Character and Personality Development Through Literature

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CHARACTER AND PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT
THROUGH LITERATURE

being

A Thesis presented to the Graduate Faculty of the Fort Hays Kansas State College in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Science

by

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University of Kansas

Date July 22, 1952
Approved: Ralph H. Coden

Chairman Graduate Council
To my husband Worlie
for his patience and
encouragement which
made the writing of
this study possible.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAPTER</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. LITERATURE: A FORCE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF CHARACTER AND PERSONALITY</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. FICTION</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The short story</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The novelette</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The novel</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. NONFICTION</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The essay and biography</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Literature</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. DRAMA</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. FOLK LITERATURE</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI. POETRY</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONCLUSION</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What we bequeath to you that is precious are the few simple virtues which have stood us in good stead in the struggle of our generation. We leave you our enthusiasms, our diligence, our zeal for a better world, that were the lodestars of our fathers. As our legatees we assign you our tolerance; our patience; our kindness; our faith, hope, and love—which make for the self-respect of man. These qualities of heart and mind grow out of a conviction that the democratic philosophy as a mode of thinking will lead mankind into a nobler way of life.

William Allen White

In a radio address to young people.
CHAPTER I

LITERATURE: A FORCE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF CHARACTER AND PERSONALITY

Through their study of literature high school students are enlightened about life and living; they can see how many problems, similar to their own, have been faced and solved. The problem of this thesis is to find in the selections of the four Kansas approved texts in American literature for the eleventh grade examples which can be of value to the students for betterment of character and personality. The four texts are: Adventures in American Literature by Rewey Belle Inglis and others; Literature: A Series of Anthologies, Heritage of American Literature by E. A. Cross, Grace Benscoter, and William Meacham; Literature of the Americas by John Brewton and others; Prose and Poetry of America by Harriet M. Lucas and Herman M. Ward.

Education really has two tasks. First, it is supposed to tell us facts about the world we live in; language is used informatively. Perhaps an even more important task, however, is that of inculcating ideals and "moulding character"; that is, language is used directly, in order that students should conform to the usages and traditions of the society in which they live.

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Education has to be, of course, both informative and directive. We cannot simply give information to students without giving them some "aspirations," "ideals," and "aims" so that they will know what to do with their information when they get it. But it is just as important to remember that we must not give them ideals alone without some factual information upon which to act; without such information they cannot even begin to bring their ideals to fruition.2

It is the aspiration of most human beings to be gifted with a magnetic personality, and the person of merit also desires a commendable character. Webster defines character as "a detailed account of the qualities of a person;" for personality we find "magnetic personal quality; excellence of personal and social traits." Another splendid definition of personality whose source I do not know is this: "Personality is that secret force that makes you vital and interesting, that hidden something that makes you a power in your home, your school, and your community. It is expressed through the medium of your appearance, your attitude toward every day's problems, your culture, your speech, and your friendships."

From the beginning of literature, about three thousand years ago, man has read about experiences by which he could enrich his personality and shape his character. He has been given bits of advice all along too. In Homer's

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2 Ibid., p. 228.
we find, "Know, friend! that virtue is the path to praise." "Precepts" we find in Hesiod's *Works and Days*, and in these he says, "May Malice never gain upon thy Will." Aristotle declared, "Virtue is a habit, accompanied with deliberate preference, in the relative mean, defined by reason, and as the prudent man would define it." In his *De Officiis* Cicero said, "We must also take the greatest care to show courtesy and consideration toward those with whom we converse." Also he said, "I exhort you to give such a place to virtue, without which friendship cannot be, that, with this exception, you consider nothing more excellent than friendship." Plato said that in childhood the mind is plastic and at that time a deep impression can be made if one wishes to leave an imprint upon the individual character. He suggested a censorship of the writers of fiction and a selection of stories for the nurses and mothers to use to mould the minds of the children. "Plato was a teacher of teachers and, like every other great

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4 Ibid., p. 40.

5 Ibid., p. 221.

6 Ibid., p. 372.

7 Ibid., p. 204.
teacher who has ever lived, his soul goes marching on, for to teach is to influence, and influence never dies."  

"Personal character can only be established on fixed principles, for if the mind be allowed to be agitated by violent emotions, to be excited by fear, or unduly moved by the love of pleasure, it will be impossible for it to be made perfect. A man must reason calmly, for without reason he would look and not see, listen and not hear," wrote Confucius.  

If we are trying to direct people to lead better lives, we use affective appeals that arouse their finest feelings. Included among directive utterances, therefore, are many of the greatest and most treasured works of literature: The Christian and Buddhist scriptures, the writings of Confucius, Milton's Areopagitica, and Lincoln's Gettysburg Address.  

The Bible is quoted throughout literature, old and modern. From its stories, parables, the Commandments, the Beatitudes, and the Golden Rule, many morals or spiritual truths are drawn. Ruskin in Our Fathers Have Told Us declared that Psalms one, eight, twelve, fourteen, fifteen, nineteen, twenty-three, and twenty-four, well studied and believed, would be sufficient for all personal guidance. Psalm one includes, "For the Lord knoweth the way of the


9 Ibid., p. 68.

10 Hayakawa, op. cit., p. 104.
righteous: But the way of the wicked shall perish." Included in Psalm fifteen is, "Lord, who shall sojourn in Thy tabernacle? Who shall dwell in Thy holy hill? He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh truth in his heart..." We find in Psalm nineteen, "The law of the Lord is perfect, restoring the soul:" and "Let the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be acceptable in Thy sight." The Bible is a great source of literary allusion for writers and speakers.

If and when appropriate, especially in the teaching of literature, history, civics, or geography, they (the teachers) may make reference to the common events or stories of the Bible especially to such passages as have become the common possession of the race: the Good Samaritan, the Prodigal Son, the Psalms, the Proverbs, and the like.

"Literature is the orchestration of platitudes," Thornton Wilder is quoted as saying. "There is first the literature of knowledge, and secondly, the literature of power. The function of the first is to teach; the function of the second is to move." A Chinese proverb says, "Something is learned every time a book is opened." We

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13 Loc. cit.
know that literature entertains, teaches, advises, and subtly guides people. A Latin proverb "Happy is he who gains wisdom from another's mishap"¹⁵ is quite true for those who see how to profit from experiences of fictional characters. The old saying "Experience is the best teacher" need not mean one's own experience, but as the Latin proverb says, "Believe him who has experienced it."¹⁶

Not by exhorting or admonishing students not to do thus and so can one hope to guide teen-agers effectively. The teacher of American literature in high schools has an exceptional opportunity to show the students that all types of literature reveal life and its implications; with a little guidance on the teacher's part, he can get students to see how someone was happier for having chosen a certain good principle by which to act. Yes, literature is life, and a teacher owes a helping hand to his students so that they can enrich their character and personality, and that their appreciation for the finer qualities of mankind and nature may grow. What are these finer qualities which contribute to character and personality? In a condensation from The Art of Real Happiness the authors include these qualities: kindness, unselfishness, sympathy, tolerance,

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 126.
an appreciation of the value of every individual as an individual, and a willingness to let others think and feel different from the way we do without our becoming angry. We need to cultivate the ability to listen and we need to develop our inner resources. "Our happiness depends on those attitudes which will gain for us the love and respect of our families and friends."  

Only add deeds to thy knowledge answerable; add faith; add virtue, patience, temperance; add love, by name to come called Charity, the soul of all the rest: then wilt thou not be loath to leave this Paradise, but shalt possess a Paradise within thee, happier far.

That was the information given by the Angel to Adam as Adam was about to leave Paradise.

It is said there were one hundred and twenty-two million copies of McGuffey Readers sold between 1836 and 1920.

Many factors contributed to the popularity of these books throughout so long a period. A very important item, no doubt, was the emphasis given to commendable traits of character. As Henry Ford stated: "Truth, honesty, fair dealing, initiative, invention, self-reliance--these were the fundamentals of the McGuffey Readers. They are as timeless now as they were then."

17 Norman Vincent Peale and Smiley Blanton, "What Kind of Person Are You?" Reader's Digest, LIX (November, 1951), 96-98.


19 Jo Chamberlain, "McGuffey and His Readers," Reader's Digest, XL (April, 1942), 75.
In a contest to select an outstanding teacher ("Quiz Kids" Program, 1946), fourteen thousand letters were examined carefully to ascertain the character traits of the effective teacher. The leading ones are: a cooperative democratic attitude, kindliness and consideration for the individual, patience, wide interests, attractive personal manner, fairness, impartiality, sense of humor, and good disposition.\textsuperscript{20} The qualities we want and need for good character and pleasing personality are the same as those required throughout all time—past, present, and future. "Teachers need to examine the literature their classes read to ascertain whether the implicit values and assumptions contained in it are the ones they hope will develop in pupils."\textsuperscript{21} Teachers can conduct discussions on the desirable traits of character into which the students will enter freely, if they feel secure in the confidence and sincerity of the teacher. The classroom can thus become a social laboratory and often attitudes can be changed for the better.

Moreover, it must be recognized that teachers are exerting an influence on pupils whether or not they have had training in psychological counseling ... Teachers must not feel that guidance is an 'extra'. On the


Through literature that is true to life students can learn to understand themselves and other people. Literature "holds a mirror up to nature". It furnishes vicarious experience that helps a student to sense how persons feel when they act in certain ways; it uncovers motives; it helps adolescents to understand family relationships.26

Unquestionably the compilers of high school American literature texts have in mind, when choosing the stories, essays, poems, and plays, certain ideals to stimulate growth in character and development of personality. "Our American heritage is a tradition of adventurous pioneering on a frontier of freedom. That is the tradition in which our great books have been written."27 "Young people are at heart idealists. Generally they are impressionable and hopeful. It is good to present them with positive suggestions, with ideas that are strong and right. But our pupils are realists, too. We must be honest in our representations of life."28

In the teacher's manual to accompany one text,29


the compilers say their plan is to have pupils learn about life through reading, to judge values, to find expressions of feelings and attitudes, and descriptions of personality characteristics. The author of one guide\(^{30}\) says,

The pupil's imagination is quickened, and he recognizes that his own experience is similar to that of others. His sympathies are expanded; his understanding is broadened. The study of literature should heighten the student's sense of life as an experience touched with the magical and the mysterious.

"Because reading is a tool and not an end in itself, we have carefully chosen selections which are not only of highest literary merit, but which are related to other secondary school subjects and to the art of living in today's world," declare the compilers of the fourth text.\(^{31}\)

To mention outstanding qualities, attitudes which are beneficial, and attributes which should be appreciated in specific selections from the four textbooks will be the method of procedure for this thesis. Some selections will be used to stress appreciation of beauty, because that is a quality worth having.

The importance of this study is that an inexperienced


teacher or one not familiar with the selections included in the Kansas adopted American literature texts can find some valuable suggestions as to what can be stressed to challenge the pupil to betterment of character and personality.

Written symbols have long been associated with controlling the moral character of man, whether the writing be the Bible, the moral biographies of Plutarch's Lives, the Classical didactics, or the moral story of the nursery rhyme, or children's literature. Reading merely for enjoyment, without direct application to better living habits, is a luxury made available by prolific printing presses and inexpensive publications. Yet tradition still expects much of the pupil's reading to influence behavior and personality in a desirable direction.32

There are many educators who feel that the teaching of literature is a guide to the development of character.

Studying books too often has the effect of producing excessive intensional orientation; this is especially true in literary study, for example, when the study of words—novels, plays, poems, essays—becomes an end in itself. When the study of literature is undertaken, however, not as an end in itself, but as a guide to life, its effect is extensional in the best sense.33

"The teaching of literature has a function that is unique: it is that of revealing the workings of moral values." So believes Mr. Pamp in writing in School and Society. He also thinks that only in teaching humanities as humanities do we find values as an integral part of the

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discipline itself. 34

"Why teach literature as one of the humanities? Is it to have the students read all standard books? No, it is to give him the advantage of life-long entertainment and moral development of a higher sort." 35

"Literature is the great unifier; it relates itself to all the activities of life and at its best it helps to improve and coordinate them." 36

It is quite surprising that just three authors are represented by a short story in all four texts: Washington Irving, our first important American short story writer, has "The Devil and Tom Walker" and also some selections from his books which are unrelated short pieces. This is said to be a typical Irving tale. "The plot is slight and of legendary origin. It is told in Irving's favorite tongue-in-cheek style and with a twinkle in the eye." 37

34 Frederic E. Pamp, Jr., "Is There a Future for the Teaching of Literature?" School and Society LXX (July 2, 1949), 4.

35 William Gillis, Jr., "Are We Teaching the Wrong Classics?" The Clearing House XXVI:4 (December, 1951), 208.

36 Brewer, op. cit., p. 616.
CHAPTER II

FICTION

That fiction is often merely escape literature is true; but the lasting value of most fiction in our time is the significance of human beings, the world in which they live and act, and what governs their action. The authors present moral problems, relationships of people of varying ages and standards, questions of social institutions and conditions, and traditions and customs. Fortunately, there are woven into the stories themes of vital importance through which we can note guidance toward better living.

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In other Irving tales there is the supernatural element in his entertaining, humorous story. It is well for students to discuss how not to be like the termagant Tom had for a wife. It is said a female scold is a match for the Devil, but here it seems he got the better of Tom's wife.

"The Legend of Sleepy Hollow", with its wonderfully descriptive passages, has the usual pervading humor of Irving and supernaturalness, as we see the school master failing to "Spare the rod, and spoil the child." Even if one can't respect him well, poor luckless Ichabod Crane knew how to win friends by his tactful willingness to be of assistance at all times.

"The Purloined Letter" by Edgar Allen Poe gives a good example of a person who reasons things out by putting himself in the place of the other person from whom he is attempting to get information. The prefect of the police tries in vain to get the brilliant detective to tell him how to solve the mystery. Why should the detective not solve it himself? He is clever enough to find the purloined letter in plain sight, earn the promised money from the prefect, and aid the prefect in collecting the huge reward. As the detective says, "It is merely an identification of the reasoner's intellect with that of his opponent." From this story it is easy to believe that Poe did blaze the trail for the modern crime story. The other
selections by Poe we can appreciate for the unique effect he produced by his choice of words in the descriptive passages. We can almost see that eye of the uncle leering at us just before the murder in "The Tell-Tale Heart"; we can easily imagine the approach of the sharp pendulum and cringe at the vivid description of the ravenous rats in "The Pit and the Pendulum" before the prisoner is rescued. "The Masque of the Red Death" is not so revolting, and although it is horrible, there is enough fantasy to give an artistic effect. After five months of secluding himself and a thousand friends to avoid the pestilence of the Red Death, the Prince entertained with a masked ball. One masquerader assumed the guise of the Red Death, and the Prince ordered him seized and hanged. From the blue room to the purple, to the green, to the orange, to the white, and thence to the violet the tall shrouded figure moved. Finally the Prince rushed through the six chambers holding aloft a drawn dagger; as he reached the black velvet room, he was confronted by the mummer. "There was a sharp cry-- and the dagger dropped gleaming upon the sable carpet, upon which, instantly afterwards, fell prostrate in death the Prince Prospero." No doubt, Poe wished his readers to enjoy the description of the gay revel; yet, he implied that one could not escape Fate. "And Darkness and Decay and the Red Death held illimitable dominion over all."
Bret Harte, whose contribution to the American short story was the use of local color, has been represented in two of the texts by "The Outcasts of Poker Flat." Recently this story has been filmed. Who says some of the older writers aren't timeless, even for mid-twentieth century teen-agers? "There is a little bad in the best of us and a little good in the worst of us" goes an old saying which is well demonstrated in this story. John Oakhurst, professional gambler, showed his kindness of heart when he advised young Tom Simson to stop gambling. "Tommy, you're a good little man, but you can't gamble worth a cent. Don't try it over again." When John was banished along with the other improper persons, he accepted his fate coolly. "He was too much of a gambler not to accept fate. With him life was at best an uncertain game; and he recognized the usual percentage in favor of the dealer." As we know, the operators of games of chance, even slot machines, have a big advantage over the amateur players. John was called the "strongest and yet the weakest of the outcasts of Poker Flat"; he was the one who, though weak morally before, rose to the greatest self-sacrifice by removing himself, thus leaving the scanty provisions for the two remaining women. This story has excellent characterization and description to be noted. In the other Bret Harte
stories we can see also that the environment influences the characters. The author must have had a forgiving nature himself, because here again he has his characters forgive someone for ill-treatment or for wrong-doing. In "The Postmistress of Laurel Run" we recognize Mrs. Baker’s courage to dare to save her neighbor, Stanton Green. She admonishes him to "rise up and be a man again" after his dishonesty has come to light. The setting of this story can be stressed too; particularly, the crowd waiting for mail to be distributed can recall to some the anxious mail-hungry line at camp or a resort. In "Tennessee's Partner" we see that in spite of the rough side of the miners' lives, there was possible a sincere affection for a friend. When Tennessee's partner tried to save Tennessee from his hanging and then procured the body for burial, we know he had forgiven him completely for stealing his wife, as was evidenced when he first welcomed him back to Sandy Bar. Bret Harte knew well the feelings and actions of the early western mining camps. His secret past will be divulged.

There are five authors whose short stories appear in three of the texts. It is interesting to note that each of the three has a different selection from O. Henry, one of America's best short story writers. In his own tragic life the unfortunate circumstance of an embezzlement charge sent him to prison for over three years. He knew
human virtues and human weaknesses which he portrays well in his stories; in these there is humor, pathos, suspense, and often a surprise ending. In "Mammon and the Archer" O. Henry has written about the wealthy of New York rather than of the common man, as was his usual theme. However, his rich man had risen from poverty. The rich man tells his son that he is a gentleman and remarks, "They say it takes three generations to make a gentleman. They're off. Money'll do it as slick as soap grease." The comradeship and sympathy of the father drew the son's confidence. In "The Cop and the Anthem" he has the tramp trying to get sent to jail; then the tramp decides to reform and get a job; ironically, he is sent to jail for doing nothing. Perhaps O. Henry was thinking of his own sad circumstance. The leading character of "A Retrieved Reformation" (dramatized as "Alias Jimmy Valentine"), decides to reform. He gets along fine until he has to open a vault to save the life of his sweetheart's little niece. If he succeeds in opening such a vault, his secret past will be divulged. The detective realizes his sincere desire to go straight and purposely fails to recognize him. He feels it is wise to help him who has decided on better ways and he leaves the reader to surmise that "honesty is rewarded."

Jack London knew life as an adventurer on land and sea; this knowledge is reflected in his stories. His use
of description seems to provide the needed background in the story for his character or few characters of whom he writes. He uses words and expressions to appeal to our five senses; especially is this noticeable in "All Gold Canon." "Smoke of life an' snakes of purgatory! Will you just look at that!" Bill, the genial miner, whose thinking was a visible process, was delighted with the green heart of the canon where he was to search for gold. "Cool green for tired eyes! Pink pills for pale people ain't in it."

When he discovered the pocket of gold, he cried, "Sufferin' Sardanopolis! Lumps an' chunks of it!" The students should learn to appreciate good, vivid description in this interesting short story. Bill's patience and determination are qualities worth mentioning. "To Build a Fire" is another story in which London employs the amount of description necessary to create just the right mood for his character. Somehow the lack of affection or understanding between the man and the dog serves to lessen the reader's desire for the man to beat his enemy-extreme cold. "The trouble with him was that he was without imagination. He was quick and alert in the things of life and not in the significances."

Here one can learn the value of listening to someone with experience. Had the cheechako listened to the old-timer who had warned him of the destroying cold, he would have won his battle. One finds himself feeling more sorry for
the dog to which the cheechako showed no kindness. The dog knew better, but he followed the man as a good dog knows he should.

The struggles of the inner man concerned one of our first American short story writers, Nathaniel Hawthorne, whose contacts with other people were infrequent and seem rather detached. Living in Salem, he naturally heard a great deal about ghosts and witches. One has to dig deep for the meaning he intended in his stories. "Feathertop" appears to be a fanciful tale about a witch's scarecrow to which she gives human qualities. However, Feathertop, as brainless as he is, recognizes his incompetence and exclaims, "I've seen myself for the wretched ragged, empty thing I am! I'll exist no longer!" The witch explains, "Well, well! I'll make a scarecrow of him, after all. 'Tis an innocent and useful vocation, and will suit my darling well; and if each of his human brethren had as fit a one, 'twould be the better for mankind." "Dr. Heidegger's Experiment" is likewise a fantasy which shows too that Hawthorne was troubled about right and wrong. The so-called scientific experiment was made by Dr. Heidegger who wanted to see if his friends would let the experience of a lifetime guide them should they be made youthful again. Perhaps one can see that he has just one life to live and that he should choose wisely as he goes along. Hawthorne's
choice of words describes well his characters. "Wakefield" has little action to cover twenty years of the story, and it resembles an essay as Hawthorne attempts to discover why Wakefield's mind worked in such an odd manner. The reader also wonders why Wakefield should leave his wife and home for twenty years and watch from a neighboring room; then, after seeing his wife struggle along and grow sad and old, walk into his own house as if he had been away but a day.

Stephen Vincent Benet, a modern writer, made use of fantasy, folklore, and historical facts in weaving delightful tales such as "The Devil and Daniel Webster" and "O'Halloran's Luck." In the latter he shows one what a struggle men had to build the West, what faith and courage and determination it took. A bit of Irish folklore in the form of the leprechaun brought luck and fortune to Tim O'Halloran. "The Devil and Daniel Webster", which has been made into a motion picture, a one-act play, and an opera, is becoming an American classic. Several things about this story are worthy of emphasis: the historical facts; the supernatural element; the common language; the suspense and humor; the imagery and figures of speech; the universality; and its resemblance to an epic because of the great character in such an historical background for a story with definite beginning, middle, and end. Pupils can learn true facts about a great American statesman of
the Civil War era in a fantastic manner when the Devil
tells Daniel Webster's fortune. Perhaps Americans are
rightfully chagrined when the Devil claims American citi-
zenship. "And who with better right? When the first wrong
was done to the first Indian, I was there." One can re-
member that others also have rights.

One of our best known contemporary writers, John
Steinbeck, presents a most realistic picture in "Flight." Some of the picture is far from pleasing, but one can
certainly feel Pepe's predicament. One sees the relation-
ship between a Mexican mother and her growing son and the
loyalty in spite of heartbreak in realization of his wrong-
doing. Knowledge of insects, animals, and the beauty of
nature can be stressed as Pepe's cognizance of these is
revealed. The statement Mama Torres made is interesting:
"A boy gets to be a man when a man is needed. Remember
this thing. I have known boys forty years old because
there was no need for a man." Pepe needed to have grown
mentally as he was learning the skill with his knife; if
he had, perhaps he would not have gotten into trouble.

Another Steinbeck story, "The Leader of the People," is
even more a study of the characters. How hard it is for
younger generations to understand the old. Poor Grandfather
was not appreciated by his son-in-law, who could have tried
harder to be more patient and tolerant. Jody, the grandson,
seemed to sense the grandfather's need for sympathetic understanding. Grandfather explained,

I tell those old stories, but they're not what I want to tell. I only know how I want people to feel when I tell them... We carried life out here and set it down the way those ants carry eggs. And I was the leader. The westering was as big as God, and the slow steps that made the movement piled up and piled up until the continent was crossed.

Two of the four texts include stories of the following seven authors. Sarah Orme Jewett's "Fame's Little Day", a story of simple realism, has an appeal for the reader because it creates a bond of sympathy. Who doesn't feel a little pleasure in seeing his name in print, especially anyone so retiring as the Pinkhams. The title could be applied to so many everyday experiences: the football substitute who ran the winning touchdown; the quiet boy and girl who were elected king and queen of the school; the boy who won a coveted scholarship; a minor character who stole the show; and many other instances could be mentioned. Chance plays a big part in our lives; many times we are unaware of the person responsible for our opportunity. Little did Mrs. Pinkham realize that the young newspaperman's notice had really made their trip a success, increased their self-respect, and would cause honor to be done them when read by their neighbors in that section of Vermont.

For a rousing discussion on boy-girl relationships there are two good selections. Both are good examples of
a typical, clever teen-age girl seeking happiness. "Sixteen" by Maureen Daly gives us also some poignant descriptions and clever use of words to discuss. The girl seems alive and talking with heartfelt sincerity of her exciting evening at the skating pond, her hopeful waiting, and her resignation to disappointment. "My heart still prays, but my mind just laughs," she says as she realizes the fickleness of youth. Miss Daly's comparisons are most vivid and the language very appropriate.

In Ring Lardner's "I Can't Breathe", written as a diary, he shows humor and satire. Although Aunt Julie's niece is quite a coquette, she probably would be a friendly girl who most boys would realize was fickle. Her language is exaggerated, but isn't most language of the teen-ager? We wish she had been more sincere and less fickle. Another humorous story by Ring Lardner is "The Maysville Minstrel"; however, one can feel sorry for Stephen Gale whom the wise-cracking New York salesman pretended to befriend. Stephen was too easily flattered and made to believe his poetry was good. He was the victim of a mean joke played on him by the salesman who is typical of lots of mean people. Ring Lardner showed a seriousness in this story which one should recognize.

A newcomer on the literary horizon, Jessamyn West, uses her Quaker background in her stories; they are
stories of local color in which the characters use quaint language, but there is a quiet humor and the personalities are distinct. "The Pacing Goose" shows Eliza's love for her pet, understandable by anyone with a pet. The hired man is between two fires in trying to be loyal both to Eliza and to Jess. The court scene shows how a judge tends to be human when some homely person like Eliza shows her sincere love for a pet and a determination that justice shall prevail. The bellowing of the truculent Mr. Overby made little impression on the young judge. It is well to point out Jess Birdwell's comment about his wife. "Well, Enoch, I learned, first, dependability's woman's greatest virtue. Steady as a pumpbolt, day in, day out. . . Second, when it's a case of woman and the law, thee don't need to waste any worry on the woman." "The Buried Leaf," another story of the Birdwell family of Quakers, shows how family tradition is important to some people. The relationship of members of this family to each other is one of respect, consideration, and understanding; they had respect for the poor struggling pioneers, too. The page from the Bible, buried years before, seemed to them to be a message of counsel from their ancestors. "I ain't so far from those days not to know a man plowed the earth then with his heart as well as his hands. It ain't always been ingrain carpets and celery vases, Mattie, and thee's not to forget it,"
admonished Jess.

Sometimes one has difficulty explaining why a certain story is a favorite or why it makes a deep impression on one. One simply knows that a certain story keeps recurring to the mind or one sees the characters vividly portrayed or understands clearly their thoughts. Such a story is "Footfalls" by Wilbur Daniel Steele. One feels compassion and respect for the blind Boaz as well as contempt for the worthless, spoiled, ungrateful son, Manuel. Unfortunately one sees this kind of one-sided affection too often; many parents, like Boaz, give their all for a child who returns trouble or disgrace. Old Boaz with his unquenchable exuberance was appreciated by the other young men, and this pleasant relationship makes even greater the contrast in the lack of understanding between father and son. "Footfalls" teems with excellent descriptive passages, good words for study, tense situations, and best of all it has Boaz—as an unforgettable character.

Three opinions are expressed about a boy's going to war in William Faulkner's "Two Soldiers". Father felt their family had done enough for the country; Mother felt that if Pete had to go, he had to, but she couldn't understand why; and Pete just knew he had to go. There is a splendid brotherly relationship between Pete and his eight-year-old brother; although Pete tries to be harsh, his
softness shows through when he says good-bye in Memphis. Pete shows loyalty to his country and courage in leaving his family, which really needs help. The author apparently dislikes the way some social workers pursue their case histories, and he has the bus depot agent and the policeman use more common sense in their dealings. The little boy is a good soldier too, and because of loyalty and love for Pete will go home to work for Pete and their parents. The reader can see beyond the written story as it is told through the eyes and understanding of an eight-year-old.

Another promising contemporary writer is the Kentuckian Jesse Stuart, whose intense desire for an education is emphatically reflected in the main characters of some of his stories. In "Eustacia" one can feel well acquainted with the girl, Eustacia, who is striving constantly to be the best student in her class. Her family background is thoroughly described and one feels that her determination to learn and to be somebody is truly praiseworthy. About the same determination is exhibited by Dave Sexton in "Split Cherry Tree." His philosophy "It's a lot in knowing the other fellow" is truly a good maxim. It can be proven every day just as it is in this story. Although there is humor through the story, one realizes the heartache and embarrassment of Dave in being loyal to
his father. One must admire Pa's sincerity in his attempt to learn about the school and forgive him for his rough manner, which Professor Herbert overcame by proving that he knew what he was talking about. The teacher-pupil relationship is worth mentioning as well as the improved father-son relationship—all because of understanding.

Although some authors are represented by a short story in only one of the four texts, there are several of these stories which are worthy of mention because of the possibilities for character and personality development. Aristotle said that curiosity of that desire to learn was something deep down in human nature: "Any man in whom that instinct is faint or dormant is incomplete." 2 Johnny, in Dorothy Thomas' story "Awful Heavy", had his share of this trait, but with it he used tact which everyone needs in abundance. Instead of getting called a sissy for having to accompany his mother on a call to a fat lady, Johnny makes his baseball cronies envious. "She's fatter than the fat lady in the circus." Too, he is tactful when he addresses the druggist as "Doc"; when he works it to move Auntie Opal from her position on the sofa to the vantage point on the meat block. Each time he uses tact, he is clearing the way to satisfy his curiosity, "Just about

what do you suppose she weighs?" The neighborliness and friendliness of a small town are shown throughout the story, and the lady with the "purple feathered head" gets a good laugh as she blunders through as lots of thoughtless people do. In spite of her sprained ankle, Auntie Opal got to the church to help manage the dinner, and through Johnny's persistence, his curiosity about her weight was satisfied. The reader is left to wonder, "Just about what do you suppose she weighs?"

Mary E. Wilkins Freeman gives a fine picture of wifely devotion and love under most trying circumstances in "The Revolt of Mother." Mother's integrity, unselfishness, diligent attention to her family's needs, and meekness are rewarded at last. After forty years of waiting for Adoniram to keep a promise, she had to take things into her own hands and move the family into the new barn in order to have a decent place for Nanny's wedding. Adoniram was thoughtless about anything that didn't have to do with his stock or farm buildings of which he was very proud; but he was remorseful when he realized how selfishly he had acted. There are splendid passages in this story: "Nobility of character manifests itself at loopholes when it is not provided with large doors"; "Unsolicited opportunities are the guideposts of the Lord to the new roads of life."
"The Heyday of the Blood" by Dorothy Canfield Fisher exemplifies a good relationship between a young boy and his great-grandfather. This is a story within a story, an old professor tries to convince a younger man, his assistant, that life is worth living if people will keep their nerve and live courageously. The old professor shows the assistant how to forget ills and meet each day confidently as he tells him of the dauntless spirit and friendly comradeship of his great-grandfather.

A delightful, thought-provoking story of the Pennsylvania Germans is Elsie Singmaster's "The End of the Year." The feeling for each other which the mother and daughter have is notable; it is considerate, kindly, and understanding. Another significant thought is the desire to pay one's debts; to be fair to one's neighbors by so doing. A good comment was: "This paying's like a chain letter. One person stops, then everything's held up." A clipped half-dollar on its round from one person and back again is an interesting feature of this story, which also shows the traditions of independence, honor, and hospitality.

"Short stories can be like windows on the world, if you will but sit by them and give your attention entirely..."
to what they show", is a comment in one of the texts. Two of the four texts have included one novelette each. "The Voice of Bugle Ann" by MacKinlay Kantor is a splendid example of a novelette. It resembles a novel in that it is long enough to develop the main characters; to give us quite a full background of those mountaineer-farmers and their interesting Ozark fox-hunting; and indeed we get some significance of the life of these characters. It has a unified plot with no sub-plots, few characters, and concentrated development of the main action; in these respects it resembles the short story. Perhaps there should be a discussion among the pupils as to the reason why they probably feel that Spring is justified in dealing with Terry the way he did, and why everyone hates to see Spring go to the penitentiary. The bits of sentiment found are noteworthy: the deep love of Spring for his dog; his fondness for his old army bugle; the dog collar he made and adorned with a silver dollar; Spring's confidence in his son when he says, "I hope Benjy has sense enough to pay for the gasoline, if he rides in a Terry car. He will, though"; the many instances when the shadow of memory of World War I crosses Bake's mind, making it waver; Benjy's...
thoughtfulness in sending certain magazines to his dad in prison; the neighbors' welcome for Spring on his return; their consideration in letting the Davises and Roysters go on the hunt alone; Camden Terry's meeting with Spring and her explanation of Bugle Ann's death; and finally, Spring's reluctantly touching Little Lady's muzzle. "The story of the man and the dog illustrates again the familiar mutual devotion and respect which can exist between a human being and an animal when each is a good example of his kind. The real value of each is clearly demonstrated in such a relationship."

Willa Cather's "Neighbor Rosicky", a novelette about an immigrant Czech farmer and his Americanized family living on a Nebraska farm, shows some very fine traits of character. America to Rosicky meant the right to own land, to be industrious, generous and warmhearted, and to enjoy life. He had known real poverty and hunger; he appreciated America with its opportunities for advancement. He believed that hard times in the city were much harder to bear than hard times in the country. He was a genial, understanding man who could see why the young folks might become discouraged and unhappy; he was tactful in seeing to it that his son and his American city-bred wife should not get

discontented on the farm. The family relationships appearing here are especially worth mentioning. Rosicky explained that life had gone well with his wife and himself because they had the same ideas about life. They agreed, without discussion, as to what was most important and what was secondary. They were not to hurry through life, not to be always skimping and saving. Their friendship with Dr. Ed was mutual, very sincere, and appreciated. Dr. Ed liked to eat with them because of the warm hospitality and as he said to Rosicky, "You are one of the few men I know who has a family he can get some comfort out of; happy dispositions, never quarrel among themselves, and they treat you right." The kind of understanding illustrated throughout this novelette can be cultivated to some extent to apply at home, at school, and at work. The appeal to patriotism and the appreciation of America in this story is valuable, too.

"The great novels of all time are studies of human personality. The purpose of these novels is to give the reader a deeper insight into his fellowmen and perhaps to impart thereby a deeper understanding of the people of the world."5 It is indeed wise to urge pupils to include in their reading some of the great novels in order that their

5 Ibid., p. 177.
world be enlarged. As one's experience with novels increases, he finds truer enjoyment in those books that emphasize character or theme rather than merely plot: that is an opinion expressed in *Adventures in American Literature*.

None of the four texts includes a novel; there are a few excerpts, but none complete enough to take from them material to add to this investigation. Each text has helpful suggestions for the reading of novels and lists of meritorious novels which the pupils will enjoy. *Literature of the Americas* says of the novel:

> And is it not true that one may learn through studying the experiences of others? If an author succeeds, as he constantly tries to succeed, in putting before you people as convincingly real as those about you, can he not teach you, by example, something about life? Assuredly he can. . . We see them marching or stumbling through their experiences, doing the things we have done, will do, or hope to do or avoid. . . If they are bad, on the whole, we may learn from their fate to avoid their type of badness. If they are good, on the whole, we may observe their qualities and perhaps learn how to acquire them.

The following quotation will make it clear why students are usually expected to do outside reading and to give book reports for credit.

> English enriches living as well as deepening understanding of social relations. Reading may be an inexhaustible source of personal satisfaction. The

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6 *Rewey Belle Inglis and others, op. cit.*, p. 127.

7 John E. Brewton and others; *Literature of the Americas* (Chicago: Laidlaw Brothers, 1951), pp. 556-7.
development in English classes of reading interests that will carry over into adult life is most effective guidance in the wise use of leisure.

Literature also furnished an objective means of considering problems common to youth. Group discussions in an English class are provocative. Comments by classmates are often more effective than the teacher’s remarks in clarifying a question.

To summarize Chapter II there is no better way perhaps than to point out that often in these selections of fiction good relationships have been emphasized; fine traits of personality and character have been stressed; admirable qualities of human beings and of nature have been indicated for appreciation. An article in The American Psychologist told of a suggested program whereby each subject in the curriculum would be used as a means for increased understanding of self and others. "Let us recognize that the most important psychological facts in a child’s life are his relationships with others and his relationship to himself." This Chapter II on fiction as a means for guidance in character and personality development has attempted just that.

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CHAPTER III

NONFICTION

Nonfiction encompasses many kinds of writing of truths, facts, and reality. Along with the content of the matter, which is determined by the author's purpose of his writings, one finds the author's personality showing through in his words, phrasing, and tone.

"On your guard" is a good motto to follow when you find a writer seeking to persuade you of his ideas. Ideas are thoughts. They should appeal to your mind. But all too many writers and speakers try to win converts by appealing to feelings, especially prejudice.

The preceding warning is given in Adventures in American Literature. Nonfiction can be interesting or dull, serious or humorous, pithy or trite, depending on those two ingredients, the content and the style or personality of the author. Included in nonfiction are essays; selections from letters, journals, and diaries; biography; national literature; and reportage, a type which has increased greatly since the two World Wars and the advent of radio.

Often it is impossible to separate one type of nonfiction from another as they resemble each other so closely; especially is this true of the essay and biography.

Ralph Waldo Emerson, America's best known essayist,

1 Rewey Bell Inglis and others, op. cit., pp. 144-5.
has selections in all four texts. He was a man deeply concerned with moral problems, and his essays reveal his desire to interpret life. "Gifts" suggests we ought to give our spirit, a portion of ourselves, next to giving necessities. A fine thought about appreciation of nature one finds in "Nature": "The difference between landscape and landscape is small, but there is great difference in the beholders." "A friend is a person with whom I may be sincere", one finds in "Friendship." Some of Emerson's wise sayings are noteworthy: "Hitch your wagon to a star"; "The only reward of virtue is virtue"; "The only way to have a friend is to be one"; "Great men are they who see that spiritual is stronger than any material force, that thoughts rule the world."

Benjamin Franklin's varied interests are shown in his Autobiography, selections from which appear in three of the four texts. Probably more enjoyable, however, are the sayings from Poor Richard's Almanac, which appear in three of the texts. Many of these are maxims as timely today as in Franklin's time.

Glass, china, and reputation are easily cracked and never well mended.
Tart words make no friends; a spoonful of honey will catch more flies than a gallon of vinegar.
God helps those that help themselves.
'Tis hard for an empty bag to stand upright.
Beware of little expenses; a small leak will sink a great ship.

Franklin explained that he felt his almanac would convey
instruction among the common people who bought scarcely any other books; so he used as fillers proverbial sentences regarding virtue. "A word to the wise is enough."

Mark Twain (Samuel Langhorne Clemens) is thought of as a novelist perhaps rather than a writer of nonfiction. Some really worthwhile ideas come from him, one of America's greatest humorists. He said, "When I find a well-drawn character in fiction or biography, I generally take a warm personal interest in him, for the reason that I have known him before—met him on the river." In his Autobiography he expresses his appreciation of the negro when he says,

We had a faithful and affectionate good friend, ally, and adviser in "Uncle Dan'l", a middle-aged slave whose head was the best one in the negro quarters, whose sympathies were wide and warm, and whose heart was honest and simple and knew no guile... It was on the farm that I got my strong liking for his race and my appreciation of certain of its fine qualities.

Mark Twain was a keen observer of the life of his era.

"The Country Doctor" by David Grayson reminds everyone that each leaves his secret mark upon his neighborhood and neighbors in accordance with the strength of character one has. He says in old neighborhoods people come to know one another, with "that sort of knowledge which reaches down into the hidden springs of human character." Mr. Grayson explains that knowledge becomes really a part of life only when knowledge is emotion. He says that goodness does not flash; it glows. He makes it clear that often
people do not stop to thank others or show appreciation until it is too late.

Dorothy Canfield Fisher needs to be mentioned here as well as with the writers of fiction in Chapter II. In "Nothing Ever Happens" such tact and kindness are shown that students can have a good discussion on those qualities as they could be exemplified in high school, especially when there is a newcomer. Mrs. Fisher has a charming way of describing characters through their actions rather than entirely by a direct opinion. "Robert Frost: A Neighbor of Mine", by Mrs. Fisher, gives a careful characterization of the contemporary poet and of another friend of hers, a cosmopolitan visitor. This essay gives an opportunity to discuss how fame doesn't necessarily put the person above others and ruin him as a human being. One should learn how not to lionize those who have done something of outstanding achievement or those who have won singular honors. There is a very poignant suggestion about learning to listen which should be noticed.

The name of Helen Keller seems to stand for courage and success. Her "Three Days to See" offers a world of thought-provoking material to discuss. In paying tribute to her former teacher of many years, Miss Keller tells how much she would like to see in Mrs. Macy's eyes her strength of character and the compassion she had for all humanity.
Miss Keller makes one see how little he who has eyes sees: "Oh, there is so much rich meaning and beauty in the art of the ages for you who have eyes to see!" She reveals how unappreciative people are of their sight and thinks everyone should consider what he would rest his gaze upon if he knew that in three days he would never see again. She laments, "It is a great pity that in the world of light the gift of sight is used only as a mere convenience rather than as a means of adding fullness to life."

Another essay to impress upon pupils the value of the gift of sight is "The Good Companions" by Alexander Woollcott, whose interest in The Seeing Eye school was so intense he gave time and money to it. This essay not only gives one an inside story of the beginning of The Seeing Eye, but also shows what good qualities of the head and heart the dogs need for training.

J. Frank Dobie, author of "The Heraldry of the Range", gives the students an enlightening story of the symbols of ranchmen. Everyone knows a cattlebrand marks cattle to show ownership, but does everyone realize what else it is? There is personal sentiment to a cattlebrand just as a family coat-of-arms means something particular for that family. Products have trade-marks which one recognizes; a cowman’s cattle can be recognized, too, by his trade-mark which is recorded. Nations, states,
colleges, universities, schools, clubs, fraternities, and many organizations have their seal, their brand, or trademark, by which they may be known. In Mr. Dobie's selection the explanation of many brands is very fascinating. Can not the students have some enjoyment drawing a personal coat-of-arms to show their family tradition, perhaps, but especially to show their interests, hobbies, secret love, or hoped-for attainment?

The teachers of American Literature may have a feeling of nostalgia when they discuss the carefully described arrival of the circus in Thomas Wolfe's "Circus at Dawn". An appreciation of the poetic quality of this prose selection as well as of Mr. Wolfe's "The Promise of America" should be noted. In this latter selection, Mr. Wolfe from his observation point atop the Rocky Mountains, urges everyone to survey the whole of America, each section with its inhabitants "burning in the night."

So, then, to every man his chance ... to every man, regardless of his birth, his shining golden opportunity ... to every man the right to live, to work, to be himself, and to become whatever thing his manhood and his vision can combine to make him--this, seeker, is the promise of America.

Donald Culross Peattie in his autobiographical selection, "The Making of a Naturalist," makes a point of showing how our environment and family life can set the pattern for our interests and how it is often the basis for our future. "The Sun Trap" deals with chlorophyll,
which is the one link between the sun and life. Pupils are certainly conscious of chlorophyll now with all the advertisements for gum, tooth-paste, and mints. Pupils should be more appreciative of nature after reading what he says about our electricity's having been hurled from the sun two hundred million years ago.

After summing up the meaning of America in achievements and opportunities, Herbert Hoover in "The Miracle of America" says:

The meaning of our word America flows from one pure source. Within the soul of America is the freedom of mind and spirit in man. Here alone are the open windows through which pours the sunlight of the human spirit. Here alone human dignity is not a dream but a major accomplishment.

And it is those moral and spiritual qualities which rise alone in free men which will fulfill the meaning of the word American. And with them will come centuries of further greatness to our country.

Albert Einstein explains, in "The Real Problem Is in the Hearts of Men," that because of atomic energy, men need to change to a new type of thinking. He says, "Our defense is not in armaments, nor in science, nor in going underground. Our defense is in law and order."

Sarah Kemble Knight, defying convention, kept a shop in Boston and taught school; she believed in the freedom of opportunity for women in the New World. She shows in her Journal what a keen observer she was and comments frequently on the customs and manners of those she contacted on her
lengthy journey on horseback. She tells of the hospitality and courteous treatment received in some places.

It is well to think about the outstanding characteristics of the men who were largely responsible for our national literature; the literature of course includes their orations. It is evident that they had faith in God and man, a desire for liberty, and courage to face privation. Patrick Henry's famous speech including "I know not what course others may take; but as for me, give me liberty or give me death!" shows the fiery spirit that many patriots possessed, the determination to fight for freedom. Benjamin Franklin, whose writings have been mentioned in this chapter, had the distinction of being the only person whose signature appeared on all four important documents of the Revolutionary period. It is wise to mention to the students some of the ideals set forth in the Declaration of Independence and the Bill of Rights and to encourage an interest in good citizenship in order to build democracy.

In addition to the beauty of the language of the Gettysburg Address, one can realize that Lincoln was paying a tribute to the brave men who had died for a cause. In his Second Inaugural Address one reads "With malice toward none; with charity for all." Lincoln had that idea in mind through his life.
In his "Farewell to the Army of North Virginia" Robert E. Lee had a splendid thought about duty: "You may take with you the satisfaction that proceeds from the consciousness of duty faithfully performed, and I earnestly pray that a merciful God will extend to you His blessing and protection." Thomas Nelson Page wrote in his biography of Lee that when Lee returned from defeat, his first recorded words were, "General Grant has acted with magnanimity." Mr. Page wrote, "Indeed, from this record a few facts stand forth beyond all others: Lee's nobility and genius; the fortitude of the Southern people; Grant's resolution and magnanimity; and the infinite valor of the American soldier." Surely, Robert E. Lee stands with Washington and Lincoln as a good American with fine personal traits.

The students should get many inspirational thoughts and good ideals from the meritorious selections of non-fiction which the teacher can use to advantage in stressing personality and character development. The essays are entertaining as well as instructive, for the most part. Those which are biographical are just as interesting as if the characters were fictional. Although national literature seems to be more valuable in time of crisis when our heritage is at stake, every citizen needs at all times to ponder the thoughts and actions of those early pioneers.
who framed our constitution and built our nation, if democracy is to survive.

Until the last century American drama had not contributed much to the world of literature; now besides the stage play there is the radio drama to which sight has been added by television in many localities. In reading drama, the reader has to bring it to life by doing mentally all that the director, actors, stage manager, costume designer, and make-up artists have done. As in other narrative types of literature, through dialogue the characters reveal their own personalities and their relationships to others. The one who reads a play to himself must have and use a lively imagination to feel the nature of the characters, to adjust himself to the setting, mood, and theme.

Some of America's best playwrights are represented in the texts: Our Town by Thornton Wilder and Where the Cross Is Made by Eugene O'Neill. Both are unusual in setting and the characters of each are most impressive.

Our Town, presented on a bare stage, is unique in that the Stage Manager is a performer in the drama; he fills in for minor characters, and he shifts the scene with a sentence or two as he shifts the time backward or forward days or years. He is the interpreter of the play which has been likened to a parable; the scenes are taken from
CHAPTER IV

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everyday life, the purpose of which is to show the truth about people and happenings. There are deep thoughts about life and about death, about social injustice and culture.

The State Manager says,

No, ma'am, there isn't much culture; but maybe this is the place to tell you that we've got a lot of pleasures of a kind here: we like the sun comin' up over the mountain in the morning, and we all notice a good deal about the birds.

The little lecture Dr. Gibbs gives his son George about helping his mother probably sounds natural to some of the boys. The gossip about the organist and his weakness for drink and the excuse someone gives for him seem fitting.

The second act has much interesting conversation between George and Emily, with flashbacks on their wedding day.

The Stage Manager repeats someone's remark, "Every child born into the world is nature's attempt to make a perfect human being. Well, we've seen nature pushing and contriving for some time now." We hear the thoughts as well as the speeches of the character many times. Act III, the scene of Emily's funeral and the cemetery is realistic and philosophical. Again the Stage Manager speaks:

I don't care what they say with their mouths, everybody knows that something is eternal. And it ain't houses, and it ain't names, and it ain't earth, and it ain't even the stars . . . everybody knows in their bones that something is eternal, and that something has to do with human beings . . . There's something way down deep that's eternal about every human being.

When Emily goes from the grave where the living are
standing and joins the dead, she says to her mother-in-law, "Oh, Mother Gibbs, I never realized before how troubled and how—how in the dark live persons are." After a while Emily goes back to earth to watch herself living the day she first realized she loved George. She feels she just can't stand it; "Oh, earth, you're too wonderful for anybody to realize you. Do any human beings ever realize life while they live it—every, every minute?" Simon Stimson's biting remarks are:

Now you know! That's what it was to be alive. To move about in a cloud of ignorance, to go up and down trampling on the feelings of those—of those about you. To spend and waste time as though you had a million years. To be always at the mercy of one self-centered passion or another. Now you know—that's the happy existence you wanted to go back and see.

There is something sweet and sad and unforgettable about Our Town and lots of things in it which students should be encouraged to talk about. How does a student feel about the day he realized that he had found a friend? Does one go blindly trampling on the feelings of those nearby? What do the students say about the emotional change that has taken place in Emily as she grew up? What kind of people were the inhabitants of Grover's Corners?

Eugene O'Neill's Where the Cross Is Made is a tragedy of the sea in which the evil of human greed turns men's minds. The supernatural element shown by the appearance of the returned shipwrecked sailors with slimy
seaweed in their hair, their nerveless bodies, and staring eyes always pleases students who realize what wonders can be wrought by lighting effects. It was the dream of treasure which kept Captain Bartlett alive and also kept Nat fighting for his "freedom" from insanity. It is a tragic truth that the sane ones and the half-sane suffer most; the complete insanity of Captain Bartlett puts him in a world apart; poor Nat is on the verge of insanity and realizes his state; and Sue suffers most, seeing her father completely mad and Nat slipping rapidly. This drama proves the statement that in some of his plays, O’Neill presents a tragic view of life in which fate (Nat’s loss of his arm) and human failings (greedily dreaming beyond their power) are powerfully blended. This play has atmosphere, sound and lighting effects, suspense, good climax, well defined characterizations, and a concluding crisis when Nat surrenders to madness as he says again, "The treasure is where the cross is made." Why does Nat burn the map? Is Sue being ungrateful when she tells the doctor to leave after the Captain dies? What is Sue’s cross?

**In the Zone**, a one-act play by Eugene O’Neill, is another play about the sea. A tense situation grows more tense as the seamen’s suspicion of Smitty’s black box increases. It proves how suspicion and snap judgment cause misunderstanding and strained relationship. Smitty’s
mates were not bad men; their fear of spies and bombs put them on edge and their growing suspicion rapidly caused them to become unreasonable. One's sympathies were with Smitty as it was quite apparent to the onlooker from the beginning that Smitty was suffering from some deep personal problem. When the sailors saw that the box which Smitty had hidden contained letters from his sweetheart whom he had lost, they were remorseful and ashamed of their accusation.

*Where But in America?* by Oscar M. Wolff presents a serious idea in a humorous manner, made so by the actions and facial expressions of young Mr. and Mrs. Espenhayne as well as by their talk. It is a case of misjudging people, their maid and her fiancé. Where but in America could the maid have an opportunity to earn enough money to be a partner in a business concern? If the Espenhaynes had inquired about "Meester Leendquist" instead of misjudging him, they would have saved themselves a lot of worry about their contemplated move to the North Shore. Students have fun dramatizing this play.

In addition to the worthwhile values of character development possibilities, the radio plays offer an opportunity to show the need for a pleasant, clear, expressive voice; the students can enjoy reading these aloud in a class.
A patriotic radio play by Robert Tallman, *The Gentleman from Paris*, has for its main characters Lafayette and Washington. The first man to declare that "the New World stands as a beacon of hope to the exhausted peoples of the Old World" was Lafayette, who stands as a symbol of liberty for two worlds. The setting in Paris has Lafayette trying to explain to Marie Antoinette that the idea of freedom is equality among men. It is wise to point out what he says about Americans not wanting a dictator but a desire only to have a share in governing themselves and a voice in choosing who shall govern them. The theme of the play is expressed several times in the speeches of different ones. "They are fighting for the greatest ideal since Christianity. They believe that all men are created equal, have equal rights to what they themselves create with their sweat and blood." Washington's pride is shown when he refuses financial aid from Lafayette at their first meeting. Why did he refuse? When it is clear that Lafayette is sincere, Washington lets him prove himself as well as give money.

*The Snow Goose* is an adaptation for radio of a short story by Paul Gallico. As the narrator says,

This is the story of a man—a lonely man—whose body was warped, but whose heart was filled with love for wild and hunted things. He was ugly to look upon, but he created great beauty. It is about him, and a child who came to know him and see beyond the grotesque form that housed him to what lay within, that this story is told.
The wounded snow goose, brought by the little girl, was the means of bringing to Rhayader friendship and, later, love. Yearly the grateful snow goose returned as did Fritha, who blossomed into a hauntingly beautiful young woman. Rhayader explained to Fritha why he must go to Dunkirk,

"Men are huddled on the beaches like hunted birds... They need help, as our wild creatures have needed help, and this is why I must go. It is something that I can do... For once—for once I can be a man and play my part."

The supernatural entered in as the snow goose followed Rhayader to Dunkirk and became his spirit as it passed over the lighthouse just before it and Fritha were blown to oblivion. Realism is brought to the story as the soldiers' fragmentary remarks reveal Rhayader's courage and hope and pride.

The Ghost Patrol, adapted for television from the short story by Sinclair Lewis, gives one an insight into the life of an ex-policeman, who finds it next to impossible to be retired from active duty on his beat. Some of "Pop" Dorgan's ideas could be held by policemen today, profitably: "There's no higher service a man can perform than upholding the law of the land." Farther on in the play he says:

"A policeman's lot is just about the happiest one in the world. At least it was for me. I was never lonely, for I had a beat to walk, people to talk to, quarrels to settle, young folk to lecture, old folk to comfort... For the human spirit is sometimes a lawless spirit and if the truth were known, it could be said that we all..."
dwell in cages and beat our wings vainly against the bars. What we all want is a little more kindness and understanding instead of more policemen and clean, shiny jails.

After falsely accusing his sweetheart's brother, the young policeman, Nick, learns a lesson from "Pop", and says:

"Well, maybe making an arrest isn't always the best solution. Like with Zollie--I jumped to some pretty quick conclusions on account of his past record. And now I realize I had a whole wrong attitude toward him. And gosh, Lieutenant, what I'm trying to say is, there's a human side to things you've got to consider. You can't always stick to the letter of the law.

This story should help prevent juvenile delinquency, and it should show pupils how Zollie's resentful, stubborn attitude hurt his chances of reestablishing himself instead of helping people to see that he was going to go straight.

The underlying humor of the love affair between "Pop" and the lady pawnshop keeper and the neighborhood conversations holds one's interest also.

Drama means doing; as one reflects on the dramas just discussed, he sees a variety of personalities doing things, facing and solving problems. There is pathos and humor; tragedy and comedy; wisdom and unreason. From the quotations and passages emphasized, students should be able to gain something worthy of being added to their development of character and personality. Drama, growing ever more popular and enlarging its scope through stage, radio, and television, not only increases its entertainment possibilities, but also its range of indoctrination to those who
see and hear, and especially to those who participate in productions.

The stage supplies a place where adolescents learn painlessly the social arts that one must know to feel at ease. The stage gives poise, for poise is nothing more than social assurance, the security one has who feels adequate in any social setting. ... Adolescence is more than anything else the period during which the child is struggling to be accepted as an adult.¹

Perhaps it is difficult to point out specific instances in folklore which will fit this study; yet, one knows certain qualities of character to be almost universal in the various types of folklore. The folk literature that is made up mostly of songs and stories must be told and re-told until finally, when someone realizes the contribution of these stories to the cultural development of our country, he records it. The recreation of folklore is not just a series; he has to choose from the many versions of a song or story, the one he feels is the best available. "The folklore is an important part of the cultural history of the race."² Often the folk literature is in vague form,

The most universal of all literary forms, the folk-tale is today claiming the increased attention of everyone interested in the history of narrative art, of every man and woman who loves to tell or hear a good story. What was once looked upon as mere amusement for children is now seen to be the most important literary expression for the vast majority of mankind.1

Perhaps it is difficult to point out specific instances in folklore which will fit this study; yet, one knows certain qualities of character to be shown by personalities in the various types of folklore. Our folk literature is made up mostly of songs and stories sung and told and resung and retold; finally, when someone realizes the contribution of those stories to the cultural development of our country, he records it. The recorder of folklore is not just a scribe; he has to choose from the many versions of a song or story, the one he feels is the most authentic. "The folklore is an important part of the cultural history of the race."2 Often the folk literature is in verse form,

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2 Ibid., p. 448.
probably for the reason that verse is easier to memorize for chanting or singing.

The teacher may feel that there is not much of positive value to point out in the ballads of the southern mountain region and the old English ballads which were transplanted there. It can be noted in "My Little Mohee" that loyalty is a preferred trait. The chanteys and work songs offer little except the recognition of cooperation.

American Indian lore is a more cultured art than much folklore, in that their songs and music were better established forms. The translation, by Mary Austin, of the Navajo "Prayer to the Mountain Spirit" shows the Indians' belief in some higher power. He must have associated that bigness of power with the beauty and bigness of the mountain. The young man prays for cleanliness, wholeness, fleetness, straightness, courage, and staunchness. The Indian songs show that they were a proud people with an appreciation for beauty. Their folklore is distinctly American.

Another distinctly American kind of folk song is that of the Negroes of the South. From their work songs comes the origin of popular ragtime, jazz, and swing music. The positive values in negro songs come of course from their spirituals which show their deep religious beliefs. "Little Black Train Is A-Comin" reminds them of the
judgment day. "Deep River" shows their hope for the future as do "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot" and "Heav'n, Heav'n."

Joel Chandler Harris' "Uncle Remus" stories are folktales which resemble fables whose sources revert to Africa and the Greek Aesop's animal tales. "For the teller of folktales today as in the past, and in our western culture as well as among primitive tribes, the world of the human and of the animal are never far apart." Students are familiar with the comic strip by Walt Disney which pictures the "Uncle Remus" moral teachings.

To almost everyone the Paul Bunyan stories are familiar, especially the Paul Bunyan of the Northwest. He is the most versatile of America's folkheroes; he has even become a phenomenal oil driller and operator in "Paul Bunyan of the Southwest" by John Lee Brooks. Perhaps this folkhero began as a real hero, an outstanding person who was admired and envied by his fellow workers. Soon the story of his prowess was exaggerated, first by one, then by another, until everyone was putting into the story something of his ideal achievement. Pupils may get some realization of a workman's hope for accomplishment. In the selection "Paul Bunyan Meets Tony Beaver" by Margaret Montague, the American hero meets his Canadian counterpart.

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3 Ibid., p. 217.
Each gives credit where credit is due and shows a sense of justice. James Stevens' "An American Hercules" gives the story of the mosquito invasion and how Babe the Blue Ox and Johnny Inkslinger do exactly as their boss says. Johnny says worshipfully about Paul, "Oh, ain't he got a brain, though?" One can learn something about logging camps, even if there is little material for character development. In the text *Prose and Poetry of America*\(^4\) it is stated, "Paul Bunyan is symbolic of the American notion that whatever we attempt, the bigger--the better!"

The cowboy ballads have more material than other ballads as far as this investigation is concerned. The characteristics of the cowboys were about the same as those which the pioneers possessed: optimism, ingenuity, sense of humor, democratic feeling, self-reliance, confidence in themselves, and stamina. These qualities were needed to enable them to carry on their responsibilities. John Lomax in "Cowboy Songs" writes,

> That the cowboy was brave has come to be axiomatic. If his life of isolation made him taciturn, it at the same time created a spirit of hospitality, primitive and hearty as that found in the mead-halls of Beowulf.

Cowboys needed their songs to while away lonely hours and for entertainment when they were gathered around the

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campfire; another function of their songs was to quiet the cattle and to help prevent stampedes. One ballad, "The Cowboy's Dream," is philosophical; it compares the dividing of cattle according to brand markings at roundup time with the treatment of cowboys on Judgment Day.

They say there will be a great roundup,
And cowboys, like dogies, will stand,
To be marked by the Riders of Judgment
Who are posted and know every brand.

Some of their songs show they think about home and loved ones; the words show a fondness for nature and beauty. "Home on the Range," the official song of Kansas, is such a one.

Folk Literature offers less real opportunity than other types for guidance in character and personality. However, with a little emphasis on certain qualities of character, a teacher can point out what traits show up favorably in certain personalities. The moral lessons of the fable-type are easily discernable. This oral literature is being recorded and appreciated in America. By singing the ballads and cowboy songs or by listening to the recordings of them, the students are enlightened as well as entertained.

2 [No page number given].
CHAPTER VI

POETRY

Literature is the most exact expression of feelings, while science is the most exact kind of reporting. Poetry which condenses all the affective resources of language into patterns of infinite rhythmical subtlety, may be said to be the language of expression at its highest degree of efficiency.¹

Poetry appeals to one's imagination and emotions; it opens one's mind by suggesting more than it says in words. In other words, "one must read between the lines." Most people like music and dancing; poetry is related to these through rhythm. It is like painting in that it adds to our enjoyment of life. Poetry makes use of many comparisons and figurative language. Every high school student uses figurative language in his everyday talk.

What is called "slang," therefore, might well be regarded as the poetry of everyday life, since it performs much the same function as poetry; that is, it vividly expresses people's feelings about life and about the things they encounter in life.²

In this discussion there will be no mention made as to whether the poems noted are narrative, dramatic, or lyric. The ones noted will point out certain traits of character or things to be appreciated, which might help

² Ibid., p. 194-5.
guide the student toward development of those worthwhile qualities. The fact that only a limited number of poems are cited, by no means affirms the lack of possible guidance in many others. One is advised in "Mrs. George Reece" by Edgar Lee Masters to become familiar with quotations from poems: "Memorize some bit of truth or beauty. It may serve a turn in your life." In "Lucinda Matlock" we are told, "It takes life to love Life." Masters' epitaph for "George Gray" explains that his life was like a boat at rest with a furled sail because he was afraid to take advantage of opportunities; his life was meaningless and full of the torture of restlessness. Through satire a point is often made more poignant, and Mr. Masters utilizes satire to convey his meaning in many of his characterizations.

Another portrait painter in words was Edwin Arlington Robinson. He was interested in men's inner lives and dealt realistically with them. He shows that a person cannot judge another by appearances: Richard Cory was the envy of the townspeople, but his riches did not bring happiness evidently when he "went home and put a bullet through his head." "Miniver Cheevy" is a portrait of a weakling who was born centuries too late. Mr. Robinson also made use of satire to emphasize the ideas he wished to convey. Perhaps he was hinting to people to quit harping on "the good old days" when he wrote "Miniver Cheevy."
Robert Frost, considered the most distinguished living American poet, writes simply but with keen insight and graphic pictures. In "The Road not Taken" he tells of the two roads diverging and of taking the one less traveled by, "and that has made all the difference." One's life is a series of choices to make. "The Death of the Hired Man" presents a pathetic picture with no action, but good conversation. The poor old hired man is too proud to go to his rich brother; these friendly people, Mary and Warren, are the ones to whom he could turn in adversity--and death. The definitions of home are interesting: "Home is the place where, when you have to go there, they have to take you in"; and "I should have called it something you somehow haven't to deserve." What is the value of talking things over in the family before making decisions? Didn't Mary lessen Warren's positiveness by helping him to understand Silas's plight in returning to them? "Mending Wall" gives us a splendid description; one can see the two neighbors walking along repairing the fence; the progressive one feels that the fence is an unnecessary barrier that he'd like to break. The other one is practical though in a rut, and feels "Good fences make good neighbors" as his father has said before. Why should one progress?

Carl Sandburg, contemporary poet and biographer, uses strong and simple but much figurative language in his
poems. His best known poem is "Chicago" in which one gets a mental picture of a strong, husky, broad shouldered youth representing the busy city with its temptation and its industries. One sees humor, integrity and pride exemplified. "Prayers of Steel" are symbolic of persons seeking to be useful in a world becoming better and more beautiful: "Let me be the great nail holding a skyscraper through blue nights into white stars."

Teachers have a splendid opportunity to urge students not to be too possessive and to have several close friends--boys and girls--when they read "Advice to a Girl" by Sara Teasdale: "No one worth possessing can be quite possessed." This poem is a favorite for memory work and arouses interest in discussing friendships. Sara Teasdale's poems are "elusive little flashes of emotion caught and molded for us like tiny figures in ivory," as the text Adventures in American Literature declares. "Barter" infers the value of the beauty of nature, music, peace, and human love: "Life has loveliness to sell ..." What will each student contribute when asked to explain loveliness? One is told in "The Coin" that "a safe-kept memory of a lovely thing" is a coin for the heart's treasury which neither a thief nor time can purloin. Will the collection of "coins" which students volunteer be large?

Social justice for the laborer is the theme of
Edwin Markham's "The Man with the Hoe" in which he pictures an extreme case of an exhausted "slave of the wheel of labor." Rehabilitation is a word well explained by his lines.

How will you ever straighten up this shape; Touch it again with immortality; Give back the upward looking and the light; Rebuild in it the music and the dream?

Markham's quatrain "Outwitted" is a challenge to everyone to "love thy neighbor" and bring him into friendship even if he is shutting one out.

Walt Whitman, called the poet of democracy because he lived it and preached it, saw miracles in the common things of everyday life. He feels that people have a kinship with the mightiness of nature, that each has his place and should fill it. The longings of a human soul to reach out and succeed—to be secure—are compared, symbolically, to the spider flinging out his gossamer thread to weave his web in "A Noiseless Patient Spider."

Emily Dickinson packed a world of meaning into her little poems, which she didn't expect to be published. She lived to herself a great deal, but she did lots of thinking and expressed her feelings beautifully. Here again are found little gems worth memorizing because of the appealing ideas. "I'm Nobody," "How Happy Is the Little Stone," and "The Soul Selects Her Own Society" show Miss Dickinson's fondness for retirement to her own home and garden. One
poem that has three titles—"I Never Saw a Moor," "Chartless," and "Assurance"—shows her faith: "I never spoke with God, nor visited in heaven; yet certain am I of the spot as if the chart were given." She implies that we can reach the heights if we are called upon as, in "We Never Know How High," she writes:

We never know how high we are
Till we are called to rise;
And then, if we are true to plan,
Our statures touch the skies.

"To Make a Prairie" tells one how much revery can do for everybody. Most students are familiar with these lines of Miss Dickinson from another poem:

There is no frigate like a book
To take us lands away,
Nor any coursers like a page
Of prancing poetry.

The poems of Emily Dickinson are worth studying for meaning and beauty.

The early American poets wrote less realistically than do those of the twentieth century. The first great American poet, William Cullen Bryant, showed powerful and dignified expression in his poems with themes of death, nature, and faith. Students need help in reading meaning into Thanatopsis; they need to understand his beliefs: Nature contributes to the mood of people; death is universal and the earth is the common sepulcher; live in such a way that when one's summons to that tomb comes it will be like
lyi ng down to pleasant dreams because of an unfaltering trust. "To a Waterfowl" is an expression of belief in a higher power which cares for birds and human beings:

He who from zone to zone
Guides through the boundless sky thy certain flight
In the long way that I must tread alone
Will lead my steps aright.

Ralph Waldo Emerson, as in his essays, is also philosophical in his poems. "Each and All" has for its theme "All are needed by each one; nothing is fair or good alone." He shows that all things and all people are dependent on each other. How are we of Kansas dependent on those of other states? How are students of Hays dependent on those of other schools in the league? In "Fable" one sees that each person or thing has its own role to play in the universe. "The Concord Hymn" is full of figures of speech and presents a very graphic picture of the statue of The Minute Man for which dedication Emerson wrote the poem. It reviews the courage of the minute men and the heritage they left their children.

Edgar Allan Poe has been discussed in Chapter II, but should be mentioned here as a poet who believed poetry should have melody, mood, and beauty. Appreciation for those qualities should be stressed here, because learning to appreciate such qualities is part of character development.

The sterling characters which John Greenleaf Whittier
includes in *Snowbound* are typical of the good people of that era and the poet pays tribute to their traits. Here again appreciation of character and nature can be stressed. In Whittier's criticism of Daniel Webster in the poem "Ichabod," he expresses his belief that when faith is lost and honor dies a person might as well be dead. "The Eternal Goodness" expresses Whittier's belief that God is good and merciful, and although he knows not what the future holds, he says, "I only know I cannot drift beyond His love and care."

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's "The Arsenal at Springfield" can be used as a modern plea for education and a protest against the materialism of war.

Were half the power that fills the world with terror, Were half the wealth bestowed on camps and courts, Given to redeem the human mind from error, There were no need of arsenals nor forts:

Many high school students are familiar with "The Chambered Nautilus" by Oliver Wendell Holmes, since it is a favorite glee club song. It is a comparison of man, progressing from one phase of life to another, with the pearly shellfish, leaving one section of its shell to progress to a larger and more beautiful one. Man is urged to "Build thee more stately mansions, O my soul, as the swift seasons roll!"

The idealism of James Russell Lowell is shown in the long narrative poem "The Vision of Sir Launfal." Students
can apply some of this to their own lives. Is it not true that often one is unaware of the beauty and good things close to him and sets out to look for happiness or success in a distant place? One brushes aside the things close at hand regardless of the pangs he causes others; then, after a time, perhaps, he opens his eyes and mind to find the very thing he sought right where he was in the beginning. Lowell shows that material things get their price, but things of the spirit are free, "Tis Heaven alone that is given away, 'Tis only God may be had for the asking."

There is a wealth of good quotations from this which the teacher can use to show appreciation of nature, of human beings and of spiritual ideas.

Not what we give, but what we share,
For the gift without the giver is bare;
Who gives himself with his alms feeds three,
Himself, his hungering neighbor, and Me.

Poetry can say a great deal to us in few words; many poems are shorter than any possible paraphrase or even a précis. To the few examples of guidance possibilities given in this chapter can be added dozens of others. It is an enjoyable experience to see just what interpretation the students themselves will give to the poems. One must use numerous poems and bits of light verse mingled with these idealistic and realistic poems in order not to seem to be preaching.
Poets, as well as scientists, have truly been called "the window washers of the mind"; without their communications to widen our interests and increase the sensitivity of our perceptions, we could very well remain as blind as puppies.³

CONCLUSION

One may see that regardless of which one of the four approved Kansas texts is used, the eleventh grade teacher of American Literature in Kansas high schools has a wealth of opportunity for guidance of character and personality development through literature.

It is a well-established fact that knowledge brings understanding; knowledge of characters in literature helps bring an understanding of human nature and of life situations. Students gain this understanding not through the teacher's preaching about virtue and high principles, but by having seen exemplified these traits which the teacher has subtly stressed as the literature was studied. There are quotations from several educators of different eras which follow: Plato said,

Let each one of us leave every other kind of knowledge, and seek and follow one thing only, if peradventure he may find someone who will make him able to learn and discern between good and evil, and so to choose always and everywhere the better life as he has opportunity.1

An early American educator said, "The knowledge of life comprehends all knowledge and therefore the study of

According to S. I. Hayakawa anyone who fails to understand passing allusions to well-known figures in American or European history or to well-known lines in literature or to well-known characters in literature is in a sense an outsider to the popular cultural traditions of contemporary America. He says,

One of the reasons, therefore, that the young in every culture are made to study the literature and history of their own linguistic or national groups is that they may be able to understand and share in the communications of the group.

Personal qualities which everyone would treasure have been noted in the selected fiction, nonfiction, folklore, drama, and poetry discussed in this research. The four texts include other worthwhile selections which can be read for enjoyment and appreciation. One of the most important objectives should be enjoyment of the literature read and of the class sessions. "Once students find by experience that here in the great writings are the eternally challenging ideas and feelings of men, they know where to go for real and enduring pleasure." 4 "In a very real sense, then, people who have read good literature have lived more

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than people who cannot or will not read." 5 Another fitting quotation of Mr. Hayakawa is, "In the light of the subtleties of feeling aroused in us by the great literature and poetry of the past, every human experience is filled with rich significances and relationships." 6

Relationships play an important role in everyone's life, if he is to feel that he is an accepted member of society. In the selections mentioned there have been various relationships shown: parent-child; brother-brother; age-youth; boy-girl; teacher-pupil; man-animal; husband-wife; schoolmates, playmates, shipmates, and neighbors.

Literary experience is one way of adding to a student's unique background and of providing additional analysis of other people's reactions to experiences. Literature broadens and makes alive for the student the myriad ways in which human beings meet the infinite possibilities that life offers, usually with a scheme of values and a share of social and philosophic order. 7

One has seen courage, unselfishness, tact, tolerance, sympathy, faith, kindness, resourcefulness, patience, patriotism, honesty, loyalty, personal integrity, and appreciation for those human qualities and for beauty in everything.

5 Hayakawa, op. cit., p. 207.
6 Ibid., p. 261.
"Guidance through literature is an opportunity offered to every teacher, especially to the teacher of literature."\(^8\)

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