

Growing Up With Literature

4th
Edition



Walter E. Sawyer

Growing Up With Literature

Fourth Edition

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Fourth Edition

Walter E. Sawyer, EdD

Foreword by Francis P. Hodge

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Foreword by



Francis P. Hodge



I am delighted to introduce the fourth edition of *Growing Up With Literature*. Many texts are available emphasizing classroom instruction in literature at all grade levels. Many texts also are on the market offering guidance to parents about the importance of books in the development of young children. This text, with over 200 newly added titles, takes the best of the aforementioned examples and treats the continuity of one to the other. This feature distinguishes *Growing Up With Literature* from many other contemporary literature-related texts.

Dr. Walter Sawyer is eminently qualified to address this topic. I have known Dr. Sawyer, who is both a father and an educator, for over twenty-five years. He has worked diligently with his own children in their development as literate human beings. He has studied and guided school programs aimed at improving literary facility among school children, particularly at the elementary level.

Dr. Sawyer's approach is truly grassroots in origin. He starts with the WHYS and carefully leads the early childhood educator and the parent along the road to the WHAT, WITHS, and the HOWS. His approach is a carefully conceived road map of operational ideas and suggestions. His points have been tested and have proven successful in numerous cases. He offers alternatives, suggesting titles that might be utilized; he indicates areas of concern; and, significantly, he advises caution and thoughtful planning by both parents and teachers.

Encouraging a love for literature, developing good readers, and making reading an integral part of everyday life are so important for young readers. Without a foundation from home and early childhood, children often experience difficulty in school, especially in mastery of reading skills. Working through the suggestions and recommendations offered by Dr. Sawyer in *Growing Up With Literature* can instill in young readers a love for and understanding of literature.

Dedication

To Jean C. Sawyer, who truly understands the beauty and power of literature.

and

In memory of Gerald T. Sawyer,
beloved uncle and member of
the greatest generation.

W.S.



Preface to the Fourth Edition



The fourth edition of *Growing Up With Literature* is a book that celebrates the interaction that can take place when quality children's literature is shared with children. It is a comprehensive guide for the individual wishing to learn how to use children's books effectively in early childhood programs. Sections are included on selecting appropriate books, motivating children to participate in the experience, integrating literature into a program, and managing the process. Although the primary audience for this text is practitioners in early childhood education programs, parents will find a wealth of information here as well.

The philosophy of the book is to present literature as an integrated part of an educational program rather than as an isolated feature used only at storytime. This approach is supported by much of the current thinking, theory, and research on the development of literacy. While the foundation of the book rests on firm conceptual ground, the practical aspects of working with children are at the forefront of the presentation. The book is a hands-on tool for both short- and long-range program planning. It explains such concepts as whole language, the role of computer technology, and emerging literacy in easily understood terms that are easily translated into classroom practice.

- Over 200 new children's literature titles are suggested for use in activities outlined in the book. These new titles were selected for their relevance, interest, and beauty. Also included are strategies for locating virtually any picture book desired.
- New sections are included on the research and theory related to children's literacy acquisition. This includes phonemic awareness, the holistic approach to literacy, and the dangers of attempting to test literacy development.
- New material within various chapters explores children's learning to spell and its relation to literature, the project approach as a strategy to enhance literacy development, and the concept of multiple literacy supported by technology.
- New to this edition is an interview with well-known children's author Charlotte Agell, in which she shares her thoughts on connecting with young children through the picture books she writes and illustrates.

- The chapter on media has been revised to include the use of computers, literature-related CD-ROMs, and the Internet. This chapter also describes the Web sites that every parent and early childhood worker needs to know about.

The authors and Delmar Learning affirm that the Web site URLs referenced herein were accurate at the time of printing. However, due to the fluid nature of the Internet, we cannot guarantee their accuracy for the life of the edition.

The text, which focuses exclusively on picture books for young children, makes a valuable contribution to the field of early childhood education. Few practical books on using literature in early childhood programs are based upon the current thinking and theory on emerging literacy. *Growing Up With Literature* provides a wealth of practical ideas and strategies that can be implemented in the classroom. The clear, concise explanations describing the process of implementation ensure their transfer. In addition, hundreds of books appropriate for young readers are cited. A wide range of titles is used to familiarize the reader with the variety of books available. The citations range from classics to the latest contemporary publications. The fourth edition includes a listing of more than 200 additional children's book citations. They represent the best of children's titles published over the last few years.

Many special features are included. First, and most important, is the approach stressed within the book. The focus is on integrating literature as an integral part of education throughout all areas of the curriculum. This edition also includes expanded sections of nonfiction and multicultural titles for young children. Each chapter includes both references for further reading and a set of questions for thought and discussion. The questions tend not to seek rote types of answers. Rather, they require a more careful analysis of the material in the chapter in order to give a thoughtful and logical response. An instructor's guide is also available.

ONLINE RESOURCES™

The Online Resources™ to accompany the fourth edition of *Growing Up With Literature* is your link to early childhood education on the Internet. The Online Resources™ contain many features to help focus your understanding of children's literature:

- Author's biography—find out more about the author and his motivation for writing this book.
- Checklist with criteria for selecting non-fiction and multicultural children's literature and evaluating a classroom literary environment.
- Weblinks—to homepages of children's book authors.
- Full color photos of selected children's books covers.
- Extension Activities corresponding to each chapter—to apply what you have learned to your own classroom.



You can find the Online Resources™ at
www.earlychilded.delmar.com

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Walter Sawyer is a graduate of Siena College, Assumption College, and the State University of New York at Albany. He holds B.A., M.A., and EdD degrees. He is certified in and has worked at all levels of education from nursery school through graduate school. Currently an independent consultant and writer, he served for many years as an administrator in the Waterford-Halfmoon School District in upstate New York while teaching graduate courses in the field of literacy at Russell Sage College. He has been an active member at all levels of the International Reading Association, and is past president of a local reading council. He was named "Educator of the Year" in 1994 by the School Administrators Association of New York State. He has a deep personal interest in storytelling and has published over 60 articles, books, papers, and chapters in the field of literacy. He is also author of *The Storm*, a children's picture book (Katonah, NY: Richard C. Owen, 1999).

The author would like to extend an acknowledgment to several key people in this endeavor: To Jean Sawyer who listened to and provided critical feedback on many of the chapters in addition to watching the children. To Andrew and Emily Sawyer who shared so many of the cited children's books in family read-aloud sessions. To the authors and storytellers who provided photographs for this book. To the publishers of children's books who generously granted permission to reprint covers of their books. To Frank Hodge for the Foreword to this book and for guiding us all down the right road. To our editor for all of her support and encouragement. To the following reviewers whose perceptive feedback and useful comments made *Growing Up With Literature* a better book:

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