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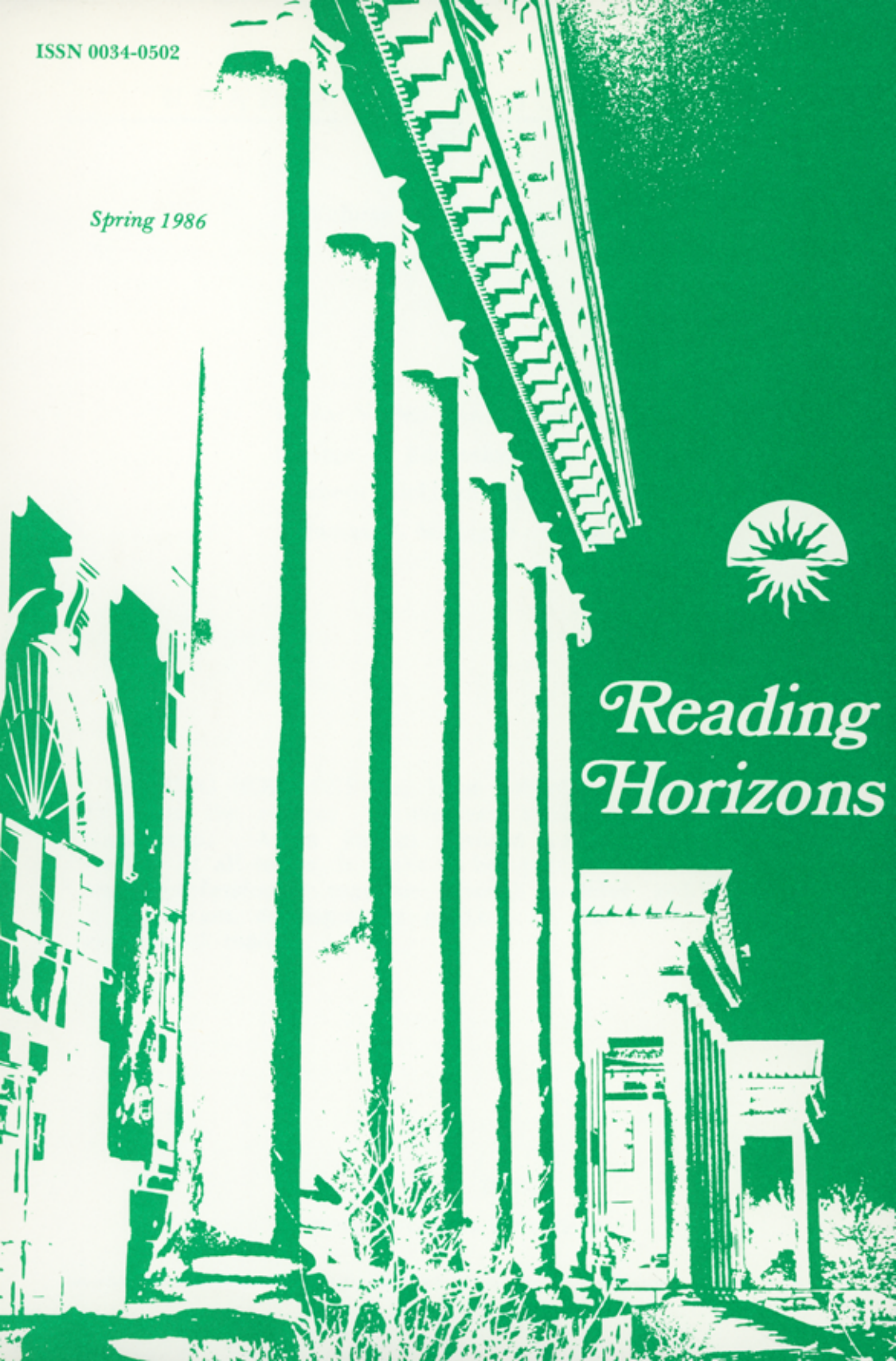

Reading Horizons

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BUILDING AN EFFECTIVE READING PROGRAM: FOUR IMPORTANT STEPS

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One of the most basic questions facing educators at all levels is that of constructing a reading program which meets the needs of all children and provides effective instruction in developmental, corrective, and remedial reading. To insure such conditions requires careful planning, thoughtful instruction, and thorough evaluation and measurement. The basic purpose of this article is to describe and analyze four important steps which should be followed in building a reading program that will help gain the objectives and goals mentioned previously.

I. Establishing a Body of Desired Skills.

The first and perhaps most important of all the steps involved in constructing a viable reading program is that of deciding what skills and competencies each pupil should develop at each of the learning levels. In a typical basal reading program the authors list in some detail all of the desired skills in a scope and sequence chart which usually encompasses such aspects as reading readiness, word attack, comprehension, vocabulary, and oral reading.

Tests are usually provided for each of the level readers which include data for the teacher to determine which

level reader the child should use and what skills have been mastered. These instruments are designed to measure proficiency in both the major skills and subskills which are enumerated on the scope and sequence chart. There is some disagreement among reading authorities regarding what the exact nature of these skills should be. Most present one list for decoding skills (for example, knowledge of letter-sound correspondences and recognition of prefixes and suffixes) and another list for comprehension skills (for example, identifying details and making inferences), but their sets of skills are rarely identical.[1]

The commercial reading program selected for elementary children should reflect those objectives which teachers, administrators, and community leaders feel correlate with the instructional goals which have been established for the local school. Since reading is not a subject but a body of skills to be taught by all teachers at every grade level, a total school system reading program should be in evidence for all students from kindergarten through the twelfth grade. Karlin,[2] for example, notes that in typical high school reading programs, less attention will be paid to word recognition than to the other reading skills unless a student is a very deficient reader. He believes that some students will need help with adjusting the way they read according to their purposes and the nature of the material.

The total skills program, whatever its nature, should be undertaken to help insure that the graduates of a local school district can demonstrate basic literacy in all of the major aspects of reading, especially silent reading comprehension. Concurrent with the pursuit of reading skills, each teacher should emphasize basic proficiencies in writing, speaking, and listening.

II. Undertaking a Program of Reading Skills Evaluation

The second step involved in building an effective reading program is evaluating each pupil to gain an understanding relative to the degree to which the individual has learned the skills that constitute the major goals of the program.

One cannot establish a meaningful instructional strategy for pupils unless a careful analysis or evaluation has been made of their exact needs. From an instructional stand-

point, evaluation may be defined as a systematic process of determining the extent to which instructional objectives are achieved by pupils. Evaluation is a much more comprehensive term than measurement.[3] In assessing the degree of reading skill attainment, an effective teacher employs many types of data in the process. These would include such measurement items as the scores from standardized achievement tests, observation of the learner while reading silently, evidences of word attack problems as noted from oral reading recitations, and reading interest as judged from listening to a child's conversation.

After gathering all of the necessary data from the evaluation sources, one should make a learning grid on which the names of the pupils are placed horizontally on the left side of the sheet and the list of desired skills or competencies are listed vertically across the top of the sheet. In each square a designation is made relative to the degree that the pupil has attained a given skill. The notations of the various deficiencies serve to indicate to the teacher the precise skills which should be emphasized in a certain student's reading program. Computer reading evaluation systems such as The Reading Style Inventory (Learning Research Associates, P.O. Box 39, Roslyn Heights, N.Y. 11577) provide an individual dual file for each child and reveal such items as perceptual strengths--preferences, best reading environment, emotional profile, sociological references, and physical references. Information is also provided with respect to the recommended strategies for teaching reading. Companies which produce basal reading series also provide appropriate computer software for evaluation procedures.

III. Initiating an Appropriate Teaching Strategies Curriculum

The third step is constructing or implementing a series of lessons or strategies to help each pupil reach his or her maximum potential in reading skills development. To meet the instructional needs of pupils, the teacher must provide lessons which will help each pupil. These activities can be those taken from the many books, worktexts, and workbooks which are on the market. Currently, many teachers are utilizing the vast array of developmental and tutorial lessons which are found in computer software stores. Some companies such as Computer Assisted Instruc-

tion, Inc., and Milliken provide programs which are individualized and meant to improve a pupil's deficiencies in such important areas as vocabulary, word attack, and comprehension.

The materials described previously can be used appropriately to supplement the basal reading program. (It is estimated that approximately 90% of the schools in the United States use a basal reading series as the primary curriculum requirement to teach children to read.[4]) Additional strategies to help pupils can be derived from using the language experience approach, thus helping pupils to build sight word vocabulary and increase interest in reading in general. Regardless of the materials and strategies employed, teachers should see the correct instructional prescription needed in light of the data derived from the evaluation procedures enumerated in Section II.

IV. Conducting a System of Continuous Evaluation

The fourth step recommends numerous activities which are designed to evaluate the teaching strategies and lessons which they are currently employing. If measurement devices show that pupils are not making sufficient progress in the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains, another approach should be found which may be more satisfactory. It is important for all concerned instructors to remember that reading is a complex act and many factors must be considered; there is no correct way to teach reading (5). Effective reading instruction demands that teachers remain flexible in utilizing both evaluation and teaching strategies.

SUMMARY

An effective reading program can be realized if four sequential steps are followed as described in this article. First, educators must decide what skills and competencies they want their pupils to develop. Second, they must conduct a program of careful evaluation to determine what students need, to meet the desired goals. Third, a well constructed program of instruction should be incorporated which matches directly the precise instructional needs of the pupil. Fourth, continuous evaluation must be conducted to learn if the instructional objectives are being met. Building an effective reading program is a challenging

task; however, the goal can be realized if the proper steps are undertaken in the process.

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A MOTIVATIONAL STRATEGY FOR TEACHING LOCATIONAL SKILLS: THE NAME GAME

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Your students are seated quietly, listening to your directions. Suddenly, a late student appears at the door, exclaiming "There's a big fire!" Immediately, this student and the fire become the center of attention. "Where's the fire?" the other students ask. Taking out a street map of the city, the teacher helps the students find the location of the fire. "That's near the hospital," interjects a student. "I hope it doesn't get out of control," says another student. "I wonder if my mom was able to get to work--she has to drive near the fire," from still another student.

Locating places is of great importance in our daily lives. Because it is crucial, we teach students map locational skills. Yet, merely asking students to locate the name of a city, mountain or river becomes quite boring if done without interest and variety.

"The intensity of our interest in an activity as well as the amount of effort that we expend on it depends on our feeling of personal involvement in that activity" (Kolesnik, 1978). Personal involvement may be increased by creating interesting materials and encouraging small group activities which involve students in planning, sharing and reacting.

As early as the 19th century, James (1890) viewed attention as being of primary importance to learning. In a survey in which college students kept a diary of the things they did for a weekend, McReynolds (1971) found that 43% of everything the students did was because of

the appeal of the activity, and 42% was to obtain a terminal goal. Wingfield (1979) wrote that personal motivation is a most important variable in attention. A person's interest will be heightened by stimuli which are relevant to his/her own needs, concerns or desires. These stimuli capture an individual's attention. If students want (desire) to engage in a learning activity, they will direct more attention to it.

Other studies on intensity of interest have been conducted by measuring children's attention, or the "holding-power" of toys, during play. Cockrell (1935) and McDowell (1937) found that different materials had different holding-power. Moyer and Gilmer (1954) found that the mean attention spans of children could be increased by increasing the holding-power of toys.

In a more recent work Shostak (1982) identifies specific skills which can increase student attention. These include: (1) "set induction" which involves getting students ready for a lesson by relating it to their needs and interests, (2) "stimulus variation" which includes varying movement, ways of presenting information and the actual teaching materials, and (3) providing a summary or "closure" to each lesson.

The unexpected (novelty) will attract attention (Wingfield, 1979). If you were walking along a beach on a hot summer day you wouldn't think anything of seeing people swimming. If, however, you were walking that same beach when it was covered with snow, you would be very surprised to see someone swimming. The unexpected would have caught your attention. When students locate places on a map using the same activities time after time, attention may well wander. Yet, when they engage in novel activities, attention increases.

If students are truly interested, they can selectively pay attention to the task and block out extraneous noises. Studies by Cherry (1953), Kahneman (1973) and Treisman (1964) illustrated ability to "turn off" outside auditory stimuli and pay attention to conversation of interest. Moray (1959) found people could identify their names when they came up unexpectedly in a room of different conversations. Novelty attracts attention.

The NAME GAME is a locational skill activity which is different from the expected "locate New York on your map." It uses novelty and creates a situation in which students become personally involved.

To play the game: (1) Provide your students with a list of descriptive phrases which stand for the name of a city (e.g., hot weather town - Summerville, Ga.; a chocolate candy bar - Hershey, Pa.). (2) Have your students read the list of descriptive phrases. Then using the list of cities on the map, try to find the name of a city which fits the description. (3) Once the name of the city is located students may then locate the city on the map and indicate its coordinates.

When students are familiar with the procedure, they can develop their own NAME GAMES. And imagine the vocabulary building which also goes on when constructing or playing at the game!

Here are a few to get you started--

Using the Pennsylvania state map, find the names of cities or towns that will fit the following clues:

1. A glittering city. (Gold)
2. A free city. (Liberty)
3. A fine china. (Lenox)
4. A chocolate candy bar. (Hershey)
5. A town in the center of things. (Middletown)
6. A small town. (Littletown)
7. A grass colored place where royalty lives. (Greencastle)
8. A town that has wet roads. (Water Street)
9. A town that likes overnight hikes. (Camptown)
10. A town that didn't do less. (Dunmore)
11. A place that developed from a bud. (Bloomsburg)
12. A sleeping car. (Bedford)
13. A town in the middle of things. (Centerville)
14. A town that likes to build dams. (Beaver)
15. A place that isn't wide. (Narrowsburg)
16. The man whose job it is to open the front door. (Butler)
17. The ocean to the east of the U.S.A. (Atlantic)
18. A city in Russia. (Moscow)
19. The lady who is married to the king. (Queen)

Using the North Carolina state map find the names of cities or towns that will fit these clues:

1. A place that is winter-white and steep. (Snow Hill)
2. A place that isn't poor or round. (Rich Square)
3. A place where cows and chickens live. (Farmville)
4. A place that isn't the roots of trees. (Pinetops)
5. A hog's leg that goes back and forth. (Rockingham)
6. A tribe of native Americans. (Cherokee)
7. A U.S. law officer, like Matt Dillon. (Marshall)
8. A place that gets hot and is painful to the touch. (Burnsville)
9. Daniel's town. (Boone)
10. A stone that is breezy. (Blowing Rock)
11. Two trees just alike. (Twin Oaks)
12. A space between two mountains that is not shallow. (Deep Gap)
13. A place that might steer a plane. (Pilot Mountain)
14. A place in which Adam and Eve might live. (Eden)
15. A group of trees that aren't sleeping. (Wake Forest)
16. A free town. (Liberty)
17. A city that doesn't want fewer skulls. (Morehead City)
18. A long necked graceful bird and 25¢. (Swan Quarter)
19. A young cat bird. (Kitty Hawk)
20. A town in the Far East. (Oriental)

Using the N.Y. state map, find the names of cities or towns that will fit these clues:

1. A town in the middle, not round. (Central Square)
2. A place that isn't high. (Lowville)
3. A town that likes boats that go with the wind. (Salem)
4. A place that wants to know if someone is ill and going down. (Hoosick Falls)
5. A city in Egypt. (Cairo)
6. A place that is not up. (Downsville)
7. A place where Eli might live. (Whitney Point)
8. A place that likes colored sticks. (Painted Post)
9. Water that doesn't flow. (Still Water)
10. Someone who wins. (Victor)
11. A place you need a key to get into. (Lockport)
12. A place where you might find dictionaries. (Webster)
13. The string in the middle of the candle is not soft. (Hardwick)

14. What you do with your money at the bank. (Deposit)
15. A place where there are no old people. (Youngstown)
16. A flower that has thorns on its stem. (Rose)
17. A large animal that lives on the plains. (Buffalo)
18. A town that is all wet. (Watertown)
19. A city which has just been built. (New City)
20. "Give me _____ or give me death." (Liberty)

Using the Ohio state map find the names of cities or towns that will fit these clues:

1. A round town. (Circlesville)
2. A town getting well. (Fort Recovery)
3. A town that needs straightening out. (Crooksville)
4. A town for strangers. (Newcomerstown)
5. A town that likes people. (Friendship)
6. A town whose water is going underground or down. (Sinking Spring)
7. A town known for bold resistance. (Defiance)
8. A country bumpkin town. (Hicksville)
9. A really hurting town. (Painsville)
10. A butterbean. (Lima)
11. A look at the water. (Lakeview)
12. People who fix cars live here. (Mechanicsburg)
13. The one who sailed the ocean blue. (Columbus)
14. Sparkling or extremely smart. (Brilliant)
15. A pasture that is not for women. (Mansfield)
16. Tiny stones. (Pebbles)
17. Acres and acres of trees. (Forest)
18. A town that must have a lot of soup. (Campbell)
19. What is seen at dawn. (Rising Sun)

You can expand or further develop the NAME GAME by providing your students with sentences containing missing words. In place of these missing words are map locations. Students must find these locations on their maps. They must then find the name of the city or town which fits into the sentence.

Using a map of New York, students might try completing the following:

> They did not meet at the Statue of G--8. Instead, they met at the F--5 on D--10. D--4 handed E--5 his money to F--7 in the bank.

They did not meet at the Statue of Liberty. Insteadl, they met at the Painted Post on Cambridge. Webster handed Geneva his money to Deposit in the bank.

The NAME GAME provides students with the opportunity to integrate learning locational skills with semantic and syntactic development; and it capitalizes upon your students' attraction to novelty and interesting materials. You can create NAME GAMES for your students or you can give your students the opportunity to put their imaginations to work developing their own NAME GAMES.

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PREDICTABLE BOOKS GUARANTEE SUCCESS

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When readers can guess what the author of a book is going to say and how he or she is going to say it, the book is considered predictable. Frequently, there is a repetitive, rhythmic syntactic pattern ("Little pig, little pig, let me come in." "Not by the hair of my chinny, chin, chin.") and a repetitive semantic pattern (By the time the wolf is at the second pig's door, we know what is going to happen.) Cumulative patterns such as The House That Jack Built or familiar sequences such as the days of the week, the months of the year, etc., supported by appropriate illustrations are also characteristic of predictable books (Rhodes,1981).

The structure of the materials that readers encounter and the abilities and experiences readers bring to the act of reading affect the ease with which they comprehend the text. Good readers who are not lawyers or accountants will be slowed down, if not completely perplexed, by their first law briefs or tax forms. Conversely, those students who are in

trouble with reading should benefit from texts whose structure and story line are obvious to them.

To test this last assumption, one group of students using their basal reader and another group of students using predictable books in a reading lab for grades one, two , and three were pre- and post-tested to discern if their reading scores were affected by their respective experiences.

Procedure

Nineteen first-grade students, 14 second-grade students and 15 third-grade students in the ECIA-I Reading/Language Arts Laboratory program of a small rural school in southern West Virginia participated in the study. To be eligible for participation in the program, the students were first referred by the classroom teacher at the end of the previous year. The kindergarten students who were entering first-grade and children retained in grade one were administered the Metropolitan Readiness Test. If the student scored at or below the 39th percentile on the test, he or she was eligible for participation in the ECIA-I program. The first-grade students and students retained in the second-grade were given the reading and language section of the Primary 1 level of the Metropolitan Achievement Test and the second-grade students and students retained in the third-grade were given the same sections of the Primary 2 level of the Metropolitan Achievement Test. If the students who took the MAT scored at or below the 40th percentile in either the reading or the language sections of the test, they were eligible to participate in the ECIA-I program. New students were tested at the beginning of the school term.

The groups for the study wee chosen randomly from each of the three grade levels. The experimental group consisted of three groups: ten students in grade one, seven students in grade two, and eight students in grade three. The control group consisted of three groups: nine students in grade one, seven students in grade two and seven students in grade three.

The instructional materials used by the control group were based on a developmental, sequential basal skills approach. The major portion of instruction came from the Ginn Reading Series. Supplemental materials were from

ditto masters which used a skills approach for reading instruction. The instructional reading materials for the experimental group were predictable books. All group projects and activities used in the program were the same for each student.

Beginning in September of the school year six groups of students were taken daily from the regular classroom and placed in a Reading/Language Arts Laboratory situation for a 45-minute period.

The students in the control group were given their materials in a sequential, step-by-step pattern according to the Ginn Basal Reader they used in the regular classroom. The students brought their basal readers to the Reading Lab for oral reading purposes. A specific list of skills was logged by the classroom teacher. These skills were used in the Reading Lab to supplement reading skills which were taught in the regular classroom at a particular time. The children were not permitted to skip, but had to adhere to the presentation of specific skills according to the teacher's manual for the students' particular reader.

At the beginning of the term the students in the experimental group were first shown the predictable books which were to be used. Then they were allowed to browse and read any book which they chose. The students were allowed to choose any books they wished to read on a particular day. The method of introducing the books to each child was based on a modified version of Stauffer's Directed Reading-Thinking Activities. These five steps were used both when the students were read to orally or when each child read individually.

1. Read the title and show the picture on the cover of the book and ask, "What do you think this book will be about?" Encourage children to use both word and picture clues as they make their predictions.

2. Begin reading the book as soon as the children have enough information, stop reading and ask one or more of the following questions to encourage children to predict what will happen:
"What do you think will happen next?" "What do you think (character) will say next?" "What do you think (character) will do next?"

3. After the children have made their predictions, ask them to explain why they made those predictions by asking one or more of the following: "Why do you think that idea is a good one?" "Why do you think (character) will say that next?" "Why do you think (character) will do that next?" The purpose of these questions is to help children realize that they are basing their predictions on the book's repetitive patterns.

4. Read through the next set of repetitive patterns to enable children to confirm or reject their predictions.

5. Continue reading and have the children repeat steps 2, 3, and 4. For children reading individually, encourage them to finish the book using the predictive cycle (Tompkins and Webler, 1983, pp. 500-501).

Each student kept a list of books read and the dates they were read. Whenever a student read 15 books, he or she received a reading certificate. The students also listened to tape recordings of the books and followed the text as they listened to the tape.

During the last week in March, all students took a post-test to see if there were any differences in scores. Students completing the first grade were given the reading and language sections of the Primary 1 level of the Metropolitan Achievement Test. Students completing grade three were given the reading and language sections of the Elementary level of the Metropolitan Achievement Test.

A two-way analysis of covariance (treatment by grade) was performed on the post-test reading scale scores with pre-test reading scale scores used as covariate.

Results

Table 1

Pre and Post Test Means of All Groups

Treatment	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3
Predictable Books	Post M=514.4 Pre M=115.6	Post M=545.6 Pre M=460.3	Post M=604.2 Pre M=553.7
Basal only	Post M=473.6 Pre M=113.3	Post M=544.8 Pre M=504.7	Post M=565 Pre M=557.6

M = Mean

TABLE 2

Results of Analysis of Covariance

	F-Ratio	Degrees of Freedom	Significance Level
Treatment	15.41	1	.0003*
Grade	4.43	2	.0181*
Interaction	.41	2	.6666

* Significance level less than .05

A least squares means analysis showed that there were significant differences in pre- and post-test scores for both treatment groups between grade levels (prob: .0001). Althought there were significant differences between the mean test scores due to the grade variable (see Table 2), the least squares means analysis did not reveal significance levels less than .05 for any pair-wise comparison of grades.

Discussion

To determine whether or not there was a difference in the pre- and post-test scaled scores of the Metropolitan Achievement Tests by the two treatment groups, an analysis of covariance was performed. The students using the predictable books as a supplement improved significantly over the students who used only the basal reader (.0003). Also there was a significant difference between the scores of each grade level (.0181). There was no significant interaction between the treatment and grade variable (.6666). The least mean square analysis showed that both groups of students improved significantly.

These differences support the theories of Goodman (1983), Smith (1975), and La Berge (1974) concerning the nature of the transactions which occur between the reader and text. The results also support the findings of Rhodes (1979) and Burke (1977) that a whole language approach to reading using predictable books is a sound process which provides whole units of meaning for the reader and makes the natural prediction of reading easier.

However, it should be noted that the children in the experimental group who read the predictable materials were exposed to the basal reader approach in their classrooms. Also, the control and experimental groups were not large groups, and were removed from the classroom daily. Since both groups were removed daily, a halo effect is somewhat controlled.

This study provides several implications for classroom use. Since predictable books reflect the child's knowledge of his world, they are good supplemental books to use in the classroom, even if teachers are required to use a basal reader. Through the use of predictable books, a teacher can find a new resource and method of expanding effective reading.

Teachers who learn to effectively use predictable books as resources for reading and writing activities will help readers acquire basic reading skills without consciously teaching a step-by-step reading method. Children who use predictable books will automatically acquire such reading skills as sight vocabulary and the use of context clues.

In addition to the advantage of using predictable books for reading skills, the books can be used as resources for writing. When children use books such as Bill Martin's Instant Readers, they can analyze the patterns in these books and use the patterns as models for their own writing. The pattern then serves as a framework upon which to hang their own ideas. Predictable books based on rhyme can help children learn word families with common sounds or syllables and improve spelling.

In today's society, where becoming literate is very important, teachers must constantly be on the lookout for materials and methods which work and demonstrate results. The use of predictable books is one such method, and their use expedites both the teaching of reading and the love of reading.

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WORD CLUSTER:
A STRATEGY FOR SYNONYM DEVELOPMENT

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"I just can't think of the right word to use!" This common lament is echoed frequently during high school, college, and beyond. Students are often taught the value of a thesaurus for finding the "right" word to use in writing or speaking. Wouldn't it be fine to have a thesaurus in one's brain--a vast store of words with numerous synonyms readily available? Actually, we do. An awareness and expansion of this "thesaurus of the brain" may be developed by using word clusters.

Learning theory suggests that proficiency in synonym knowledge is partly due to our existing cognitive structure, the way in which words have been stored and organized in our brains (Smith, 1975). Word Cluster is a strategy for vocabulary development which assists students in bringing their existing cognitive structure to the surface and helps them modify or extend their structure based on interaction with other learners. It also enhances the learner's understanding of the subtle differences among

words having similar meanings.

A plethora of strategies exists for enriching and expanding the learner's vocabulary. Many exercises designed to increase vocabulary knowledge randomly group words to be studied. Williamson (1976) suggests that vocabulary instruction should focus on complexes or a conceptual organization of words, taking advantage of a person's basic classifying ability rather than expecting the learner to remember haphazard groupings. Gipe's research (1978) with elementary age children found strong support for teaching vocabulary by defining and providing examples of new words in the context of familiar words or through association with a familiar synonym.

The Word Cluster strategy is a content-oriented instructional method which relies on the vocabulary resources of a group of learners. Classification and association as a means of retention are integral parts of the Word Cluster strategy.

A cluster is defined as "a small, close group." Word Clusters are groups of words sharing the same global concept. For example, house, cabin, mansion, and shack are similar in that they are all forms of shelter. However, there are distinct differences that must be distinguished by students to facilitate understanding of the impact of their words in various contexts.

Procedure for a Word Cluster Lesson

The Word Cluster instructional strategy requires very little preparation time for the teacher but, as with any strategy designed to enhance vocabulary, the Word Cluster should relate to the lesson at hand. It can be both a pre-reading and post-reading strategy. When used as a pre-reading strategy, it can serve to generate interest in a story, poem, article, or study topic, while also tapping students' prior knowledge of a subject. When used after reading, Word Cluster acts as a means of assessing student understanding of the organization of a particular concept. Certain steps should be followed, regardless of the placement of Word Cluster in the lesson sequence.

1. Prior to beginning the lesson, the teacher should identify a word or phrase that is central to the theme or purpose of the lesson.

2. At the time designated for the Word Cluster lesson, write the name or phrase on the chalkboard and ask students to name other words having similar meanings to the word or phrase.

3. Record all responses on the board in the order generated by students. Try to obtain ten or more, up to fifteen.

4. When the desired number of responses have been obtained, ask students to organize the words into some kind of cluster or group that can be justified. This can be done on paper by each student or can be accomplished through group discussion. If done individually, ask several students to record clusters on the board and provide a rationale for their organization of the words.

Table 1

	Initial Cluster	Hierarchy
	town	neighborhood
	village	community
Social	community	village
Studies	city	town
	metropolis	city
	neighborhood	metropolis
	megalopolis	megalopolis

from American Civics, 3rd ed., Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

Table 1 and 2 illustrate responses made by students to the words "town" and "cocaine." The first group in each table contains the initial clusters generated by the students. The second group reflects their organization of the words into a hierarchy (Table 1) or mini-clusters (2).

Some clusters of words, such as those relating to "town" lend themselves well to hierarchical relationships. The teacher should ask "which words mean more?" and "which words mean less?" to help students understand the process involved. Also, the definitions of "more" and "less" in the context at hand should be defined. For example, if cocaine is the target word, more and less

Table 2

	Initial Cluster	Mini-Clusters	
Current Events (Drugs)	cocaine	tobacco	least severe
	marijuana	alcohol	
	heroin	marijuana	
	tobacco	cocaine	
	alcohol	amphetamines	
	barbituates	barbituates	
	amphetamines	morphine	most severe
	morphine	heroin	

from Time, Ap.11, 1983, "Fighting Cocaine's Grip".

could be thought of in terms of the perceived severity of the effects of various drugs. As can be seen, it is difficult to construct an exact ranking of the drugs mentioned, therefore, several "mini" clusters emerge. If disagreement surfaces regarding placement of some words into clusters or within a hierarchy, the teacher should serve as a facilitator, helping students see that some words may be used interchangeably in certain contexts, while others may not.

Related Activities

Writing, prediction, and cloze activities may be used to extend the Word Cluster lesson. For instance, students can be divided into small groups and collaborate on construction of sentences using words contained in the cluster or hierarchy. Follow-up should center on sentence content with the teacher emphasizing the contextual differences among words in a given cluster. When Word Cluster is used as a pre-reading activity, students can be asked to make predictions concerning the content of the lesson. Cloze activities can be constructed with the deleted words chosen from the cluster. This affords students an additional opportunity to see the importance of context.

Using Word Cluster in a classroom at any grade level can help decrease the frustration reflected in "I just can't think of the right word to use!" or "I don't know anything about this topic!" Word Cluster is particularly useful in college developmental programs since it facilitates integration of reading and writing activities. Students enjoy the participation aspect of the strategy, as well as the opportunity to share and learn with others. The value of sharing is that it enables students to see varying perceptions of others regarding the organization of words which are often viewed as synonyms. Like Taba's List-Group-Label (1967), Word Cluster helps students develop organizational skills. Finally, Word Cluster enhances the students' ability to identify words appropriate in a given context and to choose the most effective word.

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ELEMENTARY TEACHERS OF READING AS MODELS

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The teacher at all levels should devote his/her efforts to leading students into the other worlds that can be found in the pages of books. Whether these are make-believe worlds found in fantasy or the real worlds of science, geography, history, etc., each reader needs to become acquainted with the elements of all possible worlds. How is this to be accomplished?

Although there can be many avenues to follow in achieving this goal, one important means would be for the teacher to serve as a model. Children tend to observe parents first and then teachers, adopting many of the practices of these individuals. Since this is true, it becomes important that the adults observed are good role models when it comes to reading.

One might assume that an individual majoring in elementary education would be a reader. Is this a safe assumption? In an effort to determine the book reading habits of individuals in this category, some questions were put to them. All were either seniors or second semester juniors and in attendance at a state university.

Although questions were asked about all types of reading, the questions to be reported here are related to the reading of books.

1. Are you reading a book now? If so, what is the name of the book?

2. If you are not reading a book now, what is the name of the last book you read? When did you read it?

3. Where did you obtain the book?

4. Why read books?

5. What are your three favorite types of leisure activities?

One might hypothesize that there would be no difference in the reading habits of these young people. Let us see is this is true.

Findings

When asked if they were reading a book now, only 29 of the 80 elementary education majors responded affirmatively. Twenty-four of the books being read were novels. Four books were inspirational in nature, and one was a collection of short stories.

Of the 51 students who were not presently reading a book, a question pertaining to the last book read was asked. Thirty-two of these students had read a novel most recently. Eight of these students did not mention the name of the book they had read most recently. Five students had read an inspirational book, one had read a biography, and one had read a book of plays. Two students had read a book for children's literatue which they listed, and one other had read only textbooks. In the last two instances, the reading could hardly be counted as voluntary. A final student listed a magazine rather than a book. Table 1 provides the percentages of students in each category.

It is of interest to note that 15 of the 51 students not presently reading a book had read one within the last month. For 19 of the 51 students the time since last reading a book was more than six months.

Table 1

Type of Book Being Read or Last Read

Now Reading	Novel-30% Biog-0% Insp.-5% Child Lit-0% Short St.-1% **Total - 36%**
Not Reading	Novel-40% Biog.-1¼% Insp.-6% Child Lit-3% Play-1¼% Not Spec-10% Text-1¼% Mag-1¼ **Total - 64%**

Table 2

Source of Reading Material

Now Reading	Purch.-10% Friend-11% Home-4% Book Club-1% Lrng Ctr-1% Gift-3% Library-1% No Rspns-5% **Total-36%**
Not Reading	Purch.-23% Friend-21% Home-8% Gift-5% Tchrs Lnge-1% Library-2% No Rspns-4% **Total-64%**

Table 3

Why Read Books?

Now Reading	Enjoy-19% Enjoy & Info-10% Info-6% No Response-1% **Total - 36%**
Not Reading	Enjoy-31% Enjoy & Info-12% Info-7% No Rspns-5% Have to-4% Sp.Tme-3% Don't Read-1% Enrichment-1% **Total - 64%**

Table 4

Is Reading One of Your Three Favorite Types of Leisure Activity?

Now Reading	Yes-31%	No-5%	**Total--36%**
Not Reading	Yes-24%	No-40%	**Total--64%**

When asked where they had obtained the book, a variety of sources was listed. For those who were presently reading a book, the greatest number, 9, had borrowed the book from a friend; 8 had purchased the book; 3 found the book at home; 4 did not indicate where they had obtained the book; 2 received the book as a gift, and the final three students listed one of the following sources: book club, learning center, or public library.

For students who were not presently reading a book, the greatest number, 18, had bought the book; 17 obtained the book from a friend; 6 students got the book at home; 4 received the book as a gift; 3 gave no response; 2 got the book at the library; and 1 found the book in the teachers' lounge. Table 2 shows the percentages of students using each source.

When examining reasons for reading, 15 of the 29 students presently reading viewed reading as something to do for enjoyment, 8 mentioned both enjoyment and information, and 5 mentioned information only as the reason for reading. One student gave no response.

For the students not presently reading a book, 25 indicated that enjoyment was the reason for reading, 10 students listed both enjoyment and information, 6 listed information only, 4 did not respond, 3 stated they read because they had to, 2 read to pass spare time, 1 read for enrichment, and 1 did not read at all. The percentages in each category are in Table 3.

The responses to the questions relating to favorite leisure time activities showed that 25 of those presently reading a book listed reading as one of their three favorite leisure time activities, and only 4 of this group did not mention it. For the students not presently reading a book 19 mentioned it as one of their three favorite leisure time activities while 32 did not include it. Table 4 shows the percentages.

Discussion

The most striking finding, one which would not be expected, was that only 29 future elementary teachers out of a total of 80 questioned were currently reading a

book. Fifty-one had no book "in process." Students currently reading seemed to be doing this voluntarily as the choice of reading material for all but 5 students was a novel. Four others were reading inspirational material, undoubtedly also their own choice. The final student was reading a collection of short stories.

In the other group 40 of the 51 students were reading in one of the two categories--novel or inspirational material. Three students were reading material for classes--surely not voluntarily. One was reading a magazine, and this does not fit into the category of book reading. Six others could not remember what they had read last. One student was reading a book of plays.

Only 41 students in all indicated that reading was for enjoyment. If we add those who included enjoyment and information, the number increases 20 to a total of 61. There were 18 students holding the belief that reading is for information only. One student did not respond and one said reading was for class assignments. The teachers who do not enjoy reading themselves would not be in the best position to lead children to develop an interest in reading as well as a desire to read.

What is the significance of these findings in terms of influence on young readers? Elementary teachers have a great influence on young readers since they are with them on a daily basis. If we have approximately one-fourth of those teachers who are most interested in reading as a process of obtaining information, the children in their classes are likely to be deprived of the recognition of the pleasure to be found in reading. Huck has told us that if there is anything omitted in our schools today, it is not the teaching of skills, but rather the demonstration to children of the pleasures to be found in reading. She states this very effectively.

> One of the best kept secrets in education is that children learn to read by reading. Most teachers overteach the skills of reading to the detriment of reading practice and enjoyment. Many primary teachers spend over half of their day teaching children how to read without ever giving them the opportunity for reading (1976, p. 600).

Parents and teachers exert influence on the development of readers in future generations. Surely both of these groups need to make sure their influence is a positive one.

There is a message in this for teacher educators as well if the reading habits of future teachers in their classes are similar to those of the students in this study. Some provision would have to be made to acquaint the students with literature for children, and to instill in those future teachers an interest in reading and a desire to read themselves. While a course in children's literature would be a beginning, it would be only that. A continuing effort throughout the teachers' preparation would have to be centered on helping future teachers see the importance of reading--not only in the lives of their students, but more importantly, in their own. With this knowledge they would be better equipped to help ensure that reading does play a focal role in the lives of their students.

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THE BLACK CHILD, HIS DIALECT, AND HIS READING

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The language of the black child, his dialect, has for years been a drawback for the school age child. The child who speaks a black dialect has come a long way in learning "his" language and perhaps feels he has mastered it rather well. But when he enters school, he often discovers that his language is unacceptable at best and openly rejected at worst. If his language is not rejected, it is rarely if ever drawn upon and utilized in the materials and learning activities of the school.

Historically, black children have been required to read, or attempt to read, in the standard dialect, and are presently required to do so. There are no indications to suggest otherwise in the future.

How should one introduce the speaker of black dialect to formal reading instruction? Furthermore, what kind of materials should be used?

1. Before any substantial gains can be made toward the solution of the problem of teaching to speakers of black dialect, teachers must become sensitized to the problems of these children and the kind of environment that produced them.

2. Before teachers can effectively work with speakers of black dialect to teach them a dialect or to teach them to read, teachers must develop a genuinely positive attitude toward black dialect.

3. Teachers must acquire an elementary understanding

of black dialect.

4. Schools should implement a systematic program designed to teach black children standard English as a second dialect.

Motivating the child to explore materials

1. Provide a variety of books and specifying times to browse through them, to get children used to handling books, examining their content, and little by little taking steps to decode the print.

2. Read aloud to implant the sound of standard English on attentive ears.

3. Prose folklore is within the grasp of the child who can read and furnishes motivation in a positive way for other children to gain the skill.

4. Children will become venturesome as they explore books if they are confident that they will not be embarrassed or ridiculed.

5. As the child's confidence grows, he will tackle longer passages. If he is successful, he is on his way in reading. If he fails, he will ask the teacher or another classmate, or keep it a secret to himself as he builds courage to try again. When children are properly motivated through involvement with subject matter, they make the effort to discover what it is in print. Now that we've got the child motivated, we must provide the child relevant materials to increase motivation, keep interest high and discouragement low.

Third World Stories

The cultural keystone of storytelling is Africa.

Some contemporary folklorists try to preserve the rhythm and spirit of the original storytellers' speech in language that is easy to read and understand. Many such stories act as a mediator between dialect and standard English. The familiar ring of the sounds in the stories draws children like a magnet.

Some examples of popular books of Black Folklore are:

-The Book of Negro Folklore by Langston Hughes and Arna

Bontemps, ed. New York: Dodd, Mead, 1958.
-Step It Down: Games, Plays, Songs and Stories from the Afro-American Heritage, Bessie Jones and Bess Lomax Hawes, New York: Harper and Row, 1972.
-An African Treasury, Langston Hughes, New York: Crown Publishers, 1960.
-The Me Nobody Knows, Children's Voices from the Ghetto, Stephen M. Joseph, ed. New York: Avon Books, 1972.
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Reading Independently

Children of minority groups need to develop a positive self image. Many children are already overburdened by the circumstances of their birth and identifying with the positive values of their culture which gives them a solid base for self esteem.

One step leads to another. If a heading of a particular category becomes intriguing, a boy or girl is impelled to investigate its contents and may ask a teacher to read aloud what he or she is unable to decipher.

Children who are learning to read are apt to be drawn to poetry because its short lines offer greater chance of immediate success than longer sentences and

paragraphs. Not only do selections in poetic style appear simple, but they are also personal in terms of interpretation.

Where are the materials? Scores of children's books pertaining to Afro-Americans and Afro-Antillean cultures are steadily being published. The educational division of every major publishing house has a Black History and/or Black Culture series. Multi-Media bits, filmstrips, transparencies, and other aids are also available. In addition, several smaller publishing houses specialize in Resources for Black Studies, including some organized for the very purpose of servicing the needs of Black and Latin American children of elementary school age.

Another possible source of books is from a child's personal collection at home. Ask children to bring their favorite book to school to share. Be certain the book is clearly marked as the property of the child so that it will be returned.

Providing the black child with the inspiration, correct environment, and materials to which he can relate yields productive children expressing themselves in the ways they know best.

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CONFIDENCE HELPS BUILD COMPETENCE

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Confidence helps build competence. Attitude helps aptitude. These are not just idle cliches.

Parents, teachers and others who work with youngsters are realizing more and more that how we teach them is affected by how we reach them.

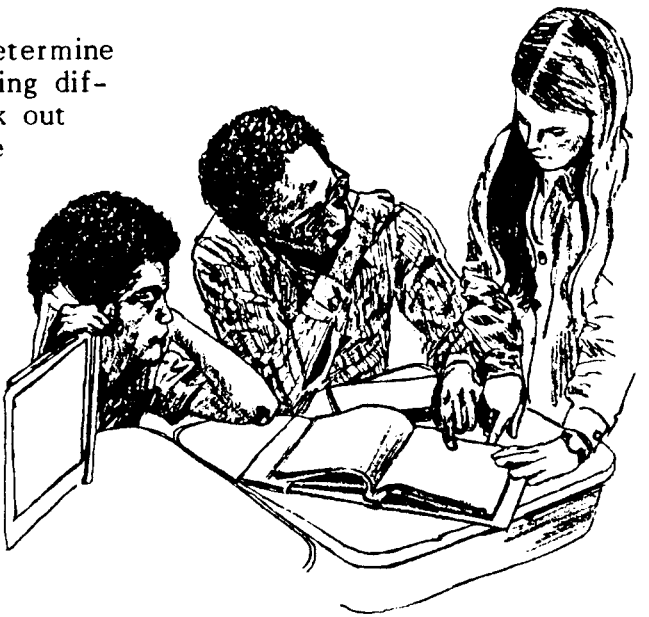
What can be done to emphasize the positive approach? Here are some helpful suggestions.

1. Give children the opportunity for success. Assign them tasks within their capabilities and then build on their strengths.

2. Try to determine why they are having difficulties and work out ways to overcome the problems.

3. Be available for consultation and encouragement.

4. Not only talk but also really listen to the feelings behind their words. Make sure whatever time you spend



with the children is meaningful.

5. Role playing can help youngsters work out and understand their fears, negative attitudes and low self-esteem. Have them act out situations to which they may be subjected.

6. Prepare them for the future by giving educational and career guidance.

7. Instill a sense of pride in them by displaying their work, appreciating their efforts and showing that you care.

8. Encourage them to be able to accept responsibility.

Feelings of self-worth and self-esteem are important to all people at all levels of achievement. The gifts of time and attention that parents and teachers devote to youngsters will enable these children to become caring, successful and well-adjusted adults.

HOW TO AVOID BEING TYRANNIZED BY READABILITY FORMULAS

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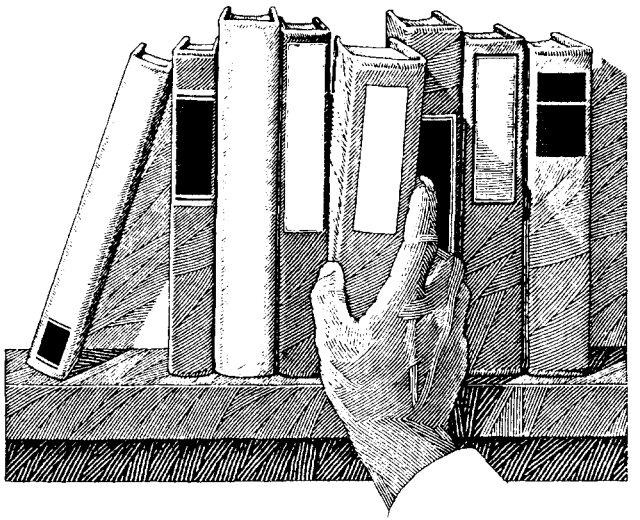

The use of readability formulas is widely recommended by many well intentioned educators, but use can become abuse if the limitations of the formulas are not understood. Supervisors and college instructors have encouraged teachers to check the readability levels of their instructional materials to be sure of a close match between reader and text. Publishers have required their writers to produce textbooks at specified readability levels to supply the current demand for readable texts. Teachers have even tried to simplify their own materials by rewriting them, using shorter words and sentences in an effort to meet the needs of all their students.

When educators who understand the limitations of

readability formulas attempt these ends, the results may indeed foster student gains. However, when educators match, write, and rewrite with blind faith in the power of the formulas to guide them, the results can be disastrous. The IRA and the NCTE consider the current misuse of readability formulas serious enough to warrant a joint statement warning that, if the formulas are to be used at all, they "MUST be used in conjunction with procedures that look at all parts of a text which affect comprehension" (Reading Today, December 1984/January 1985, p. 1).

We offer a real-life case study of how one teacher approached an aspect of this issue--selection of the most appropriate reading text for her students. By using most of the ten suggestions that follow the case study, this teacher did manage to avoid being tyrannized by readability formulas.

Case Study

An experienced and conscientious fifth grade teacher is using Fry's graph (1977) to estimate the readability of her grade-level basal reader. Following the instructions, she selects three 100-word passages and counts the number of syllables and sentences in each one. She finds the selection on page 42 has a 5.5 readability level, but the one on pages 338 and 339 has a level of 7.3. The passage on page 509 also has a readability level of 7.3! She is sure her counts are accurate, so she tests a fourth passage--from page 19--and finds it gets a 4.0 rating. This fifth-grade text seems to start off easy (below grade-level) but to end up well above grade-level. She begins to wonder if the text meets the needs of her students since its average readability (the figure normally used to rate a text) is 6.9, high even for her stronger group.

Working next with two reputable text evaluation checklists (Jevitz and Meints, 1979; and Irwin and Davis, 1980), she gives her reader high ratings for its new treatment of vocabulary and concepts. She also notes the wide range of types of selections included, the reasonably attractive format, and the especially useful ancillary materials that have made the text a valuable teaching tool for her.

Our teacher is a little perplexed at this point. On the one hand, she has been encouraged to match students

with texts of appropriate (average) readability level. But on the other hand, she feels she can and needs to judge the usefulness of the reader in more specific textual terms, rather than just with a scientific count of syllables and sentences. At this point, she is not sure what to do since these two assessments seem to conflict with each other.

Fortunately, this educator is experienced, knowledgeable, and flexible. She decides that she can continue to use the single reader for her multi-level class, in part because it does vary in readability level, but also because she gave it high ratings on key textual factors. The decision is very important to her because she has found that students reading on grade level or just below are more enthusiastic and successful when using the same text as the stronger group in their classroom. It does not seem to bother the lower group that they are working in another part of that text.

When she tries her hand at the new LAB Method (Bradley and Ames, 1984) to estimate her textbook's readability variation, she becomes even more comfortable with her decision. A set of 12 syllable/sentence counts yields an estimate of even wider readability range: third- to ninth-grade. This finding further supports her own professional judgment that the reader does indeed offer sufficient high quality material to satisfy the needs of her students--those who are reading at or slightly below grade level, as well as those who are reading above grade-level.

Recently, there has been increasing interest in analyzing the nature of written text as a communication medium (or code) used by the writer for conveying a message. Language researchers have also pointed out that before a reader can fully comprehend a writer's message, a reasonably good match must exist between the background information and language conventions possessed by the sender of the message (the writer) and the receiver of the message (the reader). Now that thea great complexity of the communication process has been exposed, many educators and writers are learning that readability, too, is a very complex and closely related concept.

Nonetheless, the unrelenting pressure by many public and educational groups for more easily readable textbook materials has increased the use (and often abuse) of read-

ability formulas. Fortunately, this same pressure has also encouraged the continued study of existing readability formulas and the development of new procedures (See Lange, 1982). Becoming familiar with these ideas, findings, and procedures can provide educators with the background information they need in order to make responsible decisions about textbook readability.

We offer ten basic suggestions on how to begin accumulating or to continue building a pool of information on text comprehension and readability. We feel that our case-study teacher was successful in resolving her readability dilemma largely because she was knowledgeable in nearly all of the following areas.

Ten Suggestions for Understanding The Readability Issue

1. Keep in mind that reading is the receptive side of written language communication. The goal of the reader is to understand the writer's ideas. If communication is difficult or does not take place at all, the problem can be traced to (a) the complexity of the writer's ideas, (b) some inadequacy in the way the message is expressed, and/or (c) a lack of background information, purpose, or processing ability on the part of the reader. Thus, readability depends on far more than just the series of words that carry the writer's message.

2. Recognize that no readability formula can yield more than an estimate of text difficulty. Fry (1977) himself recommends that users of his graph extend any readability estimate to cover a range one year above and below the grade level plotted on the graph. Dreyer (1984) also argues this point convincingly.

3. Recognize that different formulas usually give different readability estimates for a given text. In fact, the variation among estimates can be amazingly high; this point is demonstrated well by Smith and Smith (1984).

4. Realize that the factors measured by readability formulas (usually word length or familiarity, and sentence length) merely reflect the difficulty of a text but do not measure it directly. The formulas do not measure text characteristics such as concept density. degree of abstractness,

word frequency, or organization of ideas. Nor do they assess factors such as page format, type-face, or illustrations. Dreyer (1984) presents a full discussion of these issues. When formulas are used to guide the simplification of a text, the results can produce varying readability estimates (depending on which formula is used) and can actually make a piece of text harder to read (Trapini and Walmsley, 1981).

5. Learn how to use the Fry graph, probably the simplest and best known of the formulas. Knowing exactly what is involved in using a formula removes the mystique from the procedure. Consult Fry's article in the December 1977 issue of the Journal of Reading or a reading methods text (for example Durkin, 1983; or Forgan and Mangrum, 1985).

6. Realize that the readability level can vary widely within a given textbook. You might try the LAB Method (Bradley and Ames, 1984) on one of your own textbooks. They you can decide whether you want to use an average of those readability levels as your guide or whether you might like to make that variability work for you, as our case-study teacher did.

7. Use detailed checklists as your primary method for evaluating the readability of a textbook. We have found the ones by Jevitz and Meintz (1979) and Irwin and Davis (1980) to be useful. In this way, you will be sure to consider the textual factors that the formulas cannot measure.

8. Develop your own informal inventories or cloze tests for placing students in texts. Forgan and Mangrum (1985) suggest using the informal inventory procedure to produce what they call an "informal suitability survey" for making the best possible match between student and text. This general approach is also recommended in the IRA/NCTE position paper on readability formulas.

9. Listen to your students. Learn how much background information they have on the topics they meet in their textbooks and how interested they are in these subjects. It is also very important to be aware of organizational practices that may be lowering student morale. Our case-study teacher wisely decided to deal directly with the fact that her lower group was very unhappy with their status as lower-level readers. When she put them in the same text-

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THE INFLUENCES OF AN ANTICIPATION GUIDE ON READERS' RESPONSE TO A BASAL SHORT STORY

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Many advances have occurred in the field of reading in the past ten years, not only in theories of the reading process but also in views of how readers comprehend texts (Vacca & Vacca, 1983). We predict that the major thrust of reading research in the next decade will shift from issues concerning the reading process to questions dealing with instruction and reading development.

One question in particular that is on the minds of many classroom teachers is how to encourage children to bring background knowledge to bear during reading. The question is one of schema activation. It presupposes that a child already possesses relevant background knowledge to bring to a specific reading situation, but may not be aware of its importance to reading or does not know how to activate it. One way to activate background knowledge is to create a classroom environment in which students are encouraged to anticipate and predict what a reading situation is going to be about.

Background

Creating an anticipatory set helps readers to think positively about a text selection to be read. Stauffer (1975) described the importance of the reader's anticipation of what will be learned through print. He suggested that anticipation is heightened when students learn how to raise questions before reading.

A potentially useful instructional tool is to encourage anticipation and prediction-making is an anticipation guide (Vacca, 1981). An anticipation guide may be used

during the prereading phase of a lesson to draw upon whatever relevant background knowledge the reader possesses in relation to a particular reading selection. In operation, students respond individually to a series of statements that represent major ideas which may be reflected in the material.

How anticipation affects the way a reader responds to text in a classroom situation remains open to speculation. Therefore, we designed a descriptive, exploratory study 1) to understand how young readers respond to text when a teacher uses an anticipation exercise within the framework of a small group or large group discussion, 2) to observe and describe the dynamics operating in classroom instructional situations which use anticipation in small group or large group contexts.

The Study

Forty-seven third grade students from two classrooms in a semi-rural school district in Northeast Ohio were assigned randomly to one of four classroom discussion situations: 1) a small group of five members who participated in an anticipation guide discussion prior to reading; 2) a small group of five members who participated in a regular pre-reading routine as prescribed by the basal manual; 3) a large group of nineteen members who participated in an anticipation guide discussion prior to reading; and 4) a large group of eighteen students who participated in regular prereading instruction as suggested by the basal. These four groupings were not to be compared experimentally with one another to determine statistically significant differences in readers' responses to the basal story. Instead, the study was action-oriented by design to answer the question: How do young readers respond to a story once a teacher has activated their schema for a particular topic through an anticipation exercise discussed within a small or large group context?

The anticipation guide was developed by the investigators to activate the students' schema for the topic "deafness" in everyday life. Statements for the anticipation guide (see the Figure) were prepared to correlate with story information from the basal selection, "I Have a Sister, My Sister Is Deaf" in Golden Secrets (Scott Fores-

man and Company, 1981).

After reading the story, all students were asked to freely respond in writing to the story. They were directed as follows: "Your ideas about the story are very important. Please do your very best to tell as much as you can about the story." The written recalls were analyzed according to the Modified Purves Categories (Galda, 1982). Essentially, reader responses to the story were classified as personal (recalls which reflected statements about the reader or about the work, expressing personal enjoyment); descriptive (recalls about the narrative, describing aspects of plot, character, setting, etc.); interpretive (recalls which reflected inferences about parts of the story or the work as a whole) and evaluative (recalls about the emotional appeal of the story. its construction, or its significance).

Results and Implications

We found several emerging patterns of response to the short story on deafness:

1. Teaching reading with anticipation as a prereading objective influences the quality of readers' responses, not the quantity in small group settings. The overall number of responses for the two small groups were about the same. Yet the type of response differed, with a greater number of personal responses about the reader or the work made by readers in the small group who were given the anticipation guide (15% as compared with 10%). They also produced several written responses at the evaluative level, while those not given the guide did not produce any at that level.

2. The use of the anticipation guide in the context of a large group appeared to facilitate the total number of responses made during recall, interpretive responses and evaluative responses. It didn't, however, influence the number of personal engagement responses produced (fewer than 5% of total responses).

3. There is a strong tendency for third graders, at least the young readers in this study, to make more descriptive responses to a basal story than any other type of response. Regardless of the instructional context,

Figure 1

"I Have a Sister, My Sister Is Deaf"

Directions: You are going to read a story about a girl who is deaf. She has a sister who can hear. You will be reading about some things that have happened in their lives. They have some differences. What do you think those differences will be? Before reading the story, place the letter D in front of the phrases that you feel best describe the deaf sister. Place an H in front of the phrases which you feel best describe the sister who can hear. DO NOT mark the phrases which you feel would apply to both of the girls equally.

_____1. more interested in playing the piano.

_____2. more likely to enjoy playing outside.

_____3. more likely to be afraid during a storm.

_____4. more likely to notice unusual things.

_____5. better able to understand what people say.

_____6. more likely to be able to tell people how she feels.

_____7. better able to tell when a dog is barking near her.

_____8. more likely to be afraid of the dark.

_____9. better able to let people know how she is feeling.

readers at this age and stage of development recall and describe common elements of a story. They are unlikely to make personal connections or to reflect on a given story's worth and significance.

4. If the desired learning outcome is personal engagement or evaluative responding to the text, then the use of anticipation prior to reading may be helpful in a small group context. There is some evidence from this study that when young readers in a small group context are encouraged to use schema to anticipate and predict story content, their patterns of response change. One can only speculate on the benefits of training in anticipation during

prereading instruction over time. Will young readers who are shown how to use what they know to anticipate meaning respond to story content by consistently making personal connections with and evaluations of a story?

5. Finally, the teacher's handling of a prereading anticipation activity may vary according to group size and, in turn, influence readers' response to stories. The teacher's handling of a large group (more than eighteen) anticipation activity may even inhibit readers' personal or evaluative responses to the story. It was apparent from the observations in this study that teachers relied more heavily on a "turn taking" model of instruction in large groups and in the small groups following a regular routine.

Early in their development as readers, children must learn to use what they know to respond to narrative selections. Strategies which help them to anticipate story content activate their schemata for particular reading selections. However, there is a large gap that needs to be further reduced between an anticipation guide and its extension into the natural context of the classroom.

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TEACHING GUIDES FROM THE FIRST LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

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Given intact psycho-neurologic and perceptual systems, all children from birth to school entrance are successful language users. For many, however, failure begins during their initial exposure to reading instruction in kindergarten. This paper will examine how the application of certain learning principles in the young child's home foster successful learning while ignoring those same principles in the schools allows or fosters failure.

The major purpose of this paper is to demonstrate how these guides from the first learning environment, the home, can be better implemented in the schools so that reading problems can be prevented or ameliorated in a more hospitable environment.

The Hidden Curriculum

Children are born with the proclivity toward dynamic communication. Beginning at "ground zero" they build language competencies. In most homes, the preschooler is exposed to a hidden curriculum that is consciously or unconsciously maintained by parents and older siblings. Parents realize that children learn in different ways and at different rates. This understanding, coupled with the application of effective learning principles, such as reinforcement and individualization, become an integral part of the hidden curriculum that is informally applied at the child acquires and develops language. By the age of five most children have command of thousands of words that they can arrange in syntactically correct, meaningful sentences. Chomsky (1972), Baratz (1968) and others state that the

average child of six or seven appears to exhibit linguistic competence which approaches that of an adult. With the foundational language abilities and skills developed the student should be well equipped to take the next step on the language ladder: reading. Yet, paradoxically, many language competent children become incompetent readers.

The good teacher is one who has some understanding of the established principles of learning. Examination of the first learning environment and its hidden curriculum yields specific instructional guides. What do these first "teachers" do in contrast to what may happen in the classroom? What lessons may be learned from the first teachers and how may these be applied in the classroom to encourage and promote reading development?

Learning Principles

Intermittent vs. Concentrated Instruction

Language learning begins soon after birth and is a continuous, though unconscious, process. Learning occurs intermittently, throughout the day, with new language components and processes gradually acquired over a period of years. How quickly a child will achieve language competence depends on individual ability and readiness. There is no universal age at which all children are equally verbal.

In contrast, the onset of reading instruction is relatively intense. Although some attempts are made to introduce reading in pre-school and readiness programs, formal reading instruction often begins by January of kindergarten. It is expected that all of the basic skills will be learned within two years of the starting points; this is much too rapid for some of the less ready children.

Moreover, most reading instruction occurs during the early morning with little direct instruction during the rest of the day. Such concentrated attention to the subject creates frustration in many children who, as noted, have previously acquired their language unconsciously and intermittently throughout the day.

Curriculums must be designed to accommodate those children who need more time to develop readiness or more advanced skills. When a child starts to demonstrate frustration, teachers should attend to those aspects of formal

reading instruction which are overwhelming the child and introduce those factors much more gradually and repeatedly throughout the day and over a longer time span.

Primary vs. Secondary Motivation

Oral-aural language is a primary language system. To the learner it is satisfying in and of itself as a tool used to receive and express meaningful information.

Reading, on the other hand, is a secondary languagae system: the child does not relate learning to read to his survival in his environment. Thus, the learner often sees the acquisition and development of reading skills as an end in itself. The gaining of skill expertise is seen as far more important than the gaining of meaning from print.

It is crucial that the student appreciate that reading is a tool used to gain personally useful meaning from the printed page. Moreover, s/he must see that reading is a means by which s/he can: develop his/her self-image; identify with peers and siblings; and be able to find another avenue of recreation.

Primary and Social vs. Token Reinforcement

Reinforcement, viewed as a reward system, is an integral component of any learning experience. A young child learns language because s/he has needs which must be satisfied (e.g., food, water, warmth, and others). Early on s/he learns that communication of these needs to others usually results in getting that which the child requires. When the child first says "bottie" he is given a bottle; when the child says "baybee," s/he is given a baby doll. The bottle and the doll become strong, primary positive reinforcers which motivate the child toward continued language development.

Similarly, when adults are engaged in verbal communication with children they not only use the language to be learned with the child, but they use it primarily to do something besides teach the language. The prime focus in using the language appears to be to accomplish something else - to make contact, to comfort, to direct behavior, to entertain, to obtain objects, etc. (Schacter et al., 1976).

In addition, strong secondary reinforcers are abundantly available in the attention, smiles, and sounds of approval of people in the environment.

The developing reader cannot learn without doing, but often will do little without some relevant reward. Too often the only rewards available to students are weak. A report card once every three months or a sticker for a few days work are not meaningful to many children; moreover, many a child who is having difficulty with reading receives far fewer stickers or acceptable grades. Adequate rewards and reinforcement must be available to the reader or the behaviors which are prerequisites for the new reading goals may weaken. If this happens, progress in learning to read will slow down or cease. The best rewards for many children are often the encouragement of a teacher who ensures and notes small successes in a pleasant atmosphere. Put another way, the student needs "strokes". The more intensive or difficult the learning is for that student, the greater the need for more "strokes".

Immediate vs. Delayed Feedback

Further, when adults and children interact through language, the language directed to the child is for that child and inherently entails immediate feedback (Cazden, 1972). The request for a "bottie" is usually granted or the child is told why the request will not be met. The child's question, "What's that?" is rarely ignored.

In the school situation, reading instruction involves a group of children. Much of the work takes place in reading groups or independent seat work making individualized, immediate reinforcement difficult. Only when the child works or performs individually may his/her reading behaviors be immediately reinforced by teachers; unfortunately, only a small proportion of the teacher's time will be occupied with the behavior of one child.

It is important for the teacher to confirm, reinforce, or correct the student's reading behavior soon after the behavior has occurred so that the correct response is strengthened.

Individual vs. Group Needs

Although an important determinant of learning, practice does not cause learning. Practice is important only because of the conditions that operate during practice. Such conditions include: selection and introduction of new skills to be learned; the amount of new skills to be learned;

selection of the appropriate teaching styles; the amount of demonstration needed; and the amount of practice needed. During language learning those conditional factors are all individually and informally applied at the child's own learning rate.

Conversely, because of the large number of students in the class, the teacher is forced to select those reading goals, teaching techniques, materials, and amounts of practice which will meet the needs of the average students. Often these conditional factors are determined before the teacher has met with the class.

As opposed to language learning, skills are introduced, demonstration is provided, and practice is assigned in an unnatural, extrinsically induced, and formally applied manner. Too often the child must accommodate the teacher and materials; too little is done by school personnel to accommodate the individual child's learning differences and needs.

It's little wonder then that teaching machines and computers seem, at times, to have much success in teaching. Following their lead, more time must be spent on individualizing the rate of skill presentation, providing appropriate amounts of practice, and giving of immediate reinforcement.

Acceptance vs. Anxiety

Adults are rarely anxious about language acquisition. They delight in the child's progress and accept with equanimity that some children will learn faster than others; that individualized learning is part of the nature of language acquisition. At the same time, they are fully confident that the learning will in fact occur and that their baby will not grow up saying "all gone ball" when playing tennis. Children are not "blamed" if a language problem does develop. Parents believe the problem/lag is out of the child's control; that the child is the unfortunate object of the problem.

On the other hand, parents and children alike have high expectations about the child's ability to acquire and develop reading skills. If s/he does not progress according to school expectations everyone becomes anxious - parents, teachers, and ultimately the child. When a reading problem

occurs the child is often, directly and indirectly, held partially responsible by parents and teachers alike. S/he is too easy a scapegoat. The reading problem becomes the child, the child becomes the reading problem. We seldom say, "John is a problem language user" but we often say "John is a problem reader."

The teacher can act as the buffer who maintains calm and objectivity. She can present and deal with the child's problem in a realistic and positive manner, conveying confidence that she will work with the child and parents so that all will see a steady improvement in the skills. Some progress, albeit slow, is always possible.

Unconscious vs. Conscious Work

Although the language learning which takes place prior to school is at least as complex as reading acquisition, children do not think of it as trying. The pre-school child is often unaware of his language growth and the sum of his development is an unconscious product and, as such, is relatively free of negative emotional associations. Furthermore, youngsters seldom just talk; they talk as they eat, they talk as they play games, they talk as they walk and run.

On the other hand intensive teaching of reading may present some negative correlates to the child. Children know what is expected of them. Teachers and tests let the child know how well s/he is, or is not, doing. Many successful readers describe school and reading activities as "work" and speak of such activities in very adverse terms.

School is not a recreation center, and school work should not always be thought of as fun. However, many kindergarteners are barely five when they begin receiving reading instruction and six when they enter grade one. They may be intellectually ready to read, but they may not be emotionally or socially prepared to spend relatively long periods of time in a physically quiet "work" atmosphere. Formal instruction should be interspersed with relaxed or fun learning activities so that learning becomes more gamelike, lifelike, or interesting and less "work"like. The quiet periods of effort can be gradually and appropriately extended.

SUMMARY

Outstanding educational programs can be built only on principles and practices which are in accord with what we know about learning. Teacher application of these principles in the classroom during reading acquisition and development would, at the very least, ease the negative emotional effects suffered by a child who is a poor reader. At best, it could eliminate part or all of his/her reading problem.

Taken together, the lessons from the child's first learning environment imply that whole, meaning-focused, authentic, personally relevant, here-and-now, purposeful, relaxed reading instruction and teacher/parent attitudes can be correlated with success in reading acquisition and development. Teachers can feel confident that use of the guides from the hidden curriculum along with their own professional intuition and instructional knowledge will produce much success in developing children's reading competencies and confidences.

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WRITING AS A STUDY SKILL IN THE CLASSROOM LEARNING SPIRAL

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As a cognitive operation, writing is acknowledged to involve the generation of language through assimilation of the known in the form of prior knowledge (Sanacore, 1983). The process also incorporates organizational functions such as categorization in order to create a conceptual flow of information. Further, the act of writing involves a multisensory interaction with language, for it is written, seen and often heard as the writer's thoughts are given permanence in the form of print. Writing is a study skill that teachers can ill afford to neglect in the learning classroom.

The educational processes of anticipation, prediction, and setting of purpose and direction are often incorporated into the classroom learning environment. Writing is encouraged in this environment as the act can not only be subsumed within the preceding processes, but can also be the means through which the student organizes, synthesizes, and summarizes the information for efficient retrieval/recall. Four classroom writing activities which can be readily subsumed within the content area learning environment are anticipatory questioning, notetaking, graphic organizers and summary paragraph writing. These activities assist the teacher in providing the foundation for future anticipatory mind sets - creating a spiral of the learning cycle, a never-ending stream of awareness on the part of the student. Concurrently, students acquire an understanding of the logic inherent in this flow, of what they are doing (metacognition) and what they already know which serves as a basis for understanding new content.

Anticipatory questions, operationally an antecedent of the anticipation/reaction guide (Herber, 1978), are offered as an opening activity in the content area classroom. Not only to anticipatory questions provide the student with a mind set and motivation for the content to be covered during the session, but the activity itself provides the student with a physical behavior, resulting in thoughts being given a concreteness in the form of print.

In the format recommended here, the teacher simply has two to four open-ended questions related to the day's lesson content printed on the board or displayed on a screen with the overhead projector as the class session begins. The students are given five to ten minutes to copy and respond to the questions. The questions are not only open-ended, but they also have no wrong or right answers. They are designed to affectively as well as cognitively involve the student in the content being addressed during the lesson. For example, to provide anticipation and involvement in a U.S.History lesson on the Cold War, a question such as--

> "Explain why you think it's right or wrong for a stronger person to defend a weaker person. Use examples from your own experience."

would be offered to the students. This question can be referred to later in the lesson when addressing the evolution of the Russian satellite organization and the creation of NATO. The teacher has provided the student with an analogy based upon a concrete situation: an older brother protecting a weaker sibling. Thus the student has a prior knowledge-affective "hook" on which to attach new information, accommodating new information into existing schemata.

A medial writing activity is the study skill of notetaking which can be taught during the actual transmission of content information. Lecture is an inherent part of many content area classrooms and care should be taken to organize the lecture with student notetaking in mind. For example, if three important points are going to be made, the teacher would state this, encouraging the students to enumerate them as s/he discusses the points and they are taking notes. If some point is particularly impor-

tant for the students to remember, the teacher would make this clear to the students, encouraging them to star, asterisk, capitalize, circle, or otherwise highlight the information on their papers.

When addressing the subject of format in notetaking, summary margin notetaking is recommended as it provides the students with a structure which they can utilize when writing down information. Although summary margin notepaper is commercially available, the students can also create their own by simply drawing a margin line on their notepaper approximately 2.5 inches from the left edge of the paper. The students then write their lecture notes to the right of this margin in any format they (or you) desire, leaving enough space as they write for answers to questions or elaborations when they review. The left column of the paper is reserved for summary writing of the content (or even more recommended) for study questions/key concept phrases addressing specifically the information found on the individual page. Thus, the notepages will have full text to the right and widely spaced questions or key/topic headings for study and review on the left of the margin line. When reviewing the lesson's notes, the pages are simply folded over, covering the text and leaving exposed the margin questions or major review points. If the content is recalled easily, the question/point is marked and the student continues with review. Thus, when quiz or test time arrives, the students are aware of that which is known and that which is not. This saves the students from devoting more than quick review time to what is already assimilated and allows them to devote intense study time to what is unknown. An example of this notetaking format is shown in Figure 1, next page.

A further aid to the active assimilation of information is the graphic organizer. This study aid can be helpful to the students not only because it forces them to evaluate, organize and synthesize a body of conceptual information into key words, but it also is an aid to the more visual-/spatial information processor who is at a disadvantage in our highly sequential, linear, verbal world of the content area classroom. The graphic organizer is a schematic/pictorial device which is utilized to summarize content information through key concept/vocabulary words. It is recommended that the students themselves eventually develop

Figure 1

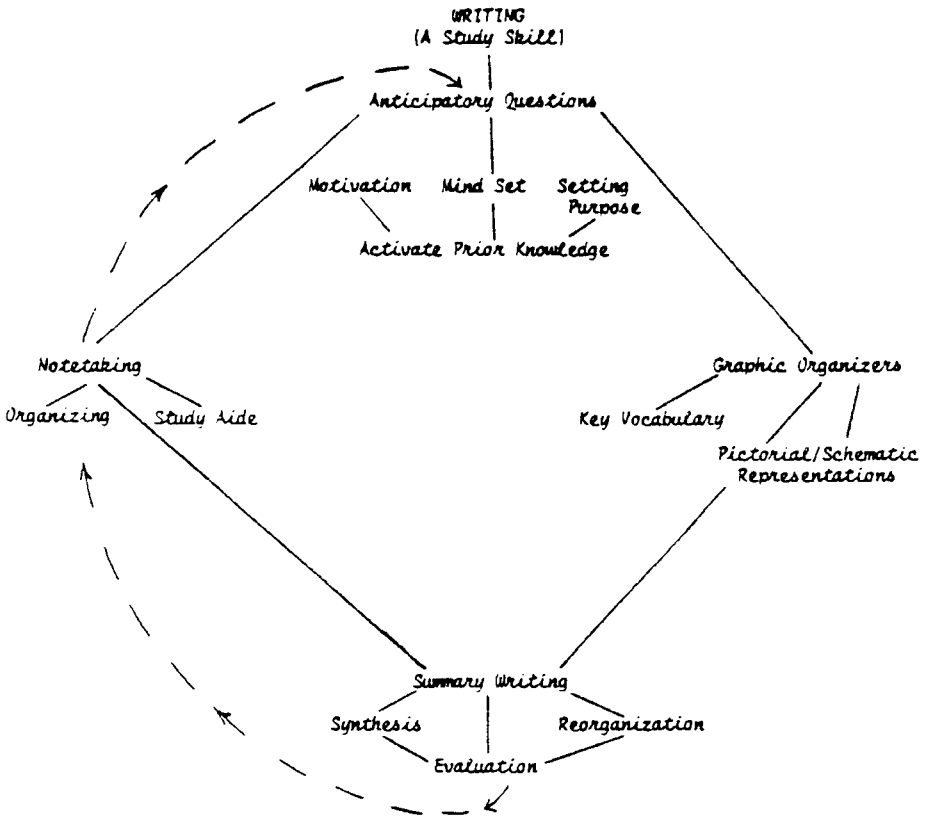
THE COLD WAR (continued)	Feb. 26th
	--
The Far East:	China - Civil War
What two groups fought	Nat'l - Chaing Kai-shek
for control of China	Commun - Mao Tse-tung
after WWII?	Communists won - Oct., 1949
	Formed People's Republic of China
	G.B., Fr., & USSR recognized
What 2 things did USA	USA would not recognize
do after the Communists	1- recog'd the Nationalists
won?	who'd retreated to island
	of Taiwan off China's coast
	2- Blocked Red China's entry
	to U.N.
What do "boycott" and	Russia THEN boycotted UN
"recognized" mean?	Security Council

individual graphic organizers after initially creating several examples through group activity.

The creation of the graphic organizer evolves out of a class or group discussion of key vocabulary and concept words which have come out of various class lectures, activities, and texts. The words are then organized by the class into a graphic structure or schematic which, through placement of the words on the paper, related the conceptual information. Whether a concept or vocabulary word is major, secondary or tertiary is represented by the placement of that word within the picture, graphic or schematic. A sample graphic organizer, utilizing the content of this article, is shown in Figure 2, next page.

Creating several graphic organizers as a class or group activity enables students to gain practice in organizing of concepts and supporting information first, and then in relaying the body of knowledge through placement of

Figure 2



the key concept/vocabulary words within the organizer itself. An examination of the graphic organizers enables the teacher to ascertain whether and to what extent each student has grasped the interrelatedness of the concepts and information which has been studied.

Finally, summary paragraph writing is proposed as not only a further practice in critical analysis, providing closure to a lesson(s) or unit, but also as a pivot point from which new anticipatory mind sets can be drawn, guiding the learner into a new turn in the spiral. A sophisticated cognitive process involving evaluation, synthesis and analysis, summary paragraph writing can evolve naturally from the notetaking and graphic organizer activities. When dealing with text, Brown and Day's (1980) procedure

Figure 3

Original Text

The educational processes of anticipation, prediction, and setting of purpose and direction are often incorporated into the classroom learning environment. Writing is encouraged in this environment as the act can not only be subsumed within the preceding processes, but can also be the means through which the student organizes, synthesizes, and summarizes the information for efficient retrieval/recall. Four classroom writing activities which can be readily subsumed within the content area learning environment are anticipatory questioning, notetaking, graphic organizers and summary paragraph writing. These activities assist the teacher in providing the foundation for future anticipatory mind sets — creating a spiral of the learning cycle, a neverending stream of awareness on the part of the student. Concurrently, students acquire an understanding of the logic inherent in this flow, of what they are doing (metacognition) and what they already know which serves as a basis for understanding new content.

Summary

Anticipation, prediction, and setting of purpose and direction are often incorporated into the classroom learning environments where writing is encouraged. Four writing activities which can be subsumed within content area learning are anticipatory questioning, notetaking, graphic organizers and summary paragraph writing. These activities assist the students in acquiring an understanding of what they already know, what they are doing (metacognition), and provide a foundation for future anticipatory mind sets.

of deleting repetitions and unimportant sentences, synthesizing and categorizing specifics in a series with a general word, and searching for or creating a main idea sentence is one which has been shown to be an effective learning procedure. The cumbersome text is whittled down through this process to the critical raw material of the content the author desired to be transmitted and can then be summarized in the students' own words more manageably. As an example of the procedure, we have Figure 3, above.

Summary paragraphs can be initially written in small groups of four or five, evolving through a process of peer group critiques to eventual independent summary paragraph writing. The length of the summary paragraphs can begin at one-hundred words and be gradually reduced to tightly knit summaries of sixty to eighty words. The summary paragraph process can be incorporated by the content area teacher at selected points within each unit to conceptually unify specific sections of text and/or to facilitate synthesizing daily notes taken from lecture/discussion sessions.

What is critical about each of the aforementioned writing study strategies is that they not be activities in and of themselves, but that they are subsumed within the teacher's lesson and are thus an intrinsic means to the untimately desired end: effective and efficient learning. Through these writing activities, the learner is naturally a more involved, active participant in the educational process, dealing in a multisensory manner with the content; reading speaking and listening as well as writing. Finally, these writing activities assist the student in understanding the nature of the learning process itself. Involvement in anticipatory questioning, organization of information, and critical summarization generate specific outcomes, outcomes which in turn generate new questions to be answered, new twists and turns in the cyclical spiral of learning.

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