

Most children are over-burdened with the present education system, which is imposing upon them heavy syllabi. There is an urgent need to create an awareness among school management to make learning a pleasant experience. It is here that the school Library can play an important role. School Library must be well equipped with good reference guides such as encyclopaedias, Dictionaries, Hand –Books and books of general knowledge books. They should have sufficient material on fairy tales, folktales, picture books, teenage novels, etc. These books should have bright illustrations which stirs up a child's imagination. They must be simple for reading and informative for children. In India most school libraries are ill equipped and managed by untrained staff. It is very important for a Librarian to have a free hand in the overall management of the Library. Most often he/she is assigned to unrelated works as a substitute for an absentee. The children do not have an easy access to reference material especially when there is no trained staff to guide them. Due to inadequate space facility and over-crowding of Library, the Librarian has to struggle to give attention to the inquisitive young children. Lack of funds and the interest show by the management for procuring good books for the children the Library suffers, which in turn reflects on the education of the children. Unfortunately, there is a common belief that Librarians do not have much work. It is this attitude of the management which discourages them from discharging their duties whole-heartedly towards the development of school Library system. Nevertheless, with all the bottlenecks in the way the Librarians with all their patience and perseverance can help to rectify the educational system of today. The primary aim of the Librarian should be to inculcate in the children love for books. The staff and children must be first taken around to all sections of the Library in order to familiarize them with the catalogues and classification schemes used in the Library. This will facilitate for easy and quick retrieval of information and prevent them from groping in the dark for identification of books.

It is a universal fact that all children love stories and thus the type of education which is imported must be made interesting keeping in view the interest of the child. It will be appropriate here for me to quote an example given by Amala Emmanuel in an article "*History Made Easy*" in one of the dailies (HINDU, Sept. 6<sup>th</sup>, 1992). As a teacher in England, she had tries to experiment by making school children to take interest in history lessons. She found that slow learners also were eager to teach the subject which was considered boring by them. Further, she made them collect information about their grandparents and parents and asked them to prepare little booklets about their family tree. This helped the children to understand history better when they started realizing that history of famous people and places were very much similar to their own lives. She then went on to tell them stories of kings and ware and spoke about the life and all the significant events of their regime. She also described about life in England during that period starting from the dress, the way of life, a day in a Childs life, the food habits, etc. They were got into little groups and taken to the Library where they were told to look up reference books and each child was made to illustrate and write down his own prices on various topics of the reign. Thus the children were found rubbing their palm in glee at the sight of reference books. They were able to draw maps and coloured pictures of costumes, armours and other related items. With this done they were now in a better position to understand about what wars were all about. It had an impressive creative impact which induced the children to part-take freely in the discussions that followed. It is true that in a classroom situation, it is impossible to study all the details. The children must be allowed to choose topics of their choice related to the lesson and, must be encouraged to find out from the Library and various other sources the

necessary details which can be presented in the class. From the above example, one would conclude that not only history but any lesson for that matter can become lively subjects for discussion and comment instead of monotonous lecture from a text book. The teacher, the parent and the Librarian all have an important role in contributing for the overall development of the Child. The success of the school Library in imparting education depends on several factors as enumerated below. In cities, children have the advantage of participating in national and international book exhibitions conducted regularly. Children must be taken from school for these exhibitions and allowed to give their views. In this way, the school Librarians and children form a close bond wherein they can discover their taste. The Librarian must organise at periodic intervals lecture sessions on various topics by inviting subject experts in the field to relate their personal experience to the children, This way, the children will get first-hand knowledge of the various aspects of life given by a Doctor, Army man or a scientist, etc. It will be more interesting for children to know about their experiences directly through demonstration. It gives instantaneous response which would never emanate from a lecture or a text book. The children can comment and question the expert sometimes even interrupting to suggest better ways of interpreting the subject. The School Librarian's role should not merely end by just giving them books of their choice and taking them back on the due date. It is better for them to read lot of children's books themselves so that they can organise story telling sessions for primary children. This will infuse life into the somnambulant class room sessions. Also, the school Librarian should encourage children of higher classes to keep a separate Library note they have borrowed. This will help her to keep a check on the child whether he or she has really gone through the book which has been borrowed. The School Librarian and the class teacher must interact with each other and conduct quiz programmes, puzzle-games, and word-building games, etc. They should plan these activities in such a way that the children get ample time to do reference work. This way the children, due to competitive spirit, will use the Library effectively to update their general knowledge. There will be total involvement in the subject by the children which is finally what education should be about. Children must also be encouraged to bring newspaper and magazine chippings of interesting articles to pin up in the Library notice board, which should be filed later for future reference after display for a week. In India, very rarely school Librarian participates in the parents-teachers meet. In order to bring an awareness for the need of knowledge through Library, the parents must be encouraged to have meetings with the school Librarian. After all, at home, it is the parents who have to motivate their children into reading habit. A proper guidance to the parents think reading story books to be a distraction and parents think reading story books to be a distraction and waste of time. The parent's teachers and the school Librarians meet will reveal the potency and positive power of Library as a tool for education. It can create an impressive impact in educating the children to respond and think for themselves.