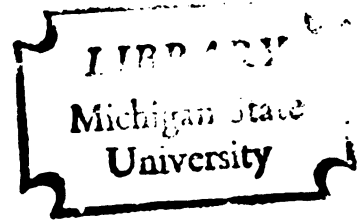


RESPONSES OF SIXTH-GRADE STUDENTS  
TO TWO TYPES OF HUMOR PRESENT  
IN FICTION FOR CHILDREN,  
AND AN INVESTIGATION OF THE TYPES  
OF HUMOR FOUND IN BOOKS  
FOR THE MIDDLE GRADE READER

Dissertation for the Degree of Ph. D.  
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY  
ROBERT LOUIS NELSON  
1973



This is to certify that the

thesis entitled

RESPONSES OF SIXTH-GRADE STUDENTS TO TWO  
TYPES OF HUMOR PRESENT IN FICTION FOR CHILDREN,  
AND AN INVESTIGATION OF THE TYPES OF HUMOR  
FOUND IN BOOKS FOR THE MIDDLE GRADE READER

presented by

Robert Louis Nelson

has been accepted towards fulfillment  
of the requirements for

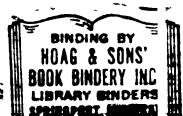
Ph.D. degree in Education

*Patricia Jean Cacciolo*

Major professor

Date January 11, 1974

0-7639





3 1293 10040 8784

~~MAN 6-177-344~~  
~~232~~  
~~AKC~~

IS — R

~~2096~~

~~2096~~  
~~2096~~

## ABSTRACT

### RESPONSES OF SIXTH-GRADE STUDENTS TO TWO TYPES OF HUMOR PRESENT IN FICTION FOR CHILDREN AND AN INVESTIGATION OF THE TYPES OF HUMOR FOUND IN BOOKS FOR THE MIDDLE GRADE READER

By

Robert Louis Nelson

#### Problem

The purpose of the study was two-fold. The first purpose was to examine the responses of 216 sixth-grade youngsters to two general types of humor found in fiction written for middle-grade children to see which type they preferred if any. The two types of humor employed were humor based on a physical action of some sort typified by stupid blunders, incongruities, and general confusion including some falling or tumbling about; and humor based upon the words used by the characters in the stories which included items such as word repetition, word rhyming, mispronunciation of words, and misunderstanding of meanings. The second purpose was to examine selections of humorous literature written for middle grade children in order to classify the general type of humor found in them as either action humor or word humor.



### Procedure

For the first part of the study 216 children were randomly selected from eighteen sixth grade classrooms. Six of these classes came from the inner-city type schools, six from suburban area schools, and six from rural school settings. Twelve youngsters, six boys and six girls, participated from each class. Groups of six were consulted at a time. These groups of six were arranged by sex. Four humorous selections taken from four middle grade children's fiction books were chosen, then recorded for playing to the pupils. Two of the selections represented humor based on a physical action while the other two represented word humor. The youngsters listened to the selections, then were asked to respond to a written instrument presented them. The instrument consisted of questions that asked which story the children preferred, (the selections were presented in pairs, one representing action humor, the other word humor); whether the stories made them feel happy, indifferent, or unhappy; and how they would rate the stories as to humor quality. Oral comments made by the students concerning the stories were taped for evaluative purposes too.

The second part of the study entailed the reading, evaluating, and categorizing of approximately 193 humorous type books written for children at the middle grade level. These books were categorized as to the basic kind of humor

they contained; that is physical, verbal, or physical and verbal both.

Results obtained from the written instrument used with the youngsters were tabulated in percentages and mean scores. Results obtained from classifying the books as to the type of humor present in them were totaled and listed by percentages.

### Major Findings

1. The majority of children in the study did feel happy after hearing the humorous selections.

2. The inner-city youth in this study favored action humor more than the rural and suburban students, but the rural youth showed a higher percentage for word humor than did the inner-city and suburban pupils.

3. Sex was not a major factor in the type of humor preferred.

4. Humor is a very individual trait. What one person finds to be funny, another may view as tragic or at least not humorous.

5. There are not enough humorous books available for the average sixth grade child.

6. The majority of humorous books available for the sixth grade child are based on physical action type humor.

7. Children indicated in their oral comments that

they would read humorous books if more were available to them.

8. Word humor of a more subtle nature is not easily comprehended by the average sixth-grader.

RESPONSES OF SIXTH-GRADE STUDENTS TO TWO  
TYPES OF HUMOR PRESENT IN FICTION FOR CHILDREN,  
AND AN INVESTIGATION OF THE TYPES OF HUMOR  
FOUND IN BOOKS FOR THE MIDDLE GRADE READER

By

Robert Louis Nelson

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to

Michigan State University

in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

College of Education

1973

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Without the advice, assistance, and encouragement of the following people this dissertation would not have been possible:

Mrs. Catherine Nelson

Dr. Patricia Cianciolo

Dr. James Snoddy

Dr. Paul Munsell

Dr. Ronald Rex

Dr. Martha King

Dr. Edgar Dale

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
LIST OF TABLES .....	vi
LIST OF FIGURES .....	viii
CHAPTER	
I. THE PROBLEM .....	1
Reason for the Study .....	2
Humor Defined .....	3
Need for Humor and Need for Humorous Literature .....	7
Purpose .....	11
Assumptions .....	13
Hypotheses .....	14
Overview .....	14
II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE .....	17
Intellectual Development of Young People as Related to Language Power and Vocabulary .....	17
Psychological Aspects of Humor Development .....	21
Reading Interests of Children Relative to Humor .....	32
Responses to Humorous Literature and What Makes the Literature Humorous .....	36
Summary .....	53
Concluding Statements .....	55
III. DESIGN OF THE STUDY .....	57
The Sample .....	57
Experimental Design .....	65
Hypotheses .....	82
Analysis .....	83
Summary .....	85

CHAPTER	Page
IV. ANALYSIS OF THE RESULTS .....	88
Part I: Four Hypotheses Pertaining to Children's Responses to Specific Humorous Selections .....	88
Part II: Hypothesis Pertaining to Analysis of the Humorous Children's Literature .....	132
Summary Statements .....	139
Chapter Summary .....	139
V. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS .....	142
Summary .....	142
Implications of Results .....	145
Conclusions .....	150
Implications for Further Research .....	155
APPENDIX	
A COPIES OF SELECTIONS RECORDED FOR PUPIL LISTENING .....	159
B EVALUATION SHEET - HUMOROUS CHILDREN'S LITERATURE .....	167
C INSTRUMENT USED FOR RECORDING CHILDREN'S RESPONSES .....	169
D STUDENT ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON EVALUATION INSTRUMENTS .....	170
Inner-City Schools .....	170
Suburban Schools .....	189
Rural Schools .....	205
E COMMENTS OF STUDENTS RECORDED FOLLOWING THE LISTENING TO THE HUMOROUS STORIES .....	219
F ANNOTATION AND CATEGORIZATION OF HUMOROUS BOOKS FOR MIDDLE GRADE CHILDREN .....	227
Contemporary and Fantasy Type Humor, Basically Humor of Action .....	228

**APPENDIX****Page**

Contemporary and Fantasy Type Humor, Basically Humor of Words .....	232
Contemporary and Fantasy Type Humor, Humor Containing Elements Based on Action <u>and</u> Words .....	233
Folk Tales, Tall Tales, All Basically Action Type Humor .....	234
Collection of Humorous Works, Basically Humor of Action .....	236
Collection of Humorous Works, Basically Humor of Words .....	237
Collections of Humorous Works, Humor Containing Elements Based on Action and Words .....	238
Books Not Annotated Because Humor Was Inconsequential Or In Poor Taste .....	239
Books Not Recommended as Humorous Books .....	241
Humorous Books Identified But Unable to Locate .....	243
Annotations of Recommended Humorous Books .....	244
 BIBLIOGRAPHY OF PROFESSIONAL LITERATURE .....	 279
Books and Pamphlets .....	279
Dissertations .....	282
Periodicals .....	283
 BIBLIOGRAPHY OF BOOKS OF WIT AND HUMOR FOR MIDDLE GRADE STUDENTS .....	 287



## LIST OF TABLES

TABLE	Page
3.01 SCHOOL TYPES, AND NUMBERS OF PUPILS IN SCHOOLS .....	58
3.02 AGES AND NUMBER OF YEARS IN PRESENT SCHOOL FOR SUBJECTS IN INNER-CITY SCHOOLS .....	60
3.03 AGES AND NUMBER OF YEARS IN PRESENT SCHOOL FOR SUBJECTS IN SUBURBAN SCHOOLS .....	62
3.04 AGES AND NUMBER OF YEARS IN PRESENT SCHOOL FOR SUBJECTS IN RURAL SCHOOLS .....	64
3.05 MEANS OF YEARS IN PRESENT SCHOOLS AND AGES FOR THE CLASSES OF SCHOOLS .....	66
3.06 RANKING OF HUMOROUS SELECTIONS BY EXPERTS .....	69
3.07 PILOT STUDY RESULTS - INNER-CITY SCHOOL .....	73
3.08 PILOT STUDY RESULTS - SUBURBAN SCHOOL .....	74
3.09 PILOT STUDY RESULTS - RURAL SCHOOL .....	76
3.10 PILOT STUDY RESULTS - COMPARING THREE TYPES OF SCHOOLS IN FINAL RESULTS .....	77
4.01 SCHOOL TYPE RAW TOTALS AND PERCENTAGES FOR ANSWERS TO QUESTION FOUR, CHOOSING BETWEEN ACTION AND WORD HUMOR .....	90
4.02 INNER-CITY RAW SCORES FOR ANSWERS TO QUESTION FOUR, CHOOSING BETWEEN ACTION AND WORD HUMOR .....	92

TABLE	Page
4.03 RURAL RAW SCORES FOR ANSWERS TO QUESTION FOUR, CHOOSING BETWEEN ACTION AND WORD HUMOR .....	93
4.04 INNER-CITY MEAN SCORES FOR ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS FIVE AND SIX .....	95
4.05 RURAL MEAN SCORES FOR ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS FIVE AND SIX .....	96
4.06 SUBURBAN RAW SCORES FOR ANSWERS TO QUESTION FOUR, CHOOSING BETWEEN ACTION AND WORD HUMOR .....	103
4.07 SUBURBAN MEAN SCORES FOR ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS FIVE AND SIX .....	104
4.08 RAW TOTALS AND PERCENTAGES FOR ANSWERS TO QUESTION FOUR, CHOOSING BETWEEN ACTION AND WORD HUMOR BY SEX .....	115
4.09 BOYS' AND GIRLS' MEAN SCORES FOR ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS FIVE AND SIX .....	118
4.10 BOYS' RAW SCORES FOR ANSWERS TO QUESTION FOUR, CHOOSING BETWEEN ACTION AND WORD HUMOR .....	119
4.11 GIRLS' RAW SCORES FOR ANSWERS TO QUESTION FOUR, CHOOSING BETWEEN ACTION AND WORD HUMOR .....	121
4.12 RAW SCORES AND PERCENTS FOR ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ONE AND TWO .....	125
4.13 INNER-CITY MEAN SCORES FOR ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ONE AND TWO .....	127
4.14 SUBURBAN MEAN SCORES FOR ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ONE AND TWO .....	128
4.15 RURAL MEAN SCORES FOR ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ONE AND TWO .....	129
4.16 RAW TOTALS AND PERCENTAGES OF BOOKS ACCORDING TO THE TYPE OF HUMOR PRESENT .....	133

## LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE	Page
1 RAW TOTALS OF HUMOROUS BOOKS ACCORDING TO THE TYPE OF HUMOR PRESENT .....	134

## Chapter One

### The Problem

#### "For A Sense of Humor"

It was pretty funny  
    Lord  
I have to admit.  
But does the laughter  
always have to be at my expense?  
I'm not the only one  
who uses the wrong word  
or gets caught in an absurd situation.  
I turn out to be the butt  
of everyone else's joke  
- more so lately,  
or does it only seem that way?  
Am I getting too touchy  
too quick to defend myself  
against anything that would make me --  
well, like the rest of humanity, I guess.  
Next time, help me to see  
the humor in the situation  
and not imagine that people's merriment  
is prompted by unkindness.  
After all, I am a bit feelish at times  
and I suppose I had it coming.  
    Amen.<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>"For a Sense of Humor," Christopher News Notes,  
No. 195, June, July, 1972.

### Reason for the Study

This is a serious age indeed. The problems of war, famine, unemployment, drugs, disease, racial and religious bigotry, and crime literally abound. Both children and adults are faced with these seemingly unconquerable problems, and life at times for all seems grim. To maintain some sort of healthy mental balance one needs to find the good in life, and one needs to be able to smile and laugh. In other words a person needs humor. Children need humor. That is basically what this piece of research is about, humor, humor as it applies to children.

General Eisenhower once told a group of students at Columbia University to have fun in life. He said, "The day that goes by without having some fun -- the day you don't enjoy life -- is not only unnecessary but unchristian."<sup>2</sup>

One source from which children might satisfy their need for humor is in the books they read. This source is not an extremely generous one, however. After checking the book reviews in Book List and Subscription Review from 1937 through 1971 and the 1970 edition of the Elementary School Library Collection only about 199 titles of books that were rated humorous could be found for children in the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades, the general age group with which

---

<sup>2</sup>Bob Hope, "The Importance of Having Fun," Readers' Digest, Jan., 1972, p. 50.

this writing is concerned. This finding is of particular significance to this study.

Twenty-one years of teaching have convinced this writer of the need for this piece of research. Laughter is needed in the classroom if it is to be a humane place, and by laughter is meant laughter with someone, not at someone. Humor should not be a source of cruelty. There is enough of that around as it is. Humor should be a soothing balm, a calming lotion, a relaxing tonic. Children need humor.

### Humor Defined

Before discussing how experts in the fields of Reading Instruction and Children's Literature feel about the need of humor for children, a working definition of the term is necessary. The Random House Dictionary<sup>3</sup> defines humor as a comic quality causing amusement, comical writing or talk in general. Elliott Landau in a discussion of humorous children's books stated unequivocally, "I would agree with Kronenberger when he said that 'Humor is not a matter of being brisk... it is an inward way of looking at life,' ... true humor ought to take some of the stuffing out of stuffed shirts; but it is important that this be done with a gentle picking at the threads of the shirt's

---

<sup>3</sup>The Random House Dictionary of the English Language. College Edition, 1969, p. 646.

seams, not a razor slash."<sup>4</sup> This researcher feels too that humor should take the stuffing out of "stuffed shirts," but disagrees with Landau when he says if we laugh a thing is either funny or humorous. Landau places a more or less negative connotation on the word funny as opposed to a more positive definition for humor.

Edwin J. Brown<sup>5</sup> differentiated between humor and wit claiming there is a clear distinction between the two, that wit often flashes and stings while humor tends to soothe and comfort.

Leon Mones<sup>6</sup> in discussing intelligence and a sense of humor concluded that a sense of humor is an intellectual insight into some characteristic cultural pattern or configuration with an accompanying appreciation of the pleasure connected with such insight.

Eastman<sup>7</sup> in his essay "Wit and Nonsense" took Freud to task contending that Freud's greatest sin against humor, and against the art of enjoying it, is that he makes it all furtive. Eastman contended that humor is an element; the

---

<sup>4</sup>Elliott D. Landau, "Quibble, Funny? Yes, Humorous, No!" Horn Book, April, 1962, p. 56.

<sup>5</sup>Edwin J. Brown, "The Humor of the School," School Board Journal, Sept., 1930, p. 35.

<sup>6</sup>Leon Mones, "Intelligence and a Sense of Humor," Journal of the Exceptional Child, March, 1939, p. 150.

<sup>7</sup>Max Eastman, The Sense of Humor, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1921), pp. 76, 87.

atom of humor is an unpleasantness or frustration taken playfully. A joke is a compound; the jocular molecule contains an atom of humor mixed with an atom or atoms of no matter what other kinds of value. Eastman soundly rejected Freud's furtive theory of humor.

Stephen Leacock defined humor as:

A humorous plot arises out of any set of circumstances that involve discomfiture or disaster of some odd or incongruous kind, not connected with the ordinary run of things and not involving sufficient pain or disaster to outweigh the pleasure of contemplating the incongruous distress.<sup>8</sup>

Bergson's rather detailed treatise on Laughter includes "Bergson's Law" which describes comic situations in general. This law states, "Any arrangement of acts and events is comic which gives us, in a single combination, the illusion of life and the distinct impression of a mechanical arrangement."<sup>9</sup> In discussing comic situations, Bergson<sup>10</sup> listed three general types that cause laughter. They are: repetition, such as meeting a friend you haven't seen in some time, three or four times in one day; inversion, where certain characters have their roles inverted, as a prisoner at the bar lecturing the magistrate; and reciprocal

---

<sup>8</sup>Stephen Leacock, Humor and Humanity, (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1938), p. 79.

<sup>9</sup>Henri Bergson, Laughter, (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1937), p. 69.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., pp. 90-96, 118.





interference of series which can be defined as a situation which is invariably comic when it belongs simultaneously to two altogether independent series of events and is capable of being interpreted in two entirely different meanings at the same time. Bergson also stated that a series of words instead of situations can become comic through the same three types of situations.

There is no general agreement as to what humor is with opinions varying from Leacock's<sup>11</sup> definition of humor as arising from any set of circumstances that involves discomfiture or disaster of some odd or incongruous kind to Eastman's<sup>12</sup> running battle with Freud, that humor does not have to be furtive, but that humor is an element, that it is an unpleasantness or frustration taken playfully.

Action humor, for purposes of this dissertation, is defined as that humor generated from some physical activity such as stupid blunders, absurd doings, incongruities, embarrassment of someone due to an accident, general confusion including some falling and tumbling about, and turning the tables on someone. Verbal humor is that based upon the words used by the characters in the story and includes word repetition, word rhyming, mispronunciation of words, misunderstanding of meanings, and humor developed

---

<sup>11</sup>Leacock, op. cit.

<sup>12</sup>Eastman, op. cit.

through implication.

Humor as used in this paper means the quality that makes a person laugh or smile and consequently feel good, even if but for a brief moment of time.

#### Need for Humor and Need for Humorous Literature

If as previously stated there is a need for children to laugh and that literature can be a vehicle to help them attain this goal, then more should be known about the effects of humor upon children and the kinds of humorous literature available for them along with their reactions to humorous writing. Armed with this information, teachers, librarians, and parents, could provide young people with the humorous types of books that they would truly enjoy. First some comments on the need for humor itself will be presented. Donald W. Click advised,

Humor makes the classroom a warmer place to be. If used judiciously and wisely, a joke can locate the student who cannot smile. We have found it advisable to beware (or try to help) the student - or teacher - who cannot smile.<sup>13</sup>

According to Beatrice Hurley, children of all ages need fun and nonsense as a balance to the overserious tendency of today's living. She stated,

---

<sup>13</sup>Donald W. Click, "Humor and Comprehension," English Journal, June, 1952, p. 321.

Life has a way of becoming a deadly serious business all too soon. In forgetting how to laugh grownups sometimes fail to realize how vital an ingredient laughter is to the healthy growth of a child's personality. Laughter acts to counterbalance the problems of everyday living.<sup>14</sup>

Raley and Ballman<sup>15</sup> felt the need for developing a way of estimating a person's sense of humor as well as his other individual characteristics since they felt that a sense of humor is vital in this age of overanxiety and insecurity; that it is a facility in seeing things in their proper perspective and in being able to laugh at oneself and at others would surely be a "saving sense."

From the psychological viewpoint Gesell and Ilg stated that the sense of humor is a pliant sense of proportion and emphasize its need further with the proposition that,

Its function is to keep the individual from becoming mechanized and hardened. It is a play of the mind akin to the spirit of freedom. When a teacher has it she protects her own mental health and that of her pupils. Humor is a safeguard against undue tensions and all the severities of unwise discipline. An over serious schoolroom violates for children the Jeffersonian right of pursuit of happiness.<sup>16</sup>

---

<sup>14</sup>Beatrice D. Hurley, "What Children Find Humorous," Childhood Education, May, 1956, p. 424.

<sup>15</sup>Sister Agnes Lucille Raley, and Christine Ballman, "Theoretical Implications for a Psychology of the Ludicrous," Journal of Social Psychology, 45 (1957), pp. 19-23.

<sup>16</sup>Arnold Gesell and Francis Ilg, The Child from Five to Ten, (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1946), p. 35.

Stressing the health factor of humor Gesell and Ilg reported, "Children would not indulge in so much spontaneous and (apparently to us) meaningless laughter if it did not have a wholesome effect upon their behavior and mental growth."<sup>17</sup> They said further that the sense of humor is not only an effective response in its own right, but that it plays an important role in the hygiene of the emotions - the emotions of parent as well as child.

A quote by P. J. Laux concludes this section on the need for humor. Laux said,

We need laughter in our lives as surely as a plant needs sunshine. A person who has forgotten how to laugh at the world, and himself, is in a serious state indeed. A world that has forgotten is even sadder. Give your children this most precious gift -- the gift of laughter. It may be all they have to sustain them in later years -- when they have children of their own.<sup>18</sup>

Regarding the need for humorous literature for children Leland Jacobs stated,

Humorous literature gives the reader or listener healthful release. It provides respite from intensity in living and learning. It allays apprehensions, alleviates annoyances, stretches the imagination -- all to the end of pure unadulterated enjoyment.<sup>19</sup>

---

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., pp. 284, 285.

<sup>18</sup>P. J. Laux, "The Gift of Laughter," Catholic School Journal, Dec., 1969, p. 25.

<sup>19</sup>Leland Jacobs, "Very, Very Funny," Instructor, Nov., 1965, p. 34.

If humorous stories can do this, teachers and others involved with children's reading need to know about appropriate books that will do the job.

Fenner<sup>20</sup> in writing about humor in stories made two important points concerned with this writing. First, she said that humor is often the starting point toward a love of reading. Second, she felt that what children think is funny changes with their age. She does think though that children of all ages need pure nonsense.

Finally, Hurley claimed the following regarding the role of literature in relaxing children,

There can be no doubt as to the role literature may play in the building of a sense of humor and in the enjoyment of laughable events and situations. Teachers will do well to cultivate a sense of humor in children through the broad use of many humorous literary selections.... It is good to laugh even though we may not always be able to categorize the stimuli which bring it forth. Enjoyment of humorous situations provides a release from miserable little tensions which all too frequently beset folks of all ages.<sup>21</sup>

The opinions of the experts in the fields of education and psychology emphasize the child's need for humor and humorous literature. If there are such needs for children then there is a need for this investigation since

---

<sup>20</sup>Phyllis Fenner, "Funny Is It?" Library Journal, Oct., 1960, p. 135.

<sup>21</sup>Hurley, op. cit., pp. 426, 427.

it deals directly with how children feel about humor and with one of the ways to add humor to a child's diet, namely through exposure to good humorous literature. To satisfy these needs it becomes necessary to know how children react to humorous selections and to what selections they do react favorably so that they can be helped to a well-balanced reading menu that will enable them to see the happy side of life as well as the ever-present gloomy moments.

### Purpose

The purpose of this study was two-fold. The first purpose was to examine the reactions of 216 sixth-grade children to two general types of humor found in fiction written for middle grade children. The two types of humor employed were humor based on physical actions and humor generated by verbal statements. The second purpose was to examine selections of humorous literature for children and classify the type of humor found in them, and to determine which type is more prevalent.

Four short humorous selections were taken from four children's books, two representing humor developed by physical action, two humor based on verbal statements. These selections were taped, then presented to the groups of children. Following each selection the children were asked to mark their feelings concerning the reading on a written instrument presented them. At the completion of

the four selections the students were asked to orally comment on the contents. Their verbal statements were taped. A set of questions was prepared to help elicit expressions of opinion from the boys and girls.

Originally six stories instead of four were planned for the study, but the Pilot Study, which was conducted with eighteen students, six from each of one inner-city, one suburban, and one rural school proved six readings to be too long a period of concentration for the pupils. Reduction to four stories cut the time for the experiment per group of six students from about sixty minutes to approximately forty to forty-five minutes.

In order to assure that the four selections read did indeed represent humor based on physical actions and humor generated by verbal statements, five selections of each type of humor were submitted to four experts in children's literature for analysis. All four of these people were teaching classes in Children's Literature at Michigan State University at the time the stories were submitted to them for examination. The three stories of each humor type that received the highest ratings from these instructors were used in the original Pilot Study.

The second part of the study entailed the reading, evaluating, and categorizing of approximately 193 humorous type children's books written for pupils at a middle grade level. Originally 199 books were identified, but of this



total six could not be located by the investigator. Identification was accomplished by reading reviews printed in Book List and Subscription Review from 1937 through 1971. Books with an interest level that generally varied from grade two through grade seven were picked. As a further check on the identification process, the subject categories were studied in the 1970 edition of The Elementary School Library Collection edited by Mary V. Gaver. Following the reading of the 193 books they were categorized according to type of humor, that is physical or verbal humor. They were also categorized as to the kind of humorous book; that is, collection of tales, folk tales, tall tales, contemporary humor. Finally the books considered most humorous were annotated.

### Assumptions

Whenever one deals with human beings as in this study, (216 of them), and whenever the affective domain of learning is being considered, there are some assumptions that must be taken into consideration. These assumptions are presented below.

1. That sixth grade children are able to indicate when something is funny to them.
2. That the girls in the study will have matured sooner than the boys as psychologists claim. This would suggest a tendency to more advanced humor preferences.

3. That sixth grade children are able to recognize when something makes them happy.
4. That the investigator can distinguish humorous books based on physical action from humorous books deriving their humor from words.

### Hypotheses

1. Humor based on words will be preferred by a higher percentage of sixth-grade children in rural schools than by children in inner-city schools.
2. Humor based on words will be preferred by a higher percentage of sixth-grade children in suburban schools than by children in rural schools.
3. Humor based on words will be preferred by a higher percentage of girls than boys.
4. A majority of the children exposed to humorous stories will recognize that the stories made them feel happy.
5. A higher percentage of the humorous books reviewed will be based on action humor as opposed to word humor.

### Overview

The standard thesis organization is being utilized for this study. In Chapter Two the pertinent literature is reviewed. This review has been divided into four components, namely; intellectual development of young people as related to language power and vocabulary, psychological aspects of humor development, reading interests of children relative to humor, and responses to humorous literature and

what makes the literature humorous. In Chapter Three a description is presented of the sample of youngsters employed in the study. The experimental design is explained, and the hypotheses are stated. An analysis of the study and chapter summary conclude Chapter Three. It is in Chapter Four that the findings of the study are listed and analyzed. The hypotheses are restated and their acceptance or rejection explained. Many of the actual oral and written comments of the students who took part in this investigation are recorded in the chapter. Chapter Four concludes with five summary statements and a chapter summary. In Chapter Five, the final chapter, there is a general summary of the dissertation as a whole, a discussion is presented on the implications of the results obtained, concluding statements are given, and fourteen implications for further related research are suggested.

Six appendices follow the regular chapters. These include copies of the selections recorded for pupil listening, the evaluation sheet designed for use with the children's literature experts, the instrument used for recording the children's responses, the youngsters' written responses obtained from the evaluation instrument, the text of the oral comments made by the students following their listening to the humorous stories, and an annotation and categorization of the humorous books identified and read for the study. The last appendix named categorizes the books both

by the type of book read; that is, contemporary and fantasy, folk tales and tall tales, and humorous collections; and by kind of humor, namely action humor, word humor, or both action and word humor.

There are two bibliographies. The first one is a compilation of the professional literature reviewed. The second one lists all the books of wit and humor for middle grade students read for this study.

## Chapter Two

### Review of Literature

The amount of research that has been completed with humor as related to Children's Literature and children is not abundant. Apparently this is a field in which much more might be done.

For organizational purposes the review of the literature has been divided into four components. The first section is a category that concerns the intellectual development of young people as related to language power and vocabulary. The second deals with the psychological aspects of humor development, the third reading interests of children relative to humor, and the fourth, the actual studies that have been completed regarding humorous literature including individual responses to this form of emotional expression.

#### Intellectual Development of Young People As Related to Language Power and Vocabulary.

The first studies reviewed concerned language development in children. These works were considered relevant to this study which deals with children's reactions to two types of humor, action humor, and verbal



humor. In order to react to word humor, youngsters would need to have a certain degree of sophistication in the use of words. Thus studies that have dealt with children's growth in the use of language could be expected to shed some light on this phase of the investigation.

Children in the inner-city are often behind in use of the so-called standard English due to many reasons such as cultural differences, poor schools, lack of books and reading in the home, and economic deficiencies which lead to health problems such as frequent absences and lack of attention. White in Tactics for Teaching the Disadvantaged, said, "The disadvantaged child's standard English has been hypothesized to be about fifty percent of the average middle class child."<sup>1</sup> Rural families on the other hand do not fare much better although Clifford Archer in his study felt there was hope for them when he stated,

Intelligent and effective leadership in rural areas, so much needed today, tends to emerge through the group activities made possible by a truly functional language program. The 4-H Clubs and similar groups recognize the value of language facility by providing training in public speaking as part of the program.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>William F. White, Tactics for Teaching the Disadvantaged, (New York: Mc'Graw-Hill Book Co., 1971), p. 29.

<sup>2</sup>Clifford P. Archer, Elementary Education in Rural Areas, (New York: The Ronald Press Co., 1958), p. 109.

Studies on education in rural areas, edited by Monroe<sup>3</sup> which included the use of intelligence tests containing vocabulary items, brought lower scores for farm children than for village and urban boys and girls. On achievement tests involving skill in the use of language, Archer<sup>4</sup> stated that farm youth generally gave evidence that their written language experiences had not been as numerous as the written language activities of children of nonfarm areas.

Moore and King<sup>5</sup> compared the achievement of rural and urban students who graduated in 1962 from a Hickman High School in Columbia. They found that the urban children who spent twelve years in urban schools had a larger proportion of students in the upper fifth of class rank in the ninth grade. There was also a greater proportion of rural children, those who spent their first eight years of school in a rural school, in the lower two-fifths of the ninth grade class rank. At the end of twelfth grade there was no difference in achievement between the same groups.

---

<sup>3</sup>Walter S. Monroe (ed.), "Rural Education III, Elementary Schools," Encyclopedia of Educational Research, (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1950), pp. 1042, 1043.

<sup>4</sup>Archer, op. cit., p. 110.

<sup>5</sup>James C. Moore, and Paul J. King, "A Comparison of Rural and Urban Pupils on Achievement," America's Other Children, ed., George Henderson (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1971), pp. 120, 121.



Concerning sex, Gesell said,

The psychology of a ten year old girl is significantly distinguishable from that of a ten year old boy of equivalent breeding and experiences. The girl has more poise, more folk wisdom, and more interest in matters pertaining to marriage and family.<sup>6</sup>

Intellectually it is the girls who are more interested in school work. In discussing sexual differences in children Strang said, "Since girls in general mature faster than boys and are apparently more interested in language, in the United States they tend to have larger vocabularies."<sup>7</sup>

Susan Ervin Tripp<sup>8</sup> in a review of language development in children stated that the sound of words rather than their meaning is salient to the preschool child. She went on to say that recent connotative factor structures indicate that at age seven the factors of value, strength, magnitude, and activity already dominate as has been found with literate adolescents and adults in many parts of the world. In addition, warmth, tautness, sometimes novelty or salience

---

<sup>6</sup>Arnold Gesell, and Francis Ilg, The Child from Five to Ten, (New York: Harper, 1946), p. 213.

<sup>7</sup>Ruth Strang, An Introduction to Child Study, (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1959), p. 276.

<sup>8</sup>Susan Ervin Tripp, "Language Development," Review of Child Development Research, ed., Lois W. Hoffman and Martin L. Hoffman (Russell Sage Foundation, 1966), pp. 62, 64, 65.

1000

1000

1000

1000

1000

1000

1000

1000

1000

1000

1000

1000

1000

1000

1000

1000

1000

1000

1000

1000

1000

1000

1000

appeared in the children's judgments. According to Tripp, judged similarities between words in various classes alter with age and as a result of these grammatical changes, the adult structure is achieved at least by age seven.

In a detailed explanation on the nature of language acquisition in children, Ronald W. Langacker,<sup>9</sup> explained that regardless of general intelligence, a child succeeds in mastering a complex system of rules and underlying representations that specifies an infinite set of sentences. Children may vary on minor points such as volubility or size of vocabulary, but they do not vary with respect to the significant structural features of linguistic organization.

The works cited this far have dealt with language development in children.

#### Psychological Aspects of Humor Development

Leo Graham<sup>10</sup> in reporting on the maturational factor in humor defined the trait as any object or situation, or any part of an object or situation, which would elicit directly or indirectly, the language response, "This is

---

<sup>9</sup>Ronald W. Langacker, Language and Structure, (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., 1968), p. 239.

<sup>10</sup>Leo Graham, "The Maturational Factor in Humor," Journal of Clinical Psychology, July, 1938, p. 326.

1. 2. 3.



74

41

99

25

1940

4. 10. 2000

10

22.

62

29

22

10

4

10

12

3

10

to

10

2

-

10

13

funny," or some equivalent expression. His test studied the hypothesis that a relationship exists between the perception of humor and the level of growth and development of the personality. Sixty pupils, twenty each in grades one, three, and five, were examined using forty-four cartoons arranged in eleven sets of four. Each subject indicated which cartoon in each set he considered to be the funniest. The results revealed significant differences. The first graders tended to select cartoons which were markedly different from those selected by the other two grades. Graham concluded by saying that apparently there is not only greater homogeneity in the perception of humor among the first grade pupils but there is also a shift in the types of things perceived as funny with increased maturity and/or experience. The nature of the shift was beyond his study.

In reporting on children's responses to humor, Katharine Kappas<sup>11</sup> affirmed that the maturing of a sense of humor does indeed parallel an individual's intellectual and emotional development. Books with multiple levels of appeal must be carefully evaluated to determine the nature of this appeal for the different age levels that will constitute their audience. In discussing age levels and responses to

---

<sup>11</sup>Katharine Kappas, "Children's Responses to Humor," A Critical Approach to Children's Literature, ed., Sara Fenwick (University of Chicago Press, 1967), pp. 67-77.

humor, Kappas alleged that much of the five year old's humor is provoked by his own motor activity, his physical posturing and play. He delights in slapstick humor. He also responds to anything strange or unusual, including misery or despair, thinking them funny or amusing. This child who is beginning to understand the relationship of objects and sizes and learning his numbers as well will find much humor in the exaggeration of each of these.

Kappas was in agreement with what Graham discovered because when speaking of nine year olds she declared that far less homogeneity of humor is found among the nine year olds than among five year old children. At this stage the child's verbal humor is increasing, and he now partakes in the ready-made moron jokes, in puns, and in more complicated riddles. The degree of "self-objectification" this child has achieved over the five year old permits him occasionally to accept jokes about himself expressed by others. By the age of fourteen, the considerable individual differences in sense of humor which are so evident among adults are already well formed. From this age on verbal wit and humor will become increasingly dominant.

According to Mary St.Clair Hester, "The play on words does not appear as a type of joke in children under

ten."<sup>12</sup> She found that a sense of humor among normal persons is unrelated to intelligence. Amongst preschool age children the surprise element ranked highest. For these youngsters, physical situations and calamities prevailed.

Zigler, Levine, and Gould<sup>13</sup> tested a group of children in grades two through five with a series of fifty cartoons in an attempt to measure the development of children's appreciation of humor. One of their conclusions was that the part played by cognition in humor should receive its clearest demonstration in those years of childhood characterized by evolving cognitive structures. As the child progresses from one cognitive or developmental level to the next, what is humorous and what is not should also manifest a meaningful progression. Their findings indicated that there is a general positive relation between cognitive ability and humor expression. Furthermore, they continued, although there can be little doubt that personality dynamics, interacting with the particular content of the

---

<sup>12</sup>Mary St.Clair Hester, "Variations in the Sense of Humor According to Age and Mental Condition," Psychological Bulletin, Dec., 1933, p. 756.

<sup>13</sup>Edward Zigler, Jacob Levine, and Lawrence Gould, "Cognitive Processes in the Development of Children's Appreciation of Humor," Child Development, Sept., 1966, pp. 507-518.

humor stimuli, are important in determining the overt humor response, the positive relation between cognitive ability and humor expression from grades two through four makes it clear that cognitive ability should be recognized as another important factor. An unexpected finding in the study was the decrease in the mirth response between grades four and five. From this the investigators hypothesized that cartoons which make few cognitive demands are perceived as being less funny than those that are in keeping with the complexity of the child's cognitive apparatus.

In commenting on children's humor, Ruth Strang affirmed, "It seems quite clear that children's sense of humor parallels their intellectual and emotional development."<sup>14</sup> She stated that the humor of ten year olds seems to center around nonsense rhymes, comics, and caricatures. School children laugh about comical situations within their own experience, especially those having elements of incongruity, discomfiture of others, and grotesqueness such as clowns, minstrels, and performing animals. Strang gave as an example one metaphysically minded eleven year old girl who wrote, "I think the funniest thing was that I was taught that God is everywhere, for if He is everywhere, He would be fat and thin, and long and wide."<sup>15</sup>

---

<sup>14</sup>Ruth Strang, An Introduction to Child Study, (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1959), p. 393.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., p. 393.



Ernest Harms<sup>16</sup> distinguished three stages which juvenile humor passes through before it reaches maturity. The first stage according to Harms lasts until the age of three. At this level humor is expressed in direct response to any pleasing approach. During the next two or three years, anything that appears unusual to the child calls for laughter. He may laugh at a fat person or someone with a black eye. In other words he sees humor but he does not personally feel it. The third stage is the school age. At this point in time the child no longer laughs about a fat woman as such but about the situations in which she may be involved. The humor now contains something of the child's own experiences. Harms states that only rarely does one find traces of humor of a verbal character in this period and that real humor does not appear in the juvenile make-up before adolescence appears. Real humor is defined as the "great humor" which is always based upon a deep life experience, a profound understanding of facts, especially the tragic and problematical facts of life, and a wisdom enabling one to accept them kindly and wholeheartedly.

In discussing humor development in young children Gesell and Ilg<sup>17</sup> declared that the three year old is

---

<sup>16</sup>Ernest Harms, "The Development of Humor," Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, July, 1943, pp. 357-359.

<sup>17</sup>Gesell and Ilg, op. cit., pp. 285, 286.

already refining the gross motor humor of the two year old. His humor is becoming more verbalized. He enjoys the verbal play of tossing a word like "golly" back and forth with someone who will play with him. At five years he enjoys slapstick humor, more or less verbalized, which he himself initiates. The age of six is not notably a humor age, but at seven he somewhat ineptly perpetrates hackneyed jokes. He seems to sense the social aspect of humor and will deliberately do something ludicrous in order to get a laugh, but he is still bound somewhat by his subjectivity. Gesell and Ilg say the eight year old has a high sense of humor. He likes to catch a teacher in a mistake, but still dislikes humorous references to himself, particularly at home where he has a status and prestige to protect. At nine and ten the humor sense, as it matures, becomes more robust. The child can now perpetrate practical jokes and even take one on himself. He may even be able to laugh off teasing which is an excellent achievement.

In studying the sense of humor in childhood and adolescence, A. Laing concluded that the development of a sense of humor was found to run parallel with general intellectual and emotional growth.<sup>18</sup>

---

<sup>18</sup>A. Laing, "The Sense of Humor in Childhood and Adolescence," British Journal of Educational Psychology, 9 (1939), p. 201.

22  
23  
24  
25  
26  
27  
28  
29  
30  
31  
32  
33  
34  
35  
36  
37  
38  
39  
40  
41  
42  
43  
44  
45  
46  
47  
48  
49  
50  
51  
52  
53  
54  
55  
56  
57  
58  
59  
60  
61  
62  
63  
64  
65  
66  
67  
68  
69  
70  
71  
72  
73  
74  
75  
76  
77  
78  
79  
80  
81  
82  
83  
84  
85  
86  
87  
88  
89  
90  
91  
92  
93  
94  
95  
96  
97  
98  
99  
100  
101  
102  
103  
104  
105  
106  
107  
108  
109  
110  
111  
112  
113  
114  
115  
116  
117  
118  
119  
120  
121  
122  
123  
124  
125  
126  
127  
128  
129  
130  
131  
132  
133  
134  
135  
136  
137  
138  
139  
140  
141  
142  
143  
144  
145  
146  
147  
148  
149  
150  
151  
152  
153  
154  
155  
156  
157  
158  
159  
160  
161  
162  
163  
164  
165  
166  
167  
168  
169  
170  
171  
172  
173  
174  
175  
176  
177  
178  
179  
180  
181  
182  
183  
184  
185  
186  
187  
188  
189  
190  
191  
192  
193  
194  
195  
196  
197  
198  
199  
200  
201  
202  
203  
204  
205  
206  
207  
208  
209  
210  
211  
212  
213  
214  
215  
216  
217  
218  
219  
220  
221  
222  
223  
224  
225  
226  
227  
228  
229  
230  
231  
232  
233  
234  
235  
236  
237  
238  
239  
240  
241  
242  
243  
244  
245  
246  
247  
248  
249  
250  
251  
252  
253  
254  
255  
256  
257  
258  
259  
260  
261  
262  
263  
264  
265  
266  
267  
268  
269  
270  
271  
272  
273  
274  
275  
276  
277  
278  
279  
280  
281  
282  
283  
284  
285  
286  
287  
288  
289  
290  
291  
292  
293  
294  
295  
296  
297  
298  
299  
300  
301  
302  
303  
304  
305  
306  
307  
308  
309  
310  
311  
312  
313  
314  
315  
316  
317  
318  
319  
320  
321  
322  
323  
324  
325  
326  
327  
328  
329  
330  
331  
332  
333  
334  
335  
336  
337  
338  
339  
340  
341  
342  
343  
344  
345  
346  
347  
348  
349  
350  
351  
352  
353  
354  
355  
356  
357  
358  
359  
360  
361  
362  
363  
364  
365  
366  
367  
368  
369  
370  
371  
372  
373  
374  
375  
376  
377  
378  
379  
380  
381  
382  
383  
384  
385  
386  
387  
388  
389  
390  
391  
392  
393  
394  
395  
396  
397  
398  
399  
400  
401  
402  
403  
404  
405  
406  
407  
408  
409  
410  
411  
412  
413  
414  
415  
416  
417  
418  
419  
420  
421  
422  
423  
424  
425  
426  
427  
428  
429  
430  
431  
432  
433  
434  
435  
436  
437  
438  
439  
440  
441  
442  
443  
444  
445  
446  
447  
448  
449  
450  
451  
452  
453  
454  
455  
456  
457  
458  
459  
460  
461  
462  
463  
464  
465  
466  
467  
468  
469  
470  
471  
472  
473  
474  
475  
476  
477  
478  
479  
480  
481  
482  
483  
484  
485  
486  
487  
488  
489  
490  
491  
492  
493  
494  
495  
496  
497  
498  
499  
500  
501  
502  
503  
504  
505  
506  
507  
508  
509  
510  
511  
512  
513  
514  
515  
516  
517  
518  
519  
520  
521  
522  
523  
524  
525  
526  
527  
528  
529  
530  
531  
532  
533  
534  
535  
536  
537  
538  
539  
540  
541  
542  
543  
544  
545  
546  
547  
548  
549  
550  
551  
552  
553  
554  
555  
556  
557  
558  
559  
560  
561  
562  
563  
564  
565  
566  
567  
568  
569  
570  
571  
572  
573  
574  
575  
576  
577  
578  
579  
580  
581  
582  
583  
584  
585  
586  
587  
588  
589  
590  
591  
592  
593  
594  
595  
596  
597  
598  
599  
600  
601  
602  
603  
604  
605  
606  
607  
608  
609  
610  
611  
612  
613  
614  
615  
616  
617  
618  
619  
620  
621  
622  
623  
624  
625  
626  
627  
628  
629  
630  
631  
632  
633  
634  
635  
636  
637  
638  
639  
640  
641  
642  
643  
644  
645  
646  
647  
648  
649  
650  
651  
652  
653  
654  
655  
656  
657  
658  
659  
660  
661  
662  
663  
664  
665  
666  
667  
668  
669  
670  
671  
672  
673  
674  
675  
676  
677  
678  
679  
680  
681  
682  
683  
684  
685  
686  
687  
688  
689  
690  
691  
692  
693  
694  
695  
696  
697  
698  
699  
700  
701  
702  
703  
704  
705  
706  
707  
708  
709  
710  
711  
712  
713  
714  
715  
716  
717  
718  
719  
720  
721  
722  
723  
724  
725  
726  
727  
728  
729  
730  
731  
732  
733  
734  
735  
736  
737  
738  
739  
740  
741  
742  
743  
744  
745  
746  
747  
748  
749  
750  
751  
752  
753  
754  
755  
756  
757  
758  
759  
760  
761  
762  
763  
764  
765  
766  
767  
768  
769  
770  
771  
772  
773  
774  
775  
776  
777  
778  
779  
780  
781  
782  
783  
784  
785  
786  
787  
788  
789  
790  
791  
792  
793  
794  
795  
796  
797  
798  
799  
800  
801  
802  
803  
804  
805  
806  
807  
808  
809  
810  
811  
812  
813  
814  
815  
816  
817  
818  
819  
820  
821  
822  
823  
824  
825  
826  
827  
828  
829  
830  
831  
832  
833  
834  
835  
836  
837  
838  
839  
840  
841  
842  
843  
844  
845  
846  
847  
848  
849  
850  
851  
852  
853  
854  
855  
85

In an attempt to estimate a person's sense of humor as well as his other individual characteristics Raley and Ballman<sup>19</sup> developed a scaling technique using cartoons as the material for judgment. Captioned humorous cartoons were submitted to the senior author by girls from the sixth to the twelfth grades inclusively. They were sorted into eight categories that were distinct and unique in themselves. The categories were: Men, Women, Romance, Children, Cars, Animals, Sports, and Soldiers. Two forms of a scale resulted from the sortings and judgments of 100 girls who were of the same age and grade ranges as those listed above. Approximately 700 more girls helped to further standardize the scale. The most tentative conjecture based on current findings, according to Raley and Ballman, was that, concerning the matter of humor as well as all other personality traits, there are definite and well-defined differences that occur due to adolescent development.

Florence Justin<sup>20</sup> completed a study of laughter provoking stimuli with ninety-six children, twelve boys and

---

<sup>19</sup>Sister Agnes Lucille Raley, and Christine Ballman, "Theoretical Implications for a Psychology of the Ludicrous," Journal of Social Psychology, 45 (1957), pp. 10-23.

<sup>20</sup>Florence Justin, "A Genetic Study of Laughter Provoking Stimuli," Child Development, June, 1932, pp. 114-136.

twelve girls at each yearly age level from three through six years. They were chosen from homes representing a cross section in socio-economic status of the Minneapolis population. These children were checked for reactions to theories of surprise and defeated expectation, of superiority - degradation, of incongruity or contrast, of play, of relief from strain, and with the social smile as a stimulus. The results of the study showed an increase in responsiveness to the fifth year of age, then a decrease in the sixth. This change with age was not due to a sudden shift in the relative effectiveness of one type of situation in eliciting responses. Actual situations, in mean seconds of response, were the most effective at all age levels. At three, four, and five years, the verbal presentation was next in effectiveness. By the sixth year, pictorial presentation was more effective than verbal. Other conclusions were that girls smile more than boys but boys laugh more than girls, that there was greater responsiveness of the children in the upper occupational group and that a positive relationship between I.Q. and laughter response was evident.

Roberts and Johnson<sup>21</sup> worked with twenty-eight

---

<sup>21</sup>Allen F. Roberts and Donald M. Johnson, "Some Factors Related to the Perception of Funniness in Humor Stimuli," Journal of Social Psychology, Aug., 1957, pp. 57-63.

mental hospital patients and tested two hypotheses concerning humor with them. The first derived from the theories of Freud and G. H. Mead was that the perceived funniness of a humor stimulus is positively related to the degree to which the perceiver is able to empathize with the characters depicted in the humor stimulus. The second was that a positive relation exists between the degree of reality contact of an individual, and that person's perception of humor stimuli as being funny. The investigators found that individuals who rank cartoons as being particularly humorous tend to be able to assume the roles of the cartoon characters to a significantly greater extent than persons who do not perceive the humor stimuli as being so funny. It was also found that those persons who rated the cartoons as being the funniest responded with significantly more laughs and smiles than those who did not derive so much pleasure from them.

In a study of the relation of sense of humor to intelligence completed with seventy high school freshmen girls, Cunningham concluded,

From the results of this one experiment, it appears that humor as measured by the Raley Cartoon Test is not related to intelligence as measured by the Thurstone Test of Mental Alertness. These findings, however, cannot be generalized to conclude that no relationships exist between sense of humor and intelligence; other studies, using different instruments to measure sense of humor and intelligence with varied populations would

have to be attempted before such conclusions could be made.<sup>22</sup>

So Cunningham's study does not agree with many previous studies made on the relationship between humor and intelligence.

A final work examined for this section was a review of experiments on humor by Ruth Perl. Perl observed,

Neither intelligence nor personality type appears to be closely connected with appreciation of humor in general, but categories of jokes that are preferred seem to be influenced by these factors. College students appreciate naive jokes or those based on the mental inferiority of another, while the surprise element ranks high with children. Extroverts prefer jokes based on superiority of the exposure of unrevealed thoughts, while introverts prefer jokes having to do with repressions such as fear of sex. Individual differences in affective tone and emotional connections influence judgments of humor. Physiological states seem to influence and be influenced by humor. Suggestion, no matter whether given to suggestible persons in the form of positive suggestions of humor or given to normal subjects by the social facilitation in a group situation, seems to play an important part in judgment of humor.<sup>23</sup>

---

<sup>22</sup>Ann Cunningham, "Relation of Sense of Humor to Intelligence," The Journal of Social Psychology, June, 1962, pp. 143-147.

<sup>23</sup>Ruth Eastwood Perl, "A Review of Experiments in Humor," The Psychological Bulletin, Dec., 1933, pp. 752-763.

### Reading Interests of Children Relative to Humor

The classic study in this area was the huge task done by George Norvell, What Boys and Girls Like to Read.<sup>24</sup> Approximately 24,000 children and 1,200 teachers participated in Norvell's survey. The report was based upon 960,000 expressions of opinion by more than 24,000 children in grades three to six. This particular work was a follow-up of Norvell's earlier check done for grades seven to twelve. For grades three to twelve, the conclusions of this monumental task are based upon more than four million expressions of opinion from 124,000 children. The study as a whole was in process more than twenty-five years. Caution should be taken in interpreting these results which were garnered in a period of time extending over so many years. In twenty-five years people change, ideas change, things change, life changes. Results would be affected. Regarding humor as an interest factor Norvell found several pertinent points for this writer's study. In every age classification, the bright girls, (I.Q. better than 110), rated humor higher than did the students in general. Bright boys were also more favorably disposed to humorous selections than the boys in general. However the bright boys rated

---

<sup>24</sup>George Norvell, What Boys and Girls Like to Read, (Morristown, N. J.: Silver Burdett Co., 1958), pp. 4, 43-49.



only one classification (subtle humor, prose), higher than all girls, and this by a very small margin. More specifically concerning children in grades four to six, selections of the following classifications were about equally enjoyed by the two groupings of children, superior and all: myths and legends, selections concerned with adventure, patriotism, home and mother, humor (except limericks), and animals. Of the many conclusions that Norvell drew from his efforts the following is the most significant to this dissertation, "When children of all ages are considered, humor is the most enjoyed characteristic of reading materials."<sup>25</sup>

Gates and Peardon<sup>26</sup> surveyed the reading interests of 2,332 pupils in grades one to three in twenty-four schools, using 268 selections. They found that 72.3% of the pupils favored narrative materials as compared to 27.7% for informative type selections. Thirty selections were read to the children in various pairings until each selection had been compared with the others a sufficient number of times to yield a fairly reliable measure of the children's interest in it in comparison with the field as a whole. Six varieties of material were used. They were

---

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., p. 183.

<sup>26</sup>Arthur Gates, Celeste Peardon, and Ira A. Sartorius, "Studies of Children's Interests in Reading," Elementary School Journal, May, 1931, pp. 662, 663.

listed as follows:

1. Family and personal experiences.
2. Unusual experiences, adventures.
3. Funny and humorous
4. Fanciful, unreal, supernatural
5. Heroic, patriotic
6. Informational

Ratings obtained from the results placed humor in fourth position among the story elements liked by the children. Ahead of humor came the elements of surprise, liveliness, and animalness. Ten other categories followed humor in the rankings. These writers concluded by saying that no one quality, in and of itself, was responsible for the interest which the children showed in the thirty selections.

Evangeline Malchow<sup>27</sup> presented ninety reading titles to 1,387 junior high school boys and girls in LaCrosse and Oconto, Wisconsin. For the boys, humor came in eighth position as a choice behind animals, adventures, mischief and trouble, new lands, war and fighting, real boys, and much action. Malchow stated that an appreciation of humor was most frequently mentioned by pupils whose intelligence quotients were 110 or more. It is interesting to note that among these boys mystery stories came in fourteenth place and sports stories sixteenth. The girls

---

<sup>27</sup>Evangeline Malchow, "Reading Interests of Junior High School Pupils," The School Review, March, 1937, pp. 176-182.

rated humor number six following mysteries, home life, everyday life, adventures, mischief, and trouble. They placed animals fourteenth, school fifteenth, and action twelfth. Regarding the girls Malchow claimed that humor appeals more definitely to girls of high intelligence quotients than to boys of similar ability. Few girls of lower than average ability mentioned humor as a favorite element.

Witty, Coomer, and Mc'Bean<sup>28</sup> conducted an interest study in six Chicago public schools of mixed socio-economic class and in four schools in three smaller cities. A total of 7,879 school children were involved. A written questionnaire was given those pupils in grades four through eight which provided space for the youngsters to list the five books they had read and enjoyed most during 1944 - 1945. The selections listed were ranked according to the frequency of mention. The results showed fun and nonsense type books ranking on top for students in grades four through six, but dropping out of the lead with the seventh and eighth grade pupils who preferred adventure, sentimental stories, animal stories, and sports-type books.

---

<sup>28</sup>Paul Witty, Ann Coomer, and Della Mc'Bean, "Children's Choices of Favorite Books: A Study Conducted in Ten Elementary Schools," Journal of Educational Psychology, 1946, pp. 266-278.

The purpose of Ruth C. Smith's investigation<sup>29</sup> was to determine how nearly the interest categories found in basic preprimers and primers designed as an introduction to reading for first grade children matched the reading interests of these children as evidenced by their "free choice" selection of reading material from the library. The 113 first grade children participating in the investigation withdrew 556 books in fourteen library visits. The five interest categories which ranked the highest in the children's free-choice reading were: Humor - Fantasy, Real Animals, Nature - Science, Holidays - Birthdays, and Fairy Tales.

Humor scored highly in all the studies reviewed.

Responses to Humorous Literature and What Makes the Literature Humorous.

Ruth Wells<sup>30</sup> did a study of tastes in literature among students of junior and senior high school. Four types of humor were used by Wells; slapstick-boisterous, predicament caused by an accident; absurdity, incongruous situations; satire, ridicule of customs, institutions, usually through exaggeration; and whimsy, the presentation of truth, often

---

<sup>29</sup>Ruth C. Smith, "Children's Reading Choices and Basic Reader Content," Elementary English, March, 1962, pp. 202-209.

<sup>30</sup>Ruth Wells, "A Study of Tastes in Humorous Literature Among Pupils of Junior and Senior High School," Journal of Educational Research, Oct., 1934, pp. 81-91.

ludicrous or incongruous in an imaginative or fantastic way. Parts were taken from books considered humorous by children in the writer's experience as a teacher, from books included in high school reading lists, from collections of humorous literature, and from books and articles suggested by many educators and students. Forty samples were chosen. There were ten groups of selections, each consisting of one sample of each of the four types of humorous selections, and these were arranged so that the selections in each group were similar. The students were told to scale the selections in each group one, two, three, four as indications of the ones they liked best, second, third, and least. The selections were presented to 400 pupils in grades seven, nine, eleven and twelve. Pertinent results obtained included the following: In all grades absurdity was the favorite type of humor, slapstick second, satire third, and whimsy fourth. The taste for slapstick varied little through the grades, absurdity decreased slightly, while satire and whimsy increased as the students grew older. The pupils from a higher cultural level showed greater appreciation for satire and whimsy, less taste for slapstick and absurdity than those in the lower cultural level. Except for slight variations in ninth grade, the girls appeared to like slapstick and absurdity less and satire and whimsy more than did the boys. As far as this study was concerned, the grade in school and social background

were shown to have more relation to tastes in humorous literature than did mental ability or social adjustment. From this Wells implied that it becomes the teacher's opportunity to lead towards a broadening of the appreciations of pupils with fewer home privileges.

An investigation of laughter was carried on in certain schools of New York City with pupils in grades three to six by Brumbaugh and Wilson.<sup>31</sup> Through administration of a preliminary questionnaire and a check list sheet called "A Funny Test" given to 800 children, the investigators attempted to find out what things were funny to children and why they thought certain things funny. After examination of the results it was concluded that there is little doubt that many undetermined factors were operating in the responses of the children, and even in the case of the simplest and most general incitors to laughter, probably different factors appealed to the risibles of different children.

The third dissertation reviewed for this chapter was the study done by Dianne Monson<sup>32</sup> which was written on children's responses to humorous situations in literature.

---

<sup>31</sup>Florence Brumbaugh and Frank Wilson, "Children's Laughter," Journal of Genetic Psychology, Sept., 1940, pp. 3-29.

<sup>32</sup>Dianne Monson, "Children's Responses to Humorous Situations in Literature," (Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, University of Minnesota, 1966), pp. 139-153.

Monson used 635 St. Paul, Minnesota fifth graders as her subjects. They were asked to respond to five types of humor; humor of character, of surprise, the impossible, of words, and of situations. The instrument used had four different forms. Form one was unstructured. The children were asked to write their own ideas of why they thought a particular selection was funny. Forms two, three, and four used true - false and multiple choice items for responding. Each child had seven selections to read. The reading level of each selection was no greater than fourth grade with a total reading and testing time of about fifty minutes. The test length was planned to coincide with the estimated length of the average reading period in fifth grade. The schools which the children attended were selected by a stratified random sample based on socio-economic level. The criteria used for judgment of this level were income of family and the number of years of schooling the parents had. Important conclusions drawn from the study are listed as follows:

1. Differences in the responses made by children in structured and unstructured treatment groups were greater for boys than girls. Boys more frequently judged selections humorous when they were presented in a structured situation.

2. Differences in the responses of children in structured and unstructured treatment groups were greater for the low socio-economic groups. Children in the low

socio-economic group more often judged selections humorous when they were presented in a structured situation.

3. A greater percentage of children in the low and middle reading groups as compared to the high group judged excerpts humorous when they were presented in a structured situation rather than when they were presented in an unstructured situation.

4. Children in the high intelligence group more often judged excerpts humorous than did children in the middle or low intelligence sections.

5. There were few differences in the choices of categories of humor made by the groups studied. Significant differences in choices of humor among groups were most often explained in terms of the differences in patterns of group members rather than in terms of the category of humor in the selections chosen by the greatest percentage of members in each group.

6. Children in the high socio-economic group and the high reading group were more alike in their choices of category of humor than were children in the other classes.

7. Choices of category of humor made by boys and girls did not differ significantly.

8. Responses to some of the selections indicated that a greater percentage of children in the low intelligence group and in the low socio-economic section chose humor of words more frequently than did children in the



middle and high groups.

Monson concluded that persons responsible for assessment of literary appreciation should be aware of the possibility that children's responses to literature will vary according to the type of item which is used to elicit the responses. Also teachers and librarians should be aware of the possibility that different children in a group will see different elements as being the reason for laughing. She claimed that teachers should present literature in such a way that the children will become aware of the meaning behind the words.

An investigation designed to compare the relationship between the humor response of normal and mentally retarded children when matched on the basis of developmental age was completed by Donald Potter.<sup>33</sup> More specifically, it was the purpose of this work to determine if there was a significant difference between the humor responses of these children to two experimental tests, the "Children's Mirth Response Test" and the "Movie Cartoon Inventory." Forty children, twenty boys and twenty girls, with a developmental age of seven were employed in the investigation. In commenting on the interest in humor Potter felt that

---

<sup>33</sup>Donald R. Potter. "Response to Humor Stimuli of Normal and Retarded Children of Comparable Developmental Age," (Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, University of South Dakota, 1967), pp. 1-9.

interest in the subject has been reawakened in the last few years, and that an advancement in theoretical understanding of humor may be forthcoming. He went on to say that while later theories might become more simple, they will in all probability still be concerned with the basic factors of superiority, suddenness, insight, incongruity, surprise, relief, and surplus energy. In discussing the relationship of humor to intelligence, Potter stated, "In summary, the early research evidence concerning the relationship between humor and intelligence was inconclusive."<sup>34</sup> Another relative point made by Potter was that there is a general consensus that a sense of humor is at least in part a result of experiential background and that it shows evidence of change and growth throughout the developmental period.<sup>35</sup>

Conclusions drawn by Potter as a result of his work with the forty South Dakota children are summarized as follows:

1. It would appear that normal and retarded children when matched on developmental age, respond similarly to silent moving picture cartoon sequences. There appear to be no significant differences in the amount of facial mirth response shown nor in the comprehension of silent moving

---

<sup>34</sup>Ibid., pp. 25, 26.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid., p. 29.

picture cartoon sequences between normal and retarded children.

2. The factor of intelligence appears to have no material effect upon the facial mirth response to nor on the appreciation of picture cartoons.

3. The factor of intelligence appears to have a material effect upon the humor comprehension of picture cartoons.

Potter's principal conclusion drawn from his results was that apparently normal and retarded children express their appreciation of picture cartoons in similar fashion.<sup>36</sup>

In an attempt to find out what circumstances and situations fourth grade children, who are comparatively slow readers, consider funny, Louisa B. Merchant<sup>37</sup> asked a group of mainly Italian-American and Black-American children to tell what was funny about a number of books to which she exposed them and to explain why they thought those parts funny. By analyzing the children's reports Merchant classified the funny situations as follows:

1. Situations which the child himself had experienced

---

<sup>36</sup>Ibid., pp. 72, 73.

<sup>37</sup>Louisa B. Merchant, "Children's Laughter," Elementary English Review, Jan., 1940, pp. 15-17, 27.

and in which he could readily imagine himself acting in the same manner. No matter how unusual the circumstance, however, it must have a happy ending or in the child's mind it ceases to be funny.

2. Situations in which animals, birds, or insects did things the children never expected them to be able to do, situations in which animals acted or spoke like human beings.

3. Situations including an unexpected outcome, such as rain at a picnic or a sudden change in action. Again a happy ending is needed.

4. Some found any action of either children or animals funny which was exaggerated, but preferred it was not too highly imaginative.

5. Any stories of toys that were animals and had exciting experiences that were within the grasp of the child's imagination.

Merchant concluded that by placing before the child a wealth of humorous literature his desire for something funny will be satisfied and he will be less likely to seek his chance to laugh in the comics and in the misfortunes of others.

Elliott D. Landau<sup>38</sup> investigated the relationship

---

<sup>38</sup>Elliott C. Landau, "The Relationship Between Social Class and What Sixth Grade Children Say is Funny in Selected Excerpts from Children's Literature," (Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, New York University, 1955), pp. 1-8, 27-38, 87-93, 192, 193.

between social class status and what sixth grade children said was funny in selected excerpts from children's literature. Landau's study was completed with 120 sixth grade children from three New York City and one Westchester schools. The youngsters were put into three social classes based upon paternal occupations. The first class included professionals, proprietors of large businesses, semi-professionals, and lesser officials of large business. Class two consisted of clerks and kindred workers, skilled workers, and proprietors of small businesses. The third class was made up of semi-skilled workers, unskilled laborers, and domestic servants. Half of each of the three classes of children heard the examiner read twenty-six selected excerpts from popular children's books while the other half read them silently. The children were then asked to rate the stories on a scale that was weighted from one to six points, one point given for a story considered not funny at all, six points for the funniest story ever read or heard. They were also asked to complete the following two statements:

1. This is what I think was funny. The part where \_\_\_\_.
2. This is why I think it is funny. It was funny because \_\_\_\_\_.

Landau listed the following conclusions as a result of his work:

1. The children in the study reacted to humorous

material in a significantly more positive way when they listened to it read as compared with reading it to themselves silently.

2. Children in Social Class I reacted more positively than those in Class II, those in Class III more positively than Class II children.

3. There were no significant differences between the reaction of the children in Classes I and III.

4. The children of Social Class II consistently rated individual excerpts lower than either of the other two groups.

5. Neither sex, I.Q., religion, or national background produced any significantly different results.

6. The children's written explanations of why excerpts were funny were similar regardless of the social group to which they belonged. There was less difference between groups than within groups.

7. The children of all groups recognized "incongruity" as a factor which made most excerpts funny. "Impossibility," "the unusual," "the feeling of superiority" also were given as reasons for funniness.

8. There was no apparent difference between the groups in the manner in which they expressed their reasoning.

9. Evidence indicates that when events or actions in stories differ from those in real life (when things are incongruous), the children were likely to think it very funny.

Of a slightly different nature was the work of Glenn H. Skelton<sup>39</sup> who did a study of children's responses to selected poems with a group of 270 fourth, fifth, and sixth grade students from two public elementary schools in Mill Valley, California. The pupils were of above average intelligence, reading ability, and socio-economic background. They gave free responses to four poems following their listening to and reading of them. The study examined the type of responses the children gave, the changes that occurred in the responses as the poems increased in difficulty, and the changes in the answers when checked with differences in intelligence, grade, reading ability, and sex. Results obtained by Skelton suggested that typical poems are harder for children than sometimes supposed. The subjects presented a response pattern dominated by a prosaic reiteration focused on the surface elements of the poem, followed closely by a type of response so subjective and intuitive that the intentions of the poems themselves were largely ignored. In general, the study suggested to the teacher, that since the subjects respond fairly comfortably to the poems, the problem lies in taking them beyond this point through improving their interpretive approach. This study seemed to particularly point out the need to encourage the children

---

<sup>39</sup>Glenn H. Skelton, "A Study of Children's Responses to Selected Poems in the Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Grades," (Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, University of California, 1963), pp. 35-37, 76-85.

beyond an idiosyncratic "reader connotative" approach to an interpretive "author connotative" approach. It suggested that the teacher must not only be aware of the children's thoughts and feelings about poetry, but that he must also be willing to evaluate and work toward improving their ability to interpret poetry. A conclusion drawn by Skelton concerning humor in poetry was that the research on children's likes and dislikes in poetry suggested that children tend to like narrative and humorous poems.

C. Heim<sup>40</sup> in judging individual reactions to thirty-two jokes had his subjects check one of the following five humor ranks; not funny, slightly funny, funny, very funny, and extremely funny. The presentation of the jokes was accomplished by having some of them read to the participants while the rest were read by the twenty-one men and twenty-nine women involved. Twelve of the jokes were basically pictorial, twenty were written. Heim felt that the main result of the experiment was to make one exceedingly chary of setting up any rules on the subject of humor, and to allay the great temptation of classifying types of humor and senses of humor. According to him, it looked as if this task would merely involve a listing of individual jokes and individual people.

---

<sup>40</sup>C. Heim, "An Experiment in Humor," The British Journal of Psychology, 1936, 37, p. 148-161.



Louise Omwake<sup>41</sup> also used a five category system which was used to determine student reaction to twelve jokes. Her scale ran from one point to five points for the following classes; among the poorest jokes I have heard, below average in humor, average in humor, above average in humor, and among the best jokes I have heard. Omwake hoped to discover whether the response to jokes is determined by the inherent humor of the jokes or by the eye-ear factor of presentation and whether there is a relation between intelligence and sense of humor. Ninety-four students in the second, third, and fourth years of high school made up the test population. One group of students was presented the jokes visually, the other orally. The results according to Omwake showed that the visual presentation promoted better comprehension of the jokes. The points of several jokes were not understood by a significantly larger percent of the students who listened to the jokes on a recording than by those who read the jokes. As far as the intelligence of the subjects was concerned, it was shown not to be a determining factor in the comprehension of the twelve jokes used in the study.

The categories used in these last two studies to judge reactions to humorous situations are similar to the

---

<sup>41</sup>Louise Omwake, "Factors Influencing the Sense of Humor," The Journal of Social Psychology, Feb., 1939, p. 98.

divisions for this investigator's dissertation. They are: not funny at all, not very funny, a little funny, funny, very funny, funniest I've heard.

The final work reviewed for this section by Sister Mary Cordelia Berding,<sup>42</sup> was a critical analysis of representative humorous books written for children since the middle of the nineteenth century. She used seventy-five books in order to discover how authors of humorous books for children have managed their material so as to appeal to the reader's pleasure in what is "funny". The reading level of the books varied from first grade to sixth with some junior high books employed. Illustrations were not considered. The books were divided into two categories; 1.) those that contained sustained humor throughout and these were further sub-divided into books with a single plot versus those with a series of episodes; 2.) those that contained incidental humor. Examples of books representing these categories were: Mr. Popper's Penguins where the entire plot is funny, well-defined, and builds to a climax; Pippi Longstocking which contains a series of funny episodes and has no major climax; and Rabbit Hill, a book in which the plot itself is

---

<sup>42</sup>Sister Mary Cordelia Berding, "Humor as a Factor in Children's Literature," (Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, University of Minnesota, 1966), pp. 1-16, 186-196.

not humorous, but which contains humorous elements and characters. Of the seventy-five books studied, Sister Berding found that the pattern of employing a single plot with sustained humor occurs most frequently. In forty-two of the seventy-five books this was found to be the case. Sustained humor on the other hand is seldom found in books for younger children. Separate books are published instead, taking into account the young child's short attention span. She also discovered that such factors as stupid blunders, absurd doings, incongruities, and exaggeration are the principal means used by authors to develop a humorous story. Surprisingly enough, traits of characterization were not used much to produce humor in the books analyzed. She felt it likely that children would rather read about the actions of characters than the descriptions of their appearance or behavior.

Sister Berding listed the following criteria for a good humorous book:

1. The author must conceive a plot that will hold the interest of the reader.
2. The plot may be realistic or fantastic but whichever is used it must be consistent.
3. The most frequently used way to produce a humorous story is the single plot with sustained humor throughout.

4. Incidental humor in a serious plot must form an integral part of the story.

5. The most effective types of humor upon which to build a humorous plot are absurd doings, stupid blunders of a character, incongruities or exaggeration.

6. Humorous incidents involve such factors as the embarrassment or discomfiture of someone, turning the tables, or a general confusion or hub-bub usually including some falling or tumbling about.

7. In a realistic story, none of the incidents should be so exaggerated that they become impossible.

8. The style an author uses is of great importance in producing a good humorous book for children.

9. The stylistic device which best produced humor in books for younger children is repetition of word, phrase, or sentence. A rhythmic pattern makes repetition even more effective.

10. When subtle humor, produced through implied meanings, is used in books for older children, it should be kind and gentle and never harsh or bitter.

11. The clever and original expressions of authors as well as play on words are effective stylistic devices for producing humor.

12. The best way to describe a humorous character for children is through a vivid and graphic description of his dress and features of his deportment.

13. Humorous qualities of a character can best be inferred through the character's actions without the author actually describing them.

### Summary

This chapter on the review of the literature was divided into four components: Intellectual Development of Young People as Related to Language Power and Vocabulary, Psychological Aspects of Humor Development, Reading Interests of Children Relative to Humor, and Responses to Humorous Literature and What Makes the Literature Humorous.

The first studies concluded that the disadvantaged child's use of standard English words is about fifty per cent of that of the average middle class child, that rural children do not fare well in written language and in general achievement in the elementary grades, and that girls in general are apparently more interested in language than boys. Language development was described as a very complex process that constantly changes as a child matures.

Among the related research regarding the psychological aspects of humor development, there was general agreement that humor in children does proceed through orderly steps, and that it matures from the homogeneity of the pre-scheoler to a more diverse appreciation once the child enters school. The very young child, according to the sources, is really unable to appreciate humor of a verbal

character which really doesn't develop until about the age of nine. This concept holds important implications for this paper. Cunningham<sup>43</sup> concluded from her study that humor was not related to intelligence. This was in opposition to the findings of many other studies. She warned that her findings cannot be generalized to conclude that no relationship exists between the sense of humor and intelligence. Hester's<sup>44</sup> findings agreed with Cunningham, that humor among normal persons is unrelated to intelligence.

Humor when related to reading interests ranked very high in the investigations reported. Two of the studies related a correlation between high intelligence and a preference for humor.

The last section regarding the responses of individuals of all ages from varied sociological and economic backgrounds to literature and what makes the literature humorous revealed many diverse points. Monson<sup>45</sup> concluded that different children in a group will see different elements as being the reason for laughing. Brumbaugh and Wilson,<sup>46</sup> and Merchant<sup>47</sup> reached somewhat the same

---

<sup>43</sup>Cunningham, op. cit.

<sup>44</sup>Hester, op. cit.

<sup>45</sup>Monson, op. cit.

<sup>46</sup>Brumbaugh and Wilson, op. cit.

<sup>47</sup>Merchant, op. cit.

conclusion. Wells<sup>48</sup> found that the grade in school and social background were shown to have more relation to tastes in humorous literature than did mental ability or social adjustment. According to Potter,<sup>49</sup> normal and retarded children expressed their appreciation of picture cartoons in a similar fashion. Landau<sup>50</sup> discovered that the higher and lower social class children reacted more positively to humor than did the children from the middle class states. In a study of children's responses to selected poems Skelton<sup>51</sup> summarized that children tend to like narrative and humorous poems. Finally in an analysis of representative humor in children's books, Sister Berding<sup>52</sup> found that the pattern of employing a single plot with sustained humor occurs most frequently but that sustained humor is seldom found in books for younger children.

### Concluding Statements

Several implications for this investigator's study are evident in the literature reviewed. They are summarized as follows:

---

<sup>48</sup>Wells, op. cit.

<sup>49</sup>Potter, op. cit.

<sup>50</sup>Landau, op. cit.

<sup>51</sup>Skelton, op. cit.

<sup>52</sup>Berding, op. cit.

1. Humor appears to mature in orderly steps.

The age of nine was signified as the age that verbal humor begins to develop. The subjects of this investigation were mostly eleven years of age.

2. The interest studies listed humor as being popular with children. If this holds true, the children in this study should rate humor highly.

3. Several studies concluded that different children in a group will find different elements that make a story funny to them.

4. One researcher reported that the children reacted more favorably to humorous studies when they heard the stories as opposed to when they read them. All the stories used in this present work were read to the children.

5. The subjects' sex did not appear to be a big factor in humor preferences. A direct analysis of this factor will be made in the dissertation.

Chapter Three contains a description of the sample, operational measures, testables hypotheses, analysis section, and chapter summary.



## Chapter Three

### Design of the Study

In Chapter Three the sample, the experimental design, the hypotheses, and analysis section are reviewed. The chapter describes a unique feature of the study, its dual purpose, the investigation of children's reactions to humorous literature and the review of the books themselves. It concludes with a chapter summary.

#### The Sample

The children involved in the study were randomly selected from three general types of schools classified by geographical location. Table 3.01 lists the pupil breakdown by school type. One sixth-grade class from each of six inner-city schools was involved. Six boys and six girls made up the population from each class. This made a total of seventy-two youngsters from inner-city schools, thirty-six boys and thirty-six girls. Two sixth grade classes from each of three schools made up the suburban subjects. These six classes furnished six boys and six girls apiece, totaling seventy-two students in all. Five rural schools were employed in the study. One sixth-grade class came from each of four schools. The fifth rural

TABLE 3.01

SCHOOL TYPES, AND  
NUMBERS OF PUPILS IN SCHOOLS

Type	Number of Schools	Rooms Per School	Boys Per Room	Girls Per Room	Total Students Per School
Inner-City	1	1	6	6	12
	2	1	6	6	12
	3	1	6	6	12
	4	1	6	6	12
	5	1	6	6	12
	6	1	6	6	12
Sub-totals	6	6	36	36	72
Suburban	1	2	2(6)	2(6)	24
	2	2	2(6)	2(6)	24
	3	2	2(6)	2(6)	24
Sub-totals	3	6	36	36	72
Rural	1	2	2(6)	2(6)	24
	2	1	6	6	12
	3	1	6	6	12
	4	1	6	6	12
	5	1	6	6	12
Sub-totals	5	6	36	36	72
Totals	14	18	6	6	216

school contributed two sixth-grade classes. The six rural school classes altogether had seventy-two pupils involved, the same total as in the inner-city and suburban schools.

The six inner-city schools were located in Detroit's central city. These schools had essentially the same features; namely: a location in poor, run-down, but high population density areas; very old buildings that had been in service upwards of fifty years; small and crowded black-top play areas; and a great racial mix including Afro-Americans, Polish-Americans, Chicanos, Greek-Americans, American Indians, and Maltese. Six boys and six girls, all sixth graders, were randomly selected from each of the six schools, seventy-two students in all. The twelve students from each school all came from the same classroom. Table 3.02 summarizes the ages and numbers of years in the present schools for these boys and girls. Their ages varied from a low of 136 months to a high of 176 months, a difference of forty months. A majority of the students were in the 140-150 month age bracket. As to years in the present school, the figures ranged from a low of one-half year (one student), to a high of seven years (twelve students). Forty pupils had spent six years in their respective schools.

The second group of schools was suburban in nature. Three schools, all with at least two rooms at each grade level were used in this study. The three schools were in Walled Lake, Michigan, a short drive by expressway from

TABLE 3.02  
AGES AND NUMBER OF YEARS IN PRESENT SCHOOL  
FOR SUBJECTS IN INNER-CITY SCHOOLS

School-A Sex	Years in Present School	Age (Months)	School-B Sex	Years in Present School	Age (Months)	School-C Sex	Years in Present School	Age (Months)
F	2	140	M	6	146	M	2	154
F	7	150	M	6	140	M	1	143
F	6	150	M	6	147	M	6	148
F	6	140	M	6	148	M	6	138
F	7	149	M	6	146	M	6	143
F	4	---	F	2	161	M	6	138
M	7	154	F	6	141	F	6	141
M	5	140	F	6	139	F	6	143
M	6	140	F	6	137	F	2	142
M	6	147	F	6	145	F	6	141
M	6	148	M	2	176	F	6	139
M	6	140	F	6	140	F	6	141
School-D Sex	Years in Present School	Age (Months)	School-E Sex	Years in Present School	Age (Months)	School-F Sex	Years in Present School	Age (Months)
M	3	141	M	7	146	M	6	156
M	6	136	M	7	143	M	6	160
M	6	142	F	7	143	M	3	150
M	6	148	M	7	140	M	3	138
M	6	147	M	7	144	M	6	165
M	2	166	M	7	150	M	6	142
F	3	146	F	7	141	F	5	147
F	6	142	F	7	138	F	6	157
F	2	153	F	5	142	F	2	159
F	6	148	F	6	141	F	4	141
F	6	139	M	7	169	F	6	156
F	5	140	F	3 $\frac{1}{2}$	141	F	6	147

Detroit. Walled Lake is one of the typical suburban areas that has grown tremendously in recent years due to the rush of people from the city. These schools were similar in all outward aspects. They were relatively new one story buildings located on large, open grassy lots. The surrounding land was largely occupied by sub-divisions and new businesses. The children who took part in the study from these schools were all white-Americans. Since only three schools were employed, two classrooms were utilized in each school to obtain the participants. Six boys and six girls, all sixth graders, were randomly selected from each of the six rooms, making a total of seventy-two students in all. Table 3.03 gives the ages and numbers of years in the present schools for the pupils. For these students the age in months ran from 137 months on the low end to a high of 160 months, a spread of twenty-three months. A majority of these pupils were in the 140-150 month age range. The years in the present schools for these subjects extended from one year to eight years. Fifty students had spent from three to seven years in their current schools.

The third group of schools was decidedly rural in characteristics. Five schools in the farm areas north of Lansing, Michigan made up this group. Three of the five schools were located in isolated areas reached only by dirt roads and surrounded by farm land. They were part of the St. Johns School District. Two were situated in the little

TABLE 3.03  
AGES AND NUMBER OF YEARS IN PRESENT SCHOOL  
FOR SUBJECTS IN SUBURBAN SCHOOLS

School-A Sex	Years in Present School	Age (Months)	School-B Sex	Years in Present School	Age (Months)	School-C Sex	Years in Present School	Age (Months)
M	4	137	M	2	141	M	7	142
M	4	148	M	3	146	M	2	143
M	1	157	M	3	148	M	2	150
M	1	149	M	1½	146	M	7	142
M	4	143	F	4	141	M	4	139
M	1	148	F	4	145	F	5	149
F	4	147	F	1	139	F	1	142
F	3	145	F	4	140	F	3	147
F	4	144	F	3	148	F	7	150
F	4	142	M	1½	145	F	1½	141
F	4	147	M	3	154	F	1	149
F	4	147	F	1	140	M	1	145
School-D Sex	Years in Present School	Age (Months)	School-E Sex	Years in Present School	Age (Months)	School-F Sex	Years in Present School	Age (Months)
M	4	145	F	3	139	M	7	148
M	2	147	F	7	153	M	6½	141
M	-	148	F	2	143	M	6½	142
M	7	148	F	5	141	M	7	150
M	1	150	F	3	143	M	4	143
F	2	147	F	3	149	M	7	146
F	3	159	M	1	149	F	7	145
F	3	146	M	7	151	F	6½	144
F	1	149	M	3	147	F	5	141
F	7	147	M	3	143	F	4	141
M	4	141	M	4	141	F	6	150
F	8	160	M	3	138	F	5½	141

villages of Pewamo and Fowler. All five schools were relatively new and had spacious open grassy play areas. There was little or no traffic near any of the schools. All the children who took part in the investigation were white-Americans. Of the five schools, one was large enough that it had two sixth grades, so six boys and six girls were drawn from each of these two grades. The other four schools had one sixth grade and furnished six boys and six girls apiece, making a total of seventy-two youngsters from the five schools. Table 3.04 lists the ages and numbers of years in the present schools for these students. The youngest student in this classification was 139 months old, the oldest 159 months for a difference of twenty months, the smallest spread of the three major school classifications. The majority of the sixth graders involved were 140-150 months in ages. The shortest time that any of the rural pupils had spent in his present school was one year, the longest time was seven years. Sixty-two of these youngsters had been in their present schools from three to seven years. In one school, all twelve boys and girls had been in their school the same length of time, five years.

An attempt was made to include in the study only those boys and girls who had spent at least two years in their present school. This was done to assure reasonable acclimation to the type of school involved. Seventy of the seventy-two inner-city youths met the criterion, sixty-one

TABLE 3.04  
AGES AND NUMBER OF YEARS IN PRESENT SCHOOL  
FOR SUBJECTS IN RURAL SCHOOLS

School-A Sex	Years in Present School	Age (Months)	School-B Sex	Years in Present School	Age (Months)	School-C Sex	Years in Present School	Age (Months)
M	5	153	M	4	139	M	4	159
M	5	144	M	3	149	M	4	149
M	5	140	M	3	152	M	4	156
M	5	148	M	4	149	M	2	139
M	5	153	M	3	142	M	2	142
F	5	151	F	4	142	F	4	148
F	5	146	F	4	139	F	2	142
F	5	148	F	3	141	F	2	146
F	5	147	M	4	144	F	4	157
F	5	147	F	3	148	F	3	145
M	5	141	F	2	151	F	3	141
F	5	140	F	3	144	M	4	150
School-D Sex	Years in Present School	Age (Months)	School-E Sex	Years in Present School	Age (Months)	School-F Sex	Years in Present School	Age (Months)
M	1	142	M	6	142	M	7	150
M	4	147	M	4	147	M	7	156
M	4	145	M	4	145	M	6	142
M	4	153	M	4	153	M	5	147
M	3	153	M	6	153	M	7	149
F	4	152	M	4	152	F	7	150
F	4	142	F	6	142	F	4	146
F	4	146	F	1	146	F	4	142
F	4	142	F	6	142	F	7	141
F	3	149	F	2	149	F	6	144
M	3	145	F	4	145	M	7	144
F	1 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>	151	F	4	151	F	7	141



of the suburban, and seventy of the rural as Table 3.05 illustrates. The mean number of years spent in the present school was 5.3 for the inner-city, 4.2 for the rural, and 3.8 for the suburban. These figures point to the suburban children as being the most mobile of the three groups which is not really surprising in the light of the trend of moving from the city to the outskirts in recent years.

The mean ages of the inner-city classes varied from 142.6 months to 151.5 months, the suburban from 144.3 to 148.9, and the rural from 145.0 to 147.8 months. For the school types as a whole, the means are very similar; 146.3 months in the inner-city, 145.6 months in the suburban, and 146.7 in the rural; a deviation of only 1.1 months from the youngest to the oldest mean age.

An attempt was made to secure an M.A. and recent standardized reading score for each of the students involved but this proved to be fruitless due to the paucity of intelligence and standardized reading scores available.

### Experimental Design

The first step in designing the instrument for discovering the subjects reactions to humorous literature was to identify the humorous selections to be used. Ten selections were picked, five to represent humor developed through an action of some kind generated by a physical activity. Examples of this could include stupid blunders,

TABLE 3.05

**MEANS OF YEARS IN PRESENT SCHOOLS  
AND AGES FOR THE CLASSES OF SCHOOLS**

Inner-City	Mean Number of Years at Present School	Mean Age (Months) of Students
A	5.7	145.3
B	5.3	147.2
C	4.9	142.6
D	4.8	145.7
E	6.3	145.5
F	4.6	151.5
Inner-City Means	5.3	146.3
Suburban	Mean Number of Years at Present School	Mean Age (Months) of Students
A	3.2	146.2
B	2.6	144.4
C	3.5	144.9
D	3.8	148.9
E	3.7	144.8
F	6.0	144.3
Suburban Means	3.8	145.6
Rural	Mean Number of Years at Present School	Mean Age (Months) of Students
A	5.0	146.5
B	3.3	145.0
C	3.2	147.8
D	3.3	147.3
E	4.3	147.3
F	6.2	146.0
Rural Means	4.2	146.7

incongruities, embarrassment of someone due to an accident, general confusion including some falling or tumbling about, and turning the tables on someone. The other five were selected to represent humor based upon the words used by the characters in the stories. This category could contain word repetition, word rhyming, mispronunciation of words, misunderstanding of meanings, and humor developed through implication.

The five books picked to represent humor of action were Mr. Popper's Penguins, Henry Reed, Inc., Pippi Longstocking, Henry and Beezus, and The Alligator Case. Those used for humor based on words included Chancy and the Grand Rascal, The Limerick Trick, Paddington Goes to Town, The Search for Delicious, and The Phantom Tollbooth. Parts were chosen from each book to represent the type of humor needed. These parts were typed, duplicated, and presented to four experts in children's literature at Michigan State University. All four were instructors of Children's Literature at Michigan State. Along with copies of the stories, (Appendix A), each expert was given an evaluation sheet, (Appendix B), upon which he was instructed to check whether the selections in their opinions did truly represent the type of humor indicated. They were also asked to rate the stories on a zero to five scale as to how well the samples did fit the category. The experts' ratings were totaled

and the six stories, three representing each type of humor, that received the highest ratings were used with the children in the Pilot Study. The three action type humor stories that received the highest point ratings in order were Henry Reed, Inc., The Alligator Case, and Pippi Longstocking. The ranking for the word type humor books was The Phantom Tollbooth first, Paddington Goes to Town second, and The Search for Delicious and Chancy and the Grand Rascal tied for third. Table 3.06 summarizes the rankings of these selections by the experts. These stories were then used in the Pilot Study. Since two stories tied for third in the word humor category, one was chosen by chance by the investigator. The Search for Delicious became the third word humor selection.

Next an instrument was designed for use with the children for obtaining their reactions to the selections (Appendix C). One check sheet was drafted for each two stories. Selection one represented an action humor story, number two humor from words, number three words, number four action, number five action, and number six words. The instrument had a place for the participants to check their feelings after hearing each selection as either very happy, happy, indifferent, unhappy, and very unhappy. There was also a place to check the preferred story in each pair or whether both were liked the same or if neither was liked at all. Then there were boxes to be checked for rating the

TABLE 3.06

**RANKING OF HUMOROUS SELECTIONS  
BY EXPERTS**

(Rating Scale - 0-5 point scale as to how well  
selections represented type of humor specified)

Action Humor Titles	1	<u>Experts</u>			TOTALS
		2	3	4	
Mr. Popper's Penguins	1	5	2	4	12
Henry Reed, Inc.	4	5	3	5	17
Pippi Longstocking	3	5	3	4	15
Henry and Beezus	4	5	3	1	13
The Alligator Case	4	5	4	3	16

Word Humor Titles	1	<u>Experts</u>			TOTALS
		2	3	4	
Chancy and the Grand Rascal	4	4	4	3	15
The Limerick Trick	2	3	3	3	11
Paddington Goes to Town	4	5	4	5	18
The Search for Delicious	5	3	4	3	15
The Phantom Tollbooth	5	5	4	5	19

humor of the selections as to whether they were the funniest heard, very funny, funny, a little funny, not very funny, and not funny at all. The instrument finally had the following questions which required write-in answers by the subjects:

What was there about the stories that made you check the boxes the way you did above?  
(Very happy, happy, indifferent, unhappy, very unhappy.)

If you thought one story funnier than the other write what made you think that way.

If you thought both stories funny write what you think made them both funny.

If you thought both stories not funny write what made you think that way.

The stories were then recorded by this investigator on cassette tape for playing to the pupils. This was done to insure uniformity of presentation. Since the selections were to be read to the students it was not vital to the results of the study that the population involved consist of boys and girls with homogeneous reading levels. Considering that none of the subjects were severely mentally retarded, emotionally disturbed, or educationally handicapped none should have been hampered to any important degree by listening to the selections. A factor that would enter in of course would be the language facility of the pupils selected, but since the 216 were randomly chosen the diversity undoubtedly obtained should make it possible to generalize the findings over a larger population.

To test the procedures a Pilot Study was then conducted with six sixth grade pupils, three boys and three girls, in each of three schools, one an inner-city school in Lansing, one a rural school north of Lansing, and a third a suburban school in Walled Lake. None of these students was used in the actual study itself. The researcher used the following procedure with the students:

First, the researcher gave his name and had the students give their names in an attempt to begin getting acquainted a little and to set them at ease. A few moments were spent discussing their various likes and dislikes such as school subjects, sports, and records.

Second, the boys and girls were told that they were not going to take a test or anything else upon which they would be graded but that they were being given a chance to help the investigator discover what kinds of books boys and girls like and how certain books make them feel. It was explained that a tape recorder was being used for the benefit of the researcher to help him remember what was done and said.

The first two selections were then played for the pupils. Following the reading the first written instrument was given to the subjects for completion. The directions were read orally to avert possible reading problems.

Following the completion of the check sheet, a short oral discussion of the stories was held. The

children's comments were recorded. The same procedure was then pursued for selections three through six. The total testing time was approximately sixty minutes.

Table 3.07 summarizes the results of the Pilot Study with the inner-city youth. As to the choices in the paired stories the boys gave three votes to word humor, none to action humor, two rated both types of humor the same, and four liked neither kind. The girls cast two votes for the action stories, one for words, and six votes rated the stories even. In evaluating the stories as to how humorous they were the girls scored the action humor 3.78, the word humor 3.67, for an over-all average of 3.73. Compared to this the boys rated action humor 2.55 and word humor 3.55 for an average of 2.94. These scores were based on a 1.0 to 6.0 scale. On the question regarding how they felt after hearing the stories, the girls averaged 3.78 after hearing the action stories, 3.89 after the word selections for an average of 3.84. The boys' score for action was 3.44 and 3.78 for words averaging 3.61. These means were established on a 1.0 - 5.0 scale.

In Table 3.08 the results from the suburban school are tabulated. For the humor preference question the girls selected action humor five times and word humor four times. The boys gave six votes to the no preference column, one to action humor, and two to word humor. The totals for both sexes were six marks for action humor, six for word



TABLE 3.07

## PILOT STUDY RESULTS - INNER-CITY SCHOOL

Book Titles

Title One - Henry Reed, Inc. - Action Humor  
 Title Two - The Phantom Tollbooth - Word Humor  
 Title Three - Paddington Goes to Town - Word Humor  
 Title Four - The Alligator Case - Action Humor  
 Title Five - Pippi Longstocking - Action Humor  
 Title Six - The Search for Delicious - Word Humor

Mean Scores for Answers to Questions One and Two

(How Did You Feel After Hearing Title 1, 3, 5?)

(How Did You Feel After Hearing Title 2, 4, 6?)

Very Unhappy, Unhappy, Indifferent, Happy, Very Happy

Scores Weighted from 1.0 - 5.0

	Title One	Title Two	Title Three	Title Four	Title Five	Title Six	Mean 1,4,5	Mean 2,3,6	Mean All
Boys	3.00	3.00	4.67	4.00	3.33	3.67	3.44	3.78	3.61
Girls	3.67	3.33	4.33	4.00	3.67	4.00	3.78	3.89	3.84

Raw Totals for Question Four

(Which Story Did You Like Better?)

(A= Action; W= Word; S= Both the same; N= Neither)

	Selections 1, 2				Selections 3, 4				Selections 5, 6			
	A	W	S	N	A	W	S	N	A	W	S	N
Girls	2	1	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	3	0
Boys	0	1	0	2	1	0	2	0	0	1	0	2
Totals	2	2	0	2	1	0	5	0	0	1	3	2
Total Raw Scores	Action Titles 1,4,5				Action Titles 2,3,6				S	N		
Boys	0				3				2	4		
Girls	2				1				6	0		
Totals	2				4				8	4		

Mean Scores for Answers to Questions Five and Six

(Rate Story No. 1, 3, 5 As To How Funny You Thought It Was.)

(Rate Story No. 2, 4, 6 As To How Funny You Thought It Was.)

Not Funny Not Very A Little Funniest  
 At All Funny Funny Funny Very Funny I've Heard

Scores Weighted from 1.0 - 6.0

	Title One	Title Two	Title Three	Title Four	Title Five	Title Six	Mean 1,4,5	Mean 2,3,6	Mean All
Girls	2.67	2.33	4.67	4.67	4.00	4.00	3.78	3.67	3.73
Boys	1.33	1.33	5.67	4.00	2.33	3.00	2.55	3.33	2.94

TABLE 3.08  
PILOT STUDY RESULTS - SUBURBAN SCHOOL

Book Titles

- Title One - Henry Reed, Inc. - Action Humor  
 Title Two - The Phantom Tollbooth - Word Humor  
 Title Three - Paddington Goes to Town - Word Humor  
 Title Four - The Alligator Case - Action Humor  
 Title Five - Pippi Longstocking - Action Humor  
 Title Six - The Search for Delicious - Word Humor

Mean Scores for Answers to Questions One and Two  
 (How Did You Feel After Hearing Title 1, 3, 5?)  
 (How Did You Feel After Hearing Title 2, 4, 6?)

Very Unhappy, Unhappy, Indifferent, Happy, Very Happy

Scores Weighted from 1.0 - 5.0

	Title One	Title Two	Title Three	Title Four	Title Five	Title Six	Mean 1,4,5	Mean 2,3,6	Mean All
Boys	4.67	3.67	4.67	4.33	4.67	4.50	4.56	4.28	4.42
Girls	4.00	4.67	5.00	4.00	4.67	3.67	4.22	4.45	4.34

Raw Totals for Question Four  
 (Which Story Did You Like Better?)

(A= Action; W= Word; S= Both the Same; N= Neither)

	Selections 1, 2				Selections 3, 4				Selections 5, 6			
	A	W	S	N	A	W	S	N	A	W	S	N
Girls	2	1	0	0	3	0	0	0	3	0	0	0
Boys	1	0	2	0	1	0	2	0	0	1	2	0
Totals	3	1	2	0	4	0	2	0	3	1	2	0
Total Raw Scores	Action Titles 1,4,5				Action Titles 2,3,6				S	N		
Boys	1				2				6	0		
Girls	5				4				0	0		
Totals	6				6				6	0		

Mean Scores for Answers to Questions Five and Six  
 (Rate Story No. 1, 3, 5 As To How Funny You Thought It Was.)  
 (Rate Story No. 2, 4, 6 As To How Funny You Thought It Was.)

Not Funny Not Very A Little Funniest  
 At All Funny Funny Very Funny I've Heard

Scores Weighted from 1.0 - 6.0

	Title One	Title Two	Title Three	Title Four	Title Five	Title Six	Mean 1,4,5	Mean 2,3,6	Mean All
Girls	4.33	4.33	5.33	4.67	5.33	4.33	4.78	4.66	4.72
Boys	4.67	4.00	5.00	4.50	4.67	4.67	4.61	4.56	4.59

humor, and six no preference. The suburban girls evaluated action humor 4.78, word humor 4.66, for an average of 4.72. The boys' means were 4.61 for action, 4.56 for words, with a final mean of 4.59. On the feeling question the boys' means were 4.56 after the action stories, 4.28 after the word stories, averaging 4.42 altogether. On this same question the girls' scores were 4.22 following the action selections and 4.45 after the word selections for a mean of 4.34.

Table 3.09 is a tabulation of scores from the rural school. The girls tallied seven votes for action humor, none for word humor, and two scored both types equal. Compared to this the boys listed seven votes in the no preference column and one for action and one for words. On the 6.40 humor rating scale the girls' means were 4.34 for the action works, 3.56 for the word narratives, 3.95 overall. The boys scores were lower all along, 4.11 for action, 3.11 for words, 3.61 total. As to their feelings after hearing the tales, the boys averaged 4.11 after the action readings, 3.67 after the word humor, 3.89 altogether. This compared to the girls totals of 4.11 after the action humor and 2.89 after the word stories for a final mean of 3.50.

Table 3.10 makes a comparison of the final results obtained from the three types of schools. The rural children selected action humor eight times, the suburban six times, the inner-city only two times. In the word

TABLE 3.09

## PILOT STUDY RESULTS - RURAL SCHOOL

Book Titles

- Title One - Henry Reed, Inc. - Action Humor  
 Title Two - The Phantom Tollbooth - Word Humor  
 Title Three - Paddington Goes to Town - Word Humor  
 Title Four - The Alligator Case - Action Humor  
 Title Five - Pippi Longstocking - Action Humor  
 Title Six - The Search for Delicious - Word Humor

Mean Scores for Answers to Questions One and Two  
 (How Did You Feel After Hearing Title 1, 3, 5?)  
 (How Did You Feel After Hearing Title 2, 4, 6?)  
 Very Unhappy, Unhappy, Indifferent, Happy, Very Happy

Scores Weighted from 1.0 - 5.0

	Title One	Title Two	Title Three	Title Four	Title Five	Title Six	Mean 1,4,5	Mean 2,3,6	Mean All
Boys	4.00	3.00	4.00	4.33	4.00	4.00	4.11	3.67	3.89
Girls	4.33	2.67	3.33	4.33	3.67	2.67	4.11	2.89	3.50

Raw Totals for Question Four  
 (Which Story Did You Like Better?)

(A= Action; W= Word; S= Both the Same; N= Neither)

	Selections 1, 2				Selections 3, 4				Selections 5, 6			
	A	W	S	N	A	W	S	N	A	W	S	N
Girls	3	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	1	0	2	0
Boys	1	0	2	0	0	0	3	0	0	1	2	0
Totals	4	0	2	0	0	3	3	0	1	1	4	0
Total Raw Scores	Action Titles 1,4,5				Action Titles 2,3,6				S	N		
Boys	1				1				7	0		
Girls	7				0				2	0		
Totals	8				1				9	0		

Mean Scores for Answers to Questions Five and Six  
 (Rate Story No. 1, 3, 5 As To How Funny You Thought It Was.)  
 (Rate Story No. 2, 4, 6 As To How Funny You Thought It Was.)

Not Funny Not Very A Little Funniest  
 At All Funny Funny Funny Very Funny I've Heard

Scores Weighted from 1.0 - 6.0

	Title One	Title Two	Title Three	Title Four	Title Five	Title Six	Mean 1,4,5	Mean 2,3,6	Mean All
Girls	4.00	3.00	3.67	4.67	3.67	2.67	4.34	3.56	3.95
Boys	4.67	2.67	4.33	4.67	3.67	3.67	4.11	3.11	3.61

TABLE 3.10

PILOT STUDY RESULTS  
COMPARING THREE TYPES OF SCHOOLS IN FINAL RESULTS

Mean Scores for Answers to Questions One and Two  
(How Did You Feel After Hearing Title 1, 3, 5?)  
(How Did You Feel After Hearing Title 2, 4, 6?)

Title One - Henry Reed, Inc. - Action Humor  
Title Two - The Phantom Tollbooth - Word Humor  
Title Three - Paddington Goes to Town - Word Humor  
Title Four - The Alligator Case - Action Humor

Scores Weighted from 1.0 - 5.0

	Action Mean	Word Mean	Over-All Mean
Inner-City	3.61	3.84	3.73
Suburban	4.39	4.37	4.38
Rural	4.11	3.28	3.70

Raw Totals for Question Four  
(Which Story Did You Like Better?)

	Action Humor	Word Humor	Both the Same	Neither
Inner-City	2	4	8	4
Suburban	6	6	6	0
Rural	8	1	9	0

Mean Scores for Answers to Questions Five and Six  
(Rate Story No. 1, 3, 5 As To How Funny You Thought It Was.)  
(Rate Story No. 2, 4, 6 As To How Funny You Thought It Was.)

Scores Weighted from 1.0 - 6.0

	Action Mean	Word Mean	Over-All Mean
Inner-City	3.17	3.50	3.34
Suburban	4.70	4.61	4.66
Rural	4.23	4.34	3.78

humor section the ruralites had one vote, the suburban six, and the inner-city four. In the no preference column were nine from the rural, six from the suburban, and eight from the inner-city schools. Four inner-city youths also checked the box denoting that neither type story was liked. As to the humor rating given the stories, the highest mean for the action stories was scored by the suburban schools at 4.70 followed by the rural at 4.23 with the inner-city trailing at 3.17. The order was the same for the word stories; 4.61 suburban, 4.34 rural, and 3.50 inner-city. The over-all humor scores were 4.66 suburban, 3.78 rural, and 3.34 inner-city. On the question as to how they felt after hearing the selections the suburban youth rated their feelings 4.39 after the action narratives and 4.37 following the word tales. The rural boys and girls totals were 4.11 for action and 3.28 for word compared to the inner-city means of 3.61 action and 3.84 word. For both types of humor together the suburbanites had the highest score at 4.38, next came the inner-city children at 3.73 followed by the rural youth at 3.70.

As a result of the Pilot Study it was decided to reduce the number of stories to be used with the children from six to four as it was felt that sixty minutes was too long a period to expect the youngsters to listen attentively. The reduction to four stories cut the time for the presentation to approximately forty to forty-five

minutes for each group of six children. The procedure used in the final study was the same as that just described except as mentioned, four stories were used instead of six. The four stories were those rated highest by the children's literature experts.

It should be emphasized that only six children were worked with at one time, three boys and three girls. By working with only six students at a time it was easier to note the individual reactions to the stories read. Strang<sup>1</sup> in her book on child study stated that one of the most effective ways of meeting the needs of individual children is the small group or sub-group technique. She said that this method improves comprehension because the pupils have a social motive for understanding what they read and hear. In speaking about basic concepts of groups Schmuck<sup>2</sup> mentioned the deeply emotional tone of face-to-face relationships in small groups. It was hoped for improved communication then through employment of small groups.

Since 216 students were involved in the study, only six at one time, the presentation was made thirty-six times.

---

<sup>1</sup>Ruth Strang, An Introduction to Child Study, (New York: Macmillan and Co., 1959), p. 428.

<sup>2</sup>Richard A. Schmuck and Patricia A. Schmuck, Group Processes in the Classroom, (Dubuque: Wm. C. Brown Co., 1971), p. 11.

Therefore directions had to be simple, direct, unambiguous, and the same as nearly as possible all thirty-six times. Special caution was used to make sure that no unintentional clues, hints, or preferences for certain books were given. This included avoiding remarks such as "I think you'll find this story funny," facial expressions such as smiling more during one story than another, and other non-verbal clues like sighing or shifting position too often.

The second part of this study was library in nature and consisted of the investigator's reading of 193 books written for children at an interest level that varied from grade two through grade seven. These were books that contributors for Book List and Subscription Review and The Elementary School Library Collection, 1970 edition, edited by Mary V. Gaver said contained some humorous element. The Book List reviews were checked from the years 1937 to 1972.

The humor discovered in these books was divided into the broad categories of humor developed through physical action and humor developed primarily through the use of words.

Action humor is defined as that humor generated from some physical activity such as stupid blunders, absurd doings, incongruities, embarrassment of someone due to an accident, general confusion including some falling and tumbling about, and turning the tables on someone.

Verbal humor is that based upon the words used by the characters in the story and includes word repetition,



word rhyming, mispronunciation of words, misunderstanding of meanings, and humor developed through implication.

It is hoped that categorization of these titles and the brief annotations that accompany each title will prove of use to teachers, librarians, parents, and students.

The annotations of these books are given in Appendix F. It must be stated that not all 193 titles have been annotated in this study, but only those that the researcher considered good literature and selections worthy of the title of a humorous book.

Thirty-four books were not annotated since the humor involved was either in poor taste or constituted such a minor part of the book as to be inconsequential as a humorous book. Examples include Arkansaw Bear which contained crude stereotypes of Italians and Blacks; Elijah the Fishbite, a book that featured a stereotyped Negro cook who spoke with "deses" and "dems"; The Book of Nonsense, a collection of humorous poems that included preachy tales such as those of Harriet who burned to death while playing with matches and the boy who sucked his thumb until it was cut off by a tall tailor; and Chucklebait, which included twenty very dated stories that might be enjoyed more by one studying the history of humor. Nineteen books were not listed as humorous books because they really contained little or nothing to qualify them as funny books. Miss Pickerell Goes to the Arctic and Miss Pickerell Goes

Underseas are examples of books that were really science-fiction tales and not humorous books. The Magic Shop was a fantasy, the tale of a battle between white magic and black magic. This Boy Cody is a fine book for learning about the customs of Appalachia but is not really funny.

### Hypotheses

On the basis of readings concerning the subject of humor, its development in children, and children's reaction to it, the following hypotheses were formulated for this investigation:

1. That a higher percentage of sixth-grade children from rural schools than inner-city schools would find humor of words more satisfying than humor based on physical action.
2. That a higher percentage of sixth-grade children from suburban schools than rural schools would find humor of words more satisfying than humor based on physical action.
3. That a higher percentage of sixth-grade girls than boys would find humor of words funnier than humor due to physical action.
4. That a majority of the children within each school classification exposed to the humorous stories would recognize that they felt happy after hearing the humorous stories.
5. That a higher percentage of the humorous books reviewed for this investigation would be based on humor of action rather than humor developed by words.

### Analysis

The children participating in the study were randomly selected from their respective classrooms. The stories were played on tape to students in groups of six. For data analysis purposes each group of six was either all male or all female. The stories were played in pairs. Within each pair one story represented physical humor, one represented humor of words. To aid in analyzing the data a point value was assigned the answers given by the students to the questions stated on the instrument. (Appendix C) The answers to questions one and two were weighted from five points for a check in the "very happy" box down to one point for a mark in the "very unhappy" box. The exact questions were:

1. How did you feel after hearing (Title 1)?  
Check one of the boxes at the right.
2. How did you feel after hearing (Title 2)?  
Check one of the boxes at the right.

A mean score was then tabulated for each set of answers for each group of six students who heard the stories together. The twelve mean scores from each group of six were then averaged to find the mean score for each particular type of school classification; inner-city, suburban and rural. The total mean scores were then checked to see if a majority of the children would recognize that they felt happy after hearing the stories.

The results from the next question, number four,

(Which story did you like better? Check box at the right.), were tabulated and percentages figured for each of the four categories to discover whether a higher percentage of students favored word type humor or action type humor selections. Separate tabulations were made for school classifications and sex.

The answers for questions five and six, stated below;

5. Rate story No. 1 as to how funny you thought it was.
6. Rate story No. 2 as to how funny you thought it was.

were weighted from six points to "funniest I've heard" down to one point for "not funny at all". Mean scores were computed for each group of six, the twelve groups of six within each school classification, and by sex. A comparison was then made to see if the stories with the highest mean "funny" ratings corresponded with the results obtained from question four as to the type of humor preference.

Especially succinct and pertinent replies written by the students in answer to questions three and either seven, eight, or nine were collated and listed in Appendix D. The questions they were asked to respond to were:

3. What was there about the stories that made you check the boxes the way you did above?
7. If you thought one story funnier than the other write what made you think that way.
8. If you thought both stories funny write what you think made them both funny.

9. If you thought both stories not funny write what made you think that way.

Oral comments of the students recorded during the discussion period are compiled in Appendix E.

For the final hypothesis regarding the humorous content of the children's books annotated in Appendix F, it was assumed that the investigator's judgment was competent enough that he could judge whether the humorous books read were basically based on action or language. Percentages were formulated for books based principally on action humor, those favoring word humor, and those in which the distinction between the two types was not clearly drawn or evident.

### Summary

This chapter first described the sample used in this researcher's study regarding the humor preferences of 216 randomly selected sixth grade boys and girls. The sample consisted of children selected from three geographically described types of schools, namely, inner-city, suburban, and rural.

Humorous selections representing humor based on words as opposed to humor developed through action were picked by the researcher, verified by a team of children's literature experts, then recorded on cassette tape for playing to the children. A written instrument was devised to obtain the children's reactions. A Pilot Study was then

conducted with eighteen children; six from an inner-city school, six from a suburban setting, and six from a rural area to test the procedures for the final investigation. In the final study the listening groups were standardized at six youngsters, either all boys or all girls. The number of selections used was reduced from six to four as a result of the Pilot Study.

The research was an attempt to either verify or disprove four hypotheses regarding children's humor preferences and feelings upon hearing funny stories. The hypotheses were: More rural school children would prefer humor based on words than would inner-city youths, that the suburban youths would prefer humor of words more than the rural children, that girls more than boys would elect humor of words over action humor, and that a majority of all the children would feel happy after hearing the narratives. A fifth hypothesis had to do with a unique feature of the study. In addition to the experimental part described above a total of 193 humorous children's books were read to discover whether the majority of the books had their humor based upon words or action. The fifth hypothesis contended that the action type would be more prevalent.

A written instrument was used with the children to record their reactions to the stories. The instrument contained seven questions, two of which required the boys and girls to write in their own opinions. Four of the

other five questions had weighted answers so that upon completion of the testing mean scores could be computed for analyzing the pupils' feelings about the stories and for checking pupils' ratings as to how funny they regarded the selections. The fifth question was one in which the youngsters needed to check which type of humorous story they preferred, humor of action, humor of words, or whether they had no preference at all. Percentages were kept for this and the results were compared with the means obtained from the answers given to questions four and five regarding the degree of humor in the stories.

Chapter Four will restate the hypotheses, the data gathered to reveal the acceptance or rejection of the hypotheses, some summary statements, and a chapter summary.

## Chapter Four

### Analysis of the Results

Chapter Four contains a restatement of the hypotheses, the data gathered to reveal the acceptance or rejection of the hypotheses; some summary statements; and a chapter summary.

#### Part I. Four Hypotheses Pertaining to Children's Responses to Specific Humorous Selections.

These hypotheses are:

1. That a higher percentage of sixth-grade children from the rural-type schools than from the inner-city schools would find humor of words more satisfying than humor based on physical action.
2. That a higher percentage of sixth-grade children from the suburban type schools rather than from the rural schools would find humor of words more to their liking than humor based on physical action.
3. That a higher percentage of sixth-grade girls than sixth-grade boys would find humor of words funnier than humor due to physical action.
4. That a majority of the children within each school classification; that is inner-city, suburban, and rural when they were exposed to the humorous stories, would recognize that they felt happy after hearing the humorous stories.



Hypothesis 1: A higher percentage of sixth-grade children from the rural-type schools than from the inner-city schools would find humor of words more satisfying than humor based on physical action.

Regarding this hypothesis, the final tabulations shown in Table 4.01, indicate that 36.1% of the rural students chose the word type humor selections compared to 34.0% who picked action humor and 29.9% who showed no preference. This compares with 27.1% of the inner-city children choosing word humor, 48.6% action humor, 13.6% no preference, and 0.7% who like neither. Further examination of the data reveals that in comparing selections one and two, Henry Reed, Inc. and The Phantom Tollbooth, 43.1% of the rural students preferred Henry Reed, Inc., the action humor story, as opposed to 38.9% selecting the word humor tale, The Phantom Tollbooth. A total of 18% rated them the same, in other words, not preferring one over the other. For these same two stories, 65.3% of the Inner-City pupils selected Henry Reed, Inc., 27.8% The Phantom Tollbooth, 5.5% rated them the same, and 1.4% didn't like either.

For the next two selections, 25.0% of the rural students chose the word humor story, Paddington Goes to Town, 33.3% the action humor selection, The Alligator Case, 41.7% evaluated them the same. For these students both the action and word humor choice percentage dropped for selections three and four. Table 4.01 shows further that 26.4% of the inner-city boys and girls checked the word story,

TABLE 4.01

SCHOOL TYPE RAW TOTALS AND PERCENTAGES FOR  
ANSWERS TO QUESTION FOUR.

(Which Story Did You Like Better? Check Box at the Right.)

CHOOSING BETWEEN ACTION AND WORD HUMOR

Selection One - Henry Reed, Inc.  
Selection Two - The Phantom Tollbooth  
Selection Three - Paddington Goes To Town  
Selection Four - The Alligator Case

(A= Action, W= Words, S= Both the Same, N= Neither)

Inner-City Schools										
	Comparing Selections 1, 2				Comparing Selections 3, 4				Total Comparison	
	A	W	S	N	A	W	S	N	A	N
Raw Scores	47	20	4	1	23	19	30	0	70	34
Percent- ages	65.3	27.8	5.5	1.4	31.9	26.4	41.7	0.0	48.6	23.6

Table 4.01 -- continued

Suburban Schools												
Raw Scores Percent- ages	Comparing Selections 1, 2				Comparing Selections 3, 4				Total Comparison			
	A	W	S	N	A	W	S	N	A	W	S	N
	38	19	13	2	14	32	24	2	52	51	37	4
	52.8	26.4	18.0	2.8	19.4	44.5	33.3	2.8	36.1	35.4	25.7	2.8

Rural Schools												
Raw Scores Percent- ages	Comparing Selections 1, 2				Comparing Selections 3, 4				Total Comparison			
	A	W	S	N	A	W	S	N	A	W	S	N
	31	28	13	0	18	24	30	0	49	52	43	0
	43.1	38.9	18.0	0.0	25.0	33.3	41.7	0.0	34.0	36.1	29.9	0.0

TABLE 4.02

INNER-CITY RAW SCORES FOR ANSWERS TO QUESTION FOUR  
 (Which Story Did You Like Better? Check Box at the Right.)  
 CHOOSING BETWEEN ACTION AND WORD HUMOR

Selection One - Henry Reed, Inc.  
 Selection Two - The Phantom Tollbooth  
 Selection Three - Paddington Goes to Town  
 Selection Four - The Alligator Case

(A= Action, W= Words, S= Both the Same, N= Neither)

Inner-City Schools	Comparing Selections 1, 2				Comparing Selections 3, 4				Total Comparisons			
	A	W	S	N	A	W	S	N	A	W	S	N
Raw Totals												
School-A												
Boys	3	2	1	0	3	1	2	0	6	3	3	0
Girls	4	1	1	0	0	3	3	0	4	4	4	0
School-B												
Boys	6	0	0	0	2	3	1	0	8	3	1	0
Girls	0	6	0	0	0	0	6	0	0	6	6	0
School-C												
Boys	5	1	0	0	1	2	3	0	6	3	3	0
Girls	6	0	0	0	0	2	4	0	6	2	4	0
School-D												
Boys	3	2	1	0	5	0	1	0	8	2	2	0
Girls	5	0	1	0	2	0	4	0	7	0	5	0
School-E												
Boys	6	0	0	0	5	0	1	0	11	0	1	0
Girls	5	0	0	1	1	1	4	0	6	1	4	1
School-F												
Boys	2	4	0	0	1	4	1	0	3	8	1	0
Girls	2	4	0	0	3	3	0	0	5	7	0	0
Inner-City Totals	47	20	4	1	23	19	30	0	70	39	34	1

TABLE 4.03

## RURAL RAW SCORES FOR ANSWERS TO QUESTION FOUR

(Which Story Did You Like Better? Check Box at the Right.)

## CHOOSING BETWEEN ACTION AND WORD HUMOR

Selection One - Henry Reed, Inc.  
 Selection Two - The Phantom Tollbooth  
 Selection Three - Paddington Goes to Town  
 Selection Four - The Alligator Case

(A= Action, W= Words, S= Both the Same, N= Neither)

Rural Schools	Comparing Selections 1, 2				Comparing Selections 3, 4				Total Comparisons			
	A	W	S	N	A	W	S	N	A	W	S	N
Raw Totals												
School-A												
Boys	4	2	0	0	0	3	3	0	4	5	3	0
Girls	5	0	1	0	0	6	0	0	5	6	1	0
School-B												
Boys	4	2	0	0	3	3	0	0	7	5	0	0
Girls	4	2	0	0	2	1	3	0	6	3	3	0
School-C												
Boys	0	4	2	0	0	0	6	0	0	4	8	0
Girls	5	1	0	0	0	4	2	0	5	5	2	0
School-D												
Boys	3	2	1	0	1	1	4	0	4	3	5	0
Girls	2	2	2	0	4	1	1	0	6	3	3	0
School-E												
Boys	2	1	3	0	0	4	2	0	2	5	5	0
Girls	1	3	2	0	1	0	5	0	2	3	7	0
School-F												
Boys	1	5	0	0	6	0	0	0	7	5	0	0
Girls	0	4	2	0	1	1	4	0	1	5	6	0
Rural Totals	31	28	13	0	18	24	30	0	49	52	43	0

Paddington Goes to Town, 31.9% the action of The Alligator Case, and 41.7% listed them the same. As with the rural youth, the percentages dropped for both the action and word stories.

In rating these same selections for humor value on a scale from 1.0 to 6.0, under the headings not funny at all, not very funny, a little funny, funny, very funny, and funniest I've heard, the rural children gave word humor a mean score of 4.0, to 3.92 for action humor. The inner-city students on the other hand rated the word humor selections 4.15 and the action humor stories 4.59. A closer look at Table 4.04 reveals the inner-city sixth graders scoring the two action type tales, Henry Reed, Inc., and The Alligator Case 4.37 and 4.78 respectively. The word humor books, The Phantom Tollbooth and Paddington Goes to Town received means of 3.42 and 4.87. Table 4.05 lists means of 3.67 for Henry Reed, Inc., and 4.17 for The Alligator Case for the rural children. These same youngsters scored the word humor stories, The Phantom Tollbooth and Paddington Goes to Town, 3.64 and 4.36 respectively.

In addition to the objective selections made, the pupils also wrote subjective comments on why they chose the stories they did. The students were asked to reply to one of the following questions.

1. If you thought one of the stories seemed funnier than the other write what made you think that way.

TABLE 4.04

INNER-CITY MEAN SCORES FOR ANSWERS TO  
QUESTIONS FIVE AND SIX

(5. Rate Story No. 1 As to How Funny You Thought It Was.)  
(6. Rate Story No. 2 as to How Funny You Thought It Was.)

Selection One - Henry Reed, Inc. - Action Humor  
Selection Two - The Phantom Tollbooth - Word Humor  
Selection Three - Paddington Goes to Town - Word Humor  
Selection Four - The Alligator Case - Action Humor

Scores Weighted from 1.0 - 6.0

	Title One	Title Four	Mean 1, 4	Title Two	Title Three	Mean 2, 3	Mean All
School-A							
Boys	4.50	5.20	4.85	4.00	5.00	4.50	4.68
Girls	4.00	4.83	4.44	3.00	5.00	4.00	4.22
School-B							
Boys	4.17	4.67	4.42	2.00	5.00	3.50	3.96
Girls	2.83	4.50	3.67	4.33	4.50	4.42	4.05
School-C							
Boys	5.50	5.00	5.25	3.50	5.50	4.50	4.88
Girls	5.00	4.67	4.84	3.00	4.67	3.84	4.34
School-D							
Boys	4.00	5.83	4.92	3.50	4.60	4.05	4.49
Girls	4.83	5.17	5.00	4.00	4.83	4.44	4.72
School-E							
Boys	5.50	5.00	5.25	3.33	4.50	3.92	4.59
Girls	4.33	4.83	4.58	2.17	5.17	3.67	4.13
School-F							
Boys	3.50	4.67	4.09	4.00	5.17	4.59	4.34
Girls	4.33	3.00	3.67	4.17	4.50	4.34	4.01
Total Means							
(Boys)	4.52	5.06	4.80	3.39	4.96	4.18	4.49
(Girls)	4.22	4.50	4.37	3.45	4.78	4.12	4.25
Total Means (All)	4.37	4.78	4.59	3.42	4.87	4.15	4.37

TABLE 4.05

RURAL MEAN SCORES FOR ANSWERS TO  
QUESTIONS FIVE AND SIX

- (5. Rate Story No. 1 As to How Funny You Thought It Was.)  
(6. Rate Story No. 2 As to How Funny You Thought It Was.)

Selection One - Henry Reed, Inc. - Action Humor  
Selection Two - The Phantom Tollbooth - Word Humor  
Selection Three - Paddington Goes to Town - Word Humor  
Selection Four - The Alligator Case - Action Humor

Scores Weighted from 1.0 - 6.0

	Title One	Title Four	Mean 1, 4	Title Two	Title Three	Mean 2, 3	Mean All
School-A							
Boys	4.00	3.67	3.84	3.50	4.33	3.92	3.88
Girls	4.33	3.33	3.83	3.00	3.50	4.25	4.04
School-B							
Boys	3.00	3.50	3.25	2.67	3.00	2.84	3.05
Girls	4.17	4.67	4.42	3.67	4.83	4.25	4.34
School-C							
Boys	2.83	4.83	3.83	3.17	5.00	4.09	3.96
Girls	4.17	3.33	3.75	3.33	4.00	3.67	3.71
School-D							
Boys	3.83	4.67	4.25	3.33	4.33	3.83	4.04
Girls	3.50	4.33	3.92	3.83	3.67	3.75	3.84
School-E							
Boys	3.67	3.33	3.50	3.33	4.67	4.00	3.75
Girls	4.33	4.83	4.58	4.67	4.83	4.75	4.67
School-F							
Boys	3.00	4.83	3.92	5.17	3.83	4.50	4.21
Girls	3.17	4.67	3.92	4.00	4.33	4.17	4.42
Total Means							
(Boys)	3.39	4.14	3.77	3.53	4.19	3.86	3.82
(Girls)	3.95	4.19	4.07	3.75	4.53	4.14	4.11
Total Means (All)	3.67	4.17	3.92	3.64	4.36	4.00	3.97



2. If you thought both stories funny write what you think made them both funny:

3. If you thought both stories not funny, write what made you think that way.

Representative written comments made by the inner-city boys follow:

Because the one was funny about the lady falling in the pond, (Henry Reed, Inc.), and the other was boring about the dinner. (The Phantom Tollbooth) (Variations of this comment appeared very often.)

I didn't really understand title two: (The Phantom Tollbooth) (A frequent comment.)

I thought that the first one, (Henry Reed, Inc.), was funnier because it seemed more realistic than the other one did, (The Phantom Tollbooth), and just more funnier.

I thought that Henry Reed, Inc. was better because I felt what was going on in the story.

Well, the story number two, The Phantom Tollbooth, was funny because it was when they ate squares.

I thought the bear playing a human being out-smarted the doctor: (Paddington Goes to Town)

I like when the bear always said opposites. (Paddington Goes to Town)

I liked when he places his peas on a spoon and hit it in the air with the pork chop. (The Alligator Case)

Typical comments of the inner-city girls were:

I thought they were both the same because I don't read stories like that: (Henry Reed, Inc. and The Phantom Tollbooth)

The first story, (Henry Reed, Inc.), was funnier than the other because the lady fell in the pond and it's a usual thing in real life. The other one had too much royalty in it and not that much humor. (The Phantom Tollbooth)

Because you had to eat the words you said. (The Phantom Tollbooth)

I think number two, (The Phantom Tollbooth), was funnier because I drew my feelings faster to it. I think number one, Henry Reed, Inc., was not as funny because eating squares is more unusual than falling in a pond.

Because a fat lady falling into a pond was funny. (Henry Reed, Inc.)

I think the first story, (Henry Reed, Inc.), was funny, but the other one was not funny. (The Phantom Tollbooth) Because it had a boring title and mostly about words.

When Paddington kept on giving the psychiatrist antonyms for the words. (Paddington Goes to Town)

The things that made them funny were the characters, a bear and a fish, for I know they can't talk. And when they're in stories they are funny. (Paddington Goes to Town and The Alligator Case)

A few typical rural boys written statements are listed next:

Number two, (The Phantom Tollbooth), was full of clever terms such as eating your own words.

The first one, (Henry Reed, Inc.), had fat ladies. It also had make-up stuff.

The Phantom Tellbooth had less slapstick.

There was nothing funny in them.

Number three, (Paddington Goes to Town), had more excitement or horsing around.

It's funny when a dumb person makes a fool of a smart person like in number three. (Paddington Goes to Town)

The Alligator Case was too weird.

The rural girl replies included the following:

The Phantom Tellbooth was funnier I thought because Title One, (Henry Reed, Inc.), was sort of tragic when the lady fainted.

The first one, (Henry Reed, Inc.), wasn't very funny because of the words. I didn't think the words were put together very well.

I liked the one, (The Phantom Tellbooth), because of the numbers and the food.

In Paddington Goes to Town there was more excitement. I like humor stories where things go wrong. In number two, (The Alligator Case), nothing went wrong really.

The way Mr. Fish ate his bullet peas and his perk chop. (The Alligator Case)

Because they were both silly.

A complete listing of all the written pupil comments is contained in Appendix D.

In addition to the written comments gathered on the instrument, other remarks by the students were tape

recorded following the story presentations.

One question used to stimulate the discussion was, "What do you think makes a story funny?"

Some representative inner-city replies were:

When a person does stupid things.

The characters.

The way they act.

The stupid side of everything.

Clumsiness, being sneaky.

Greediness, selfishness.

The words.

Good rhyming words.

Always having smart remarks.

Rural youngsters answers included the following:

Funny words.

Throwing pies back and forth.

How they say it.

Something that doesn't make sense.

Something odd or weird.

Animals coming to life.

People who think they're real big, high rank, somebody does something to them to show them up.

Some illustrations make stories funny.

Appendix E records all the comments made by the

students in the discussion period following each playing of the stories.

Regarding the first hypothesis then, that a higher percentage of rural sixth grade children than inner-city sixth graders would prefer word humor over physical action humor, as far as straight percentages are concerned, the rural children did choose word humor more frequently than did the inner-city pupils. On the rating scale the inner-city youngsters gave both action and word humor higher scores than did the rural boys and girls, but the inner-city youngsters did score action humor higher than word humor 4.59 to 4.15, while the rural pupils did the reverse, scoring word humor 4.00 to 3.92 for action humor. Using a T Test the difference in the word humor means was not significant at the .05 level of significance.

Hypothesis 2: A higher percentage of sixth-grade children from the suburban type schools rather than from the rural schools would find humor of words more to their liking than humor based on physical action.

Table 4.01, referred to earlier, contains a summary of the findings for the suburban schools. Of the 216 subjects, 35.4% picked word humor to 36.1% for action, 25.7% showed no preference, and 2.8% liked neither type presented. The figures of course are the same as those stated previously for the rural pupils; 36.1% for word humor, 34.0% action, and 29.9% no choice.

By looking closer at Table 4.01 it is seen that the suburban boys and girls selected Henry Reed, Inc. the action humor story over The Phantom Tollbooth, the word humor tale by 52.8% to 26.4%. In addition to this, 18.0% liked the two books to the same extent and 2.8% liked neither. On these two stories the rural students scored 43.1% for Henry Reed, Inc., to 38.9% for The Phantom Tollbooth. In this group 18.0% liked the two selections equally well. On the third and fourth stories, the suburban pupils picked the action story, The Alligator Case, by a percent of 19.4%, while 44.5% chose the word selection, Paddington Goes to Town. This compares with the rural scores of 25.0% for The Alligator Case and 33.3% for Paddington Goes to Town. In the column denoting no preference were 33.3% of the suburban subjects and 41.7% of the ruralites. In addition 2.8% of those from the suburban schools liked neither of the last two stories.

On the humor rating scales the suburban youngsters scored both the action and humor stories 4.16. This score of 4.16 was a higher mean for word humor than the 4.00 given to word humor by the rural youths. A T Test applied to these means revealed no significant differences in the means at the .05 level of significance. The 4.16 for action humor by the suburban children was also higher than the 3.92 score of the ruralites. Another look at Table 4.07 indicates the suburban rating for Henry Reed, Inc., the action story, 4.14.

TABLE 4.06

## SUBURBAN RAW SCORES FOR ANSWERS TO QUESTION FOUR

(Which Story Did You Like Better? Check Box at the Right.)

## CHOOSING BETWEEN ACTION AND WORD HUMOR

Selection One - Henry Reed, Inc.  
 Selection Two - The Phantom Tollbooth  
 Selection Three - Paddington Goes to Town  
 Selection Four - The Alligator Case

(A= Action, W= Words, S= Both the Same, N= Neither)

Suburban Schools	Comparing Selections 1, 2				Comparing Selections 3, 4				Total Comparisons			
	A	W	S	N	A	W	S	N	A	W	S	N
Raw Totals												
School-A												
Boys	1	4	1	0	1	5	0	0	2	9	1	0
Girls	2	4	0	0	1	5	0	0	3	9	0	0
School-B												
Boys	4	2	0	0	1	2	3	0	5	4	3	0
Girls	1	3	1	1	1	0	4	1	2	3	5	2
School-C												
Boys	3	1	2	0	0	3	3	0	3	4	5	0
Girls	5	1	0	0	2	0	4	0	7	1	4	0
School-D												
Boys	5	0	1	0	0	4	2	0	5	4	3	0
Girls	1	2	2	1	3	2	0	1	4	4	2	2
School-E												
Boys	5	1	0	0	0	6	0	0	5	7	0	0
Girls	2	1	3	0	3	0	3	0	5	1	6	0
School-F												
Boys	6	0	0	0	0	2	4	0	6	2	4	0
Girls	3	0	3	0	2	3	1	0	5	3	4	0
Suburban Totals	38	19	13	2	14	32	24	2	52	51	37	4

TABLE 4.07

SUBURBAN MEAN SCORES FOR ANSWERS TO  
QUESTIONS FIVE AND SIX

(5. Rate Story No. 1 As to How Funny You Thought It Was.)  
(6. Rate Story No. 2 As to How Funny You Thought It Was.)

Selection One - Henry Reed, Inc. - Action Humor  
Selection Two - The Phantom Tollbooth - Word Humor  
Selection Three - Paddington Goes to Town - Word Humor  
Selection Four - The Alligator Case - Action Humor

Scores Weighted from 1.0 - 6.0

	Title One	Title Four	Mean 1, 4	Title Two	Title Three	Mean 2, 3	Mean All
School-A							
Boys	3.17	3.00	3.09	3.17	5.17	4.17	3.63
Girls	3.83	3.33	3.58	4.33	5.17	4.75	4.17
School-B							
Boys	4.67	4.50	4.59	3.50	4.83	4.17	4.38
Girls	3.33	4.83	4.08	4.33	4.83	4.58	4.33
School-C							
Boys	4.33	4.67	4.50	4.17	5.17	4.67	4.58
Girls	4.00	4.50	4.25	2.83	4.50	3.67	3.96
School-D							
Boys	3.83	4.50	4.17	2.17	5.17	3.67	3.92
Girls	3.00	3.17	3.09	2.83	3.33	3.08	3.09
School-E							
Boys	4.33	3.50	3.92	3.67	5.33	4.50	4.21
Girls	5.00	5.50	5.25	3.33	4.83	4.08	4.67
School-F							
Boys	5.50	4.83	5.17	3.67	5.33	4.50	4.84
Girls	4.67	3.83	4.25	4.17	4.00	4.09	4.17
Total Means							
(Boys)	4.31	4.17	4.24	3.39	5.17	4.28	4.26
(Girls)	3.97	4.19	4.08	3.64	4.44	4.04	4.06
Total Means (All)	4.14	4.18	4.16	3.52	4.81	4.16	4.16



The rural youth rated this story 3.67. On the other action story, The Alligator Case, the suburban mean was 4.18, the rural mean, 4.17. For the word stories, the suburban youngsters scored The Phantom Tollbooth 3.52, the rural, 3.64, and on Paddington Goes to Town, it was 4.81 for the suburban to 4.36 for the rural.

Listed below are some of the written comments made by the suburban boys and girls as to why they selected and rated the stories as they did. First are the girls:

In story number two, (The Phantom Tollbooth), it seemed more real.

Number two, (The Phantom Tollbooth), He had to eat his words and that's why I thought it was funny.

I thought the second one, (The Phantom Tollbooth), was more unusual than the first one. (Henry Reed, Inc.)

The first one, (Henry Reed, Inc.), was the funniest. Because there was a better action.

They are too simple and dull, not very exciting.

Paddington kept on getting things mixed up.

Because they both talk about the weird way somebody acts.

I thought Paddington Goes to Town was better because it was funnier and The Alligator Case was confusing and I didn't understand it as well as Paddington.

Some of the suburban boys' remarks follow:

Because the boy had to eat his words.  
(The Phantom Tollbooth)

Because of the fat lady falling down,  
(Henry Reed, Inc.), and the cutdowns.

I like exaggerations about fat people.  
(Henry Reed, Inc.)

Story four, (The Alligator Case), was dull.

The first story is funny. Paddington  
talked back. (Paddington Goes to Town)  
The second one, (The Alligator Case),  
he did not have good manners.

When he hit the peas in his mouth.  
(The Alligator Case)

I like when people give other people a  
rough time in a funny way.

In the discussion period following the playing of  
the stories, as previously mentioned, the youngsters were  
asked to think about the question, "What do you think makes  
a story funny?" A few of the suburban children's remarks  
are listed below:

People goofing up, getting into trouble.

The words that are used.

Exaggeration.

Something that is strange.

Something goes wrong in the plot.

Twisted jokes.

Saying the opposite words.

An action of some kind, when someone  
falls or trips.

Concerning the second hypothesis that a higher percentage of sixth graders from suburban schools than from rural schools would find humor of words more to their liking than humor based on physical action it was found that the suburban boys and girls rated both types of humor higher than did the rural children. Even so the fact remains that the total percent of pupils showing a preference for word humor was higher for the rural students than it was for those from the suburbs. The second hypothesis was rejected.

Considering the first two hypotheses together which were closely related, the results showed that of the three classes of schools, the rural school students showed the highest percentage in choice of word humor which was 36.1%, compared to 35.4% for the suburban schools, and a low of 27.1% for the inner-city youngsters. The percentages favoring action humor were reversed, the inner-city was first with 48.6% to 36.1% suburban and 34.0% rural. These results are not unexpected in light of what research has said concerning inner-city youth as stated in Chapter Two, that they are often behind in use of so-called standard English which is the language used in most children's books.

In the matter of rating the stories on a six point scale as to how funny they thought the stories were, the inner-city youth scored action humor 4.59 compared to 4.16 for the suburban, and a low of 3.92 for the rural. On word humor the highest average mean was that of the suburban at

4.16 to 4.15 for the inner-city and another low of 4.00 for the rural. So even though the rural youth had the largest percent favoring word humor they gave both types of humor the lowest scores of the three school classes. This compares favorably with the subjective analysis made by the investigator during the presentations. Of the three general classes of children, the inner-city youth showed by far the most enthusiasm for the stories. They often laughed out loud at the selections, especially at the action such as the lady falling in the fish pond. The suburban response was generally very strong for the boys, not as pronounced for the girls. In fact it was in one of the suburban schools that several girls were quite sullen and "above" the stories. They openly stated that they preferred stories about love, etc. This was the only case though in which the students felt that the stories were way below their intellectual and emotional levels. The rural children showed by far the least emotion of all the students. Many were very quiet and had no responses at all.

Observations made by the investigator are summarized below:

#### Observations - Inner-City Schools

##### Boys

1. Boys get restless after awhile. Attention span was short. Reacted best to physical type humor, pie throwing type.
2. Boys were very responsive - laughed openly - unusually attentive and appreciative.

3. Boys laughed out loud at the stories. Willing to discuss them.

#### Girls

1. Girls were relaxed, seemed to enjoy stories. Also reacted well to physical type humor.
2. Girls showed great response and attention. Openly laughed, enjoyed stories.
3. Girls very outward. Wanted to know all about what I was doing. Very interested.
4. Girls very eager to talk and ask questions.

#### Boys and Girls

Tremendous enthusiasm by boys and girls.

#### Observations - Suburban Schools

#### Girls

1. Girls wanted to stall, stretch out the hour.
2. Girls generally passive except for maybe two or three out of twelve. These few did laugh and smile.
3. Girls - one or two laughed, but were afraid to because of the other four. One girl was downright belligerent, very anti- everything. She definitely influenced others, especially the one next to her.
4. Girls very tight lipped, second group said practically nothing.

#### Boys

1. First group of boys very receptive. Laughed, showed emotions, willing to discuss books.
2. The boys were quite receptive, even laughed out loud on occasion. Were willing to discuss books.
3. Boys wanted more stories, didn't want to leave.

Boys and Girls

1. Excellent reception by boys and girls.
2. Boys laughed out loud at several stories, girls did at least once.
3. Much better reception than other group. Both boys and girls were cooperative.
4. Boys showed emotions more than the girls. Girls were shy.

Observations - Rural SchoolsBoys

1. Boys very quiet, smiled some, had little to say.
2. Boys rather quiet but very cooperative.
3. Boys cooperative, quiet.
4. Two of six boys laughed quite obviously at stories. Three showed little emotion at all. One smiled a little during stories.

Girls

1. Girls showed little reaction at all. Was almost impossible to get them to talk at all. Seemed very unhappy with school in general.
2. Girls showed more emotion.
3. Girls receptive except for one who looked very bored.
4. Girls reacted somewhat positively, smiled, but did not laugh much.

Boys and Girls

1. Little desire to discuss stories. (Boys and girls)
2. Group really controls responses. A group of six seems to work as one.

3. Girls generally reacted much more to the stories than did the boys. They laughed right out loud. Often the boys showed little or no outward emotion.
4. The girls generally were much more willing to discuss humor and literature than were the boys.
5. Complained about books available. Both boys and girls claimed only younger children's books were available.

As previously mentioned, the boys and girls were asked to write why they thought one story was funnier than the other, or why they thought them either equally funny or not funny. A perusal of the statements reveals certain remarks such as the lady falling in the pond and finding the turtle in her purse, the fact that the people had to eat their words, the way the man ate his peas, and the bear saying the opposite words, occurring again and again. It is a fact that many students wrote the reason they didn't care for The Phantom Tollbooth was that they didn't understand the story.

Some of the exact pupil comments are listed below to illustrate this point:

Number one (Henry Reed, Inc.), was funnier because the lost turtle was found jumping out of the purse when the lady fainted.

Because number one (Henry Reed Inc.) was funnier, the lady fell into the pond, that's why.

Because the fat lady fell into a pond and because they needed a truck to get her out.  
(Henry Reed, Inc.)

The first story, (Henry Reed, Inc.), was funnier because the lady fell in the pond.

The time when the lady fell in the pond.  
(Henry Reed, Inc.)

The boy kept saying the opposite thing the doctor said. (Paddington Goes to Town)

Because the bear kept on answering the word that the scientist didn't want him to. (Paddington Goes to Town)

Because you had to eat the words you said.  
(The Phantom Tollbooth)

People having to eat their words is not all that bad and I thought that was funny.  
(The Phantom Tollbooth)

Because the boy had to eat his words.  
(The Phantom Tollbooth)

When he was eating peas with both spoons.  
(The Alligator Case)

And the second one was funny because he batted the peas in his mouth and he swallowed the pork chop. (The Alligator Case)

Batting peas in your mouth is quite hard but the fish must have had some experience.  
(The Alligator Case)

I liked the fish who batted peas in his mouth with pork chops. (The Alligator Case)

A complete listing of the students written comments is contained in Appendix D.

An examination of the recorded comments of the students following the reading of the stories showed several similar points being mentioned over and over again as to what makes a story funny. The most common comments were those having to do with a physical action such as the lady



falling in the pond, somebody throwing something, clumsiness, the way the characters acted, and doing something stupid; and those things having to do with word type humor such as jokes, vocabulary words, good rhyming words, the way the characters talk, how they say it and people making wise cracks.

Samples representing these statements are summarized below:

When the lady fell in the water and they couldn't get her out.

The way the lady fell in the water.

Trying to get help, somebody throws something.

An action of some kind when someone falls or trips.

Throwing pies back and forth.

When a person does stupid things.

Jokes.

Joke after joke.

Funny jokes.

Good rhyming words.

The words.

The way it is written.

Funny words.

The way they talk.

People say ridiculous things.

People make cracks.

### Wisecracks.

It is important to note that even though most of the written and oral comments were similar in nature there were many that showed that humor is a very personal thing and that what is funny for one person may not seem funny at all to another. One girl commented, "I thought title one, (Henry Reed, Inc.), was sort of tragic when the lady fainted." Another wrote, "The frog shouldn't have caused so much confusion if it was a small one. I couldn't understand why she fainted when she was pulled out of the lily pond." A third student said she didn't like The Phantom Tollbooth because it was just about some letters. A boy wrote, "It's funny when a dumb person makes a fool of a smart person like in Paddington." The comments made by these boys and girls amazingly paralleled what research has discovered about the sense of humor, that it is a very personal trait.

Hypothesis 3: A higher percentage of sixth-grade girls than sixth-grade boys would find humor of words funnier than humor due to physical action.

According to the final percentages listed in Table 4.08, a total of 30.6% of the girls favored word humor, 36.5% action humor, 30.6% did not choose either form, while 2.3% didn't like either type. For the fellows, 35.2% selected the word humor stories, 42.6% the action, and 22.2% couldn't make a choice.

TABLE 4.08

**RAW TOTALS AND PERCENTAGES FOR  
ANSWERS TO QUESTION FOUR,**

(Which Story Did You Like Better? Check Box at the Right.)

**CHOOSING BETWEEN ACTION AND WORD HUMOR BY SEX**

Selection One - Henry Reed, Inc. - Action Humor  
 Selection Two - The Phantom Tollbooth - Word Humor  
 Selection Three - Paddington Goes to Town - Word Humor  
 Selection Four - The Alligator Case - Action Humor

(A= Action, W= Word, S= Both the Same, N= Neither)

Boys												
	Comparing Selections 1, 2				Comparing Selections 3, 4				Total Comparisons			
	A	W	S	N	A	W	S	N	A	W	S	N
Raw Scores	63	33	12	0	29	43	36	0	92	76	48	0
Percent- ages	58.3	30.6	11.1	0.0	26.9	39.8	33.3	0.0	42.6	35.2	22.2	0.0

Girls												
	Comparing Selections 1, 2				Comparing Selections 3, 4				Total Comparisons			
	A	W	S	N	A	W	S	N	A	W	S	N
Raw Scores	53	34	18	3	26	32	48	2	79	66	66	5
Percent- ages	49.1	31.5	16.6	2.8	24.1	29.6	44.4	1.9	36.5	30.6	30.6	2.3

Looking at the stories by the pairs in which they were presented, 49.1% of the girls chose the action story, Henry Reed, Inc., 31.5% the word story, The Phantom Tollbooth, 16.6% liked them, equally well, and 2.8% liked neither story. For these same two stories, 58.3% of the boys selected Henry Reed, Inc., 30.6% The Phantom Tollbooth, and 11.1% rated them the same. For the second pair of stories, 24.1% of the girls elected the action story, The Alligator Case, 29.6% the word humor tale, Paddington Goes to Town, 4.4% rated them equal, and 1.9% didn't like either one. On these two stories 26.9% of the boys marked The Alligator Case, 39.8% Paddington Goes to Town, and 33.3% found them the same.

A re-examination of the final percentages showed that even though the boys did prefer action humor more than the girls, which was expected, they also led in word humor which was unexpected.

Sample comments made by the students regarding their preferences are listed below:

### Girls

They both were funny I think, but the first one about the bear was O.K. They were both O.K.

I think they are really both funny because you find both in an unusual way. Finding a man eating peas a different way and a bear talking when he's not supposed to.

I thought both stories were funny.

I liked them both very much because of the conditions in both stories.

I liked them both the same because they were interesting, funny, amusing, and last but not least exciting.

### Boys

I think The Alligator Case was funnier because although it could not happen, you could see it in your mind.

I thought The Alligator Case was funnier because of catapulting peas.

I think that the first one, (Henry Reed, Inc.), was funnier because when she opened the bag she jumped.

The happenings were much funnier in the first one, (Henry Reed, Inc.), than the second. (The Phantom Tollbooth)

One, (Henry Reed, Inc.), was funnier than two (The Phantom Tollbooth) because I don't think two had that many funny lines.

On the six point humor rating scale for the stories, the boys rated word humor 4.11 to 4.10 for the girls. A T Test was applied to these means and no significant difference was found at the .05 level of significance. The boys rated action humor higher too, 4.20 to 4.17. A T Test was used to examine these means and again no significant difference was found at the .05 level of significance. Table 4.09 summarized the mean scores by sex.

In looking at the selections a little closer it can be seen by examining Table 4.08, that on the first word story, The Phantom Tollbooth, 31.5% of the girls preferred it compared to 30.6% of the boys. It was the scoring on the second word story, Paddington Goes to Town, that enabled the boys to overtake the girls, as 39.8% of the boys

TABLE 4.09

BOYS' AND GIRLS' MEAN SCORES FOR ANSWERS  
TO QUESTIONS FIVE AND SIX

- (5. Rate Story No. 1 As to How Funny You Thought It Was.)  
(6. Rate Story No. 2 As to How Funny You Thought It Was.)

Selection One - Henry Reed, Inc. - Action Humor  
Selection Two - The Phantom Tollbooth - Word Humor  
Selection Three - Paddington Goes to Town - Word Humor  
Selection Four - The Alligator Case - Action Humor

Scores Weighted from 1.0 - 6.0

<u>Inner-City Girls</u>		<u>Inner-City Boys</u>	
<u>Word Humor</u>	<u>Action Humor</u>	<u>Word Humor</u>	<u>Action Humor</u>
4.12	4.37	4.18	4.80
<u>Suburban Girls</u>		<u>Suburban Boys</u>	
<u>Word Humor</u>	<u>Action Humor</u>	<u>Word Humor</u>	<u>Action Humor</u>
4.04	4.08	4.28	4.24
<u>Rural Girls</u>		<u>Rural Boys</u>	
<u>Word Humor</u>	<u>Action Humor</u>	<u>Word Humor</u>	<u>Action Humor</u>
4.14	4.07	3.86	3.77
<u>Girls</u>	<u>Means</u>	<u>Boys</u>	<u>Means</u>
4.10	4.17	4.11	4.20

TABLE 4.10

## BOYS' RAW SCORE FOR ANSWERS TO QUESTION FOUR

(Which Story Did You Like Better? Check Box at the Right.)

## CHOOSING BETWEEN ACTION AND WORD HUMORS

Selection One - Henry Reed, Inc. - Action Humor  
 Selection Two - The Phantom Tollbooth - Word Humor  
 Selection Three - Paddington Goes to Town - Word Humor  
 Selection Four - The Alligator Case - Action Humor

(A= Action, W= Words, S= Both the Same, N= Neither)

Inner-City Boys												
	Comparing Selections 1, 2				Comparing Selections 3, 4				Total Comparisons			
Raw Totals	A	W	S	N	A	W	S	N	A	W	S	N
School - A	3	2	1	0	3	1	2	0	6	3	3	0
School - B	6	0	0	0	2	3	1	0	8	3	1	0
School - C	5	1	0	0	1	2	3	0	6	3	3	0
School - D	3	2	1	0	5	0	1	0	8	2	2	0
School - E	6	0	0	0	5	0	1	0	11	0	1	0
School - F	2	4	0	0	1	4	1	0	3	8	1	0
Inner-City Totals	25	9	2	0	17	10	9	0	42	19	11	0

Table 4.10 -- continued

Suburban Boys												
	Comparing Selections 1, 2				Comparing Selections 3, 4				Total Comparisons			
Raw Totals	A	W	S	N	A	W	S	N	A	W	S	N
School - A	1	4	1	0	1	5	0	0	2	9	1	0
School - B	4	2	0	0	1	2	3	0	5	4	3	0
School - C	3	1	2	0	0	3	3	0	3	4	5	0
School - D	5	0	1	0	0	4	2	0	5	4	3	0
School - E	5	1	0	0	0	6	0	0	5	7	0	0
School - F	6	0	0	0	0	2	4	0	6	2	4	0
Suburban Totals	24	8	4	0	2	22	12	0	26	30	16	0

## Rural Boys

	Comparing Selections 1, 2				Comparing Selections 3, 4				Total Comparisons			
Raw Totals	A	W	S	N	A	W	S	N	A	W	S	N
School - A	4	2	0	0	0	3	3	0	4	5	3	0
School - B	4	2	0	0	3	3	0	0	7	5	0	0
School - C	0	4	2	0	0	0	6	0	0	4	8	0
School - D	3	2	1	0	1	1	4	0	4	3	5	0
School - E	2	1	3	0	0	4	2	0	2	5	5	0
School - F	1	5	0	0	6	0	0	0	7	5	0	0
Rural Totals	14	16	6	0	10	11	15	0	24	27	21	0
Boys' (All) Totals	63	33	12	0	29	43	36	0	92	76	48	0



TABLE 4.11

**GIRLS' RAW SCORES FOR ANSWERS TO QUESTION FOUR**  
**(Which Story Did You Like Better? Check Box at the Right.)**  
**CHOOSING BETWEEN ACTION AND WORD HUMORS**

Selection One - Henry Reed, Inc. - Action Humor  
 Selection Two - The Phantom Tollbooth - Word Humor  
 Selection Three - Paddington Goes to Town - Word Humor  
 Selection Four - The Alligator Case - Action Humor

(A= Action, W= Words, S= Both the Same, N= Neither)

Inner-City Girls												
	Comparing Selections 1, 2				Comparing Selections 3, 4				Total Comparisons			
Raw Totals	A	W	S	N	A	W	S	N	A	W	S	N
School - A	4	1	1	0	0	3	3	0	4	4	4	0
School - B	0	6	0	0	0	0	6	0	0	6	6	0
School - C	6	0	0	0	0	2	4	0	6	2	4	0
School - D	5	0	1	0	2	0	4	0	7	0	5	0
School - E	5	0	0	1	1	1	4	0	6	1	4	1
School - F	2	4	0	0	3	3	0	0	5	7	0	0
Inner-City Totals	22	11	2	1	6	9	21	0	28	20	23	1

Table 4.11 -- continued

Suburban Girls												
	Comparing Selections 1, 2				Comparing Selections 3, 4				Total Comparisons			
Raw Totals	A	W	S	N	A	W	S	N	A	W	S	N
School - A	2	4	0	0	1	5	0	0	3	9	0	0
School - B	1	3	1	1	1	0	4	1	2	3	5	2
School - C	5	1	0	0	2	0	4	0	7	1	4	0
School - D	1	2	2	1	3	2	0	1	4	4	2	2
School - E	2	1	3	0	3	0	3	0	5	1	6	0
School - F	3	0	3	0	2	3	1	0	5	3	4	0
Suburban Totals	14	11	9	2	12	10	12	2	26	21	21	4

## Rural Girls

	Comparing Selections 1, 2				Comparing Selections 3, 4				Total Comparisons			
Raw Totals	A	W	S	N	A	W	S	N	A	W	S	N
School - A	5	0	1	0	0	6	0	0	5	6	1	0
School - B	4	2	0	0	2	1	3	0	6	3	3	0
School - C	5	1	0	0	0	4	2	0	5	5	2	0
School - D	2	2	2	0	4	1	1	0	6	3	3	0
School - E	1	3	2	0	1	0	5	0	2	3	7	0
School - F	0	4	2	0	1	1	4	0	1	5	6	0
Rural Totals	17	12	7	0	8	13	15	0	25	25	22	0
Girls' (All) Totals	53	34	18	3	26	32	48	2	79	66	66	5

checked word humor as opposed to only 29.6% of the girls. As previously mentioned, the "Paddington" story contained a more obvious form of word humor and was rather slapstick in nature. The girls did actually out-rate the boys on the "Tollbooth" story where a greater degree of word sophistication was needed to interpret the humor.

Nevertheless, the over-all findings regarding sex and humor ratings in this study tend to agree with the conclusions drawn by other researchers as stated in Chapter Two, that sex does not appear to be a major factor in humor preferences, with this age group at any rate. On the basis of the figures stated above then, the third hypothesis is rejected.

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, it was only one group of girls that felt the stories too easy for them, this a group of suburban girls. None of the boys made any such comments. Other groups of girls, particularly the inner-city were very responsive and outward in their reactions. Generally the boys showed fine enthusiasm, very often laughing outwardly except for the rural area boys who were very quiet and unresponsive.

Hypothesis 4: A majority of the children within each school classification; that is inner-city, suburban, and rural; exposed to the humorous stories, would recognize that they felt happy after hearing the humorous stories.

This hypothesis concerned itself with the effective

domain and how students might feel after hearing the humorous stories. It was a basic contention of this complete study that humor is therapeutic and good for people. Questions one, two, and three on the instrument used with the children attempted to measure the students' feelings after hearing the stories.

These questions stated;

1. How did you feel after hearing Henry Reed, Inc.? Check one of the boxes at the right.
2. How did you feel after hearing The Phantom Tollbooth? Check one of the boxes at the right.
3. What was there about the stories that made you check the boxes the way you did above?

The boxes had headings that listed the feelings; very happy, happy, indifferent, unhappy, and very unhappy. Weights ranging from 5.0 to 1.0 were assigned these feelings. Table 4.12 contains a summary of the scores. The results showed that 40.6% of the inner-city youth checked their feelings as very happy after hearing the stories and 37.9% happy for a positive feeling total of 78.5%. Next in line were the suburban boys and girls who scored 34.7% very happy and 40.3% happy, a total of 75.0%. Last came the rural pupils; 19.8% very happy, 46.9% happy, total 66.7%.

The mean feeling scores for the three groups of schools indicated the inner-city students rating as 4.22; the suburban, 4.06; and the rural, 3.85. It is interesting to note in Tables 4.13, 4.14, and 4.15 that only the rural

TABLE 4.12

RAW SCORES AND PERCENTS FOR ANSWERS TO  
QUESTIONS ONE AND TWO

- (1. How Did You Feel After Hearing Titles 1, 3?)  
 (2. How Did You Feel After Hearing Titles 2, 4?)

Selection One - Henry Reed, Inc. - Action Humor  
 Selection Two - The Phantom Tollbooth - Word Humor  
 Selection Three - Paddington Goes to Town - Word Humor  
 Selection Four - The Alligator Case - Action Humor

V.H.= Very Happy; H.= Happy; I.= Indifferent; U.= Unhappy; V.U.= Very Unhappy																
Selections 1, 4						Selections 2, 3						All Selections				
Inner-City	V.H.	H.	I.	U.	V.U.	V.H.	H.	I.	U.	V.U.	V.H.	H.	I.	U.	V.U.	
Raw Totals (Boys)	35	25	11	0	1	24	33	9	6	0	59	58	20	6	1	
Raw Totals (Girls)	36	16	19	1	0	22	35	15	0	0	58	51	34	1	0	
Raw Totals (All)	71	41	30	1	1	46	68	24	6	0	117	109	54	7	1	
Percents (All)	49.3	28.5	20.8	0.7	0.7	31.9	47.2	16.7	4.2	0.0	40.6	37.9	18.8	2.4	0.3	
Inner-City	40.6%				37.9%				Happy				Total 79.5% Very Happy or Happy			



TABLE 4.13

**INNER-CITY MEAN SCORES FOR ANSWERS TO  
QUESTIONS ONE AND TWO**

- (1. How Did You Feel After Hearing Titles 1, 3?)  
 (Henry Reed, Inc. and Paddington Goes to Town)  
 (2. How Did You Feel After Hearing Titles 2, 4?)  
 (The Phantom Tollbooth and The Alligator Case)

(Selections 1, 4 Action Humor; Selections 2, 3 Word Humor)

Very Happy, Happy, Indifferent, Unhappy, Very Happy

Scores Weighted from 1.0 - 5.0

	Title One	Title Four	Mean 1, 4	Title Two	Title Three	Mean 2, 3	Mean All
<b>School - A</b>							
Boys	4.67	4.67	4.67	4.00	4.50	4.25	4.46
Girls	4.00	4.50	4.25	3.67	4.83	4.75	4.50
<b>School - B</b>							
Boys	3.33	4.17	3.75	2.17	4.67	3.42	3.57
Girls	3.17	4.50	3.84	4.00	4.17	4.09	3.97
<b>School - C</b>							
Boys	4.67	4.83	4.75	4.00	4.83	4.44	4.56
Girls	4.33	4.67	4.50	3.17	4.50	3.84	4.17
<b>School - D</b>							
Boys	3.50	5.00	4.25	4.17	4.17	4.17	4.21
Girls	4.67	5.00	4.84	4.17	4.83	4.50	4.67
<b>School - E</b>							
Boys	4.83	4.50	4.67	3.17	4.17	3.67	4.17
Girls	4.50	5.00	4.75	3.33	4.83	4.08	4.42
<b>School - F</b>							
Boys	3.50	3.83	3.67	4.67	4.67	4.67	4.17
Girls	3.50	3.50	3.50	4.33	4.17	4.25	3.88
<b>Total Means</b>							
(Boys)	4.08	4.50	4.29	3.70	4.50	4.10	4.20
(Girls)	4.03	4.53	4.28	3.78	4.56	4.17	4.23
<b>Total Means (All)</b>	4.06	4.52	4.29	3.74	4.53	4.14	4.22

TABLE 4.14

SUBURBAN MEAN SCORES FOR ANSWERS TO  
QUESTIONS ONE AND TWO

- (1. How Did You Feel After Hearing Titles 1, 3?)  
(Henry Reed, Inc. and Paddington Goes to Town)  
(2. How Did You Feel After Hearing Titles 2, 4?)  
(The Phantom Tollbooth and The Alligator Case)

(Selections 1, 4 Action Humor; Selections 2, 3 Word Humor)

Very Happy, Happy, Indifferent, Unhappy, Very Happy

Scores Weighted from 1.0 - 5.0

	Title One	Title Four	Mean 1, 4	Title Two	Title Three	Mean 2, 3	Mean All
<u>School - A</u>							
Boys	3.00	3.50	3.25	3.00	4.67	3.89	3.57
Girls	3.83	4.33	4.58	4.17	5.00	4.34	4.46
<u>School - B</u>							
Boys	4.17	4.17	4.17	3.17	4.17	3.67	3.92
Girls	3.67	4.67	4.17	3.67	4.67	4.17	4.17
<u>School - C</u>							
Boys	3.83	4.83	4.33	3.83	5.00	4.42	4.38
Girls	3.33	4.50	3.92	3.00	4.17	3.59	3.76
<u>School - D</u>							
Boys	4.00	4.00	4.00	3.50	4.83	4.17	4.09
Girls	3.00	4.17	3.59	2.67	4.17	3.42	3.51
<u>School - E</u>							
Boys	5.00	3.67	4.34	4.50	5.00	4.75	4.55
Girls	4.00	5.00	4.50	3.83	4.67	4.25	4.38
<u>School - F</u>							
Boys	4.50	4.83	4.67	3.50	5.00	4.25	4.46
Girls	3.83	3.50	3.67	3.67	3.50	3.59	3.63
Total Means (Boys)	4.08	4.17	4.13	3.58	4.78	4.18	4.16
(Girls)	3.61	4.36	3.99	3.50	4.36	3.93	3.96
Total Means (All)	3.85	4.27	4.06	3.54	4.57	4.06	4.06



TABLE 4.15

RURAL MEAN SCORES FOR ANSWERS TO  
QUESTIONS ONE AND TWO

- (1. How Did You Feel After Hearing Titles 1, 3?)  
(Henry Reed, Inc. and Paddington Goes to Town)  
 (2. How Did You Feel After Hearing Titles 2, 4?)  
(The Phantom Tollbooth and The Alligator Case)

(Selections 1, 4 Action Humor; Selections 2, 3 Word Humor)

Very Happy, Happy, Indifferent, Unhappy, Very Happy

Scores Weighted from 1.0 - 5.0

	Title One	Title Four	Mean 1, 4	Title Two	Title Three	Mean 2, 3	Mean All
<b>School - A</b>							
Boys	3.50	3.67	3.59	3.33	4.17	3.75	3.67
Girls	4.17	3.33	3.75	3.33	4.67	4.00	3.88
<b>School - B</b>							
Boys	3.67	3.67	3.67	3.33	4.17	3.75	3.71
Girls	3.00	4.83	3.92	3.00	4.00	3.50	3.71
<b>School - C</b>							
Boys	3.00	4.50	3.75	3.50	4.50	4.00	3.88
Girls	4.00	3.00	3.50	3.00	4.00	3.50	3.50
<b>School - D</b>							
Boys	3.67	4.33	4.00	3.33	4.33	3.83	3.92
Girls	3.83	3.83	3.83	3.83	4.17	4.00	3.92
<b>School - E</b>							
Boys	3.33	3.50	3.42	3.17	4.50	3.84	3.63
Girls	4.17	4.50	4.34	4.33	4.50	4.42	4.38
<b>School - F</b>							
Boys	3.67	5.00	4.34	4.33	4.00	4.17	4.26
Girls	3.00	4.17	3.59	3.50	4.17	3.84	3.72
<b>Total Means</b>							
(Boys)	3.47	4.11	3.79	3.50	4.28	3.89	3.84
(Girls)	3.70	3.94	3.82	3.50	4.25	3.88	3.85
<b>Total Means (All)</b>	3.59	4.03	3.81	3.50	4.27	3.89	3.85

pupils gave higher good feeling ratings for the word stories over the action stories. The rural boys scored word humor feelings 3.89 to 3.79 for the action, the girls favored the word type 3.88 to 3.82. Both inner-city boys and girls scored their feelings from the action stories higher than from the word stories, the boys 4.29 to 4.10 and the girls 4.28 to 4.17. The suburban scores were split, the boys rating word humor 4.18 to 4.13 for action, the girls 3.99 for action to 3.93 for word. These results generally complement what was discussed earlier in this chapter.

In addition to checking a "feeling box" the students were asked to write in their own words what made them feel the way they did. Appendix D is a compilation of these statements. Many of the written replies were similar to those given for rating the humor of the selections. Other comments were directly related to feelings as some of the following illustrate:

Well, I checked the way I felt because I couldn't tell whether I was happy or not so I put indifferent.

It made me feel unhappy because all the people had a big dinner but one man had to eat his words or nothing. (Again Tellbooth story was not truly understood.)

In the first story I marked happy because they found the turtle.

It is hard to eat square feed.

The stories were kind of funny and brightened up the day a little.

The story number two had a happy ending.

The stories were funny and made the day brighter.

The second story, (Tollbooth), I really didn't understand.

I felt very happy because it isn't everyday you see a man eat like that.

It wasn't really the stories. I was feeling "indifferent" when they were played.

During the taped discussion period the youngsters were asked how they thought the reading of humorous books affected the way people felt after reading them. A few of the rather revealing comments are reproduced here:

We had a teacher last year who made jokes. We learned a lot.

You need funny books because all your life will be settling down.

Puts you in a better mood.

After reading a sad book you feel sad.

Some people would feel good, some wouldn't.

They make you feel better.

To relax, read humorous books.

The figures cited in Tables 4.12, 4.13, 4.14, and 4.15 led to the acceptance of the fourth hypothesis.

Part II. Hypothesis Pertaining to Analysis of the Humorous Children's Literature.

A higher percentage of the humorous books reviewed for the investigation would be based on humor of action rather than humor developed by words.

The final hypothesis had to do with the 193 humorous books identified, then read for the study. It was assumed that this investigator was competent enough to distinguish whether the type of humor employed in the books read was based upon the words used by the characters in the stories or upon some physical action such as stupid blunders, incongruities, general confusion, tumbling about, and the like. It was contended that most of the humorous books written for middle grade children would be based on action type humor. This was expected since it is taken for granted that books are generally written to appeal to various age classifications. Child psychologists have stated that humor does go through developmental stages in a child's growth, and that humor of a verbal character isn't really appreciated by a youngster until he is at least nine years old. So the books should reflect this knowledge. The figures enumerated in Table 4.16 and graphed in Figure 1, definitely affirmed the hypothesis. Of the 174 books read that were considered by the reviewer to truly contain a good degree of humor, it was found that 78.7% were basically

TABLE 4.16

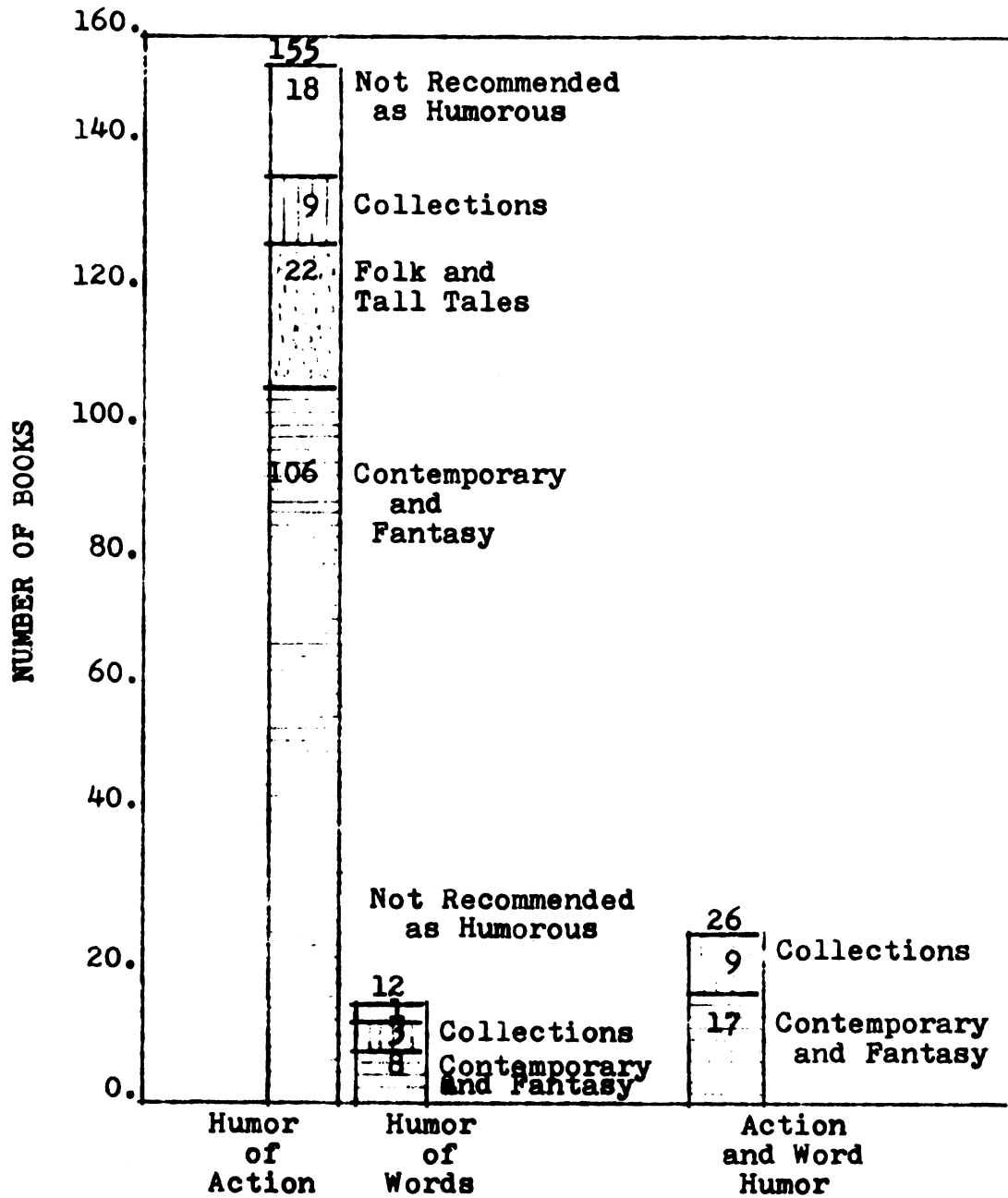
RAW TOTALS AND PERCENTAGES  
OF BOOKS ACCORDING TO THE  
TYPE OF HUMOR PRESENT

Raw Totals			
Type of Humorous Books	Basically Humor of Action	Basically Humor of Words	Elements of Action and Word Humor
Contemporary and Fantasy	106	8	17
Folk Tales, Tall Tales	22	0	0
Collections	9	3	9
Not Recommended	18	1	0
Totals	155	12	26

Percentages for Recommended Books			
Type of Humorous Books	Basically Humor of Action	Basically Humor of Words	Elements of Action and Word Humor
Contemporary Fantasy	54.9	4.1	8.8
Folk Tales, Tall Tales	11.4	0.0	0.0
Collections	4.7	1.6	4.7
Not Recommended	9.3	0.5	0.0
Totals	80.3	6.2	13.5

FIGURE 1

RAW TOTALS OF HUMOROUS BOOKS  
ACCORDING TO THE TYPE OF HUMOR PRESENT



action humor stories, 6.3% were word humor, and 15.0% contained elements of both kinds of humor. The raw totals in Table 4.16 show that 137 books were read that were basically action humor types. Examples of this type included Alphense - That Bearded One by Natalie Savage Carlson, the hilarious story of a bear that is passed off as a human by his master and Pippi Goes on Board by Astrid Lindgren which is the wild tale of an orphan girl who always does just as she pleases. Pippi's wild adventures include her going on a crazy shopping spree during which she buys all the toys in a toy store.

Table 4.16 shows a total of eleven books considered basically word humor stories. A fine example of this category is The Phantom Tollbooth by Norton Juster which is rich in its use of words to amuse. Samples of word humor employed are a "light" meal consisting of shafts of colored light and a "square" meal composed of steaming squares of all sizes and colors. Another is The Mysterious Disappearance of Leon, (I Mean Noel), by Ellen Raskin, a book that makes an innovative use of words to both amuse and mystify. In this story the simple word grape takes on a vulgar meaning as the voice cried, "Grape, Mrs. Carillon. There should be a law." "What does grape mean?" her companion asked. "You can imagine what such filth means. It's obscene, that's what it is, foul and obscene."

Twenty-six of the books contained ample elements of both action and word humor. In this category were books such as Paddington Goes to Town by Michael Bond which contains lots of tumbling about and a great play on words through the use of antonyms and The Limerick Trick by Scott Corbett which uses rhyming words for fun along with bumbling antics. Young Kirby Maxwell, hero of the story, got into trouble with his tough friend Bumps when he answered Bumps's question about a hammer by saying, "Try using your bean instead! It's big and it's thick, and it's hard as a brick, so bang in the nails with your head."

In addition to the books mentioned that were based on a single plot with sustained humor, a number of humorous collections were read too. Of these, nine were basically composed of action humor, three word humor, and nine contained elements of both types. The action type included The World's Most Truthful Man by Harold W. Felton, a collection of wild tales actually told to Felton by Ed Grant. In one tale Ed caught a tame trout that followed him around like a dog. It got so used to living out of water that one day it fell into a pond and drowned. Once the Hodja by Alice Geer Kelsey is a set of Turkish tall tales about the Hodja, (teacher, master, or elder), and his many escapades. The Hodja has many escapades such as the time he shot his own coat with an arrow because he thought it a robber, and his caring for a pumpkin which he thought



to be a donkey egg. Only three collections were identified that were based mainly on word humor. One of these was Katherine Love's A Little Laughter, which is a book of humorous poems including some by Ogden Nash and Eleanor Farjeon. A sample poem was "A Sleeper from the Amazon," which goes,

A sleeper from the Amazon  
Put nighties of his gra'mazon  
The reason, that  
He was too fat  
To get his own pajamazon.

Those collections containing both types of humor were nine in number. An example of this category was Zomo the Rabbit by Hugh Sturton, a number of comical African folk tales centered around Zomo the Rabbit and how he tricked his fellow animals. Zomo arranged a hilarious tug-of-war between the hippos and the elephants, and the best part was that they didn't really know what they were doing. Helen Smith's Laughing Matter has stories with lots of action and others that depend upon the wording for their jollity. One type of humor in this book is illustrated by the following limerick,

A diner while dining at Crewe  
Found quite a large mouse in his stew.  
Said the waiter, Don't shout  
And wave it about,  
Or the rest will be wanting one too!

It should be added at this point that the number of humorous books available for middle graders is small indeed

in comparison to books of other types. During the discussion period, the boys and girls were asked if they read many humorous books and if many were available. The answers from the students in all the school classifications were practically the same. Over and over again they claimed that few humorous books were available and those that were, were designed for primary children. A few of the sharpest replies made by the children are listed below:

There aren't many humorous books. It's not the style. Publishers, all they make is sex books and books like that. That's the style today.

Can't find many books. Would like to see more funny ones.

Can't find too many. About the only funny books are the comics.

Should be more books in our language.

Anything that's funny has maybe twenty-six pages and words about that big. (Used fingers to illustrate very small words.)

The humorous books available for the middle grade child are generally based on a physical action of some kind. Hypothesis number five, "A higher percentage of the humorous books reviewed for the investigation would be based on humor of action rather than humor developed by words," was therefore accepted as stated.

### Summary Statements

Based upon the information obtained from the written instruments used with the subjects in this study and from their oral comments made to the investigator, the following statements have been formulated:

1. In this investigation the inner-city youth showed the most over-all appreciation and enthusiasm for humor, and the rural youth the least.

2. In this study the inner-city youth showed the strongest liking for physical type humor, the least for word humor, while the rural youth showed a slight preference for word humor over the suburban students.

3. Sex did not appear to be a factor in humor preferences.

4. The hearing of humorous stories did have a tendency to make the majority of the youngsters feel good.

5. Most of the humorous books reviewed were indeed based upon physical action as opposed to word humor.

### Chapter Summary

The results obtained from working with 216 youngsters and reading 193 humorous books were applied to the five hypotheses formulated for this study. The results as stated in this chapter are summarized below:

1. The first hypothesis that the sixth-grade children from rural type schools would favor word type

humor over action humor by a higher percentage than the inner-city youth was accepted. The rural youth showed a 36.1% preference for word humor compared to 27.1% of the inner-city boys and girls choosing word humor.

2. The second hypothesis said in effect that a higher percentage of suburban youth than rural youth would choose word humor. This was rejected as actually 36.1% of the rural youth selected word humor as compared to 35.4% of the suburban pupils.

3. Hypothesis number three projected a greater percentage of girls than boys choosing word humor. This was rejected since 35.2% of the boys checked word humor, 30.6% of the girls word humor.

4. The fourth hypothesis made the statement that a majority of the students in each school classification would indicate that they felt happy after hearing the selections. This proved to be the case as 78.5% of the inner-city, 78.0% of the suburban, and 66.7% of the rural youth signified that they had some kind of happy feeling after hearing the stories.

5. The final hypothesis was concerned with the books themselves and specified that a higher percentage of the books read for the investigation would be based on physical type humor rather than action humor. Of the 174 books included, it was determined that 78.7% were basically the physical action type story.

Of the five hypotheses formulated, three were accepted and two rejected.

The final chapter of this study includes a summary of the dissertation as a whole, implications of the results, conclusions drawn from the findings, and suggestions for further research.

## Chapter Five

### Summary and Conclusions

This final chapter contains a summary of the study, implications of the results, conclusions drawn from the findings, and suggestions for further research.

#### Summary

Chapter One contained sections on the significance of the study, definitions of humor, the need for humor and for this study, the purpose of the investigation, and assumptions formulated.

The purpose of the study was two-fold. First, it was an examination of the reactions of 216 sixth grade children to two general types of humor found in fiction for middle grade children. The two types of humor involved were humor based on physical actions of some sort and humor generated by verbal statements. Second, it was a library study of 193 humorous books that were read, with a classification of the humor found in them along with annotations of the books considered most truly humorous. These books had to be quality literature to be considered. Only a few offensive ones were discovered.

Five hypotheses were tested. Four of them had to do with children's humor preferences and feelings upon hearing funny stories. These hypotheses stated in essence that more rural school children would prefer humor based on words than would inner-city youths, that the suburban youths would prefer humor of words more than the rural children, that girls more than boys would elect humor of words over action humor, and that a majority of all the children would feel happy after hearing the narratives. The fifth hypothesis had to do with the second nature of the study. It contended that a majority of the 193 humorous books read by the investigator would be based upon action humor rather than verbal humor.

Chapter Two contained a review of the pertinent research including psychological aspects of humor development in children, responses of children to literature and what makes the literature itself humorous, and an analysis of humor in children's books.

Chapter Three explained the design of the study. Part I was an investigation of 216 sixth-grade children's reactions to two types of humorous literature. Part II was a review of 193 children's books identified as humorous. The sample of 216 youngsters mentioned earlier in this summary was fully described. The humorous selections used with the boys and girls were verified as to their validity by a team of

children's literature experts, then recorded on cassette tape and played for the groups of children. Four selections were used in the final study, two representing action humor, Henry Reed, Inc., and The Alligator Case; two standing for word humor, The Phantom Tollbooth and Paddington Goes to Town. Six students were worked with at a time. The six were of the same sex.

Chapter Four summarized the results obtained from working with the 216 sixth grade students and from reading the 193 humorous books.

Based upon the data obtained from working with these youngsters and their reactions to four humorous selections in both a verbal and written manner, and from the information received by researching, then searching for, then reading 193 humorous children's books, the following general findings have been formulated to conclude this summary:

1. The majority of the children in this study did feel happy after hearing the humorous selections played for them. The final percentages showed 78.5% of the inner-city students, 75.0% of the suburban youth, and 66.7% of the rural pupils expressing feelings of either very happy or happy.
2. Humor is a very individual trait. What one person finds to be funny, another may view as tragic.
3. Sex was not a major factor in the type of humor preferred. The boys totaled 42.6% for action humor to 36.5% for the girls but the boys also led in word humor preference, 35.2% to 30.6%.



4. There are not enough humorous books available for the average sixth-grade child.
5. Children will read humorous books if more are available for them according to their oral comments.
6. Among the humorous books for middle grade students reviewed for this study, the majority are based on a physical action type humor. Out of 174 books recommended as humorous 78.7% were basically action type humor oriented.
7. The way the stories themselves are written is a determining factor in whether youngsters prefer humor of a verbal nature or of action characteristics. If the language used is easy to understand and consists of simple techniques such as use of opposite meanings, children tend to enjoy the words employed. Those stories that require high level interpretive skills are not as popular. Word humor of a more subtle nature then is not too easily comprehended by the average sixth-grader.
8. The inner-city youth in the study favored action humor more than the rural and suburban students, but the rural youth showed a higher percentage for word humor than did the inner-city and suburban pupils. The percentages for action humor were inner-city 48.6%, suburban 36.1%, and rural 34.0%. For word humor the rural youth totaled 36.1%, suburban 35.4%, and inner-city 27.1%.

### Implications of Results

Of the five hypotheses formulated, three were accepted and two were rejected. The hypothesis that the sixth-grade children from the rural type schools would favor word humor over action humor by a higher percentage

than would the inner-city sixth-grade was accepted. The ruralites showed a 36.1% preference for word humor compared to 27.1% for the inner-city students.

The second hypothesis that a higher percentage of suburban youth than rural youngsters would choose word humor did not hold up. Actually 36.1% of the rural pupils went for word humor, while 35.4% of the suburbanites preferred word humor. The inner-city youth showed a great liking for action type humor, 48.0% of them choosing action humor compared to 36.1% of the suburban and 34.0% of the rural youngsters. The fact that these inner-city children could be somewhat deficient in so-called "Standard English" could account for their greater interest in action humor which includes a great deal of tumbling and falling about which would be easy for any youngster to relate to, no matter what his language background. The relief of the tensions of inner-city life can probably best be eased through an action type humor as opposed to word humor.

The word humor stories fared the best with the rural children of the three general school types. Regarding word humor, research says that children don't really understand word type humor until around the age of nine. Most of the students in this study were eleven or twelve and maybe in the early stages of appreciation of verbal humor. It is interesting to note that the rural students, who

chose word humor to a greater percentage than did the inner-city and suburban youth, also were the students with the oldest mean age. In attempting to further explain the rural children's higher ratings for word humor in this investigation it should be remembered that the research cited in Chapter Two regarding rural families and their language problems concerned rural children that were probably much more isolated than the rural children in this study. Even though the boys and girls in this investigation did indeed attend schools that in all ways would need to be classified rural, they were not that far from the city of Lansing, Michigan that they couldn't drive there in an evening or on a weekend. So they could easily pick up ways of living more city-like such as easier access to books, entertainment, stores, and the like. Then too, the occupations of the parents were not identified in this study, and many parents could be commuters from the city area even though it would be a long daily drive. This would tend to make the rural child's life style very similar to that of the suburban youngster. All these factors would tend to even out differences and may have accounted for the closeness of the percentage choices of these two groups of students.

The stories chosen to represent action humor and particularly word humor undoubtedly played a large part in

the final figures too. The first word selection, The Phantom Tollbooth, which was loaded with word connotations, didn't fare as well in the suburban school as the other word selection, Paddington Goes to Town, which relied on a more obvious form of word humor, the confusing of literal and figurative language. The inner-city youngsters gave both word stories rather low scores, 27.8% chose The Phantom Tollbooth, 26.4% Paddington Goes to Town. The differences in the suburban schools was 26.4% for the "Tollbooth," 44.5% for "Paddington"; and in the rural schools, 38.9% for the "Tollbooth" to 33.3% for "Paddington." Only the rural schools scored relatively high on the "Tollbooth" story. If only the "Paddington" story had been used the suburban schools would have shown up much better on word humor than the rural types. So the type of story used controls to a great degree the responses received.

The number of years that the students were in their respective schools could be a major factor in choice too. It is interesting to note that the inner-city pupils were most truly representative of their class, their average number of years in the inner-city schools totaling 5.3. The suburban average was 3.8 years and the rural was 4.2 years. In this respect too, the rural and suburban characteristics were close.

Hypothesis number three projected a greater percentage of girls than boys choosing word humor. This was

rejected since 35.2% of the boys checked word humor, only 30.6% of the girls. The boys also showed a lead in their choice of action humor with 42.6% of the boys selecting it over 36.5% of the girls. The girls showed a distinct edge over the boys in the category that showed no preference for either kind of humor. The girls scored 30.6% to 22.2% for the boys in the no choice column. It appears that the choice of humor was not as important to the girls as it was to the boys.

The fourth hypothesis made the statement that a majority of the students in each school classification would indicate that they felt happy after hearing the selections. This proved to be the case as 78.5% of the inner-city, 75.0% of the suburban, and 66.7% of the rural youth signified that they had had some kind of happy feeling after hearing the stories. These findings then agree with psychological statements quoted earlier, that humor can make you feel better, even if for only a short time. An interesting sidelight from these results is the fact that the rural schools again scored the lowest, a fact that did not really surprise the investigator based upon his observations of the groups as mentioned earlier. Without any doubt, in general, the inner-city youth showed the most interest and enthusiasm during the testing situations, the rural children the least. Could it be that the inner-city children with their few material advantages are not as unhappy and sullen as the

picture has often been painted? Might the fact that the rural and suburban children have so much equipment and such fine facilities make them more unappreciative of such a thing as listening to a story? These findings all appear to be related to that larger problem facing America today, the problem of value priorities.

The final hypothesis was concerned with the books themselves and specified that a higher percentage of the books read for the investigation would be based on physical type humor rather than action humor. Of the 174 truly humorous books, it was determined that 78.7% were basically the physical action type story. Another 15.0% contained elements of both types of humor, while only 6.3% were the word type stories. Clearly the fifth hypothesis was verified. It seems very clear that on the basis of these figures more books with word type humor incorporated in them could be written for young people. If we expect boys and girls of this age to appreciate this type of humor they need to be exposed to it more often than they have been.

### Conclusions

In the first chapter the feeling was expressed that humor is important as an emotion balancer in the every day trials of living. It was felt further that humorous literature was a way to provide the child with a way to obtain release from the tensions that often beset him. This study

in its way did show that children can be made to feel good by hearing good funny stories. It was not only the way they checked their feelings on the written instrument but the way they reacted physically to the stories that illustrated this fact. So many laughed out loud and others grinned from ear to ear. Not all the children reacted this way of course because as it has been pointed out humor is a very personal thing and it is not natural to expect everyone to find amusement in the same things. It is a probable fact that some of the students, who did not find the stories particularly amusing, were as some of the written replies indicated, intellectually and/or emotionally above the level of the stories used. In all likelihood amusing stories of a more advanced nature could make these students feel good too. In dealing with human emotions one needs to remember also that not everyone always feels good all the time. We have our emotional ups and downs and certainly this would affect children's reactions to humorous stories at any given time.

Sex did not play a major part in the children's reactions to the stories. Some girls found humor of words more interesting than boys and vice versa. The same held true for action humor. This observation is not surprising

and agrees with the findings of Monson<sup>1</sup> and Landau.<sup>2</sup> This is probably a good sign today in our drive for equality among the sexes.

A point of great significance for those who work with children is the knowledge of the paucity of humorous books for children in the middle grade age range. The boys and girls gave every indication to the researcher that they would read funny books if they could find any. Maybe it is time the publishers and authors took note of this fact and printed more books of this nature. This means that the books should be written to appeal to the nine, ten, and eleven year old. This implies that the language should be suitable for the age of this child and should not be written too simply, with "little baby words" as one of the pupils in the study put it. Then too, by publishing more books that use the middle grade child's language maybe humor based upon words could be introduced a little more to the child to offset the lop-sided balance given at present to humor based upon physical action.

---

<sup>1</sup>Dianne Monson, "Children's Responses to Humorous Situations in Literature," (Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, University of Minnesota, 1966), pp. 139-153.

<sup>2</sup>Elliott C. Landau, "The Relationship Between Social Class and What Sixth Grade Children Say is Funny in Selected Excerpts from Children's Literature," (Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, New York University, 1955), pp. 192, 193.



As far as the reaction to the two types of humor used in the study by school class is concerned, it was found that the inner-city youth reacted least favorably to word-type humor. This does not by any means indicate that these children are word-deficient compared with the students in the more affluent and modern suburban and rural areas. In fact, it was a definite observation of this investigator that the inner-city youth were most proficient in oral language usage. These were the children most willing to talk and most willing to write about the stories they had heard. What it does mean is that more books, humorous books included of course, need to be written in the language style of these boys and girls.

It is time then to advocate more humorous books for children, books written at their language levels, books for both sexes, so that all those who read them can be made to feel a little better as a result of having met them.

If this study were to be replicated this investigator would consider the following changes:

First, the scope of this study was rather large. It probably would have been more advantageous to concentrate either on children's reactions to humorous selections or upon the books themselves. It was difficult doing justice to both. The children's responses might have been more finely categorized into the elements of humor that seemed to appeal most or least to them for analyzation purposes.

Finer elements could include absurdity, whimsy, and satire. The books themselves could have been examined for the same types of sub-humor just mentioned, then totaled to see which types of humor were most and least prevalent in children's literature.

Second, the student subjects could possibly have been more advantageously selected. By this it is meant that student selection by parental occupation may have given more insight into the results as was done in the work by Landau.<sup>3</sup>

Third, an administration of an intelligence test or reading achievement or language power test to all the participants might have added pertinent data. In addition, if standardized reading scores, particularly the vocabulary sections, had been available, they could have been of use in evaluating the children's reactions to the word humor stories.

Fourth, in selecting rural type students for study it would probably be better to go to more isolated areas, far enough away from large population centers, so that the subjects would not be tainted with suburbanitis.

Fifth, the instrument used to test the children's responses could be retested, then refined so as to be made more definitive of what it asks of the children. It was

---

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., pp. 192, 193.

felt that the dichotomy between the humor selection and feeling questions used in this study was not as clearly drawn as it should have been.

### Implications for Further Research

There is a great deal of room for more research in the field of humorous literature for children and their reactions to it. Some suggestions for further research follow.

1. There is room for examination with children of the many sub-divisions of the broad humor categories used in this study. For example, children's reactions to absurdity and satire, or slapstick and whimsy could be measured and compared.

2. Work could be done similar to what was done in this study with both younger and older students, that is primary and junior high age pupils.

3. A long range study could be set up to follow a group of youngsters over a period of years to see how humor interests possibly change with time.

4. A selected group of students could be chosen to read two or three complete books over a certain time period to obtain their reactions to the humor contained in the entire stories.

5. A study could be developed in which children's reactions to humorous selections as opposed to sports

stories or mysteries or some other type of fiction could be measured and compared.

6. A historical study could prove revealing in which the type of humor present in children's books in the 1920's and 1930's could be studied, then compared with the type of humor present in current children's books.

7. A comparison of children's reactions to fictional humor stories as opposed to non-fiction books such as science or social studies books could give insights into youngsters' reading choices and feelings about what they like.

8. Humorous selections could be read to youngsters which they would rate. A second instrument would ask them to rate current popular television comedies. It could be of value to see how children's humorous books rate with television humor in the eyes of children.

9. A study that investigated children's humor interests in relation to their standardized scores on a reliable and valid reading test would make a good research project.

10. There has been much disagreement about the relationship between intelligence and a sense of humor. A careful study in which accurate intelligence information was obtained, then studied in relation to youngsters' reactions to humorous stories might shed some light on the problem.

11. Several humorous stories could be identified, recorded, then presented to a carefully controlled and selected population for their listening. These same stories would then be presented in print to another group of youngsters as similar in characteristics to the first as possible for their reading. The question as to whether reading or listening to humorous selections makes a significant difference might be answered.

12. Groups of youngsters from different parts of the country could be used to see if humor preferences vary greatly from one section of the country to another, such as in a small midwest town and a large city in the South.

13. A library study, comparing the number of recommended children's books printed in the last ten years in a field such as adventure or mystery as compared to humor, would give indications as what is really available for boys and girls to read.

14. Children's emotional reactions to humorous stories might be checked in comparison to their reaction to unhappy or frightening stories. The results obtained could prove of value to anyone interested in the mental health of children.

In conclusion, there is need for further research in the area of humorous literature. Anything that is so much a part of a child's life should not be dismissed

lightly. Let's hope that more can be discovered so that the people who publish the books in this country will realize that kids do need books that help to make them grin, smile, and laugh out loud.

This investigation began with a quotation about humor. It appropriately ends with two quotes about laughter.

The man who cannot laugh is  
not only fit for treasons, stratagems,  
and spoils, but his whole life is already  
a treason and a stratagem.

Carlyle

Man alone suffers so excruciatingly  
in the world that he was compelled  
to invent laughter.

Nietzsche - The Will to Power

## **APPENDICES**

## APPENDIX A

### Copies of Selections Recorded for Pupil Listening

Henry Reed, Inc.  
PP. 128-131

"Hey, the littlest camellia is gone," Midge said. I looked, and sure enough, there were only five turtles in the pen. Since we had sold three, there should have been six. We examined the pen carefully but there was no hole where that turtle could have possibly slipped out.

"Do you suppose somebody could have been here and have stolen it?" I asked.

"Maybe we left it over at my house," Midge said. "Did you count them?"

I hadn't counted them. I had just picked them up and put them in the basket. We decided that it was probably in Mrs. Glass's garden someplace, so went over to look for it. As we rounded the corner of the house we saw that the garden club was still there. A woman in a blue flowered dress and a big straw hat with grapes on top of it was talking about foundation planting. As we turned around to leave she finished her speech and everyone clapped. Then they all started talking at once, and some got up to congratulate the speaker.

"I'm going to slip down and see if I can find that turtle," Midge said. "I don't trust that garden club."

"They wouldn't steal a turtle."

"No, but they'd step on it. He's such a little tiny turtle, and some of those garden-club members are just plain big, and most of them have big feet."

I stayed where I was and she slipped down, jumped over the wall, and began looking for the turtle. Everybody was talking so no one paid any attention.

I didn't really see all that happened, but one woman, who was undoubtedly one of those that Midge meant when she said that some of the members were awfully big, got up from her chair and picked up a big black leather bag that had been lying on the ground beside her. It was as big as a small suitcase but it had one of those straps that



you hang over the shoulder and was really a purse, I guess. Holding the bag by its strap, she moved over several feet to talk to a woman who was standing by the lily pond. She raised her bag, sort of cradling it in her left arm, and then bent her head and began poking in the bag with her right hand. It must have been open already and all she had to do was shove the flap back. Suddenly she let out a horrible shriek. She dropped the purse, jumped backward about three steps, and fell into the lily pond.

Everyone was too surprised to do anything. Meanwhile this poor woman was floundering on her back in the lily pond. There was nothing for her to grab and the sides of the pond were sloped so she couldn't roll over very easily. Besides, she was too fat to do much of anything for herself. No one seemed to know what to do or how to get her out of there. The only thing I could think of was to call a tow truck and I doubt if they would have liked that suggestion. I stayed where I was and laughed until my sides ached.

Mrs. Glass was the hostess and so she had to do something. Finally she did the only thing possible. She waded right out into the middle of the lily pond and grabbed the woman's left arm. Another woman was able to stand on the edge of the pool and take the other arm. They hauled, lifted, and puffed, and finally they hoisted her up out of there.

That woman certainly was a sorry-looking mess. There was water dripping from her hair, and her soaking-wet dress stuck to her like the skin of a sausage. Somehow or other, her hat had managed to stay on her head through it all. It was a little straw hat with a lot of flowers on it. These sort of hung down over the edge of the hat like the strings of a mop. Water dripped off of them down onto her shoulders and back. Huffing and puffing, she walked forward about eight or ten steps, and then suddenly she fainted. Mrs. Glass and the other women tried to hold her up for a minute and finally gave up. They lowered her onto the grass and stood looking at her, huffing and puffing themselves. Mrs. Glass is a tiny little woman and I can see why she'd be tired. Someone said something about a doctor and one of the women started toward the house. Just then Midge joined me.

"I got the turtle," she announced.

"Did you ever see such a ruckus?" I asked. Even though the woman had fainted I couldn't help laughing.

Midge grinned. "It would be a lot funnier if she hadn't splashed half of my goldfish out of that lily pond. Now I know what causes tidal waves."

"What started it all?" I asked.

"Let's take this turtle over to the barn and I'll tell you," Midge answered.

"Let's wait and see if this woman comes to."  
Midge shook her head. "Let's get away while the getting's good."

We walked across the street and put the turtle in the pen. "The reason I didn't want to stay any longer," Midge said, "was the turtle was what started it all. It was in her pocketbook."

### The Alligator Case

PP. 32-37

I am a detective, and I cannot forgive myself.

Mr. Fish first ordered me to remove all knives and forks and glassware, and to leave only two teaspoons on his table. He thus at the start captured my attention.

I blush at the memory of it all.

He next shouted "WAITER!" so loudly all conversation ceased.

A waiter rushed to his table.

"Yes, sir, would you prefer the shrimp cocktail or the fresh fruit cup?"

"Skip it!" bellowed Mr. Fish.

"Yes, sir. Now then, the roast beef is blood rare, or do you wish the turkey?"

"I want pork chops well-done, and bullet peas!"

"Sorry, sir..."

"And paper panties on the pork chops!"

"Sorry, sir..."

"By bullet peas, I mean green peas hard and firm that bounce!"

"Sorry, sir, but on Sundays..."

"Stop being sorry and bring me my order!"

"It will take time, it will have to be cooked to or--"

"Get out of here!"

"Yes, sir."

Needless to say, there was nervous tension in the dining room and a stunned silence broken only by the clitter-clatter of silverware and china. The uneasiness resulted in rapid eating. The Sunday feast turned into a joyless race. Most guests had finished their meals and paid their checks before Mr. Fish was served; but they sat transfixed, rather afraid to stay but too afraid to leave and miss something horrible.

In came the overdone pork chops with paper panties, and the bullet peas. The waiter, shaking noticeably, placed them in front of the fat red-and-gold bassoonist.

Mr. Fish studied his plate.

He picked up a pea and rolled it between thumb and forefinger.

He smiled. "Good, good. Not bad at all."

His change of mood relaxed the charged atmosphere of the room.

Guests who had been sitting stiffly in a conscious effort to mind their own business unbent a bit and risked a peek at Mr. Fish.

Mr. Fish placed a teaspoon on each side of his plate, with its handle pointed forward. He placed a pea on the handle of the spoon near his left hand and picked up a pork chop with his right by its paper panty.

He thumped down with his left fist on the bowl of the spoon, catapulting the bullet pea high in the air.

As the pea passed his enormous open mouth he batted it in with his overdone pork chop.

A small boy in the room, overwhelmed with boorish joy at this terrible display of table manners, stood up and let escape a piercing "HOORAY!" He received a stinging slap from his mother for his efforts.

Seemingly unaware of more and more eyes staring bluntly at him, Mr. Fish repeated the feat, then did it again, and again, and again.

He never missed.

Placing a pea on the handle of each teaspoon, thumping the peas up close to the ceiling, quickly picking up a pork chop in each hand, he batted two peas into his mouth!

He smiled to himself at the success of the double action, smacked his lips, then followed up with an encore.

Guests and waiters, at first cowed and apart, slowly grouped around his table, mouths open in utter disbelief, and looking oddly as though they too hoped to catch a batted bullet pea -- a foul ball off the pork-chop handle.

But he never missed.

As the peas vanished two by two he made the trick still harder by taking a bite of pork chop between hits, shrinking his bats.

And he never missed.

The Phantom Tollbooth  
PP. 76-80

"If you please," said Milo, "my name is Milo and this is Tock. Thank you very much for inviting us to your banquet, and I think your palace is beautiful."

"Exquisite," corrected the duke.

"Lovely," counseled the minister.

"Handsome," recommended the count.

"Pretty," hinted the Earl.

"Charming," submitted the undersecretary.

"SILENCE," suggested the king. "Now, young man, what can you do to entertain us? Sing songs? Tell stories? Compose sonnets? Juggle plates? Do tumbling tricks? Which is it?"

"I can't do any of those things," admitted Milo.

"What an ordinary little boy," commented the king.

"Why, my cabinet members can do all sorts of things. The duke here can make mountains out of molehills. The minister splits hairs. The count makes hay while the sun shines. The earl leaves no stone unturned. And the undersecretary," he finished ominously, "hangs by a thread. Can't you do anything at all?"

"I can count to a thousand," offered Milo.

"A-A-R-G-H numbers! Never mention numbers here. Only use them when we absolutely have to," growled Azaz disgustedly. "Now, why don't you and Tock come up here and sit next to me, and we'll have some dinner?"

"Are you ready with the menu?" reminded the Humbug.

"Well," said Milo, remembering that his mother had always told him to eat lightly when he was a guest, "why don't we have a light meal?"

"A light meal it shall be," roared the bug, waving his arms.

The waiters rushed in carrying large serving platters and set them on the table in front of the king. When he lifted the covers, shafts of brilliant-colored light leaped from the plates and bounced around the ceiling, the walls, across the floor, and out the windows.

"Not a very substantial meal," said the Humbug, rubbing his eyes, "but quite an attractive one. Perhaps you can suggest something a little more filling."

The king clapped his hands, the platters were removed, and, without thinking, Milo quickly suggested, "Well, in that case, I think we ought to have a square meal of --"

"A square meal it is," shouted the Humbug again. The king clapped his hands once more and the waiters reappeared carrying plates heaped high with steaming squares of all sizes and colors.

"Ugh," said the Spelling Bee, tasting one, "these are awful."

No one else seemed to like them very much either, and the Humbug got one caught in his throat and almost choked..

"Time for the speeches," announced the king as the plates were again removed and everyone looked glum. "You first," he commanded, pointing to Milo.

"Your Majesty, ladies and gentlemen," started Milo timidly, "I would like to take this opportunity to say that in all the --"

"That's quite enough," snapped the king. "Mustn't talk all day."

"But I'd just begun," objected Milo.

"NEXT!" belleted the king.

"Roast turkey, mashed potatoes, vanilla ice cream," recited the Humbug, bouncing up and down quickly.

"What a strange speech," thought Milo, for he'd heard many in the past and knew that they were supposed to be long and dull.

"Hamburgers, corn on the cob, chocolate pudding -- p-u-d-d-i-n-g," said the Spelling Bee in his turn.

"Frankfurters, sour pickles, strawberry jam." shouted Officer Shrift from his chair. Since he was taller sitting than standing, he didn't bother to get up.

And so down the line it went, with each guest rising briefly, making a short speech, and then resuming his place.

The waiters reappeared immediately, carrying heavy, hot trays, which they set on the table. Each one contained the exact words spoken by the various guests, and they all began eating immediately with great gusto.

"Dig in," said the king, poking Milo with his elbow and looking disapprovingly at his plate. "I can't say that I think much of your choice."

"I didn't know that I was going to have to eat my words," objected Milo.

"Of course, of course, everyone here does," the king grunted. "You should have made a tastier speech."

Paddington Goes to Town  
PP. 52-57

Helping Paddington to his feet Mr. Heinz motioned him towards the couch in the middle of the room. "I'd like you to lie on that," he said. "And then look up towards the ceiling and try to make your mind a blank."

Paddington examined the couch with interest. "Thank you very much," he exclaimed doubtfully as he clambered up, "but shall I be able to see your tricks?"

"My tricks?" repeated Mr. Heinz.

"The man in the hall said you were going to do some tricks," explained Paddington, beginning to look rather disappointed that nothing much was happening.

"I expect he was trying to humour...that is, keep you happy," said Mr. Heinz, making his way back to the desk.

"As a matter of fact," he continued casually, "I'd like to play a little game. It's really to test your reactions."

"A game to test my reactions?" repeated Paddington, looking more and more surprised. "I didn't know I had any."

"Oh, yes," said Mr. Heinz. "Everyone has reactions. Some people have fast ones and some have slow." He picked up his pen again. "Now I'm going to call out some words - quite quickly - and each time I call one out I want you to give another one which has the opposite meaning... Right?"

"Wrong," said Paddington promptly.

Mr. Heinz paused with his pen half-way to the paper. "What's the matter?" he asked crossly. "Aren't you comfortable?"

"Oh, yes," said Paddington, "but you told me to say the opposite every time you gave me a word." He sat up and gave the man behind the desk another hard stare. For someone who was supposed to be testing reactions he didn't think much of Mr. Heinz's own ones at all.

For some unknown reason Mr. Heinz appeared to be counting under his breath. "That wasn't the word, bear," he said, breathing heavily. "Wait until I give you the go-ahead. Once you start I don't want to hear anything else. I'll give you a count-down, beginning... now. Three...two...one...go!"

"Stop!" said Paddington.

Mr. Heinz opened his mouth and then appeared to change his mind. "Very good," he said grudgingly.

"Very bad," replied Paddington eagerly.

"Look here!" began Mr. Heinz, a note of panic in his voice.

"Look there!" cried Paddington wildly. Much as he had been looking forward to seeing Mr. Heinz do some tricks on his bicycle he was beginning to think the present game was

much more interesting and he looked most disappointed when his last reply was greeted with silence. "Can't you think of any more words, Mr. Heinz?" he asked.

The psychiatrist spent a moment or two drumming on his desk with his fingers. He looked as if there were a number of words he would like to have said, but ignoring the temptation he picked up his pen again.

"White," he said wearily.

"Black," said Paddington, settling down again on the couch with his paws crossed and a pleased expression on his face.

"Big," said Mr. Heinz hopefully.

"Small," said Paddington promptly.

"Fast," said Mr. Heinz.

"Slow," said Paddington.

Trying several more words in quick succession Mr. Heinz began to look better pleased with the way things were going and for several minutes his pen raced across the paper as he tried to keep pace with Paddington's replies.

"Fine," he said at last, leaning back in his chair.

"Wet," exclaimed Paddington.

"Mr. Heinz gave a chuckle. "We've finished..." he began.

"We've started," said Paddington.

"No we haven't," said Mr. Heinz crossly.

"Yes we have," cried Paddington.

"No...no...no!" shouted Mr. Heinz, thumping his desk.

"Yes...yes...yes!" cried Paddington, waving his paws in the air.

"Will you stop!" yelled Mr. Heinz.

"No I won't!" cried Paddington, nearly falling off the couch in his excitement.

Mr. Heinz looked wildly about the room. "Why did I ever take this up?" he cried, burying his face in his hands. "I should have had my head examined!"

Paddington sat up looking most surprised at the last remark. "Perhaps it needs shrinking," he said, peering at Mr. Heinz's head with interest. "I should go and see the man in the hall. He might be able to help you. He knows all about these things."

As Paddington began clambering down off the couch Mr. Heinz made a dash for the door. "I shall be gone for five minutes," he announced dramatically. "Five minutes! And if you're still here when I get back..."

Mr. Heinz left his sentence unfinished but from the way he punctuated it with the slam of the door even Paddington could see that he wasn't best pleased at the way things had gone.

## APPENDIX B

### Evaluation Sheet - Humorous Children's Literature

#### Directions

1. Read each sample selection.
2. Decide whether in your opinion each selection does indeed represent either humor developed through physical action or humor generated from words. (Definitions of these terms are given below.) Circle yes or no below.
3. Then give each story a rating on a 0-5 point scale as to how well in your opinion each selection does represent the type of humor specified. Five points would mean an excellent example and zero points a very poor sample with the points in-between standing for intermediate ratings.

#### Definitions

1. Humor of action: the humor is generated from some physical activity such as stupid blunders, absurd doings, incongruities, embarrassment of someone due to an accident, general confusion including some falling or tumbling about, and turning the tables on someone.
2. Humor based upon the words used: Humor based upon the words used by the characters in the stories could include word repetition, word rhyming, mispronunciation of words, misunderstanding of meanings, and humor developed through implication.



The Selections

<u>Humor of Action Titles</u>	<u>Does Represent</u> <u>Humor of Action</u>		<u>Circle</u> <u>Rating</u>					
1. Mr. Popper's Penguins	YES	NO	0	1	2	3	4	5
2. Henry Reed, Inc.	YES	NO	0	1	2	3	4	5
3. Pippi Longstocking	YES	NO	0	1	2	3	4	5
4. Henry and Beezus	YES	NO	0	1	2	3	4	5
5. The Alligator Case	YES	NO	0	1	2	3	4	5

<u>Humor of Words Titles</u>	<u>Does Represent</u> <u>Humor of Words</u>		<u>Circle</u> <u>Rating</u>					
1. Chancy and the Grand Rascal	YES	NO	0	1	2	3	4	5
2. The Limerick Trick	YES	NO	0	1	2	3	4	5
3. Paddington Goes to Town	YES	NO	0	1	2	3	4	5
4. The Search for Delicious	YES	NO	0	1	2	3	4	5
5. The Phantom Tollbooth	YES	NO	0	1	2	3	4	5

# APPENDIX C INSTRUMENT USED FOR RECORDING CHILDREN'S RESPONSES

Sex M F School \_\_\_\_\_ Name \_\_\_\_\_

(Selections One and Two)

	Very Happy	Happy	Indifferent	Unhappy	Very Unhappy
1. How did you feel after hearing (Title 1)? Check one of the boxes at the right.					
2. How did you feel after hearing (Title 2)? Check one of the boxes at the right.					
3. What was there about the stories that made you check the boxes the way you did above?					
4. Which story did you like better? Check box at the right.	Henry Reed, Inc. (Title 1)	Phantom Tollbooth (Title 2)	Both the Same		Neither
5. Rate story No. 1 as to how funny you thought it was.	Funniest I've Heard	Very Funny	A Little Funny	Not Very Funny	Not Funny At All
6. Rate story No. 2 as to how funny you thought it was.					
<p>Answer either question 7, 8, or 9 below.</p> <p>7. If you thought one story funnier than the other write what made you think that way.</p> <p>8. If you thought both stories funny write what you think made them both funny.</p> <p>9. If you thought both stories not funny write what made you think that way.</p>					
7, 8, or 9.					

## APPENDIX D

### Students Answers to Questions on Evaluation Instrument

Appendix D lists the verbatim responses of the students to the two free response questions on the evaluation instrument. The number of answers varies since some students did not choose to write any comments of their own, or they were of no consequence.

The replies are listed by question, school type, sex, and individual school. Only the spelling errors were corrected.

#### Inner-City Schools

##### Question One - (Selections One and Two)

What was there about the stories, (Henry Reed, Inc., and the Phantom Tollbooth), that made you check the boxes the way you did?

##### School A - Boys

1. I like stories about animals and especially this one. I also like funny stories.
2. When the lady fell in the water at the end, to eat words.

3. Well, I guess I checked these boxes because the first one was a mystery like and the other was kind of dull.
4. The second one was very funny because Milo didn't know anything about the king.
5. A light dinner and a square dinner.
6. Because it was a story that was imagining.

#### School A - Girls

1. The stories were O.K. but they really didn't seem interesting to me.
2. Well, I checked them the way I felt because I couldn't tell whether I was happy or not so I put indifferent.
3. I didn't feel any different from these two stories because I like a different kind of book.
4. I felt indifferent because the kind of humor I like is more funny than the kind in the stories mentioned.
5. In one the story was funny so I checked very happy. In two the story was a little funny so I checked happy.
6. Well, I think the stories were both good and very humorous but one seemed more funny than two because usually you'd like something that is least a little bound to happen.

#### School B - Boys

1. It made me feel unhappy because all the people had a big dinner but one man had to eat his words or nothing.
2. The second one because the guy didn't know what to do, that's why it was unhappy.
3. It was a funny story, but it sounded like a children's book. I like more mature books.

4. It made me happy because it started when the lady saw the turtle and where she fell in the pond.
5. Some parts made me laugh and some parts were dull.
6. Story one was funniest because it was about a turtle that started a commotion and made a lady fall in a pond.

#### School B - Girls

1. The first one didn't amuse me while the second one was fiction and it was funny.
2. The first one didn't seem funny or sad. It seemed in-between. This one was a little funnier. It made you laugh and it made you feel happy.
3. When you found the turtle in the purse.
4. The first story made me feel happy and unhappy and the second made me feel happy.
5. Well, there is a difference between the feelings of the characters.
6. Because title two was funny. The people ate squares and made me feel different. My feelings were much different and happy.

#### School C - Boys

1. When the lady fell in the pond. When he had to eat his words.
2. Humor and fantasy made me check the boxes the way I did.
3. The fat lady in the lily pond. The light food and the square food.
4. When they suggested to get a tow truck. When they expressed the kingdom.
5. When the fat lady fell in the pond. When one of the men didn't finish his speech.

School C - Girls

1. The way the actors expressed themselves in these books.
2. The reason she fell in the pond.
3. In the first story I liked the way the turtle got lost and then found. The second story I didn't like that much.
4. The first story made me happy when the turtle jumped and she fainted.

School D - Boys

1. The first one I like that it made you happy because it was funny.
2. About the lady being dragged out of the pond. How what they said they ate.
3. The way the lady fell into the lily pond. When they started eating the squares. That you always ate your words.
4. In the first story the turtle started a lot of commotion which was sort of funny. In the second story when the people made a speech it was about food.
5. In the first story I marked happy because they found the turtle. In the second story it was just funny.
6. The first one had no feeling at all to me. The second one gave me a little feeling.

School D - Girls

1. In number one the incident about the turtle became a funny surprise when the turtle was in her pocket book. In number two I thought they would get what it said but they ate their words.
2. In the second story I thought we learned a great lesson. The first story was funny because of the situation.

3. Very funny to me because children are involved and kids make it funny.
4. The first one had some humor but the second didn't have as much as the first.
5. That how the lady weighed so cause she could have been weighing 300 pounds. How that lady was so skinny.

#### School E - Boys

1. I liked the first one because it was very enjoyable but the second one I didn't understand.
2. I like stories about animals.
3. Because the first story was more exciting than the other and it had more feeling than the other.

#### School E - Girls

1. Because the woman fell in the lily pond and I thought it was funny.
2. The second was fantasy. I like things that really can happen. I like stories with a problem and a solution.
3. Well, I thought the first one was happy because they found the turtle, the second one I didn't quite understand.
4. Because both of them were interesting and not boring.

#### School F - Boys

1. It was dumb and pretty bad put together. You got to eat your own words.
2. You got to eat your own words.
3. Well, why, I thought the second one was a horror story.
4. When the lady fell in the pond. It is hard to eat square food.

5. Falling into a pond just because of seeing a turtle is different. The second one seems good and boring.
6. It was funny where the lady fell in the lily pond. It was funny where they said eat your words.

#### School F - Girls

1. I liked the second one because of the way he was a judge and the food he named.
2. Well, I like when the lady saw the turtle in her purse and fell in the flower pool. That is why I checked very happy.
3. I did not like the first one because it didn't sound right.

#### Question One - (Selections Three and Four)

What was there about the stories, (Paddington Goes to Town, and The Alligator Case), that made you check the boxes the way you did?

#### School A - Girls

1. I thought both of them were funny because of their action.
2. I checked them like this because they were both very happy and exciting.
3. They were both very, very funny. In fact they were hilarious!
4. I liked the first one because animals in stories are funnier than people in stories.
5. They said a lot of dumb things that I think were pretty funny.

#### School A - Boys

1. I liked the way the fish guy ate, that was funny.



2. When he said opposites. I like baseball.
3. Well, it was too unreal about the first one and wasn't very funny.
4. I think they were both very funny the way he ate the peas and the bear was mixed up with a psychiatrist.

#### School B - Girls

1. They were both humorous and gave me a happy feeling. In the second story I liked the way he ate.
2. The fourth story had some action and the third did too, but not that much.
3. The way the bear said the words at the wrong time. The way the man played baseball with pork chops and peas.
4. When the bear fell off the couch. And when he was arguing.
5. They were funny and nice.
6. I liked title four better because it is unusual to find a man eat peas the hard way. You can't find anyone eating like that.

#### School B - Boys

1. Title three - the bear was smarter than the doctor. Title four - thieves were sneaky.
2. Because he was distracting the people the way he ate and at the cash register the other guy was studying the money.
3. The man's table manners in number three is what got the best vote from me.
4. I was very happy because the bear obeyed the psychiatrist on every word he said and wouldn't stop.
5. It sounded happy because of the bear and the psychiatrist telling him to say the opposite.

School C - Girls

1. I like humorous books.
2. I liked the way he mocked the doctor, and I liked the second one because the way he batted his food.
3. The happiness expressed by the actors in the book.
4. I thought number four was pretty funny when it came to the eating part.

School C - Boys

1. When he did everything right wrong. When he batted his peas with a pork chop.
2. I liked the way the bear didn't stop saying the opposites. I liked when he batted the peas and the boy got a slap.
3. Very funny and made me happy.
4. Humor mainly gave me my feelings.
5. The way the bear said the different words. The funny way the food was eaten.
6. When the bear kept saying the opposite. When this man put his peas and spoon and batted them in.

School D - Girls

1. I felt they were both very funny stories because of the way each character did funny things.
2. In the Alligator Case his food. The way he ate it.
3. They both were very unusual. Something that is just someone wouldn't do, Alligator Case, Mr. Fish was very unusual!

School D - Boys

1. I liked Alligator Case because of the fish who

batted peas with pork chops.

2. I think number four was happier.
3. I liked number four because funny about he ate the food.
4. About the bear laying on the sofa and saying opposites. About the man hitting peas into his mouth.
5. In the third one the bear went to see a friend in the hospital and wound up fooling around with a psychiatrist.

#### School E - Girls

1. Because they were stupid and funny.
2. I like funny stories.
3. I hope to get them both.
4. The way Paddington answered was funny and the hard pork chops and peas were funny too.

#### School E - Boys

1. I think four was more funnier than the other because it was more exciting.
2. I enjoyed number four when the fish shot the peas in the air.

#### School F - Girls

1. I liked the fourth one because he told him to bring him something to eat.
2. They both were exciting.
3. Number four was more fun.
4. Because the third one was silly and the fourth one was stupid and corny.

#### School F - Boys

1. Because the bear was smart. The way he would eat.

2. When he ate some peas with his pork chops it was very funny.
3. Where the bear went to the psychiatrist.

Question Two - (Selections One and Two)

Answer one of the following questions:

1. If you thought one of the stories funnier than the other write what made you think that way.
2. If you thought both stories funny write what you think made them both funny.
3. If you thought both stories not funny, write what made you think that way.

School A - Boys

1. It was just the kind of stories I like to hear.
2. The second one was funny because of the king.
3. Because the one was funny about the lady falling in the pond and the other was boring about the dinner.
4. I thought they both the same because falling in a fish pond is funny and so is eating your words.
5. Well, when the turtle was in the purse it is funny how he got in and when she opens up the purse by the water she jumped back.

School A - Girls

1. I thought they were the same because I don't read stories like that. I read mysteries, stuff like that, but they were both O.K.

2. I thought that number one was funnier because of that fat lady that fell in the pond, just because of that little old turtle.
3. I think number two was funnier because it was a different type of story. And I like reading humorous books about a person who is like the man in this story.
4. The first story was funnier than the other because the lady fell in the pond and it's a usual thing in real life. The other one had too much royalty in it and not that much humor.
5. The first one was funniest because it had lots of exciting parts in it.
6. Well, story two wasn't as funny because it's sort of fiction and is not bound to happen.

#### School B - Boys

1. I think one was funnier than the other because the way the fat lady was explained.
2. Because number one was funnier, the lady fell into the pond, that's why.
3. I liked the part where the guy thought she was fat.
4. One was funnier because of the turtle and the other wasn't so funny because of the king.
5. I didn't really understand title two.
6. Story was funny because a fat lady falls in a pond with clothes and all. Story two wasn't funny because it didn't have anything funny in it.

#### School B - Girls

1. It was humorous fiction and I like fiction.
2. The way the second one was worded made me laugh a little more. The way they served food too was a little weird and funny.
3. It wasn't that funny when she found the turtle

in her purse. He didn't know what meal to pick.

4. Because you had to eat words you said. The lady fell into the goldfish pond.
5. Because in the first story the lady fell in the pond. And the second they served different kinds of food.
6. I think number two was funnier because I drew my feelings faster to it. I think number one was not as funny because eating squares is more unusual than falling in a pond.

#### School C - Boys

1. Because the fat lady fell into a pond and because they needed a truck to get her out.
2. The thing that made number one funny was when the lady fell into the pond.
3. I thought that the first one was funnier because it seemed more realistic than the other one did and just more funnier.
4. The fat lady and the way she had to be lugged out of the water, and fainted when she saw the turtle in her pocket.
5. The story made me feel this way when the lady fell in the pond and they suggested a tow truck and said, "Now I know what causes tidal waves!"
6. The story I thought was funny was about the turtle which was lost. I liked when the fat lady fell in the pond and when she floated into the pond.

#### School C - Girls

1. More comical and very lively.
2. Because of the happenings.
3. The first one was funnier because the turtle got in the lady's purse and it was really funny when she fell in the pond.

4. The first story was funnier because the lady fell in the pond.
5. I thought the first one was funnier because it had a lot of things happening that made me laugh. Many exciting things happening made it enjoyable.
6. Number one was funnier I thought because the lost turtle was found jumping out of the purse when the lady fainted.

#### School D - Boys

1. The first one was funny because it was a good book who the author was.
2. I thought that Henry Reed, Inc. was better because I felt what was going on in the story.
3. I thought that way when I heard the story Henry Reed. It was a funny and mysterious story with a happy thought.
4. In the first story the turtle escaped and everyone was worried and a lady opened a purse and saw him and fell in a pond.
5. I thought the second was funnier because it was a story that could never happen, and anything could happen in the story.
6. The first one I think was not funny as the second because in the first one they were looking for only one turtle.

#### School D - Girls

1. The idea came out in a way in number one that made it funny. In number two the point didn't come clear enough.
2. I feel the first story was funny because of the way the lady fell in the pond, and someone said I'll get a tow truck to get her out. I thought the second story was funny because it seemed like they ate their words.
3. People having to eat their words is not all that bad. And I thought that was funny. And

I can imagine a fat and quite big woman falling in a fish pond.

4. On the first I just laughed a little more and on the second I didn't laugh at all.
5. How that lady fell in the pond and they need a bulldozer to pull her up. How that skinny lady tried to pull her up.

#### School E - Boys

1. Because the Phantom Tollbooth I didn't quite understand.
2. Because it was the funniest story I heard.
3. The time when the lady fell in the pond.
4. When the fat lady fell in the water and they couldn't get her out.
5. Because of the lady in the fish pond made it funnier.
6. Because it was more funnier and more exciting than the other.

#### School E - Girls

1. Because a fat lady falling into a pond is funny.
2. The second one was too dumb.
3. Because in the second one nothing funny happened like in the first one.
4. I thought the first one was very funny because of the fat lady.
5. I think the first story was funny, but the other one was not funny. Because it had a boring title. And mostly about words.

#### School F - Boys

1. Because it was a fantasy and a good story for little children and very funny.



2. Well, the story number two was funny because it was when they ate squares.
3. Well, Henry Reed, Inc. because the fat lady fell into the pond, etc.
4. Because the lady fell in the pond and I think it was very funny and I like it.
5. I think the second one was better because it was sort of being able to fool someone.
6. Because where the lady fell into the lily pond where she saw the frog in her purse.

School F - Girls

1. The second one was about hamburgers and corn on the cob and I liked that.
2. Because the second one had more experience to it and excitement.
3. Cause I liked the food he named cause I like to eat.
4. I thought number one was very funny because the lady saw the turtle in her purse and fell into the flower pool.
5. One was funnier because I like it when the fat lady fell in the pool.
6. The reason I liked the second one better was because it had all the food and things and it made me hungry and the first one was not funny to me.

Question Two - (Selections Three and Four)

Same questions as for Selections One and Two.

School A - Girls

1. They sounded mixed up like the bear. I couldn't keep meself from giggling also with four.

2. I thought both of the stories were very funny was because I like stories like those.
3. The first story was funnier because the bear answered the psychiatrist with funny answers and the second story was not that funny but O.K.
4. They both were funny I think, but the first one about the bear was O.K., they were both O.K.

#### School A - Boys

1. I thought they were both funny because they had lots of character.
2. Well, the other wasn't that good about the bear and it was all talk, the other was different about it because it was action.
3. Well, I really do like interesting books. The way I check them both because they were so funny.
4. I think they were both funny because I never heard it before and they were imagined.

#### School B - Girls

1. In the first it was funny the way they always said the opposite and in the second I liked the way he ate his food, like he was playing baseball with pork chops and peas.
2. Well, he was answering at the right time. Well, the way the man was eating.
3. In the first story the bear was dumb but yet smart. The way he answered was the funny part. In the second story the way the man ate his food.
4. When he was eating peas with both spoons. When he fell off the bed.
5. The bear keep saying the opposite when he shouldn't have. He ate so funny. I never heard anyone eat so funny.
6. I think they are really both funny because you find both in an unusual way. Finding a man eating peas a different way and a bear talking when he's not supposed to.

School B - Boys

1. I thought the bear playing a human being out-smarted the doctor.
2. Because not everybody should be watching him, there should be someone watching the place that's why.
3. They were both funny, but I chose number two because he was just doing that so his partner could steal the stuff.
4. Because the way the man was eating wouldn't be the right way to eat.
5. I think the lesson made it funnier than the other one.
6. Both were funny because they had funny characters.

School C - Girls

1. When Paddington keep on giving the psychiatrist antonyms for the words.
2. The things that made them funny were the characters. A bear and a fish, for I know they can't talk. And when they're in stories they are funny.
3. The first one was funny because he kept mocking the doctor. And the second one was funny because he batted the peas in his mouth and he swallowed the pork chop.
4. I thought Alligator Case was funnier because the actors expresses its feelings.
5. I thought both stories were funny. Number one was funnier when the bear was testing his reflexes.

School C - Boys

1. Because he was batting down his peas with a pork chop and when he opened his mouth too fast.

2. I like when the bear always said opposites. I liked when Mr. Fish was batting peas and the boy yelled and received a slap from his mother.
3. Because what ever the psychiatrist would say Paddington would say and I think that's what made the story funny.
4. I thought number three was better than the other one because it was set up in a very good order to make it funnier.
5. The way Paddington kept on saying the opposite every time the head shrinker said something. The way Mr. Fish kept on taking the spoon, hitting a pea up, a batting it in with a pork chop.
6. I liked when the bear said the opposite and when the psychiatrist said it was enough, the bear just kept it up. I liked when he places his peas on a spoon and hit it in the air with the pork chop.

#### School D - Girls

1. Batting peas in your mouth is quite hard but the fish must have had some experience.
2. I liked them both very much because of the conditions in both stories. The characters were animals and I like these kind of stories.
3. I liked them both the same because they were interesting, funny, amusing, and last but not least exciting.
4. The reason I think both were funny because in Paddington how everytime the doctor said something he would answer when the doctor wasn't ready. In the Alligator Case how he ate his dinner.
5. Paddington was funny because the author made him like he was stupid. He said the opposite of every word but would never stop. Alligator Case was funny because Mr. Fish acted as a real fish. He ate very strange.

School D - Boys

1. I liked the fish who batted peas in his mouth with pork chops.
2. I think the Alligator Case was funnier because although it could not happen, you could see it in your mind.
3. I thought they were both funny because they had some really crazy things.
4. I thought the Alligator Case was funnier because of catapulting peas.

School E - Girls

1. I think they were both funny because of the way the characters acted.
2. The second was more meaningless than the first.
3. Because the way the guy ate his supper. And the way the bear went to see the doctor.
4. They were both funny because I could just picture a bear answering and the man eating was funny too.
5. The first one was very funny kind of, because about the psychiatrist and bear but the other one was funnier about his manners.

School E - Boys

1. Because I liked the bear and the doctor.
2. The way he would hit the peas and batted them in his mouth.
3. Because the bear keep saying the different meanings, and number four because when he shot the peas in the air.

School F - Girls

1. I thought it was funnier than the second story because of what the first story was and about it was very intelligent.

2. Because he wanted something to eat the second one.
3. Number three seemed funny because Paddington did just what the doctor said and kept doing it when the doctor said to stop.

School F - Boys

1. Because he ate without any disturbance and nobody said anything about how he ate his food.
2. Paddington was real funny because of the answers to the questions.
3. Number three was best because he got him real mad.
4. Because the man he ate the peas, but he didn't eat them right. It was very funny.

Suburban Schools

Question One - (Selections One and Two)

What was there about the stories, (Henry Reed, Inc., and The Phantom Tollbooth), that made you check the boxes the way you did?

School A - Boys

1. You knew what was going to happen in story one.
2. Number two was funnier because it wasn't as practical.
3. Because the second story the boy had to eat his words and the first story the lady fell into the pond.
4. I feel that they should of told him.

School A - Girls

1. In the first story there was mischief.

2. Because of the way it went. It wasn't long. It was a funny story.
3. I think that they were funny, and they weren't very serious.
4. The stories were kind of funny and brightened up the day a little.
5. The story number two had a happy ending.
6. I marked box one like I did because I have read the book before and didn't care for it.

#### School B - Boys

1. The Phantom Tollbooth had more jokes in it than Henry Reed.
2. Because I have read many Henry Reed stories before and I like stories that could happen.
3. The first story it was very funny. The second story was unhappy.

#### School B - Girls

1. The first story was boring to me but it didn't make me unhappy. I like the second one.
2. Because they both had a funny ending, and it had an ending that made sense.
3. It wasn't really the stories, I was really feeling "indifferent" when they were played.
4. They were happy they found what they were looking for. He was unhappy he didn't say something different or better.

#### School C - Boys

1. When the lady fell in the pond was funny. When the king said he should make a tastier speech.
2. What the turtle did. The short speech.
3. When the fat lady fell in the pond.

4. Story one falling into the pond.

School C - Girls

1. The woman falling didn't make me happy or unhappy and the words didn't make me happy or unhappy in title two.
2. The way the people were acting and the type of actions in the stories.
3. Because I like mysterious the best.
4. I don't think we heard enough of the stories in order to laugh at them.
5. They weren't gay enough or sad enough to do either.

School D - Boys

1. First story when she fell into pond.
2. Sounds very interesting.
3. Not too much about the first story but the second story was quite corny.
4. When the fat lady fell in the pond. When he said a light meal.
5. The first one was a much funnier one because the words were put better.

School D - Girls

1. They were just not very exciting but just boring.
2. In the first story it was funny because when she fell in the pond.
3. Because they were both different and they were all unusual stories.
4. The way the people talked, and what they did.
5. In one it wasn't such a terrible thing and it wasn't great either. In two Milo had to eat a lousy supper.



School E - Boys

1. When the king said to Milo, "That's enough," after he had spoken about two words.
2. When they were going to eat the books. When the lady fell in.
3. I was happy because the fat lady fell in the pond.
4. Number one because the lady fell in the fish pond and the remarks from Midge and Henry. Number two because of the puns.
5. I think they were funny because they both had a particular person or an animal.

School E - Girls

1. Because both of them were two different meanings and they were both really funny.
2. The first one was a little boring. I liked the second one because it was happy.
3. Because it was like a funny story when the lady fell in the pond. Because they got what they wanted.

School F - Boys

1. In the second one I know I don't want a square meal.
2. Tidal wave and the insults from the boy. The way the king made the people say short stories.
3. He had to get a tow truck to haul the lady out and she made a tidal wave.

School F - Girls

1. In the second story it got happy then it got sad so that's what I wrote.
2. How the lady fell in the pond and the way she got out.

3. The second one made me feel happy because it had a funny feeling about eating your own words.
4. When the lady fell in the pond. When they had to eat their speech.
5. They were both very good stories but at the end they got kind of sad.

Question One - (Selections Three and Four)

What was there about the stories, (Paddington Goes to Town and The Alligator Case), that made you check the boxes the way you did?

School A - Girls

1. The bear was funny.
2. The stories were very funny and made the day brighter.
3. I liked the stories very much they were very funny and have lots of humor.
4. I liked the first one better because it had more excitement to it.
5. They were very different than other stories I've heard before.
6. I didn't like the number two because it must be sick to eat like he did.

School A - Boys

1. He reaped what he said in the story.
2. Number three was better to me because funnier things were said.
3. Because the bear said the opposite when he was telling him what to do.
4. It made me feel O.K.

5. When the bear said yes and the doctor said no, and they kept doing it.

School B - Girls

1. They were funny and couldn't really have happened.
2. They were happy and funny.
3. The doctor was funny the way he ate.

School B - Boys

1. The first story the man did not like Paddington.

School C - Girls

1. They were different and had unusual humors.
2. The way everything was done, and how the action took place.

School C - Boys

1. When he was batting his peas. When he was saying the opposites.
2. Story four, hitting the peas.
3. The way he answered. The peas and pork chops.
4. About the bear saying the opposite of the psychiatrist. The way he ate the peas.
5. When Paddington said the words right.

School D - Girls

1. They made me happy cause they were sort of stupid.
2. They're both about the way someone acts.
3. The things that happened to them, the way they were written.

4. They are stupid.

School D - Boys

1. It was funny when he kept mocking him.
2. Sounded funny.
3. When he hit the spoon and pork chops in his mouth.

School E - Girls

1. Because Paddington went into a psychiatrist and he got mad. The man ate by shooting the peas in the air and in his mouth.
2. When Paddington went to see a psychiatrist. When Mr. Fisher batted the peas in his mouth.

School E - Boys

1. Because how mad the shrink got. Because I wasn't happy or unhappy after I heard the stories.
2. The part when he kept repeating. The way he ordered the waiter.
3. It was funny when he went into the psychiatrist. Kind of funny but not as funny as Paddington.
4. He was very unusual.

School F - Girls

1. I think the first one was kind of stupid. The second one wasn't the greatest but it was O.K.
2. I thought the first one was funny when Paddington and the psychiatrist were saying the opposite. The second one I liked.
3. It made me happy because it was funny and interesting.

School F - Boys

1. I like weird things.
2. He batted the peas into his mouth.
3. I liked when the doctor said he said something different.
4. He kept saying the opposite thing that the doctor said. The fat guy batted peas into his mouth.

Question Two - (Selections One and Two)

Answer one of the following questions:

1. If you thought one of the stories funnier than the other write what made you think that way.
2. If you thought both stories funny write what you think made them both funny.
3. If you thought both stories not funny, write what made you think that way.

School A - Boys

1. One, you knew what was going to happen. Two was like a mystery.
2. I think that the first was funnier because when she opened the bag she jumped.
3. Because the boy ate his words and funnier things happened.
4. Because the boy had to eat his words.
5. Because the lady fell in the pond.
6. Not funny because they should of told him what he said he could eat. The first one was funny because she fell in the lake.

School A - Girls

1. In story number two it seemed more real.
2. It was funny because in one story they didn't use numbers unless they had to. And they had to eat their words.
3. I thought the first one was funny when she fell in. But I've read some of his stories and all were really good.
4. Number two I thought it was funny because everyone had a big meal but the boy.
5. Number two. He had to eat his words and that's why I thought it was funny.
6. I thought number two was funnier because it was more realistic, and was more of a story.

School B - Boys

1. All of the jokes made them funny, I think.
2. Because one was gayer than the other one.
3. The lady that fell into the pool. Number two wasn't too funny.
4. The first story the lady fell in the pool. The second the king did not like numbers.
5. Well, they had to eat their own words and that's what made it funny.

School B - Girls

1. I thought the second one was more unusual than the other one. I just liked it better.
2. I thought that number two was funnier because of the way the little boy did his speech.
3. Two was better because they didn't like numbers and because of their menus.
4. The first story was more serious, which didn't make it quite as funny.

5. I thought it was funny when she fell into the pond and they had to pull her out. It was a little funny that he had to eat his words.
6. They were both funny. The first one was funny because the turtle was in the purse and the second one was funny because of all the food.

#### School C - Boys

1. It was funny when the lady fell into the pond. It was funny what the king said at the end of the story.
2. They had funny parts like falling in the pond and only half speeches.
3. The way he had to eat his words.
4. When the lady fell in the pond and was too fat to get out.
5. Falling into the pond. Getting any food you want.
6. Where the old lady fell in.

#### School C - Girls

1. Because the words are not very funny but I think that story one was funny because of how the fat lady struggled to get out of the pond when everyone tried to help her. Title Two has a very good story title and it sounds spooky but it is a very boring story.
2. Because in the first story a lady fell in a pond of water and in the second one they just talk about the speeches of some kids also the action taking place in the first story was a little better than in the second story.
3. The first one was the funniest. Because there was a better action.
4. I thought the first story was funnier because the actions were funnier and in the second one there was hardly anything funny about it.

5. Because the lady got upset over the frog. The frog shouldn't have caused so much confusion if it was a small one. I couldn't understand why she fainted when she was pulled out of the lily pond.

#### School D - Boys

1. The first story when she fell into the pond.
2. Title One. I like when she fell in the pond and got wet.
3. Because the jokes in the second story were corny jokes.
4. Because of the fat lady falling in the pond and the cut-downs.
5. When the fat lady fell in the pond. When he said I want a light meal.
6. The happenings were much funnier in the first one rather than the second.

#### School D - Girls

1. They are too simple and dull, not very exciting.
2. Because in the second story no catastrophe happened, everything was funny.
3. They both weren't very funny because they weren't old enough for a sixth grader.
4. The second one was funny because of the fantasy.

#### School E - Boys

1. I thought the first story was funny because the lady fell in the lily pond, and Henry said he now knows what makes tidal waves.
2. When the king was eating the book and the boy was eating the words.
3. Well, because the lady fell in the water, the thing about getting a tow truck. The other didn't really have any real funny things.



4. One was funnier than two because I don't think two had that many funny lines.
5. One was funnier because it might happen and when she saw the snake by the pond. Number two was kind of funny and kind of making up stories.
6. I thought Henry Reed was very funny because of the lady falling in the water and when she fainted when she felt the turtle. The next one wasn't funny because you can't spell your dinner.

#### School - E - Girls

1. The first one was funnier because it had more confusion and they didn't know what to do.
2. I like the first one because it had more of, there was confusion and it ended up funnier.
3. I liked story number two better because the man was eating his words and asked for light lunches and square lunches.
4. Number two. They didn't very much have it funny. It was just about some letters. Number one was funny about the fat lady.
5. I thought the first story was funny when the lady fell in the fish pond and couldn't get her out they suggested to get a tow truck. I thought that it was a little funny because whatever he asked he got.
6. What they said about the story, the dinner, and the fat lady.

#### School F - Boys

1. I like exaggerations about fat people.
2. Tidal waves, tow trucks.
3. Because of tidal waves and tow trucks.
4. The insults the boy said about the fat lady.
5. Tidal waves and tow trucks.

6. I liked the first one because the lady who fell in was fat and made tidal waves.

#### School F - Girls

1. I thought one story was funnier because of when the lady fell into the pond and the turtle was in the purse.
2. I thought two was not as funny because it sounded weird in the king's speech.
3. The first one was funny because of all the jokes they made about the fat lady and about the part when she fell in. The second one was funny because of the light meal and the square meal. Also because of the food speeches they made.
4. The first one was funny about when the lady fell in the pond. The second was funny too.
5. How they described the lady and the dinner. I think they were both good.
6. I thought the first story was funny when the lady fell into the pond and couldn't get out. In number two I thought it was funny the way everyone got confused with their words.

#### Question Two - (Selections Three and Four)

Same questions as for Selections One and Two.

#### School A - Girls

1. Number three was funnier than four. The bear kept on repeating everything.
2. Number three I thought that was funnier because I liked it when the bear kept saying opposites.
3. I just like the way they were written. I wish I had a bunch of books like them.
4. The first one has more excitement to it and has more humor to it.

5. Paddington is just silly. The Alligator Case is kind of strange.
6. The first one was funniest because he got mad. The bear had to say the opposite and the psychiatrist got mad.

#### School A - Boys

1. Because every word he would say he said the opposite because the guy was getting mad.
2. Story four was dull.
3. Because the bear said everything opposite to the psychiatrist even after the test was over.
4. Because it was more exciting.

#### School B - Girls

1. Because of the way the main characters acted in the story.
2. They both did very strange and funny things.
3. They were very funny and strange.
4. The first was funny because the doctor was saying all those funny things. The second the way he ate.

#### School B - Boys

1. Cause of the way he ate the bullet peas.
2. Paddington kept on getting things mixed up.
3. I like the one about the men with the peas.
4. When he kept saying the opposite. The pork chops and bullet peas.
5. The first story is funny. Paddington talked back. The second one he did not have good manners.

School C - Girls

1. They were unusual because of the things that happened in them.
2. When the testing was finished the bear kept replying the opposite. The way the guy ate his meal and attracted everyone's attention.
3. I thought the second one was better because it talks about bullet peas and pork chops. The first one isn't that funny.
4. They were both funny because the characters were good.

School C - Boys

1. When he was batting his peas. When he was saying the opposite.
2. The way Paddington answered back to the man.
3. Because he kept repeating everything that was opposite from what the other person said.

School D - Girls

1. The first one was stupid and the second one was good.
2. Paddington was funnier because he did exactly right. Alligator Case was a little funny cause it was stupid.
3. Because they both talk about the weird way somebody acts.
4. Too simple.

School D - Boys

1. The first one was much funnier because the way Paddington answered.
2. The way they acted.
3. They were about unusual happenings and were very funny.

4. When he popped the peas in his mouth and pork chop.

#### School E - Girls

1. The psychiatrist was all confusing. The Alligator Case was exciting.
2. The Paddington story was so confusing.
3. In the first story Paddington was over doing it. On the second story the way the guy was eating.
4. A bear got into a psychiatrist's room. Having an act.
5. It was funny when Paddington was in the psychiatrists and he slammed the door. I liked the other one because the way he ate his peas.
6. When he went to a psychiatrist and when he went to the restaurant.

#### School E - Boys

1. When he hit the peas in his mouth.
2. I think Paddington was funnier because he kept on saying the opposite.
3. Because he answered the opposite when he wasn't supposed to. When he ate and ordered the waiter around.
4. Number three was funny when he kept repeating. It was kind of funny when he ate the pork chops.
5. Paddington was a lot more funny because it was about an animal. The Alligator Case wasn't that funny because of the person who is eating is not funny at all.

#### School F - Girls

1. I liked four better because the man put the pea on the teaspoons and hit the spoon and hit the pea into his mouth with pork chops.

2. Story number four was funnier because in story three, you already knew what was going to happen. Story four wasn't really the greatest because you couldn't hear the rest. I think this one would have been better if I heard the whole story.
3. I thought Paddington was better because it was funnier and Alligator Case was confusing and I didn't understand it as well as Paddington.
4. I liked Paddington better than the other story because I read Paddington before. I thought the pork chop one was good too but Paddington had jokes mixed in with a story.
5. For Paddington it was funny because he kept saying the opposite of what the psychiatrist said. For the fourth story he kept hitting the peas with his pork chop.

#### School F - Boys

1. I like when people give other people a rough time in a funny way.
2. The way he batted the peas into his mouth.
3. Because the bear kept on answering the word that the scientist didn't want him to.
4. The boy kept saying the opposite thing the doctor said.
5. I thought it great for baseball.

#### Rural Schools

#### Question One - (Selections One and Two)

What was there about the stories, (Henry Reed, Inc., and The Phantom Tollbooth), that made you check the boxes the way you did?

School A - Boys

1. The first was not sticking close to the fact that the turtle was lost all the time. Number two was full of humor and was very interesting.
2. Number one had more adventure number two was a little boring. Adventure makes it funny.
3. One wasn't as funny as the other. One taught a lesson and the other didn't.

School A - Girls

1. The first story was a little funny. The second story I really didn't understand.
2. I thought that the first story was funny because of the lady fell in the pool.
3. About the turtle and the fat lady, the way they talked during the story.
4. I like movies or stories when ladies that think they're real big something happens to them. It was dull. (No. 2)

School B - Boys

1. Number two was sort of jolly.
2. I checked the way I did in it is because I don't like slapstick.
3. The fat lady fell in and they found a turtle.
4. They found the turtle and the fat lady fell in.
5. They found the turtle.

School B - Girls

1. Because I thought it was a little sad about what they said about the lady but the things he said were funny.

School C - Boys

No comments

School C - Girls

1. The first one was funny because of the comparisons.
2. The lady that fell in the pond.
3. The first one, when the lady fell in the pond.

School D - Boys

1. In the first story the idea of the fat lady at the garden party was good and the jokes about her were funny and the story was sort of a mystery.

School D - Girls

No comments

School E - Boys

1. It was a little foolish.
2. The lady falling in the pond. The way they had to eat their words.
3. Going into too much depth.

School E - Girls

1. The second story was just something you don't hear about often.
2. The way the big fat lady fell in the pond. When they ate what they said.
3. In title one when the lady fell in the pond. In title two when the king was kind of bossy.
4. When the fat lady found the frog in her bag.
5. The different shapes and sizes of the people. Like in title one the women.
6. When the lady fell in the pond. When he said I didn't know I would have to eat my words.



School F - Boys

1. The turtle in the purse and eating your words.
2. The funny selections and the odd speeches in Phantom Tollbooth.
3. When the boy turtle got in the lady's pocket-book and she fell in the pond.

School F - Girls

1. Because they had to eat their words.
2. Because of the way they do say things.

Question One - (Selections Three and Four)

What was there about the stories, (Paddington Goes Goes to Town and The Alligator Case), that made you check the boxes the way you did?

School A - Girls

1. I couldn't really decide on a number because I like things better with pictures. But it was funny. Wasn't too much excitement in two.

School A - Boys

1. The words that had been said was quite funny.
2. Number three was very cute about the casting and way of proceeding. Number four was a little strange but a bit more interesting than strange.
3. I thought that they were funny because they both goofed off a bit.

School B - Girls

1. He was very funny about his order.

2. The way they made me feel happy is the way they acted.

School B - Boys

1. When he batted the peas.

School C - Girls

1. His manners were weird.
2. I liked the first one because it's weird.
3. When Paddington repeated everything.
4. When Paddington kept answering the psychiatrist back when he didn't want him to.

School C - Boys

1. Yes. I like how they eat and the bear works.
2. The way the boy yelled out.
3. The way they done their stunts.

School D - Girls

1. I liked the second story because of how that man ate.
2. The first one was cool, but the second one was really out of sight.
3. The second story I don't think was very interesting it was kind of dumb.
4. The way he ate.

School D - Boys

No comments

School E - Girls

1. They were both very funny and something different.

2. When he kept saying the opposite. When he batted peas in his mouth.
3. When the fish batted the peas into his mouth with his pork chop.
4. In Title Four when Mr. Fish batted the peas into his mouth.

School E - Boys

1. The last one was too foolish.
2. Unreal, funny.
3. The way the bear sassed back the head shrinker. When he catapulted the peas and hit them with his pork chop.

School F - Girls

1. I have never heard stories that silly.
2. The second one was funny when he was batting them in his mouth and the boy got hit for yelling.
3. Because they all were kind of funny or stupid.
4. I felt very happy because it isn't everyday you see a man eat like that.

School F - Boys

1. When the guy used his pork chop to bat his bullet peas into his mouth.
2. The way he ate.
3. The way he eats pork chops and peas.
4. I think it was funny the way Mr. Fish ate.

Question Two - (Selections One and Two)

Answer one of the following questions:

1. If you thought one of the stories funnier than

the other write what made you think that way.

2. If you thought both stories funny write what you think made them both funny.

3. If you thought both stories not funny, write what made you think that way.

#### School A - Boys

1. The first was funnier because it had more to it and more excitement.
2. Number two was full of clever terms such as "eating your own words."
3. Because how they put the words in.
4. Number one is funnier because it has funny things happen like a lady falling in a pond.
5. Because it had some parts that was funny like the woman fell in the pond.
6. The first one had fat ladies. It also had make-up stuff.

#### School A - Girls

1. The first story was funny, because the big fat lady fell in the pond.
2. I thought that the first one was the funniest because it put more laughter and jokes in it.
3. Well, they talked funnier, then they ate weird things. I also liked their speeches.
4. The first one was funnier because of all the incidents that happened. And the way the lady fell in the water.

#### School B - Boys

1. It was the suspense in it and sort of frolicky or weird, well not that weird.

2. The Phantom Tollbooth had less slapsticks.
3. The lady fell in a pond.
4. The lady fell in the water.
5. The fat lady fell in the pond.
6. Because the fat lady fell in the pond.

#### School B - Girls

1. The people in the story and that they were funny.
2. The Phantom Tollbooth was funnier I thought because Title One was sort of tragic when the lady fainted.
3. The first was funnier than the second because he said all those funny things about the lady and in the second one didn't interest me and wasn't very funny.
4. The first one had a lot of splashing and thinking that the turtle was in the garden next door.
5. In one, I thought it was funnier because of the wording and the way it was told.

#### School C - Boys

1. The number two story was funny because the boy had to eat his words.
2. Number two used funnier words but number one was dull.
3. There was nothing funny in them.

#### School C - Girls

1. I thought it was funnier because the lady fell in the pond.
2. I liked the story of Henry Reed because it makes you laugh. I've read other stories of Henry Reed and I really enjoy them.
3. Because it was funny the way they put the words.

4. When the fat lady fell in the pond and the boy said to call a tow truck.
5. The Phantom Tollbooth was funnier because they had to eat their words.
6. Because the turtle started everything like started the whole thing when the lady fell in the pond. And, when the hostess had to get the lady out.

#### School D - Boys

1. Because of what they had to eat.
2. The lady that fell in the pond.
3. The Phantom Tollbooth wasn't very exciting and a little dull.
4. I thought Henry Reed was funnier because when the woman fell in the water.

#### School D - Girls

1. It told of fiction happening that I enjoy.
2. It was funny because of the fat woman. Number two because they liked words.
3. When the lady fell in the pond. When the boy suggested the square and light meal.
4. The woman falling in the pool.
5. The first one was O.K. but too easy to read. The second one was funny because when they made a speech and had to eat what they said.
6. The first one wasn't very funny because of the words. I didn't think the words were put together very well.

#### School E - Boys

1. It was funny when she fell in the pond.
2. The kids looking for the turtle, and then the

woman found it in her purse and almost became hysterical.

3. More jokes, funny names seemed more understandable.
4. The first story was a little funny because the lady fell in. The second one was a little funny because he ate his words.

#### School E - Girls

1. Because the second one was more unusual than the first.
2. Because they had to eat what they said, and it was a lot.
3. In story two they used all of them fancy words and the story was a fantasy.
4. I liked the one because of the numbers and the food.
5. In title one I thought it was funnier because that lady was so fat!
6. When the lady found a turtle in her purse. When he said he would have to eat his own words.

#### School F - Boys

1. The Phantom Tollbooth where they said I didn't want to eat my own words.
2. The boy had to eat his words and his speech.
3. It was funnier because it was weird about the square meal and all.

#### School F - Girls

1. The second one was funniest because it had more to it.
2. Because they had to eat their own words.
3. Because the second one was funnier because I like where they had to eat their words.

4. Because of the speeches and meals.
5. Because the second one was funny when he didn't know he would eat his words.

Question Two - (Selections Three and Four)

Same questions as for Selections One and Two.

School A - Girls

1. If you would listen to them you will like it. The bear had bad manners. And they make me feel happy.
2. In Paddington there was more excitement. I like humor stories where things go wrong. In number two nothing went wrong really.
3. I didn't think that one was better than the other because thing were always moving. They both were good.
4. The first was funny because the bear was funny.
5. The way Paddington was with the psychologist. Paddington made him nervous was another reason I liked it.
6. They were both funny because of the way they acted.

School A - Boys

1. Because the bear said the opposite all the time and when he did not want him to.
2. Because they had words that was the opposite and he got the answer back quickly.
3. Number three had more excitement or horsing around.
4. Paddington was very exclusive of bad ways.
5. It's funny when a dumb person makes a fool of a smart person like in number three.



6. The first was the funniest because he showed the scientist who was the smarter.

#### School B - Girls

1. The Paddington story was funny because of the word that meant the opposite of the word hung. The Alligator Case was funny because the way the guy ate.
2. They were both funny because of the wording and the way he ordered his food and how he cooked it. Then when on number three is the way he kept saying the opposite.
3. I liked how Paddington kept saying opposites of the doctor and I liked the paper panties and how he ate.
4. I liked the way Paddington kept answering when he wasn't supposed to and when Mr. Fish kept batting his bullet peas.
5. The way Mr. Fish ate his bullet peas and his pork chop.
6. I liked the way the psychiatrist was calling the words and Pattie was giving him the opposite.

#### School B - Boys

1. I liked it because of the way he ate peas.
2. Because he batted the pea in.
3. The way the man ate.
4. Number three was funnier because he kept playing the game.
5. I liked number three because it had a lot of humor and enthusiasm.
6. The Alligator Case was too weird.

#### School C - Girls

1. I liked the first one because it was funny and weird.

2. I liked when how the man ate his steak.
3. Mr. Fish was funnier because the way he ate his food, and what he eats.
4. I thought it was funnier because Paddington had to keep repeating to the doctor.

#### School C - Boys

1. The bear acted like people and the man ate the pea.
2. Both stories used funny words and used them where they were needed.

#### School D - Girls

1. The first one was funny because of the bear. Two was funny because he never missed.
2. I don't think many of the books I've read are about table manners.

#### School D - Boys

1. Alligator Case because when he was hitting the peas.
2. The doctor tried to get rid of him.

#### School E - Girls

1. When Paddington was sitting on the couch he would say the words so funny like.
2. Both the same because I liked the first one because he kept shooting back the words and the other one because he could shoot peas good.

#### School E - Boys

1. The way the bear kept saying things.
2. The third one was funny but not foolish.
3. Because it made the doctor mad.

4. Because the last one was too foolish.
5. When Paddington was playing that game with the psychiatrist.

School F - Girls

1. Because not very often do you see someone batting peas like that.
2. The one about Paddington was funnier because he kept on saying the opposite.
3. Because they were both silly.
4. I liked the Alligator Case because the guy was funny.

School F - Boys

1. Because when the guy hit that pea up into the air and caught it with his mouth.
2. Because he batted the peas in his mouth.
3. The way he ate pork chops and peas.
4. Because no one eats like that.
5. The way he eats and running into a psychiatrist.
6. Mr. Fish ate queer.

## APPENDIX E

### Comments of Students Recorded

#### Following the Listening to the Humorous Stories

This appendix lists the comments recorded by the researcher following the playing of the humorous selections. The conversations are organized by the questions used to facilitate the discussions and according to the classes of schools used.

Question -- What do you think makes a story funny?

Replies -- Inner-City Children

1. Jokes.
2. When a person does stupid things.
3. When she did anything she wanted to as Pippi Longstocking did.
4. When she stuck her face in the food.
5. Greediness, selfishness.
6. Clumsiness, being sneaky.
7. Always having smart remarks.
8. The stupid side of everything.
9. When you have characters like bears that don't talk and when they do they say funny things. You know they can't talk.
10. Something happening all the time.

11. Joke after joke.
12. The characters.
13. Vocabulary words.
14. The feelings.
15. What the characters do.
16. The situations, how everything works out.
17. The way they act.
18. The ridiculous things that kids do.
19. The title.
20. When the lady fell in the water and they couldn't get her out.
21. The things that the characters do.
22. Trying to get help, somebody throws something.
23. When the characters are funny.
24. The people and how they act.
25. Imagining things.
26. The pictures, illustrations.
27. The words.
28. People won't be able to say the long words right.
29. What the characters do and say.
30. Good rhyming words.
31. The way the characters act and talk.

Replies -- Suburban Children

1. People goofing up, getting into trouble.
2. The words that are used.

3. When two people get involved, they start doing something, it gets in a big commotion, they get into trouble.
4. Something goes wrong in the plot.
5. The story is like a mystery and it turns into a joke.
6. Something that is strange.
7. The way it's written.
8. An action of some kind when someone falls or trips.
9. The words, the way it is put.
10. The way the characters act.
11. The title.
12. The actions of the characters.
13. The way something is done.
14. Exaggeration.
15. Funny jokes.
16. Twisted jokes.
17. Saying the opposite words.
18. The characters.
19. The way they act.
20. The way they talk.
21. What they do.

Replies -- Rural Children

1. Funny words.
2. Funny happenings.
3. Jokes.
4. Some illustrations make stories funny.

5. Throwing pies back and forth.
6. It depends on what you like to read about.
7. The way he ate the peas and the way he ordered the waiter around.
8. Eat your words. It had all these sayings that you say in everyday life.
9. When it said the pork chop has paper panties.
10. How they word it.
11. How they say it.
12. How they tell it.
13. How it is punctuated.
14. If someone believed in good table manners they wouldn't think the one about the peas was funny.
15. A little bit of mystery, action, and excitement mixed in.
16. Something that doesn't make sense.
17. People say ridiculous things.
18. People make cracks.
19. When they say you're supposed to eat your words.
20. Humpty Dumpty, how he falls and then they can't put him back together.
21. The way it's told.
22. The words that are used.
23. The way it is presented.
24. The way the lady fell in the water.
25. Something odd or weird.
26. The characters.
27. Unusual things.

28. Things out of the ordinary.
29. Taking sayings and making them sound as if they're knocking them.
30. Wisecracks.
31. Animals coming to life.
32. All kinds of jokes.
33. Talk funny, the way they make ready.
34. Guys making other guys shut up.
35. Something they don't expect like they ask something and get something they don't even want.
36. People who think they're real big, high rank, somebody does something to them to show them up.

Question -- Have you been able to find many humorous books to read? If so, where and what books did you find?

Almost all the answers to this question were in the negative. The children answered over and over again that there aren't many humorous books available and that they would read them if they could find them. Among the few titles mentioned were Henry and Beezus, Pippi Longstocking, and the Charlie Brown books. A few individual replies follow.

Replies -- Inner-City Children

1. There aren't many humorous books. It's not the style. Publishers, all they make is sex books and books like that. That's the style today.
2. Not enough humorous books.
3. Can't find many books.
4. There should be more humorous ones.



5. Can't find many books. Would like to see more funny ones.
6. Can't find too many. About the only funny books are the comics.
7. Kids would enjoy funny books.
8. Think there should be more funny stories.
9. Kids would read them.
10. Once in awhile.

Replies -- Suburban Children

1. No, can't find books.
2. Not many around.
3. Should be more books in our language.
4. I like sad books more.
5. Not many books around, should be more humorous books.
6. Hard to find.
7. Kids like humorous books, mysterious.

Replies -- Rural Children

1. No.
2. No humorous books around.
3. Anything that's funny has maybe twenty-six pages and words about that big. (Used fingers to illustrate very small words.)
4. You have to find a good baby book if you want an interesting one.
5. Hardly any humorous books around.
6. Yes, there should be more humorous stories to read.
7. Hard to find funny books.

8. Should have kids give the ideas for books.
9. Can't find many.
10. Mostly cartoon books.
11. Would like more funny books.

Questions -- How do you think the reading of humorous books affects the way people feel after reading them?

There was a general consensus of opinion that reading funny books made a person feel better. A few of the more thoughtful replies are summarized below.

Replies -- Inner-City Children

1. You feel happy after hearing humorous stories.
2. After reading a sad book you feel sad.
3. After reading a funny book I laugh a lot. I tell the teacher about it and she laughs too. I remember it.
4. Some people would feel good, some people wouldn't.
5. We had a teacher last year who made jokes. We learned a lot.
6. You need funny books because all your life will be settling down.
7. Sometimes the books go too far.
8. Puts you in a better mood.

Replies -- Suburban Children

No really precise comments were made by these children except to say that humorous stories would help make people feel better.

**Replies -- Rural Children**

1. They make you feel better.
2. If they're unhappy when they read them they might feel better.
3. To relax, read humorous books.
4. It depends on how they take the story.

## APPENDIX F

### Annotation and Categorization of Humorous Books for Middle Grade Children

A total of 199 humorous books with an interest level that generally varied from grade two through grade seven were identified for this study. Identification was made from book reviews in Book List and Subscription Review from 1937 through 1971 and in the 1970 edition of The Elementary School Library Collection. Of the 199 identified books, 193 were eventually located and read.

Of these 193 books, nineteen were not considered truly humorous. The 174 remaining books were categorized into contemporary and fantasy type humor, folk tales and tall tales, and collections of humorous works. These broad divisions were sub-divided into humor that was basically action humor, word humor, or action and word humor. In the investigator's opinion the books thus categorized were truly representative of humor of action or humor of words. Of the 174 books, 140 considered the most truly humorous and worthwhile literature were annotated. Thirty-four books were not annotated because in the investigator's opinion they contained humor considered in poor taste or of an inconsequential amount to be classified as humorous selections.

Contemporary and Fantasy Type HumorBasically Humor of Action

<u>Author</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Interest Level</u> <u>(Years)</u>
Aiken, Joan	<u>Armitage, Armitage,</u> <u>Fly Away Home</u>	9 - 13
Anderson, Mildred N.	<u>A Gift for Merimond</u>	8 - 10
Atwater, Richard and Florence	<u>Mr. Popper's Penguins</u>	7 - 11
Ball, Zachary (Masters)	<u>Sputters</u>	10 - 13
Beatty, Jr., Jerome	<u>Bob Fulton's Amazing</u> <u>Soda-Pop Stretcher</u>	9 - 12
Bell, Norman	<u>The Weightless Mother</u>	9 - 12
Bishop, Claire H.	<u>The Man Who Lost His Head</u>	5 - 8
Botemps, Anna and Conroy, Jack	<u>The Fast Sooner Hound</u>	5 - 9
	<u>Slappy Hooper, The</u> <u>Wonderful Sign Painter</u>	7 - 10
Brock, Emma L.	<u>Three Ring Circus</u>	7 - 10
	<u>The Topsy Turvy Family</u>	6 - 9
Brown, Jeff	<u>Flat Stanley</u>	6 - 10
Butterworth, Oliver	<u>The Enormous Egg</u>	8 - 12
	<u>The Trouble With</u> <u>Jenny's Bar</u>	9 - 12
Carlson, Natalie (Savage)	<u>Alphonse - That Bearded One</u>	8 - 11
	<u>Carnival in Paris</u>	8 - 10

Carlson, Ruth C.	<u>Mr. Pudgins</u>	8 - 10
Carroll, Ruth and Latrobe	<u>The Flying House</u>	8 - 10
Chaikin, Miriam	<u>Ittki Pittki</u>	7 - 10
Chalmer, Audrey	<u>Hundreds and Hundreds of Pancakes</u>	5 - 10
Cleary, Beverly	<u>Beezus and Ramona</u>	6 - 10
	<u>Ellen Tebbits</u>	8 - 10
	<u>Henry and Beezus</u>	8 - 10
	<u>Henry and Ribsy</u>	8 - 10
	<u>Henry and the Clubhouse</u>	8 - 10
	<u>Henry and the Paper Route</u>	8 - 10
	<u>Henry Huggins</u>	8 - 10
	<u>The Mouse and the Motorcycle</u>	8 - 11
	<u>Otis Spofford</u>	7 - 10
	<u>Ramona the Pest</u>	7 - 10
	<u>Ribsy</u>	8 - 10
Corbett, Scott	<u>The Disappearing Dog Trick</u>	8 - 11
	<u>Ever Ride a Dinosaur?</u>	8 - 11
	<u>The Hairy Horror Trick</u>	8 - 11
	<u>The Hateful, Plateful Trick</u>	8 - 11
	<u>The Lemonade Trick</u>	8 - 11
	<u>The Mailbox Trick</u>	8 - 11
	<u>Steady, Freddie</u>	8 - 11
Cowley, Jay	<u>Duck in the Gun</u>	7 - 9
Dahl, Roald	<u>Charlie and the Chocolate Factory</u>	8 - 12
Dubois, William Pene	<u>The Great Geppy</u>	7 - 11
	<u>Otto and the Magic Potatoes</u>	7 - 11
Estes, Eleanor	<u>The Sun and the Wind and Mr. Toad</u>	6 - 9
Fleischman, Sid	<u>By the Great Horn Spoon</u>	9 - 13
	<u>Longbeard the Wizard</u>	5 - 8
	<u>Mr. Mysterious and Co.</u>	8 - 12
Garnett, Eve	<u>The Family from One End Street and Some of Their Adventures</u>	9 - 13
Graham, Benzell	<u>That Big Broozer</u>	7 - 10

Gray, Nicholas S.	<u>The Apple Stone</u>	9 - 13
Haywood, Carolyn	<u>Betsy's Busy Summer</u>	7 - 9
	<u>Eddie and His Big Deals</u>	7 - 9
	<u>Eddie and the Fire Engine</u>	7 - 9
	<u>Eddie Makes Music</u>	7 - 9
	<u>Eddie's Green Thumb</u>	7 - 9
	<u>Eddie's Pay Dirt</u>	7 - 9
	<u>Eddie the Dog Holder</u>	7 - 9
Henderson, Legrand	<u>Augustus and the Mountains</u>	7 - 10
	<u>Augustus and the River</u>	7 - 10
Lawson, Robert	<u>Ben and Me</u>	8 - 11
	<u>The Fabulous Flight</u>	8 - 11
	<u>Mc'Whinney's Jaunt</u>	8 - 11
	<u>Mr. Revere and I</u>	8 - 13
Leaf, Murno	<u>Sam and the Superdroop</u>	9 - 11
Lewellen, John	<u>Tee Vee Humphrey</u>	8 - 11
Lindgren, Astrid	<u>Emil in the Soup Tureen</u>	7 - 10
	<u>Emil's Pranks</u>	7 - 10
	<u>Mischievous Meg</u>	8 - 11
	<u>Pippi Goes on Board</u>	8 - 11
Lord, Beman	<u>The Perfect Pitch</u>	7 - 9
	<u>The Trouble With Francis</u>	7 - 9
MacDonald, Betty	<u>Mrs. Piggle-Wiggle</u>	7 - 10
MacGregor, Ellen	<u>Miss Pickerell and the Geiger Counter</u>	8 - 10
Mc'Closkey, Robert	<u>Centerbury Tales</u>	9 - 11
Malone, Mary	<u>Here's Howie</u>	8 - 12
Meyer, Franklyn E.	<u>Me and Caleb</u>	8 - 13
	<u>Me and Caleb Again</u>	8 - 13
Mowat, Farley	<u>The Dog Who Wouldn't Be</u>	10 - Up
	<u>Owls in the Family</u>	9 - Up
North, Sterling	<u>Greased Lightning</u>	7 - 9
Paine, Albert B.	<u>Arkansaw Bear</u>	8 - 10
Parkinson, Ethelyn M.	<u>Good Old Archibald</u>	8 - 12

Petrie, Stuart	<u>The Voyage of the Barracks</u>	8 - 11
Proysen, Alf	<u>Mrs. Pepperpot in the Magic Wood</u>	7 - 9
Rinkoff, Barbara	<u>Albert, the Mind Reader</u>	8 - 12
Robertson, Keith	<u>Henry Reed, Inc.</u>	9 - 13
	<u>Henry Reed's Baby Sitting Service</u>	9 - 13
Robinson, Tom	<u>Trigger John's Son</u>	9 - 13
Seldon, George	<u>The Cricket in Times Square</u>	7 - 11
Shura, Mary F.	<u>Simple Spigott</u>	7 - 10
Slobodkin, Louis	<u>The Spaceship Under the Apple Tree</u>	8 - 10
Spearing, Judith	<u>Ghosts Who Went to School</u>	7 - 11
Steele, Mary D.	<u>Miss Osborne the Mop</u>	8 - 11
	<u>A Wild Goose Tale</u>	8 - 12
Stong, Phil	<u>High Water</u>	7 - 11
	<u>Honk the Moose</u>	7 - 11
Turnbull, Agnes S.	<u>Elijah the Fishbite</u>	7 - 10
Wickenden, Dan	<u>The Amazing Vacation</u>	9 - 11
Wilkins, Mary E.	<u>The Pumpkin Giant</u>	6 - 9
Williams, Jan and Abrashkin, Raymond	<u>Danny Dunn and the Anti-Gravity Paint</u>	8 - 11
	<u>Danny Dunn and the Weather Machine</u>	8 - 11
Williams, Jay	<u>Philbert the Fearful</u>	7 - 10
	<u>The Practical Princess</u>	6 - 10
	<u>The Silver Whistle</u>	6 - 10
Wilson, Hazel	<u>Herbert</u>	8 - 11
Wood, Esther	<u>Silk and Satin Lane</u>	7 - 10
Yolen, Jane	<u>Hobo Toad and the Motorcycle Gang</u>	8 - 11



Contemporary and Fantasy Type HumorBasically Humor of Words

<u>Author</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Interest Level</u> <u>(Years)</u>
Babbitt, Natalie	<u>The Search for Delicious</u>	9 - 13
Cameron, Polly	<u>The Green Machine</u>	5 - 8
Juster, Norton	<u>The Phantom Tollbooth</u>	10 - Up
Kilian, Crawford	<u>Wonders, Inc.</u>	8 - 11
Nash, Ogden	<u>The Cruise of the</u> <u>Aardvark</u>	7 - Up
Parish, Peggy	<u>Amelia Bedelia</u>	5 - 8
Raskin, Ellen	<u>The Mysterious</u> <u>Disappearance of Leon</u> <u>(I Mean Noel)</u>	9 - 13
Thurber, James	<u>The Wonderful O</u>	11 - Up

Contemporary and Fantasy Type Humor  
Humor Containing Elements Based  
On Action and Words

<u>Author</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Interest Level</u> ( <u>Years</u> )
Bond, Michael	<u>Paddington Goes to Town</u>	8 - 11
Carlson, Natalie S.	<u>Hortense: The Cow for a Queen</u>	7 - 10
Corbett, Scott	<u>The Limerick Trick</u>	9 - 11
DuBois, William P.	<u>The Alligator Case</u> <u>Porko Von Popbutton</u>	8 - 11 8 - 11
Fleischman, Albert S.	<u>Chancy and the Grand Rascal</u>	8 - 13
Haywood, Carolyn	<u>Ever-Ready Eddie</u> <u>Little Eddie</u>	7 - 9 5 - 9
Lawson, Robert	<u>Mr. Twigg's Mistake</u>	8 - 11
Lindgren, Astrid	<u>Pippi Longstocking</u>	8 - 11
Mc'Closkey, Robert	<u>Homer Price</u>	8 - 12
Merrill, Jean	<u>The Pushcart War</u>	10 - 13
Peet, Bill	<u>Hubert's Hair-Raising Adventure</u> <u>Randy's Dandy Lions</u>	5 - 8 K - 8
Selden, George	<u>Tucker's Countryside</u>	8 - 12
Stolz, Mary	<u>Siri the Conquistador</u>	5 - 10
Williams, Jay and Abrashkin, Raymond	<u>Danny Dunn and the Homework Machine</u>	8 - 11

Folk Tales, Tall Tales  
All Basically Action Type Humor

<u>Author</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Interest Level</u> <u>(Years)</u>
Amarant, Julius	<u>Tall Baseball Stories</u>	8 - 11
Andersen, Hans C.	<u>The Emperor's New Clothes</u>	6 - 11
Bowman, James C.	<u>Mike Fink</u>	9 - 13
Davis, Robert	<u>Padre Porko, the</u> <u>Gentlemanly Pig</u>	7 - 11
Felton, Harold W.	<u>Bowleg Bill, Seagoing</u> <u>Cowpuncher</u>	9 - 13
	<u>New Tall Tales of Pecos</u> <u>Bill</u>	9 - 13
	<u>True Tall Tales of</u> <u>Stormalong, Sailor of</u> <u>the Seven Seas</u>	8 - 12
Feuerlicht, Roberta S.	<u>The Legends of Paul Bunyan</u>	8 - 12
Fleischman, Sid	<u>Mc'Broom and the Big Wind</u>	7 - 10
Henderson, LeGrand	<u>Matilda</u>	7 - 10
Leskov, Nicholas	<u>The Steel Flea</u>	7 - 10
Mc'Closkey, Robert	<u>Burt Dow: Deep-Water Man</u>	5 - 8
Mc'Govern, Ann	<u>Hee Haw</u>	5 - 8
Rounds, Glen	<u>Ol Paul the Mighty Logger</u>	8 - 11
	<u>The Whistle Punk of Camp 15</u>	8 - 11
Shapiro, Irwin	<u>How Old Stormalong</u> <u>Captured Mocha Dick</u>	8 - 11
	<u>Joe Magarac and His U.S.A.</u> <u>Citizen Papers</u>	9 - 12
	<u>John Henry and the Double-</u> <u>Jointed Steam Drill</u>	8 - 12

Shapiro, Irwin	<u>Steamboat Bill and the Captain's Top Hat</u>	8 - 11
Steele, William O.	<u>Davy Crockett's Earthquake</u>	7 - 10
	<u>The No-Name Man of the Mountain</u>	7 - 11
Turney, Ida Virginia	<u>Paul Bunyan. the Work Giant</u>	7 - 9

Collections of Humorous WorksBasically Humor of Action

<u>Editor or Author</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Interest Level</u> <u>(Years)</u>
Chase, Richard	<u>The Jack Tales</u>	K - Up
Credle, Ellis	<u>Tall Tales from the</u> <u>High Hills</u>	10 - Up
Felton, Harold W.	<u>The World's Most Truthful</u> <u>Man</u>	9 - 13
Hale, Lucretia P.	<u>The Complete Peterkin Papers</u>	10 - Up
Jagendorf, Moritz A.	<u>The Marvelous Adventures of</u> <u>Johnny Darling</u>	10 - Up
Kelsey, Alice G.	<u>Once the Hodja</u>	8 - Up
Shapiro, Irwin	<u>Tall Tales of America</u>	8 - 13
Walters, Maude O.	<u>Clever and Foolish Tales</u> <u>for Children</u>	7 - 13
Withers, Carl	<u>A World of Nonsense</u> <u>(Strange and Humorous</u> <u>Tales from Many Lands)</u>	8 - Up

Collections of Humorous WorksBasically Humor of Words

<u>Editor or Author</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Interest Level</u> <u>(Years)</u>
Green, Roger L.	<u>The Book of Nonsense</u>	10 - Up
Jagendorf, Moritz A.	<u>Tytl Ulenspiegel's</u> <u>Merry Pranks</u>	10 - Up
Love, Katherine	<u>A Little Laughter</u>	All Ages

Collections of Humorous Works  
Humor Containing Elements Based On  
Action and Words

<u>Editor or Author</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Interest Level</u> <u>(Years)</u>
Davis, Mary G.	<u>With Caps and Bells:</u> <u>Humorous Stories to</u> <u>Tell and Read Aloud</u>	7 - Up
Fenner, Phyllis R.	<u>Fools and Funny Fellows</u> <u>Time to Laugh</u>	9 - 13 9 - 13
Jagendorf, M. A.	<u>Noodlehead Stories from</u> <u>Around the World</u>	All Ages
Scoggin, Margaret C.	<u>Chucklebait</u>	11 - Up
Shapiro, Milton J.	<u>A Treasury of Sports Humor</u>	10 - Up
Smith, Helen R.	<u>Laughing Matter</u>	9 - 13
Sturton, Hugh	<u>Zomo the Rabbit</u>	8 - 12
Walker, Barbara K.	<u>Once There Was and Twice</u> <u>There Wasn't</u>	8 - 10

Books Not Annotated Because Humor  
Was Inconsequential or in Poor Taste

<u>Author</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Interest Level</u>
Aiken, Joan	<u>Armitage, Armitage</u> <u>Fly Away Home</u>	8 - 10
Anderson, Mildred N.	<u>A Gift for Merimond</u>	8 - 10
Bishop, Claire H.	<u>The Man Who Lost His Head</u>	5 - 8
Brock, Emma L.	<u>Three Ring Circus</u>	7 - 10
	<u>The Topsy-Turvy Family</u>	6 - 9
Carlsen, Ruth C.	<u>Mr. Pudgins</u>	8 - 10
Carlson, Natalie S.	<u>Carnival in Paris</u>	8 - 10
Carroll, Ruth and Latrobe	<u>The Flying House</u>	8 - 10
Chaikin, Miriam	<u>Ittki Pittki</u>	7 - 10
Cleary, Beverly	<u>Otis Spofford</u>	7 - 10
Fleischman, Sid	<u>Longbeard the Wizard</u>	5 - 8
Garnett, Eve	<u>The Family from One End</u> <u>Street and Some of Their</u> <u>Adventures</u>	9 - 13
Graham, Benzell	<u>That Big Broozer</u>	7 - 10
Gray, Nicholas S.	<u>The Apple Stone</u>	10 - 13
Green, Roger L. (ed.)	<u>The Book of Nonsense</u>	10 - Up
Leaf, Munro	<u>Sam and the Superdroop</u>	9 - 11
Lindgren, Astrid	<u>Mischievous Meg</u>	8 - 11
Lord, Beman	<u>The Trouble with Francis</u>	7 - 10



MacGregor, Ellen	<u>Miss Pickerell and the Geiger Counter</u>	8 - 10
North, Sterling	<u>Greased Lightning</u>	7 - 9
Paine, Albert B.	<u>Arkansaw Bear</u>	8 - 10
Petrie, Stuart	<u>The Voyage of the Barracks</u>	8 - 11
Proysen, Alf	<u>Mrs. Pepperpot in the Magic Wood</u>	7 - 10
Robinson, Tom	<u>Trigger John's Son</u>	9 - 13
Scoggin, Margaret C. (ed.)	<u>Chucklebait</u>	11 - Up
Shura, Mary F.	<u>Simple Spigott</u>	7 - 10
Slobodkin, Louis	<u>The Space Ship Under the Apple Tree</u>	8 - 10
Stolz, Mary	<u>Siri the Conquistador</u>	6 - 10
Stong, Phil	<u>High Water</u>	7 - 11
Turnbull, Agnes S.	<u>Elijah the Fishbite</u>	7 - 10
Wilkins, Mary E.	<u>The Pumpkin Giant</u>	6 - 9
Williams, Jay	<u>The Silver Whistle</u>	6 - 10
Wilson, Hazel	<u>Herbert</u>	8 - 11
Wood, Esther	<u>Silk and Satin Lane</u>	7 - 10

Books Not Recommended  
as Humorous Books

(The little humor that these books did contain was action type humor except for that contained in This Boy Cody which consisted of humor generated by riddles.)

<u>Author</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Interest Level</u> <u>(Years)</u>
Best, Allena C.	<u>One String Fiddle</u>	7 - 9
Blough, Glenn C.	<u>The Monkey With a Notion</u>	7 - 10
Clymer, Eleanor	<u>Chester</u>	8 - 10
Cone, Molly	<u>Mishmash</u>	7 - 10
Dolbier, Maurice	<u>The Magic Shop</u>	6 - 9
Faralla, Dana	<u>The Wonderful Flying-Go-Round</u>	8 - 11
Foster, John	<u>Marco and the Tiger</u>	8 - 11
Gage, Wilson	<u>Mike's Toads</u>	6 - 9
Hodges, Margaret	<u>What's for Lunch, Charley?</u>	6 - 9
Jackson, Charlotte	<u>Tito: The Pig of Guatemala</u>	7 - 9
Kendall, Carol	<u>The Big Splash</u>	9 - 12
MacGregor, Ellen	<u>Miss Pickerell Goes to the Arctic</u>	8 - 10
	<u>Miss Pickerell Goes Undersea</u>	8 - 10
Mackellar, William	<u>The Smallest Monster in the World</u>	7 - 10
Moore, Lilian	<u>The Snake That Went to School</u>	6 - 9

Nash, Mary	<u>While Mrs. Coverlet Was Away</u>	8 - 10
Stockton, Frank R.	<u>The Bee-Man of Orn</u>	5 - Up
Stong, Phil	<u>Captain Kidd's Cow</u>	9 - 11
Wilson, Leon	<u>This Boy Cody</u>	8 - 10

Humorous Books IdentifiedBut Unable to Locate

<u>Author</u>	<u>Title and Publisher</u>
Casserley, Anne	<u>Barney the Donkey</u> Harper, Row and Co., 1938
Catling, Patrick	<u>The Chocolate Touch</u> William Morrow, 1952
Lindsay, Maud	<u>Jock Barefoot</u> Lothrop, 1939
Stong, Philip	<u>Cowhand Goes to Town</u> Dodd, 1939
Webb, Wheaton P.	<u>Uncle Swithin's Inventions</u> Holiday House, 1947
Winter, William	<u>The Secret World of Og</u> Little, Brown, and Co., 1962

## Annotations of Recommended

### Humorous Books

1. Amarant, Julius (author)      Tall Baseball Stories  
No Illustrations      Interest Level 8-10 years

This is a hilarious collection of tall tales of the baseball games between the Lightfoot Lilies and the Ringtail Roarers as told by Wee Willie Little who himself was anything but little. An example of the tales would be that of Dean Braley, the pitcher who was so lazy that every time he crossed the foul line he tripped over it because he was too lazy to lift his feet.

2. Andersen, Hans Christian (author)  
Erik Blegvad, Illustrator      The Emperor's New Clothes  
Interest Level 5-9 years

Andersen's classic of the king who is fooled by swindlers who pretend to be great tailors lives again in this adaptation. The parade which the king leads while nude is the highlight of the tale. Even the Chamberlains pretend to carry the king's train. More for younger readers although even older youngsters should enjoy it.

3. Atwater, Richard and Florence (authors)  
Robert Lawson, Illustrator      Mr. Popper's Penguins  
Interest Level 7-11 years

Mr. Popper is a house painter interested in the Polar regions. He receives a penguin as a gift from an admiral friend which is later joined by a second penguin. Soon ten more are on the scene. Confusion reigns and finally the penguins are relegated to the basement. The penguins eventually become hits in show business. Contains good action humor.

4. Babbitt, Natalie (author)      The Search for Delicious  
Babbitt, Illustrator      Interest Level 9-13 years

The kingdom is in an uproar over the dictionary being written by the prime minister. No one can agree on a definition for the word delicious. The king's

messenger, Gaylen, is sent on a journey to take a census of what the people feel the word delicious means to them. Fine use of words to promote fun.

5. Ball, Zachary (Masters) (author)  
Leonard Shortall, Sputters  
Illustrator Interest Level 10-15 years

Great action humor in this story about Jase, an orphan boy, and his dog, Sputters. Jase lives with Lute, the county sheriff, who has adopted him. Together they hunt for moonshiners.

6. Beatty, Jr., Jerome (author) Bob Fulton's Amazing  
Graham Wilson, Soda-Pop Stretcher  
Illustrator Interest Level 8-12 years

Bob Fulton's soda-pop stretcher blows up producing a goo that reduces friction. Lots of fun occurs as the government reproduces the machine and two little old lady spies try to steal the secrets. Bob's father is a bumbling steamboat captain who inadvertently leads an enemy sub into a sandbar.

7. Bell, Norman (author) The Weightless Mother  
W. J. Mars, Illustrator Interest Level 8-12 years

Dr. Flippin is the typical absent-minded professor. Mrs. Flippin has her problems with the children. One day she takes some of her husband's weightless pills by mistake and becomes weightless. Wild action ensues. The story line contains much physical action humor such as tripping, falling, spilling things, and breaking items.

8. Bond, Michael (author) Paddington Goes to Town  
Peggy Fortoum, Illustrator Interest Level 8-11 years

This book is one in a series about Paddington, the problem making bear with the human characteristics. A great play on words takes place in the third chapter as Paddington utterly confuses a psychiatrist.

9. Bontemps, Arna and Conroy, Jack (authors)  
Virginia Lee Burton The Fast Sooner Hound  
Illustrator Interest Level 5-9 years

Sooner was a dog that could outrun any train just to be near his master. The roadmaster finally has

to allow the dog to ride in the engine with his master so as not to disgrace the trains by outrunning them. Great for younger readers.

10. Bontemps, Arna and Conroy, Jack (authors) Slappy Hooper, The Wonderful Sign Painter  
 Ursula Koering, Illustrators  
 Interest Level 7-10 years

Slappy Hooper painted signs so realistically that he always got into trouble. His sign of a hot stove was so real that it burned down a house next to the sign. Even older readers would appreciate the story of the bread sign that looked so life-like that the birds broke off their bills trying to eat it. The humane society forced the removal of the sign!

11. Bowman, James C. (author) Mike Fink  
 Leonard E. Fisher, Illustrators  
 Interest Level 9-13 years

Bowman's book contains the basic criteria of an American tall tale, exaggerations, swaggering heroes, and poker-faced humor. The illustrations graphically portray the characters in the stories. Progress changed the role of the keelboat and even Mike had to acknowledge this fact.

12. Brown, Jeff (author) Flat Stanley  
 Tomi Ungerer, Illustrators  
 Interest Level 6-10 years

Stanley Lambchop is flattened by a bulletin board to a thickness of half an inch. He is so thin that his brother uses him as a kite. The illustrations add to the hilarity.

13. Butterworth, Oliver (author) The Enormous Egg  
 Louis Darling, Illustrators  
 Interest Level 8-12 years

Nate Twitchell's hen lays a huge egg which hatches into a triceratops. The dinosaur grows rapidly and has to be taken to Washington, D.C. Book contains an excellent satire of U.S. Congressmen and their attempts to have the dinosaur killed to save money.

14. Butterworth, Oliver (author) The Trouble With Jenny's Ear  
 Julian de Miskey, Illustrators  
 Interest Level 9-12 years

Jenny's brothers Joe and Stanley are electronic bugs and through an accident cause Jenny to be able to hear people's thoughts. Her new talent enables her to

win \$100,000 in a quiz program. An especially humorous part occurs in the chapter describing how the children learn by television in their classroom.

15. Cameron, Polly (author) The Green Machine  
 Conseulo Joerns, Illustrator Interest Level 5-8 years

The green machine, a fancy sports car, roars through the garden, crashes into the brook, then is pushed out by the trout. Humor is based on rhyming words such as "Use your nose said the rose," and "Be gentle said the lentil." Young children should enjoy the sounds of the rhyming words.

16. Carlson, Natalie Savage (author)  
 Nicolos, Illustrator Alphonse - That Bearded One  
 Interest Level 8-11 years

This is the hilarious story of Alphonse the bear who is passed off as a human by his master. Alphonse was even taken as a conscript into the French army. Poor Alphonse volunteers for spy duty by accident.

17. Carlson, Natalie Savage (author)  
 Nicolas, Illustrator Hortense: the Cow for a Queen  
 Interest Level 7-10 years

Hortense was a French cow stolen by pirates. She winds up in Africa where a French botanist mistakes her for a gnu. One of the Frenchman's notes concerning Hortense read, "Although gnus are very fierce in their natural state, they are easily tamed. Their milk tastes much like that of a cow."

18. Chalmers, Audrey (author) Hundreds and Hundreds of Pancakes  
 Chalmers, Illustrator Interest Level 5-9 years

The Fizzlewits live next to the zoo. A hurricane frees the animals who come to the Fizzlewits looking for food. Mrs. Fizzlewit makes hundreds of pancakes for the animals who eat until they fall asleep. The keepers then move them back to their cages. Written for primary children's enjoyment.



19. Chase, Richard (editor) The Jack Tales  
 Berkeley Williams, Jr., Interest Level 6-Up  
 Illustrator

The Jack Tales is a collection of Appalachian folk tales with Jack as the central figure, the hero more or less. Many of the stories are similar in story line to the old tales such as "Jack and the Bean Stalk," here called "bean tree." True to tall tale tradition Jack accomplishes feats such as shooting a deer, a flock of wild turkeys, a rabbit, and a hive full of honey with one shot.

Cleary, Beverly

Cleary has written many very humorous stories, mostly about Henry Huggins, a young boy, his dog Ribsy, and his friends. They are usually most appropriate for youngsters in the 8-11 year age bracket. A good sampling is annotated below.

20. Cleary, Beverly (author) Beezus and Ramona  
 Louis Darling, Illustrator Interest Level 6-10 years

Beezus has his problems with Ramona but learns that it is not unusual to have moments of love for her. Ramona stirs up lots of action by doing things such as locking Ribsy in the bathroom and taking one bite out of each apple in a box of apples.

21. Cleary, Beverly (author) Ellen Tebbits  
 Louis Darling, Illustrator Interest Level 8-10 years

Ellen meets a new girl, Austine, and finds that they have something in common. They both are made to wear long underwear! Many young girls with similar problems might find satisfaction in how the girls resolve their worries.

22. Cleary, Beverly (author) Henry and Beezus  
 Louis Darling, Illustrator Interest Level 8-10 years

The story revolves around Henry's efforts to obtain a new bicycle. He overcomes many difficulties such as Ribsy taking the neighbors' newspapers, Ribsy stealing the neighbor's roast, and Beezus bidding on a girls' bike for Henry at the police auction. Henry has a terrible time riding a bargain bike.

23. Cleary, Beverly (author) Henry and Ribsy  
 Louis Darling, Illustrator Interest Level 8-10 years

Henry has a problem keeping Ribsy out of trouble so that he can go salmon fishing with his dad. Other things go wrong too especially when he gets his hair cut by his mother and father.

"Oops!" said Mr. Huggins.

"What do you mean oops?" demanded Henry crossly. Boys with the current long hair styles might not find Henry's predicament too amusing!

24. Cleary, Beverly (author) Henry and the Clubhouse  
 Louis Darling, Illustrator Interest Level 8-10 years

Henry and his buddies get a clubhouse built from scrap lumber. The clubhouse becomes a jail for Henry when Ramona locks him in. Good laughable incidents occur when Henry goes for a ride in a bath tub in Mr. Grumbie's truck and Ribsy goes trick or treating complete with a wolf mask.

25. Cleary, Beverly (author) Henry and the Paper Route  
 Louis Darling, Illustrator Interest Level 8-10 years

In this episode of Henry Huggins, Henry wants his own paper route, but is not supposed to have one until he is eleven years old. He finally realizes his goal when the neighbor "brain," Bryon Murphy, gives up his route because he can't cope with Ramona. Ramona's delivering papers adds to the fun.

26. Cleary, Beverly (author) Henry Huggins  
 Louis Darling, Illustrator Interest Level 8-10 years

This is the book in which Henry finds his dog Ribsy, so named because he was so skinny. Humor of action abounds; Henry gets hundreds of guppies, digs for night crawlers, and gets covered with green paint at the Christmas play practice.

27. Cleary, Beverly (author) The Mouse and the Motorcycle  
 Louis Darling, Illustrator Interest Level 8-10 years

Ralph is a mouse living in an old hotel. His life is enlivened by a young boy, Keith, who has a toy motorcycle. Ralph has a great time riding the cycle around the hotel until the time he winds up in the bed-sheets and has to chew his way out. The mouse's predicaments make an amusing story.

28. Cleary, Beverly (author)      Ramona the Pest  
 Louis Darling, Illustrator      Interest Level 7-10 years

Ramona has her problems in kindergarten, especially one day when she is sent home for pulling another girl's hair. She has other escapades too, her new boots get stuck in the mud, she uses a worm for a ring, doesn't want to go to school when a substitute takes over. Lots of humorous incidents.

29. Cleary, Beverly (author)      Ribsy  
 Louis Darling, Illustrator      Interest Level 8-10 years

Ribsy lets himself out of the family car and gets picked up by strangers. The plot follows the many exploits of Ribsy in trying to get back to his master. The fun revolves around Ribsy as he is given a bubble bath by a well-meaning family, as another woman adopts him and teaches him how to pray and to keep a pipe in his mouth, and as he makes a big play in a high school football game.

30. Corbett, Scott (author)      The Disappearing Dog Trick  
 Paul Galdone, Illustrator      Interest Level 8-11 years

Kirby Maxwell's dog, Waldo, disappears from home without his dog collar. Kirby goes to his chemistry set which he obtained from the mysterious Mrs. Graymalkin and whips up a mixture that acts like a television set, which is then used to try to find Waldo. The following of Waldo leads to much action.

31. Corbett, Scott (author)      Ever Ride a Dinosaur?  
 Mircea Vasiliu, Illustrator      Interest Level 9-11 years

This is the very funny story of Tad Marsh, a middle-aged banker who meets an invisible protosaurus that talks. The two journey to New York City with Tad shrunk to boy size by the powers of the dinosaur.

32. Corbett, Scott (author)      The Hairy Horror Trick  
 Paul Galdon, Illustrator      Interest Level 8-11 Years

Gay, Kirby Maxwell's cousin, mixes up his chemicals so that the trick Kirby and his friend Fenton were going to play on her backfires. Fenton winds up with a mustache, Kirby with a beard, and Waldo the dog, loses his hair. Only a good scare can turn them back to normal.

33. Corbett, Scott (author)      The Hateful, Plateful Trick  
 Paul Galdone, Illustrator      Interest Level 8-11 years

Kirby Maxwell, his friend Fenton, and Gay, Kirby's cousin, use Kirby's old chemistry set given them by Mrs. Graymalkin once again. Things go all wrong and the kids come out smelling like the foods they hate; wieners and saurkraut, corn beef and cabbage, and tomato soup. Waldo smells like apple pie. Mrs. Graymalkin tells them the only way they can get rid of their smells is to eat the food that they smell like.

34. Corbett, Scott (author)      The Lemonade Trick  
 Paul Galdone, Illustrator      Interest Level 8-11 years

Wild mixups occur as a result of a chemical brewed by Kirby Maxwell from an old chemistry set that he received from an old mystery lady, a Mrs. Graymalkin. The chemical has the property to make the person who takes it a very well-behaved individual except in the case of Kirby's friend, Fenton, who is already so good, that the chemical makes him bad.

35. Corbett, Scott (author)      The Limerick Trick  
 Paul Galdone, Illustrator      Interest Level 8-11 years

Kirby Maxwell hopes to win an English bike by winning a poetry contest. He has no inspirations until he meets his little old lady friend, a Mrs. Graymalkin, who tells him of a formula to mix with his chemistry set, then to apply the result to his head. He does this and consequently finds himself talking in limericks. An example of this is when he is at the clubhouse with his tough friend Bumps. Bumps asks Kirby to give him the hammer.

Kirby replies, "Try to use your bean instead! It's big and thick, and it's hard as a brick. So bang in the nails with your head."

36. Corbett, Scott (author)      The Mailbox Trick  
 Paul Galdone, Illustrator      Interest Level 8-11 years

Most of the humor in this Kirby Maxwell yarn occurs as a result of Kirby writing insulting letters to his tough friend Bumps and to his crabby neighbor Mrs. Pembroke and then having his cousin Gay mail the letters which Kirby didn't intend doing. He has a terrible time trying to get the letters back before they are read.

37. Corbett, Scott (author) Steady, Freddie!  
Lawrence Beall Smith, Interest Level 8-11 years  
Illustrator

Donna Wesley finds a frog in her Girl Scout bag after a scout trip to the zoo. She adopts him, names him Freddie, and has all sorts of problems as the frog winds up in a Girl Scout box of cookies.

38. Cowley, Joy (author) Duck in the Gun  
Edward Sorel, Illustrator Interest Level 7-9 years

A duck laid her eggs in a big gun just as the general was ready for war. The war was then postponed until the eggs hatched. The soldiers helped paint the town they were to attack. The war was consequently cancelled because the men didn't want to shoot at the houses they had helped paint. Great for the young reader.

39. Credle, Ellis (editor) Tall Tales from the High Hills  
Richard Bennett, Interest Level 9-and Up  
Illustrator

This is a collection of tales told by an old timer from the Blue Ridge Mountains. An example would be the story "Fighting Rams" in which two rams fight until only their tails are left and even these continue the fight. "The Lake that Flew" was about a lake that froze quite suddenly freezing the geese in the lake. When the fellow in the story fired his gun, the geese got scared, the ice cracked, and they all flew into the air, taking the lake with them.

40. Dahl, Roald, (author) Charlie and the Chocolate  
Joseph Schindelman, Factory  
Illustrator Interest Level 8-12 years

Five children are picked to visit Willie Wonka's fabulous chocolate factory; Augustus Gloop who never stops eating, Violet Beauregarde who never stops chewing gum, the very spoiled Veruca Salt, Mike Teavee who does nothing but watch television, and the poor, but good guy, Charlie Bucket. What happens to them is quite a story which moralizes but is still fun.

41. Davis, Mary Goul (editor) With Cap and Bells  
 Richard Bennett, (Humorous Stories to  
 Illustrator Tell and Read Aloud)  
 Interest Level 7-Up

This collection of humorous tales contains some that are quite ridiculous and others like the "The Jumblies" by Lear and "The Yarn of the Nancy Bell" by W. S. Gilbert. Those with a leaning towards the impossible, way-out stories would find the book of interest.

42. Davis, Robert (editor) Padre Porko, The Gentle-  
 Fritz Eichenberg, manly Pig  
 Illustrator Interest Level 7-11 years

Padre Porko was a kind human-like pig who was always helping others, humans and animals. Eleven tales are in this collection including the one that tells how Padre got the nail out of the horse's hoof, found the buried silver coffee pot, and had problems with a dog that he helped learn to talk. Examples of humor in the stories include that of the boy bully who gets butted by a goat into a wall, then finds a dead mouse and two green caterpillars in his lunch.

43. DuBois, William Pene (author) The Alligator Case  
 DuBois, Illustrator Interest Level 8-11 years

This is the story of a young boy who wants to be a detective. He has an opportunity to detect when three strangers from a circus playing in town try to rob the local hotel. Contains action type humor and a clever use of words as in the sentence, "The register's drawer was out like a Ubangi's lower lip, gaping empty, bare as a bone."

44. DuBois, William Pene (author) The Great Geppy  
 DuBois, Illustrator Interest Level 7-11 years

Geppy, short for Susagep, is a red and white striped horse, hired as a detective to solve robberies taking place in the Bott Circus. Geppy tries tight-rope walking, lion training, and being a freak sea horse without much success. His greatest success is achieved when he is shot out of a cannon. The illustrations add to the fun.

45. DuBois, William Pene (author) Otto and the Magic Potatoes  
 DuBois, Illustrator Interest Level 8-12 years

Otto is a huge dog kidnapped by Baron Bachgammon who wants to examine Otto so that he can discover the secret of growing huge roses and potatoes properly. The roses and potatoes grow huge but the flowers shatter easily and the potatoes are full of water. The potatoes and Otto are used to fight the big fire in the town.

46. DuBois, William Pene (author) Porko Von Popbutton  
 DuBois, Illustrator Interest Level 8-11 years

Pat O'Sullivan Pinkerton is a young glutton who is sent to a private boarding school famous for its hockey team. Here he acquires the name of Porko Von Popbutton because of his appetite and size. Porko becomes a goalie on the hockey team and a big hero in the game against a Canadian school as his bulk melts the ice. The names used in the story add to the fun. Examples are Ben Appetite, Sir Circumference Girth, Blimpy Splitseam, Fatty Unbuckle, John Swillerton Hogwash, and Oink Oink Morchow.

47. Estes, Eleanor (author) The Sun and the Wind and  
 Louis Slobodkin, Mr. Todd  
 Illustrator Interest Level 6-9 years

Mr. Todd was a weatherman who was never right in his predictions. One day after being mauled by the sun and the wind in their famous duel, Mr. Todd came up with the theory that if he predicted rain, it had to rain somewhere, and the same had to be true for other kinds of weather. This made him a big hit at the Weatherman's Convention and his theory became known as the Todd Theory. Good for the very young reader.

48. Felton, Harold W. (author) Bowleg Bill, Seagoing  
 William Moyers, Cowpuncher  
 Illustrator Interest Level 10-14 years

Bowleg Bill is a typical "Tall Tale" and is fun to read. Most youngsters should enjoy Bowleg Bill and his adventures. The illustrations are simple but do match the descriptions well. In this book Bill tames a sea witch, rides a tuna, and in the end marries a beautiful maiden. The reader should enjoy the ridiculous to enjoy the story though.

49. Felton, Harold W. (author) New Tall Tales of Pecos Bill  
William Moyers, Illustrator Interest Level 9-13 years

This is an excellent collection of tall tales about Pecos Bill. Included are the stories of how Bill and Widow Maker jumped the Grand Canyon on the second try, the tail that grew a dog, the stream that moved so fast that it was hot, and the sourdough that was so light that it floated.

50. Felton, Harold W. (author) True Tall Tales of Stormalong:  
Joan Sandin, Illustrator Sailor of the Seven Seas  
Interest Level 8-12 years

The story of Stormalong from his birth on makes for "tall" reading. Once his ship was in such a thick fog that the fish were able to swim in it, and the white cliffs of Dover got white from the soap smeared on his ship so that it could squeeze through the English Channel.

51. Felton, Harold W. (editor) The World's Most Truthful Man  
Leonard E. Fisher, Illustrator Interest Level 9-13 years

These are Ed Grant's stories told to Harold W. Felton in Rangeley, Maine. They are excellent, hilarious tales such as the bear Ed turned inside out, the shot from a gun that followed a partridge around the earth 12,672 times, and the bear with two hides, one inside and one outside.

52. Fenner, Phyllis R. (editor) Fools and Funny Fellows  
Henry C. Pitz, Illustrator Interest Level 9-13 years

Fenner's collection includes a wide variety of tales such as "The Flea" by Ruth Sawyer, "Doctor Know It All" by Wanda Gag, "Stormalong" by Irwin Shapiro, and "Knute, the Giant Bullsnake" by Glen Rounds. Even a tale by the Grimm Brothers is in the book. The stories contain a wide variety of humorous incidents, from the very physical to a play on words.

53. Fenner, Phyllis R. (editor) Time to Laugh  
Henry C. Pitz, Illustrator Interest Level 7-12 years

This collection of twenty tales consists mostly of the fairy or tall tale type. An example would be "Good Sense" a story about a boy who never seemed to do the right thing; he put honey in his pocket, dragged a side of beef on a rope, and let sugar pour out of a sack.



Then there was the wild humor contained in "Ebenezer Never-Could Sneezer," who couldn't sneeze because he had no nose.

54. Feuerlicht, Roberta Strause (editor)  
Kurt Werth, Illustrator      The Legend of Paul Bunyan  
Interest Level 8-12 years

More "outrageous" tall tales are part of this collection in which the Bunyan stories are retold with all their audacity. If anything, the stories are more "outlandish" than ever. Brought into focus are some of Paul's lesser known companions; Benny the smaller ox, Lucy the cow, Mrs. Paul, and Paul's two children, Jean and Teeny. The illustrations are cleverly and amusingly done.

55. Fleischman, Albert S. (author)  
Eric von Schmidt,      Chancy and the Grand Rascal  
Illustrator      Interest Level 8-13 years

Chancy was determined to find his two sisters and brother from whom he was separated after his parents' death. The story line describes Chancy's journey, mostly by river flatboat, and his meeting his uncle, "The Grand Rascal," who is fond of telling tall tales. Humor is developed through physical action and word usage.

56. Fleischman, Sid (author)      By the Great Horn Spoon  
Eric von Schmidt,      Interest Level 9-13 years  
Illustrator

Master Jack Flagg and the butler, Praiseworthy, left Boston on a sailing ship to seek their fortunes in the California gold fields. They needed money for Jack's Aunt Arabella who was in financial trouble. The story contains lots of rollicking adventures; Praiseworthy boxes the mountain ox, Jack winds up with a bushel of neckties but manages to sell them, Jack is bucked off a burro, Praiseworthy knocks the bandit twenty-three feet. Action humor.

57. Fleischman, Sid (author) Mc'Broom and the Big Wind  
Kurth Werth, Illustrator Interest Level 7-9 years

The wind was so strong in this tall tale that it could pluck the feathers off a turkey. It blew Josh Mc'Broom's children high into the sky so that old Josh had to chase after them with his wind plow. He finally threw a rope to the children, they caught it, and were pulled back home. Good for the younger reader.

58. Fleischman, Sid (author) Mr. Mysterious and Co.  
Eric von Schmidt, Illustrator Interest Level 8-12 years

Mr. Mysterious and family, (The Andrew Hacketts), are show people traveling across the United States to San Diego where they hope to settle down. Along the way they give magic shows and have lots of fun. Mr. Mysterious "milks" a chicken, and the town doctor is mistaken for a gangster. On "Abracadabra Day" the children can do whatever they wish without getting spanked.

59. Hale, Lucretia P. (author) The Complete Peterkin Papers  
Hale, Illustrator Interest Level - All Ages

All the Peterkin stories are included in this volume, such as the time the Peterkin family couldn't get their horse to go because they forgot to untie him, the mess they made when moving to a different house, and their attempts at learning various languages. This is a book for the person who likes absurdity.

60. Haywood, Carolyn (author) Betsy's Busy Summer  
Haywood, Illustrator Interest Level 6-9 years

Action humor is employed in the episodic adventures of Betsy during a busy summer. Betsy makes some horrible lemonade, fries eggs on the sidewalk, falls into a muddy hole being dug for a swimming pool, and mixes up her mother's grocery order. The story is designed for the very young reader.

The "Eddie" series by Carolyn Haywood contains many easy reading books about little Eddie and his daily exploits. All the books are simple, contain some humor, and are for the very young reader. A number of books in the series have been read for this investigation.

61. Haywood, Carolyn (author) Eddie and His Big Deals  
 Haywood, Illustrator Interest Level 6-9 years

Little Eddie is making deals in this series book. He wants a printing press that his friend Anna Patricia has and finally trades her a doll for it. Eddie causes some problems with a newspaper he prints which he calls "Hot News." The story is episodic and very easy reading.

62. Haywood, Carolyn (author) Eddie and the Fire Engine  
 Haywood, Illustrator Interest Level 6-9 years

Eddie has some adventures with an old fire engine. He also gets a goat for awhile which eats twenty-two pies from a bakery truck. Humorous incidents include that of Anna Patricia, (Eddie's friend), losing her false teeth in an inkwell. The book is episodic and for the young readers.

63. Haywood, Carolyn (author) Eddie Makes Music  
 Haywood, Illustrator Interest Level 6-9 years

Eddie is determined to get into the school orchestra. He buys an old hand organ, finally his dad buys him a glockenspiel. Eddie does get into the orchestra but at the big concert he winds up as a singer. Humor is present in this easy story in parts such as Anna Patricia getting bird seed into her "heavenly hash" candy.

64. Haywood, Carolyn (author) Eddie's Green Thumb  
 Haywood, Illustrator Interest Level 6-9 years

In this book Eddie and the gang raise vegetables as part of a school project. Eddie has plenty of problems though, with a scarecrow that he made which had a balloon for a head, with his friend Sidney's pet crow, and with a huge watermelon that he grew and subsequently dropped. In the end he manages to win the "Green Thumb" award for his rabbits. This is another easy-to-read Eddie book.

65. Haywood, Carolyn (author) Eddie's Pay Dirt  
Haywood, Illustrator Interest Level 6-9 years

Eddie returns home from a trip out west and brings back more "junk" including a talking parrot, a box of dirt, and a box of rocks. Some of the so-called "junk" turns out to be rather valuable. Eddie has lots of fun with fake snakes. As with others in the series, the book is episodic and simple.

66. Haywood, Carolyn (author) Eddie the Dog Holder  
Haywood, Illustrator Interest Level 6-9 years

Problems arise for Eddie and his friend Annie Pat in their painting project. Annie hopes to paint pictures of dogs and sell the paintings for fifty cents. Eddie is dog holder. On one of the dogs they spill red, white, and blue paint. They also have troubles with a German shepherd who gets away and is captured by the dog catcher. Easy reading for the young child.

67. Haywood, Carolyn (author) Ever-Ready Eddie  
Haywood, Illustrator Interest Level 6-9 years

In this book in the series Eddie serves as a campaign manager for Boodles Cary who is running for student council against Annie Pat Wallace. Buttons, free cookies, tape recorded speeches all add to the fun. Rally Day is a good sample of humor based on physical activity. The book, as are others in the series, is for the young reader.

68. Haywood, Carolyn (author) Little Eddie  
Haywood, Illustrator Interest Level 5-9 years

In this first book in the Eddie series, Eddie is a junk collector, cat collector, dancer, and dog catcher. Some humor is attached to Eddie's misunderstanding of words. Very episodic in its presentation, the book is simple enough for very young readers.

69. Henderson, LeGrand (author) Augustus and the Mountains  
Henderson, Illustrator Interest Level 7-10 years

Pop trades the family houseboat for an old car so that the family can visit Uncle Lem who lives at Piney Pass in the Great Smokies. They complete the journey but not without many difficulties. The old car itself provides lots of fun as it chuggs along. When

the family reaches the mountains it is even driven up a mountain stream. A particularly humorous episode occurs the night that Pop blunders into Augustus's burglar trap and winds up with pots and pans all over his head.

70. Henderson, LeGrand (author) Augustus and the River  
Henderson, Illustrator Interest Level 7-10 years

There is lots of fun and action as Augustus and his family move south on the Mississippi River in their houseboat. Ma's tonic provides a good laugh in this story. One night Augustus and his sister Glorianna decide to put all sorts of things into her tonic. The list includes an ol' egg, a fish, Pop's old pipe, a rotten onion, a red pepper, and coal oil. They figured that since Ma always tasted the tonic first that she would think it so horrible that the kids wouldn't have to take it. The plan backfires! Ma drinks the tonic, then makes the kids drink it too.

71. Henderson, LeGrand (author) Matilda  
Henderson, Illustrator Interest Level 7-11 years

This is the story of Patrick Riley's goat, Matilda, whose habit it was to butt anyone bent over. Matilda was used to keep the sleepy fullback on Columbia University's football team awake either by butting him directly or just through the threat of being butted. This strategy helped Columbia win the big game.

72. Jagendorf, Moritz A. (editor)  
Howard Simon, The Marvelous Adventures of  
Illustrator Johnny Darling  
Interest Level 10-Up

These are the collected tales of Johnny Caesar Cicero Darling, storyteller of the 1800's from New York State. The stories are really way out and include selections such as the one about the pig that Johnny fixed so that it had wheels for back legs. When this pig littered the eleven piglets had two-wheeled carts attached to their middles! Loads of action type humor prevail.

73. Jagendorf, Moritz A. (editor) Noodlehead Stories from  
 Shane Miller, Illustrator Around the World  
 Interest Level - All ages

Sixty-four stories from thirty-six countries make up this collection about Noodleheads or nitwits. The similarity in the stories from country to country is very evident. Samples include "Horse Egg" from India in which the egg was really a watermelon, "Don't Marry Two Wives" in which the women alternate pulling hairs from the husband's head until he is bald, and "Dankeys All," a Syrian tale, that tells of the merchant who kept miscounting his donkeys depending upon whether he was on or off one donkey. Generally the stories are physical-action type humor although a couple tales use a play on words to generate fun.

74. Jagendorf, Moritz A. (editor) Tyll Ulenspiegel's  
 Fritz Eichenberg, Merry Pranks  
 Illustrator Interest Level 10-Up

This is an excellent collection of stories of Tyll Ulenspiegel, the joker, who played his tricks upon the mean, the stingy, and the cruel. He was against the greedy and war-like nature of man. His tricks included convincing a merchant that green cloth was blue, and tricking a bragging innkeeper into showing fear of a dead wolf. There is a great play on words throughout the book.

75. Juster, Norton (author) The Phantom Tollbooth  
 Jules Feiffer, Illustrator Interest Level 10-13 years

This book is rich in its use of words to amuse. Milo went through a tollbooth into a strange land where he met King Azaz, the ruler of Dictionopolis where words were of supreme importance. Milo, Tock the watchdog, and Humbug travel to the Mountains of Ignorance and Island of Conclusions in attempt to rescue Rhyme and Reason. The book requires some sophistication in the understanding of the connotations ever present in language.

76. Kelsey, Alice Geer (editor) Once the Hodja  
 Frank Dobias, Illustrator Interest Level 8-Up

These are humorous Turkish folk tales of the tall tale variety. The Hodja, (teacher, master, or elder), has many escapades such as figuring out what sermons to give on Fridays or how to get out of giving sermons, how he shot his own coat with an arrow because he thought it a robber, and his caring for a pumpkin which he thought was a donkey egg.

77. Kilian, Crawford, (author) Wonders, Inc.  
 John Larrecq, Illustrator Interest Level 8-11 years

Christopher walks into the "Wonders, Inc." factory and sees all kinds of wondrous machines such as the line assembly, the mistake machine, the time making machine, the space mill, and the word department. There is a beautiful play on words throughout the book. The line assembly makes skylines, hairlines, sidelines, borderlines, underlines, timber lines, and by-lines. The mistake machine makes everything from tiny errors to colossal blunders.

78. Lawson, Robert (author) Ben and Me  
 Lawson, Illustrator Interest Level 8-11 years

The story of Ben Franklin as told by his friend Amos the mouse makes for fun reading. Some of the incidents described are those that tell how the Franklin stove was invented and the discoveries having to do with electricity. Amos even supervised the Battle of Versailles, a war between the poor and rich mice. Amos's tinkering with an electric chair almost electrocutes the governor.

79. Lawson, Robert (author) The Fabulous Flight  
 Lawson, Illustrator Interest Level 8-11 years

Peter Peabody Pepperall shrinks to a tiny size as a result of a fall out of an apple tree. While this size he performs a secret mission for the government by stealing a dangerous explosive from a madman in the country of Zargonia. Peter as a result of his size causes moments of humor, for example, when he and his bird friend, Gus, watch a baseball game in Yankee Stadium they shake up the players who think they hear a sea gull talking.

80. Lawson, Robert (author) Mc'Whinney's Jaunt  
Lawson, Illustrator Interest Level 8-11 years

The invention of "Z" gas by Professor Mc'Whinney leads to some wild moments in this story. The "Z" gas, when used in bicycle tires, enables the bike to fly. The professor flies across the country on his bike and even wins a bike race at a country fair in Missouri by skimming right over the tops of the other riders in the race. Lots of fun.

81. Lawson, Robert (author) Mr. Revere and I  
Lawson, Illustrator Interest Level 8-13 years

History is amusingly related in this book. It is the story of Paul Revere as told by his horse, Sherry, formerly a British-owned horse by the name of Scheherazade. Sherry shifts her allegiance from that of a loyal believer in the King of England to a supporter of the American Revolution. The humor is mostly generated by the British officer, Lieutenant Cedric Noel Vivian Barnstable and his ridiculous mannerisms and appearance. The British officers are painted as stupid boobs.

82. Lawson, Robert (author) Mr. Twigg's Mistake  
Lawson, Illustrator Interest Level 8-11 years

When Mr. Twigg goofs at the cereal factory, all of the Vitamin X goes into one box of cereal instead of 6800 boxes. The box in question winds up in the Appleton family where young Squirt Appleton feeds "Bities" to his pet mole. The mole grows to an enormous size accounting for much of the humor in the story.

83. Leskov, Nicholas (author) The Steel Flea  
Janina Domanska, Illustrator Interest Level 7-10 years

It was a miraculous engineering fleet of the Russian gunsmiths at Toola that enabled them to make horseshoes complete with nails for the shoes to fit the amazing microscopic steel flea manufactured by the English. The frantic efforts of General Platorv to have the Russian gunsmiths outdo the English was very amusing.

84. Lewellen, John (author) Tee Vee Humphrey  
Kurth Werth, Illustrator Interest Level 8-11 years

Tee Vee, (Theodosius Valentivius), a fifth grade student, gets a job at a TV Station. Here his problems begin. While taking part in a television show



he gets up too soon after being "shot," and his problems on the "Animal Shop" program with a dog, snake, and monkeys are numerous. Good fun for the middle grader.

85. Lindgren, Astrid (author) Emil in the Soup Tureen  
Bjorn Berg, Illustrator Interest Level 7-10 years

Getting into trouble was five-year-old Emil's specialty. One day he got his head stuck in a soup tureen and another time he hoisted his sister to the top of a flagpole. For all the trouble he caused, Emil did emerge as a hero by foiling a robbery in the bearded lady's tent while at the fair.

86. Lindgren, Astrid (author) Emil's Pranks  
Bjorn Berg, Illustrator Interest Level 7-10 years

Emil is a mischievous boy who usually winds up in the woodshed for some trouble he caused. He is responsible for his father catching his foot in a rat trap, he douses his father with pudding, and he jabs the maid in the stomach who consequently spills batter on the father. Emil even rides his newly acquired horse right into the mayor's house where a party was in progress. Loads of wild action.

87. Lindgren, Astrid (author) Pippi Goes on Board  
Louis S. Glanzman, Illustrator Interest Level 8-11 years

More of Pippi's hilarious adventures are found in this book. She goes on a shopping spree buying out all the toys in the store, has a great time at the fair being a snake charmer and capturing a tiger, and is all set to leave town with her father on a journey to a cannibal island when she decides against it because her friends would miss her so.

88. Lindgren, Astrid (author) Pippi Longstocking  
Louis S. Glanzman, Illustrator Interest Level 8-11 years

This is the first book in the series about Pippi, the happy-go-lucky orphan who lives by herself and does as she pleases. She has great strength and is able to pick up two policemen at a time. Pippi does many other unusual things such as sleeping with her feet on her pillow and making a general mess in her house. She doesn't care for school and learning, but she does like to have fun.

89. Lord, Beman (author) The Perfect Pitch  
 Harold Benson, Illustrator Interest Level 7-9 years

Tommy has trouble as a baseball pitcher. Then he meets a Mr. Watts who is able to grant wishes. The fun begins. The wishes Tommy gets really foul him up. After one wish he pitches wildly so that no one can hit the ball. After another he pitches only perfect strikes so everyone hits it. He finally decides that he is better off without any wishes. The younger reader should enjoy this story.

90. Love, Katherine (editor) A Little Laughter  
 Walter H. Lorraine, Illustrator Interest Level - All ages

All kinds of humor is present in Love's collection of humorous poems. The poems vary from Eleanor Farjeon's "Three Little Puffins" to Ogden Nash's "The Lama". A good sample poem would be "A Sleeper from the Amazon" which went:

A sleeper from the Amazon  
 Put nighties of his gra'mazon  
 The reason, that  
 He was too fat  
 To get his own pajamazon.

91. Mc'Closkey, Robert (author) Burt Dow: Deep-Water Man  
 Mc'Closkey, Illustrator Interest Level 5-9 years

While on a fishing trip Burt Dow convinced a whale to swallow him so that he would be safe from a storm. To get out again is the problem. So Burt smears all sorts of things on the whale's insides; paint, grease, etc., until the whale burps him out. This is a good tall tale with fine illustrations for the young reader.

92. Mc'Closkey, Robert (author) Centerburg Tales  
 Mc'Closkey, Illustrator Interest Level 9-11 years

Centerburg Tales is a collection of short, funny stories about the small town of Centerburg and its many characters. Examples of the fun include Grandpa's story of Sparrow Courthouse where the clock ran so slow that the people mixed up their days and nights, the recording that no one could stop singing, and Duley Dooner's strange seeds which grew into huge ragweed plants. Good for lots of laughs.

93. Mc'Closkey, Robert (author) Homer Price  
 Mc'Closkey, Illustrator Interest Level 8-12 years

Actually Homer Price is a series of six short stories about Homer and his adventures in Centerburg. Included are the doughnut story about the machine that couldn't be stopped from making doughnuts, the famous ball of string contest, and Super-Duper, the cosmic comic who wasn't as strong as he appeared in the movies. Also most of the humor is physical in nature, except for the bungling sheriff who really confuses his words as in "robio raiders."

94. MacDonald, Betty (author) Mrs. Piggle-Wiggle  
 Hilary Knight, Illustrator Interest Level 7-9 years

Basically this is the episodic story of how old Mrs. Piggle-Wiggle helped cure unruly children from quarreling, staying up too late, selfishness, not washing, sassing back, slow eating, and not picking up their toys. Some of the cures are unique such as letting a child get so dirty that you could plant radishes on him. There is lots of action humor in the book and plenty of exaggeration.

95. Mc'Govern, Ann (editor) Hee Haw  
 Eric Von Schmidt, Illustrator Interest Level 5-8 years

Aesop's fables are the basis for this book. An old man and a boy go to market to trade their donkey for three hens. Everyone they meet gives them advice which they foolishly follow. Finally they wind up carrying the donkey. When they put it down the donkey runs away braying "Hee haw." The moral - "When you try to please everyone you please no one, not even yourself." Absurdity type humor is prevalent for the young reader.

96. Malone, Mary (author) Here's Howie  
 Kurt Wiese, Illustrator Interest Level 9-12 years

"Helpful Howie" has many problems trying to be helpful. He tries to help his teacher and the librarian too much. He winds up promising to be a friend to Stanley, nicknamed "Despicable," and this is hard to do since Stanley is an all-around fink. Action humor prevails as Howie makes a mess of a batch of pea soup, wrecks his dad's umbrella, and makes a sign for the library that says, "Shut up. This means you." This doesn't go over too well with the P.T.A.

97. Merrill, Jean (author) The Pushcart War  
 Ronni Solbert, Illustrator Interest Level 10-13 years

The action is great as the pushcarts battle the trucks in New York's Pushcart War. To stop the behemoths the pushcart operators shoot pea tacks into the truck tires. It is a tough struggle but in the end the pushcart operators win concessions from the trucking firms. Lots of chuckles for readers of almost any age.

98. Meyer, Franklyn E. (author) Me and Caleb  
 Lawrence B. Smith, Illustrator Interest Level 9-13 years

This book is highly recommended for good fun. It is the episodic story of Bud and Caleb Wallings. The action includes the hand fishing episode when Caleb catches a water moccasin by mistake; the slugging of Bud by the new tough boy Lawrence; the tricks played on Halloween; (grease on the doorknobs, the garbage slinger); and the visit to the haunted house.

99. Meyer, Franklyn E. (author) Me and Caleb Again  
 Charles Liese, Illustrator Interest Level 9-13 years

The misadventures of Bud and Caleb Wallings are very amusing. They put their sister's bikini on the dog, do good deeds for the town grouch which thoroughly confuses him, and the town's wealthy man is hit in the face with a pie. The book is well-written and fun all the way through.

100. Mowat, Farley (author) The Dog Who Wouldn't Be  
 Paul Galdone, Illustrator Interest Level 10 - Up

This is a beautiful yet hilarious story about a boy, (the author), and his wondrous dog Mutt. The story takes place in Canada, mostly Saskatchewan, in the 1930's. Dozens of funny sections fill the book such as Farley's father washing the dog with bluing; Mutt, the dog, scaring away the ducks on his first hunting expedition; and Mutt retrieving a stuffed bird from the local hardware store.

101. Mowat, Farley (author) Owls in the Family  
 Robert Frankenberg, Interest Level 9-Up  
 Illustrator

Farley obtains two owls as pets, Wol and Weeps. Wol is independent and can be fierce. Weeps is pathetic and never learns to fly. There are many mirthful adventures until the family moves to Toronto, leaving the owls in Saskatchewan. The owls cause some frantic moments in the story such as the time Wol visits school and lands right on the teacher's desk, or the day he flies through an open window and perches on the visiting preacher's shoulder, scaring the minister greatly. This is a well-told story with lots of humor and pathos.

102. Nash, Ogden (author) The Cruise of the Aardvark  
 Wendy Watson, Illustrator Interest Level 7-Up

Nash's delightful rhymes concerning the Aardvark who goes for a cruise on an ark with other animals should capture the interest of readers of various ages. The Aardvark saves the ship from sinking by eating the termites that were eating the ship! An example of humor presented in the book through verse would be the lines:

"He painted the portraits and you can see 'em  
 If ever you find the right museum."

103. Parish, Peggy (author) Amelia Bedelia  
 Fritz Siebel, Illustrator Interest Level 5-8 years

In this book for the younger reader, Amelia is hired by a rich family as maid and cook, but takes her orders too literally. When told to "dust the house," she does just that, covers the house with dust. You can imagine what she does when she is told to "dress a chicken." The book is a fine play on words that should delight the small child.

104. Parkinson, Ethelyn M. (author)  
 Mary Stevens, Good Old Archibald  
 Illustrator Interest Level 8-12 years

Archibald Brewster comes to town after "good old" Ralph Jackson has moved away. Arch is well-dressed and rather sissy-like. The boys try to avoid him but finally discover that he can wrestle and play baseball. Arch learns how to be a "regular" boy. The humor present is generally physical in nature as the time when Arch gets stuck in the clothes chute.

105. Peet, Bill (author)                      Hubert's Hair-Raising  
       Peet, Illustrator                        Adventure  
    Interest Level 5-8 years

Written in verse form, this story generates fun from the rhyming words and the action denoted by the words. The early reader should thoroughly enjoy the predicament of poor Hubert whose mane is burned off. His problem grows when his new mane is trimmed square-shaped. A sample of the rhyming pattern follows:

"So Hubert climbed onto a boulder nearby,  
       Where he sat very still staring up at the sky,  
       While his friends sat around him all ready  
       to shout  
       At the very first sign of his new mane to  
       sprout."

106. Peet, Bill (author)                      Randy's Dandy Lions  
       Peet, Illustrator                        Interest Level 5-9 years

Randy's lions were too shy for the circus act. They did overcome their stage fright and became stars but not before a new, mean lion tamer scared them so that they roared all night and kept everyone up all night. Humor of words is present in the rhyming lines. The action builds from the stupendous act the lions devise. The illustrations help make this a great book for the young reader.

107. Raskin, Ellen (author)                      The Mysterious Disappearance  
       Raskin, Illustrator                        of Leon, (I Mean Noel)  
    Interest Level 9-12 years

The innovative use of words in this game about words and names is decidedly different and fun. The tale itself revolves around the disappearance of Leon or Noel and the clues that are discovered to help find him. There are many wacky statements in the book similar to the following one:

"Mavis Bensonhurst's mother suffered a broken arm when she was hit by a truck. She was wearing a pantsuit at the time, so no one saw her lace underwear."

108. Rinkoff, Barbara (author) Elbert, the Mind Reader  
Paul Galdone, Illustrator Interest Level 8-12 years

Young Elbert Berry is too thin to make the school football team. Things look bad until he has a tooth filled. From then on he is able to tune in radio stations with his tooth. Better yet, after brushing the new filling he can hear people's thoughts. Finally the coach gives Elbert a chance as quarterback in time for the big game. Good fun for the middle grade reader.

109. Robertson, Keith (author) Henry Reed, Inc.  
Robert Mc'Closkey, Illustrator Interest Level 9-13 years

Henry visits his uncle in New Jersey for summer vacation and starts up a business with the neighbor girl, Margaret Glass. The two have many hilarious escapades with Henry's dog, Agony; Mr. Apple, the crabby neighbor; Siegfried, the nosey cat; the big white rabbit; and the hydrogen balloon.

110. Robertson, Keith (author) Henry Reed's Baby-Sitting Service  
Robert Mc'Closkey, Illustrator Interest Level 9-13 years

In the second Henry Reed Book, Henry and Midge again form a business, this time, baby-sitting. The business leads to many ludicrous troubles such as they had with their client Belinda who constantly hid where it was hard to find her, and little Danny, who was liable to try anything. Henry and Midge do manage to get even with the wise-guy teenager, John Sebastian, while he is resting in a hammock.

111. Rounds, Glen (author) Ol' Paul, the Mighty Logger  
Rounds, Illustrator Interest Level 8-10 years

This is one of the better tall tale books told in a whimsical style. It includes the main criteria of a tall tale; exaggeration, outrageous humor, and mighty heroes. The illustrations are clever although in a few instances their placement seems wrong. The tales told include a few not often found in other Bunyan collections such as "Bedcats" and "The Giant Bullsake."

112. Rounds, Glen (author)      The Whistle Punk of Camp 15  
 Rounds, Illustrator      Interest Level 9-12 years

"Whistle Punk" is a newcomer in an American lumber camp. He learns the lumberjack language and how a camp is run. In addition he hears many of the tall tales of the lumbermen, such as that of Paul Bunyan and the vicious "Sidehill Whiffler" which had shorter legs on one side than the other so that it could walk around hills easier.

113. Selden, George (author)      The Cricket in Times Square  
 Garth Williams,      Interest Level 7-11 years  
 Illustrator

Though not strictly a humorous story, there are moments of mirth in this delightful book. Chester, the cricket; Harry, the cat; and Tucker, the mouse; live in a news stand on Times Square. Chester is from Connecticut and misses the country. He becomes the pet of a poor boy, Mario, to whom he demonstrates his great singing ability. A witty part takes place when Chester sings to a greatly surprised piano teacher, Mr. Smedley.

114. Selden, George (author)      Tucker's Countryside  
 Garth Williams, Illustrator      Interest Level 8-12 years

This is a truly beautiful story of how Tucker Mouse, Harry the Cat, and Chester Cricket, along with some children, save a Connecticut meadow from being sub-divided. Inter-woven with the fine story are many moments of action humor and humor of words. Samples of pleasantries include Tucker floundering in the water, Harry being thoroughly spoiled, Tucker being hit with a broom by Mrs. Hadley. An example of words humor follows:

"There," said Tucker. "Finished! How's that for a benign deception?"

"Very good!" said Harry Cat. "As a forgery it's not bad either."

115. Shapiro, Irwin (author)      How Old Stormalong Captured  
 Donald Mc'Kay,      Mocha Dick  
 Illustrator      Interest Level 8-12 years

Shapiro's book is a typically written tall tale, filled with reckless exaggerations. The illustrations are good and closely parallel the story. The story line follows old Stormalong in his attempts to capture the great white whale. Stormy is thwarted at first, so he



takes up farming and cowboying. Eventually he goes back to the sea and bareback rides Mocha Dick.

116. Shapiro, Irwin (author)      Joe Magarac and His U.S.A.  
James Daugherty,                Citizen Papers  
Illustrator                        Interest Level 9-12 years

Joe and his fantastic feats of strength put this book into the tall tale category. After being fired as a steelman, Joe tried coal mining but couldn't stand being away from the mills. After returning to steel work he was melted into a girder and then made part of a government building in Washington D.C. He came out of the girder and threatened some bigoted congressmen. Rather appropriate for today!

117. Shapiro, Irwin (author)      John Henry and the Double-  
James Daugherty,                Jointed Steam Drill  
Illustrator                        Interest Level 8-11 years

Big John Henry defeats the mighty steam drill tunneling into a mountain. He is exhausted, a funeral is held for him, but John is only resting. Later he wears out a steam drill tunneling. The book contains the typical action humor of a tall tale.

118. Shapiro, Irwin (author)      Steamboat Bill and the  
Donald Mc'Kay,                Captain's Top Hat  
Illustrator                        Interest Level 8-11 years

The Whippoorwill went past the Thunderbolt so fast that all that the Thunderbolt crew heard was a roar, and they felt a wind on their faces but didn't see the boat. So goes the action in this Shapiro tale. Steamboat Bill took over the command of the Whippoorwill even though Captain Carter didn't know it. He guided the boat to a new speed record though he had to tear up almost everything on the boat for fuel to keep up the steam. Good fun.

119. Shapiro, Irwin (editor)      Tall Tales of America  
Al Schmidt, Illustrator        Interest Level 8-12 years

Included in this collection of tall tales are stories about Davy Crockett outdancing a comet, Sam Patch jumping into Niagara Falls, and Anthony scaring the Indians by blowing his trumpet. Other stories are about Old Stormalong, Johnny Appleseed, Paul Bunyan, John Henry, Joe Magarac, and Pecos Bill. Children would be familiar with most of the characters except for possibly Sam Patch, the great leaper from Pawtucket,

Rhode Island; and Anthony, the powerful horn blower from New Amsterdam.

120. Shapiro, Milton J. (editor) A Treasury of Sports Humor  
No Illustrations Interest Level 9 - Up

The sports fan from nine to ninety will enjoy this mirthful collection of humorous anecdotes about many well-known athletes. Though most of the stories concern baseball celebrities, many other sports stars from the fields of football, basketball, boxing, golf, track, and ice hockey are featured in the tales related.

121. Smith, Helen R. (editor) Laughing Matter  
Kurt Wiese, Illustrator Interest Level 8-Up

Included in this humorous collection are stories with lots of action and others that depend upon the wording for their jollity. There are stories by the Brothers Grimm, Kipling, Lewis Carroll, and A. A. Milne. In the "Three Sillies" the man didn't know how to put on his pants while the words cause smiles in limericks such as:

A diner while dining at Crewe  
Found quite a large mouse in his stew,  
Said the waiter, Don't shout,  
And wave it about,  
Or the rest will be wanting one too.

122. Spearing, Judith (author) Ghosts Who Went to School  
Marvin Glass, Illustrator Interest Level 7-11 years

The Temples are a ghost family that still live in the old family home. They are invisible but have the power to materialize themselves. Much of the fun comes from their playing tricks and doing things while invisible, for example, a young photographer is shaken when the Templeton family appears on photos that he took in the haunted house.

123. Steele, Mary G. (Gage, Wilson) (author)  
Paul Galdone, Illustrator Miss Osborne - the Mop  
Interest Level 8-11 years

Jody Ransom is unhappy about spending the summer in the mountains with Dill Tracy until she discovers that she has the power to change things or people into what she wants them to be. So she changes a dust mop into a person, the bossy Miss Osborne. Other incidents that cause confusion are Dill being changed into a squirrel, Dill smashing his motorcycle into a tree, and a cat that is turned into a tiger.

124. Steele, Mary G. (Gage, Wilson) (author)  
 Glen Rounds, A Wild Goose Tale  
 Illustrator Interest Level 8-12 years

Actually this is an excellent book on nature that is sprinkled with various comic episodes. Chuck, the main character, mixes up the words hose and hoes, gets himself tangled up with a goose in his fishing line, and mistakes a spider on the lens of his uncle's telescope for a monster.

125. Steele, William O. (author) Davy Crockett's Earthquake  
 Nicolas, Illustrator Interest Level 7-10 years

Ol' Davy goes bear hunting but runs into a comet and earthquake causing him to lose his gear, his hides, meat, and horse, but he makes his way home again. Lots of tall laughs as Davy walks through mud so thick that he has to chop his way through. This is a typical "far-out" incident from the book.

126. Steele, William O. (author) The No-Name Man of the  
 Jack Davis, Illustrator Mountain  
 Interest Level 7-11 years

There is plenty of nonsense in this story of the No-Name boy who lived on top of a mountain, and who was constantly being tricked by his rotten brothers, Creel and Huckabuck. The boy's farm was so small that there wasn't enough air to go around. He was supposedly so ugly that he always wore an onion sack over his head. In the end, No-Name, acquires a name, Pat. Pending, taken off an old chest that he discovers.

127. Stong, Phil (author) Honk the Moose  
 Kurt Wiese, Illustrator Interest Level 7-11 years

It was a bad feed year for wild animals, so Honk the moose wandered into the Finnish Ketonen barn one winter looking for food. The humor of the incident arises over the fact that no one in town seemed to believe that a moose could be in the village. The question that then needed to be answered was what to do with Honk.

128. Sturton, Hugh (author) Zomo the Rabbit  
Peter Warner, Illustrator Interest Level 8-12 years

Most of these comical African folk tales center around Zomo the rabbit and how he tricked his fellow animals. He tricks Kada the crocodile into a cage and arranges a hilarious tug-of-war between the hippos and the elephants. The best part is that they don't even realize it. Most of the humor is action type although word humor is employed in the chapter "Double or Quits."

129. Thurber, James (author) The Wonderful O  
Marc Simont, Illustrator Interest Level 11-Up

Probably only the more mature readers would enjoy the subtle word humor employed in this book. It is the tale of two pirates who did away with the letter O. One of the men didn't like O's because his mother had become wedged in a porthole. Confusion reigned after the O's were wiped out. A man named Otto Ott could only stutter when asked to say his name.

130. Turney, Ida Virginia (author)  
Norma Lyon, Harold Price, Paul Bunyan, the Work Giant  
Illustrators Interest Level 6-9 years

The wild exaggeration of the Paul Bunyan stories is found in this volume. Included are the best known examples of Bunyan lore plus variations such as using kernels of popcorn to turn over the flap-jacks, the inventing of the doughnut hole, and the yarn of Lucy, the camp cow, whose milk became so much like balsam and pine that the cooks couldn't use it. Instead it was bottled for Balsam Cough Syrup and Axle Grease.

131. Walker, Barbara K. (author) Once There Was and Twice  
Gordon Kibbee, Illustrator There Wasn't  
Interest Level 8-10 years

In this compilation of Turkish folk tales about Keloglan, whose name means bald boy, humor is developed through use of action and word manipulation. Keloglan seems stupid as he blunders from one adventure to another, but he usually comes out on top. "The Lucky Exchanges" illustrates one type of humor as exchanges are made from a thorn to a stove to an ox to a bride. In the last selection, "In the Service of the Padishah," clever word usage is employed as Keloglan outwits a foreign ambassador by answering his questions wittily.

132. Walters, Maude Owens (editor)  
 Ted Freed, Illustrator Clever and Foolish Tales  
 for Children  
 Interest Level 7-13 years

The stupidity and gullibility of man is exemplified in this series of folk tales from many countries; India, China, Germany, Ireland, Norway, Russia, Africa, and others. Among the stories are that of the jackal who outwitted the crocodile, (India); the rat that tricked the cat, (Africa); and the stupid Mc'Andrews who gave everything they owned away and were too stupid to realize what they had done. (Ireland)

133. Wickenden, Dan (author) The Amazing Vacation  
 Erik Bleguad, Illustrator Interest Level 9-11 years

The humor present in this fantasy about children and their dreams is more subtle than obvious. Rickey and Joanne go through the window in their uncle's study and have adventures in the "Country Without a Name." It is here that they meet the queen who thinks herself so important, the scatterbrained king, the dragon-like jet plane, Mrs. Breadloaf who rides a vacuum cleaner, a poetry reading porpentine called Federico, and the so-called war in which both sides are reluctant to fight, (with field hockey sticks).

134. Williams, Jay, and Abrashkin, Raymond (authors)  
 Ezra Jack Keats, Danny Dunn and the Anti-  
 Gravity Paint  
 Illustrator Interest Level 8-12 years

While day dreaming Danny accidentally winds up on a space ship with Professors Bullfinch and Grimes and his friend Joe. Through a malfunction the ship goes near Mars but with Danny's help corrections are made and they are able to return home. There is lots of blundering about as Professor Bullfinch zooms to the ceiling, the two professors mess up their lab, and Grimes and Bullfinch play their instruments while bickering constantly.

135. Williams, Jay, and Abrashkin, Raymond (authors)  
 Ezra Jack Keats, Danny Dunn and the Homework  
 Machine  
 Illustrator Interest Level 8-12 years

Danny uses Professor Bullfinch's computer to do homework for Joe, Irene, and himself. It works fine

until classmate Eddie Philips, "the Snitcher," jumbles up the machine. It fouls up their homework assignments and also messes up the professor's work until Danny discovers the trouble. Humor is evident when Irene pushes Eddie into the mud in revenge for her embarrassment at reading her "scrambled" report on Peru to her class.

136. Williams, Jay, and Abrashkin, Raymond (authors)  
 Ezra Jack Keats, Danny Dunn and the Weather  
 Illustrator Machine  
 Interest Level 8-11 years

Confusion is generated in this story by twin weather forecasters, one grouchy and one pleasant. Add this to Danny's trouble while using Professor Bullfinch's Ionic Transmitter and the fun multiplies. Snitcher Philips gets it in this story when a raincloud forms over his head and he is drenched. Then poor Joe leaps into a pond that has no water, only mud! Should be enjoyed by the middle graders.

137. Williams, Jay (author) Philbert the Fearful  
 Ib Ohlssen, Illustrator Interest Level 6-9 years

Sir Philbert is not too brave but journeys with three other knights to find the emperor's kidnapped daughter anyway. By using his head along with a little luck, Philbert overcomes a giant, a cockatrice, and an enchanter. He marries the emperor's daughter after he passes the supreme test of taking a wasp out of a box with his hand. (His hand was in an iron glove.) Great fun for the younger reader.

138. Williams, Jay (author) The Practical Princess  
 Friso Henstra, Illustrator Interest Level 6-9 years

Crazy actions, fine illustrations make this fun reading for the young reader. The princess in the tale uses her wit to destroy a dragon by tossing a bundle of gunpowder down its throat. The bundle looked like a princess to the dragon. Old Lord Garp who wishes to marry the princess is outwitted too. The princess helps Prince Perion escape and at the moment of escape, Lord Garp arrives. He pulls on Perion's long beard hanging down from the tower! Perion falls on top of Garp!

139. Withers, Carl (editor)      A World of Nonsense  
      John E. Johnson,                (Strange and Humorous  
             Illustrator                Tales from Many Lands)

Interest Level 8-Up

There is a lot of nonsense in this collection by Withers. Numerous comical drawings highlight the tales drawn from many countries. Typical of the nonsense is the story of the man who was shingling his house in a fog, and when the fog lifted he found that he had shingled six feet beyond the edge of the roof. Then there was the barber who could shave a hare in full flight, the blacksmith who could shoe a horse in full gallop, and the fencer who could fence so fast in a hard rain that he didn't even get wet.

140. Yolen, Jane (author)      Hobo Toad and the Motor-  
      Emily Mc'Cully,                cycle Gang  
             Illustrator                Interest Level 8-11 years

The mad professor and the motorcycle gang attempt to rob the First National Bank of Secundo but are foiled by Hobo Toad, Mac the truck driver, Kate the diner owner, and young Sammy the professor's adopted son. After being tied up by the robbers, Hobo Toad frees Sammy's bonds by using his tongue, then unties the others. Kate's buttons pop and help frighten the professor into surrendering. Mac's marbles spill from his truck causing the rest of the gang to tumble about. Rollicking fun for the reader.

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY**



## Bibliography of Professional Literature

### Books and Pamphlets

- Archer, Clifford P. Elementary Education in Rural Areas. New York: Ronald Press, 1958.
- Bergson, Henri. Laughter. New York: The Macmillan Co., 1937.
- Eastman, Max. The Sense of Humor. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1921.
- Egoff, S. A., and Others. (eds.) Only Connect. Readings on Children's Literature. London: Oxford, 1969.
- Furst, Edward J. Constructing Evaluation Instruments. New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1958.
- Gesell, Arnold, and Ilg, Francis. The Child from Five to Ten. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1946.
- Hardy, William G. Communication and the Disadvantaged Child. Baltimore: Williams and Wilkins, 1970.
- Henderson, George. (ed.) America's Other Children. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1971.
- Hoffman, Lois W., and Hoffman, Martin L. (eds.) Review of Child Development Research. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1966.
- Huck, Charlotte, and Kuhn, Doris. Children's Literature in the Elementary School. New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1968.
- Iverson, William J. "New Trends in Children's Literature," A Forum for Focus. Martha L. King, Robert Emans, and Patricia J. Cianciolo. (eds.) Urbana, Illinois: National Council of Teachers of English, 1973.
- Kappas, Katharine H. "Children's Responses to Humor," A Critical Approach to Children's Literature. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, Sara Fenwick, (ed.) 1967.

- Leacock, S. B. Humor and Humanity. New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1938.
- Lenneberg, Eric H. New Directions on the Study of Language. Cambridge, Mass.: The M. I. T. Press, 1964.
- Loban, Walter. Problems in Oral English. Champaign, Illinois: National Council of Teachers of English, 1966.
- Longacker, Ronald W. Language and Its Structure. New York: Harcourt, Brace and World Inc., 1968.
- Moore, James C., and King, Paul J. "A Comparison of Rural and Urban Pupils In Achievement," America's Other Children. George Henderson, (ed.) Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1971.
- Moore, Walter S. (ed.) "Rural Education III, Elementary Schools," Encyclopedia of Educational Research. New York: The Macmillan Co., 1950.
- Norvell, George. What Boys and Girls Like to Read. Morristown, New Jersey: Silver Burdett Co., 1958.
- Schmuck, Richard A., and Patricia A. Group Processes in the Classroom. Dubuque, Iowa: Wm. C. Brown Co., 1971.
- Smith, James. A Critical Approach to Children's Literature. New York: Mc'Graw-Hill, 1968.
- Squire, James R. (ed.) Response to Literature. Champaign, Illinois: National Council of Teachers of English, 1968.
- Squire, James R. The Responses of Adolescents While Reading Four Short Stories. Champaign, Illinois: National Council of Teachers of English, 1964.
- Strang, Ruth. An Introduction to Child Study. New York: Macmillan, 1959.
- White, William F. Tactics for Teaching the Disadvantaged. New York: Mc'Graw-Hill, 1971.
- Williams, Frederick. (ed.) Language and Poverty. Chicago: Markham Publishing Co., 1970.

Winer, B. J. Statistical Principles in Experimental Design.  
New York: Mc'Graw-Hill, 1962.

Wolfenstein, Martha. Children's Humor. Glencoe: The Free  
Press, 1954.

Wright, Milton. What's Funny and Why - An Outline on Humor.

Dissertations

- Berding, Mary Cordelia Sister. Humor as a Factor in Children's Literature. Ed.D., University of Cincinnati, 1965.
- Landau, Elliott C. The Relationship Between Social Class Status and What Sixth Grade Children Say Is Funny in Selected Excerpts from Children's Literature. Ph.D., New York University, 1955.
- Monson, Dianne Lynn. Children's Responses to Humorous Situations in Literature. Ph.D., University of Minnesota, 1966.
- Potter, Donald R. Response to Humor Stimuli of Normal and Retarded Children of Comparable Developmental Age. Ed.D., University of South Dakota, 1967.
- Skelton, Glenn Harvey. A Study of Children's Responses to Selected Poems in the Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Grades. Ed.D., University of California, Berkeley, 1963.

Periodicals

- Ashley, L. F. "Children's Reading Interests and Individualized Reading," Elementary English, XLVII (Dec., 1970), 1088 - 1096.
- Barron, Milton L. "A Content Analysis of Intergroup Humor," American Sociological Review, 15 (Feb., 1950), 88-94.
- Bird, Grace E. "An Objective Humor Test for Children," Psychological Bulletin, 22 (Feb., 1925), 137, 138.
- Boardman, G. C. "Humor in Education," Wisconsin Journal of Education, 92 (Nov., 1959), 19.
- Brown, Edwin J. "The Humor of the School," School Board Journal, 55, 56 (Sept., 1930), 35.
- Brumbaugh, Florence and Wilson, Frank. "Children's Laughter," Journal of Genetic Psychology, 57 (Sept., 1940), 3 - 29.
- Brumbaugh, Florence. "We Study Wit and Humor," Childhood Education, 16 (May, 1940), 401 - 404.
- Burma, John H. "Humor as a Technique in Race Conflict," American Sociological Review, 11 (Dec., 1946), 710 - 715.
- Christopher News Notes, "For a Sense of Humor," No. 195 (June, July, 1972).
- Cleary, Beverly. "Wonderful World of Humor," Elementary English, 44 (Nov., 1967), 743 - 7.
- Click, D. W. "Humor and Comprehension," English Journal, 41 (June, 1952), 321.
- Coleman, J. H., and Jungeblut, Ann. "Children's Likes and Dislikes About What They Read," Journal of Educational Research, 54 (Feb., 1961), 221 - 228.
- Cunningham, Ann. "Relation of Sense of Humor to Intelligence," The Journal of Social Psychology, 57 (June, 1962), 143 - 147.

- Daniel, Brother. "That Sense of Humor," Catholic School Journal, 52 (Sept., 1952), 219.
- Earls, Patricia L. "Humorizing Learning," Elementary English, XLIX (Jan., 1972), 107.
- Fenner, Phyllis. "Funny, Is It?" Library Journal, 85 (Oct., 1960), 3822 - 3824.
- Gates, Arthur L., Peardon, Celeste C., and Sartorius, Ina C. "Studies of Children's Interests in Reading," Elementary School Journal, 31 (May, 1931), 656-570.
- Gilliand, Hap, and Mauritsen, Harriett. "Humor in the Classroom," The Reading Teacher, 24 (May, 1971), 753-756, 761.
- Gorden, E. J. "Humor in Literature - What's Happened to Humor?" English Journal, 47 (March, 1958), 127-133.
- Graham, Leo. "The Maturational Factor in Humor," Journal of Clinical Psychology, 14 (July, 1958), 326-328.
- Gruner, Charles R. "A Further Experimental Study of Satire as Persuasion," Speech Monographs, XXXIII (June, 1966), 184, 185.
- Grziwok, Rudolf, and Scodel, Alvin. "Some Psychological Correlates of Humor Preferences," Journal of Consulting Psychology, 20 (Feb., 1956), 42.
- Harms, Ernest. "The Development of Humor," Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, 35 (July, 1943), 351 - 369.
- Heim, A. "An Experiment on Humor," The British Journal of Psychology, XXVII (1936, 37), 148-161.
- Henson, M. "Assessment of Children's Appreciation of Humorous Verse," Educational Review, 22 (Feb., 1970), 198-204.
- Hester, Mary St.Clair. "Variations in the Sense of Humor According to Age and Mental Condition," Psychological Bulletin, 30 (Dec., 1933), 755-756.
- Hope, Bob. "The Importance of Having Fun," Reader's Digest, 100 (Jan., 1972), 50.

- Hurley, B. J. D. "What Children Find Humorous," Childhood Education, 32 (May, 1956), 424.
- Jacobs, L. B. "Very, Very Funny," Instructor, 75 (Nov., 1965), 34, 55, 112.
- Jenkins, W. A. "Reading for Enjoyment and Personal Development," Educational Leadership, 24 (Feb., 1967), 404-6.
- Jensen, A. E. "Let's Have a Laugh," Grade Teacher, 71 (Jan., 1954), 27.
- Johnson, B. "For Our Schools, A Sense of Nonsense," New York Times Magazine, (Sept., 16, 1956), 17+.
- Justin, Florence. "A Genetic Study of Laughter Provoking Stimuli," Child Development, 3 (June, 1932), 114-136.
- Kozlak, Mary A. "Teaching Humorous Literature," Elementary English Review, 12 (1935), 192, 193.
- Laing, A. "The Sense of Humor in Childhood and Adolescence," British Journal of Educational Psychology, 9 (1939), 201.
- Landau, E. D. "Quibble, Quibble, Funny? Yes, Humorous, No!" Horn Book, 38 (April, 1962), 154-164.
- Laux, P. J. "The Gift of Laughter," The Catholic School Journal, 69 (Dec., 1969), 25.
- Malchow, Evangeline. "Reading Interests of Junior High School Pupils," The School Review, 45 (March, 1937), 175-185.
- Merchant, Louisa. "A Child's Sense of Humor," Elementary English Review, 17 (Jan., 1940), 15-17.
- Mones, L. "Intelligence and a Sense of Humor," Journal of the Exceptional Child, 5 (March, 1939), 150-153.
- Omwake, Louise. "Factors Influencing the Sense of Humor," The Journal of Social Psychology, 10 (Feb., 1939), 95-104.
- Perl, Ruth Eastwood. "A Review of Experiments in Humor," The Psychological Bulletin, 30 (Dec., 1933), 752-763.

- Raley, Sister Agnes Lucille, and Ballman, Christine. "Theoretical Implications for a Psychology of the Ludicrous," Journal of Social Psychology, 45 (1957), 12-23.
- Roberts, Allen F., and Johnson, Donald M. "Some Factors Related to the Perception of Funniness in Humor Stimuli," Journal of Social Psychology, 46 (Aug., 1957), 57-63.
- Smith, Ruth C. "Children's Reading Choices and Basic Reader Content," Elementary English, 39 (March, 1962), 202-209.
- Stroud, Rupert. "How to Be Very Superior in a Sense of Humor," Phi Delta Kappan, 38 (April, 1957), 266, 267.
- Tyler, Ralph W. "Ability to Use Scientific Method," Educational Research Bulletin, 11 (Jan., 1932), 1-9.
- Wells, Ruth. "A Study of Tastes in Humorous Literature Among Pupils of Junior and Senior High School," Journal of Educational Research, 28 (Oct., 1934), 81-91.
- Williams, Jessie M. "Experimental and Theoretical Study of Humor in Children," British Journal of Educational Psychology, 16 (Feb., 1946), 43.
- Witty, Paul, Coomer, Ann, and Mc'Bean, Della. "Children's Choices of Favorite Books: A Study Conducted in Ten Elementary Schools," Journal of Educational Psychology, 37 (1946), 266-278.
- Zigler, Edward, Levine, Jacob, and Gould, Lawrence. "Cognitive Processes in the Development of Children's Appreciation of Humor," Child Development, 37 (Sept., 1966), 507-518.



Bibliography of Books of  
Wit and Humor for Middle Grade Students

- Aiken, Joan. Armitage, Armitage, Fly Away Home. Doubleday and Co., 1968.
- Amarant, Julius. Tall Baseball Stories. Association Press, 1948.
- Andersen, Hans Christian. The Emperor's New Clothes. Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1959.
- Anderson, Mildred Napier. A Gift for Merimond. Oxford University Press, 1953.
- Atwater, Richard, and Florence. Mr. Popper's Penguins. Little, Brown, and Co., 1938.
- Babbitt, Natalie. The Search for Delicious. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1969.
- Ball, Zachary (Masters). Sputters. Holiday House, 1963.
- Beatty, Jr., Jerome. Bob Fulton's Amazing Soda-Pop Stretcher. William R. Scott, Inc., 1963.
- Bell, Norman. The Weightless Mother. Follett Publishing Co., 1967.
- Best, Allena C. One-String Fiddle. John C. Winston Co., 1939.
- Bishop, Claire Huchet. The Man Who Lost His Head. The Viking Press, 1942.
- Blough, Glenn O. The Monkey With a Notion. Henry Holt and Co., 1946.
- Bond, Michael. Paddington Goes to Town. Houghton-Mifflin Co., 1968.
- Bontemps, Arna, and Conroy, Jack. The Fast Sooner Hound. Houghton, Mifflin Co., 1942.

- Bontemps, Arna, and Conroy, Jack. Slappy Hooper, The Wonderful Sign Painter. Houghton, Mifflin Co., 1946.
- Bowman, James Gloyd. Mike Fink. Little, Brown, and Co., 1957.
- Brock, Emma L. Three Ring Circus. Alfred A. Knopf, 1950.
- Brock, Emma L. The Topsy-Turvy Family. Alfred A. Knopf, 1949.
- Brown, Jeff. Flat Stanley. Harper and Row, 1964.
- Butterworth, Oliver. The Enormous Egg. Little, Brown, and Co., 1956.
- Butterworth, Oliver. The Trouble With Jenny's Ear. Little, Brown, and Co., 1960.
- Cameron, Polly. The Green Machine. Coward-McCann Co., 1969.
- Carlsen, Ruth Christoffer. Mr. Pudgins. Houghton, Mifflin Co., 1951.
- Carlson, Natalie Savage. Alphonse - That Bearded One. Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1954.
- Carlson, Natalie Savage. Carnival in Paris. Harper and Row, 1962.
- Carlson, Natalie Savage. Hortense: the Cow for a Queen. Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1957.
- Carroll, Ruth and Latrobe. The Flying House. The Macmillan Co., 1946.
- Chaikin, Miriam. Ittki Pittki. Parents' Magazine Press, 1971.
- Chalmers, Audrey. Hundreds and Hundreds of Pancakes. The Viking Press, 1942.
- Chase, Richard. The Jack Tales. Houghton, Mifflin Co., 1943.
- Cleary, Beverly. Beezus and Ramona. William Morrow and Co., 1968.

- Cleary, Beverly. Ellen Tebbits. William Morrow and Co., 1951.
- Cleary, Beverly. Henry and Beezus. William Morrow and Co., 1952.
- Cleary, Beverly. Henry and Ribsy. William Morrow and Co., 1954.
- Cleary, Beverly. Henry and the Clubhouse. William Morrow and Co., 1962.
- Cleary, Beverly. Henry and the Paper Route. William Morrow and Co., 1957.
- Cleary, Beverly. Henry Huggins. William Morrow and Co., 1950.
- Cleary, Beverly. The Mouse and the Motorcycle. William Morrow and Co., 1972.
- Cleary, Beverly. Otis Speefford. William Morrow and Co., 1953.
- Cleary, Beverly. Ramona the Pest. William Morrow and Co., 1968.
- Cleary, Beverly. Ribsy. William Morrow and Co., 1964.
- Clymer, Eleanor. Chester. Dodd, Mead and Co., 1955.
- Cone, Molly. Mishmash. Houghton, Mifflin and Co., 1962.
- Corbett, Scott. The Disappearing Dog Trick. Little, Brown, and Co., 1963.
- Corbett, Scott. Ever Ride a Dinosaur? Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1969.
- Corbett, Scott. The Hairy Horror Trick. Little, Brown and Co., 1969.
- Corbett, Scott. The Hateful, Plateful Trick. Little, Brown and Co., 1971.
- Corbett, Scott. The Lemonade Trick. Little, Brown and Co., 1960.
- Corbett, Scott. The Limerick Trick. Little, Brown and Co., 1964.

- Corbett, Scott. The Mailbox Trick. Little, Brown and Co., 1961.
- Corbett, Scott. Steady, Freddie! E. P. Dutton Co., 1970.
- Cowley, Joy. Duck in the Gun. Doubleday and Co., 1969.
- Credle, Ellis. Tall Tales from the High Hills. Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1957.
- Dahl, Roald. Charlie and the Chocolate Factory. Alfred A. Knopf, 1964.
- Davis, Mary Gould (ed.). With Cap and Bells (Humorous Stories to Tell and to Read Aloud). Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1937.
- Davis, Robert. Padre Porko, the Gentlemanly Pig. Holiday House, 1948.
- Dolbier, Maurice. The Magic Shop. Random House, 1946.
- DuBois, William Pene. The Alligator Case. Harper and Row, 1965.
- DuBois, William Pene. The Great Geppy. The Viking Press, 1946.
- DuBois, William Pene. Otto and the Magic Potatoes. The Viking Press, 1970.
- DuBois, William Pene. Perko Von Popbutton. Harper and Row, 1968.
- Estes, Eleanor. The Sun and the Wind and Mr. Todd. Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1943.
- Faralla, Dana. The Wonderful Flying-Go-Round. World, 1965.
- Felton, Harold W. Bowleg Bill, Seagoing Cowpuncher. Prentice-Hall, 1957.
- Felton, Harold W. New Tall Tales of Pecos Bill. Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1958.
- Felton, Harold W. True Tall Tales of Stormalong: Sailor of the Seven Seas. Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1968.
- Felton, Harold W. The World's Most Truthful Man. Dodd, Mead and Co., 1961.

- Fenner, Phyllis R. Fools and Funny Fellows. Alfred A. Knopf, 1949.
- Fenner, Phyllis R. Time to Laugh. Alfred A. Knopf, 1942.
- Feuerlicht, Roberta Strauss. The Legends of Paul Bunyan. Collier Books, 1966.
- Fleischman, Albert S. Chancy and the Grand Rascal. Little, Brown and Co., 1966.
- Fleischman, Sid. By the Great Horn Spoon! Little, Brown and Co., 1963.
- Fleischman, Sid. Longbeard the Wizard. Little, Brown and Co., 1970.
- Fleischman, Sid. McBroom and the Big Wind. W. W. Norton and Co., 1967.
- Fleischman, Sid. Mr. Mysterious and Co., Little, Brown and Co., 1962.
- Foster, John. Marco and the Tiger. Dodd, Mead and Co., 1967.
- Gage, Wilson. Mike's Toads. World, 1970.
- Garnett, Eve. The Family from One End Street and Some of Their Adventures. The Vanguard Press, Inc., 1939.
- Graham, Benzell. That Big Broozer. William Morrow and Co., 1959.
- Gray, Nicholas Stuart. The Apple Stone. Meredith Press, 1965.
- Green, Roger Lancelyn. The Book of Nonsense. E. P. Dutton and Co., 1956.
- Hale, Lucretia P. The Complete Peterkin Papers. Houghton, Mifflin Co., 1960.
- Haywood, Carolyn. Betsy's Busy Summer. William Morrow and Co., 1956.
- Haywood, Carolyn. Eddie and His Big Deals. William Morrow and Co., 1955.
- Haywood, Carolyn. Eddie and the Fire Engine. William Morrow and Co., 1949.

- Haywood, Carolyn. Eddie Makes Music. William Morrow and Co., 1957.
- Haywood, Carolyn. Eddie's Green Thumb. William Morrow and Co., 1964.
- Haywood, Carolyn. Eddie's Pay Dirt. William Morrow and Co., 1953.
- Haywood, Carolyn. Eddie the Dog Holder. William Morrow and Co., 1966.
- Haywood, Carolyn. Ever-Ready Eddie. William Morrow and Co., 1968.
- Haywood, Carolyn. Little Eddie. William Morrow and Co., 1947.
- Henderson, LeGrand. Augustus and the Mountains. Grosset and Dunlap, 1941.
- Henderson, LeGrand. Augustus and the River. Grosset and Dunlap, 1939.
- Henderson, LeGrand. Matilda. Abingdon, 1956.
- Hodges, Margaret. What's for Lunch, Charley? Dial Press, 1961.
- Jackson, Charlotte. Tito: The Pig of Guatemala. Dodd, Mead and Co., 1940.
- Jagendorf, Moritz Adolph. The Marvelous Adventures of Johnny Darling. Vanguard Press, 1949.
- Jagendorf, Moritz Adolph. Noodlehead Stories from Around the World. Vanguard Press, 1957.
- Jagendorf, Moritz Adolph. Tyll Ulenspiegel's Merry Pranks. Vanguard Press, 1938.
- Juster, Norton. The Phantom Tollbooth. Random House, 1961.
- Kelsey, Alice Geer. Once the Hodja. Longmans, Green and Co., 1943.
- Kendall, Carol. The Big Splash. The Viking Press, 1960.
- Kilian, Crawford. Wonders, Inc. Parnassus Press, 1968.

- Lawson, Robert. Ben and Me. Little, Brown and Co., 1951.
- Lawson, Robert. The Fabulous Flight. Little, Brown and Co., 1949.
- Lawson, Robert. Mc'Whinney's Jaunt. Little, Brown and Co., 1951.
- Lawson, Robert. Mr. Revere and I. Little, Brown and Co., 1953.
- Lawson, Robert. Mr. Twigg's Mistake. Little, Brown and Co., 1947.
- Leaf, Munro. Sam and the Superdroop. Viking Press, 1948.
- Leskov, Nicholas. The Steel Flea. Harper and Row Co., 1964.
- Lewellen, John. Tee Vee Humphrey. Alfred A. Knopf, 1957.
- Lindgren, Astrid. Emil in the Soup Tureen. Follett, 1963.
- Lindgren, Astrid. Emil's Pranks. Follett, 1966.
- Lindgren, Astrid. Mischievous Meg. The Viking Press, 1962.
- Lindgren, Astrid. Pippi Goes on Board. The Viking Press, 1957.
- Lindgren, Astrid. Pippi Longstocking. The Viking Press, 1950.
- Lord, Beman. The Perfect Pitch. Henry Z. Walck, Inc., 1965.
- Lord, Beman. The Trouble With Francis. Henry Z. Walck, Inc., 1958.
- Love, Katherine. A Little Laughter. Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1957.
- MacDonald, Betty. Mrs. Piggle-Wiggle. J. B. Lippincott Co., 1947.
- MacGregor, Ellen. Miss Pickerell and the Geiger Counter. McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1953.
- MacGregor, Ellen. Miss Pickerell Goes to the Arctic. McGraw-Hill Co., 1954.

- MacGregor, Ellen. Miss Pickerell Goes Undersea. Whittlesey House, 1953.
- Mackellar, William. The Smallest Monster in the World. David McKay Co., 1969.
- Malone, Mary. Here's Howie. Dodd, Mead and Co., 1962.
- McCloskey, Robert. Burt Dow: Deep-Water Man. The Viking Press, 1963.
- McCloskey, Robert. Centerburg Tales. The Viking Press, 1951.
- McCloskey, Robert. Homer Price. The Viking Press, 1943.
- McGovern, Ann. Hee Haw. Houghton, Mifflin Co., 1969.
- Merrill, Jean. The Pushcart War. Grosset and Dunlap, 1964.
- Meyer, Franklyn E. Me and Caleb. Follett Publishing Co., 1962.
- Meyer, Franklyn E. Me and Caleb Again. Follett Publishing Co., 1969.
- Moore, Lilian. The Snake That Went to School. Random House, 1957.
- Mowat, Farley. The Dog Who Wouldn't Be. Little, Brown and Co., 1957.
- Mowat, Farley. Owls in the Family. Little, Brown and Co., 1961.
- Nash, Mary. While Mrs. Coverlet Was Away. Little, Brown and Co., 1958.
- Nash, Ogden. The Cruise of the Aardvark. J. B. Lippincott, 1967.
- North, Sterling. Greased Lightning. Winston Co., 1940.
- Paine, Albert Bigelow. Arkansaw Bear. Harper and Brothers, 1925.
- Parish, Peggy. Amelia Bedelia. Harper and Row Co., 1963.
- Parkinson, Ethelyn M. Good Old Archibald. Abingdon Press, 1960.



- Peet, Bill. Hubert's Hair-Raising Adventure. Houghton, Mifflin Co., 1959.
- Peet, Bill. Randy's Dandy Lions. Houghton, Mifflin Co., 1964.
- Petrie, Stuart. The Voyage of the Barracks. Meredith Press, 1967.
- Proysen, Alf. Mrs. Pepperpot in the Magic Wood. Pantheon Co., 1968.
- Raskin, Ellen. The Mysterious Disappearance of Leon (I Mean Noel). E. P. Dutton and Co., 1971.
- Rinkoff, Barbara. Elbert, the Mind Reader. Lothrop, Lee and Shepard Co., 1967.
- Robertson, Keith. Henry Reed, Inc. The Viking Press, 1958.
- Robertson, Keith. Henry Reed's Baby-Sitting Service. The Viking Press, 1966.
- Robinson, Tom. Trigger John's Son. The Viking Press, 1949.
- Rounds, Glen. Ol' Paul, the Mighty Logger. Holiday House, 1949.
- Rounds, Glen. The Whistle Punk of Camp 15. Holiday House, 1959.
- Scoggin, Margaret C. Chucklebait. Alfred A. Knopf, 1945.
- Selden, George. The Cricket in Times Square. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1960.
- Selden, George. Tucker's Countryside. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1969.
- Shapiro, Irwin. How Old Stormalong Captured Mocha Dick. Julian Messner Inc., 1942.
- Shapiro, Irwin. Joe Magarac and His U.S.A. Citizen Papers. Julian Messner, Inc., 1948.
- Shapiro, Irwin. John Henry and the Double-Jointed Steam Drill. Julian Messner, Inc., 1945.
- Shapiro, Irwin. Steamboat Bill and the Captain's Top Hat. Julian Messner, Inc., 1943.

- Shapiro, Irwin. Tall Tales of America. Guild Press, Inc., 1958.
- Shapiro, Milton J. A Treasury of Sports Humor. Julian Messner, 1972.
- Shura, Mary Frances. Simple Spigott. Alfred A. Knopf, 1960.
- Slobodkin, Louis. The Space Ship Under the Apple Tree. Macmillan Co., 1952.
- Smith, Helen R. Laughing Matter. Scribner's Sons, 1949.
- Spearing, Judith. Ghosts Who Went to School. Atheneum, 1966.
- Steele, Mary G. Miss Osborne - the Mop. World Publishing Co., 1963.
- Steele, Mary G. A Wild Goose Tale. The World Publishing Co., 1961.
- Steele, William O. Davy Crockett's Earthquake. Harcourt, Brace and World Inc., 1956.
- Steele, William O. The No-Name Man of the Mountain. Harcourt, Brace and World Inc., 1964.
- Stockton, Frank R. The Bee-Man of Orn. Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1964.
- Stolz, Mary. Siri the Conquistador. Harper and Row Co., 1963.
- Stong, Phil. Captain Kidd's Cow. Dodd, Mead and Co., 1944.
- Stong, Phil. High Water. Dodd, Mead and Co., 1937.
- Stong, Phil. Honk the Moose. Dodd, Mead and Co., 1943.
- Sturton, Hugh. Zomo the Rabbit. Atheneum, 1966.
- Thurber, James. The Wonderful O. Simon and Schuster, 1957.
- Turnbull, Agnes Sligh. Elijah the Fishbite. Macmillan Co., 1940.
- Turney, Ida Virginia. Paul Bunyan, the Work Giant. Binfords and Mort, 1941.

- Walker, Barbara K. Once There Was and Twice There Wasn't. Follett Publishing Co., 1968.
- Walters, Maude Owens. Clever and Foolish Tales for Children. Dodd, Mead and Co., 1941.
- Wickenden, Dan. The Amazing Vacation. Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1956.
- Wilkins, Mary E. The Pumpkin Giant. Lothrop, Lee and Shepard Co., 1970.
- Williams, Jay and Abrashkin, Raymond. Danny Dunn and the Anti-Gravity Paint. Whittlesey House, 1956.
- Williams, Jay and Abrashkin, Raymond. Danny Dunn and the Homework Machine. Whittlesey House, 1958.
- Williams, Jay and Abrashkin, Raymond. Danny Dunn and the Weather Machine. Whittlesey House, 1959.
- Williams, Jay. Philbert the Fearful. W. W. Norton and Co., 1966.
- Williams, Jay. The Practical Princess. Parents' Magazine Press, 1969.
- Williams, Jay. The Silver Whistle. Parents' Magazine Press, 1971.
- Wilson, Hazel. Herbert. Alfred A. Knopf, 1950.
- Wilson, Leon. This Boy Cody. Franklin Watts, Inc., 1950.
- Withers, Carl. A World of Nonsense (Strange and Humorous Tales from Many Lands). Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1968.
- Wood, Esther. Silk and Satin Lane. Longmans, Green and Co., 1939.
- Yolen, Jane. Hobo Toad and the Motorcycle Gang. The World Publishing Co., 1970.

MICHIGAN STATE UNIV. LIBRARIES



31293100408784