Learning Resources in Creative and Literary Arts

By

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Modern Technology has affected all facets of Society Education. Technology is now being used to aid all areas of learning. Technological advancements have led to the invention of several teaching machines. Consequently, there are changes in the patterns of education to cope with the technological society we now find ourselves. The scope of education is no longer restricted to instruction in the three Rs, Read ng, 'R ting and 'Rithmetic and the memorisation of factual knowledge. There is now increasing concern for the effective areas of learning.

The text book is no longer regarded as the sole source of knowledge. It is now treated as a nucleus of knowledge to which other views can and should be added. Printed resources can no longer provide the totality of learning. A combination of resources is now being advocated because research has shown that a combination of the senses are involved in the learning process.

Nelson (1975) in a study estimated that:—

1% of what we know is through taste.

1½% of what we know is through touch.

3½% of what we know is through smell.

11% of what we know is through hearing.

83% of what we know is through seeing.

Therefore, a combination of the senses should lead to *effective* and permanent learning. There is also the increasing realisation that children learn at different rates and have different learning styles. Multi media offer the unique advantage of providing variety of learning styles to suit individual talent and idiosyncracies. We believe that all children have creative potentials. It is our duty as parents, teachers, librarians to encourage and develop the creativity which all children have.

One sure way of doing this is by exposing them to an environment, that is conducive to creative and divergent thinking. This is possible in the modern school library, which is now known variously as Media Resource Centre or Instructional Materials Centre.

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This paper focuses on primary education therefore only learning resources appropriate to primary school situation will be covered. Creative and literary arts, the production of something new and original, have been included in all definitions of creativity.

Literacy is defined as pertaining to the ability to read and write. Creative and literary arts can be taken to deal with all aspects of language, literature, poetry, drama & prose.

LEARNING RESOURCES FOR PRIMARY SCHOOLS

Learning resources used in the primary schools consist of the following:

(1) Books, pamphlets and other painted materials.
(2) Graphics.
(3) Still projectuals.
(4) Audio projectuals.
(5) Motion projectuals.
(6) Realia, objects and specimens.
(7) Games.
(8) Learning machines.

Books and illustrative materials are still and will remain the traditional tools for learning all subjects. Our present culture and civilisation is based on the written word. A book has several advantages over other media. A book is usually very portable. A passage or chapter can be read over and over again until the message is understood. Reading is and will still remain as the fundamental way of learning although there are new ways to supplement it. It is still an essential means of acquiring knowledge, understanding ideas, attitudes, feelings, expectations and other values. Reading could and should affect the cognitive and affective processes. Reading is a means to an end information, enjoyment, understanding. There is considerable emphasis on teaching of reading in schools. The ability to read is prerequisite to success in most societies today. There should be various books in primary schools to serve the many purposes referred to above, namely for reference information, study, and for recreation. It has been suggested that children learn to read by reading. If children learn to read, they will read to learn. If we want our children to read, we must provide attractive books that are suitable and relevant to our children's needs.

The multimedia approach to learning does not suggest eradication or replacement of books by other media. The other media, posters, pictures, flannel board materials, are used in the schools.

Posters (Alphabets) are used to teach alphabets and the recognition of words. Alphabets and objects are linked together to teach concepts.

Pictures — constituting wordless picture books — This category of books has appeared only in the last decade and can be used for various purposes. Picture books can be 'read' in any language. This is very important in a multilingual country like Nigeria where there are many languages and where there is a paucity of books for children beginning to read. Picture books bridge the gap between oral story-telling and reading activities. It can be used to expand the language repertoire of children. Picture books have been aptly described as encouraging a "No Failure", encounter with books. They ensure the growth of positive attitudes towards reading.

Children need to acquire confidence very early in school. This confidence is even more important in our African cultural environment which is essentially an adult culture where children are to be seen and not heard.

Pictures are important to learning. It can be used to encourage creative writing by children. The results would be quite varied and interesting as no two individuals will get same meanings from the same pictures. It must be realised that many children have considerable potential for creativity. Pictures used alone are very important, but they are also important as part of a book such as the illustrated book where they give additional insights into the characters and the setting. Pictures facilitate prose — learning. Leoin & Lesgold (1978) found that children correctly responded to about 80% of the short answer questions, when pictures control condition and form.

Flannel board and flannel board characters add another dimension to story—telling to young children. Children will enjoy seeing and touching their favourite story characters. As the story progresses, the characters are placed on the board. This usually excites the children so they get more involved in the story—telling activity.

Still Projectuals, such as filmstrips and slides, can be used to stimulate interest in particular books. Many books are now available in filmstrips accompanied with taped narration. Filmstrip slides can add an interesting dimension to an ordinary language literature class. There is also the added advantage that they can be used individually

or in groups. Tape recording are very popular in language teaching. They are useful for the older children in teaching the correct pronounciation of words. Faulty pronounciations are corrected by listening to a tape recording. This can be reinforced by being accompanied with filmstrips which show pictures of some one pronouncing words.

The radio also has a great potential for learning. Excerpts of many books are first read on the radio. The biggest advantage of a radio is its ubiquity. Nearly everyone has a radio. One can listen to a radio whilst performing other manual tasks.

Motion Projectuals, such as films, televisions and video recordings are very useful in language studies and creative arts. Televisions can also be used to teach because it is capable of stimulating consequitive processes. Motion pictures have been used to dramatise literature. Films, televisions and video have been found to motivate reading. Busch (1978) showed that 89% of the respondents had watched at least one programme on television that motivated them to read a book. Exciting passages can be dramatized to make the book come alive without divulging the whole plot. The book creator can be presented reading portions of the book, thereby wetting the audience's appetite for the book.

Realia are real objects like costumes, which can be used to depict the countries from which particular languages come from thereby making the subject master more interesting. Costumes can also be used to add colour and meaning to drama classes.

Learning Machines can and should be used to reinforce what has been taught by painted resources. There are obvious and definite advantages in using learning machines. It encourages individual and independent activities. It allows students to work individually and at the same time free the teacher to circulate, meeting with students on an individual or small group basis, as experienced in the total classroom atmosphere. It can be used to foster individual instruction so that children can work at their own pace. The bright is not frustrated whilst the slow one is not made to look stupid.

Learning machine encourages children to follow directions, make decisions and to complete assignments independently. The directions are usually simple and direct. The child learns particular concepts in the process of making decisions. The significant element of the learning machine is the opportunity for the child to arrive at the correct answer independently even though it is through the process of trial and error. Learning machines, as with other audio—visual ma-

terials, encourage involvement in the subject taught. The child is no longer a passive observer but an active participant in the learning process.

CONCLUSION

Learning resources for creative and literary arts should be used as entities. One set should not be considered inferior to the other. The involvement of teachers and pupils in the creation of learning materials should be encouraged. This joint collaboration will lead to a meaningful experience that is both active and motivational.

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