

**“Know the Child, Know the Book”:
A Developmental Approach to Children’s Literature**

UGC APPROVAL LETTER NO. AND DATE : MRP (H)-0416/12-13/KLKE002/UGC-SWRO
Dated 23 September 2013

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Abstract

The concept of childhood shifts constantly from period to period, place to place, culture to culture- perhaps even from child to child. The literature designed and selected for childhood reflects this variety too. This project work unlocked the secret of what happens in the interaction between a child and a book. The deplorable condition at present in the field of teaching and learning at lower classes is that general competence in the language has deteriorated sharply. With the help of this project work the investigator find out that if we introduce appropriate children’s literature from an early age they will become enthusiastic readers. The investigator found out what genre of literature children are interested at various developmental stages. She also examined some of literary works of children. The investigator also explained how children’s literature should be chosen according to the biological, psychological and social development of the child.

Knowing a child, knowing a book and knowing developmental theory enables teachers, librarians and parents to select books that match children’s developmental needs. The secret to lead a child to the right book is not only to know books, but to know the child. Only then is the concept of goodness-of-fit (the match between a child’s developmental level and appropriate literature) complete. In this way, the traditional genres of children’s literature become more meaningful when viewed through a developmental lens. Jean Piaget, Erik Erikson, Lawrence Kohlberg, and Lev Vygotsky all developed theories dealing with the various types of development in children—theories which educators of young children can utilize to help them make appropriate book choices for children. When choosing books for young children, it is important for teachers to be aware of these modern theories of child development.