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A SCIENCE LIBRARY FOR WEST VIRGINIA HIGH SCHOOLS

Edited By
Robert F. Munn, Librarian
West Virginia University

This list of books and periodicals represents an attempt to develop a basic science collection for West Virginia High Schools. The list was compiled as the main project of a graduate-level class in Library Science offered during the 1958 Summer Session at West Virginia University. The author served as instructor.

Why develop yet another list of science books? Members of the class were well aware that there were already a number of guides to book selection in this area. The Standard Catalog for High School Libraries and the Books of the Traveling High School Science Library (Published by the American Association for the Advancement of Science) are perhaps the best known. However, the class felt strongly that these lists did not meet the needs of the schools in which they served. Many of the titles recommended seemed far too elementary. It should be remembered that many high school boys these days have a surprising knowledge--often far superior to that of their teachers--of electricity, aviation, automobile engines and the like. Some are even blowing themselves up building rockets. Other titles recommended appeared, upon actual inspection, to be either too difficult or too old.

The purpose of the course was to develop a high school library which could be purchased for a sum that the average West Virginia High School might have some realistic hope of obtaining. It was finally decided that \$500 would be allocated for the basic book collection and that an additional \$100 would be devoted to periodicals. This last sum may seem high. However, it must be stressed that science moves rapidly; today's Truth is tomorrow's quaint notion. Periodicals provide the best and in the long run the cheapest method of keeping abreast of current developments. It was agreed that at least the more important periodicals should be bound and preserved for from five to ten years. Many librarians may find space as much a factor as money in limiting the number of periodicals that can be bound and retained.

It will be obvious from the following list that some of the periodical titles were selected primarily for the teachers. This seemed to the class a proper--and indeed vital--expenditure of funds. Such titles as the American Biology Teacher and the American Journal of Physics enable teachers to keep up with new developments in these rapidly changing fields. The other periodical titles were chosen with great care. General interest, reliability, cost and inclusion in Readers Guide were some of the factors considered.

Care has been taken to provide at least one in-print title in each major area. Particular emphasis was placed on Biography and the History of Science. Such books provide an excellent introduction to the field. They are also less likely to become quickly out-dated. Although 1940 texts in Physics or Chemistry are almost worthless, biographies of a great physicist or chemist written in the same year may still be the best things in the field.

This list--like all lists--should not be followed mechanically. Members of the class stressed books which seemed to best fit the known interests of their schools. A number of titles (including one periodical) on coal mining have been included because the compilers came from coal mining areas. The librarian of a school in an agricultural area would certainly wish to stress agriculture rather than mining. Other additions and deletions will be suggested by the requirements of the local scene.

No attempt has been made to calculate discounts. Thus the list prices of the books total more than \$500. Discounts will bring the total below the \$500 allocated.

Members of the class who devoted full time to this compilation are listed below. Their sustained interest and hard work made the project possible.

Mrs. Wretha Simms, Librarian
Centerville Borough (Washington County, Pennsylvania)
Junior-Senior School

Mrs. Maxine Vanscyoc
Waynesburg Public Schools

Mrs. Mabel C. Wilson, Librarian
Farmington (Marion County) High School

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PERIODICALS

American Biology Teacher	\$3.75
American Journal of Physics	7.50
Audubon Magazine	3.00
Coal Age	3.00
Farm Journal	2.00

Field and Stream	3.00
Flying	4.00
Hobbies	3.50
Journal of School Health	4.00
Mechanix Illustrated	3.00
National Geographic Magazine	6.50
Nature Magazine	5.00
Popular Mechanics	5.00
Popular Photography	4.00
Popular Science	3.40
Radio and Television News	4.00
School Science and Mathematics	4.50
Science Digest	3.50
Science Education	5.00
Science News Letter	5.50
Science Teacher	3.00
Scientific American	5.00
Today's Health	3.00
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TOTAL	\$94.15

