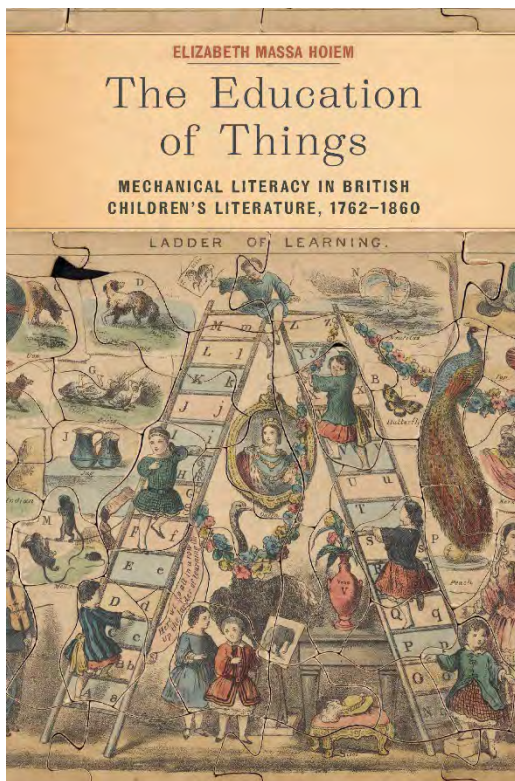


The Education of Things: How British Children's Books and Toys Taught Science and Manufacturing, 1762–1860

Tuesday, February 20 from 3 - 5 pm in the RBML



By the close of the eighteenth century, learning to read and write became closely associated with learning about the material world, and a vast array of games and books from the era taught children how to comprehend the physical world of “things.” Author Elizabeth Massa Hoiem reveals the class politics behind the playful literature, toys, and learning aids created to teach reading alongside science, technology, and economics. She argues that with the rise of manufacturing, skills such as tinkering, observation, and experimentation became essential new literacies for an industrial economy. As work was repositioned as play, wealthy children were encouraged to do tasks in the classroom that poor children performed for wages, while working-class children honed skills that would be crucial to their social advancement as adults. This talk includes many images, followed by examples from the RBML displayed in the reading room.

Lecture is co-sponsored by the RBML and The Center for Children's Books.
This public event is free and open to all, and refreshments will be served.