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# Guide to the San José State Normal School Teaching Tools Collection

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## Guide to the San José State Normal School Teaching Tools Collection

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## San José State Normal School Teaching Tools Collection

Collection number: MSS-2009-02-06



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Processed by:

Lynn Sheehy reviewed by Danelle Moon and Erin Louthen

Date Completed:

2009

Encoded by:

Lynn Sheehy

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### Descriptive Summary

**Title:** San José State Normal School Teaching Tools Collection

**Dates:** 1896-1927

**Collection number:** MSS-2009-02-06

**Creator:** San José State Normal School

**Collection Size:** 17 boxes(18.54 linear feet)

**Repository:** San José State University. Library.

San José, California 95192-0028

**Abstract:** The San José State Normal School Teaching Tools Collection (1896-1927), consists of various teaching materials used to educate young children at the Normal Training School. The collection includes Friedrich Froebel's *Kindergarten Gifts and Occupations* as well as sewing and reading cards and other manipulative objects manufactured by the Milton Bradley Company. The collection is arranged into a single series: Series I. Educational Teaching Tools, 1896-1927.

**Physical location:** For current information on the location of these materials, please consult the Library's online catalog

**Languages:** Languages represented in the collection: English

### Access

The collection is open for research.

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#### **Preferred Citation**

The San José State Normal School Teaching Tools Collection, MSS-2009-02-06, San José State University Library Special Collections and Archives.

#### **Processing Information**

Collection processed by Lynn Sheehy. Finding aid EAD encoded by Lynn Sheehy. Reviewed by Danelle Moon and Erin Louthen.

#### **Project Information**

This finding aid was created as part of the Survey and Cataloging Project, a two-year San José State University Library grant project funded by the National Historical Publications and Records Commission. The project began in 2008. The Project Director is Danelle Moon. The Project Archivist is Erin Louthen.

#### **Organizational History**

In 1857 the San Francisco Board of Education established Minns' Evening Normal School for current and prospective teachers in the city. Named after its principal, George W. Minns, the institution was formally established as the first California State Normal School by the State Legislature in 1862. A decade later, the Legislature voted to move the Normal School to San José, and the school relocated to its new home on Washington Square prior to the fall term of 1872. After a fire destroyed the Normal School building in 1880, the Legislature authorized \$200,000 to construct a new building on the same site. Completed in 1881, the building was commonly referred to as the Second State Normal School. After several name and curriculum changes, Minns' Normal school now known as San José State University, offer more than 134 bachelor's and master's degrees with 110 concentrations, and is recognized as one of the top public universities granting such degrees in the West.

In 1898, the Normal School Board of Trustees established a kindergarten training department with a demonstration class. The following year, the San José State Normal School kindergarten training school was established, and had a faculty of three, a student body of ten, and a kindergarten group of some seventy children. The kindergarten training school was eventually abandoned the following year due to a Board decision that the expense did not justify the numerical gain, but kindergarten classes continued at the Normal School and enrollment increased throughout the early 1900s.

Most of the teaching tools in the collection were produced by the well-known Milton Bradley Company, maker of toys and games for children since 1864. Bradley was a firm believer in German educator Friedrich Froebel's then-radical notion of kindergarten as a cornerstone of childhood education, and pushed the idea in America with an almost evangelical zeal. Even though this concept was not yet accepted as a part of the American school system, Bradley manufactured *Kindergarten Gifts and Occupations* in 1877, using local timber and materials from his home in Springfield, Massachusetts. These gifts (blocks and items to teach basic skills), were added to the company's product offerings even though sales were initially almost non-existent. As kindergarten gained in popularity in the United States, Froebel's Gifts became an industry standard, providing for child's play while at the same time training children in movement dexterity and the laws of nature. The bulk of the San José State Normal School Teaching Tools Collection consists of such *Gifts and Occupations*, including balls, blocks for building, colored tablets for design, and colored papers to cut and fold.

#### **Related Material**

Guide to the Kate Douglas Wiggin Collection: <http://www.oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/kt1h4nd8jr/>

#### **Scope and Content**

This San José State Normal School Educational Teaching Tools Collection (1896-1927), consists of a variety of teaching tools used to teach children basic educational skills. The collection includes many examples of Friedrich Froebel's *Gifts and Occupations* produced by the Milton Bradley Company in the late 1800s. Included in the collection are wooden blocks of various shapes, sewing cards, reading cards, and manipulatives used to teach basic skills. The majority of the collection documents the use of teaching tools at the Normal Training School which existed on the San José State campus from 1898 until 1934.

#### **Arrangement**

The collection is arranged into a single series: Series I. Educational Teaching Tools, 1896-1927.

#### **Subject Headings**

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the library's online public access catalog.

San José State Normal School -- History

San José State Teachers College -- History

Teaching -- Aids and devices -- Specimens

Education, Higher -- California -- San José

Series I: **Educational Teaching Tools 1896-1927**

**Physical Description:** 17 boxes

**Series Scope and Content Summary**

This series consists of early education teaching tools based on the educational philosophy of German educator Friedrich Froebel, and manufactured by the Milton Bradley Company. The series consists of Froebel's *Gifts and Occupations* in addition to sewing and reading cards and other manipulatives. Also included are tin containers of stories on microform and music scores used to teach music to children.

**Arrangement**

This series is arranged chronologically by format.

Box 1	<b>Froebel's Gifts, building blocks 1896-1927</b>
Box 2	<b>Seat work cards, basic skills, teaching tools 1896-1927</b>
Box 3	<b>Gift 3 blocks, shape puzzles, word cards. 1896-1927</b>
Box 4	<b>Gift 3 and 4 blocks, wire circles in various sizes, colored rings made of wood. 1896-1927</b>
Box 5	<b>Gift 6 wooden building blocks. 1896-1927</b>
Box 6	<b>Gift 6 building materials, colored spools. 1896-1927</b>
Box 7	<b>Gift 5, Dicky Dare story steps, math flash cards, parquetry tiles. 1896-1927</b>
Box 8	<b>Seat work cards, stories on microform, wooden tiles. 1896-1927</b>
Box 9	<b>Gift 5 building blocks, word cubes, fabric sample kit. 1896-1927</b>
Box 10	<b>Peg board, colored pegs, building blocks. 1896-1927</b>
Box 11	<b>Gift 5, story building blocks. 1896-1927</b>
Box 12	<b>1927 yearbook, sewing cards, musical scores, sewing samples. 1896-1927</b>
Box 13	<b>Gift 5 building blocks. 1896-1927</b>
Box 14	<b>Seat work cards, math booklets. 1896-1927</b>
Box 15	<b>Educational Tools made of wood. 1896-1927</b>
Box 16	<b>Gift 4, colored pegs, large colored blocks, weaving and seatwork cards. 1904-1926</b>
Box 17	<b>Reading cards, Ideal School Supply, word cards, letter and number cards. 1925-1927</b>