This annotated bibliography cites selected reading materials for all age levels that present aging and the aged realistically with a full range of human behaviors. The listing is meant to serve as a resource to educators who wish to develop positive attitudes in children and in adolescents about the elderly and about themselves. Educators should realize that both personal and societal attitudes held by authors are often reflected in their work. When this happens, books help to form and to reinforce the ideas that young people acquire about the aged, including how young people will approach their own aging. Therefore, to eradicate negative attitudes and to develop positive ones, it is imperative for educators to be careful when selecting books and to be aware of the images that they convey to young readers. Books that present death as part of the life cycle have been included in the list. There are three major sections: Children's Literature, Kindergarten--Third Grade; Children's Literature, Fourth--Sixth Grades; and Literature, Seventh Grade--Adult. The kinds of materials listed include picture books, fiction, fables, legends, tall tales, short stories, reference biographies, and novels. (Author/AM)
“REALISTIC” PORTRAYAL OF AGING
AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

ANITA E. DODSON
READING SPECIALIST, ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

JUDITH B. HAUSE
READING SPECIALIST, ACTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

HARA ANN BOUGANIM, EDITOR
EQUITY ASSOCIATES

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TEACHING AND LEARNING ABOUT AGING
McCarthy-Towne School, Acton, MA 01720 (617) 263-8773
PREFACE

During past centuries, aging and aged individuals have been generally maligned in literature. Our society's conceptions about the aging process and older people have become stereotyped and negative. Not only do readers get a distorted view of what it is to grow old, but they do not realize the effects that this stereotyping has upon the elderly. In a sense, the situation has created a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Educators should realize that both personal and societal attitudes held by authors are often reflected in their work. When this happens, books help to form and to reinforce the ideas that young people acquire about the aged, including how young people will approach their own aging. Therefore, to eradicate negative attitudes and to develop positive ones, it is imperative for educators to be careful when selecting books and to be aware of the images that they portray to young readers.

This annotated bibliography meant to serve as a resource to educators who wish to develop positive attitudes in children and in adolescents about the elderly and about themselves. In preparing the bibliography, an attempt was made to select reading materials that present aging and the aged "realistically," with a full range of human behaviors, emotions, and roles. While the topics of old age and death should not be equated, books that present death as part of the life cycle have also been included in the list. The entries vary in positive portrayal of aging and in literary quality. The bibliography is intended to be neither definitive nor objective. The final page, entitled Acknowledgements, lists major sources on which the bibliography was based.
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CHILDREN'S LITERATURE: KINDERGARTEN - THIRD GRADE (K-3)

I. FICTION:  A. PICTURE BOOKS


The ways in which a little girl and her grandmother spend certain holidays together is told in rhyme. They even make up holidays of their own. (K-3)


Sy lives in a little house on the edge of the sea. A penny in his pocket for a sharp new fishhook and a periwinkle hiding in the sea weed are all he needs to have comfort and contentment. (K-1: Picture Book)


When a storm destroys fisherman Sy's home, his friends chop down trees and build him another. These older men exhibit physical behaviors that are seldom found in books. (K-1: Picture Book)


Lisa asks her grandmother to tell a favorite story of the fine green balloon shaped like a green cat. She reminds her grandmother of everything that happens in the story. Then her grandmother tells the story. (K-3: Picture Book)


"The day she was born, her grandfather made her a ring of silver and a polished stone, because he loved her already." In this poem of a picture book, Aliki captures the essence of a true and lasting love between grandfather and grandchild. (K-3: Picture Book)


This story is set in a seacoast town and shows an older man running a lighthouse. The older character is fully developed. (K-3)


This delightful picture book shows how a little girl and her grandmother spend a day in and around her grandmother's house. (K-2: Picture Book)

Tina longs for a garden--she finds a "garden" of sunflowers and brightens her silent grandmother's life. (K-2: Picture Book)


A little boy describes how the death of his grandmother affects his family. Scenes of the hearse, casket, and funeral are shown. (1-3: Picture Book)


A little girl tells about her perfectly delightful grandfather who knows just how to play with a five-year-old. He shows a full range of behaviors. (K-2: Picture Book)


This book gives an informal history of social customs in the thirties--it tells about life at home and school, play, trips, and transportation. Good reference text for grades 2 and 3. (2-3: Picture Book)


Four children find a dead bird, mourn over it, and bury it with a ceremony that helps them put death in perspective so that they can both feel it and forget it. (K-3: Picture Book)


Mrs. Christie and Rachel's neighbor, the King, come to organize their untidy farm and learn that disorganization can be fun. (K-2: Picture Book)


Fathers, mothers, sisters and brothers are always hurrying, but when a boy and his grandfather go walking they have time to stop and look for as long as they wish. (K-1: Picture Book)


A young girl describes why her grandmother's lap is special. (K-2: Picture Book)

Craig, Hazel. BECKY LOU IN GRANDMOTHER'S DAYS, Minneapolis: T.S. Dennison, 1967.

The reader will see what it was like to be a little girl who lived a long time ago, in the days of her grandmothers and great-grandmothers. (K-3: Picture Book)

Tommy visits his grandmother and his ninety-four-year-old great-grandmother every Sunday. When great-grandmother dies, Tommy learns about death. This is a nice story, but both grandmothers seem too old and have stereotypic physical characteristics. (K-2: Picture Book)


Maggie and her grandmother live at the edge of a cranberry bog in New England. Grandmother's recipe for cranberry bread is sought after by all the bakers in the area. On Thanksgiving Day they each invite someone to dinner. Something terrible happens, but Maggie's friend Mr. Whiskers saves the day. (K-3: Picture Book)


This story is about a birthday present which did not come wrapped in paper and tied with a ribbon. It could not be seen or handled at all. Joseph's grandfather taught him a song which he, in turn, taught to many people. (K-2: Picture Book)


A boy and his grandfather share all types of activities. Each person thinks the other is very special. (K-2: Picture Book)


Grandmother's daily routine is the basis for the story. She gets up, goes fishing, eats dinner, and goes to bed early so that she can go fishing again the next day. (K-1)


A woman in her nineties fondly remembers a lifetime of experiences related to a carved representation of Noah's ark and its occupants that her father gave her as a child. The story is told simply and with warmth. (K-2: Picture Book)


A young girl enjoys visiting her grandmother in a tall apartment building in a big city. The special things they do together and talk about make this an enjoyable and special book. (K-3: Picture Book)


When a member of his friend's family dies, Scott asks his mother why. She explains the concept of death in terms that he can understand. (K-3)

A young girl recollects her childhood experiences on her grandparents' farm. The excellent photographs lend appeal to this narration. (K-3: Picture Book)


A lonely bunny is looking for someone to snuggle against and cannot find anyone. He finally finds a lonely old man and they snuggle together. (K-2: Picture Book)


An elderly lady named Maxie follows the same routine every morning until one day she feels so lonely and unneeded that she stays in bed. When the neighborhood people come to her door to see what is wrong, she realizes how many people need her after all. (K-3)


Children have a funeral for Eva's dead pet bird, with each one bringing something. They behave as adults do on sad occasions. However, the cat is going to have kittens and Eva is suddenly all excited and runs to tell her friend Amy. (K-3: Picture Book)


Grandpa is coming to visit, and Nico remembers all the good things they used to do together. This time, however, it will be different. Grandpa has been sick and he has to rest a lot, but in spite of his illness, a special relationship develops between him and his grandson. (K-3: Picture Book)


Poppy, Pop, Grandpa, and Pops are the names for Tom's grandfather. This is the story of a warm and sharing relationship. (K-2: Picture Book)


Abbey spends the summer with her grandmother on an island off the coast of Maine. Grandma is a rugged resourceful woman with much time to teach and share. With her, Abbey experiences the wonders of the island and develops a special friendship. (K-3: Picture Book)


The experiences of a little girl, who visits her grandmother for a day and a night, are described. (K-2: Picture Book)

Matt's grandfather is senile and in a nursing home, but he and Matt still understand each other. (K-2: Picture Book)


This is the story of Jeff, a small boy, who has many friends, some little, some his own age, but also some big friends. Mr. James is a big friend who lives on an adjoining farm and is always happy to see him. This story presents a highly positive image of intergenerational relationships, quite aside from immediate family ties. Highly recommended for children from first to fourth grade. (1-4: Picture Book)


In return for a picture he has drawn, grandmother sends Little Bear a kiss via several animals. (K-1: Picture Book)


On a wonderful day with his grandparents, Little Bear hears a story about his mother when she was a little girl, has lots of good things to eat, and plays games until he falls asleep. (K-1: Picture Book)


A little Haitian girl, Josefina, acquires a baby burro, which she adores, but she finally trades it for a pair of shoes for her beloved grandmother. (K-2: Picture Book)


A young girl with an impish imagination curls up with her grandparents and asks them to tell about the time when her mother and father were young—the results are hilarious. (K-3: Picture Book)


A young girl describes her relationship with her grandmother. (K-1: Picture Book)


Granny Guntry lives alone in the woods and provides for herself by some pretty unorthodox means. What the Indians do know is that Granny is eating better than they are without working for her food. She and the Indians reach a humorous and unusual peace treaty. concludes this funny story. (1-3: Picture Book)

Granny Guntry takes on two wily desperadoes and emerges the victor in this humorous book. Granny proves that she can take care of herself and that she has a special view of things. (1-2: Picture Book)


Varyusha loses her ring with magic powers to bring happiness to her and health to her ailing grandfather. One spring day, when the snows have melted, she finds the ring and begins to feel its magic. There is a warm relationship between the grandfather and the granddaughter. (1-3: Picture Book)


While his parents are away taking care of his sick grandmother, Peter stays with the Brandons. Mr. Brandon takes Peter out for the day. (K-2: Picture Book)


When a homeless dog scratches at their door, the Brooksides decide to adopt him. The elderly couple treats their new pet very well. They pet him and praise him. They feed him as much as he wants, name him Morris, and take his picture. All goes well until the Brooksides get the notion that Morris should have some dog friends. (K-4: Picture Book)


Mr. Brookside borrows Morris' blanket. Morris becomes upset and runs away. He is found by Princess and the Brooksides learn that animals have feelings, too. (K-3: Picture Book)


When grandmother comes to visit, Mandy finds that she likes girls to wear dresses and play with dolls. She does not like toads and sorts in bedrooms. Grandmother and Mandy resolve their problems too quickly. (K-2: Picture Book)


Everything is always the same at Grandpa's house, even the things he says, until he overhears his grandchildren talking. The next morning Grandpa had a story to tell that no one could find uninteresting. The routine of Grandpa's life is overdone and he appears too old, but the story he tells and its illustrations are amusing for young readers. (K-3: Picture Book)

When a pet turtle dies, a boy learns that all living things must die. (K-3: Picture Book)


The death of Barney, a cat, brings sadness to his master. In order to make him feel better, his mother says for him to think of ten good things about Barney. The first nine are easy. Finally, the boy discovers the tenth--after Barney has been in the ground for a while, he will help the grass and flowers grow. (K-3: Picture Book)


As Nelly and Bartholomew grow older and change, there is a special change, or trade, in their roles. (K-2: Picture Book)


Grandmother Lucy takes a picnic basket down to the river with a little friend, and they have a wonderful time. (Stereotypic illustrations.) (K-2: Picture Book)


This is a book which describes the lovable qualities of grandfathers. (K-2)


This is a book which describes the lovable qualities of grandmothers. (K-2)


One night, six-year-old Lewis wakes up, missing his grandfather who had died four years ago. Lewis and his mother share memories. (K-2: Picture Book)


William wanted a doll, but instead he got a basketball and a train set. Grandmother does not think that boys with dolls are sissies. She gets him a doll, so when he grows up he will know how to be a good father. (K-2: Picture Book)
I. FICTION: B. EARLY FICTION


An old man has the wisdom and courage to burn the villagers' rice fields to warn them of an approaching tidal wave and thus saves their lives as they run to the fields on higher ground. (1-3)


The parents of a little girl want to send her grandfather to a nursing home. She persuades them that he should stay with his family and they build a room for him. This is a tender and appealing story dealing with the problem of old age. (2-4)


Paco has always lived with an old man who hopes to make him a man of love and compassion, as was St. Francis. The elderly man becomes ill and the simple mountain people befriend Paco and help them. (2-4)


One summer, Dave and Grandmother Cat chance upon a hermit. From the special relationship that develops between the three of them, Dave matures and learns that everything in life changes, but that memories can be kept forever. (3-4)


This story is about a young Black child in a musical family which is dominated by a strong-minded grandmother. (1-3)


Millicent and Pete establish a club, The Oldest and Youngest Club, which will include all ages. None is to be left out. The project catches on with the other children and Missie's problem is solved. This story provides an excellent basis for discussion on the problem of "age discrimination" at all levels, including old age. (2-4)


This true Revolutionary War tale tells how Aaron and his grandfather helped the Green Mountain Boys. (1-3)


Elizabeth, the youngest of four children, is short, fat, clumsy, and sometimes naughty. Great-grandmother gives her a fairy doll to help her. Elizabeth makes the discovery which great-grandmother knew she would. (2-3)

A great-grandmother teaches her great-granddaughter to play games, sew, and tie shoe laces. She plans surprises and explains why people grow smaller with age. This story gives a balanced portrayal of life. (K-3)


Mia comes to understand her grandmother's friendship with her household items, nature, and the ugly genie in the earthenware jar. (1-3)


This is a heartening tale of a grandmother's love and how, in her own way, she teaches her granddaughter an important lesson in forgiveness. (1-3)


This great-grandfather's reminiscence about traveling for miles across sparsely settled Canadian prairie to see a new baby helps a young boy come to grips with his own apprehension about meeting his baby sister. (2-3)


Benjie faces his own grandmother's illness and grows up in the process. (1-3)


John loves Grandpa's house the best because he learns to see it through his Grandpa's eyes. Grandpa is blind, but he has his own way of seeing. (2-3)


This is a beautifully told story of a young Navajo girl living in a hogan on a reservation with her parents and her grandmother. (1-3)


While exploring an old castle, three Austrian children find a violin, a viola, and a cello. They take them home to their grandfather, who explains the origins of the instruments. (2-3)


This story describes a special friendship between a boy and an old dog that is forced to leave a farm when he can no longer work efficiently. (K-3)

This story describes the experiences of a city-dwelling Black family. They have love and concern for a sick grandmother. (1-3)


This is a warm, poignant story about the relationship between a Black girl and an unconventional elderly man. (2-3)


Mary Jo is visiting Grandmother, who lives in the country, during Christmas vacation. When Grandmother falls and breaks her leg, Mary Jo resourcefully sets out through a snowstorm to find help. (2-3)


Special moments and stories are some of the things that Dodo and her granddaughter share. (2-3)


While a boy is visiting his grandparents, his grandfather brings home an Indian and the town goes into an uproar. The story is set in the 1930's. (K-3)


What happens between Sona and her grandmother when Sona's yearning for the sea proves stronger than her Armenian-American family loyalty makes a tender story. The story is set in San Francisco in the 1930's. (2-3)


On the first Christmas after Mr. Crockett moves into his brownstone, the scrappy little potted pine tree makes a poor showing in his window compared to the bushy ornamented Christmas trees of his neighbors. In the spring, Mr. Crockett plants the tree in front of his house and tenderly cares for it. Years later on Christmas Day, when birds come to feed and sing at the growing pine, the neighbors discover the joy of Mr. Crockett's tree. (2-4)

I. FICTION: C. FABLES/LEGENDS/TALL TALES


The Bengali folk tale shows how a clever old lady twice outwits a bear, a tiger, and a jackal. (K-3: Picture Book)

This tale is adapted from a Bengali folk tale. The old woman went to seek help from the raja because someone was stealing her rice. The raja was hunting, but luckily she meets some clever friends who help her catch the thief and enjoy as much rice as she can from then on. (K-3: Picture Book)


In this retelling of La Fontaine's fable, a man, a boy, and a donkey, en route to the miller with a sack of corn, are criticized by their neighbors no matter who rides or who walks. The authors' hill folk rendition of the familiar fable is well-matched by excellent home-spun illustrations. (2-3)


Wise old Strega Nona, "Grandmother Witch," is whispered about in her Calabrian town. But everyone in the town comes to her for potions and cures, magic and comfort. When she hires Big Anthony to look after her house and garden, the boy discovers her magic secrets, or so he thinks. The retelling of this old tale combines warmth and humor in pictures with an exciting and sympathetic text. (K-3: Picture Book)


This is a fairy tale with a Japanese setting. An old man and his tiger are no longer able to work in a circus and are given permission to live in a cherry tree. They delight all of the nearby children, until some people ask the landlord to make them go away. They do, and the tree and the children become very sad. Their eventual return makes everyone in the town very happy again. (2-3)


Four tall tales are told to a little boy by his grandpa who is "very tall...almost as tall as trees. Sometimes tired birds sit on his hat...Grandpa just lets them sit there. He even feeds them worms and bugs, if he happens to be digging...grandpa is very nice to animals and birds, too." (2-3)


This folk tale tells how a wise man tricks a thief into betraying his guilt. (3)


In the retelling of this classic folk tale, a little old woman's troubles begin after she finds a crooked sixpence and goes to market to buy a pig. It takes "a dog and a stick, fire and water, even a rope, and a cat and a rat to help her out." (K-3: Picture Book)

Cleverness and generosity are found in the stories about Ananse, the spider man. This is the retelling of an old African tale about how stories came to earth. (K-1: Picture Book)


In this play, a simple peddlar helps ten people make a wonderful discovery. Pupils will enjoy the repetition of events and may be able to foresee the outcome before the beginning of Scene II. (3-4)


Harrassed Mrs. Hubbard not only has a bare cupboard, but her demanding sheep dog has her running all over town. This book is a full color tongue-in-cheek interpretation of a classic rhyme to make children laugh. (K-3: Picture Book)


In this retelling of La Fontaine's fable, a man, a boy, and a donkey, en route to the miller with a sack of corn, are criticized by their neighbors no matter who rides or who walks. Moral: It is no use trying to please everyone. (2-3)


This is a legend of an Alaskan Indian boy who, assisted by his grandmother's magic, rescues an Indian girl being held prisoner by the angry moon because the girl had laughed at the moon's ugly face. (2-3)

I. FICTION: D. SHORT STORIES


Grandpa's mind was made up. He was going to buy an automobile! Times were changing. He felt that he wanted to keep up with the times, so he was going to buy a model-T Ford, or, as it was called, a "tin Lizzie." He and his granddaughter Emily have some hilarious and exciting adventures. (3-4)


Charles and Mrs. Emory became good friends. He liked to sit on the steps outside her door and watch her make cookies. Where she went every week with the cookies was a mystery. Charles becomes very concerned when she disappears overnight with her suitcase and does not return. Charles gets help in solving the mystery and learns about Mrs. Emory.

Soo Ling finds a way to help her grandfather’s hand laundry business when a laundromat opens across the street. Stereotyping is present, but grandfather is active and employed. (1-2)


This two-part story describes Granny’s efforts to rescue a duckling from the clutches of a turtle and then to rid the farm of the two large turtles that took up residence in a neighboring pond. (2-3)


A grandfather and his grandson go for a walk, but they do not hurry along as other people do, they stop and look at things just as long as they like. (1-2)


The theme of this short story might be "one good turn deserves another." It is a heartwarming story of a plan devised by friends and neighbors to replace Miss Abby’s cherished household plants that had been destroyed by the cold. In doing so, they hope to repay Miss Abby for the thoughtfulness and kindness that she has shown them. (2-3)


A Japanese-American boy, who has no living grandparents, needs a substitute for the first grade school party honoring grandparents. He succeeds in getting five older people to become his adopted grandparents. They all show up at the party and Mike receives special recognition, along with his adopted grandparents. (1-3)


This is a story of two children whose desire for a pair of shoes is finally realized with the help of Granny. It shows that personal enterprise and sustained effort can help fulfill one’s hopes. (Stereotypic pictures) (2-3)


Grandpa Theo stopped singing, giving parties, and piano lessons. Phoebe was sad and spoke to her grandfather about her feelings. He understood and said that he had only been thinking of himself and knew that his hearing was failing, but that he would do something about it and get a hearing aid. He did and everything turned out well. Very good portrayal of a grandfather-granddaughter relationship! (3-4)

When Jamie's dog King dies, he is very sad. After talking to his Granny he comes to understand how King's spirit is still with him. Granny is shown to be a wise and well-developed character. This is an appealing and touching story! (3-4)


This ghoulish and amusing collection of stories and the inventive illustrations that accompany them keeps young readers on the edge of their chairs. (2-3)


This story takes place in Somalia, Africa. When the village goes without rain for several months, the people turn to the oldest man for advice. Even though he does not play a major role in the story, he does tell them how to solve the drought problem. (3-4)


Great-grandfather lives with Johnny's grandfather and grandmother. He does not see well anymore, but he is fun to be with, and he helps Johnny learn not to quit when things are not going his way. (2)


While cleaning a storage room with his grandfather, Jasper finds a snow shovel. Grandfather tells him that it is a magic shovel that he gave to Jasper's father when he was a boy. Grandfather goes on to explain that part of the magic is up to the weather, and part is up to the one who owns it. Jasper now understands that he has a way to get the guitar that he wants. (2)


This is the story of an interesting man named Jerome Kildee who builds an odd house in the woods and has very unusual neighbors—wild animals, especially raccoons and skunks. It also tells how he wins over "Old Grouch," a grumpy raccoon. (3-4)


Nineteen humorous stories are told about the adventures of the little old woman who had many problems to solve, such as keeping her geese warm during the winter while taking their feathers for a feather bed. (1-3)

Pam had come to stay with her grandparents in their summer place by the sea for a vacation. She liked to go there, and this summer it was going to be more fun than ever because her two cousins were coming. Even though the grandparents do not play significant roles in the story, they are shown to be active and involved. (2)


Charlie visits his Indian grandfather, William Three Feathers, in his log cabin and asks him to tell him tales of his people and how they lived long ago with the eagle, the bear, the water, and the forest. The final picture is poignant! (3-4)


Uncle Harry finds a kitten while walking. At first he tries to give the kitten away, but, after taking a long look at him, he decides to call him Minx and to take him home. (1)


This is a factual article. It relates information the author discovered about the crows, especially Old Silverspot, by studying them closely over a long period of time. (3-4)


This is a three-part story. In the first part, the humorous complications that result from Mr. Dawson's attempt to fly a kite to which a key has been attached are described. The second and third parts concern Mr. Dawson's efforts to locate his wife who has disappeared and to solve the mystery of who is knocking. (2)

II. NON-FICTION A. REFERENCE


This text and its photographs introduce the joys, problems, and contributions of the elderly. (K-3: Picture Book)


What happens when people die? Here, in sensitive words and photographs, is an honest but reassuring answer to many of the questions children ask about death. The reasons for death, theories of afterlife, burial practices, grief, and the naturalness of death in the chain of life are explained in simple terms. (1-3)
An appropriately illustrated and simply written little book, which conveys the scientific story of aging in the myriad forms of life, including man, and places each in a comparative time sequence which can be understood and appreciated by children in the early primary grades. (1-2: Picture Book)


To find out whether Grandmother is the protector or "spoiler" of the young children, the authors asked several grandchildren about their grandmothers. (2-4)


This book presents forty-six full page photographs of grandparents and children taken in twenty-five countries with a brief text accompanying each photograph. (K-3: Picture Book)

II. NON-FICTION  B. BIOGRAPHY (Alphabetical by Subject)


The life of Abigail Adams, a parson's daughter, wife of the second President, and mother of six, is simply told in historical fashion. (2-3)


Hans Christian Anderson's childhood was as poor as any he wrote about in fantasy, yet in his fame he was honored by kings and crowds wherever he went. This story of his ambition, of his constant struggle for education, his many false starts, and his final unbelieving triumph brings to life the storyteller whose tales are now a part of our literary heritage. (3-4)


When he was twelve years old, a newsboy and street singer, Louis Armstrong was sent to the Colored Waifs' Home for boys for firing a blank pistol. It was there that he first learned to play the music he loved so well. After years of selling coal and learning to blow his horn, he got a job with the famous Kid Ory's band. After World War I, he began his steady climb to world renown. Becoming known as "King Satchmo," he had taken the music of his people and of New Orleans and had given it to the world. (3-4)


A simple biography of a Black scientist famed for his revolutionary agricultural research. As an orphan in the post-Civil War South, George grew up pretty much on his own, living with different people and going to different schools, always looking for more ways to learn. During his long life he never stopped in his search for improving the farmlands of the South. (2-3)

Sam Clemens lived with a twinkle in his eye and a story on his lips. His life story, told in simple terms, should delight a young reader's sense of humor. Most people knew him as Mark Twain, the name he used when writing his funny stories and books. (2-3)


When he could not make a living as a country lawyer and talk to people about his new ideas, Clarence Darrow moved to Chicago. It was the year 1887. There he defended people whom no one else would defend and he participated in one of the most famous cases of the century, the "Monkey Trial" in Tennessee. (2-4)


Frederick Douglas spent his childhood as a slave. As he grew older he became aware of the cruelties forced upon his people. Disguised as a sailor, he escaped to the North and began the dangerous business of freeing other slaves. As a Black spokesman during the Civil War, he became President Lincoln's friend and an advisor to other Presidents. Throughout his long life, he worked faithfully to advance the cause of freedom. (2-4)


Young readers who like true adventures will like the story of Thomas Edison. Thomas Edison--inquisitive, confident, stubborn--always refused to give up until he achieved his goals. This biography is the story of his career and of the man himself. (2-3)


This simply written biography spans Duke Ellington's life from the age of eight until his death at the age of seventy-five. He was known as the "King of Jazz," and music was the most important thing in his life. Even when he wasn't playing the piano and leading the band, music was never far from his thoughts. (3-4)


This simple biography spans Ben Franklin's life from his boyhood of twelve until he died at the age of eighty-four. As a boy, he invented things and wrote stories using the name "Silence Dogood." As a man, his many ideas gave him countless careers--author, printer, businessman, inventor, scientist, ambassador, and statesman. Each of these is briefly touched upon in this short account of his life. (3-4)


Robert Frost came to New England at the age of eleven, shortly after his father's death. His life story is one of gentleness, strength, and a love of living. It is a portrait of all that is within a man who becomes a legend in his own lifetime--known as "America's poet." (2-3)

This is a true-life story of one of the greatest blues writers of all time, who was also one of the first musicians to popularize Black folk music in America. (3-4)


This is a brief biography of a Black woman, sometimes known as the "Mother of the Civil Rights Movement" for her part in precipitating the Montgomery bus boycott. (2-3)


This is a brief biography of Robert Peary and how he was the first man to journey to the North Pole. His motto throughout life was "I will find a way, or make one." (2-3)


Doris Faber has taken all that is known of Pocahontas, her father Powhatan, the Algonquin Indians, and Jamestown, and woven it into this shining story from our country's past. (2-3)


As a child, Beatrix Potter had a lively imagination. She never lost her imagination when she grew up. She wrote THE TALE OF PETER RABBIT and twenty-five other books for children. This is a brief story about her life and the unusual way in which she became an author. (2-3)


This is the charming, lively story of how the Ringling Brothers made a universal childhood dream come true. (2-3)


This beginning-to-read biography shows Eleanor Roosevelt as a young girl who lived in a house with servants, traveling around the world, and expressing concern for less fortunate people. She married Franklin Delano Roosevelt, who became President of the United States. As First Lady, she traveled around the country meeting people and finding out how the government could make their lives better. (2-3)


Both the pictures and informal text provide a realistic and compelling view of the beloved Eleanor Roosevelt, a lady who became a legend while she lived. Far into her old age, she worked to make a better world for all people. (2-3)


This is a simply written biography of Theodore Roosevelt's boyhood, family, and years as President of our country. (3-4)

Born a slave on a Maryland plantation, Harriet Tubman dreamed of following the North Star to freedom. After she did escape, she risked her life many times to come back to lead other slaves to freedom along the Underground Railroad. This biography is about a woman whose faith, courage, and intelligence have earned her a place in history. (2-3)


Here is a series of lithographs that depict George Washington's life. It is a story, not of dates and biographical data, but of a boy growing up on a plantation in Virginia and, when growing older, taking part in the affairs of Virginia and then of the struggling colonies as a whole. (K-3)
CHILDREN'S LITERATURE: FOURTH - SIXTH GRADES (4-6)

I. FICTION: A. NOVELS


The death of a devoted dog and his Black master in the rural nineteenth century South leaves the man's son a hard, but hopeful, legacy of stoicism, resilience, and self-reliance. A film was based on the novel. (5-6)


Gran, Jenny, and Seward are drawn into a kind of deadly game with each other and with the sea, a game that only the sea knows how to win. (5-6)


The two stories of Winnie Foster and the Tuck family cross near the Village of Treegap in the 1880's with a mixture of violence and love, anguish and tranquility. (4-6)


A young Chippewa at the turn of the century is torn between the traditional customs of his tribe and modern ideas. (4-6)


This is a sequel to MIA ALONE. Mia and her father have Gran, who has been living in a nursing home, move in with them. Gran talks about her younger days and the early Swedish Suffragist Movement. Mia feels a great loss when Gran dies. (6)


Two children visit and learn to respect their independent grandmother. (4-6)


Debbie's close relationship to her grandma is changed when Grandma begins to fail and has to move to a nursing home. Her grandma's optimistic attitude consoles the child. (4-6)


A boy and his great-grandmother develop a rapport as the older woman tells him about three children who had grown up in her house generations ago. (4-6)

Although this is basically a story of a young girl’s adjustment to a new home, a large family, and eventually to her father’s remarriage, there is also a good discussion between Rosie and her grandfather on the meaning of death. (4-6)


Kimo was the only one of his family left when a tidal wave swept away a Japanese fishing village. When he grew up he wanted to return to the village to be a fisherman. He knew how to be ready if another tidal wave came. The story has a unique value for its explanation of the mysteries of life and death. (4-6)


Lonnie lives with his mother and great-grandfather in a house that has to be given up because of a highway project. A perceptive picture of an old man who needs respect and status is presented. The relationships between generations are described. (4)


This story parallels the lives of Mr. Hilton, a retired gristmill operator in his seventies, and Wild Wings, an elderly chicken. Hilton gives up his freedom to move in with his daughter because, “It’s for his own good.” (4-6)


Trouble River earned its name, as Dewey and Grandma find out. How they survived its dangers makes a story of pioneer courage and resourcefulness. (4-6)


Ten-year-old Sammy does not want to live with his grandfather, “the wild old man.” Together they care for a wounded crane, and Sammy learns to love his grandparent. (4-6)


Figgy and his grandfather lived in their cabin until urban renewal came. This story shows how an elderly man reacts controversially when everything he owns is taken away in the name of progress and how his relationship with his grandson changes. (5-6)


Randy spends the summer at his grandfather’s. He learns about growing up, harness racing, and his grandfather’s devotion to hard work and his horses. (4-6)
Canfield, Dorothy. UNDERSTOOD BETSY, New York: Grosset and Dunlap, 1917.

"Elizabeth Ann," who was too much 'understood' and coddled by an over-
conscientious aunt, changes into a strong, self-reliant little indi-
vidual after living with her grandmother on a Vermont farm. (5-6)

Christgau, Alice. ROSABEL'S SECRET Reading, Massachusetts: Addison-
Wesley, 1967.

A young girl and an older woman become fast friends one summer. The
woman is hiding in a shack deep in the woods, and Rosabel helps to
keep her secret until the woman's knowledge of herbs is required to
save her mother's life. (4-6)


Grover accepts his mother's death after an agonizing period of adjust-
ment. The strain is increased by the adults' attempts to protect him
from the truth during her illness and by his father's withdrawal into
grief after her suicide. (5-6)


A new relationship develops between twelve-year-old Wilma and her
grandmother when Wilma has to stay with her until a permanent house-
keeper/companion can be found. (6)

Cleaver, Vera and Bill. THE WHYS AND WHEREFORES OF LITTA BELLE LEE, New

Litta Belle, age 16, becomes the sole support of her grandparents
after her elderly aunt leaves the family home. The girl manages to
work, care for her grandparents, and force her relatives to help out
financially. This story is set in the Ozark Mountains during the
late 1920's. (6)

Clymer, Eleanor. THE SPIDER, THE CAVE, AND THE POTTERY BOWL, New York:

A contemporary Pueblo Indian family retains a traditional art, and
two children are able to relate to their grandmother, their family,
and the larger white society. (4-6)

Coatsworth, Elizabeth. THE CAT WHO WENT TO HEAVEN, New York: Macmillan

A Japanese legend is told about a cat who longed to have a cat in the
painting her master was making of the Buddha's farewell to the animals
as he prepared to die. This could not be because the cat refused to
pay homage to the great teacher. In the end, by a miracle, the cat
is in the painting and dies of joy upon seeing it. (3-5)


While her parents are in Europe, Lynn spends a year on Nantucket Island
with her grandmother. She finds herself faced with the problems of her
grandmother's "age," "tough kids" at school, and her own shyness and
lack of self-confidence. A strong, positive relationship develops
between Lynn and her grandmother. (4-6)
Curry, Jane Louise. THE LOST FARM, New York: Atheneum, 1974. After their farm is hit by Professor Lilliput's Reducer Machine, Pete and Granny manage to survive due to Granny's years of knowledge and Pete's inventiveness. A positive and dignified image of most older people is shown in the story. (4-6)

Distad, Audree. THE DREAM RUNNER, New York: Harper and Row, 1977. Sam is told Indian tales by his elderly part-Indian co-worker, Clete. Clete dies and Sam goes to seek an Indian vision. On his journey he meets a retired teacher, Miss Emma. (5-6)

Dixon, Paige. PROMISES TO KEEP, New York: Atheneum, 1974. Lon's Vietnamese mother and American father died in the Vietnamese war. He goes to live in New England with his aristocratic grandmother, who refuses to accept him. (5-6)

Erwin, Betty. WHO IS VICTORIA?, Boston: Little, Brown, 1973. An elderly retired teacher realizes that her life is nearing its end, and she daydreams a lot during her last summer. Suddenly, a girl, Victoria, appears and plays with the girls in the neighborhood. Just as suddenly, she disappears. After the teacher dies, the girls decide that Victoria was a figment of the teacher's imagination. This story deals successfully with aging and death. (4-6)

Fassler, Joan. MY GRANDPA DIED TODAY, New York: Human Sciences Press, 1971. This is a sympathetic story about a little boy and his relationship with his grandfather. When Grandpa died, the little boy was very sad but gradually he "began to understand why my grandpa was not afraid to die." (4-6)

Gage, Wilson. BIG BLUE ISLAND, Cleveland: World Publishing, 1964. An orphaned boy from Tennessee goes reluctantly to live with a great uncle on the Big Blue Island. He gradually accepts his uncle's attempts to help him, and the island becomes a refuge instead of a prison. (4-6)

Glass, Frankcina. MARVIN AND TIGE, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1977. This is a story of two very different, but lonely people who are drawn together. Tige is an eleven-year-old Black orphan who has grown up in the streets of an Atlanta slum. Marvin is fifty-three years old and has traded middle-class luxuries for a drifter's existence. Although the two have their differences, they are able to share their troubles and their loneliness. They learn to accept each other. As a result, they learn to enjoy a relationship that is based on understanding, compassion, and love. (6)

Glasser, Barbara and Ellen Bluestein. BONGO BRADLEY, New York: E.P. Dutton, 1973. City-bred Bradley spends the summer with his grandmother in a small southern town and learns about the music in his family's past. (4-6)
Two children befriend an old man and his dog living in a dilapidated bus hidden away in a wooded area of a city dump. As they struggle to undo the trouble they have caused the old man, they learn about themselves and about life. (4-6)

At first, ten-year-old Mildred Murphy is lonely in the new neighborhood, since all the kids are away for the summer. But Mildred does not moan around for long. Using her telescope, she surveys life on the block. To her surprise, Mildred discovers a mystery. She is sure she has seen an elderly lady in the empty house across the street. As Mildred unravels the mystery, befriends the lady, and shares a secret, she solves her problem of loneliness and learns about friendship. (4-6)

Paul was called "Rabbit" because his ears stuck out. He did not have any friends, and when he had the chance to make some, he had to pay for them by stealing! He wondered if it was really worth it. Living with his mother would probably be much better than living with his grandmother, but his mother never seemed to be able to find room for him. One thing for sure is that his grandmother is marching into old age gallantly, rather than tranquilly, a positive antidote to the stereotyped grandmother image. (4-6)

Louis, age twelve, is called Elephant Ears, but Mrs. Beeble says his ears are a sign of character. She plays poker (betting candy mints) and gives him a good luck amulet. (4-6)

After her father dies, a young Black girl watches her sister withdraw from her and her mother. At age nine, Doretha began keeping a diary and now, four years later, she rereads it and relives the past—each episode becomes an unforgettable story of love, laughter, deep sadness, or small victories. Doretha learns that you can, "Fight them and laugh at them, like Grandpa said." (4-6)

Janey's summer vacation is spent at the ranch owned by her father, whom she idolizes. The ranch was a disappointment until she became aware of the stallion. Grandpa wanted him off the ranch, but he needed Janey's help. During the summer Janey begins to reevaluate her feelings about herself and her relationship with her grandfather. In her battle to save the stallion, she takes an important step toward maturity and independence. (4-6)

A young, orphaned German boy goes to live with his grandmother in Munich. They need each other and they know it. (4-5)

Sara is unhappy with her status-seeking mother. She befriends Maisie Best, an elderly and impoverished lady. Maisie talks about the Sad One (loneliness). Sara rejects the lady for a status friendship with a girl her own age. (4-6)


This is a beautiful tale of an old man's relationship with a young boy, the sea, the creatures of the sea, and himself as a human being. The story also shows how old age faces life and death with hope, courage, and wisdom. All students should enjoy this classic portrayal of a proud and independent old man. A film was based on the novel. (6+)


Ten-year-old Sheila develops a special relationship with her seventy-nine-year-old grandmother when Bubbie comes to live with the family. The needs and desires of an elderly person are poignantly expressed in this heartwarming story. Excellent book! (4-6)


At the end of his life, a retired school master reviews the years spent at an English school. The years of devotion to his school and pupils are repaid through their honor and respect. The beloved Mr. Chips is one who shows acceptance of himself and satisfaction with his life. A film was based on the novel. (6+)


Shy Jenny wants to forget that she is part Mandan Indian. Her wise and understanding teacher requests that she seek her grandmother's help in making a lovely piece of Mandan pottery. Jennie comes to realize that she need not be ashamed of her mixed ancestry and that each culture has a heritage of which it can be proud. (4-5)


Billy Youngbear makes choices which deny neither the culture of his ancestors (his beloved grandmother lives in her tepee during the summer) nor the culture of modern life (his father has attended college). (4-6)


This first-person narration deals with a young girl's maturation from seven to seventeen. The reader will easily identify with the characters and will respond to the warm account of Julie's growing love for her aunt. (6+)

Birdie McShane's happy early childhood is interrupted by the death of her beloved father. Her sorrow colors her life as she matures, leading her to reflect on time and death, which she learns to deal with through her desire to write poetry. (6)


This book is about a summer of discovery shared by a girl and her grandmother on an island in the Gulf of Finland. (5-6)


June and her grandmother, Ginger, get involved in civil rights issues in a small Mississippi town. (4-6)


When Death came by, Old Hark was feeding the birds, taking care of them as he had every winter for as long as he could remember. Old Hark asked Death to wait until Spring to take him, but Death did not want to wait. He tricked Old Hark into quite an unusual wager. (3-6: Picture Book)


Oliver Hyde played the sweetest fiddle around, but when his bride died, he smashed the fiddle and shut himself up in a shack. The years went by. When an old friend came asking a favor, Oliver found it hard to say no. He agreed to play his fiddle at a wedding, but he decided to make it difficult. All the guests must cover their heads with dishcloths. The incidents that follow are amusing! (4-6: Picture Book)


The aging great-grandfather, aware of coming death, gave an important legacy to his great-grandson—the ability to distinguish between false and true heroism. (4-6)


The illness and impending death of a ten-year-old girl, Maryanne, and the effect on her family as a whole is realistically and sensitively told. (4-6)


When Grandma retires, she moves in with Emma's family. She is allergic to her granddaughter's dog and it must be given away. (4-5)

Little, Jean. SPRING BEGINS IN MARCH, Boston: Little, Brown, 1966.

The problems and frustrations of Meg Copeland, a girl of about ten years old, will capture the reader's interest. This realistic story depicts a warm family situation with a special emphasis on the developing relationship between a child and her grandmother. (5-6)
Ellie is beginning to experience the pleasure and pain of maturing. Her grandmother, whom she calls Mama, understands and tries to help her in the maturing process by relating her own girlhood experiences. The love between Ellie and her Mama is poignantly expressed. (5-6)

Great Aunt Drew, a hundred years old, lives with Michael and his family. Michael's mother reacts negatively, his father acts protectively, and Michael responds to the older Black woman with love. (4-5)

After thirteen years of living with his son and family, Grandpa Pennoyer is forced to give up his basement apartment to make room for his grandson and his new wife. When the family decides that Grandpa should be moved to a nursing home, the eighty-three-year-old man and his thirteen-year-old granddaughter attempt to make it on their own. The novel looks at the benefits and the problems of being a member of an extended family household. (5-6)

This is an account of the times spent together by Thomas Jefferson and his granddaughter. (4-6)

This is a delightful story of an orphaned girl who goes to live with an older brother and sister on a farm. Anne is an inquiring, philosophical, and adventurous young girl whose antics worry her guardians, but she eventually grows into a fine young woman. (5-6)

Fifteen-year-old Peter, stranded in a mountain wilderness, learns about survival, conservation, and life from the older man who rescues him. (4-6)

In a dream, James goes to where aging fairy-tale characters "live happily ever after." The characters have gained in life's experience, and they help him in his escapades. (4-6)

An Indian girl spends eighteen years alone on an island after the death of her brother who was killed by a pack of wild dogs. (5-6)

A boy finds a large pearl supposedly cursed with death. When the boy's father dies, he starts to throw the pearl into the sea. (5+6)
A moving story about a child's love for her Grandma Liza and her adjustment to grandmother's death. It describes a home memorial service, using music which Libby has suggested, and which she knows will stay with her always, along with the memory of her grandmother. (4-6)

The life of a ten-year-old boy in rural Virginia expands when he becomes friends with a newcomer who subsequently meets an untimely death trying to reach their hideaway, Terabithia, during a storm. (5-6)

A comparison of the years, 1910, 1940, 1970, and 2000 is given in this book. (4-6)

Cassie, a seventh grade student, tries to prevent her grandfather from growing old and losing his independence. (6)

Jody's pet fawn has to be killed to keep it from eating the food necessary for the family. Jody's grief ends his youth and leaves him a man. A film was based on the novel. (4-6)

With sculpture, the author and sculptor points up the tender memories she has of her family, especially her grandparents and her Jewish heritage. (4-6)

T.K. does not like sharing a room with his grandfather. His dismay increases when Grandpa intrudes on his secret clubhouse and embroils T.K. and his friends in the affairs of a local hermit, causing a family and a community crisis. (4-6)

This book is sentimental, but it has a lovely story with depth and warmth, based on family ties and the need for understanding and love. A young girl discovers the "real meaning" of Thanksgiving. (4-6)

A fine "read-aloud" story in which the Christmas spirit and message are twice movingly demonstrated. Adding to the appeal of the story is the feeling the author provides of immediacy and lively times in a pleasant Nebraska town. (4-6)

Mary Ross October, better known as Slug, goes to live with her grandmother who has the power of ESP. (5-6)


Mr. Penfold, a hermit, was the subject of Tony's essay on endangered species. The paper won an award and the media became involved. Welfare workers find the recluse, "rescue" him from the out-of-doors, and place him in Pinewood Nursing Home. Within months, the man dies. (4-6)


When fragile little Trinket died, Lucinda grieved and wrote in her diary, "What is hard to understand is how death divides you in two. Something goes and something stays." (4-6)


A young boy spends a summer tending sheep with Old Ramon, from whom he learns much about himself, nature, animals, and his own past. (4-6)


Dobry's grandfather helps him to respect his own uniqueness as an artist. (5-6)


Despising her long black braids, Magdalena decides to disobey her grandmother's order not to cut them. Grandmother does not understand why she does this, but she shows considerable insight into the behavior of Magdalena's friends, who encouraged the hair cutting, and even learns to accept Magdalena's short hair. (5-6)


Eleven-year-old Jenny, whose mother died three years ago, lives with her sisters and brother, her father, and a housekeeper. One day she learns that her grandmother, whom she has never met, is coming to live with them. She is surprised to learn about the various things her grandmother does! (6)


Everyone agreed that Jamie was special, even when he exasperated them by showing off. No one, least of all his best friend, dreamed that Jamie's exuberance and a harmless prank could end in sudden tragedy. When it does, the boy, who is the first-person narrator of this unusual book, must find the strength to bear his grief and his guilty feeling that somehow he might have saved his friend. (3-5)


The classic story of Heidi is one of greatness of affection for Peter, her grandfather, her pet goat, and her mountain home. A film was based on the novel. (4-6)

Miss Birdie, the herb and charms lady, becomes the housekeeper for a doctor's family with young children. (4-6)


Katherine Ann, an orphan, lives with various relatives until she comes to stay with an elderly cousin. Kate is free to explore the attic with letters, trunks and boxes filled with clues to the personalities of deceased family members. In reconstructing her family tree, she gains a sense of belonging. (4-6)


A boy's grandmother makes him so happy when she gives him a wonderful home, he is willing to do almost anything to get enough money to buy her a wonderful Christmas present. (4-6)


Anders and his grandmother have several adventures on their long journey out in the world to earn money. (5-6)


Azure, settling in a new high school, goes to work in the school cafeteria under the supervision of her grandmother. Conflicts, love and the reality of death come into the story. (4-6)


In this classic story, Charlotte, the spider who has saved the life of the little pig Wilbur and been his best friend, helps Wilbur to understand and to accept her approaching death. A cartoon film was based on the novel. (3-6)


Tempe's little sister, Laurie, cannot understand that her mother will not be returning. After her mother's death, Tempe is expected to undertake most of the chores that her mother had done. After spending a few weeks at their grandmother's, Tempe accepts her responsibilities and Laurie appears adjusted to her mother's absence. (4-6)

Williams, Margery. THE VELVETEEN RABBIT, New York: Doubleday, 1922.

This is the story of a young boy's pride in having an old and worn toy. The toy imparts a personality of its own and is not threatened by other new toys because it is loved by the boy and knows it has special value in being loved. The relationship between the boy and the toy is characterized by love, loyalty, and friendship--ageless, timeless values. (2-6)
Emily had always spent the summers with her grandparents on their farm. She enjoyed doing her share of farm chores and swimming and fishing with her grandfather in the pond. But this summer her best friend Nina was invited to visit and her presence changed the summer routine. Emily finds herself caught between her loyalty to her trustworthy grandfather and to her capricious friend. This novel depicts a compatible and meaningful relationship between members of two generations. (6)

Casey, age twelve, moves in with her grandmother, Paw-Paw, who lives in San Francisco's Chinatown. A well-written, heart-warming story of how Casey learns to cope with the generation gap, cultural gap, and her family situation. (5-6)

Nampeyo, a Hopi Indian girl, learns from the old Medicine Man how to make beautiful pottery. Today Nampeyo's work is shown in museums and emulated by her pupils. The patience and wisdom of the Medicine Man are well-developed in this story. (5)

To Antonio, the coyote is an enemy. His grandfather, being wise in the ways of the world, does not agree. He sees the coyote as doing what it must for survival. When a mother coyote adopts a collie puppy that Antonio feared was killed by coyotes, the boy begins to hear other things, the good things like his grandfather, in the coyote cry. (5-6)


"Trick or treat:" Halloween is that time of year and Mr. Munch enjoyed it as much as the children. He does not even seem to mind it when some of the boys make fun of him. He must be full of mischief himself, however, when he plays a trick on them. (5-6)

This story gives a biographical sketch of a famous Black American, Mary MacLeod Bethune, a schoolteacher in Florida. She worked to gain rights for her people and to improve understanding between Blacks and whites. (4-5)

This short story gives a brief biographical sketch of Robert Frost from the time he arrived at his grandfather's house in Lawrence, Massachusetts, at the age of eleven, until his death as an honored poet, at the age of eighty-six. (6)


This selection gives a short biographical account of Albert Einstein, the great physicist, from the time he arrived in America in 1933 until shortly after his seventy-sixth birthday in 1955. (5-6)


A blind ex-railroad engineer, Mose Johnson, personally helps Dave overcome his fears and coaches him so that he can run in the "440" and win the blue ribbon. Mose always tells Dave that it is the extra bit of effort that wins races in life, and he lives by that motto. (6)


This African legend relates the strange tale of how a famous African rainmaker learned his mysterious art from an old woman. (6)


A touching story of an Indian boy and his grandfather who live in squalor in the city. His grandfather tells him of "the other time" and the wonder of the open world. (4-6)


This story takes place in September of 1894. It is about a train that never came back and about the heroism of her engineer, Old Jim Root, in the big fire. (4-5)


This short selection consists of some comments about Robert Frost made in 1961 by President John F. Kennedy. When Robert Frost died in 1963, these comments were broadcast on television as a tribute to show how a President looked at a great poet. (6)

Great-Grandfather made David chief of the Quileute Indians because he felt that his tribe needed young blood to lead them. The contrast in life styles, social customs, and economic needs between the time when Great-Grandfather was a boy and the present are realistically and simply explained. The family strata, spanning three generations, is also detailed. (5-6)


The Night of the Leonids," in MAKING CHOICES, Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill, 1975, pp. 228-238.

A ten-year-old boy and his grandmother go to watch a star shower which occurs once every thirty-three years. He learns what it means to grow old and not to have another chance. (4-6)


This is the story of Raolph Bunche, a famous Black American, mediator for the United Nations, and Nobel Peace Prize winner. The struggles he had to face, plus the strength of his grandmother, are discussed with feeling. (5-6)


On the trail, an aged Eskimo embraces valiantly his inevitable place in the cycle of nature. (6+)


When reading this historical account of Susan B. Anthony, students will come to understand her courage in her heroic and often lonely struggle to obtain equal rights for women, above all the right to vote. (6)


On a small farm in India, an old man and his wife work hard in their vegetable garden to eke out a living. Their most cherished possession is a large white bullock to whom they give every care and kindness. The journey and what happens to and from the market for the old man and the bullock are the basis of the story. (4-5)


Scotty was going to visit his grandfather, as he did every summer. Today was special, however, because Grandfather had promised to show him how a telegraph worked. Many unexpected things happen, and this becomes an unforgettable story. (4)

Hatsuno, a Japanese-American girl, wants to join a Camp Fire Girls group, but her shyness stands in the way. When Hatsuno sees her great-grandmother's willingness to venture out into a new and foreign situation in order to help her, she is able to forget her own shyness and let other girls know that she wants to be friends. (6)


When the Cantrell family move from Kentucky to Chicago, they find an entirely different world waiting for them. Gramma helps pull things together and gives the children the idea for starting Gramma's Flowerpot. It is not until this is done that the Cantrells feel at home in Chicago. (6)


This is a touching story of Pierre, a milkman, and his horse, Joseph. Both work hard and are not thinking of retiring. The secret that they share is revealed accidentally, yet tenderly, at the end of the story. Excellent! (5-6)


A young boy spends the summer at this grandparents' farm and grows up in the process. A hawk kills his rooster, Caruso, but his understanding grandparents help him to understand that hawks, too, are needed in life. A tender and nicely written story! (4-5)


Johanna went to Holland to visit her grandparents, but, with the outbreak of war, her visit turns into a four-year stay. The valiant efforts of Johanna and her grandparents to save the "little riders," lead figures that at twelve o'clock come out of the church steeple from the German soldiers makes an interesting and exciting story. (5-6)


Amanda has just moved to a new town and a new school. Everything seems to be going wrong until she runs away from school and falls into a grave that an elderly man is digging for his dog Chief. After becoming acquainted, the man gives Amanda a Gold Medal he had bought for Chief when he knew that Chief was disappointed at not having been a "winner in a race." The man knows that she is a true winner, just as he knows Chief was, and he tells Amanda to keep the medal until she is able to win her own. (6)
**II. NON-FICTION: A. REFERENCE**


This is a collection of the memories of twelve immigrants who came to America between 1900 and 1930—the Great Migration. This book contains excellent photographs as well as stories! (6)


In this book, some extraordinary people talk about themselves and their lives in rural northern New Mexico. Robert Cole's transcriptions of their words combine with Alex Harris's photographs of their ageless faces to remind us that human beings can still grow old with dignity. The book also points out that happiness and family acceptance contribute to long life. (6+)


This book contains stories, poems, and drawings done by grandchildren for their grandparents. (4-6)


Young readers will be fascinated by this nostalgic look at everyday life of children growing up in the early twentieth century. Easy reading and nicely illustrated with photographs of the period. (3-6)
Shanks, Ann Zane. OLD IS WHAT YOU GET: DIALOGUES ON AGING BY YOUNG AND OLD, New York: Viking Press, 1976

The author presents interviews with several people in a number of situations. Topics include attitudes of and toward the elderly concerning remarriage, death, retirement, life styles, and sex. (6+)


Death is described dispassionately, but sensitively, as a part of living. The book tells what happens to the human body when it dies, how death is recognized, and how burial takes place. Death customs over the world are described. (4-6)

II. NON-FICTION: B. BIOGRAPHY (Alphabetical by Subject)


A group of vibrant adults, with very different backgrounds, recount their favorite memories and describe their feelings about growing older to the author. (4-6)


Abigail Adams was an illustrious woman. The daughter of a preacher, she early acquires a love of learning and reading, which affected her whole life. In this affectionate biography of one of America's great women, the wife of one President and the mother of another, Abigail Adams' courage, wit, and loyalty are apparent in all her actions. (4-6)


This Newberry-Award-winning biography presents a vivid portrayal of Louisa May Alcott and her eventful career. Here she is, acting in her own play in the barn behind the Alcott home, teaching small children, writing stories, nursing Union soldiers during the Civil War, visiting Europe as a companion to an invalid girl, and meeting "Laurie" in Switzerland. After writing LITTLE WOMEN to help support her family, she becomes successful and universally beloved. (4-6)


Ethan Allen's story is told with vivid simplicity, plus full-color pictures. Ethan Allen was the leader of the Green Mountain Boys, forged the state of Vermont out of the Hampshire Grants, was a hero of Fort Ticonderoga, and was one of the first men who saw America's destiny and rebelled against British authority. (3-5)


A biography of the first woman doctor, Elizabeth Blackwell, written as if she herself were relating her struggles to become a physician, to found her practice, to speak publicly, and to administer a clinic. Her feminist determination and her courage were not always well received by her contemporaries. (4-6)

A well-known illustrator discourses on himself, his life, and his work. He sketches it words and pictures the life that formed his distinctive drawing style. (4-6)


Louis Braille was blinded as a small boy. Yet, through hard work and devotion to a cause to help other sightless individuals, he became a blessing to millions of blind people. The personal struggles he overcame in the process of inventing a system of touch reading are expressed in this biography. (4-6)


In this detailed and comprehensive portrait of Willy Brandt, the authors describe his life story, from the time of his birth in 1913 to his election as Chancellor of West Germany and award of the Nobel Peace Prize in 1971, and his resignation as Chancellor in 1974. Brandt's maturation under the influence of his passionately political grandfather is discussed. (5-6)


This is the first biography of Ralph J. Bunche, Black scholar, statesman, diplomat, and Nobel Peace Prize Winner in 1950. "was orphaned at twelve and Grandma Johnson, tender, loving, and s. was his guiding spirit, his inspiration for achievement, and... instigator for good. Grandma Johnson's philosophy was deeply ingrained in him, for she always insisted on racial pride. (4-6)


The events in this biography of John Burroughs, a great naturalist, are factual--taken from his own memories, from the recollections of his son and grandchildren, the recording of his secretary, or revealed in the letters of his friends. "The most precious things in life are near at hand," he wrote, "without money and without price." (5-6)


By drawing much of his story from the recollections of Rachel Carson's friends and colleagues, the author presents a well-rounded portrayal of a woman who was a dedicated scientist and gifted writer, a devoted daughter and friend, and, above all, a determined defender of the natural world she understood so well. (5-6)

Robin McKown's biography, generously illustrated with the works of Mary Cassatt and her fellow artists, brings to life a proud, independent, and talented woman. She was an outstanding painter and printmaker, whose use of color set her apart from her American contemporaries and placed her on terms of equality with the most advanced French artists of her day. (5-6)


Here, in a spirited and colorful story, the early days of an American writer are recreated. Willa's childhood in the Nebraska plains had a tremendous influence on the books that gave her a place in our literature. Both of her grandparents are well-developed in this biography. (4-6)


Some of George Catlin's paintings and drawings are the basis for the pictures in this biography. His interest in Indians and their way of life began early. When he became a painter, the relationship deepened. He went to the West, painted Indian portraits, and collected many of the things they made. The last part of his life was spent trying to make other people appreciate the Indians as he did. (4-6)


Buffalo Bill Cody is and always will be a colorful personality and symbol of the Golden West. As a scout and plainsman, he helped build the West, and through his famous Wild West Shows he gave the world an epic pageant of a period in United States history. This biography spans the period from his boyhood adventures to his death, when he realizes that few men had been richer than he in enduring friendship and loyal admiration. (4-6)


This biography begins in the Alamo with Davy Crockett playing his fiddle and defiantly singing a Mexican song. Then the chronicle flashes back to his life as a frontiersman in Tennessee, bear hunter, Indian fighter, state legislator, and United States Congressman. (3-6)


Harvey Cushing came from a family of physicians. but he was on the verge of quitting medical school when an older doctor convinced him to dedicate his life to fighting the needless fatalities that so shocked him. This American doctor became the world's foremost brain surgeon and helped change the hospital operating room from a place of despair to one of hope. (4-6)

In this fascinating biography, Mellersh presents a vivid portrait of Darwin, the man and the scientist, set against the background of England in the nineteenth century, a time when the science of biology was in its infancy and scientific facts now taken for granted were still unknown. (5-6)


In this biography, the Epsteins have placed in focus de Gaulle’s life, his achievements, his strengths, and his flaws. The guiding force in de Gaulle’s life, patriotism, his relationship with other world leaders of his time, and his years as President of the Fifth French Republic are detailed. (5-6)


In this account of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle’s extraordinary life and work, Wood gives a full portrait of a man as fascinating and nearly as astonishing as his own most celebrated creation, Sherlock Holmes. (4-6)


James B. Eads had a lifelong love affair with the Mississippi River. To tame its waters, he fought ice and floods, public opinion, and the whole United States government. In the end, he did the impossible. He invented the diving bell, made and lost millions in the salvage business, built ironclads (armored navy vessels) that helped win the Civil War, and survived personal disasters. The Eads Bridge Spanning the Mississippi is a monument to his genius. (5-6)


This is an intensely moving biography of a strong and gentle man. He was born in Africa, captured and sold to slave traders and brought to Massachusetts, where he was sold at auction. He lived as a slave until he was sixty years old and able to purchase his freedom. At seventy, he began a settled life for himself in Jaffrey, New Hampshire. (4-6)


This poignant autobiography of the adolescent years of Anne Frank is the actual diary of her life in hiding during the Nazi occupation of Holland. She ignores the shadow of death and copes with an almost impossible way of life with great dignity. Relationships with her parents and other adults are accurately and sensitively portrayed. (5-6)

This book tells Franklin's absorbing life story. In informal style, the author presents a well-rounded account of the man judged the most versatile and accomplished of his time. His life was productive until his death at the age of eighty-four. (5-6)


Here is Gandhi's story--his boyhood in India, his student days in England, his experiences in South Africa through which he found non-violence to be the path to social justice. It ends with his leadership of his own people in India in a struggle that resulted in their victory and his death. (4-6)


Completed before his death at the age of ninety in November 1978, Berry Gordy's memoirs tell how he taught his family how to make it in a white world--the lessons he learned from his father, his elders, and life itself. Its warm, anecdotal style will draw readers of all ages to the story of this lovable man. (4-6+)


In the years since it was first published, many people have found solace and inspiration in this poignant record of the brief life of Gunther's son, Johnny, who died at the age of seventeen after a gallant but losing battle against the ravages of a brain tumor. As John Gunther writes in the introduction, "This is a story not merely of suffering, harrowing as that suffering was, but of courage." (6+)


Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr., was said to be "composed of at least two-and-a-half different people rolled into one." This fascinating Bostonian became one of the greatest interpreters of law of the United States. He lived to the age of ninety-one, but he seemed to grow younger with time, and there was always a bond between him and young people. (4-6)


Jean Fritz not only paints a candid portrait of a complex man, Andrew Jackson, but also tells the story of war and its emotional impact on specific soldiers in both the North and South. Jackson was a penniless orphan in West Virginia, but he grew up to be a popular idol. His nickname, "Stonewall," was fitting for it described the fanatic determination and hard inner core of a man who has been ranked as one of America's most brilliant and indefatigable military leaders. (4-6)
This is the absorbing biography of an extraordinary man whose career took him from the hill country of Texas to the White House. A balanced view of Lyndon Johnson's controversial personality is provided—his growth as a politician, his strengths and skills, his accomplishments, and the flaws that brought his Presidency to an end. (6)

This is a story of a remarkable woman told with insight and warmth. However, it is more than a biography. The author unfolds in Helen Keller's life story the great changes in social and medical attitudes that took place during Miss Keller's lifetime toward handicapped persons, changes that enabled them to better cope with life. (4-6)

Mrs. Coolidge's purpose was to present in this masterful biography the first fifty years of Lincoln's life, as a man and as a politician. It is not too long for young readers, and it has intellectual challenge. (5-6)

"Few men in their lifetimes have been loved and hated with such intensity as Douglas MacArthur." This is the epic story of a military genius whose career spanned half a century of service at home and abroad, on the battlefields of three wars and in days of peace. Graduating from West Point, he made soldiering his career and rose from second lieutenant to five-star general. He retired to civilian life after fifty-two years of service, when he was recalled from Korea in a disagreement with President Truman over the Thirty-eighth Parallel. While MacArthur's deeds were of heroic proportion, he is, and will continue to be, one of America's most controversial figures. (6+)

Joyce Blackburn carefully researched the records of Oglethorpe's time. The result is a vivid portrayal of a distinguished and versatile man who was consistent throughout his life in his devotion to humanity. He founded the colony of Georgia and, as an elder, alienated his friends by supporting the American Revolution. (5-6)

Miss Jane Pittman, born on a Louisiana plantation, lived one hundred and ten years. Her recollections of those years record the strength and endurance of a Black woman living in the South. All students should enjoy this story of a remarkable woman who was born a slave and lived to witness the Black militancy of the 1960's. A film was based on the book. (6)

The story of Pocahontas has become an American legend. Pocahontas' inner conflicts are poignantly revealed in this simple account of her youth, her marriage to John Rolfe, and her life in Jamestown and later in England. (4-6)


Here is a collection of anecdotes, stories, and memories about Eleanor Roosevelt from those who knew her. A WOMAN OF QUALITY shows how she was a woman of the people, a First Lady who reached out to thousands who needed help, and who gave it unstintingly. (5-6)


Here is a detailed story of one of the most controversial Presidents in American history—Franklin Delano Roosevelt—from his carefree childhood, his schooling, his romance, through the tragedy of polio, to his election to the presidency at a time of national distress. It gives a sharply etched picture of a man who saw the nation through economic crisis at home and the threat of extinction from abroad. (5-6+)


The biography details this Indian girl's role in the Lewis and Clark expedition to the West and what happened to her in the aftermath and in her later years. (5-6)


Rogers' biography of Carl Sandburg is written in a brisk style and uses excerpts from Sandburg's own prose and poetry. When Carl Sandburg died at the age of eighty-nine, his death was mourned as a national loss. (6+)


This biography portrays Adlai Stevenson from his boyhood through his career at the United Nations. The wit and humor that he brought to American political life are highlighted in this book. (6+)


One of the most charismatic of American women was Sojourner Truth, an ex-slave who became a powerful voice in the abolitionist and feminist movement of the nineteenth century. She fought vigorously her entire life for the rights of her people and for an expansion of human understanding. (5-6+)

A well-known illustrator of children's books talks about herself, her life, and her work. (4-6)
I. FICTION: A. NOVELS


In a tale of culture contrasts, an aged Africa chief priest struggles against changing times and changing religions.


This novel portrays a patriarchal grandfather on the Russian frontier at the end of the eighteenth century.

Alcott, Louisa May. LITTLE WOMEN, Boston: Little, Brown, 1868.

LITTLE WOMEN, a popular novel, is largely autobiographical. The March girls are Louisa's own sisters and Jo is Louisa. At the center of the family unit stands the mother, a tough and courageous woman. This novel presents a picture of human endurance both touching and inspiring. A film was based on the novel.


Two women and three men from the English middle class and one servant, all over seventy, combine their resources into one household. Members of the group present a variety of views.


This story describes a close relationship between a father and son in the woods of northern Maine.


A seventy-five-year-old lady runs away to find a new way of life. This novel has much to say about alienation and loneliness in American life today.


Magda Townsend at eighty, in the process of revising her will, recalls the highlights of a full life which included two marriages, children, grandchildren, and a long, successful career as a writer. The story is filled with color, romance, and observations.


Connie, her sister, and brother experience confusion and frustration during a family breakup. Advice from a grandparent leads to reconciliation and happiness.


Mia and her father have Gran, who has been living in a nursing home, move in with them. Gran talks about her younger days and the early Swedish Suffragist Movement. Mia feels a great loss when Gran dies. Sequel to MIA ALONE.
An aged Polish Jew, a survivor of the Nazi camps, tries to adjust to life in modern New York.

A lady in her sixties gets annoyed with her life of serving husband and son and moves into a world of poverty, eccentricity, and vitality.

An elderly man in London struggles to maintain himself.

This book records the growing affection between a young Jewish boy and the anti-Semitic but loving old man who shelters him on a farm during the war years.

Old Jack, a retired farmer in his eighties, reviews the major events of his lifetime, including his adolescence, young manhood, working adulthood, and old age. He places equal emphasis on each stage of life and illustrates the continuity of the life cycle.

The life of an eighty-four-year-old woman depicts the evolution from the pioneer era to the social welfare state.

THE GOOD EARTH describes the cycle of birth, marriage, and death in a Chinese peasant family. It realistically portrays Wang Lung's life on the farm, his trip to the city when starvation threatens, and his life until it is time for him to be claimed by the good earth. A film was based on the novel.

This is a delightful story of three old ladies in the Home for Aged Women, and the loving and understanding matron who presided over the home.

Miss Jane Marple, a detective of sorts, revisits a quiet London hotel which she remembers fondly from her youth. The book not only involves a mystery with little violence, but a good contrast between this era and that of Miss Marple's youth.

This book explores the psychology of old age and the effect of war on people. Set in provincial France during the last year of World War II, the novel deals with an aging couple and the trouble in their family.

Litta Belle, age sixteen, becomes the sole support of her dependent grandparents after her elderly aunt leaves the family home to live with a hermit. The girl manages to work, care for her grandparents, and force her relatives into helping financially. This is a heartwarming story set in the Ozark Mountains during the late 1920's.


Cheerfully independent and an avid bridge player, Mrs. Meigs is still young at eighty.


Mrs. Meigs carries on into her eighties with many interests, including a new man.


Fourteen-year-old Marianne goes to live with her grandmother, an ex-actress, in Montana. With her grandmother's support, she learns to adjust to her new life.


During the year that Jesse spends with her grandparents on their Pennsylvania farm, she learns that people should be loved and not judged. The reader gains an appreciation of older people through the grandfather - a man of wisdom who is revered and loved.


A seventy-five-year-old man, Mr. Serendipity, has to leave his condemned tenement and gets a job as a night watchman on a construction site. Interaction with local youth helps everyone.


Denker portrays an extraordinary friendship between two unforgettable characters, a cantankerous, elderly Jewish gentleman and a quiet-spoken, ghetto-raised Black nurse. This novel illustrates that learning, caring, and growing are not the exclusive preserves of the young.


Seventy-nine-year-old Isodore Rose, wealthy, retired businessman, winters in Florida and spends the rest of the year with a sister-in-law in New York, until he hires Mrs. Sweet as a companion and travels with her to Italy and Israel.


Harry befriends eccentric seventy-two-year-old Amelia Meyers, a panhandler. She lives in a condemned building and eats pigeons she catches. She stopped going to the Golden Age Center due to "all those senior citizens."
Set in England in the near future where U.S. Marines are protecting the countryside, Mad, a seventy-nine-year-old former actress, emerges as a leader. Her twenty-year-old granddaughter and six adopted boys of various ages assist in dealing with the Americans.

John Stevens, who was forced to retire from a New England university at the age of seventy, writes a journal of his experiences. It includes much of his philosophy of aging.

In this novel, seventy-six-year-old Miss Violet Besserman is forced to masquerade as Mrs. Elva Ryan, the widowed owner of a large house.

Martin Pendle Hill, an eighty-year-old retired professor from Oxford, solves the murder of a young tenant.

This novel evokes the horror of the holocaust as experienced by the Ullman grandparents, parents, and children. David, the youngest and only survivor, finds the key to his future hidden in the family's old home.

Nice Mrs. Pollifax, an elderly lady, becomes a secret agent and masterminds her way out of trouble.

Max Guttman, a seventy-two-year-old man living alone in New York, investigates and solves the murder of his friend. His character emphasizes the positive aspects of old age.

A seventy-five-year-old lady jaunts around the world kicking up her heels.

This is a touching story of a seventy-two-year-old man who is able to retain a positive perspective of life while coping with the losses of old age as he and his cat, Tonto, travel across the country. A film was based on the novel.

The story of Clay-Boy Spencer's reaching manhood is the basis of the current television series, "The Waltons." Details of daily life among a close-knit family are related.


The old fisherman demonstrates tenacity, skill, and great courage in this tale of an old man's relationships with a young boy, the sea, and himself as a human being. A film was based on the novel.


This is a story of two friends, nineteen-year-old Harold, who is preoccupied with death, and eighty-year-old Maude, who is fascinated with life. She fills her days with adventure and new experiences. A film was based on the novel.


An aged, beloved, headmaster recalls his life at an English school. His years of devotion to his pupils are repaid through their honor and respect. A film was based on the novel.


Sixty-two-year-old Nye Gifford, chief of police in a Cape Cod town, participates in the detection and prosecution of a murderer.


The characterizations in THE COUNTRY OF THE POINTED FIRS are among the finest in American literature. Mrs. Todd, the central figure, might belong to any age, but it is her language with the old Maine way of speaking, that makes her 'come alive'. Descriptions of nature along the Maine coast are outstanding.


Agata Shingo, age 62, dutifully heads his family while coping with problems of aging. Attitudes toward aging and the status of the aged in Japan are evident throughout the novel.


In this fantasized biography, the life story of Eleanor of Aquitaine is reviewed. Accomplishments of her later years are especially highlighted.


The central figure in this novel is Zorba, a miner of about sixty, who refuses to let age and approaching death keep him from the celebration of being alive. It is the story of the passion for life which the old man raises in the spirit of a younger man. A film was based on the novel.
Hagar Shipley at age ninety recalls memories of her life as a daughter, wife, and mother. While thinking of the past, she searches for the meaning of her life.

A man is compelled to retire because of age and searches for a new job and self-respect.

This story pokes gentle fun at life in a retirement community and the stereotyping of the aged.

His novel presents three middle-aged women faced with problems of aging parents. Eventually the problems are solved reasonably enough. Timely concerns of ordinary people are treated in an understanding way.

Mrs. L'Engle writes about the last summer her ninety-year-old mother spent with her and her family. Although failing rapidly, grandmother was allowed to remain at home until her death, due to the joint efforts of her family.

Sarah and Joey, uncovering a plot to institutionalize Grandpa, set out with him on a trip to Chicago where they plan to seek help. This novel deals with attitudes toward aging and feelings of family responsibility.

Miss Beatrice Portman, Mrs. Anne Storch, and their brother, Mr. Oscar Portman, all in their seventies, celebrate Christmas in Minneapolis with their greatniece and husband, both in their twenties.

The author depicts a society in which They, the younger generation, are the dominant and powerful. The last years of five older people living in a communal arrangement are described.

Set in Boston, this novel chronicles three Apley generations. Thomas represents the old nineteenth century individualistic businessman. George envies his father's certainty and strength but cannot emulate him. John rebels against the establishment.
Mazer, Norma Fox. A FIGURE OF SPEECH, New York: Delacorte Press, 1973. An indignant twelve-year-old, Jenny, plots with her grandfather to prevent his being sent to a nursing home. He runs off to the abandoned family farm, with Jenny following.


Morris, Wright. FIRE SERMON, New York: Harper and Row, 1971. A twelve-year-old boy and his eighty-year-old uncle set out on a journey where they meet a young hippie couple. Interaction of the three young people with the old man is a demonstration of the old giving way to the young.

Morris, Wright. A LIFE, New York: Harper and Row, 1973. This novel, a continuation of FIRE SERMON, is a dramatic account of an old man's effort to find meaning in the events of the past. While seeking to find his former home, he recalls past events, early relationships, and prepares to meet life's end.

O'Connor, Edwin. LAST HURRAH, Boston: Little, Brown, 1956. This novel describes the career of Frank Skeffington, a colorful Boston politician, who at the age of seventy-two experiences changing attitudes toward political campaigns. His life greatly resembles that of Mayor James M. Curley.


O'Dell, Scott. THE BLACK PEARL, Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1967. A great black pearl is secured in a dive by young Roman Salozar in Mexican waters. It seems to be a cause of bad luck, but greed and superstition are responsible as well.


Jody's pet fawn has to be killed to keep it from eating the food necessary for the family. Jody's grief ends his youth and leaves him a man. A film was based on the novel.


This first person narrative presents several concerns of older people, including helping youth realize that the elderly are individuals who need independence and respect. It also illustrates the effect of overprotection.


This is a novel about kinds of passion and kinds of courage. The characters portray a rich variety of human beings from young Cathy to Eben Fifield, a man in his seventies.


Caroline Spencer, a seventy-six-year-old resident in a nursing home, records in her journal daily happenings in the home as well as episodes from the past. The author communicates the frustration resulting from changes that occur in old age.


In this novel, May Sarton tells the story of Poppy, a woman who abandons a marriage after twenty-seven years. Poppy feels that her growth as an individual has been stifled. This is a story told with much human insight.


This story describes the experiences of Carrie and Tom Russell, Montana ranchers in their seventies, who share the winter of 1935-1936 with a young couple. The older woman and the younger one are contrasted.


A boy in India learns some lessons from an old man while on a hunting trip.


An eighty-six-year-old Seminole Indian, Charlie Juniper, sees his way of life destroyed because of the encroachment of a real estate development.


This is a funny novel about an old woman who knits up a storm, jogs like crazy, and lives happily in an old folks' home in Queens, New York. She demonstrates that old age can be productive and meaningful.
Janine Gavin’s parents get a divorce, which is traumatic for her. Looking for help, she comes to understand her proud, aloof grandmother and other old people as well.

This book depicts what happens to a successful businessman when he retires.

THE GARDEN is a tale of the development of a boy, Dermot, into a young man. During his holidays, the English lad visits his grandparents and cousins in Ireland, “the dearest and loveliest place in the world.” This novel is rich in dialogue and the characterizations are excellent.

This novel, set in rural Iowa in the early twentieth century, illustrates how the struggle to achieve harmony exists in the old as well as the young. It notes that both are right.

Following her husband’s death, Mrs. Palfrey takes up residence in a London hotel. In this isolated setting, the author describes what old age can be for those who are alone.

A man in his seventies flees a mental institution and goes to Las Vegas, but his dreams of a settled future are not realized.

This book tells the story of Kristin from happy childhood to wife and mother to old age. It is a realistic account of a woman’s life set in the vivid background of medieval Norway.

In this novel, John Updike’s home for the aged becomes an image of some future socially planned world and the regimentation it implies. Even so, the anarchy of the old suggests a more meaningful existence than that offered by the planned world.

Albert, a loner, is miserably isolated until he meets Mrs. Orpha Woodfin, a great old woman who lives near him. A friendship develops, and Albert gains wisdom and security.

The heritage which Alwyn Towes studies as he pours over the family albums is the heritage of most Americans. It is the story of the loves and hates, the madnesiness and strengths, and weaknesses found in all families. The characters are authentic and events realistic.

After her grandfather's death, Cress realizes that the ending of life is just as important as the beginning. She also learns that time will not protect her youth.


Emily and grandfather had always thought alike. Suddenly her loyalties are torn between her steady, dependable grandfather and her unpredictable best friend.


This science fiction novel describes a society in which all power is in the hands of the young. The leader of the "Old People's Army" works to save his generation and overthrow the youth-dominated government.


Dick Twombly, seventy, a retired bank teller, and his friend, Behemoth Brown, an ex-prizefighter, escape from a home for the elderly and hitchhike to New Mexico.


Two lonely teenagers meet an eccentric old man living with thoughts of the past and of his trips to the zoo to visit his friends. The three create a world of fun, love, and laughter.

I. FICTION: B. SHORT STORIES


Several stories in this collection feature characters in their seventies, the problems they face, and their methods for solving them.


This series of short stories depicts the identity crises of middle aged and elderly individuals, most of whom live in or near Manhattan. The characters are vital and engaging.


The first story features a major who attempts to resist aging by taking a young wife. The second presents three elderly men, the oldest being the most active. The third story is a charming but rather tragic one in which a lonely gentleman and an old lady almost overcome their loneliness.


When her Chinese village is invaded by the Japanese, an elderly woman manifests a type of courage related partially to her age.

The first and third stories portray independent old men affectionately and sympathetically. The second reflects the wisdom that sometimes comes with age.


This is a tale of childhood which features as the heroine a charming elderly kinswoman of the author.


An Amish family celebrates Christmas together, and Grandpa Nadeli reminisces about Christmas in the days of his youth to his children and grandchildren.


In these four excellent stories, several elderly widows and widowers attempt to relate in a successful way to their children and other relatives.


Marion Hart, who had worked as a geologist, physicist, chemical engineer, artist, author, and sculptor, continues to remain active at age eighty by piloting a plane.


Each of these stories presents an elderly man who is confronted by a crisis or a change in his pattern of life.


These short stories of de Maupassant all depict the aged and the aging process.


This story of a Navajo girl living with her grandmother on a reservation highlights a problem of the old and new world, namely the conflict between generations. Tozbah learns to respect her grandmother's world without rejecting her own.

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The first, third, and fourth stories are concerned with an older person's relationship to a son or daughter. The second story features a centenarian.


These stories all feature elderly characters. The second is an especially good reflection of some common social attitudes toward the elderly.


In this story a young man tells an absorbing account of an old man who was part of his family for many years.


This is a thought-provoking story in which fifteen-year-old Jenny disagrees with her parents on a birthday gift for her grandmother who is eighty.


An inspiring teacher, a true scholar, a wise counselor, a good pal---elderly Mr. Oddie was all of these and more as he helped the children of his town.


The Countess, an elderly lady, teaches an important lesson, that meeting "impossible" challenges can help a person come to a fuller life.


A fascinating and detailed account is written here of an aged Black man who, it seems, will never die.


This factual story relates the achievements that Thomas Alva Edison accomplished throughout his lifetime.
II. NON-FICTION: A. REFERENCE.


Achenbaum shows in this account of elderly life in America that there have been significant shifts in the ways the aged have been perceived, plus marked variations in their modes of living. Between the Revolutionary and Civil Wars, we relied on the guiding wisdom and experience of the elderly. In the latter nineteenth and early twentieth century, we considered the aged an economic burden. During the past 40 years, there has been a significant improvement in their situation.


THE AGING GAME presents practical ways to fight back and to keep worth and dignity in old age without submitting to the system. Successful aging is a matter of confrontation and action.


A basic resource for a general understanding of aging, this book examines the economic, psychological, and biological aspects of old age in all areas of society. The author also discusses aging as it is treated in literature.


The life-style and habits of the long-lived people of the villages of Georgia (U.S.S.R.) are discussed. Factors which promote good health and longevity and implications for the aged in the United States are noted.


Ronald Blythe recounts the joys, problems, skills, and needs of people in late middle age and beyond. It is a social history made into literature, as people speak of their lives.


Wilbur Bradbury presents growth as a lifelong cycle. He focuses in on each period from youth to the vintage years.


Dr. Butler documents what it is like to grow old in America, suggesting that we look at our own futures. He presents the difficulties older Americans face in a time of inflation.


An octogenarian who is an energetic participant in civic affairs comments on ways of dealing with physical changes that accompany aging, the need to find new interests, and to cope with aloneness and experience spiritual growth and love.

The author examines every aspect of man’s middle-aged plight. He studies those who have floundered as well as those who have learned to face the future with dignity, intelligence, and flair.


This book shows how human beings can grow old with dignity. In extensive interviews, four old couples talk about their lives in rural New Mexico.


This book covers facts, survival techniques, problems, and pleasures of later life. Included are portraits and biographies of older people who have achieved success in old age.


This book presents a highly readable and revealing overview of the ways educational opportunities are being made available to older citizens. Using case studies and narrative, the authors discuss the manner in which senior adults are, with increasing confidence, enrolling in courses and programs which broaden their lives and add vigor to their retirement.


Imogen Cunningham at the age of ninety-two depicts people as they are at the end of life, through photographs. This volume is a fascinating presentation of the conditions of old age.


The author, traveling through the United States, presents a variety of old people and the problems they face. This is a highly readable book on the subject of aging in America.


The author presents a study of the centenarians in the villages of the Andes. It is a good depiction of life and customs of a primitive society.


Old age is examined from an historical perspective, tracing changing attitudes from the colonial period to the present. Suggestions are offered for improving the present situation for older people.
This is a perceptive account of what middle age represents for the 21 million American women aged 41 to 60 today. Without whitewashing or ignoring problems, this is an informative, optimistic book.

A journal of retirement, this book tells of the decisions, problems, experiences, adjustments, and activities a couple faces as they retire. They express their philosophy of taking things as they come, enjoying the familiar pleasures of home, and exploring new places and ideas.

A sequel to THESE RICH YEARS, this is an account of a retired couple's move to the South, the courage it took and the upheaval of leaving home and adjusting to a new way of life. It is a chronicle of life lived to the fullest.

Maggie Kuhn, founder of the Gray Panthers and a leader of older Americans, speaks out on retirement communities, mandatory retirement, and health care for the elderly.

This book shows that it is possible to lead a healthy, happy, and productive life throughout old age.

The author discusses with wit, insight, and compassion the joys and pitfalls that await the single grandmother who makes a concentrated effort to get back into the mainstream. She believes that these women have earned the right to enjoy the lifestyle that offers them the greatest potential for their happiness.

Jacobs examines the older woman's position in America today. Combining sociological data and vignettes, she develops examples of women's roles: nurturers, careerists, seekers, faded beauties, doctors, escapists, and advocates. She notes what society can do to improve the lives of older women.

This book recounts the responses of nearly eighty people over age sixty who faced the loss of a job or a spouse. Part I concerns finding new jobs in later years. Part II examines remarriage.


A team of social scientists presents a creative answer to the complex problem of growing older in a youth-oriented society. They present a practical program to reintegrate the older generation and to use its expertise to benefit all.


One day, eighty-one-year-old Frank Tugend removed his false teeth and began to die. A moving photographic essay of how his family let him die at home so he could retain a semblance of dignity is given.


Garson Kanin, in a lively and witty approach, makes a strong case for maturity and experience. He gives a vivid indictment of mandatory retirement.


This anthology provides a three-fold introduction to the field of social gerontology. Section I covers theoretical approaches to social aging. Section II notes methods used in researching the field, and Section III describes the aged and the ways they differ from younger people. The second half of the book covers topics from retirement and leisure through death and dying.


This book describes how Koch brought poetry writing to patients in a nursing home. A selection of poetry written by the elderly is provided.


Daniel Levinson presents research and findings regarding adult development from early adulthood through middle age and beyond. The lives and experiences of a number of individuals are presented and explored.


This book reveals an image, not of age, but of life. It is a story of wisdom and courage in the older people we love.

This book depicts people who have changed their lives and who have learned to stop worrying and start living. It is filled with practical and specific examples.


In a cross-cultural study, the author discusses the present status and social integration of the aged in Japan. He notes practices and attitudes which might prove useful for improving the condition of the aged in the West.


This book addresses the economic, social, and psychological problems of widows. Comprising over ten million persons in the United States, many widows are forgotten, isolated, and shut off from the mainstream of social life.


This publication presents the need for education about aging along with information on the treatment of the elderly in our society. Two case studies of older people are included, and many activities that might be used in planning a curriculum are described. This is a good source for teachers.

Pratt, Francis. EDUCATION FOR AGING, Acton, Massachusetts: TLA Project, 1981.

This is a good sourcebook for teaching and learning about aging. It covers attitudes about aging as well as the economics and politics of aging. The process of aging in other times and places is described, and longevity and the future are viewed.


In THE GRAY LOBBY, Henry Pratt treats the development of federal policy toward the aged over the past two decades and draws contrasts between the elderly associations of the present era and those existing from 1920 to 1940.


LIFE TIME contains a series of illustrations presenting a new image of aging. Maggie Kuhn states, "LIFE TIME is an excellent initial step toward empowerment, with a holistic emphasis on the person interacting in a positive way with society and the environment."


The author discusses the physical, psychological, and social aspects of aging in this non-technical book. He gives examples of older people who have made outstanding contributions to art, literature, and other fields.

*PROLONGEVITY* reports on the revolutionary scientific discoveries now being made about aging and dying, and their explicit promise of a vastly extended life span without old age.


*Here is a practical guide to life after the age of 60 by a woman who has arrived there and is enjoying herself. Such topics as how to relate to children, dress, travel, life on a small income, and keep busy are covered.*


*At age eighty-two, Florida Scott-Maxwell writes about her strong reaction to being old and to the time in which we live.*


*This book contains dialogues on aging by the old and young as well as many photographs in a variety of settings and situations.*


*Gail Sheehy notes the personality changes common to each stage of life. She compares the developmental rhythms of men and women and examines the crises that couples can anticipate. This book gives a vision of the passages we must take from adolescence through the fifties.*


*Through approximately three hundred pictures, this book traces the history of family life in America.*


*Smith provides a useful guide the the problems of aging. Through vignettes, he shows us the physical and emotional needs we share but which we frequently deny the aged.*


*A good resource book for older people, it suggests opportunities for employment, education, and other activities. It discusses facts, myths, and stereotypes of aging.*


*This publication reports that approximately two million persons over age 55 have returned to school, many to college. It advises educators to alter mental and emotional barriers to older students and not to stereotype them financially. With the "graying of America," educators will face an entirely new series of problems. How they are resolved will affect the future of their institutions.*

This book contains a collection of narrative interviews with older people throughout the United States. Each of the thirty-nine interviews is a unique experience in discovering the wisdom of the older generation.

II. NON-FICTION: B. BIOGRAPHY (Alphabetical by Subject)


This is a moving portrait of John Quincy Adams, a brave President turned Congressman, driven by a moral sense that would not let him retire. This remarkable “old man eloquent” achieved more after he left the White House than most men accomplish in a lifetime.


The head of a famous preparatory school, having reached his eighties, is viewed at various times in his career by people who knew him. They make a composite picture of his many-faceted personality.


A Virginia lady, one hundred years of age, reviews five generations of life and change.


The author presents a day-by-day account of the death of her mother.


In this autobiography, Mrs. Black recalls camp life in the Klondike and later, at the age of seventy, her political career in the Canadian Parliament. Until her death at age eighty-one, she worked toward goals to help the Klondike Territory.


"I was seventy-nine years old when they asked me to play in 'The Sunshine Boys,' and it did start a whole new career for me," notes George Burns in this informative and highly amusing autobiography. From the vaudeville circuit to the early days of radio and Hollywood in its heyday, this book provides a complete picture of the entertainment industry by a man who worked in it for three-quarters of a century.


Forrest Carter was a five-year-old orphan in the 1930’s when he went to live with his Cherokee grandparents in their Tennessee mountain home. His education is realistic and moving as he shares the bittersweet splendor of his grandparents’ old age.

The astoundingly long and successful life of Pablo Casals is set forth here in a definitive biography. This is a vivid and sensitive portrait of a talented and courageous man.


Lady Churchill emerges here as a vibrant unconventional personality in her own right. The book is a dual portrait, presenting Lady Churchill, unknown to the mass of people, and Winston Churchill, as seen through his wife's eyes.


This biography begins when Samuel Clemens was already thirty-one and a journalist in San Francisco. It covers the rest of his life during which he acquired worldwide fame as a towering literary figure. As his story unfolds, we see Clemens as a comic spirit and a tragic human being, referred to as "the Lincoln of our literature."


"Outwardly I am eighty-three years old," Elizabeth Coatsworth writes in PERSONAL GEOGRAPHY, "but inwardly I am every age, embodying the emotions and experiences of every period of my growth. Each piece in this book is a moment of my life, caught in passing."


In this autobiography, the author, grandson of Cochise and nephew of Geronimo, describes his family's struggles for freedom and its attempts to preserve Apache customs. He also includes exploits of his later life in Hollywood.


In this autobiography, General Charles de Gaulle tells of his return to power, no longer the head of an embattled government in exile, but called upon at the age of sixty-seven to rescue France from a war in Algeria and to re-establish France's glory.


This is the story of Frederick Douglas, one of the noblest men in American history who escaped from slavery to become one of the great leaders of his century. His long public career, the work he did, the causes he espoused, and positions of trust and honor he filled reflect almost superhuman accomplishments.


Ralph Waldo Emerson, perhaps the most original thinker of his day, detested conformity and defended individualism. He remained deeply concerned about the issues of his time throughout his lifetime.

This poignant autobiography of the adolescent years of Anne Frank is the actual diary of her life in hiding during the Nazi occupation of Holland. She ignores the shadow of death and copes with an almost impossible way of life with great dignity. Relationships with her parents and other adults are accurately and sensitively portrayed. A film was based on the book.

Franklin, Benjamin. THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, New York: W. J. Black, 1941.

This is indeed America's first success story. Beginning as a printer's apprentice, Franklin accumulated enough wealth to retire soon after he was forty. The remainder of his years were devoted to public service. In every field, Franklin left his mark. Everywhere human life has been richer because he lived.


There is more joy than sadness in THE LATER YEARS as the accomplishments of Robert Frost's later life are recalled. His career culminated in his participation in the inauguration of President Kennedy where he won the hearts of millions by reciting "The Gift Outright."


Mahatma Gandhi, the "Great Soul" and saint of non-violence, was a patriot, revolutionary, religious and social reformer, statesman, and politician. During his later years, he did most of his work leading to India's independence.


In this autobiography of a writing family, Roger Garis tells what life was like in a hard-working, imaginative family which produced more than one thousand books. We see how delightful and unpredictable life was with a jovial, confident, and inventive father and a charming and talented mother.


The notion that the elderly are powerless, leading lonely, unproductive lives, is a myth that this book dispels. Here two vital oldsters tell how they got there and why they enjoy it.


Here the author recounts the events of his life with his wife, much younger than himself. He also writes about his son, born to him when he was seventy-one years of age.


When he was a boy in Tennessee, Alex Haley's grandmother told him stories about their family-stories that went back to her grandparents, and their grandparents, down through the generations all the way to a man she called "the African." In ROOTS, Haley has traced and recaptured the history of his own family. A classic TV series was based on the book.

In these three autobiographical volumes, a British veterinarian describes the joys and trials of his profession from his early career through middle age. Experiences with his unique clientele, many of whom are elderly, are recalled.

Bowen, Catherine Drinker.  YANKEE FROM OLYMPUS, Boston: Little, Brown, 1945.

Chief Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes loved life and believed in it. For him, the act of learning was always an adventure. Until the morning of his death, he pursued knowledge. This was a man whose presence also carried tradition. His roots reached deep into American earth.


Margaret Mead, the distinguished American anthropologist, recalls the people and events of her childhood and early career, revealing the major influences on her private and public life.


This illustrated book presents and examines the art and personality of Anna Mary Moses. It shows the compelling urge of an older woman to remain active and to produce pretty things for her own enjoyment and the pleasure of others.


Miss Jane Pittman lived for 110 years. Her recollections of those years record the strength and endurance of a black woman in the South. Born of a slave, she lived to see the black militancy of the 60's.


This Pulitzer Prize winning biography presents a factual account of Paul Revere's many contributions to his country and mankind throughout his lengthy life.


On his eighty-second birthday, Norman Rockwell was still at his easel for a good part of each day. When asked about the longevity of his peers, he observed, "Maybe the secret to living so long is that artists are always looking ahead to something new and exciting. The secret is not to look back." In this biography, Walton shares with us numerous anecdotes about Rockwell's life and experiences.

Here is the account of a courageous woman. It moves from her girlhood days in Skowhegan, Maine, her marriage to Clyde H. Smith, and her education by him in the ways of politics, to her decision at his death to complete his term in the House of Representatives, and finally the pursuit of her own career in the Senate.


This unique portrait of a President by his daughter covers the full sweep of Truman's life from his early days and political career in Missouri through the momentous years in Washington where he served as Senator, Vice-President, and President. It concludes with his retirement to Independence, Missouri, and the joys of being a grandfather of four boys.


A controversial genius, idolized by his followers and misunderstood by others, Frank Lloyd Wright fought against personal and professional adversities that would have discouraged a lesser man. He attained the most fruitful period of his life when he was in his eighties.
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