

TEACHING THE USE OF BOOKS AND LIBRARIES

A MANUAL FOR TEACHERS AND LIBRARIANS

BY

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Formerly Librarian, Omaha Technical High School

AND

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Assistant Librarian, Omaha Technical High School

Fourth Edition Revised



THE H. W. WILSON COMPANY
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PREFACE TO SECOND EDITION

This manual is intended for teachers and librarians giving library instruction. Its purpose is to describe briefly various methods that have been used successfully in teaching this subject to students in elementary and high schools and in colleges.

Many textbooks and outlines on the use of books and libraries have been examined and from these a summary of current practices has been made, with examples of illustrative material, problems and references for further study. Although emphasis has been placed on the needs and abilities of high school students, since the experience of the writers has been limited to the high school level, a variety of suggestions and forms of practice work have been purposely included to make the book adaptable to elementary and college students as well. Each instructor can select from these the ones suited to her particular requirements. As it is hoped that classroom teachers will find this book useful in helping their students acquire library skills, much more explanation of elementary library techniques has been included than would have been the case had it been intended for librarians alone.

The first edition of this book was planned to accompany a particular student text, *Library Key*, by Zaidee Brown. A new edition of that book now contains teaching suggestions and examples of practice work, so that it seemed best to broaden the scope of this book by making it a general teachers' manual for library instruction rather than one meant for use with a single text. The general plan of this edition is, however, the same as that of the first edition and the arrangement of material follows that of *Library Key*.

In this revised edition the text for most of the chapters has been entirely rewritten, since, in the interval between the publication of the two editions, many changes have been made in methods of presenting this work and many new textbooks for library instruction have been published. The bibliographies have been brought up to date and some changes in the practice work have been made where new editions of reference tools have appeared. Appendix 1 of the old edition, "Plan for Teaching the Use of Books and Libraries as Part of Class Work of Required Courses in High School," has been omitted, as new studies of the integration of library instruction with the curriculum have superseded

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these tentative outlines. Appendix 2, "Sample Lesson on Reference Books for Office Practice Classes," based on a plan used in the South Philadelphia High School for Girls, has also been omitted, as this plan has since been fully described by its compiler, Mary Farr, in the *Wilson Bulletin* for April, 1934. Appendix 3, giving sample tests for all divisions of a library course has been retained with slight changes, in the new edition. The preparation of this edition has been entirely the work of the second of the two authors and she alone should be held responsible for its errors and other shortcomings.

As this book represents a compilation of the teaching methods and devices used by many librarians and teachers, it is in the fullest sense a cooperative work, to which many persons have contributed. Although an effort has been made to give credit to the librarian or school whenever a method, device, or example of practice work is reproduced, it is impossible to acknowledge individually all the help that has been received. Grateful acknowledgment is made here to all of those who have in any way aided in the preparation of this book.

We especially wish to acknowledge our indebtedness to Zaidée Brown who is responsible for the original plan of this manual and on whose book, *Library Key*, this book is largely based.

MAY INGLES
ANNA McCAGUE

July 1937

NOTE ON FOURTH EDITION

In this edition an attempt has been made to bring the bibliographical material up to date. Some new references have been added and older references have in many cases been dropped. Librarians and teachers who have worked on the problem of library instruction know that their ideas concerning content, method and emphasis change over a period of years. For this reason schools are constantly revising their outlines for library instruction and new library textbooks are being published. Circumstances have not permitted a complete listing of revised library courses at this time but some of these have been included as well as several outstanding texts on this subject which have been published since the last edition of this book. In some instances references have been dropped, not because they are no longer useful but because they are out of print or in magazines not available to most school libraries.

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The list of films for teaching the use of the library has been dropped from the Appendix as up-to-date lists of such films may be found in class 020 of the *Educational Film Catalog* and its supplements. This catalog is published by The H. W. Wilson Company and will be found in many school and public libraries.

Some changes have been made in the text to conform with present practice and some problems and exercises have been revised.



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CHAPTER 1

AIMS, ORGANIZATION AND METHODS OF LIBRARY INSTRUCTION

AIMS

The aims or objectives of library instruction have often been formulated and variously stated. To a certain extent they parallel the aims of the school library. The following points are usually included in a statement of them:

To create an interest in the school library and an appreciation of it as a laboratory for exploration and research.

To help students acquire correct study techniques, such as skill in the use of books and other reference aids, and the ability to evaluate material and summarize it in notes.

To help integrate the curriculum by leading students to investigate various fields of content and to gather material from many sources.

To help develop the reading habit and an appreciation of the best in literature.

To provide opportunity for the practice of citizenship and the acquiring of desirable attitudes and habits in regard to books and libraries.

In addition to these general aims, each division of library instruction has its own specific objectives. In this manual these definite objectives for each lesson will be given at the beginning of each chapter.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

Arranging for library instruction in the school program. At the present time usage in regard to the programming of library instruction varies greatly. In schools in which classes are scheduled to the library for certain periods each week, library instruction is usually given by the librarian during some of these periods. In many high schools library lessons are given in English or social science classes as part of the work of those courses. Sometimes all of this instruction is given by the librarian, but at the present time there is a decided trend away from the former practice of giving library lessons as a separate course and in large doses.

For this reason many recent library instruction outlines make teachers responsible for most of the content of library lessons although they suggest that the general introduction to the library or orientation lesson is best given by the librarian. These outlines stress the fact that library tools should not be taught until the need for them is felt and that library instruction should be given gradually from the elementary school through high school until skill in using library tools and good work habits are acquired.¹ On the college level, especially in teacher-training institutions, a separate course on the use of books and libraries is usually provided.²

Integration of library instruction with the curriculum. The preceding paragraph has touched on the fact that there is a growing feeling among school librarians and some educators as well, that the content of the usual school library lessons is not after all, separate subject matter to be taught apart from other courses. An analysis of it shows it to be made up of skills, study techniques, information and attitudes which are needed for successful study in all courses. There has been frequent expression of this idea in recent library periodicals and several thorough studies, including outlines showing how this integration may be effected, have been made.³ Furthermore, not only are library instruction textbooks now being planned for use in regular classes, but textbooks and courses of study for English and orientation classes are including section on library use.⁴

If this belief in the value of integrating library instruction with other courses is widely accepted by librarians and educators, the whole conception of library lessons will be changed. Librarians will no longer prepare outlines and practice work for lessons that are, of necessity, more or less distinct from the pupils' interests and needs. But rather will the classroom teacher, who is herself skilled in library use, introduce her

¹ Los Angeles. City Schools. *Road maps and treasure hunts, lessons in the use of the library for junior and senior high schools.* 1940. p.13-15; New York City. Board of Education. Bureau of Libraries. *Syllabus in the use of library books for high schools.* 1941. p.6-8.; Scripture, Elizabeth and Greer, M. H. *Find it yourself! a brief course in the use of books and libraries.* 2d ed. rev. 1943. p.6-8.

² For a discussion of scheduling library instruction in elementary and high schools, see Fargo, L. F. *The library in the school.* 3d ed. A.L.A. 1939. p.114-22. For library instruction in colleges and normal schools the following references will be helpful: Harris, Mabel. *Non-professional library instruction in teachers colleges.* Peabody contributions to librarianship no. 3. Peabody Library School. 1934 (Reprinted from *Peabody Journal of Education.* 12: 86-95. September 1934) *How shall we educate teachers and librarians for library service in the school?* Findings and recommendations of the Joint committee of the American association of teachers colleges and the American library association, with a library science curriculum for teachers and teacher-librarians. Columbia University. 1936. Hurt, Peyton. "Bridging the gulf between the college classroom and the library." *Library Journal.* 59:748-51. October 1, 1934. Little, E. S. *Instruction in the use of books and libraries in colleges and universities.* University of Michigan. Dept. of Library science. 1936.

³ For list of articles on this subject and examples of integrated library lessons, see bibliography at end of this chapter.

⁴ Full references to many of these textbooks and outlines will be found in the general bibliography on page 185.

students to various library tools and techniques at the time when learning comes most easily, that is, when the need is felt.

Needless to say complete integration of the materials of library instruction represents an ideal for the future rather than something immediately realizable. Teachers themselves must become library trained. Principals and others responsible for curriculum making must be led to see that in order that pupils may become skilled users of books and libraries, they should practice these skills in many courses when the need for them is felt, rather than attempt to learn them in brief isolated library lessons. The responsibility of the librarian in showing teachers and administrators the advantages of this plan is obvious. Much study of the problem with experiment and tentative procedures, as well as the exercise of much tact and patience on the part of the librarian, will be necessary before the goal is reached.⁵ However, no one who has examined recent library texts and outlines can doubt that much progress has been made in integrating library instruction with the curriculum.

Library instruction given by the librarian. Although complete integration of library instruction belongs to the future, and the librarian must now be responsible for the library lessons, a certain amount of integration has been achieved in many schools by arranging that this instruction be given in connection with the work of some class. A study of actual practices in elementary and high schools shows that one of the following plans is usually followed. First, the librarian may go to the classroom to tell the class about some particular library aid or technique whenever the work of the class calls for its use. Theoretically this is an ideal way to present library instruction, but actually except in small schools, crowded schedules often make it impossible for the librarian to leave her other work to give instruction whenever the need arises. A second plan is then followed. Definitely scheduled lessons are given each year by the librarian in certain required courses. Careful planning by both the teacher and librarian can usually arrange for these lessons when the class really needs them, and if they are skilfully connected with the class work their importance will be recognized by students and teacher. Much of the librarian's burden of following up delinquent practice work can be eliminated by this plan since the teacher can withhold the pupil's weekly grade until the librarian reports the practice work complete. Another great advantage of this plan is that teachers of these courses,

⁵ Cf. Feagley, E. M. "The teacher and the library." *American Library Association, Bulletin*. 28:116-23. March 1934; Indiana. Department of Public Instruction. *A library manual for use in Indiana schools*. 1941. p.17-18; New York City. Board of Education. *Syllabus in the use of library books for high schools*. 1941. p.8-10; Scripture, Elizabeth and Greer, M. H. *Find it yourself!* 2nd rev. ed. 1943. p.6-8.

in which the librarian has given instruction for some time, frequently come to feel themselves ready to take over the teaching of the library lessons themselves, especially if the librarian can supply them with the outlines and illustrative material she has used. Thus the librarian is free to extend her own teaching to other classes and in this way bring about a more complete integration of the curriculum.

If library lessons cannot be scheduled for some class, it will be necessary for the librarian to give this instruction when pupils come to the library for reading periods; or to arrange that they come from study halls for this work. This giving of library instruction apart from the regular work of the class need not mean that the lessons seem isolated and entirely apart from the needs of the students. The alert librarian will keep in such close touch with the classroom work that she will be able to know the particular library needs and interests of the group and to adjust her instruction to meet these.

Subject matter of library instruction. Though the divisions of the content of library instruction vary in number in various textbooks and outlines, certain basic information, abilities and skills appear in all of them. These are:

A knowledge of the general arrangement of the local library and its rules, and an understanding of how books are classified and arranged on the shelves in libraries.

Something concerning the purpose of the parts of a book, and the ability to use books skilfully.

An understanding of the plan of the library catalog and the ability to use it to locate book information.

A knowledge of the different kinds of information to be found in dictionaries and encyclopedias and the ability to use these books intelligently.

A knowledge of other reference books useful to the student at his particular level and the ability to use these with skill.

The ability to locate material in magazines by using periodical indexes, particularly, the *Readers' Guide*.

The ability to tie these various skills together for a definite purpose by learning to prepare a bibliography in good form.

Other library subjects included in some texts and outlines are the technique of note taking and information on book buying and the formation of a personal library.

Length of course. The length of time given to library instruction and the number of lessons will vary, of course, with circumstances. As instruction spreads downward through elementary schools less time will have to be given in high school to certain elementary skills. Diagnostic tests will show how much students already know about the library when they enter high school. If the classroom teacher gives the instruction there need not be any set time limit, each teacher judging from the work done by her pupils how much time is needed for the acquiring of the various skills. If the lessons are given by the librarian a definite number must, of course, be determined upon but this number will vary with conditions and should never be inflexible. The minimum number for high school recommended by the Certain report⁶ and accepted by the Secondary School Department of the National Education Association, the North Central Association and the American Library Association, is twelve lessons, three lessons to be given each year in English classes; or, as an alternative, a unit course of twelve lessons, three of which are to be given in history classes, one in Latin or French, four in science or manual training and three in English. The Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools of the Southern States⁷ also recommends twelve lessons to be given, preferably, in the first year of high school. *School Library Yearbook, Number One*,⁸ suggests six lessons as a minimum, and many schools in which it has not been found possible to arrange for a longer course, get excellent results from this number.

Since this book was originally planned as a teacher's manual for a special textbook *Library Key* by Zaidee Brown the chapter divisions correspond to the chapters in that book. These chapters are not to be construed as representing a fixed number of lessons. In fact each one of them probably contains more material than can be successfully assimilated in the usual forty-minute class period. For example, ideally, a whole period should be given to orientation in the library and parts of several periods to explanation of and drill with the classification. When the librarian must give instruction in a limited number of periods, she frequently attempts to cover too much ground and the results of her teaching are discouraging. The mastery of a few basic skills by all the class with extra self-directed activity by those of superior ability will result in greater satisfaction for all.⁹

⁶ Certain, C. C. *Standard library organization and equipment for secondary schools.* A.L.A. 1920.

⁷ Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools of the Southern States. "New library standards for secondary schools." In *American Library Association. Education Committee. School library yearbook.* no. 4, 1931. p.102.

⁸ American Library Association. Education Committee. *School library yearbook.* no. 1. 1927.

⁹ For excellent article urging simplification of library instruction, see Naughton, Helen E. "Learning library." *Wilson Library Bulletin.* 16:44-5, 48. September 1941.

The divisions of library instruction listed above represent the broad field of library skills desirable for high school students to acquire. Library lessons under existing conditions must, of course, often fall far short of accomplishing this full teaching program. Each librarian will have to adjust her own teaching to conditions as she finds them, concentrating on those parts of the library course of study that seem most needed by her particular group and working always toward an enlargement of library instruction through integrating it with classroom needs.

Credit. If the instruction is given as part of a regular class, credit for library work is part of the class credit. If given separately the librarian must keep a record for the school office of those who have completed satisfactorily the requirements of the library instruction. It may not be necessary to record a grade for the work done by each student but some sort of check must be made in order that students feel that their library lessons are required work.

PLANNING AND PRESENTING THE WORK

The many excellent textbooks and courses of study for library instruction now in print greatly facilitate the work of planning and presenting library work. Frequent reference to many of these is made throughout this book and a list of the most outstanding of these aids may be found in the bibliography on page 185. Some of these texts are planned for students at the college level, others for high schools and elementary schools. One of them, *The Library Key* by Zaidee Brown, is adapted to both high school and college students by an ingenious arrangement of printing the most important explanations in heavy type, and by including in the practice work questions and exercises of varying degrees of difficulty.

Diagnostic or pre-tests. As library instruction becomes more nearly standardized and as certain definite units of instruction are incorporated into the courses of study for schools at all levels it will be possible to know somewhat accurately just what library knowledges and skills have already been acquired by a high school or college freshman. At the present time however, when this standardization is lacking and students entering high school or college differ so widely in their library experience, diagnostic or pre-tests to determine what students already know are very valuable. These tests not only help the instructor plan the work which is to follow by showing what parts of the subject matter need emphasis, but they also make it possible for her to arrange for individual differences