INTRODUCTION

Reading has considerable importance in the development of individuals and the rise of nations to the level of civilizations. When we look at developed societies today, it is seen that the literacy rate is very high. In today’s world, which we call the information age, the way to share and reproduce information is through reading. As Gündoğ (2009) stated, the fact that developed or developing countries approach the reading problem seriously and try to solve it is an indication of the vital importance of this issue for countries:

“Experts discuss the existence of various relationships between reading habits and economic development, power, crime rates, dropout rates, and success at work. Reading is one of the necessities of social life. Reading, which forms the basis of the intellectual development of the individual, has become a social power in a sense. It is seen that acquisition of reading skills in a country is directly proportional to their level of development” (GÜNGÖR, 2009).

Transforming the acquisition of reading into a habit, which is extremely important for the future of the nations, and the individuals who make up the society enjoying reading throughout their lives, are closely related to the reading habit gained in childhood. First of all, family, then school and environment play a big role in the person’s gaining the habit in question. As Gürşimşek (2002) states, families are the first teachers of children. “In order for individuals to acquire reading skills, it is important to have physical and mental abilities, as well as to have received training on this skill. Reading education begins in the family. Stories read together with children prepare them for the necessary readiness for reading education (ELBIR and BAĞCI, 2013).

Especially in the preschool period, thanks to the close attention that parents show to their children in this sense, their interaction with the book begins and this interest continues rapidly in the following developmental periods. Educators generally group the objectives of reading under three headings: gaining knowledge, having fun, and getting to know life. Textbooks help children gain knowledge. Literary works, on the other hand, guide them in gaining knowledge, having fun, and getting to know life. The child’s soul needs to be satisfied in these three directions. Families and teachers need to consider these three important elements when teaching children to read books. It should not be forgotten that books enrich the lives of children in an unlimited way. For this reason, the first education given by the family in gaining the habit of reading is of great importance for the child. It is extremely essential for the family to take an encouraging role in this sense, especially in the pre-school period, in order to direct the child to read and to gain the love for reading. In this context, newspapers, magazines and books bought into the house play an important role in directing the child to the books. It should not be forgotten that in this period, children learn by modeling everything. The role-modeling that the family will undertake for this purpose will be effective in helping children acquire reading habits and love books.

While introducing children the habit of reading, parents and teachers should take considerable care and prefer children’s books that are written successfully by using methods suitable for the age and educational level of the child. “It should be known that reading differs according to age and educational process, and methods suitable for age groups should be applied in reading education. For this reason, reading education will be more successful if a process is created
considering the periods related to reading education and the characteristics of these periods (ELBİR and BAĞCI, 2013). Both parents and teachers should attach considerable importance to this issue, as children who grow up with unsuccessfully written and unqualified works cannot show the desired development. “Those who encounter unsavory, literarily unsuccessful books as children grow up as people who only know how to read and write, but cannot read, cannot fully understand what they read, therefore cannot think healthily (ÇILGIN, 2006, 177).” Families and teachers need to pay attention to certain criteria in order to discover successfully written children’s books.

One of the most important things to consider is that a book is a good book only if children enjoy it. Even if it is a classic in the eyes of adults, such a book is a bad children’s book if it is not read by children or if the content bores them. However, the skills exhibited by the child during the period from birth to adolescence differ. Depending on this development, the style characteristics, pictures, content and writing language of the books also change (YÜKSELEN, YUMUŞ and IŞIK, 162). It is a fact that in today’s book market, there are many works that are prepared without any criteria and care about children. In this sense, first of all, families and then teachers have critical responsibility in choosing books. It is very important that the teachers who are supposed to guide the child about the book are conscious and selective in this regard. “The point to be considered here is to save the child’s meeting with the book from being a coincidence and to ensure that he has gained the ability to make a conscious book selection” (YAĞCI, 2007, 66). Therefore, in this paper, it has been tried to reveal the perception of the contextual, morphological and linguistic characteristics that should be found in children’s books by families who help children in choosing books. Accordingly, the problem statement of the research was determined as follows: "What is the level of perception of the characteristics that should be found in children's books by parents with and without higher education?"

PURPOSE
The general purpose of the study is to determine the level of awareness of families on this issue by revealing the relationship between the educational status of the families and the choice of books for their children.

METHOD
Research model
The general survey model was used in this study, which was prepared to reveal the perception of the characteristics that should be found in children's books by parents with and without higher education.

Study group
The study group of the research consists of 60 families with and without higher education (30+30).

Data collection tools
As a data collection tool in the study, "The Scale of Characteristics to be Found in Children's Books", which was prepared by researchers using basic source books such as Oğuzkan (2006), Sever (2003), Yalçın and Aytaş (2002), Nas (2002), was employed. The Scale of Characteristics Required in Children's Books consists of three dimensions and a total of 38 items. There are 12 items in the style dimension, 16 items in the content dimension, and 10 items in the language and expression dimension.

Data collection and analysis
In order to collect the research data, families with and without higher education were asked to write down the characteristics that should be found in children’s books that appeal to the 12-14 age group, under the headings of style, content, language and expression. After the data were collected, the items written by each parent were evaluated in line with the prepared scale. Descriptive analysis technique was used to analyze the data. Percentages and frequencies were given in descriptive analysis. If the item written down by each parent was included in the scale, it was evaluated as “yes”, and items on the scale that were not written down by the parents were evaluated as “no.”
FINDINGS

Interesting findings were obtained in this study, in which the perception of style, content and language-expression characteristics in children’s books of parents with and without higher education were examined.

Table 1. Perceptions of Style Characteristics of Children’s Books by Parents with and Without Higher Education

| Style characteristics                                      | Yes | No | % | Yes | No | % |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|-----|----|---|-----|----|---|
| 1. Cover images should be lively and attractive.          | 10  | 20 | 33,3 | 5   | 16,6 | 83,3 |
| 2. Paper should not be very bright, glossy paper should not be used. | 15  | 15 | 50 | 7   | 23,3 | 76,6 |
| 3. It should be stitched for durability.                   | 20  | 22 | 66,6 | 8   | 26,6 |    |
| 4. The texts in the books should be supported with images. | 22  | 4  | 73,3 | 8   | 26,6 |    |
| 5. The letters should not strain eyes and the print should be clean. | 26  | 8  | 86,6 | 4   | 13,3 | 9  |
| 6. Pictures in books should have an artistic value.       | 20  | 10 | 66,6 | 4   | 13,3 | 26  |
| 7. Book pictures should increase the power of thinking.   | 17  | 6  | 56,6 | 6   | 20  | 80  |
| 8. The book should not be too voluminous.                 | 27  | 3  | 90  | 10  | 26  | 86,6 |
| 9. The texts in the manuscript should be written in a color which is contrasting to the background color. | 12  | 18 | 40  | 60  | 0   | 100 |
| 10. The cover should also indicate which age group or grade it is recommended for. | 21  | 9  | 70  | 30  | 2   | 6,6 |
| 11. The title should be short and interesting.            | 16  | 14 | 53,3 | 46,6 | 7   | 23,3 |
| 12. Pictures and figures should be placed on the same page as the relevant text. | 21  | 9  | 70  | 30  | 2   | 6,6 |

Source: Search data.

There are 12 items in total in the “style characteristics” scale we formed using various resources. Parents with higher education indicated the item “Cover images should be lively and attractive” at 33% ratio whereas parents without higher education indicated the same item at 16.6% ratio. The item “paper should not be very bright, glossy paper should not be used” was preferred by 50% of parents with higher education whereas 23.3% of parents without higher education indicated that item. Parents with higher education indicated the item “the book should be stitched for durability” whereas 73.3% of parents without higher education indicated the same item. “Texts in books should be supported with images” item was checked by 73.3% of parents with higher education and 13.3% of parents without higher education. “Letters should not strain eyes and its print should be clean” item was preferred by 86.6% of parents with higher education and 70% of parents without higher education.

The item “pictures in the books should have an artistic value” was indicated by 66.6% of parents with higher education whereas the same item was preferred by 13.3% of parents without higher education. The item “Book pictures should increase the power of thought” was chosen by 56.6% of parents with higher education while the same item was indicated by 20% by parents without higher education. The item “books should not be too voluminous” was indicated by 90% of parents with higher education and 86.6% of parents without higher education. The item “the texts in the manuscript should be written in a color which is contrasting to the background color” was indicated by 40% of parents with higher education whereas it was preferred by 0% of parents without higher education.
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The item “the cover should also indicate which age group or grade it is recommended for” was preferred by 70% of parents with higher education and 6.6% of parents without higher education. The item “its title should be short and interesting” was indicated by 53.3% of parents with higher education whereas it was preferred by 23.3% of parents without higher education. The parents with higher education indicated the item “pictures and figures should be placed on the same page as the relevant text” at 70% whereas parents without higher education preferred the same item at 6.6 percent ratio.

Table 2. Perceptions of Content Characteristics of Children’s Books by Parents with and Without Higher Education

| Content characteristics                                                                 | Parents with higher education degree | Parents without higher education degree |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
|                                                                                        | Yes | No | Yes | No |
| 1. Topics should be presented in an interesting way, and the books should be entertaining and thought-provoking. | 27  90 | 3  10 | 22  73.3 | 8  26.6 |
| 2. National values should be cultivated and it should be ensured that children are proud of their nation. | 18  60 | 12  40 | 21  70 | 9  30 |
| 3. Children should gain the pleasure and habit of reading. | 25  83.3 | 5  16.6 | 20  66.6 | 10  33.3 |
| 4. A sense of humor should be included. | 28  93.3 | 2  6.6 | 17  56.6 | 13  43.3 |
| 5. The old heroes that our cultural genes are loaded with should also be used. | 12  40 | 18  60 | 1  3.3 | 29  96.6 |
| 6. It should help the child to develop feelings such as trust, love, goodness, honesty, tolerance and responsibility. | 23  76.6 | 7  23.3 | 16  53.3 | 14  46.6 |
| 7. It should give people with their strengths, weaknesses, positive and negative sides. | 11  36.6 | 19  63.3 | 0  0 | 30  100 |
| 8. Children’s love and curiosity towards animals should be considered. | 9  30 | 21  70 | 1  3.3 | 29  96.6 |
| 9. It should teach respect, even if it disagrees with the personal and sacred values of others. | 8  26.6 | 22  73.3 | 0  0 | 30  100 |
| 10. It should give a critical perspective towards life. | 2  6.6 | 28  93.3 | 2  6.6 | 28  93.3 |
| 11. Children’s books should not impose a certain ideology. | 24  80 | 6  20 | 4  13.3 | 26  86.6 |
| 12. Psychological analyzes appropriate for the level should be included. | 17  56.6 | 13  43.3 | 0  0 | 30  100 |
| 13. It should be ensured that the main idea is clear and unambiguous. | 19  63.3 | 11  36.6 | 13  43.3 | 17  56.6 |
| 14. Children’s book should not be directly informative. | 4  13.3 | 26  86.6 | 0  0 | 30  100 |
| 15. It should develop imagination and thinking ability. | 30  100 | 0  0 | 22  73.3 | 8  26.6 |
| 16. It should reflect the child’s world and psychology | 9  30 | 21  70 | 0  0 | 30  100 |

Source: Search data.

In Table 2 where the content characteristics of children’s books are questioned, the item “topics should be presented in an interesting way, and the books should be entertaining and thought provoking” was preferred by 90% of parents with higher education and 73.3% of parents without higher education. Sixty percent of participants with higher education degree stated that “national values should be cultivated and it should be ensured that children are proud of their nation” whereas 70% of participants indicated the same. While 83.3% of participants with higher education stated the item “reading should bring pleasure and habit to children”, the rate of participants without higher education who preferred this item was...
66.6%. While 93.3% of those with higher education stated the item “a sense of humor should be included”, 56.6% of those without higher education mentioned it. While 40% of those with higher education stated the item “the old heroes with our cultural genes should also be used”, this rate remained at 3.3% for those without higher education. While 76.6% of those with higher education stated the item “it should help the child to develop feelings such as trust, love, goodness, honesty, tolerance and responsibility”, 53.3 percent of those without higher education stated that item. While 36.6% of those with higher education stated the item “it should give people with their strengths, weaknesses, positive and negative aspects”, no one from the participant group without higher education stated this item. While 30% of those with higher education stated the item “children’s love and curiosity for animals should be considered”, this rate was 3.3% for those who have not received higher education. While 26.6% of those with higher education stated the item “it should teach to be respectful even if it does not agree with the personal and sacred values of others”, no one from those without higher education stated this item. While none of those who have higher education stated the item “they should gain a critical perspective towards life”, this rate was 6.6% for those who have not received higher education. While 80% of those with higher education stated the item “children’s books should not impose a certain ideology”, only 13.3% of those without higher education indicated the same item. While 56.6% of those with higher education stated the item “psychological analysis appropriate for the level should be included”, no one from those without higher education stated this item. While 63.3% of those with higher education stated the item “the main idea should be clear and unambiguous”, 43.3% of those without higher education stated it. While 86.6% of those with higher education stated the item “it should enrich the child’s vocabulary”, no one from the participant group who did not receive higher education stated this item.

**Table 3.** Perceptions of Language and Expression Characteristics of Children’s Books by Parents with and without Higher Education

| Language and Expression Characteristics | Parents with higher education degree | Parents without higher education degree |
|----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
|                                       | Yes | No  | Yes | No  |
| 1. Language and expression should be simple and concepts should be clear. | 22  | 73,3 | 8  | 26,6 |
| 2. Slang words should not be used.    | 30  | 100 | 0  | 0  |
| 3. Lengthy sentences and paragraphs should be avoided. | 27  | 90  | 3  | 10  |
| 4. It should be in accordance with the spelling rules and punctuation marks of the Turkish Language Association. | 28  | 93,3 | 2  | 6,6 |
| 5. Local dialects should not be used. | 26  | 86,6 | 4  | 13,3 |
| 6. Concrete words that can be described to the child should be preferred rather than abstract words. | 9   | 30  | 21 | 70  |
| 7. Unnecessary words and ideas should be avoided. | 16  | 53,3 | 14 | 46,6 |
| 8. There should be no incoherencies in the book. | 18  | 60  | 12 | 40  |
| 9. Foreign words corresponding to our language should not be used. | 0   | 0   | 30 | 0   |
| 10. It should enrich the child’s vocabulary. | 11  | 36,6 | 19 | 63,3 |

**Source:** Search data.

In Table 4, where the language and expression characteristics are examined, 100% of those with higher education stated the item “language and expression should be simple, concepts should be clear”, while those without higher education stated the same item at the rate of...
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56.6%. Again, while those with higher education state the item "slang words should not be used" at the rate of 100%, this rate is 73.3% for those who have not received higher education. While 90% of those with higher education stated the item "lengthy sentences and paragraphs should be avoided", 46.6% of those without higher education stated it. While 93.3% of those with higher education stated the item "it should be in accordance with the spelling rules and punctuation marks of the Turkish Language Institution", the same item was stated by 3.3% of those without higher education. While the item "local dialects should not be used in those with higher education" was 86.6%, it remained at 10% for those without higher education. While 70% of those with higher education stated the item "concrete words that can be described to the child should be preferred rather than abstract words", those without higher education did not specify this item. While 53.3% of those with higher education stated the item "unnecessary words and ideas should be avoided", those without higher education did not specify this item. While 60% of those who have higher education state the item "there should be no incoherencies in the book", this ratio is 23.3% for those who did not receive higher education. Interestingly, no participant could state the item "foreign words corresponding to our language should not be used". While 36.6% of those with higher education stated the item "It should enrich the child's vocabulary", those without higher education stated the same item at the rate of 3.3%.

CONCLUSION
When the studies conducted today are examined, it can be seen that the first education of a child starts in the family which shapes the future life of the individual until the age of six or seven. The family factor is extremely important for today's children to acquire the habit of reading. In gaining the habit in question, family members should be extremely careful and know that some unqualified publications made solely out of financial concerns would give more harm to the child than good. Today, it seems that the aesthetic concerns of the child, cultural enrichment and other technical elements are not taken into account in some publications made with commercial concerns.

Today, especially in preschool and primary education, the books that children will read are primarily chosen by the parents and then by the teachers who decide whether the books in question are suitable for children. It is for this reason that parents should consider certain criteria when making such a choice.

According to the result obtained from the study, both of the participant groups have a negative view that children’s books are too voluminous. Other answers given by higher education parents regarding the formal characteristics of children’s books by more than 50%, respectively, are as follows: "letters should not strain the eyes and the print should be clean.", "The texts in the books should be supported with pictures.", "The cover should also indicate which age group or class it is recommended for.", "Pictures and figures should be on the same page with the relevant text.", "It should be stitched for its durability.", "Pictures in books should have an artistic value.", "Book illustrations should be thought-provoking.", and "The title should be short and interesting." Families with higher education stated 9 of the 12 items in the scale regarding the style characteristics of children’s books with a rate higher than 50 percent. Accordingly, it can be said that parents with higher education generally have an above-average level of knowledge in terms of the style characteristics that should be found in children’s books.

Other answers given by the parents who did not have higher education about the formal characteristics of children’s books by more than 50%, respectively, consist of the following items: "It should be stitched for its durability.", "The letters should not strain the eyes and the print should be clean." It was determined that the families who did not receive higher education stated other items in the scale regarding the style characteristics of children’s books at lower rates. Accordingly, it can be said that parents with higher education have more knowledge about the style characteristics of children’s books than the other participant group.

It was observed that parents with higher education highly specified 9 of the 16 content characteristics that should be included in children’s books in the scale. The content characteristics pointed out by these parents are as follows, starting with the highest rate: "It should develop imagination and thinking ability.", "A sense of humor should be included.", "The topics should be presented in an interesting, entertaining and thought-provoking way."
"It should give children the pleasure and habit of reading.", "Children's books should not impose a certain ideology.", "It should help the child to develop feelings such as trust, love, goodness, honesty, tolerance and responsibility.", "It should be ensured that the main idea is clear and unambiguous.", "National values should be cultivated and children should be made to be proud of their nation.", "Psychological analyzes appropriate for the level should be included."

It was determined that the families who did not receive higher education stated 6 items regarding the content characteristics of the books at a very high rate. The items stated by the aforementioned participant group regarding the subject are listed as follows, starting from the highest ratio: "It should develop imagination and thinking ability.", "The topics should be presented in an interesting, entertaining and thought-provoking way.", "National values should be cultivated and children should be made to be proud of their nation.", "It should give children the pleasure and habit of reading.", "A sense of humor should be included.", "It should help the child to develop feelings such as trust, love, goodness, honesty, tolerance and responsibility."

One of the most striking results in this part of the research is that both participant groups are united in the point that children’s books improve their imagination and thinking skills. While 100% of the parents with higher education stated this item, 73.3% of the participants from the other group stated it. Likewise, one of the most striking results in this section is that both participant groups show a little knowledge that children’s books should bring a critical perspective and that the books in question must reflect the world and psychology of children. While the item "it must give a critical perspective towards life" was stated by 6.6% by both participant groups, the item "it must reflect the child’s world and psychology" was not mentioned by 30% by those with higher education, and by those who did not have higher education at all. In this section where content characteristics were questioned, it was observed that both groups had very little knowledge about some essential and vital content characteristics, although it was determined that those with higher education stated the items at a higher rate and number than the other participant group.

Interesting results were also obtained in the last table in which the language and expression characteristics of children’s books were questioned. It was observed that parents with higher education stated 7 out of 10 items in the scale at a high rate, while those who did not have higher education stated 4 items at a high rate. While both participant groups agreed that slang words should not be included in the books in general terms, it was determined that no one from both participant groups stated the item "foreign words corresponding to our language should not be used" in children's books. This situation is very thought-provoking because the article in question is very important in order to create language awareness among children at young ages and to raise awareness among them for the Turkish language. In the study, it was observed that the parents were also not aware of this issue. In the table in which the language and expression characteristics of the families with higher education are questioned, the items that they indicate at a high rate are listed as follows, starting from the highest level: "Slang words should not be used.", "It should be in accordance with the spelling rules and punctuation marks of the Turkish Language Institution.", "Lengthy sentences and paragraphs should be avoided.", "Local dialects should not be used.", "Language and expression should be simple and concepts should be clear.", "Incoherency should be avoided in the book.", "Useless words and ideas should be avoided."

Today, it is a well-known fact that only societies that attach importance to the education of children show progress and can reach the level of advanced civilizations in this way. In order for nations to look to the future with more confidence, it is necessary to attach great importance to the mental, physical and social development of children. In this sense, it is seen that parents have an important role to play. The effect of books on the child’s success in life and having an environmentally sensitive mindset is an indisputable fact. Today, parents have a considerable responsibility in helping children get acquainted with books and derive maximum benefit from these books.
According to the results of the research, although it is seen that the parents who have higher education are more conscious in general, it has been determined that they have serious deficiencies in terms of some extremely important characteristics. It has been observed that parents who do not have higher education have more deficiencies in this regard. Parents need to be more careful in this sense. In addition, it will be extremely beneficial for the Faculties of Education, which train teachers in universities, to pay more attention to the subject and to raise awareness of future teachers in this sense, in terms of eliminating some deficiencies of parents in this regard by teachers at schools. A society with parents who are well-informed in the choice of books and competent teachers who consciously instill in children a love of reading will always look to the future with more confidence.

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Perception by parents of characteristics that should be found in children’s books

Percepção dos pais sobre as características que devem ser encontradas nos livros infantis

Percepción de los padres acerca de las características que deben encontrarse en los libros infantiles

Resumo
As crianças refletem o que aprenderam com sua família, ambiente e professores desde a mais tenra idade. Por isso, para fazer com que as crianças amem os livros inicialmente, os pais precisam conhecer algumas características dos livros em questão, para que gostem de ler e possam escolher obras adequadas para os seus filhos. O objetivo da pesquisa é revelar a compreensão dos pais sobre as características que devem ser encontradas nos livros infantis. O modelo geral de triagem será utilizado no estudo e os participantes serão selecionados por método aleatório. Em consonância com o objetivo definido, os participantes serão solicitados a redigir o conteúdo, características formais e linguísticas que deverão constar dos livros infantis. Os achados serão avaliados de acordo com a escala de recursos que devem ser encontrados em livros infantis elaborados a partir de fontes diferentes e algumas sugestões serão feitas.

Keywords: Criança. Literatura infantil. Livros infantis. Família.

Abstract
Children reflect on life what they learn from their family, environment and teachers from an early age. For this reason, in order to ensure that children like books, first of all, mothers and fathers need to love to read books and to be able to choose the works suitable for their children; and for this, they need to know some characteristics of the books in question. The aim of the study is to reveal an understanding for the characteristics that should be found in children’s books. The general survey model will be used in the study and the participants will be selected by random method. In line with the determined goal, participants will be asked to write the content, formal and linguistic characteristics that should be found in children’s books. The findings obtained will be evaluated according to the scale prepared using different sources to determine the characteristics that should be found in children’s books and some recommendations will be made.

Keywords: Child. Children’s literature. Children’s books. Family.

Resumen
Los niños reflejan lo que han aprendido de su familia, entorno y maestros desde una edad temprana hasta la vida. Por eso, para que los niños amen los libros, en primer lugar, los padres deben conocer algunas características de los libros en cuestión para amar la lectura y poder elegir obras adecuadas para sus hijos. El objetivo de la investigación es revelar la comprensión de los padres sobre las características que deberían encontrarse en los libros para niños. El modelo de cribado general se utilizará en el estudio y los participantes serán seleccionados mediante un método aleatorio. De acuerdo con el objetivo determinado, se pedirá a los participantes que redacten el contenido, las características formales y lingüísticas que deben encontrarse en los libros infantiles. Los hallazgos se evaluarán de acuerdo con la escala de características que deben encontrarse en los libros para niños elaborados utilizando diferentes fuentes y se harán algunas sugerencias.

Keywords: Infantil. Literatura infantil. Libros infantiles. Familia.