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Oregon Trails-Muir and Muir About Book Collecting

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validation. Unlike the texts discussed above, it is important that practical titles be updated regularly to maintain their utility.

Now in its fourth edition, **Ruth Clark** and **Richard E. Mayer's** *E-Learning and the Science of Instruction* is one such title.¹¹ Focused broadly on instruction and not aimed exclusively at school settings, this work is especially useful because it is aimed at non-specialists and offers a solid, basic introduction to demonstrated electronic instructional techniques. **Clark** and **Mayer** begin by discussing the strength of evidence-based practices, then devote the bulk of the book to an in-depth investigation of successful techniques. These include instructions for using graphics with words, whether written or spoken; being sure that graphic elements align with verbal and written content; refraining from redundancy, such as a presenter reading text as it appears on the screen; and avoiding verbosity or lessons cluttered with extraneous materials. The book expands to address the structure of the learning environment, such as how much control learners need for success and the use of collaborative learning and games.

Collectors will also want to have some titles specific to school and classroom use. For teachers looking to introduce technology into a traditional classroom, **Karen Ivers's** *A Teacher's Guide to Using Technology in the Classroom* is a good choice.¹² For those developing an online course, **Susan Ko** and **Steve Rossen's** *Teaching Online: A Practical Guide* is helpful and available this year in a new edition.¹³ Both are organized in a logical,

task-by-task manner and have been updated by the authors with substantive new editions as needed. **Ivers** starts with the basics, encouraging teachers to use the internet for their own professional development and as a way to become comfortable with both computer resources and hardware. In every chapter she provides numerous resource suggestions — programs, websites, and school personnel — that can help with implementation. She contextualizes recommendations by employing scenarios demonstrating effective technology use and supplements everything with supporting activities and references. The book covers special needs learners as well as other student populations and additionally offers suggestions for classroom management and assessment. **Ko** and **Rossen** focus on the development of online and blended courses in higher education, although some of the content would no doubt be useful in other educational settings. Like **Ivers**, **Ko** and **Rossen** often begin their discussions with a specific scenario to help illustrate the ensuing points. The book is not merely about instruction techniques; it covers institutional resources, classroom management, student problems specific to online courses, copyright concerns, testing, and assessment. This book has fewer resource suggestions than **Ivers's** work, a natural consequence of the fact that it is addressed to subject specialists teaching at the college level.

A good educational technology collection will have many books about the latest and greatest innovations being developed for or implemented in classrooms. Churn in the collection is unavoidable as the nature of electronic development means published materials go out of date quickly. With a basis in research and a solid historical context, these seven titles have

had staying power and should prove essential to any academic collection. 🌳

Endnotes

1. **Saettler, L. Paul.** *The Evolution of American Educational Technology.* Englewood, CO: Libraries Unlimited, 1990.*
 2. **Saettler, L. Paul.** *A History of Instructional Technology.* New York: McGraw-Hill, 1968.
 3. *The Evolution of American Educational Technology*, xxvii.
 4. *Ibid.*, 4.
 5. *Ibid.*, 61–4.
 6. **Cuban, Larry.** *Teachers and Machines: The Classroom Use of Technology since 1920.* New York: Teachers College Press, 1986.*
 7. **Cuban, Larry.** *Oversold and Underused: Computers in the Classroom.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001.*
 8. *Ibid.*, 9–10.
 9. **Lee, Mal, and Arthur Winzenried.** *The Use of Instructional Technology in Schools: Lessons to Be Learned.* Camberwell, Vic.: ACER Press, 2009.*
 10. *Ibid.*, 5.
 11. **Clark, Ruth, and Richard E. Mayer.** *E-Learning and the Science of Instruction: Proven Guidelines for Consumers and Designers of Multimedia Learning*, 4th ed. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley, 2016.*
 12. **Ivers, Karen S.** *A Teacher's Guide to Using Technology in the Classroom*, 2nd ed. Westport, CT: Libraries Unlimited, 2009.*
 13. **Ko, Susan, and Steve Rossen.** *Teaching Online: A Practical Guide*, 4th ed. London: Routledge, 2017.*
- *Editor's note: An asterisk (*) denotes a title selected for *Resources for College Libraries*.

Oregon Trails — Muir and Muir About Book-Collecting

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There are many useful books about book-collecting, some better than others, but all worth reading or at least skimming if you are a book-collector or think that you might want to become one. I have a small but representative collection of books about books and bibliography (two shelves and growing) to share with you, *ad seriatim* in my column in hope that I will inspire some reader(s) to dip into one or two to see what they are all about. If on the fence, you may be inspired or persuaded that book-collecting, even on a modest scale, might be fun. To decide what to collect and how to go about it is what **Percy Muir's** books are all about.

Percy H. Muir (1894-1979) is a name that features prominently in the literature of book-collecting. He served as the president of the **Antiquarian Booksellers' Association** and was named a **Life President of Honor**. He was also president of the **International League of Antiquar-**

ian Booksellers and was both a book-seller and a collector, despite having declared in writing, "Make up your mind whether you intend to be a book-collector or a book-dealer; you cannot be both." Of course, you can but what he is writing about is book-collecting as an investment. Also in that context, he wrote, "Well, to quote a fashionable precedent, it depends what you mean by book-collecting and what you mean by investment." While admitting that over time a collection may gain in value beyond the combined purchase price, that is not why you should be collecting, you should be collecting books for the sheer pleasure of building that collection, book by book. He seems on the fence about all collections gaining in value. He assumes that the as yet ungathered collection will fall within certain categories that he was familiar with during the time in which he lived.

Here is what he wrote in *Book-Collecting as a Hobby in a Series of Letters to Every-*

man (Gramol Publications Ltd., London and Chesham, [1944]). "Reckon the value of your collection rather in terms of the pleasure you will derive from it than in terms of its rising cash value. Do not be always thinking what your collection would be worth if you turned it into cash to-morrow. That way lies trouble. Do not misunderstand me. The collective value of our library will always increase beyond the sum of the individual prices you have paid for the books in it, and the proportion of increase will rise steeply as the collection grows in size and importance." (p.8). The use of always in this context makes me nervous as I look at my author collections. I don't intend to part with them but part we must one day and when my books come to be sold, they will be sold at a wholesale price, not retail, and I doubt very much that the sum they bring will be anything near the collective sum that I have paid. But don't use me as an example, read **Muir** and decide for yourself.

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On the first page of this book **Muir** makes the point, not necessarily obvious, that there is a difference between mere book-buying and book-collecting. "...for although all book-collectors are book-buyers, not all book-buyers are book-collectors."

He follows with another kernel of advice: "*Book-collecting is not exclusively a hobby for rich and leisured people. It is less a matter of money than of method.*" He then goes on to talk about planning for your collection and the need to read up on your selected author or subject and gives some good examples as the kinds of books and advice you should seek out. If the novice collector takes only one thing to heart in this book, I hope it is this advice. The modern collector could skip the rest of the book and come out ahead.

But don't stop there. **Muir** is useful in providing a bit of history about books, bookstores, and collecting and provides a useful guide to the differences among *editions*, *impressions*, *issues*, *states*, and *first editions*.

As I have suggested earlier, a book-collector should be a book reader, too, and as a collector, one should have some background and history about one's hobby. Letter VII, "A Short History of Book Production," is a succinct history of printing along with suggestions for further reading about books and

collecting. If interested, copies of this book are available for \$5-\$10 and would be a good beginning on your collection of books about books that should be sharing shelf space with your primary collection(s).

Five years after his letters to Everyman, **Muir** followed up with a successor, *Book-Collecting: More Letters to Everyman* (Cassell and Company, Ltd.: London..., 1949) "*This second book...is written not so much to fill gaps in the first one, as to attempt to guide your [Everyman] footsteps along the road of book-collecting after the early milestones have been passed.*" He soon thereafter adds, "*Furthermore, it may be admitted that only the 'how' of book-collecting can be taught, it is useless to attempt to teach anyone the 'why' of it: either you have the virus in your blood or you have not.*"

I smile as I read the line about the collecting virus for it was **Muir's** second book that I bought first. When I saw that this was a sequel or volume two, I searched for and found a copy for less than \$10. I had no choice. If I hadn't found a copy, I would have been haunted and taunted each time I looked at *Book-Collecting: More Letters to Everyman* sitting there all alone, so to speak. My copy is in amazingly good shape for a book printed under wartime restrictions and though shorter and with a stiff cardboard wrapper, it holds its own sitting on the shelf next to its companion.

This second book also contains seven letters. The first two are "The Joys and Woes

of a Book-Collector" and "How to Proceed." In the joys and woes, the emphasis is on the fun of book-collecting. In "How to Proceed," **Muir** gives most of the letter to the strategies and tactics of assembling a subject collection and gives copious examples.

"What to do About Auction Sales" can be skipped. When you have finished reading "Is Book-Collecting an Investment?" you will understand why I do not agree with him on this point.

Letter VI: "Is there Money in Old Bibles?" Yes, if someone decided to use a Bible instead of a mattress or a bank to safe-guard one's cash. Actually, I found this to be the most interesting letter in the book. It is a history of the printed Bible and serves as a guide should you decide to collect Bibles but for fun and not for profit because you likely can't afford the ones that can't help but go up in value. They are available for purchase but you need thousands, not hundreds of dollars to play the game.

The final letter is short and to the point. It is a history of the **ABA**, the **Antiquarian Booksellers' Association** and is followed by a list of **ABA** members, none of which are likely to be alive. You are saved, however, by the Internet and the World Wide Web where the **ABA** and the **ILAB** both have websites.

These two books, even if they don't address your interests or consider your financial situation, will give you much to think about and will provide character to your bookshelves. 🐾