



Flowerfield Historic School
LITERATURE LESSON

*Be well read whilst thou art young,
That when old thy praise be sung.*

HISTORIC SCHOOL

LITERATURE LESSON

LESSON TIME: 20 minutes

OBJECTIVES:

1. Students will learn of the ideals of the literature during the 1880-1900's and how the literature promoted values through teaching moralistic lessons.
2. Students will have an opportunity to recite prose and/or poetry.

HISTORIC SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

1. To begin the literature lesson, explain that during the 1880's most literature available to children was meant not to entertain, but to instruct them in the values and morals of the time. The Historic School teacher will use maxims, proverbs, and morals throughout the day's instructions.
2. Read an appropriate selection from Aesop's Fables to the students and conduct a discussion of the selection. The following fables are reproduced in this guide:
3.
 - The Fox and the Stork
 - The Lion and the Mouse
 - The Crow and the Pitcher
 - The Dog and His Shadow
 - The Ant and the Grasshopper
4. Allow students to recite a previously memorized poem. Poetry appropriate for memorization and recitation is listed below: (*indicates poetry included in this guide.)

*The Swing	Stevenson
*The Children's Hour	Stevenson
*The Land of Story Books	Stevenson
*My Shadow	Stevenson
*Twenty Froggies	George Cooper
*The Milk Jug	Oliver Herford
*The Village Blacksmith	Longfellow Riley
*Little Orphant Annie	Riley
*The Raggedy Man	Longfellow
Hiawatha	Whittier
Barefoot Boy	Whittier
In School Days	Stevenson

Words once spoken cannot be wiped out with a sponge.

THE FOX AND THE STORK

At one time the Fox and the Stork were on visiting terms and seemed very good friends. So the Fox invited the Stork to dinner, and for a joke put nothing before her but some soup in a very shallow dish. This the Fox could easily lap up, but the Stork could only wet the end of her long bill in it, and left the meal as hungry as when she began.

"I am sorry," said the Fox, "the soup is not in your liking."

"Pray do not apologize," said the Stork. "I hope you will return this visit, and come and dine with me soon."

So a day was appointed when the Fox should visit the Stork, but when they were seated at the table all there was for their dinner was contained in a very long-necked jar with a narrow mouth, in which the Fox could not insert his snout. So all he could manage to do was to lick the outside of the jar.

"I will not apologize for the dinner," said the Stork.

"One bad turn deserves another."

THE LION AND THE MOUSE

Once when a Lion was asleep a little Mouse began running up and down upon him. This soon wakened the Lion, who placed his huge paw upon the little Mouse, and opened his big jaws to swallow him.

"Pardon, O King," cried the little Mouse, "let me go this time and I shall never forget it. Who knows but what I may be able to do you a good turn some of these days?"

The Lion was so tickled at the idea of the Mouse being able to help him that he lifted up his paw and let him go.

Some time later the Lion was caught in a trap. The hunters, who desired to carry him alive to the King, tied him to a tree while they went in search of a wagon to carry him on. Just then the little Mouse happened to pass by and, seeing the sad plight in which the Lion was, went up to him and soon gnawed away the ropes that bound the King of Beasts.

"Was I not right?" said the little Mouse.

Little friends may prove great friends.

THE CROW AND THE PITCHER

A crow, half-dead with thirst, came upon a pitcher which had once been full of water, but when the Crow put his beak into the mouth of the pitcher he found that only very little water was left in it, and that he could not reach far enough down to get at it. He tried and he tried, but at last had to give up in despair.

Then a thought came to him, and he took a pebble and dropped it into the pitcher.

Then he took another pebble and dropped it into the pitcher.

Then he took another pebble and dropped that into the pitcher.

Then he took another pebble and dropped that into the pitcher.

Then he took another pebble and dropped that into the pitcher.

Then he took another pebble and dropped that into the pitcher.

At last, at last, he saw the water mount up near him, and after casting in a few more pebbles he was able to quench his thirst and save his life.

Little by little does the trick.

THE DOG AND HIS SHADOW

--Aesop

A Dog took a bone from the butcher, and ran off with it. On the way home, he came to a river.

He looked in the water, and there he saw another dog with another bone, bigger than his. When he stopped, the other dog stopped. When he ran on, the other dog ran on.

"This will not do," thought the Dog. "I will take his bone away from him."

So he opened his mouth to take the other dog's bone, and he dropped his bone into the river.

He sprang at the other dog, and fell into the water.

So he got no bone at all, and had to go home, wet and hungry.

Beware lest you lose the substance by grasping at the shadow.

THE ANT AND THE GRASSHOPPER

-Aesop

Once an ant and a grasshopper lived in the same garden. The ant was busy laying up food for the winter.

"Why do you work so hard?" asked the grasshopper. "Just look at me. I don't work. I dance and sing and have a good time."

"Yes, I see that you do," said the ant. "But if I played all summer, what should I do for food in the winter?"

The grasshopper laughed. "Oh, winter is a long way off," he said. "I never think about that." Then he danced away.

After a time the summer was gone. The ground was white with snow. The ant was warm and happy in her little house. And it was full of food. But the poor grasshopper had no home. He had no food. He was shaking with cold, and oh, so hungry!

"Dear me," he said. "What shall I do? I am very cold, and I can find no grass to eat. Maybe the ant will help me. I will go and ask her."

So he looked all about for the ant's house. When he found it, he called to her.

"Please, dear ant, may I come in? I am very cold and hungry."

"Poor grasshopper!" said the ant. "Come in and have some food. But you laughed at me for working. You danced and played all summer long. If you had worked then, you would not be asking for food now."

"That is so," said the grasshopper, "and I am sorry. Thank you for the food. Good-by."

He went out into the cold.

And the ant never saw him again.

Work before Play.

It is best to prepare for the days of necessity.

THE SWING

By Robert Louis Stevenson

How do you like to go up in a swing,
Up in the air so blue?
Oh, I do think it the pleasantest thing
Ever a child can do!

Up in the air and over the wall,
Till I can see so wide,
Rivers and trees and cattle and all
Over the countryside-

T'll I look down on the garden green,
Down on the roof so brown
Up in the air I go flying again,
Up in the air and down!

THE CHILDREN'S HOUR

Between the dark and the daylight,
When the night is beginning to lower,
Comes a pause in the day's occupations,
That is known as the Children's Hour.

I hear in the chamber above me
The patter of little feet,
The sound of a door that is opened,
The voices soft and sweet.

From my study I see in the lamplight,
Descending the broad hall stair,
Grave Alice and laughing Allegra,
And Edith with golden hair.

THE LAND OF STORY BOOKS

By Robert Louis Stevenson

At evening when the lamp is lit,
Around the fire my parents sit;
They sit at home and talk and sing,
And do not play at anything.

Now, with my little gun, I crawl
All in the dark along the wall,
And follow round the forest track
Away behind the sofa back.

There, in the night, where none can spy,
All in my hunter's camp I lie,
And play at books that I have read
Till it is time to go to bed.

These are the hills, these are the woods,
These are my starry solitudes;
And there the river by shoes brink
The roaring lions come to drink.

I see the others far away
As if in fire lit camp they lay,
And I, like to an Indian scout,
Around their party prowled about.

So when my nurse comes in for me,
Home I return across the sea,
And go to bed with backward looks
At my dear Land of Story Books.

THE MILK JUG (The Kitten Speaks)
By Oliver Herford

The Gentle Milk Jug blue and white
I love with all my soul.
She pours herself with all her might
To fill my breakfast bowl.

All day she sits upon the shelf,
She does not jump or climb
She only waits to pour herself
When 'Lis my supper time.

And when the jug is empty quite,
It shall not mew in vain,
The Friendly Cow, all red and white,
Will fill her up again.

TWENTY FROGGIES By George Cooper

Twenty froggies went to school
Down beside a rush pool.
Twenty little coats of green,
Twenty vests all white and clean.

"We must be in time," said they:
"First we study, then we play:
That is how we keep the rule,
When we froggies go to school."

Master Bullfrog, brave and stern,
Called his classes in their turn,
Taught them how to nobly strive,
Also how to leap and dive.

Polished in a high degree,
As each froggie ought to be,
Now they sit on other logs,
Teaching other little frogs.

THE VILLAGE BLACKSMITH
By Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Under a spreading chestnut tree,
The village smithy stands;
The smith, a mighty man is he,
With large and sinewy hands;
And the muscles of his brawny arms
Are strong as iron bands.

His hair is crisp, and black, and long,
His face is like the tan;
His barrow is wet with honest sweat,
He earns whate'er he can.
And looks the whole world in the face,
For he owes not any man.

Week in, week out, from morn till night,
You can hear his bellows blow;
You can hear him swing his heavy sledge,
With measured beat and slow,
Like a sexton ringing the village bell,
When the evening sun is low.

MY SHADOW
By Robert Louis Stevenson

I have a little shadow that goes in and out with me,
And what can be the use of him is more than I can see.
He is very, very like me from the heels up to the head;
And I see him jump before me, when I jump into my bed.

The funniest thing about him is the way he likes to grow,
Not at all like proper children, which is always very slow;
For he sometimes shoots up taller like an India-rubber ball,
And he sometimes goes so little that there's none of him at all.

He hasn't got a notion of how children ought to play,
And can only make a fool of me in every sort of way.
He stays so close beside me, he's a coward you can see;
I'd think shame to stick in nursie as that shadow sticks to me!

One morning, very early, before the sun was up,
I rose and found the shining dew on every buttercup;
But my lazy little shadow, like an arrant sleepyhead,
Had stayed at home behind me and was fast asleep in bed.

LITTLE ORPHANT ANNIE

Little Orphant Annie's come to our house to stay,
An' wash the cups an' saucers up, an' brush the crumbs away,
An' shoo the chickens off the porch, an' dust the hearth, an' sweep
An' make the fire, an' bake the bread, an' earn her board an' keep:
An' all us other children, when the supper things is done,
We set around the kitchen fire an' has the mostest fun.
A'list'nin' to the witch-tales `at Annie tells about,
An' the Gobble-un `at gits you
Ef you
Don't
Watch
Out!

wunst they wus a little boy wouldn't say his prayers -
An' when he went to bed at night, away up stairs,
His Mammy heered him holler, an' his Daddy heered him bawl,
An' when they turn't the kivvers down, he wasn't there at all!
An' they seeked him in the rafter-room, an' cubby-hole, an' press,
An' all they ever found wus thist his pants an' roundabout:
An' the Gobble-un sill git you
Ef you
Don't
Watch
Out!

An' one time a little girl `ul allus laugh an' grin,
An' make fun of ever' one, an' all her blood-an'-kin;
An' wunst when they was "company," an' ole folks wus there,
She mocked `em an' shocked `em an' said she didn't care!
An' thist as she kicked her heels, an' turn't to run an' hide,
They was two great big Black things a-standin' by her side,
An' they snatched her through the ceilin" fore she knowed what she's about!
An' the Gobble-uns'll git you
Ef you
Don't
Watch
Out!

An little Orphant Annie says, when the blaze is blue,
An' the lamp-wick sputters, an' the wind goes woo oo!
An' you hear the crickets quit, an' the moon is gray, An'
the lightnin'-bugs in dew is all squenched away,
You better mind yer parunts, an' yer teachurs fond and' dear,
An' churish them `at loves you, an' dry the orphant's tear,
An' help the pore an' needy ones `at clusters all about, Er
the Gobble-uns `ill git you
Ef you
Don't
Watch
Out!

THE RAGGEDY MAN
By James Whitcomb Riley (1849-1916)

O THE Raggedy Man! He works for Pa:
An' he's the goodest man ever you saw!
He comes to our house every day,
An' water the horses, an' feeds `em hay:
An' he opens the shed - - an' we all jist laugh
When he drives out our little old wobble-ly calf;
An' nen - - ef our hired girl says he can - - He
milks the cow for 'Lizabuth Ann.

Aint he a' awful good Raggedy Man?
Raggedy! Raggedy! Raggedy Man!

W'y the Raggedy Man - - he's ist so good
He splits the kindlin' an' chops the wood;
An' nen he spades in our garden, too, An'
does most things `at boys can't do - - He
clumbed clean up in our big tree An'
shooked a' apple down for me - - An'
'nother'n, too, fer `Lizabuth Ann - -

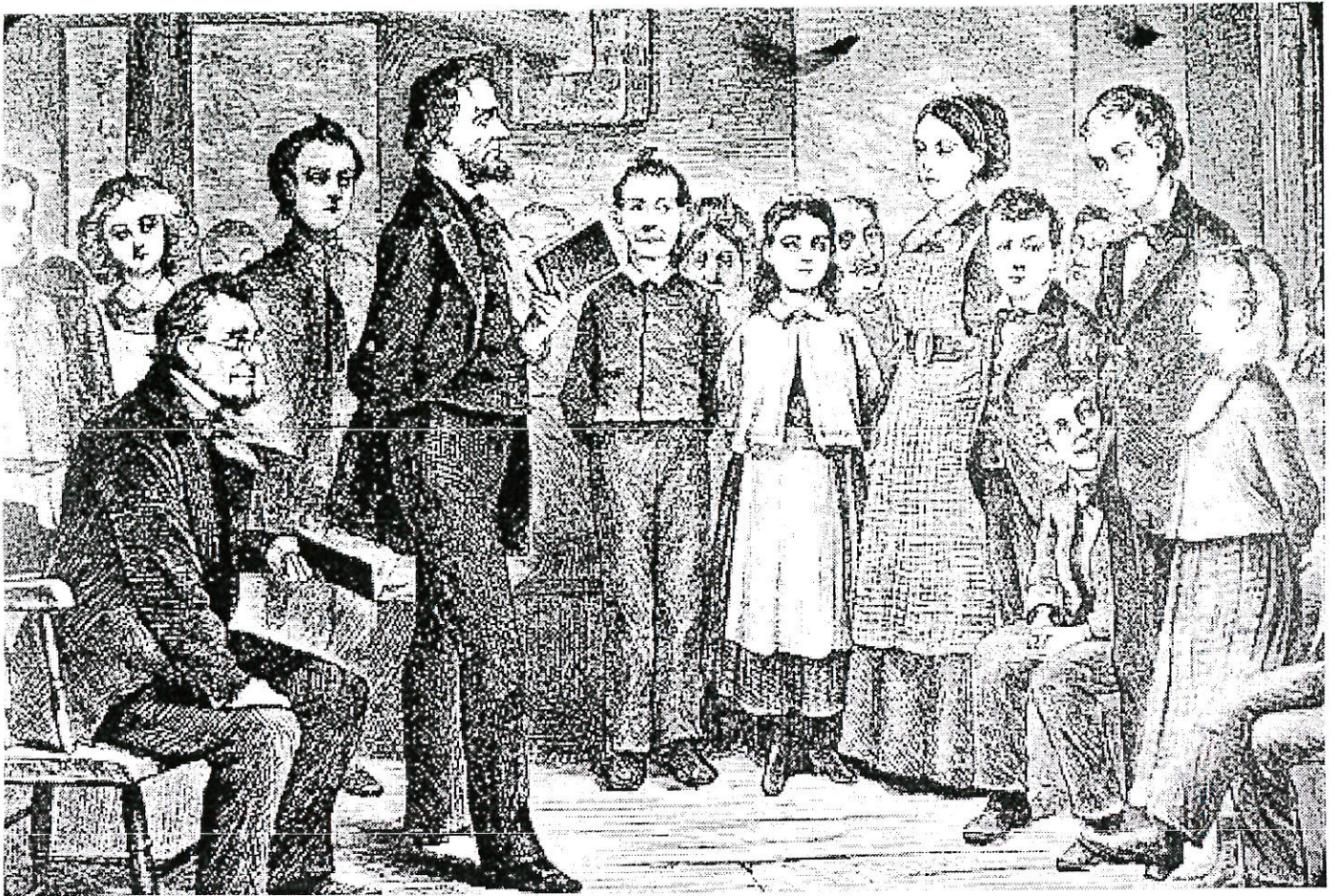
Aint he a' awful good Raggedy Man?
Raggedy! Raggedy! Raggedy Man!

An' the Raggedy Man, he knows most rhymes
An' tells `em, ef I be good, sometimes;
Knows `bout Gunts, an' Griffuns, an' Elves,
An' the Squidgicum-Sqyees `at the Wunks is got,
'At lives `way dep in the ground, an' can
Turn into me, er `Lizabuth Ann!
Er Ma, er Pa, er the Raggedy Man!

Anit he a' awful good Raggedy Man?
Raggedy! Raddedy! Raggedy Man!

The Raggedy Man - - one time when he
Was making' a little bow-n `orry fer me,
Says, "When you're big like your Pa is, Air
you go' to keep a fine store like his - -
An' be a rich merchant - - an' wear fine clothes?"
Er what air you go' - to be, goodness knows?" An'
nen he laughed at `Lizabuth Ann, An' I says "M
go' to be a Raggedy Man! - -

Im' jist go' to be a nice Raggedy Man!"
Raggedy! Raggedy! Raggedy Man!



PREPARATORY ACTIVITIES FOR LITERATURE

PREPARE FOR RECITATION

After students have had a brief exposure to literature of the past, the teacher may wish to introduce them to some poetry of the past, and explain to them that children in the 1880's were expected to memorize poems like these and recite them in front of their peers. Give students copies of the poems found in this guide and encourage them to choose one to memorize so that they will be able to recite it at the Historic School.

EXAMINE LITERATURE PAST AND PRESENT

To prepare the students for the Historic School literature lesson, the teacher may want to involve them in a discussion about the differences between literature of 100 years ago, and literature of today. Sample questions follow:

1. What are some books that you like?
What types of things do they talk about?
Who are some authors that you like?
Why do you like them?
2. Now let's think about children who lived a hundred years ago. What do you think the books that they read were like? Do you think they were like the books that you read today? Why or why not?
3. Here is an example of what children in Nebraska read in the 1880's. (The teacher can read a small portion of the excerpt from Robinson Crusoe which is included, or he/she may read from another book typical of the period such as one of the following titles recommended by the 1896 Nebraska Course of Study:
4.
 - Ulysses Among the Phoenicians
 - Gulliver's Travels
 - Story of the Iliad
 - Arabian Nights
 - Open Sesame, Part II
 - Tales of Troy
 - Homer's Iliad, Books 1-8
 - The Odyssey
5. Allow students to discuss what they thought of the material read to them.
6. Explain to students that during the late 1800's children were often considered to be 'little adults', and were expected to understand and enjoy books that taught them strong values and morals. They were not often allowed to read things for pleasure or leisure.

**...When bad be your prospects, don't sit still and cry;
Instead, jump up and say to yourself, "I'll try."**

THE SHIPWRECK OF ROBINSON CRUSOE

1. Nothing can describe the confusion of thought which I felt when I sank into the water, for though I swam very well, yet I could not deliver myself from the waves so as to draw breath, till that wave, having driven me, or rather carried me, a vast way on toward the shore, and having spent itself, went back, and left me upon the land almost dry, but half dead with the water I took in.
2. I had so much presence of mind as well as breath left, that, seeing myself neared the mainland than I expected, I got upon my feet, and endeavored to make on toward the land as fast as I could, before another wave should return and take me up again. But I soon found it was impossible to avoid it; for I saw the sea come after me as high as a great hill, and as furious as an enemy which I had no means or strength to contend with.
3. My business was to hold my breath, and raise myself upon the water, if I could; and so, by swimming, to preserve by breathing and pilot myself toward the shore when it came on, might not carry me back again with it when it gave back toward the sea.
4. The wave that came upon me again buried me at once twenty or thirty feet deep in its own body, and I could feel myself carried with a mighty force and swiftness toward the shore, a very great way; but I held my breath, and assisted myself to swim still forward with all my might. I was ready to burst with holding my breath, when, as I felt myself rising up, so, to my immediate relief, I found my head and hands shoot out above the surface of the water; and though it was not two seconds of time that I could keep myself so, yet it relieved me greatly, and gave me breath and new courage.
5. I was covered again with water a good while, but not so long but I held it out; and, finding the water had spent itself, and began to return, I struck forward against the return of the wave, and felt ground again with my feet. I stood still a few moments to recover breath, and till the water went from me, and then took to my heels and ran, with what strength I had, farther toward the shore. But neither would this deliver me from the fury of the sea, which came pouring in after me again; and twice more I was lifted up by the waves and carried forward as before, the shore being very flat.
6. The last time of these two had well nigh been fatal to me; for the sea, having hurried me along, as before, landed me, or rather dashed me, against a piece of a rock, and that with such force that it left me senseless, and indeed helpless as to my own deliverance; for the blow, taking my side and breast, beat the breath, as it were, quite out of my body; sad, had it returned again immediately, I must have been strangled in the water; but I recovered a little before the return of the wave, and seeing I should again be covered with water, I resolved to hold fast by a piece of the rock, and so to hold my breath, if possible, till the wave went back.
7. Now, as the waves were not so high as the first, being nearer land, I held my hold till the wave abated, and then fetched another run, which brought me so near the shore that the next wave, though it went over me, yet did not so swallow me up as to carry me away; and, the next run I took, I got to the mainland, where, to my great comfort, I clambered up the cliffs of the shore, and sate me down upon the grass, free from danger, and quite out of the reach of the water.

READ SELECTIONS ALOUD

There are several children's books which may be useful in preparing students for all aspects of the Historic School. Teachers are encouraged to read orally from these books.

A Gathering of Days by Joan W. Blos This story does not take place in Nebraska. It does, however, portray accurately and beautifully, school life in a one-room school house, maxims and verses that children memorized during the 1800's, and the values and morals that were taught.

Prairie Songs by Pam Conrad

The Price of Free Land by Treva Adams Strait. This true story describes a child's experiences as her family homesteaded in the Scottsbluff area.

MORALIZE WITH MAXIMS

Maxims come from many sources. Each is remembered for its bit of wisdom. They may be traced to great literature, famous philosophers, or common sense. Popular maxims were hung in pioneer homes as decoration and reminder. The read-aloud books utilize maxims in telling the pioneer stories. Classroom teachers are encouraged to have their students complete the fill-in-the-blank activity without pre-teaching the traditional proverbs. The resultant "child wisdom" will be fresh and fun to share with parents. Later, students can discuss the traditional endings for these maxims. They might write lyrics to a familiar tune about a maxim. They could examine modern day use of maxims such as bumper stickers and create their own proverbs to live by. The Historic School teacher will utilize maxim lessons throughout the day, such as those that follow:

Make New Friends, But Keep the Old.
The First Are Silver, The Latter, Gold

What is a friend? Why do we have friends? How are friends like silver and gold? Can friends ever be more valuable than silver and gold? Give examples of actions that nurture friendship.

Strike While the Iron is Hot

Discuss with children how a blacksmith works with iron, making horseshoes. Metal must be hot to bend it into shapes and worked on quickly. All of us must do things now, not put work off until later when it may be too late.

MAXIM PROVERBS

Fill in the blanks to finish these proverbs.

1. Silence is _____
2. Great braggers are little _____
3. He who lives in a glass house should not _____
4. It is sure to be dark if you shut _____
5. Three may keep a secret if two of them are _____
6. He that lies down with dogs shall rise up _____
7. A penny saved is a _____
8. Money isn't _____
9. The best things in life are _____
10. Make hay while _____
11. Rolling stones gather _____
12. You can't have your cake and _____
13. You can't squeeze blood _____
14. You can't judge a book by _____
15. You can't make cookies when you haven't got _____
16. It is better to be safe than _____
17. One bad apple can spoil _____
18. A stitch in time saves _____
19. A bird in the hand is worth _____
20. Too many cooks spoil _____
21. Honey catches more flies than _____
22. Don't cry over _____

MAXIM PROVERBS
(continued)

- 23. Don't bite the hand that _____
- 24. Better late than _____
- 25. Two wrongs don't make _____
- 26. Two is company, three is a _____
- 27. Spare the rod and spoil _____
- 28. Little pitchers may have _____
- 29. Don't count your chickens before _____
- 30. One is never too old to _____
- 31. Where there is smoke there is _____
- 32. The higher they stand, the farther they _____
- 33. Hitch your wagon to _____
- 34. From little acorns grow _____
- 35. The early bird catches _____

MAXIM PROVERBS

Answers

Fill in the blanks to finish these proverbs.

1. Silence is golden
2. Great braggers are little doers
3. He who lives in a glass house should not throw stones
4. It is sure to be dark if you shut your eyes
5. Three may keep a secret if two of them are dead
6. He that lies down with dogs shall rise up with fleas
7. A penny saved is a earned
8. Money isn't everything
9. The best things in life are free
10. Make hay while the sun shines
11. Rolling stones gather no moss
12. You can't have your cake and eat it too
13. You can't squeeze blood from a turnip
14. You can't judge a book by its cover
15. You can't make cookies when you haven't got the dough
16. It is better to be safe than sorry
17. One bad apple can spoil the barrel
18. A stitch in time saves nine
19. A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush
20. Too many cooks spoil the broth
21. Honey catches more flies than vinegar
22. Don't cry over spilled milk

MAXIM PROVERBS

(answers continued)

23. Don't bite the hand that Feeds you
24. Better late than Never
25. Two wrongs don't make a right
26. Two is company, three is a crowd
27. Spare the rod and spoil the child
28. Little pitchers may have big ears
29. Don't count your chickens before they hatch
30. One is never too old to learn
31. Where there is smoke there is fire
32. The higher they stand, the farther they fall
33. Hitch your wagon to a star
34. From little acorns grow mighty oaks
35. The early bird catches the worm

FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES FOR LITERATURE

The post-activities should help students make generalizations about the past as compared to the present, and then to make predictions about the future. The teacher should help them draw some conclusions about literature of the past - vs - literature of today. Next, the teacher could expand students' horizons by having them project themselves into the future and think about what literature for children might be like 100 years from now.

1. Write stories which could be examples of the literature children will read 100 years from now. How different will it be from what we read today, or from what the children of the Historic School days read? Will students still read?
2. 100 years from now, what will people think of our literature? Will people then still be reading books that we enjoy today? Will they think our literature is silly, or vulgar or boring?
3. Write poems about your experience at the Historic School.

