

Summer 2003

# Looking Back: Rules and Regulations for School Libraries, 1910

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## Recommended Repository Citation

Jeffrey, Jonathan. (2003). Looking Back: Rules and Regulations for School Libraries, 1910. *Kentucky Libraries*, 67 (3).

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**Looking Back: Rules and Regulations for School Libraries, 1910**  
**By Jonathan Jeffrey**

This interesting piece was found in the Bulletin of [the] Kentucky Department of Education in September 1910. The article offered tips to people in charge of school libraries. Typically schools did not employ professional librarians or someone with even rudimentary library training. No doubt this article provided some harried individual with some elementary procedures for their library operation whether for the entire school or for their individual classroom.

**Rules and Regulations**

1. It shall be the duty of the County Board of Education to provide a substantial bookcase before the books are secured, and to require the same to be locked, except when in actual use.
2. The County Superintendents and teachers shall give aid and advice to the trustees in selecting and ordering the library from the list adopted by the State board of Education.
3. The teacher (or Principal) of the school shall be the librarian who shall have charge of the library; he shall keep a catalogue of all the books belonging to the library in a book to be provided for that purpose.
4. Every volume in the library shall have pasted on the inside of the cover a printed label, giving the name of the school, the number of the district and the name of the county; the number of the volume, and the fine for not returning it within the specified time, and for the loss of or injury to any book.

5. Every volume loaned shall be entered by the librarian in a book to be provided for that purpose, by its catalogue number, with the day on which it was loaned, the name of the person to whom it was charged, the date when returned and the condition of the book, and the fine assessed for detention or injury done to the book.
6. The library shall be free to all pupils of suitable age belonging to the schools of the district but any resident of the district may become entitled to the privilege upon the payment of such a sum of money for membership as the Division Board may prescribe.
7. No person shall loan a library book to any one out of his own house.
8. No person shall be allowed to have more than one volume at a time or to retain the same longer than two weeks; nor shall any person who has incurred a fine imposed by these regulations receive a book while such fine remains unpaid.
9. On the election of a librarian his predecessor shall, within ten days thereafter, deliver to him all the books, cases and all other property belonging to the library which was in his custody, for which the librarian shall give him a full receipt, discharging him from all responsibility therefore.
10. The library shall in all cases be kept in the school building during the school term.
11. On the return of every book to the library the librarian shall examine it carefully to ascertain what injury, if any, has been sustained by it, and shall charge the amount of the fine accordingly.
12. The following fines shall be assessed by the librarian as herein provided:  
First—For detaining a book beyond two weeks, five cents per week.

Second—For the loss of a volume, the cost of the book, and if one of a set, an amount sufficient to purchase a new set.

Third—For a leaf of the text torn out or lost, or so spoiled as to render it illegible, the cost of the book; and if one of a set, the cost of a new set. In either of the above cases the person paying the fine shall be entitled to the book or set injured.

Fourth—For an injury beyond ordinary wear, an amount proportionate to the injury, to be estimated by the librarian, subject to revision, upon appeal by the Division Board.

Fifth—Whenever any book shall not be returned within six weeks from the time it was loaned, it shall be deemed to be lost, and the person so detaining it shall be charged with its cost in addition to the weekly fine for detention up to the time such charge is made. But if the book be finally returned, the charge for loss shall be remitted, and the fine for not returning the book shall be levied up to the time of such return; provided, that in no case shall the amount of weekly fines exceed the cost of the book.

13. The library fines collected shall first be applied to the replacing of lost volumes, and rebuilding such books as may require it.

14. The librarian shall report to the Division Board as follows:

First—The number of volumes in the library.

Second—The number of volumes purchased during the year.

Third—The number of volumes presented during the year.

Fourth—The number of volumes loaned during the year. (Counting each volume once for each time it is loaned.)

Fifth—The amount of fines assessed.

Sixth—The amount of fines not collected.

Seventh—Such other items as may be of interest.

Eighth—Total value of books and bookcases.

15. The last day of each school year shall be “Library Day.” Public exercises appropriate to the day shall be held and the community shall be invited to attend. The librarian’s report (see rule 14) shall be read and commented upon. Contributions and donations for the library may be received on this day.

#### How to Secure a Library

1. Interest some philanthropic citizen to make a proposition to give as much money towards the library as the school will raise.
2. Have the school board make such propositions to the school.
3. Interest the community in your library and make a canvass among your citizens for subscriptions for a library.
4. Give a school entertainments or series of entertainments and charge a small admission fee.
5. Have a series of spelling matches with other districts, to which a small admission fee is charged.
6. Secure a good lecturer with whom you can clear some money on the sale of tickets.
7. Secure as many good books as possible by donation.
8. Celebrate national holidays and commemorate birthdays of notable men, charging a small admission fee.

9. To arouse interest have pupils sign a petition and request for books and pledge themselves to read them.

Finally, the most important thing is for the teacher to find himself wide awake on the subject. No one can impart enthusiasm who does not possess it himself.

#### Pointers for Librarians

1. Get a small collection of books and add to it gradually.
2. If books are donated, accept only those which are useful and interesting. Do not take anything as a gift anything unless it is bright, attractive, and above all, readable.
3. Have a bookcase of some kind, if you can get nothing better than a shoe box made neat with paper, paint and curtain.
4. Have the bookshelves or case put up with screws in a convenient part of the school room. The library should be as essential a part of the school furniture as the blackboard.
5. Number and mark each book plainly. Do not cover the new books. An attractive cover will do much to draw the attention of the pupils and will be read when a covered book will be neglected. A book worn out for its use speaks well of its usefulness.
6. Have a regular place for each book, and when it is not in use see that the book is in its place.
7. Have some one, as an older pupil, act as librarian. Have stated times for drawing books, and stated length of time for keeping them. Keep record of all books drawn and returned, and by whom.

8. Use the books constantly. They will afford excellent supplementary work in language, geography, history, and almost any study.
9. Encourage children to keep notebooks, in which they may copy favorite passages from books they have read. Frequently ask pupils to give or write briefly the substance of some book which has interested them.—Supt. W.R. Jackson, Nebraska.

#### Selection of Books

1. The State Board of Education has prepared suitable lists of books for District Libraries and for County Teachers' Libraries; select books from these recommended lists.
2. Do not buy too much books for adults to neglect of the children. This is a common error.
3. Some books are worthless; some are harmful! Keep out trashy and cheap books.
4. Buy books that interest the children – appropriate to your grade or schools.
5. Buy some supplementary readers in the different subjects taught in your grade. These add spice to regular work.
6. The “short story” ranks easily first, but good as it is the story can easily be overdone. It is a grave mistake to create an insatiable appetite for mere stories.
7. Biography should be ranked second in the scale of merit. Children a born hero-worshippers and rarely tire of hearing the deeds of good men and great.
8. Then come books of animal life, books of travel, books of verse and poetry, myths, folk-lore, fairy stories, legends, fiction, historical fiction, and English and American classics.

### Suggested to Pupils : Care of Books

Do not mark them with pen or pencil.

Do not turn down corners or leaves.

Do not wet the fingers to turn the leaves.

Do not lay an open book face downward.

Do not break the back by forcing open.

Do not handle except with clean hands.

Do not fold covers together backward.

### How to Read

1. Read but few books.
2. Read the best books.
3. Read the books that help you most.
4. Read the same books many times.
5. Read for ideas more than facts.
6. Take notes while reading.
7. Commit to memory striking passages.
8. Make indexed scrapbook of gems read.

One hour of thoughtful reading each day will furnish food for meditation for all your leisure hours. Persist in this practice until it becomes a controlling habit. Read and study the lives of good men until you have discovered the secret of their goodness and greatness. Read and study the history of a nation until you appreciate the people, measure the leaders and are able to comprehend the reasons why it helped or hindered the world's progress. Read and study one of the classics until you make



your own ideas about the author, see the picture he paints, understand the characters he portrays and can think out to legitimate conclusions the ideas expressed. Verify the statements on science, by observation or experiment, if possible. Do not feel satisfied with understanding the words of the author. Master the thought, welcome the enthusiasm he inspires and follow out the ideas your reading suggests. Study and respect the opinions of others, but in the end stand by your own conclusions. – Supt. W.W. Stetson.