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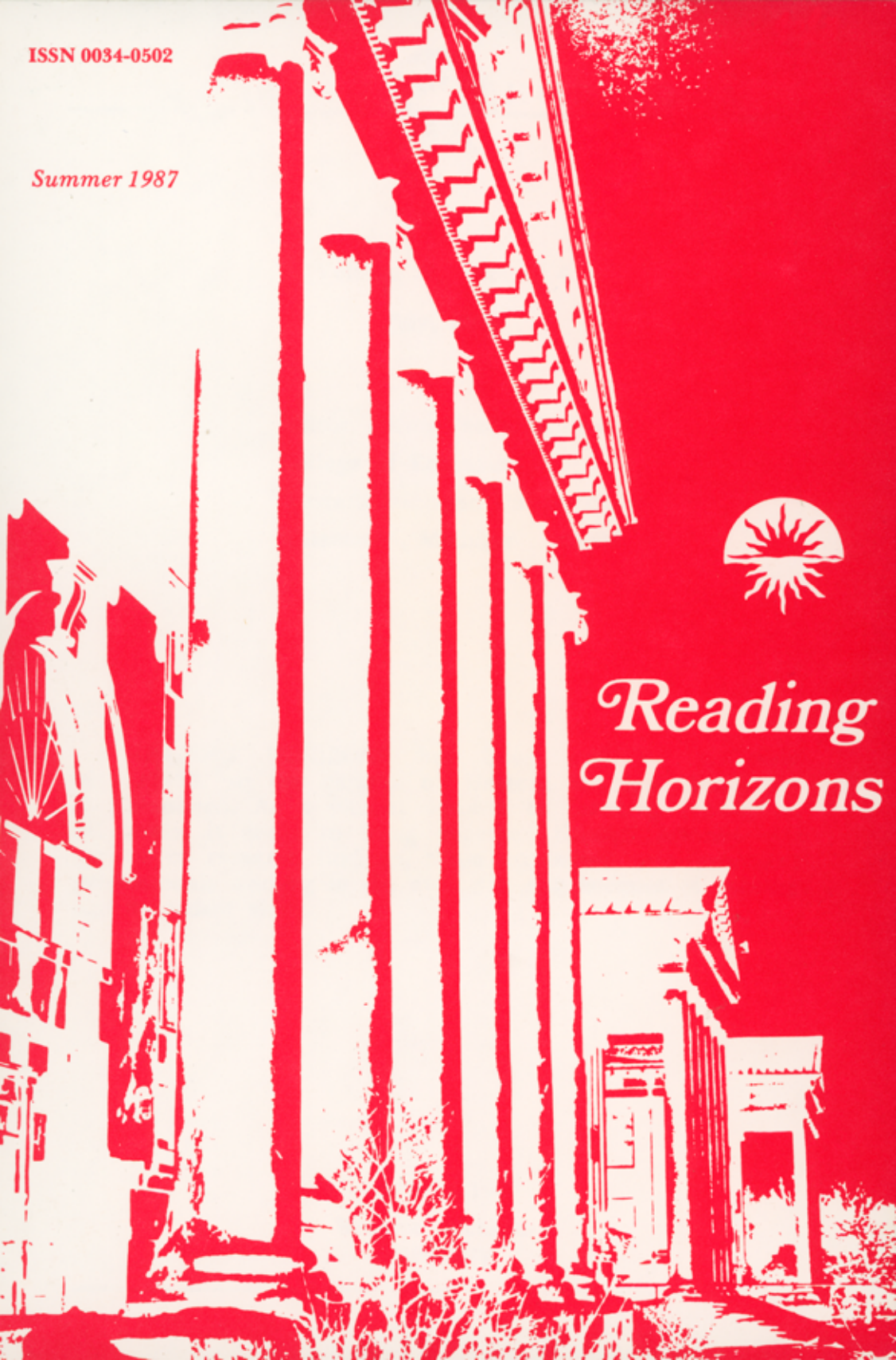


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EMERGENT LITERACY: AVOIDING THE PLATEAU EFFECT

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The topic of emergent literacy has been quite prominent in the field of reading within the past few years. There is no doubt that literacy begins to emerge within the home; in fact, many children come to school already readers (Clark, 1976; Durkin, 1982; Lass, 1982). The literature is also replete with information regarding how this literacy takes place (Cockran-Smith, 1984; Doake, 1981; Ninio and Bruner, 1978; Snow, 1983; Teale, 1981). A significant literacy event in the home is story reading. However, the significance of this event as a factor in literacy development is not due to its existence but to how the event is actualized (Doake, 1981; Hayden, 1985; Teale, 1981).

Research on children who could read and write at the time of school entrance has provided much information on the nature of the environment in which this knowledge was acquired. A summary of this research is as follows:

1. The preschool child is immersed in a literacy oriented environment. As Cohn (1981) described it, "My children's environment is alive with spoken language and print" (p. 549).
2. Children are read to at a very early age, as early as age two (Durkin, 1961), before their first birthday (Hayden, 1985), or as early as six months (Cohn, 1981).
3. There is a wide range of books and related literacy materials in the home. Among those books are favorite books, which the children want read again and again (Doak, 1981). There is also a continuous addition of new books, which often are obtained from the public library and which these children frequent with their parents (Brailsford, 1985; Clarke, 1976).
4. The children are interested in books as playthings and as a source of enjoyment with others. Cohn (1981) described her daughter, age three, who set up dolls in a semicircle

and "read" aloud to them, occasionally turning the books to face the dolls so that they could see the pictures. Lass (1982) speaks of her son who turns pages in books and used this activity to engage the attention of those present.

5. These children initiate literacy events in the course of ongoing, day-to-day activities. Since these events grow out of the children's lifeworld, they are endowed with meaning (Juliebo, 1985).

6. Parents (or others) respond to the children's requests for literacy experiences. Durkin (1961) speaks of their patience in answering questions. Clark (1976) describes these adults as "willing to provide such instant encouragement and also to take part in play with their children even at the expense of delaying other activities" (p. 43).

7. Parents, however, are not usually aware of their children's developing literacy skills. As Clark (1976) states "Few of the parents have consciously attempted to teach their children to read and indeed some were embarrassed at their child's rapid progress" (p. 102).

8. Literacy development did not develop by transmission but by interaction. As Doake (1981) states, books were read to and with children. Parents clarify, elaborate, relate, and encourage involvement, all within an accepting environment. As Schickedanz and Sullivan (1984) indicate, literacy development does not occur naturally but occurs because of what parents do.

9. The young readers are able to plan, take responsibility, and control their behavior. Such behavior is related to the children's ability to engage in effective monologue and dialogue (Cox and Sulzby, 1982).

10. Children perceive themselves as readers (Lass, 1982) or as readers-in-progress (Brailsford, 1985).

Even those children who do not come to school as readers have begun to develop some form of literacy awareness, even by recognizing the MacDonald's "M". Perhaps a more significant point is that regardless of their position on the scale of literacy development, they have not experienced failure in this venture before coming to school.

Why is it that within school, literacy development does not continue to emerge for all children but sometimes

plateaus? There are obviously many factors to be considered in response to this question but one that is often overlooked is the relationship between the child's learning at home and at school.

Literacy development at home is somewhat similar to learning oral language. The term "acquisition" has been used to describe this general process (Krashen, 1978). According to McLaughlin (1978), acquisition occurs "through meaningful interaction in a natural communication setting. Speakers (readers) are not concerned with form but with meaning. Nor is there explicit concern with error detection and correction" (p. 310). Most of this acquisition goes on at a subconscious level and is often marked by spontaneity in terms of the child's desire to know and to use. The term "learning" is often used to describe the school based process. Learning tends to be an explicit, conscious process where the focus is on structure, rules, boundaries, and memory. Learning often makes sense to the learner only within the context of the school. The students often do not see its relevance in a larger context. They learn for the teacher.

However, as Snow (1985) indicates, the term "learning" is a general one and using it only for the school type interaction may lead to confusion. She proposes instead the terms intentional and incidental learning. There are also problems with these since incidental learning may occur within a highly structured intentional learning situation. Perhaps the distinction is best made between the focus of the "teaching" that goes on in the home and in the school. Teaching in the home tends to be warm, sensitive, opportune, accepting, extending, and clarifying. It is loosely structured in the sense that there are no set bounds, the "teacher" and the child share in initiating and controlling the progression of the learning activity. At school, on the other hand, teaching tends to be preplanned where the focus is on work to be covered and the desired outcomes. In fact, Juliebo (1985) found that when parents adopted a "teacher" role modelled on their perception of the school (workbooks, focus on learning letter sounds) their children tended to do less well than the children of parents who adopted a more indirect teaching role.

What are the implications for teachers? Teachers must understand that all children entering school are at

some point on the literacy development scale. The grade one class may be the most heterogeneous class within the school. Consequently teachers must be prepared to provide a wide range of learning activities. Many children will need to be immersed in books, and writing, and talking, and story reading, and will need time to ask questions and make comments. Other children who are readers already will need opportunities to read and to develop more complex reading skills. Sometimes the learning will need more structure and direction. The challenge is neither to move children too slowly nor too quickly. If moved too quickly, children will begin to focus on the "form" of reading and writing and will use their cognitive capacity to memorize rules and procedures and to ignore meaning. If moved too slowly, children will lose interest, become bored and seek outlets elsewhere for their needs. Either of these course of action may result in a plateau effect; both readers and emergent readers may go on hold. The grade one teacher has a tremendous responsibility. Shulman's (1984) contention that the task environment of the classroom is more complex than that faced by a physician in a diagnostic examination is certainly true for the grade one teacher.

An implication for preservice and inservice educators is that teachers need to be made aware of successful teaching interactions within the home and how these can be integrated into the sometimes more formal interaction of classroom teaching. Teachers will need to understand the functions of incidental and more structured learning; whether the focus is more on the incidental or the structure will depend on the goals to be achieved.

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INTEGRATING READING AND WRITING: THE DRWA

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Numerous studies show that reading and writing are inter-related processes (Doctorow, Wittrock, and Marks, 1978; Loban, 1963; Nagle, 1972; Taylor and Berkowitz, 1980). It is noteworthy that most of these studies involved expository reading materials. Thus, content area lessons offer a splendid opportunity to integrate these two skills.

Apparently, however, the nature and extent of specific transfer between instruction in reading and instruction in writing depend somewhat on the focus of instruction. When writing exercises are used specifically to enhance reading comprehension, significant gains result. On the other hand, when writing activities are used primarily to develop writing skills, reading comprehension is not significantly improved (Stotsky, 1983).

Similarly, the 1981 report of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) indicated that while students of all ages were able to comprehend reading passages at varied levels, they appeared to have difficulty elaborating or explaining their ideas in writing. Moreover, few 17-year-olds recalled every having been taught strategies for composing (NAEP, 1981).

Although dismaying, such reports are not completely surprising. Graves (1978) noted that most elementary teachers emphasize the mechanics of writing rather than the teaching of composition. At the secondary level, Applebee (1981) found that only four percent of the social science and science teachers at junior and senior high school levels provide students with opportunities to write. Amazingly, not more than 10% of the English teachers arrange for such experiences.

Despite these dismal statistics, current research is beginning to identify effective ways for integrating the

teaching of reading and writing. And, because a great deal of the expository writing that is required of students is often done under pressure of class or test conditions, Teidt, Bruemmer, Lane, Stelwagon, Watanabe, and Williams (1983) assert that the skill must become automatic. In other words, students should be taught to master basic structures for such composition so that they can concentrate most of their efforts on content rather than format.

The Directed Reading-Writing Activity (DRWA) described in this article provides a framework that will help them write about the information acquired through reading.

Directed Reading-Writing Activity

Active learners are generally more analytical and responsive than passive learners. A DRWA is an instructional approach that is designed to become a student's self-guided search for answers and ideas.

A DRWA provides the format for combining the thinking processes involved in reading and writing. It incorporates aspects of Wittrock's generative reading comprehension model (1983) in which students are active learners, responsible for relating the text to their experiential backgrounds and establishing purposes for reading.

However, as a model, the DRWA extends the thought processes associated with reading comprehension into effective writing. And, it brings together into an integrated framework instructional practices and exercises that are surely familiar, though in isolated contexts, to teachers.

As we have developed it with practicing teachers among our graduate students during the past several years, a DRWA leads logically to more complete understanding of text. In a DRWA, reading leads immediately to writing, an integration which nurtures simultaneous improvement in reading comprehension. Writing enables readers to organize and clarify their thoughts; at the same time it guides them directly into what is being read during the activity.

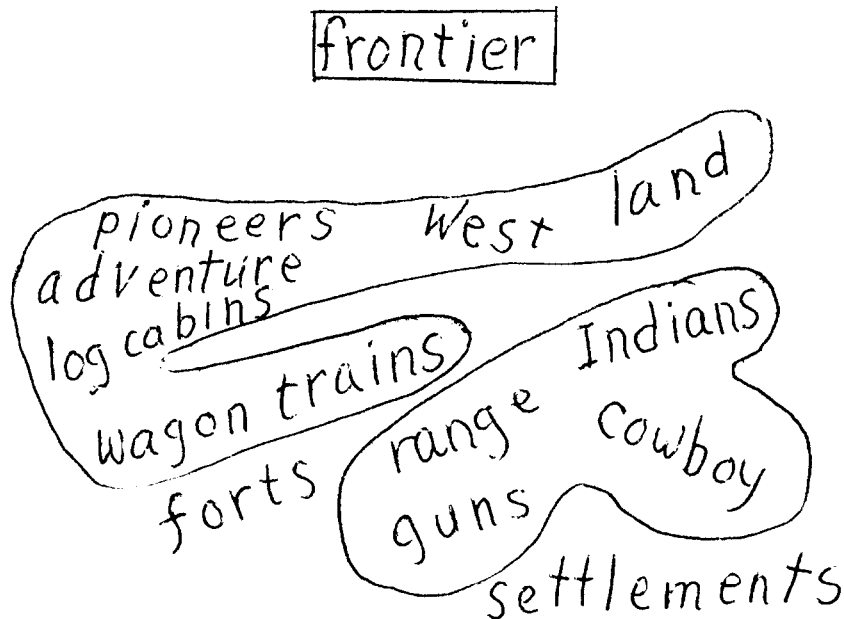
The DRWA is composed of three major steps: (1) preparation, (2) involvement, and (3) reaction. At each step, writing exercises ensure that students become active comprehenders. In the preparation stage, students use vocabulary and conventions of print to write purpose-setting statements

and questions. During involvement, students interact with the passage by writing answers to questions, completing outlines and summarizing. Finally, in the reaction stage, students monitor their own thought processes by evaluating the written activities they completed during all three steps of the DRWA.

Preparation

During the preparatory stage, vocabulary is developed in a way that leads students to write purpose-setting questions that stimulate active reading. For instance, an approach such as "clustering" combines reading and writing quite readily. Write the topic of the selection to be read on the chalkboard and enclose it in a rectangle. Ask the students for words or phrases which the topic suggests to them. Record them underneath the rectangle.

After a sufficient number of words and phrases have been recorded, ask students to make associations among them. Enclose those words which students identify as being related. See Figure 1, below.



Then instruct the class to use two or more words within a cluster as stimuli for writing every statement or question that will serve as a purpose for reading. For example, the words "pioneer" and "west" can be used to formulate "Why did the pioneers move west?" and "adventure" and "wagon train" might produce "What kind of adventures were encountered when traveling in wagon trains?"

Or, again as preparation, provide key vocabulary from the selection to be read and direct your students, in small groups, to categorize the words or phrases under appropriate headings. After such categorization, ask students to write their own purpose-setting questions based on perceived relationships among words in a specific category. After the questions are composed, the selection can be read silently. In a story relating to pioneers, for instance, "forts," "settlements," "log cabins," and "sod houses" might be classified as shelters and used to formulate the question, "Why did some pioneers live in log cabins and others live in sod houses?"

At other times, introductions, headings, summaries, and graphic aids from the text selection can serve as stimuli for writing purpose-setting statements and questions about the topic.

In all instances, the questions which individual students have written should be shared orally and some should be written on the chalkboard. However cursory and preliminary such writing may seem, when it is shared orally, backgrounds are extended and purposes are refined or generated within individual members of the class.

Because prior knowledge is required for processing ideas through language, the preparation stage in DRWA is essential. When students pose their own questions, as in the examples just given, reading becomes a search for ideas and answers.

Involvement

The involvement stage of a DRWA helps students become active comprehenders. Questions that were formulated and recorded during the preparation stage can guide students in their search for meaning in the selection at hand. As they progress through the selection, students are encouraged to write responses to their questions. Such written response to the text and to their own questions and statements helps clarify their thoughts, reinforce important facts, and formu-

late new questions. Understanding is deepened and recall strengthened.

Another involvement activity utilizes words categorized in step one. Often these words can serve as a basis for a partial outline which the students complete as they read the selection, thus facilitating understanding and recall. Initially, students can copy directly from the reading selection to complete the outline. Eventually, a summary can be composed based on the kind of outlining suggested by Cunningham, Moore, et al., (1983).

Figure 2: Example of partial outline

I. Moving West of the Appalachians

A. _____

1. young

2. white

3. poor

B. Reasons for moving

1. _____

2. _____

3. improve lives

4. _____

C. Transportation

1. raft

2. _____

3. _____

D. Conflicts

1. Tippecanoe

2. _____

3. Andrew Jackson

a. Creeks

b. _____

c. elected president

E. Indian Reservation Act

(America Past and Present, Schreiber, et. al., Scott
Foresman and Co., 1983)

A third involvement activity is the writing of a topic sentence summary. Before asking students to read a selection, determine which paragraphs contain topic sentences. Note their specific location on a worksheet that provides space in which to write each topic sentence. When the reading is completed, share and discuss students' compilations of topic sentences. Findings from several studies

reveal that such writing enhances reading comprehension (Stotsky, 1982).

As a variation of this activity, students may write an original one-sentence summary after each paragraph. Research involving sixth graders has shown that this strategy promotes greater comprehension than the writing of a one-sentence summary for an entire selection or for writing nothing at all (Doctorow, Wittrock, and Marks, 1978). Interestingly, low ability readers in this study improved even more than high ability readers.

Summarizing, writing responses to self-generated questions, and outlining--each involves students in the learning process. This involvement helps develop factual and inferential comprehension skills (Pearson and Johnson, 1978; Stotsky 1982). Thus, the second state of a DRWA is a springboard to higher levels of comprehension.

Reaction

The third step in a DRWA helps students monitor their own thought processes and to develop strategies that improve comprehension and creation of written material. Evaluating one's original purpose-setting questions is a reaction activity that can promote skill in recognizing main ideas in the reading selection and list them in sentence form on the chalkboard. Ask "Which of your questions could be answered by these sentences?" In this way students can distinguish between important and unimportant questions.

Examine some of the remaining questions to determine whether they refer to relevant or irrelevant details. Ask students to explain decisions about relevancy so that they may become cognizant of their own thinking strategies. Interject questions pertaining to important information overlooked by the students.

Another reaction activity focuses on comparing outlines developed by students during the involvement stage with a model provided by the teacher. Project specific outlines on an overhead projector and direct students' attention to specific points being discussed. If major disagreements arise, refer students to supporting sections of the text and read them aloud. Through subsequent discussion, highlight the thinking processes involved in outlining.

Precis writing is still another potential reaction activity. This type of writing involves selecting and paraphrasing ideas in order to write a concise abridgement of a reading selection. One of the topic sentence summaries completed by a student during the involvement stage can be duplicated and used to teach precis writing. Words that can be replaced can be underlined and students asked to suggest suitable synonyms.

At the same time, help students to realize that not all words can be replaced. For example, in the sentence "A temperate climate and fertile soil provide the United States with abundant crops," most, but not all, of the words can be replaced. A paraphrased version might read "Moderate weather and rich earth supply plenty of food for the United States." Such vocabulary discussion will enable students to paraphrase topic sentences into a precis more easily. According to Bretzing and Kulhavy (1979), better comprehension results when students make a greater cognitive effort and process information more deeply by using their own words to elaborate on the text and paraphrase its important lines.

Once you understand the logic of a DRWA and have internalized its basic framework as a model of processing information, classroom application is limited only by your own imagination in coming up with a variety of techniques already familiar to you in the teaching of the language arts generally.

Summary

Current research in reading and writing increasingly recognizes the importance of the interrelationships of these two skills (Squire, 1983). A Directed Reading-Writing Activity as outlined in this article offers a practical way of integrating instruction in writing and in reading. At each of the three stages, preparation, involvement, and reaction, students participate in exercises that enhance both comprehension and composition.

In preparation students generate purpose-setting questions. The involvement step is a self-guided search for meaning. During reaction, students become acquainted with strategies for monitoring their own thought processes as they read and write. Since a mutually supportive relationship

exists between reading and writing, students benefit from the combined use of these two skills.

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TEACHERS' REACTIONS TO THE BASAL READING SERIES APPROACH

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Since the advent of the McGuffey Readers, published between 1836 and 1844, basal reading series have increased in popularity, becoming the predominant approach to reading instruction. Chall (1967), Aukerman (1981), along with other educators, reported that 80 to 95% of classroom teachers used one or more basal series for reading instruction. A recent nationwide study by Smith/Saltz (1985) showed an increasing number of teachers, 95.4%, were using one or more basal series in their classrooms.

As a follow-up to the 1985 study, the authors asked classroom teachers who participated in the original survey to answer four brief background questions and then respond to an open-ended statement concerning appropriate comments regarding their use of basal readers, grouping, supplementary materials, and related items. Open-ended statements were requested since surveys which require forced-choice answers frequently restrict respondents who may feel that the items which are presented do not accurately reflect a total situation. Oftentimes, the respondents feel a need to modify or qualify the answers which are listed, or because statements may not pertain to a specific situation, the item is not answered. In order to avoid this, the authors required a minimal amount of background to be furnished by teachers and chose to provide an opportunity for the teachers to comment on their particular beliefs and/or attitudes. One hundred and thirteen teachers from forty-seven states provided background information and general comments.

Background of Teachers

Background information provided a framework from which teachers' responses evolved. Responding teachers were classified according to their years of experience:

beginning teachers, 1 to 2 years; teachers in the critical years, 3 to 7 years (during this time many teachers decide to pursue another career); experienced teachers, 8 to 19 years; experienced plus teachers, 20 to 30 years; and, veteran teachers, 31 or more years.

Twelve of the teachers reported their school location as urban, twenty-six represented suburban areas, and sixty-nine represented rural areas. "Small city" was cited by four of the respondents while two teachers did not provide their school setting. Schools were classified for this study according to the number of classrooms which comprised their school building or complex. The information received indicated (1) six schools contained 1 to 7 classrooms, (2) thirty-four contained 8 to 19 classrooms, (3) forty-two contained 14 to 21, and (4) thirty schools had 22 or more classrooms.

The number of pupils were categorized to reflect the enrollment in each classroom. Responses indicated that three teachers had 10 or less students, twenty-eight had 11 to 20 students, seventy-four teachers had 21 to 30 students, while seven reported 31 or more students. One teacher did not give the classroom enrollment.

Although seventeen basal reading series were used by 113 responding teachers, seven publishers appeared at the top of the ranking as being consistently used. The highest ranking publishers were: Houghton Mifflin Co.; Ginn and Co.; Scott, Foresman & Co.; Economy Co.; Holt, Rinehart & Winston Co.; Macmillan Publishing Co.; and, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

OPEN-ENDED STATEMENTS ON AREAS OF CONCERN

Teachers' responses to open-ended statements were numerous and diversified. Seven areas of concern were mentioned repeatedly. These areas were the use of the current basal series, the basal series incorporated with other approaches to reading instruction, satisfactions with the basal series, dissatisfaction with the basal series, grouping within the classroom/school, supplementary materials, and teachers' abilities.

Areas of Concern

Use of the current basal series. In most instances,

teachers reacted favorably to their basal series. They felt the children had "phenomenal success" and were scoring in the above average range on standardized tests. They were pleased with the number of supplementary activities and the many instructional strategies provided in their basal series. Teachers believed they had flexibility within their reading programs and stated they did not feel pressured to closely follow a basal series. They also believed that their specific basal effectively met the students' needs. Most teachers felt there was a good balance between the teaching of skills and the amount of reading practice provided. Most schools chose their textbooks according to the needs of their children, i.e., they selected phonics-oriented readers, linguistic readers, whole word approach readers, or language experienced-based programs.

Some teachers reacted unfavorably, not to the concept of basal series, but to the use of specific basals. Considering the children's needs, some teachers stated that a specific basal reader within the classroom was "too difficult for the slower reading students," or "a second series, more difficult, is needed for the top group," or children "who are developmentally unready to differentiate sounds are not successful with an auditorily-based approach."

Other teachers indicated that their series were lacking in phonic skills, language skills, or comprehension skills relating to study skills. Beginning teachers considered a basal series with an "exceptional" manual as mandatory in order to "grow, expand, experiment and create." Experienced teachers considered a basal series a necessity because "it is a base from which to teach," and "teachers cannot reinvent the wheel every night to prepare for each day." However, as one teacher so aptly stated, "After ten years of experience...I have yet to find a consummate basal program to meet all the needs of the children I teach. The individual teacher must still bring to her teaching additional elements, such as language experience, recreational reading, literature and dramatic expression for a high-interest, well-rounded program."

Teachers were continuously searching for new basal series to use in their schools, but at times the same series, updated and improved, was selected. At other times new series were introduced to help satisfy the needs of children within the schools. In many instances the new series were

adopted, but not purchased because of funding.

Basal series incorporated with other approaches. "I feel the basal reader approach is a good foundation especially for beginning reading teachers, but I think it should not be the total reading method in the classroom. A good teacher will use the basal and integrate many different methods to make reading fun and read individual students' needs." This reaction from an experienced teacher was reflected in many responses. Other teachers stated, "The basal series has been good for building our program, but it is in no way responsible for all the success in our reading program;" "Reading instruction must involve a variety of methods and be monitored individually, as closely as possible."

Several teachers reported that the reading program is supplemented with a structured writing program. "Process writing is an integral part of our reading program since the children write many of their own books which, in turn, motivates reading." "No series, no matter how well chosen, can be used by itself as the only means of teaching reading" "No basal series ever supplies all that is demanded or required for effective teaching of any subject."

Satisfaction with the basal series. In varying degrees teachers expressed satisfaction with their basal series. Some comments from the responding teachers included: "I like the reading series we are now using as it has more than enough supplementary materials to build on each individual's needs," "We've been very satisfied with our basal series. . . the majority of our students are reading far above their grade level," "I really like the basal series I am using. . . I feel it covers all the necessary skills needed for my grade level." Another teacher commented, "I am pleased to be using the basal. It is an excellent program and lends itself to many different instructional methods. We take pride in our reading program and all work toward a common goal. This is what makes it successful."

Other teachers stated: "A wide variety of activities are presented as supplementary work in the basal. This includes various types of experience stories and other language arts involvement. Therefore, the basal can be viewed as a varied total approach," "Using a basal throughout our school has given reading instruction a consistency and sequence. Our grade level has shown marked improvement in reading skills

since the basal was adopted," "I think the basal series provides a backbone for a continuous reading program," and finally, "This particular series has delightful stories with attractive illustrations."

Dissatisfaction with the basal series. Teachers' dissatisfaction was expressed in many ways. One teacher said, ". . . I feel a little resentful that publishing companies are essentially dictating our programs. It is extremely difficult to choose a really good series that is equally strong at all grade levels. I also feel that a good share of the materials take more time to present than they are worth."

Other comments included: "Basal series are better now than a few years ago, but still not satisfying. They are too restricted. . . . They are very difficult for low readers," "I would like to teach reading without a basal reader. There is something about a reading book which evokes an 'ugh' response from students. I feel student interest in reading would be increased with different types of material," "Most series don't get into the meat of reading fast enough for first graders," "I do not feel that the reading series helps my students with critical and more difficult reading done in Social Studies and Science. I would like to try teaching reading through the content subjects and supplementing it with more enjoyable stories and books. Our series is supposed to be a complete language arts series, but falls way short of succeeding."

Additional comments were: "Generally, I am satisfied . . . more specifically, I would like to see more emphasis placed on content comprehension. I would also like to see a reading series that incorporates a fair amount of language-oriented material and sufficient practice to accompany that material," "Most basal readers are very narrow in their vocabulary selections," "I feel that more comprehension material should come with the basal series. Also, more written work is needed--I think there is a direct correlation between what is written and what is learned." One teacher summarized the feelings of most teachers when she stated, "No basal series ever supplies all that is demanded or required for effective teaching of any subject."

Grouping within the classroom/school. Comments from teachers indicated that ability grouping was the predominant method for assigning children to groups either in or outside

their classrooms. Some teachers voiced their concerns about the suitability of basal readers regarding low-level or above-level students in self-contained rooms. For example, "I enjoy teaching reading. The problem comes with the wide range of reading abilities within a class. I, therefore, have five reading groups daily. This makes it very difficult if not impossible to do all the various strands of instruction that are mentioned in the Teacher's Guide." A second comment was, "When I taught slow readers, I found the basal series not nearly so useful. Those readers could not function well under a basal system. They need more individualized work."

Teachers expressed satisfaction with cross-grade grouping where teachers have equal numbers of groups and "the majority of children were reading above their grade levels." In many situations, provisions for grouping outside the classroom dealt mainly with gifted, EMR, learning disabled, behavioral disordered, physically handicapped, Chapter I, and remedial reading students.

Supplementary materials. Although the majority of teachers praised basal readers, many teachers reported they use materials which are either provided with their series, or outside the basal, to supplement their reading program. Some of the comments included: "I like the reading series we are now using as it has more than enough supplementary materials to build on each individual's needs," "I feel that the basal reader along with the use of supplementary materials constitutes an effective reading program," "(The basal series) provides extra or supplementary materials that are very helpful," and finally, "To individualize instruction we . . . use other materials to supplement and/or enrich the program."

Some teachers believed that more materials should be readily available for class use. For example, one teacher said, "We have a variety of reading materials, along with our own media center, whereby a teacher may check out materials to fill the needs of each student." Another teacher said, "I feel I do not have enough supplementary materials in my classroom (magazines, kits, etc.). These are available in the learning center, but I would prefer more materials in the classroom. A lack of funds makes many types of materials unavailable."

Teachers' abilities. Several teachers believed that the

success of a basal reading program was only as effective as the classroom teacher. One teacher stated, ". . . to have a good reading program you also need good teaching . . . they complement each other." Another said ". . . we have an excellent reading series--our teachers work very hard teaching reading in our school." A third teacher remarked, "The quality of reading instruction depends on the quality of teacher training in reading. I believe teachers of elementary children should have at least nine to twelve hours of reading classes required for certification." Another teacher wrote, "I feel too many individualized programs/language experience, etc., are geared to the teacher's ability. . . a teacher simply does not have time to deal with each student individually at all times."

SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS

Because basal readers are used almost universally in public schools, open-ended statements were requested from the sources who could provide the necessary information, i.e., elementary teachers in self-contained classrooms. The following reactions were expressed:

- Teachers acclaimed the concept of basal series but felt that specific series did not satisfy children's individual needs, i.e., some series were more readily accepted by above-average readers, other series by slower readers. Children's needs determined the type of basal reader adopted for each school.
- Basal series served as the core of reading instruction which was enriched through other approaches. Teachers felt that most basal series are integrated very easily with other approaches to teaching reading.
- Most teachers believed there was a balance between the teaching of skills and the amount of practice reading within basal series. They further believed that higher level critical skills, content comprehension skills, and study skills needed more emphasis in basal series.
- Higher standardized test scores appeared to result from the use of developmental, structured basal readers.
- Ability grouping was the predominant method of assigning children to reading groups. Grouping outside the classroom was prevalent for special students.

- Teachers preferred to have more supplementary materials housed within their classrooms rather than in a media or learning center.
- Although basal series have improved during past years and are continuing to improve, the success of a basal reader was considered to be only as effective as the classroom teacher.

The information provided by teachers has specific implications for the possible improvement of basal series. For example, teachers felt they should have more input in the revisions of basal readers, and should be more involved in the writing of accompanying workbooks. Several teachers thought that higher level skills, such as content comprehension and critical reading skills, must be incorporated in basal readers and workbooks. They also felt that more writing assignments needed to be included in activities in the teachers' guides as well as workbooks.

Teachers who implement basal series have strong opinions and reactions. Because of this, a logical consideration for publishers would be greater teacher involvement in text revision and revitalization.

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EVALUATION/TESTING PROCEDURES IN READING

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Introduction

This is the second in a series of four articles devoted to parents and reading. The first article described typical school reading programs and illustrated the key ingredients of each. This article treats the evaluation and testing procedures that schools use in the area of reading.

Types of Reading Tests

Schools have available a number and variety of well constructed tests that can be used in reading. Reading-Achievement/Survey Tests, Diagnostic Tests and Informal Reading Inventories are available for teachers. Each type of test will be examined in this paper.

Reading Achievement Tests

Reading achievement or survey tests are tests which give an approximate level at which a child functions in reading. They present a very broad picture of how a child is performing in comparison to others. Tests such as the California Achievement Tests: Reading, the Iowa Test of Basic Skills, the Stanford Achievement Test and the Metropolitan Achievement Tests: Reading, are examples of widely used group reading achievement tests. These tests may measure somewhat different skills and abilities, but each provides a general reading achievement score. On each test, at least two areas are measured--word recognition and comprehension.

Frequently the word recognition section of a test might be titled: --vocabulary

--word meanings

--word attack

--word knowledge

Tests differ as to how they ask students questions. For example, one vocabulary test may ask a student to select a word that is the opposite of a key stimulus word:

Sample A: on | start go off
 hot | in water cold

Another test may ask a student to find the word that a picture names: Sample B

(picture of cat) five six two cat
 (picture of ball) ball cat broom toad

A third type of task might include asking students to complete a sentence that contains a missing word:

Sample C

The dog ran after the _____. (cat, run)

Billy's _____ was painted red. (house, dollar)

Still another type of test requires students to select the word the teacher pronounces for them:

Sample D

hat ham house

(teacher reads hat and student circles hat)

The comprehension section of a test usually asks students to read one or several paragraphs and answer questions about what they have read. As children progress from early elementary grades (K-3) to later elementary grades (4-6) the tests include fewer pictures, longer passages to read and more specific areas are tested.

These tests are norm-referenced and allow you and the teacher to compare your child's performance to other children. This simply means that the publishers of the test sampled a wide-variety of reading skills, have tested many children from various parts of the country at different age/grade levels and at different socio-economic levels, have developed and piloted the tests using specific directions and time limits and do not allow for teacher assistance during the testing situation. Reading achievement or survey tests are frequently administered to a whole class of students. They help you and the teacher answer several questions:

1. What is the general reading performance of my child?
2. What are the general strengths and weaknesses of my child in reading?
3. Has my child made progress in reading during the year?

Diagnostic Reading Tests

A second major category of tests in reading include

diagnostic tests. These tests may be group or individually administered. A teacher or parent could request such a test be given if the child performs poorly on an achievement-survey test or if specific problems have been observed while the child is reading. Tests such as the Gray Oral Reading Test, the Gates McKillop Horowitz Reading Diagnostic Test, the Woodcock Reading Mastery Tests and the Durrell Analysis of Reading Difficulty are examples of individual diagnostic tests. These tests take from 15 minutes to 90 minutes of individual testing time and require much skill in test administration and analysis. Group diagnostic tests are also available. These may be given to several students and include such tests as the Doren Diagnostic Reading Test, the Prescriptive Reading Inventory and the California Phonics Survey.

These tests provide more specific information in several areas of reading and typically include such areas as phonics skills, blending skills, visual memory, structural analysis, word recognition, spelling, syllabication, handwriting, knowledge of letters, names and sounds as well as comprehension.

These tests are used to help answer the following questions:

1. Does my child have specific skill weaknesses in reading?
2. Is my child's problem one of knowledge of basic skills or application of the skills?
3. What are my child's strengths in reading skills?

Diagnostic tests will help the teacher pinpoint specific strengths and weaknesses and provide a more comprehensive picture of the child's performance in reading.

Frequently, diagnostic tests are criterion-referenced. These tests are usually very narrow in focus and center upon specific reading skills. Their purpose is to measure which students show mastery of specific skills. These tests are frequently used throughout the school year and provide a monitoring device for student progress.

Informal Reading Inventories

Another valuable tool available for classroom teachers for diagnosing reading strengths and weaknesses include informal reading inventories (IRIs). Tests such as the Basic Reading Inventory, Classroom Reading Inventory, and the Analytical Reading Inventory. This type of test may be commercially

developed or teacher-made. Contrasted with the more formal standardized tests, the IRIs do not have standardized norms or formalized procedures.

They are intended to be used by the classroom teacher, a reading specialist or a diagnostician to examine a student's patterns of errors and to help the teacher determine different reading levels on each child, reading fluency and comprehension. For example, most IRIs provide the teacher with information about the following reading levels--the independent reading level, the instructional reading level, the frustration level and the listening level.

It is important for you to know these varied levels and what they mean. Briefly, the independent level is the level at which a child can read with ease. Books at this level present the student with few problems and are associated with pleasure reading material. At the instructional level, a student may encounter some difficulty, but with the instruction that the teacher provides, the child can continue to learn and read. The frustration level is too hard for the child and materials at that level create tension and anxiety for the student, the student miscalls many words and cannot understand what is read. In short, this level is too difficult for the child and should not be used with him. The listening level is frequently called the capacity or potential for reading. At this level, students can understand what is read to them. So even though they cannot read the words on the page, they can comprehend what they have heard.

This type of test frequently contains a graded word list, and several sets of reading passages with comprehension questions. These passages are read orally and silently by the child and some are read to the child. After the reading, children are asked questions by the teacher.

In addition to providing the teacher with information on the previously mentioned, the teacher can analyze the errors that children make while reading orally and answering questions. For example, if a student reads hat for bat, how for cow, sold for told, or not for hot, our analysis could indicate that a student has difficulty with beginnings of words and this might mean that he does not know how to apply sounds at the beginning of words, or that he may be in a hurry and not looking carefully at the words or not using the surrounding words to help him understand.

Further analysis is frequently done with the comprehension questions. The questions are written at different levels of difficulty. For example: When did Columbus discover America? is a very low level question and merely tests whether a child can remember and restate a date. A question such as--How do you think our astronauts are similar to Columbus and his crew? is a far more complex, higher-order question. Informal reading inventories allow teachers to determine the problem areas in comprehension and to plan a program to help students with their weaknesses.

The informal reading inventory is used to help answer the following questions:

1. What are my child's independent, instructional, and frustration levels?
2. What types of questions can my child comprehend?
3. How does my child correct his/her errors?

Test Results and Interpretations

After understanding the different types and purposes of reading tests, the next area to be considered is the result or scores. What do these scores mean? What is a raw score, a grade equivalent score, a percentile score, a percentage score, or a stanine? These terms are frequently used when discussing test results but are frequently misunderstood.

Let's examine achievement or survey test results first. The results of these tests are frequently used to evaluate where your child scores in reading in comparison to other children in the class, the school or the nation. The scores are frequently presented in different ways that include grade equivalent units, percentile scores or stanines. Frequently, teachers will refer to the raw score. The raw score is the number of items a student gets correct on a test. For example, if a student gets 48 items correct out of 50, the raw score is 48. A grade equivalent unit represents the score as a grade level score. A score of 3.2 indicates the child is reading at the grade equivalent level of the second month of the third grade, likewise, a score of 4.8 indicates a student is reading at the equivalent of the eighth month of the fourth grade.

Many achievement tests use the percentile score. A percentile of 86 means that your child did as well as 86

percent of the children, or could be interpreted to mean that 14 percent of the students performed at a higher level than your child. The percentile score does not mean that your child had 86% of the answers correct. This is frequently misunderstood by parents and educators. A stanine score also reflects a child's rank with others. Tests are divided into 9 stanines, a combination of two words - standard and nine. There are nine levels on a scale, the lowest score being 1. The middle stanine then, is 5 and indicates average performance. If a child scored in stanine 9 s/he would be performing at a very high level in which only about 4% of the population fell. A stanine of 1 would compare to the low 4% on the scale. The word standard in stanine is based on the fact that each stanine level is one-half of a standard deviation wide (except for 1 and 9).

Figure 1
Comparison of Stanine & Percentile Scores

Stanine	1	equals	percentile	0 - 3
"	2	"	"	4 - 10
"	3	"	"	11 - 22
"	4	"	"	23 - 39
"	5	"	"	40 - 59
"	6	"	"	60 - 76
"	7	"	"	77 - 88
"	8	"	"	89 - 95
"	9	"	"	96 - 99

Figure 1 illustrates the relationship between stanine and percentile scores. As you can see, stanine 5 or percentile 40-59 is at the midpoint and would indicate average performance.

Another important concept to remember about test scores is that some measurement error occurs in all tests. There are no absolutes in testing and we must consider ranges of scores. There is not enough precision in testing and tests; to pretend any different would be misleading. Even though the tests are prepared by experts who may use the best procedures for writing, selecting, and sampling items, some error occurs and it is best to think in terms of ranges.

Some Diagnostic Tests described previously, are norm referenced tests, but many are criterion-referenced and

report a percentage score. For example, if there were ten items on a test and your child's raw score (number correct) was eight, the percentage would be 80% correct. For many criterion-referenced tests, scores of 70-100% are considered to be mastery level.

The results from the informal reading inventory are presented as levels. The four levels are the independent, instructional, frustration, and listening. These levels help parents and teachers make decisions about the appropriateness and selection of materials for different reading purposes. For example, one wants to help children select easier reading material for pleasurable reading. More difficult material may be used when the teacher is working with a child in the school setting. Teachers and parents must also know when some material is too difficult for their child, so to prevent frustration, tension and anxiety, they would divert children from reading material which is too difficult.

SUMMARY

The three major categories of tests are achievement/survey, diagnostic and informal reading inventories. The purposes of each and the means of reporting scores are different for each type of test. These tests allow you and your child's teacher to monitor his/her progress, make instructional decisions and make comparisons between children.



INFUSING WRITING ACTIVITIES INTO COLLEGE READING

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This study sought to measure the effects from infusing writing components into a university reading laboratory. Together, the writing components displaced 30% of the regular reading instructional time. With this level of infusion we had four research concerns. First, we wanted to know if the writing infused group would make significant gains in reading. Second, we wanted to know how the writing-infused group fared in reading gains when compared to the other groups where reading was the sole mode of instruction. Third, we asked the writing-infused students how useful they felt the writing activities were to their reading development. Finally, we asked these students how much interest they had in each of the writing activities. Stotsky (1975, 1983) has adequately reviewed the research on reading writing relationships. From this one concludes that a definitive explanation of the impact of teaching methods and curricular activities on the joint development of reading and writing has yet to be determined. Karlin and Karlin (1984), however, urged that writing infusions should be done even though the research picture is not complete.

Method

Subjects

There were 254 subjects in this study, all of whom were enrolled in and completed a college reading course. The research took place while they were students in the course. Of this group, 61 subjects were in the writing infused reading group. Two groups from prior semesters ($n = 124$, $n = 69$) where reading was the only instructional mode served as comparison groups.

Instructional Setting

For the college reading course, students must enroll in three credit hours; however, the credit cannot be used for

graduation. The course is graded and the grade points are computed in the student's overall GPA. The course is taught in a reading laboratory setting which accommodates 20 students per class. Multiple materials are used from several sources. There is substantial heterogeneity of achievement within a class and this dictates that an individualized instructional model be used. Students attend the class for 16 weeks with three contact hours per week required.

Writing Infusion

The writing infusion consisted of three different treatments and each is described.

Written Pre-reading Organizers. Students read articles or passages and answered accompanying questions. Students were instructed that prior to reading each passage in its entirety, they should first write an organizing paragraph - they were to first write a main idea sentence. To finish the paragraph, they were to write detail sentences which related to or supported the main idea sentence which they had written. They were told to skim over the passage to pick up some details for their sentences. The length of the paragraph could vary depending on the length of the passage. The emphasis was placed on achieving confidence before reading the story so that students could successfully answer questions after having read it.

Sentence-Combining. The primary focus of this treatment was paragraph length sentence-combining using Reading for Understanding Kits 2 and 3 (Thurstone, 1978). Exercises from this program are paragraph length with ten exercises or paragraphs included on a task card. The student reads each paragraph and selects one of four answers which accurately completes the thought of the paragraph. Since none of the answers is derived from recall of explicitly stated information, the program appears to foster inferential thinking in the reading process. There are 100 levels of task cards in each of two kits which, together, span reading difficulty levels 3.0 through 14.0.

Students were placed at appropriate levels and required to complete forty task cards which, together, spanned a difficulty gradient of 3 to 4 years. The purpose of this was to insure that students could first function in the inferential reading-thinking process along a specified difficulty gradient. For each student, 20 paragraphs were then

selected at random by the instructor from along this gradient, and the student was instructed to complete the sentence-combining activity for each of the 20 paragraphs. Essentially, the exercise requires students to condense the paragraph by combining sentences without losing the substance of the original paragraph. Students were also required to reverse the sentence order, insofar as possible, in the rewriting of the paragraph.

Written Book Reports. Students read paperbacks for enjoyment in the lab. To this was added the requirement of writing a book report on each completed paperback. The task was aimed at getting the students involved in expressive writing. The minimum length of the book report was set at 250 words.

In infusing these three treatments, 30% of the lab time was taken from other activities. With this change, no specific reading activities were eliminated. Rather, there was a general reduction in time allocated to all reading activities.

Procedures. In their respective semesters, the 254 subjects took The Nelson-Denny Reading Test, Form E (Brown, Bennett & Hanna, 1981) at the beginning of the semester and Form F as a post-test at the end of the semester. For the writing-infused group, two instructors were used, and we sought to find out if the group made substantial pre- to post-test gains. Data analysis was done first by a repeated measures ANOVA of test by instructor. A second analysis was done using ANCOVA with main effects for instructor. In comparing the writing-infusing group to the two reading-instructed groups a repeated measures ANOVA was run comparing groups by tests. Additional analyses using ANCOVA were done with main effects for group. To ascertain if the students viewed the writing activities as useful to their reading development, we constructed a survey form in which the students were asked to rate the relative usefulness of the three writing activities along with five reading activities:

Activity 1: Reading and answering activity cards from the Reading for Understanding program.

Activity 2: Reading self-selected paperbacks for enjoyment.

Activity 3: Writing pre-reading organizers.

Activity 4: Reading passages and answering accompanying questions.

Activity 5: Reading with emphasis on rate.

Activity 6: Writing book reports.

Activity 7: Writing the paragraph level sentence-combining activity from Reading for Understanding.

Activity 8: Reading to build vocabulary through exercises and dictionary use.

The students rated the relative worth of each activity by the following criteria: 5 = useful, 4 = somewhat useful, 3 = neither useful nor useless, 2 = somewhat useless, 1 = useless. The students also rated their relative degree of interest in each activity by the following criteria: 5 = interesting, 4 = somewhat interesting, 3 = neither interesting nor boring, 2 = somewhat boring, 1 = boring.

A series of "t"-tests was run to determine the relative degrees of students' perceived usefulness and interest in the eight activities.

Results

Table 1

Mean, stan. dev. and different scores for two instructors

Measure	Instructor 1 (n = 27)			Instructor 2 (n = 34)		
	\bar{X}	s. d.	diff.	\bar{X}	s. d.	diff.
Voc. pre	42.30	19.25	3.48	45.12	14.70	5.09
Voc. post	45.78	19.94		50.21	17.42	
Comp. pre	36.59	12.95	11.85	40.35	11.93	9.24
Comp. post	48.44	14.76		49.59	11.24	
Total pre	78.89	29.86	15.33	85.47	24.66	14.32
Total post	94.22	32.03		99.79	26.97	

Did the writing infused group make significant gains in reading? Table 1 reports \bar{X} , standard deviation, and difference scores for pre- and post-tests for the two instructor groups. The ANOVA which compared tests by instructors showed pre-to-post test gains to be significant in vocabulary ($DF = 1, F = 23.68, p < 0.001$), comprehension ($DF = 1, F = 85.72, p < 0.001$), and total reading achievement ($DF = 1, F = 98.95, p < 0.001$). The interaction of instructor by test revealed no significant differences on measures of vocabulary ($DF = 1, F = 0.79, p = 0.379$), comprehension ($DF = 1, F = 1.34, p = 0.252$), and total reading achievement ($DF = 1, F = 0.11, p = 0.737$). The ANCOVA which gauged main effects for instructor revealed a significant instructor effect on the measure of vocabulary ($DF = 1, F = 5.89, p < 0.018$), but not for comprehension ($DF = 1, F = 0.275, p = 0.602$) or total reading achievement ($DF = 1, F = 3.42, p = .070$). Therefore it was concluded that the writing infused group made significant gains in reading achievement and that instructor differences were not a factor.

How did the writing infused group compare in reading achievement gains to two previous semesters' groups which received only reading instruction? Table 2 reports a mean, standard deviation, and difference scores for the three groups on pre- and post-test measures. The repeated measures ANOVA which compared group to test and the ANCOVA which measured main effects for group revealed conflicting results on the measures of vocabulary and comprehension. However, results from the ANOVA ($DF = 2, F = 3.07, p < 0.048$) and the results from the ANCOVA ($DF = 2, F = 12.47, p < 0.001$) were in agreement that significant differences existed on measures of total reading achievement. Post-hoc comparisons using Tukey-B procedure showed that true group differences existed between groups 1 and 3 ($F = 3.08, p = 0.050$) but not between groups 2 and 3 on the single measure of total reading achievement. Thus, we concluded that the writing infused group did not differ significantly from one reading instructed group and showed significant, but minor differences, from the second reading instructed group.

Were the three writing activities perceived by the students to be both useful and interesting? Table 3 reports the \bar{X} and standard deviation scores for the usefulness and

Table 2
Mean, standard deviation, and differences scores for 3 groups

Measure	Group 1 (n = 124)		Group 2 (n = 69)		Group 3 (N = 61)	
	\bar{X}	s.d.	diff.	\bar{X}	s. d.	diff.
Vocab. pre	43.14	18.16		50.28	17.82	
Vocab. post	46.07	18.37	2.93	53.76	18.15	3.48
Comp. pre	39.74	12.12		39.83	12.96	
Comp. post	46.44	11.87	6.70	48.70	12.50	8.87
Total pre	82.88	28.20		90.10	28.28	
Total post	92.51	28.03	9.63	102.45	28.04	12.35

Group 1: Reading instructed
Group 2: Reading instructed
Group 3: Reading instructed with writing infusion

interest ratings. The data show that the usefulness of written book reports was doubted by the students. The t-test

Table 3

Mean and standard deviation scores for student usefulness and utility ratings for the 8 activities

	<u>Usefulness</u>		<u>Interest</u>	
	X	s.d.	X	s.d.
1. Reading: RFU Kit	4.35	0.88	3.56	1.15
2. Reading: Paperbacks	4.19	0.86	4.31	0.94
3. Writing: Organizers	4.40	0.75	3.46	1.20
4. Reading: Passages/ Questions	4.35	0.74	3.63	1.05
5. Reading: Rate	4.10	1.45	3.85	1.02
6. Writing: Book Reports	3.37	1.24	2.98	1.20
7. Writing: Sentence-Comb.	4.21	1.02	3.13	1.36
8. Reading: Dict./Vocab.	4.50	1.13	3.62	1.21

comparisons among the eight activities showed that the remaining seven items were considered significantly more useful ($p = 0.001$) than written book reports. Written organizers and sentence combining were viewed as equally useful to the reading activities. On interest measures, activities 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 8 were considered substantially more interesting ($p = 0.020$) than writing book reports. Sentence-combining proved to be substantially less interesting ($p = 0.040$) than the five reading activities. Sentence-combining did not differ significantly from either written organizers or written book reports on interest ratings. In sum, written book reports were rated by students as being low both in perceived usefulness and interest. While sentence-combining and written organizers were viewed as tools useful for developing reading, both were rated relatively low on the student interest measure.

Discussion

Can writing be infused into the college reading program successfully? Our results show that it can. Improvement in reading was significant with writing infusions. Reading improvement was comparable to those classes where reading was the sole mode of instruction. The superiority of the writing-infused group on reading measures cannot rightfully be claimed due to the lack of a true experimental design. We believe students would continue to view writing infusions as useful if book report writing were to be eliminated. In terms of students' interest in completing written organizers and sentence-combining exercises, definite steps are needed to make these two activities more interesting.

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SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNERS: THEIR SPECIAL NEEDS IN CONTENT AREA READING

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Often teachers working with limited English Proficient (LEP), or non-English speaking individuals are at a loss as to how to help them succeed in the heavily content oriented secondary school. These students are more likely to encounter academic frustrations and retention; and as a result, they are more likely to drop out of school (Steinburg, Blinde, and Chan, 1984). Thus, teachers should consider developing strategies for effectively working with LEP students.

An area of prime concern is reading. Teachers working with second language learners need to know how to help the LEP student read more effectively; being aware of the difficulties associated with reading in a second language is a start. Buck (1975, p. 91) specifies three problem areas: "(1) the reader's input [what he brings to the reading process]; (2) the author's input [the cues from which the reader must select]; and (3) the reading process itself [the interaction of both the reader's input and the author's input]." Thus, readers use both external information, provided by the printed material, and internal information, based on personal experiences, and actual cognitive capabilities, to process the text.

Those previous experiences which the reader brings to bear on textual information are known as schemata. The reader depends on such background knowledge to adequately interpret the text; with second language learners, however, this may lead to reading problems. The first language of the student may differ dramatically in cultural content from the second language. Thus, reading which depicts the American view of the home, family, sex roles, or success may be baffling to students whose heritage is different from American life.

Background knowledge is also emphasized in the psycho-

linguistic model of reading. Readers use linguistic and schematic cues to sample from the text, predict meaning, test these predictions, and confirm their accuracy (Pimsleur & Quinn, 1971). For the LEP student, several sources of mistakes may confound this process, such as inadequate background knowledge, inappropriate processing strategies, or insufficient linguistic knowledge (Mackay, Barkman, & Jordan, 1979). Difficulties may arise not so much from limited proficiency in English but from a lack of the necessary schemata associated with the topic.

Therefore, the implications of schema theory for content area teachers at the secondary level are clear. "Students must have 'conceptual readiness' for each task; reading activities must either hook into the students' knowledge of the world, or the teacher must fill in the gaps before the task is begun" (Clarke and Silberstein, 1977, p. 137). This paper will provide insights on how to effectively fill in those gaps while teaching the content areas.

Content Area Strategies

Content area teachers should recognize that each subject requires different reading background and skills such as word recognition skills, basic comprehension skills, word meaning skills, reading study skills, interpretative skills, and critical reading skills (Karlin, 1973, p. 175).

In the area of mathematics, most LEP students at the secondary level already have a conceptual framework for the number system. Teachers then must provide new labels or vocabulary to hook onto the students' previous math experience. Knowledge of the specialized math vocabulary used in math is a must as more prose is introduced into texts, and students are exposed to increasingly complex word problems. To aid comprehension, teachers can simplify the prose, breaking it down into word--symbol relationships, for example, plus (+), minus (-), greater than (>), etc. This would insure understanding of mathematical concepts and association of the graphic representation with the symbol. Once the teacher has modeled this process, students can follow suit and in groups break down prose and word problems into simpler units with numbers and symbols.

Another essential skill in the mathematics class is problem analysis. "Practice in how to read a problem, how to analyze its content, and how to follow a carefully planned

sequence toward its solution may be as necessary to success as computational practice in mathematics" (Thonis, 1970, p. 91). Simplification of textual information can be utilized here also. Teachers and students can analyze a problem for givens, unknowns, and options for solutions. The secondary math teacher thus builds a bridge between the LEP student's previous knowledge of numbers, math concepts, and computational skills to new labels and methods of problem solving.

In the science class, the required skills are similar to math. Again the student encounters a specialized vocabulary and a need for problem analysis. In order to aid the LEP student with the large amounts of sometimes technical reading material, a general reading strategy is suggested (Karlin, 1973, p. 178): (1) become aware of and expand the student's background knowledge; (2) preview material with the student prior to reading attempting to hook onto any previous experiences of class members; (3) explain the basic concepts which are often expressed by the specific vocabulary of the lesson; and (4) establish specific purposes to guide the students' reading. For long reading assignments, breaking the text into chunks is an alternative. Then the teacher can intersperse questions between sections in order to detect early misconceptions and miscues which may continue to affect later reading comprehension.

Visual aids further enhance reading comprehension. The teacher might provide actual demonstrations or bulletin board and poster displays depicting important vocabulary, concepts, and processes found in the reading selection. Also an advanced organizer such as a simple outline format with relevant subtopics or headings could be provided to the student prior to an assignment.

In the area of social sciences, applicability of schema theory is particularly rich. "Many of the concepts presented are completely alien to the reader because he has never seen, heard, or even thought of an economic or cultural group except his own" (Thonis, 1970, p. 94). Sensitivity is crucial, and the teacher must avoid potentially negative situations that could arise through stereotyping. For students as well as teachers, "most important is the realization that one way of life is not better, not superior, and not 'more right' than another" (Zintz, 1980, p. 399).

Social studies texts often contain abstract terminology

and vocabulary tied to other eras and regions. Teacher-made glossaries can help as well as pre-reading activities, such as the construction of vocabulary or conceptual collages and posters which can be displayed and explained by the students. In fact, for describing new concepts in the social studies class, teachers will find visual aids such as posters, displays, pictures, films, maps, and slides indispensable. Geography readings can take on new meaning when class members construct a map charting their birthplaces and previous travels and residences. In this manner, students become as cultural 'experts' for various regions. For the history class, organizational strategies such as timelines or flowcharts enable students to sequence events and discern cause and effect relationships. Various role play and simulation opportunities are also available to explain cultural content and events. For instance, classes covering early immigration to the United States could simulate the entry procedures at Ellis Island. In this manner, students build personal experience schema that develop into powerful reading comprehension tools.

For language arts, vocabulary and interpretative reading skills are again needed. Of prime importance is a capability to read beyond the literal meaning of words. The key to teaching vocabulary lies in providing the items in meaningful context and in developing the relationship between words. One helpful technique is to guide students in mapping their associations with a word, for example, house, and then comparing and contrasting the literal and figurative connotations. Students will begin to see the multiple meanings and the imagery potential of words and phrases.

Extension of vocabulary has been a need noted in each content area. To build vocabulary, an important consideration is whether to provide passive exercises or activities involving students, such as demonstrations and role play. Actual personal experiences seem to have a greater impact on comprehension and retention than drills or lists of words to define. The technique of webbing is a useful tool in vocabulary lessons enabling students to build a mental network for new words and concepts. Students call out associations with a word while the teacher forms a web diagram showing the interrelationships between the center word and its subcategories. Thus, all available schemata for one word are mapped by the class members. For example, leisure time might

elicit the following response categories which could be further expanded: recreational activities, sports, hobbies, weather related activities, sports equipment, sports clothing, uniforms, etc. Webs can be utilized as pre-reading activities to familiarize students with vocabulary in new contexts or used to build conceptual ideas in a post-reading phase. An English class might make a web on parts of a short story filling in specific examples for a selection just read. Webbing is an extremely adaptable activity.

Vocabulary grids provide another possibility for students to organize new vocabulary and see the interrelationships and subsets of words. Main topics and subheadings are provided for students, and they must fill in the relevant vocabulary items. This could be utilized for a selection dealing with taxonomies or as a post-reading activity to find new examples of content presented in the text. In a biology class, students might be provided with a vocabulary grid for the digestive process. Under the subheadings, they would fill in the organs involved, mechanical and chemical processes, etc. A health class studying nutrition and food groups could begin to list examples which fit into the basic categories after reading and discussing the assigned text. The possibilities for vocabulary extension are numerous, but the emphasis should be on keeping words in context, not divorcing them from meaning by giving students simple lists of words to memorize or define.

Literature can be a rich source of cultural and linguistic information, but LEP students are often baffled by the content if not prepared prior to reading selections. In a 1971 study conducted by Gatbonton and Tucker, the authors "suggest that inappropriate values, attitudes and judgments led to Filipino ESL students' misunderstanding of American literature. However, when teachers provided relevant cultural information, their students' reading comprehension improved" (Johnson, 1982, p. 504). Role play of values and attitudes expressed in stories can be a successful post-reading activity to assess understanding. Also, an open climate will allow pupils to discuss their confusion regarding the cultural differences noted in the text and will permit students to question cultural biases and stereotypes present in some literature.

A final area of concern is study and reference skills. These cross subject areas and are a vital need found in all

courses. Providing students with actual hands-on experience with reference materials and in the library is more valuable for the LEP student than merely being told, or reading about how to use the library or reference texts. Many of these students have very little experience with the use of reference materials in a library setting. A treasure hunt activity can be organized to acquaint students with locating various sources of information or using specific parts of texts such as the table of contents or index. Students could work in groups or pairs to find the necessary clues among the reference materials. In this manner, students are building background knowledge relating to reference texts enabling them to more successfully utilize these materials at a later date.

In general, addressing the special needs of LEP students includes strategies which are effective for regular or inefficient readers as well. The processing of textual information can be divided into three phases: pre-reading, during reading, and post reading. Teachers should preview material with special attention given to new or technical vocabulary and idioms. Further, outlining the objectives or goals for content and explaining these prior to reading are particularly effective for helping students process the text. Then, during reading, have the student refer to the questions for the assignment. Are they discovering the relevant information? Students may also note areas where there was a special problem with the text. During reading in class, the instructor could divide the material into manageable sections and guide students through these while assessing comprehension of each section.

Finally, in post-reading activities teachers should determine if the original reading purposes or objectives were achieved. At this stage, a variety of means to measure comprehension from class discussion to role playing can be utilized. However, if a student does not grasp the content, then the teacher must try to ascertain where the "short circuit" occurred in order to get the pupil back on the right path and to prevent further misunderstandings.

Concluding Statements

In conclusion, students use various skills in order to process textual information. Among these skills are linguistic knowledge of English and background knowledge or schema

relevant to the content. These combine in an interactive process of reading with students using syntactic and semantic knowledge to comprehend reading material. In the case of LEP students, linguistic and/or background knowledge may not be fully or equally developed which can lead to comprehension problems. The reader can utilize one knowledge to compensate for the other. For example, "strong semantic input will help the acquisition of the reading competence where syntactic control is weak. This suggests that the subject of reading materials should be of high interest and relate to the background of the learners" (Pimsleur & Quinn, 1971, p. 141).

Various strategies have been discussed with regard to the different content areas in the secondary school. Teachers need to become aware of their students' prior knowledge and level of language competence. As Carrell & Eisterhold (1983) suggest, teachers must ". . . strive for an optimum balance between the background knowledge presupposed by the texts our students read and the background our students possess," (p. 569). With a knowledge of students' prior experiences, instructors can then build bridges from familiar content to the new.

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ACTION BOOK NURSERY RHYMES AND FAVORITE TALES

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Nursery rhymes and favorite tales have a timeless appeal to young children. Many nursery rhymes and favorite tales are now available as action books. Action books are often called pop-up, pull-tap, or lift-the-flap books. Children trigger movement by turning pages, lifting flaps, sliding tabs or moving wheels. Action books is an inclusive term used to identify books with moving parts. The most common action in books is the pop-up; as the pages are opened an illustration pops up giving a three-dimensional effect.

Action books for children date back to England in the 1760s, when Robert Sayer first published pop-up and action-tab books. The paper engineers of today's action books have created the movement technology to send the cow jumping over the moon, to hide Peter Rabbit behind a pop-out watering can and to glide Pooh Bear to the top of a honey tree.

Action books of rhymes and tales are well suited for use with young children to help develop prereading skills and foster a lively interest in books. It is the purpose of this article to present a rationale and guidelines for using action book nursery rhymes and favorite tales with preschool and kindergarten children. A booklist has been compiled to assist parents and teachers in choosing a resource collection.

Rationale

The purpose for using action rhymes and tales in the home or early childhood classroom is to develop children's representational understandings and a sense of story structure. In addition, action books help children enjoy print, an important motivational aspect for successful beginning reading.

Action books are useful in helping young children build representational understandings (McGee & Charlesworth, 1984). The movables serve as a transition between real

objects and actions and the flat representations in picture books. Pictures can aid the transition from the concrete to the abstract (Smardo, 1982). However, for some children pictures are often not enough. Action books with movable parts, on the other hand, allow for a degree of concreteness to accompany print.

Helping young children develop a "sense of story" is an important prereading skill (Petty, Petty & Becking, 1985; Stewig, 1983). Action books can serve as an aid for children to help them develop a sense of plot and story sequence. Shannon and Samuels (1985) suggest that action books help children organize thought in order to produce meaning. The moving visuals are a natural media for helping children understand and order the sequence of a plot. Young children can sequence simple storytelling by following the actions of the movables. The oral reprocessing of the rhymes and tales help children gain an awareness of story structure.

Action rhymes and tales help foster a love of literature. A child who loves books is on his or her way to becoming a successful reader (Barron & Burley, 1984; Durkin, 1983). Children enjoy action books because they are able to participate in a story and find the involvement exciting. Abrahamson and Stewart (1982) point out that books with movables show children that experiences with print can be enjoyable. Children should always be introduced to the traditional picture books of nursery rhymes and favorite tales. The action books offer an additional dimension to the traditional picture books for helping children enjoy experiences with print.

Guidelines

The following four steps are guidelines for using action rhymes and tales with young children. The steps follow the releasing story power sequence suggested by Burke (1986). The guidelines focus on reading as a shared experience.

1. Prepare the children. Tell them to watch for surprises. Read the tale or rhyme and model the action triggers yourself.
2. Go back and show the children how to use the lift-flaps, pull-tabs, turn-wheels and pop-up pages. Read the rhyme or tale again. Guide the children's participation with the action triggers.
3. Have a child hold the book, turn the pages, lift the

flaps or turn the wheels while you model telling the story in your own words or repeating the rhyme. Have a child tell the story, with assistance if needed, as he or she triggers the action tabs.

4. Make the book available for repeated individual discovery and oral storytelling.

Resource Booklist

Action rhymes and tales for reading in the home or classroom should be selected based on durability and simplicity. In most cases the action books of rhymes and tales of today are paper engineered for hard use. The lift-flaps are sturdy and the pop-out figures and objects are securely glued. Fragile pop-ups should be avoided for use with young children. The interest and pleasure of an action book is for the child to be able to participate.

The accompanying text for action books should be simple. Long complicated texts are not in keeping with a young child's attention span. A simple text will allow the child to tell back the rhyme or tale based on the sequence of pop-ups. However, a too abbreviated text can be a disservice to a favorite tale or rhyme. Care must be taken to have a balance between simplicity and retaining the richness of the original tale or rhyme.

The following booklist has been annotated to assist both parents and teachers in selecting durable and simple action book rhymes and tales for the home and early childhood classroom.

Nursery Rhymes

Golden Animal Pop-Up Book. (1985). Racine, WI: Western Publishing Co. My Pop-Up Mother Goose. Sturdy stand-up animals pop up for each nursery rhyme.

Hawkins, D., and Hawkins, J. (1985). New York: Putnam. Old Mother Hubbard. Old Mother Hubbard's funny dog is hiding under the lift-flaps.

Hill, E. (1984). Los Angeles: Price/Stern/Sloan. Nursery Rhyme Peek-A-Book. Nursery rhyme riddles are solved by lifting the flaps to find the answers.

Honey Bear Giant Pop-Up Book. (n/d). New York: Modern Promotions. Mother Goose. A delight of simple pop-ups of favorite rhymes.

Playtime Pop-Ups. (reprinted 1985). New York: Outlet Book Co., Deans International. My Nursery Rhyme Pop-Up Book and Lucy Atwell's Pop-Up Book of Rhymes. Favorite rhymes have simple stand-out scenes.

Real Mother Goose Pop-Ups. (1985). New York: Rand McNally & Co. Cat and the Fiddle and Other Animal Rhymes, Humpty Dumpty and Other Nursery Rhymes, Jack and Jill and Other Favorite Rhymes, and Pat-a-cake and Other Playtime Rhymes. A marvel of movables to accompany nursery rhymes; hands clap, fiddlers bow, and children line up by the Old Woman's shoe.

Revolving Picture Book Series. (1984). New York: Franklin Watts. Humpty Dumpty and Other Favorite Nursery Rhymes and Jack and Jill and Other Favorite Nursery Rhymes. Revolving wheels give action pictures for the rhymes.

Sesame Street. (1976). New York: Random House. The Sesame Street Mother Goose. Pop-up Sesame Street Characters pose for the rhymes.

Favorite Tales

All-Action Treasure Hour Pop-Up Books. (1971; 1983). New York: Outlet Book Co., Deans International (Artia; Brown Watson). Goldilocks and the Three Bears, Jack and the Beanstalk, Puss-in-Boots, Snow White, The Three Little Pigs, and Cinderella. Durable pop-outs sequence the plot for each tale.

Baum, Frank. (n/d). New York: Windmill. The Wizard of Oz: A Windmill Pop-Up Book. A tornado lifts Dorothy's house off the page and carries it high into the air.

De-Luxe Pop-Up Book Series. (reprinted 1985). New York: Bookthrift, Deans International. My Pop-Up Book of Fairy Tales, My Pop-Up Book of Sleeping Beauty, My Pop-Up Book of Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs, My Pop-Up Book of Puss-in-Boots, and My Pop-Up Book of Cinderella. Scenes and characters fold out to set a sequence of scenes for each of the five stories.

Favorite Tale Pop-Up Books. (1984). New York: Crown Publishers. Alice in Wonderland, The Three Little Pigs, Cinderella, Tom Thumb, Goldilocks, Puss-in-Boots, The Tortoise and the Hare, and The Ugly Duckling. Eight

tales fold out as a lively sequence of the favorite tales.

Hill, E. (1984). Los Angeles: Price/Stern/Sloan. Fairy Tale Peek-a-Book. A riddle fairy tale book; answers are under the flaps.

Hillard, S. (1986). New York: Putnam. Billy Goats Gruff. A troll is hiding under the lift flaps.

Honey Bear Pop-Up Books. (n/d). New York: Modern Promotions. Cinderella, Hansel and Gretel, Pinocchio, and Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs. Four pocket-sized pop-out books of favorite tales. Honey Bear Giant Pop-Up Books. (n/d). Alice in Wonderland, Jack and the Beanstalk, Little Red Riding Hood, Peter Rabbit, and The Wizard of Oz. Sturdy pop-ups of favorite scenes.

Milne, A. A. (1984). New York: Dutton. Winnie-the-Pooh: A Pop-Up Book. Christopher Robin tugs back and forth to free Pooh from Rabbit's hole.

My Favorite Pop-Up Books. (n/d). New York: Modern Promotions. Hansel and Gretel, Wizard of Oz, Alice in Wonderland, Jack and the Beanstalk, and Sleeping Beauty. Easy to tell the tale from the pop-up scenes.

Patience, J. (reprinted 1985). New York: Crown Publishers. All in a Day in Fern Hollow, Outdoor Fun in Fern Hollow, Busy Times in Fern Hollow, and Winter Fun in Fern Hollow. Fold-out scenes bring the characters from Fern Hollow into action.

Play Time Pop-Ups. (reprinted 1985). New York: Outlet Book Co., Deans International. My Pop-Up Book of Fairy Tales. The pop-ups are simple and sturdy.

Potter, B. (1983). New York: Frederick Warne. The Peter Rabbit Pop-Up Book. A fold-out watering can emerges and a pull-tab pops up Peter with a "Kertschoo."

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