Fourteen leading educators responded to a survey questionnaire asking them to list the 10 books or other works which they thought were the most important for elementary classroom teachers. An examination of the lists shows that a) there is a lack of unanimity among educational leaders as to what is most important for the elementary classroom teacher to read; b) that methods books are not considered to be the most important for classroom teachers; c) journal citations are few, indicating that national association publications may not be having their intended impact; d) leading contemporary educators did not suggest a large number of "classic" works in education; e) the lists do not reflect any prominent theme or thrust in educational literature today; and f) career, migrant, humanistic, and competency-based education did not receive any notable mention from the survey respondents. (The lists are included in the document.) (HMD)
WHAT EVERY ELEMENTARY TEACHER OUGHT TO READ
(FOURTEEN OPINIONS)

Dr. Matthew Ludes
Associate Professor of Education
State University College
Fredonia, New York

Dr. William E. Schall
Associate Professor of Education
State University College
Fredonia, New York

MARCH, 1974
The current wealth of good literature in education is a great blessing for the teacher at all levels - high school, elementary school and college. For many teachers, especially the beginner, this horn of plenty presents a perplexing problem; with limited time or financial resources the new teacher may need guidance as to what literature would be most beneficial for him to read and, hopefully, to own.

Some excellent lists have been compiled by universities and educational associations, and many good bibliographies exist in a variety of textbooks. However, these lists are quite long, a bit impersonal and give little indication of how individual leaders in the field react to them. As an alternative, it was decided to repeat an old experiment, but on a limited scale. Many years ago, great men of literature were asked which twenty books they would want to have if only twenty could be saved. The resulting lists were quite fascinating and served as a good starting point for anyone wishing to begin a personal library or a reading program for general enlightenment.

This article reports the results of a similar survey. Twenty prominent educators were selected and asked, "If you had to identify the ten most important or useful books that an elementary teacher should own and study, what would they be?" "Book" was undefined to allow as much freedom as possible. Of the twenty persons surveyed, fourteen replied (two out of the five were out of the country) and one individual declined to participate. The fourteen who replied were (in alphabetical order):
(1) Dwight W. Allen, Dean
School of Education
University of Massachusetts
Amherst, Massachusetts 01002

(2) Paul C. Burns
Professor of Education
University of Tennessee
Knoxville, Tennessee 37916

(3) Maxine Dunfee
Professor of Education
Indiana University
Bloomington, Indiana 47401

(4) Lydia Gross (Pet.)
Director of Elementary Education
Lock Haven State College
Lock Haven, Pennsylvania 17745

(5) Robert L. Heichberger
Assistant to the President
State University College at Fredonia
Fredonia, New York 14063

(6) Maurie Hillson
Professor of Education
Graduate School of Education
Rutgers University
New Brunswick, New Jersey

(7) Madeline Hunter, Principal
University Elementary School
University of California
Los Angeles, California 90024

(8) Bruce R. Joyce
Professor of Education
Teachers College
Columbia University
New York, New York 10027

(9) J. Murray Lee
Professor of Elementary Education
Southern Illinois University
Carbondale, Illinois 62901

(10) J. D. McAulay
Professor of Education
The Pennsylvania State University
University Park, Pennsylvania 16802
Since respondents were allowed to list less than ten books, some lists are short. Also, a few respondents went somewhat over the limit of ten by grouping certain books together or by listing alternatives; these lists are reported in full. Hopefully, readers will find at least a few items worth an investment in time or money. Following the individual lists is a compilation of those books and their frequency of selection. The reader will surely notice that the solicited opinions resulted in a great deal of diversity. Concluding the article are some findings and conclusions which seem to be suggested by this survey.

Following, then, are the lists:

Dwight W. Allen

Dwight W. Allen (continued)


Paul C. Burns


Maxine Dunfee


Maxine Dunfee (continued)


Lydia Gross


Robert L. Heichberger


Maurie Hillson


**Madeline Hunter**


**Bruce R. Joyce**


Bruce R. Joyce (continued)


J. Murray Lee


J. D. McAulay


J. D. McAulay (continued)


Robert M. McClure


Vincent R. Rogers


Vincent R. Rogers (continued)


Harold G. Shane


2. Arithmetic handbook designed at the college level.
Harold G. Shane (continued)


7. Phi Delta Kappan.


10. Things to Make and Things to Do Book, dealing with arts materials.

E. Paul Torrance


FINDINGS

The following books were identified most frequently, and the number of times each was listed appears in the second column.

- **Schools Without Failure.** Glasser, William.  
- **Teacher.** Ashton-Warner, Sylvia.  
- **Creative Learning and Teaching.** Torrance, E. Paul and Myers, R. E.  
- **Crisis in the Classroom.** Silberman, Charles E.  
- **Values and Teaching: Working With Values in the Classroom.** Raths, Louis E.; Harmin, Merrill; and Simon, Sidney B.  
- **Child and Curriculum.** Dewey, John.  
- **Creative Power: The Education of Youth in the Creative Arts.** Mearns, Hughes.  
- **Freedom to Learn: A View of What Education Might Become.** Rogers, Carl.  
- **How Children Fail.** Holt, John.  
- **Life in Classrooms.** Jackson, Philip W.  
- **Models of Teaching.** Joyce, Bruce and Weil, Marsha.  
- **Piaget for Teachers.** Furth, Hans G.  
- **The Arts in the Classroom.** Cole, Natalie R.  
- **The Culture of the School and the Problem of Change.** Sarason, Seymour.  
- **The Elementary School in the United States.** Shane, Harold G. and Goodlad, John I., eds.  
- **The Process of Education.** Bruner, Jerome S.  
- **The School and Society.** Dewey, John.  
- **The Teachers' Handbook.** Allen, Dwight W., et al.
TABLE 1

Copyright Distribution of the 149 Recommendations
(145 specific titles and 4 general references--see Harold Shane's list)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Copyright</th>
<th>Number of Books Recommended</th>
<th>% of Books Recommended</th>
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<tr>
<td>1970-73</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>40</td>
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<tr>
<td>1960-69</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>44.8</td>
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<td>1950-59</td>
<td>13</td>
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<td>prior to 1950</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6.7</td>
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TABLE 2

Copyright Distribution of the Eighteen Books Recommended by Two or More of Those Surveyed.

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<th>Copyright</th>
<th>Number of Books Recommended</th>
<th>% of Books Recommended</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1970-73</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>38.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>1960-69</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>38.9</td>
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<td>1950-59</td>
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<tr>
<td>prior to 1950</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>16.7</td>
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CONCLUSIONS AND QUESTIONS

After analyzing the fourteen submitted lists, the investigators suggest the following questions and conclusions:

(1) This survey demonstrated the lack of unanimity among leading educators as to the most important or useful books an elementary classroom teacher should read. Fourteen educators responded with 149 different titles, 119 of which appeared on only one of the lists submitted by those surveyed. No single work appeared more than five times; i.e., SCHOOLS WITHOUT FAILURE and TEACHER received maximum attention and were suggested on five different lists.

(2) Specific methods books were not frequent choices on the lists. The
investigators were somewhat surprised by this as most of those surveyed have made major contributions in specific discipline areas of the elementary school curriculum.

(3) As the investigators analyzed the suggested reading lists, they questioned where prospective elementary teachers would most likely encounter the books most frequently suggested. It appeared to the investigators that many of the suggested books (such as TEACHER, CRISIS IN THE CLASSROOM, SCHOOLS WITHOUT FAILURE, etc.) would most likely appear on bibliographies of educational foundations courses. Therefore, the investigators raise the following questions: (1) Should foundations work receive greater emphasis in teacher education? (2) Should considerable effort be made in teacher education to expose prospective elementary teachers to important and useful educational literature (for example, see Shane's list)?

(4) National professional organizations devote considerable effort, money and manpower to the publication of yearbooks, journals and special publications. Only three yearbooks (ASCD, NCSS, NSSE) were cited out of 140 titles on our lists. Have such publications made the impact intended by the national professional organizations?

(5) Although several "classic" books in education (such as Dewey's SCHOOL AND SOCIETY) were included on a few lists (for example, see J. D. McAulay's list), the investigators were surprised that such a small number of works usually considered "classics" were suggested.

(6) The overall lists did not seem to reflect any major themes or thrusts that seem to be prominent in educational literature today. For example, only two books were suggested concerning CMI/PAT. Other topics such as career education, migrant education, and humanistic education did not appear to receive noticeable attention.
The investigators realize that this list of questions and conclusions is not exhaustive. Surely many other interesting questions and conclusions can be, and perhaps should be, raised by the above lists. The reader hopefully will find some of his own.
Many years ago, great men of literature were asked which twenty books they would want to have if only twenty could be saved. The resulting lists were quite fascinating and served as a good starting point for beginning a personal library or a reading program for general enlightenment.

The current wealth of good literature in education is a great blessing for the teacher at all levels - elementary school, high school, and college. But for many teachers, especially the beginner, this horn of plenty presents a perplexing problem: with limited time or financial resources the classroom teacher often needs guidance as to what literature would be most beneficial for him to read and, hopefully, to own.

This letter is an attempt to conduct a survey, similar to that of old. Twenty prominent educators, such as yourself, will be selected and asked: "you had to identify the ten most important or useful books that an elementary classroom teacher should own and study, what would they be?"

We do hope you will help us with our survey by completing the enclosed survey form. When you have finished the form, please sign it and return it in the enclosed self-addressed, stamped envelope. As soon as all surveys are returned and tabulated, the data will be shared with you.

Thank you.

Professionally,

William E. Schall
Associate Professor of Education

Matthew J. Ludes
Assistant Professor of Education

WES:MJL/pc
Encs.
BOOK LIST

"If you had to identify the ten most important or useful books that an elementary classroom teacher should own and study, what would they be?"

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<th>Date</th>
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Name ________________________________

Position ________________________________