeast on the very end star of its handle.

Texas Woman Has Fifth Set Of Twins

MERCEDES, Tex., March 6 (AP)—Mr. and Mrs. Emilio Tamez are the parents of twins — for the fifth time in 10 years.

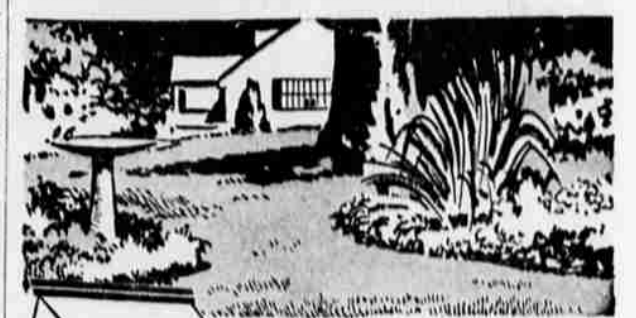
The latest additions to the family arrived Thursday. The 26-year-old mother and the two boys are doing nicely in a hospital here.

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WINS
PULLMAN, March 6 (AP)—The Washington State college rifle team boosted its season record to 16 wins against three losses this week with an 1874 to 1871 victory over the University of Indiana. Nearly one-third of the total area of Arizona is under cultivation.



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