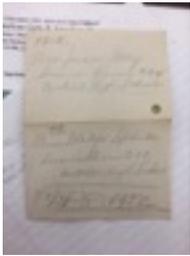


# Education in Girlhood

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Through the analysis of three historic artifacts, a connection was found between typical items that represented learning for American children and the study of education through children's literature. While learning occurred for children in development, formal education was unavailable or informal for many American girls, whether certain girls were denied due to race, socioeconomic class, or gender. Through the presentation of these objects, we hope to exemplify the way in which American girls learned and explore the possible realms in which they were absent due to strict enforcement of gender norms in society.

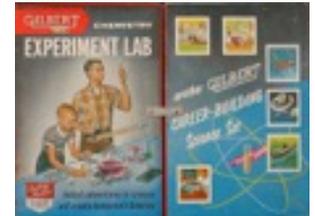


## Gladys Johnson Letters:

These letters were shared between Gladys Johnson and her friend Jeanne between the 1932-1933 school year. In them, they describe their daily lives at school, family life, and interactions with others throughout their day. They are filled with the stresses of a typical teenage girl during the 30s. In many of these stories, we can see a common theme of girls sticking with other girls when growing up. This also relates to the keyword "Education" in that it gives us a look into the daily life at school, just like how the essay talks about a "school story". We can see how it is true that these stories rarely focus on the curriculum of school itself, but about "schooling" and daily life in schools.

## Chemistry Lab Set:

Object 1977.139 is a chemistry experiment lab made by Gilbert in 1958. This "science kit" comes with test tubes, petrie dishes, 24 chemical compounds, books for learning science, and other experimental paraphernalia. It was created after World War II and after the Soviet Union launched Sputnik in 1957, when Americans were entering a trend of space and science. America wanted their boys to lead the way into the future of science, which led to a peak in interest for science toys and kits. This item relates to the keywords of "Education" and "Gender" in that it reinforces stereotypical gender binaries through the offering of education with gender-based restrictions.



## Book Club Records:

In 1906, a group of six young girls formed a book club called the Hill Folk Literary Club. These girls documented the happenings from their club and the books they read. They established a president, secretary, and treasurer for the club and held regular elections. The girls started with Shakespeare and then moved on to "The Crossing" by Winston Churchill, as well as "The Little Colonel at Boarding School". This diligent documentation of the book club gives us insight into what life was like for young girls in the early 1900s as well as what types of literature they were exposed to. This book club fits in with the keyword of "education" in girlhood, because we see that literature written by men and about men was dominant during that time. It is also very unique to see how these girls took their education into their own hands by forming the club and reading together.



