

Books help create a quiet Christmas

By RON WALLACE
Three books could cause this to be your quietest Christmas ever. The trio: Where's Waldo (Grolier, \$12.95), Animalia (Irwin,

\$17.95), and Ultimate Alphabet (Fitzhenry and Whiteside, \$34.95), can be classified as activity books. They promise to keep you ac-

tive and quiet. Waldo is a world traveller who likes to disappear in the multitudes of people in various countries.

He's also very careless, dropping at least one item in each destination. Children, even the very young, will spend much time tracking Waldo down, then returning through the book to locate his belongings.

Animalia gets a bit more complicated, but the book is still aimed at the younger set.

Illustrator Graeme Base has put together a fabulous book centering around the alphabet. Each page has a number of items on it beginning with a certain letter.

Only Graeme knows exactly how many items are in the book, and if you're lucky enough to hit the right number and have your name drawn, there's a trip to Florida plus \$1,000 spending money waiting for you.

While the kids are engrossed in those two books, mom and dad will likely be hovering over the "Ultimate Alphabet", a magnificent book, containing 7,777 items for you to locate and identify.

There's \$15,000 worth of incentive waiting for some lucky entrant, in this book-contest which comes complete with a workbook.

It would be impossible to complete this book without a dictionary, and several good ones are on the market this year.

Random House has a major effort in its Dictionary of the English Language (2nd Edition); Collins has a new edition for its English Dictionary; but it's Oxford with its three-volume Compact English Dictionary that holds the limelight this year.

The set — valued at \$399.95 — is a scaled down version of its 16-volume tome, complete in every detail, except a magnifying glass is provided to read it.

By the way, the 16-volume set

can be yours for just under \$2,500, but it would be a little tough to carry from classroom to classroom.

There are other major works fighting for the limelight this Christmas season, several dealing with current events.

The recent television production of the opening of a safe from the Titanic is enhanced in a coffee-table entitled The Discovery of the Titanic, by the man who found it, Dr. Robert Ballard (Penguin, \$39.95).

It was impossible to take pictures of the entire ship, but the illustrations will make you think you're looking at photographs.

This is a definite case of the book being better than the TV show.

Meanwhile, all the major events of the 20th century are presented to you in brief, readable form in a magnificent effort called the Chronicle of the 20th Century, a 1,360-page book which comes complete with its own carrying case.

In the flick of a page, you'll peruse through 13,411 eventful days from the turn of the century until the present, described with the aid of 2,000 color and 1,500 black and white photographs.

This is a joint effort of the Canadian and American Booksellers Association, and the book retails at \$59.95.

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