

Scott, Foresman & Company and the Birth of the Modern Reader

Standardization & Market Domination

Founded in 1896, Scott, Foresman & Company quickly emerged as the dominant publisher of primary and secondary school textbooks through a combined strategy of absorbing competitors thrown into financial straits by the recessions plaguing the late Gilded Age or acquiring their catalogs outright.

Though curriculum development within the United States at the turn of the 20th century mirrored that of the present in that it remained largely decentralized, adoption of the company's textbooks throughout the Trans-Mississippi West cemented Scott, Foresman & Co.'s reputation as the clear purveyor of educational materials.