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The Eighth

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The programs outlined briefly in this article present a potpourri of ideas which are classroom-tested. Certainly they can be used with all children, but they were designed especially for those children who can read but won't. It's very disheartening for a teacher to hear a youngster say: "Yes, I can read, but do I have to?"

These programs demonstrate that reading springs from one's talents and interests and can be used in many situations. The results have been that once children experience the pleasures of reading, they turn to it with more anticipation and enthusiasm.

THE EIGHTH

There was a tall tree, standing solely near the forest;
A man came walking along and the tree called out to the man -
"Oh, sir! Won't you come up and meet my branches?"
And the man said - "No, I haven't the time," and hurried briskly on;
Then a second man walked past the tree and the tree called out to the man -
"Hello! Won't you come up and meet my branches?" and the man did not answer . . .
He simply trudged up the small incline to the tree and met it there;
He looked at the tree, saw nothing there, and went back down the same way he
 had come;
Soon a third came walking by and the tree said the same as it had before.
The man climbed the hill, circled the tree, and was done with it;
He went back the same way he had come; only to find yet another of his own kind;
He walked directly past this fourth man, without speaking a word;
When the fifth person came, the fourth asked him, "Sir, as I see that you are headed
 up, will you please deposit this coin in the bark of yon tree?"
And so handed the fifth a shiny new copper coin.
But the fifth went on his way with this coin belonging to the fourth;
The sixth came and the fourth implied the same unto him;
And the sixth took the coin and was on his way.
So finally the fourth took the coin up himself, and deposited it in the bark;
Then a seventh person came by, and saw no one but the tree, for the fourth was
 resting;
And the man went up, looking closely at the tree, admiring its intricate details,
 and so found the coin;
And the man followed in the way of the tree, the path of the straight and narrow;
The eighth person was not a man but a girl, and the tree asked her -
"What is a young virgin like you doing out in the world?"
And she answered, "Admiring its beauty, taking in its wonderful sights."
So he said - "Would you come up and meet my branches?" and she did.
And she circled the tree, not nonchalantly, as the third;
She gazed into the depth of its trunk, comparing its different points of beauty,
And so she found the coin; and followed the tree's ways, thriving in its shade.

by Cathi Winslow
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