

NEBRASKA

PUBLIC LIBRARY COMMISSION

*Suggestions for the observance of library day in
the public schools of Nebraska,
October 23, 1903.*

TO THE TEACHERS OF NEBRASKA:—

The object of this special day is primarily to furnish the teacher some way of arousing the interest of pupils and patrons in the building up of a school library. If possible, money should be raised to buy at least \$5 worth of books to display for the patrons' inspection on that day.

In planning a program for that occasion, aim to show the patrons what good use you have made of the library books you already have. This will have more educational value for the children than a showy program, and will be more apt to satisfy the parents. You can use the occasion to demonstrate to the patrons that the children who read good books and think about them, can advance more rapidly in their regular studies. Make the day count in the direction of a larger and better library for your school.

The "Special day programs" contain only general suggestions for Library day. The authors' birthday programs it would be well to leave for special days—indeed some author of note should be given an hour or two at least once a month. Children will not care about authors until they know and like some of their writings. From one author day to another, let the children read and prepare for the author day that is to come. Select your authors several months in advance, and get the children to help you get together all possible material by and about the author. You will thus be having library days throughout the year.

For the author for Library day, this year, I suggest Robert Louis Stevenson. For a week or two before the time, let the pupils search out and bring in all the Stevenson material in the district. The younger children will delight in the "Child's garden of verses." The others may read "Treasure island." The eighth grade pupils ought to have the "Christmas sermon," "Silverado squatters," and the "Wrecker"—or any other of Stevenson's writings. A simple little program would include the recitation of the "Lampighter," "My shadow," "The cow," by the smaller children. Many of the verses have been set to music, and the little people will enjoy learning to sing them. Almost any modern collection of children's songs will contain some of them. The older pupils can discuss "Treasure island," and then a few minutes can be devoted to giving the children such an account of

Stevenson's life as will give them an insight to his character. Dwell particularly on his childhood, his love for his parents and nurse, and read the dedicatory lines to his "Child's garden of verses." Tell of the engineering Stevensons and the great Bell light. Explain Stevenson's failure to follow the profession of his fathers, and his wanderings in many lands. With a map, point out some of these wanderings, giving as much as you can of the family life at Vailima. Place upon the board or on a poster, the following quotation from Stevenson, giving your comments on it:—

"To be honest, to be kind, to earn a little and to spend a little less; to make upon the whole a family happier for his presence; to renounce when that shall be necessary, and not be embittered; to keep a few friends, but these without capitulation; above all, on the same grim conditions, to keep friends with himself—here is a task for all that a man has of fortitude and delicacy."

In this quotation, and in the love of so many people—the good and great, the young and playful, the gracious and witty, the simple and uncivilized, the princely minds of the English speaking world—find the keynote to an inspiring and lovable character. The loyalty, courage, and perseverance of such a character should inspire your pupils to greater effort in their lessons and other undertakings.

To prepare this program, you should have the following:—

Child's garden of verses, Rand, McNally ed.....	.50
Treasure island " "40

These two are especially valuable for their biographical notes. By special arrangement with the state agent of Rand, McNally, the above mentioned books will be sent postpaid to any Nebraska school for 45 cents and 36 cents, respectively. Order of Rand, McNally & Co., Chicago.

In addition get the following, if possible:—

Christmas sermon.....	\$.50
Silverado squatters.....	1.00
Black Life of Stevenson.....	.75

In many attics of Nebraska are quantities of old magazines. Try to get hold of the following numbers:—

Scribner's magazine, October, 1895, May and June, 1896.

McClure's magazine, September, 1894, February, 1895.

Any standard periodical of 1895 *may* contain sketches of Stevenson's life.

Do not let the interest of the school end with the Library day program. Invite the pupils to bring in items concerning his life and works during the entire school year. Later, if you can, add the following to your school library:—

Ebb-tide.....	\$1.25
Virginibus puerisque Cameo ed.....	1.25
David Balfour.....	1.50

Any reliable jobbing house, such as A. C. McClurg & Co., Chicago, will furnish these books at the above prices plus about ten cents a volume for postage.

As a practical exercise in the use of books, I suggest the following for part of the Library day observance:—

Secure from the Democrat Printing Company of Madison, Wis., copies of the five book marks in their series 7. You can get 20 copies each of all five for 35 cents. They can be ordered only in lots of 100.

Select one or more of these book marks to give to the older children. I suggest number 2 as the most suitable for the day. Give the children half an hour to find what the school library contains about the ten topics mentioned on the book mark, and take a few additional minutes to have them tell what they found and how they found it. Ask them to explain why they looked in a certain book rather than some other book. Teach them to use indexes and tables of contents in this way. The following books contain information on nearly all the topics mentioned on the five book marks:—

Baldwin	Fifty famous stories retold	\$ 30
Guerber	Story of the Greeks	52
"	" " " Romans	52
Kingsley	Greek heroes	26
Blaisdell	Stories from English history	35
Johonnot	Stories of heroic deeds	26
Pratt	Stories of old Germany	42
Radford	King Arthur and his knights	40
Hall	Viking tales	35
Bellamy & Goodwin	Open sesame, v. 2 and 3	1.30

\$4.68

These books can be had at the above prices only if ordered of the Educational Publishing Co., Topeka, Kansas. Transportation charges will be in addition to the cost of the books. Since this company maintains a general jobbing house, any books you may wish, can also be ordered of them.

Other book marks that will be interesting and helpful for the children can be had of the Democrat Printing Co., for 35 cents a hundred. An assortment of the entire set of 25 would make four of each kind available.

Any further information that may be desired will be cheerfully furnished if you write for it. We desire to co-operate in every possible way with the schools, in helping the boys and girls of Nebraska to greater opportunities.

Sincerely,

EDNA D. BULLOCK, Sec'y.,

Lincoln, Neb.