Cross-Age Study to Locate the Common Characteristics of Students Identified as Struggling Readers

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A CROSS-AGE STUDY TO LOCATE THE COMMON CHARACTERISTICS OF STUDENTS IDENTIFIED AS STRUGGLING READERS

by

Jean C. Hackney

A Project Report
Submitted to the
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A CROSS-AGE STUDY TO LOCATE THE COMMON CHARACTERISTICS OF STUDENTS IDENTIFIED AS STRUGGLING READERS

Jean C. Hackney, Ed.S.
Western Michigan University, 1988

The problem presented in this study is to locate common characteristics of elementary students who are struggling in their reading at school. The motivation for finding common characteristics is to identify and diagnose the struggling readers as soon as they enter school and to provide remedial assistance before poor self-concepts are developed.

The methodology used for the investigation involved interviews with students who have displayed a low reading ability in their classrooms and questionnaires to their teachers and parents about reading.

The main focus of the study is centered around the physical, social, mental, and emotional aspects of the human resources—the low readers themselves. Recommendations are made for teachers, administrators, parents, and those in education who are interested in helping struggling readers achieve their own personal reading success.
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Jean C. Hackney
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A cross-age study to locate the common characteristics of students identified as struggling readers

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Western Michigan University, 1988
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

From the 1800s to the present, educators have differed greatly in their educational ideals. However, they all have expressed a concern regarding the student as an individual, searching for the best approach to meet his or her educational needs.

Prominent educators such as Rousseau, Owen, Froebel, Gesell, Piaget, Bowlby, Denenberg, Dewey, and Mann seem to be in agreement: Students continually learn from everything—either directly or incidentally. As Hymes (1968) wrote:

Young children share a characteristic with all ages. They learn from everything and they learn all the time. They learn from what we set out to teach them. They learn also when no one thinks a lesson is being taught. There are direct learnings and there are incidental learnings. Children never come, stay, go, untouched by an experience, experiencing no change for the worse and none for the better. (p. 18)

Educators are faced with the constant challenge of meeting the needs and demands of an ever-changing society. Educators have a responsibility to insure a literate society while being sensitive to individual needs.

Every teacher in the public schools must face a wide range of reading abilities. If reading is required to learn the content of a certain subject, those struggling in reading will have much difficulty.
In elementary classrooms when the teacher instructs the reading lesson, he or she will be accountable for meeting each reading need. To do this, the teacher does his or her own testing. After evaluating the results, he or she will meet the varied needs of readers.

What about the struggling readers, the most frustrating to teach and the ones who are hard to reach in the public schools?

The elementary classroom teacher will try to meet individual needs and challenge the strugglers. Could there be common characteristics they possess and share? If so, would teachers be able to identify the strugglers sooner with less frustration? Would they then have another tool to use for this early identification process?

In their separate studies on students' reading difficulties, both Parker (cited in Dwyer & Joy, 1980) and Swanson (1985) suggested more than standardized testing needs to be done when identifying students' reading levels. From their studies, they each recommended taking a closer look at the quality of instruction and the instructional intent by talking to the students and tapping their point of view on the learning-to-read process.

Statement of Problem

It was these same concerns which motivated this study. The research questions listed below represent the focus of this study where answers to the following are sought:

1. Are there similar physical attributes among those struggling to read?
2. For their grade level, are the struggling readers socially mature or immature?

3. Are there specific, identifiable academic areas of deficiency common to struggling readers?

4. When in the process of silent or oral reading, does the struggling reader display a particular emotional reaction; moreover, do struggling readers exhibit any particular emotional pattern?

5. Are there positive and negative reading attitudes by those who struggle to read?

6. Do struggling readers and their parents have similar attitudes toward reading?

The purpose of this study is to answer the six research questions centered around the public school students who were selected for this study along with their classroom teacher and parents with whom the student resides.

According to Doll and Fleming (1966), "Young people who learn and grow in a climate characterized by concern for humanness are those who are likely to contribute to the greatness of their country" (p. 98). This must be remembered by parents and educators when involved with the reading process of the public school systems.

Definition of Terms

Terms which are referred to throughout this paper are listed below.

**Struggling readers**: Those students diagnosed by their classroom teachers as not reading at grade level according to their school's
reading curriculum.

**Personal reading success:** When a student finds self-pride (regardless of the individual's level or need of reading satisfaction; not for others, but truly for oneself) in his or her reading.

**Holistic approach:** A reading environment where positive reading attitudes are built, reinforced, or improved through stress-free reading activities.

**Intelligence quotient:** A number expressing the intelligence of a person determined by dividing his or her mental age by his or her chronological age and multiplying by 100 (*Webster's Seventh New College Dictionary*, 1961).

**Mental age:** The measure of mental ability (raw scores taken from the number of items correct) which is characteristic of a given chronological age group (Gekoski, 1969).

**Outline of the Study**

Chapter II contains a review of literature relating to the six research questions in finding common characteristics among the physical, social, mental, and emotional aspects of struggling readers.

The research design, methodology, and findings are discussed in Chapter III. The survey instruments design and data collection with results and summary are presented.

Chapter IV contains recommendations for lower and upper elementary teachers and for parents and administrators and concluding remarks.
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF SELECTED LITERATURE

In the public schools, education must not be denied to any child. Guidelines are set up to teach all children at their own rate of learning. There are few laws and many guidelines as to when, where, how, why, and what to teach. Because of these laws and many guidelines, teaching strugglers to read becomes the concern of all public educators.

Carter and McGinnis (1972) showed their concern for struggling readers by identifying their disabilities in their search for remedies. They wrote that 70-80% of the disabled readers can be reached with success if caught before the third grade. It would seem, therefore, that when these readers enter high school, their possible feelings of inadequacy and failure due to a reading disability would be minimized if found before the third grade.

Students, like all people, desire acceptance, encouragement, and understanding from human relationships and interactions. In an effort to please, the struggling reader strives for reading success. Once this success is attained, the struggling reader finds gratification, not only in the form of approval from others, but also in the form of deep personal satisfaction.

In reviewing the related literature for this paper, considerable information was gathered from several experts in regard to the
struggling reader. The experts' opinions were pooled concerning the physical, social, mental, and emotional aspects of the struggling reader's development. These factors have been looked at before and now it is time to interpret them again. The following pages reveal studies done from the early 1900s to the present day.

The concern for students' reading success and those who can best provide opportunities to achieve this success in education is not a new fad. It has been and will continue to be the concern of all educators as long as there is public education.

In the literature research done for this study, there are references to Robinson's study done in 1946 entitled *Why Pupils Fail in Reading*. Her literature research and personal investigations contributed greatly and significantly to the writing of this paper.

Robinson's (1946) study involved 30 severely retarded readers with IQs between 85 and 137. These students were examined by a social worker, psychiatrist, pediatrician, neurologist, an endocrinologist, three ophthalmologist, a reading specialist, and the investigator (who acted as a psychologist and reading technician). The areas of study, like this paper, were physical, social, mental, and emotional (family included).

**Are There Similar Physical Attributes Among Those Struggling to Read?**

Robinson's (1946) contributions from her study in the physical aspect indicated the following:
1. Visual difficulties are responsible for reading failure in a large percentage of students.

2. Binocular incoordination is found more frequently (orthoptic treatment to correct these difficulties was shown to be highly beneficial).

3. Neurological difficulties were found in a number of cases.

4. Speech and functional auditory problems found reading failure in a number of cases. Inadequate auditory memory span for sounds and insufficient auditory discrimination appeared to be causes of both reading and speech difficulties in some cases.

5. Endocrine disturbances were limited to cases of mild hypothyroidism.

6. General physical difficulties, such as malnutrition, resulted in reading failure as cited in both her literature research and investigation.

From Robinson's (1946) long list of physical causes (apathetic, listless behavior, yawning, fatigue, sleepiness, irritability, hyperactivity, nervousness, poor dentition, defective hearing, mouth breathing, speech defectiveness, goiters, infected tonsils and adenoids, poor teeth, glandular dysfunction, asthmatic and allergic conditions, susceptibility to colds, after effect of children's diseases, poor physical habits (inadequate sleep and poor dietary irregularities), lymphatic system disorders, circulatory disorders, gastrointestinal difficulties, tuberculosis, hypothyroidism, delay in decent of testicles, reduced function of the pituitary gland, slight or serious cardiac disturbances, kidney malfunction, chorea,
rheumatic fever, and low metabolism), the most common were malnutrition, infections of various kinds, and endocrine (glandular) disturbances. She found that the previously-mentioned physical causes affected reading because the reader displayed signs of inability to concentrate on reading, increased absenteeism, fatigue quickly during lessons, irritability towards peers, inattention due to lack of energy, inadequate physical stamina which prevents competition with healthier classmates, and inability to keep up with his or her schoolwork.

In agreement with Robinson's (1946) findings, the article on "Health Impaired Children Deserve a Break" (Shayne, Walker, Perrin, & Moynihan, 1987) states:

There are a million chronically ill children in the U.S. who can handle regular classwork—with a little help. Health impaired or chronically ill children are more likely than other children to experience academic difficulties resulting from interrupted school attendance. (p. 36)

Asthma, hemophilia, cystic fibrosis, nephrosis, leukemia, and sickle cell anemia have been associated with excessive illnesses. The article refers to the difficulties which arise when prolonged and lengthy absences, or frequent and brief absences, usually cause disruptive learning and unsustaining peer relationships.

The effects of these absences on achievement often extend from a period prior to a planned absence for treatment, surgery, or diagnostic testing through a period after the child returns to school.

The anticipation of missing schoolwork, and falling behind may cause anxieties which make it difficult to concentrate while in school. Painful or exhausting episodes of illness or treatment, together with pressure to make up missed work, may produce a downward spiraling effect on
achievement after the child returns. (Shayne et al., 1987, p. 39)

Olson (1966) did a study on third graders to find a relationship between school achievement, reading ability, and six visual perceptual abilities as measured by the Frostig Developmental Test of Visual Perception (DTVP). Olson found that:

1. The results of the testing of the third grade population on the Frostig DTVP indicate that the total test is a fair predictor of school achievement and specific reading skill ability.

2. According to the population tested, the Frostig DTVP is a better predictor for girls than boys.

3. Visual perception difficulties and specific reading difficulties showed a moderate degree of correlation in some instances and no significant correlation in others. The figure-ground test and the position in space test do not appear to have any significant correlation with the California Achievement Test (Form W) or the special reading skill test (Hearing Sounds in Word Test, Primary), visual memory of words test (Primary-Durrell Analysis of Reading Difficulty), and developmental reading tests. The measure of mental ability was the California Short-Form Test of Mental Maturity (Level 1), 1963 revision.

4. The results of the testing on this population do not support Frostig's (cited in Olson, 1966) postulates concerning the relationships between her tests and specific reading difficulties.
For Their Grade Level, Are the Struggling Readers Socially Mature or Immature?

Robinson's (1946) social factors grouped the home and school together in finding their influence and interrelationships with severely retarded readers.

In the home she looked at parents' education, their reading ability, physical health, emotional reactions, economic status, language spoken in the home, and neighborhood conditions.

Robinson (1946) found home and family relationships are very important causes of severe reading retardation. She found mal-adjusted homes or poor interfamily relationships to be contributing causes in 54.5% of her cases studied. Organic and emotional problems will influence a student's reading; while many of these problems apparently are remote from the home, they still exert considerable influence.

Most clinics and reports of studies agree that the majority of reading failures seem to be boys. In 1937 Monroe (cited in Robinson, 1946) found that 84% of her failures were boys. Preston (cited in Robinson, 1946) reported in 1939 that 72%, and others reported varying percentages; but there seemed to be general agreement that failure to learn to read is greater among boys than among girls (Robinson, p. 96).

Robinson (1946) looked at the school environment and its effect on reading. The areas of concern were school administration policies, materials being used, promotion of materials, size of classes, training of teachers, and personalities of teachers.
Through her investigation and literature search, Robinson (1946) found the school itself might be an important cause of reading failure because of emotional and personal maladjustments of students who failed to learn to read properly. Even though inappropriate school methods and teachers' personalities could be causal factors, there were too few cases studied to find a relationship. Her investigation found that inadequate adaptation of methods of teaching reading appeared to be the cause of reading failure in 18% out of the 22 cases. Methods of teaching, promotion, materials for instruction, and freedom to use these materials with individuals certainly did influence progress in individual cases, but not consistently. She did not measure the affect of the school and the teacher on reading failure, but wanted the following to be considered: teachers' personalities and their relationship to students, methods of teaching reading, and school policies on promotions, materials available, and size of classes.

Are There Specific, Identifiable Academic Areas of Deficiency Common to Struggling Readers?

In Why Pupils Fail in Reading, Robinson (1946) could find no contributions made to show a relationship between intelligence and reading failure. What she did find was that:

1. A positive relationship existed between intelligence test scores and reading test scores.

2. Severely retarded readers seem to range in mental ages and IQs about the same as unselected cases within the public schools.
where low grade feeble-minded are eliminated and the majority have IQs between 90 and 110.

3. Mental age seems more significant than IQ.

4. Mental age of more than 6 years is desirable for beginning learning.

5. Special mental characteristics, such as verbal disabilities, low vocabulary for mental age, low auditory memory, and poor visual memory, are listed but exact relationships to reading was not determined.

6. Intelligence ratings are obtained by measuring a number of abilities and combining these into one composite score; and when tests of the primary mental traits are standardized, a profile of intelligence should show factors more closely related to reading than the general score.

7. Reading expectations for children are only relative and it is not just the mental-age score on the Stanford-Binet test to be looked at as previously assumed. They should be looked at through several test scores with caution and only then with possible consideration.

In Robinson's (1946) literature search, she found most investigators expressed that low intelligence is a very close correlate of reading and sets the limits of achievement in reading; yet, no firm relationship between intelligence and reading failure could be established.

Neisworth (1969) found that measured intelligence is a combination of genetic equipment and environmental opportunities with many
limitations and difficulties in its interpretations. He stated the belief that the results are not genetically predetermined or of permanent significance and, therefore, very hard to locate common characteristics because the results are of the interaction between the individual and his or her environment. Knowledge of the pupil's present performance on an appropriate mental test can and does aid in the planning of remedial operations.

Wattenberg and Clifford (1966) declared that self-concept is more closely related to reading achievement than is intelligence. They did an exploratory study of the relationship of self-concept to school achievement. They studied 185 children in kindergarten from two Detroit schools and measured intelligence, self-concept, ego-strength, and reading ability. They found the following:

1. Overall statistical levels of confidence were found to be marginal, but findings where measures of self-concept and ratings of ego-strength made at the beginning of kindergarten proved to be somewhat more predictive of reading achievement 2.5 years later than measures of mental ability.

2. Self-concept stands in a causal relationship to reading achievement.

Louttit (1936) cited a median correlation (.60) in 46 comparisons between group tests of intelligence and reading. Using group tests of intelligence and low verbal tests, he found and supported Neisworth (1969) in that "deficient intelligence may frequently be at the basis of reading difficulties" (p. 262).
Gates (1937) found over a 30-year span that common characteristics of a student's progress in reading is more often influenced by the instructional methods and the degree of personalized attention given pupils than by their actual mental ages. There is no essential mental age for beginning reading under ideal conditions. Also, pupils with the same mental ages do not necessarily make similar progress under any given method or methods. He believed, even though precise interpretation of the test cannot locate commonalities of reading problems, that an essential part of the intelligence test can help in a diagnosis, such as (a) predicting the reading level that the pupil would or should achieve, (b) allowing a variety of observations of the pupil's cognitive strengths and weaknesses, (c) providing awareness of one's attitudes and performances during challenging tasks, and (d) giving insights into a student's self-concept and personality.

When in the Process of Silent or Oral Reading, Does the Struggling Reader Display a Particular Emotional Reaction; Moreover, Do Struggling Readers Exhibit Any Particular Emotional Pattern?

In Robinson's (1946) study on emotional aspects, she found emotional maladjustments are important causes of reading disability and emotional reactions were considered in each case, too.

In her literature search, Robinson (1946) found connections of emotional and social factors so closely related that they could not be disentangled; yet, the percentage was lower than reported by her research psychiatrist; 41% of 22 cases showed significant emotional
problems, while only 32% caused reading failures.

Robinson (1946) believed "the emotional maladjustment seen in a severely retarded reader, then, may be either the cause, the effect, or the result of the interaction of reading failure and emotional maladjustments. Therefore, these areas need to be examined more thoroughly in school" (p. 28).

The authorities in the field (Bird, Saunders, Castner, Monroe, & Backus, and Gates, cited in Monroe, 1946, pp. 80-81) during the years 1916-1934 had four similar conclusions when reporting on emotional and personality problems and their relationship to reading failure.

1. There is a difference between the neurotic student and the emotionally maladjusted student. The neurotic student's behavior is quite evident and needs to be carefully studied before entering a reading program. The emotional maladjusted student's behavior is mostly filled with minor adjustments when entering school if that student is immature.

2. Emotionally immature students could have emotional maladjustments to reading because they are not prepared to devote time to reading even though they have the desire to learn. As a result, their reading could be hampered by lack of confidence, lack of security, unpleasant association with words, indifferent association with words, or excessive timidity.

3. If the emotionally immature student develops emotional maladjustments when reading instruction takes place, then secondary emotional problems could develop with behaviors, such as frustration, inattention, lack of motivation, confusion, and lack of application.
to the task of learning to read.

4. If the emotionally maladjusted student finds reading is difficult, then failure could be setting in. The student's personality may begin to show signs of being aggressive and withdrawn. There may be a loss of confidence, a loss of emotional effectiveness, and a tendency to make up excuses as a result of not being able to accept reading failure.

Beck (1981) showed how a description of students' behaviors can be grouped according to characteristics which she has placed into three reading problem packages, or categories. Through identification of certain reading problems into one of the three packages, a process can be established to help a student improve his or her reading. They are (a) print-to-speech difficulties due to poor decoding process skills, (b) oral reading difficulties due to lack of positive self-concept and self-confidence for fluent oral reading, and (c) poor comprehension due to lack of important prior knowledge about the content of material being read. With recognition of the individual student's reading situation matched to a characteristic in one of the three packages, Beck (1981) believed reading problems of those who struggle to read may be attended to.

Freeman's (1986) study was to determine to what extent changes occur in the correlation between reading achievement and self-concept of boys and girls across the school levels and whether sexual differences have any significant effect on this success. When comparing boys and girls, she found:
1. Reading achievement and self-concept do not correlate at any one of the three school levels, either individually or combined.

2. Reading achievement and self-concept remained stable across the school levels.

3. Educators need to put more emphasis on reading achievement of junior and senior high school students in order to prevent the drop in reading achievement scores and the possible rise in illiteracy in the future.

4. Boys scored slightly higher than girls in reading achievement at each self-concept level of elementary, junior high, and senior high school students.

On the other hand, Herbert (1968) found a direct relationship between high self-concept and high reading comprehension.

**Are There Positive and Negative Reading Attitudes by Those Who Struggle to Read?**

Wigfield and Asher (1984) reported on three studies by Nicolls where he related current trends to achievement theory. He found that young children's attitudes seemed to be positive because they over estimated their attainment in school and did not perceive school success as related to ability.

In 5 and 6 year old children their positive attitudes were evident because they could not judge which of a set of tasks were most difficult or could realize that difficult tasks required more ability, even in reading cases. The young children were generally happy about success and unhappy about failure, regardless of the
degree of task difficulty or the cause of the success or failure.

Nicolls (cited in Wigfield & Asher, 1984) also found that during early elementary school years children did not conceptually distinguish effort and ability as separate causes of outcome; and therefore, positive attitudes seemed high. Instead, being able also meant trying hard. Only at about age 12 or 13 were the two causes fully distinguished and negative attitudes developed and remained.

Wigfield and Asher (1984) also cited a study by Biophy and Good on how school influences reading attitudes. They found children's attitudes toward reading are positive when they are good readers and when teacher's perception of and expectation of them are high regardless of race, social class, or achievement motivation.

Do Struggling Readers and Their Parents Have Similar Attitudes Toward Reading?

In her literature research, Robinson (1946) found no conclusive evidence that any characteristic possessed by parents themselves influenced reading failure. Studies of the cause of reading disability influenced by the home revealed no clear-cut factors which occur only in poor readers and never in good readers.

Other important conclusions were drawn from Robinson's (1946) literature research. In 1932 Parrin (cited in Robinson, 1946) found that some college students were poor readers due to a lack of reading material in the home, a lack of interest in reading during childhood, and little or no recreational reading in the home. In 1938 Bennett (cited in Robinson, 1946) found that the size of home libraries and
reading disabilities were not related.

According to Mazurkiewicz (1960), male parents unconsciously lead their boys to reject reading as a feminine activity. They fail to provide a positive role model in reading activities.

Gordon (1970) found child rearing patterns to be frequently analyzed. Since the primary parent-child relationship is so often with the mother, the nature and effect of this interaction cannot be over-emphasized regarding language development, intelligence, and school success. It appears that a mother's language style tends to determine the child's ability to handle language abstractions, even more so than does the IQ.

Mutimer, Loughlin, and Powell (1966), in "Some Differences in the Family Relationships of Achieving and Underachieving Readers," found underachieving boys and girls considered their parents as the least significant members of the family, while achieving boy readers identified with their fathers and achieving girls identified with their mothers. Underachieving girls and boys interacted more with their siblings.

MacDonald (1963) cited the direct effect of negative parental attitudes toward education, toward language development, and toward the importance of success in reading upon pupils' school success in their field.

Preston (1939) was amazed to find that half of the parents of reading disability cases had no understanding of the impact of this failure on their children either through their own ignorance or prejudice in all cases to the detriment of the developing personality.
of the child. These parents' distressing attitudes were followed by blighting comparisons, derogatory terms, reproach, ridicule, deprivation of privileges, and physical punishment used as emotional outlets as well as punitive measures by the adult superior parent (Preston, p. 179).

Hansen (1969) studied the relationship of the home literature environment and the child's reading attitude. He worked with fifth to eighth grade students who were either enthusiastic readers and couldn't get enough of the library and its contents or those who were barely stimulated to browse. He asked why? Why is there such a marked difference in reading behavior?

Hansen (1969) found the home environment of a literary atmosphere and the positive relationship with the child's reading successes are due to the parents' reading habits; fostering of study habits; prereading experiences; family harmony; the supply of reading matter; the number of books, magazines, and newspapers; and the use of the library.

Monroe and Rogers (1964) found the significance of prereading experiences as a foundation for reading. They did not emphasize class structure but recognized that the kinds of informational experiences they were discussing were a direct reflection of the educational and socioeconomic status of the family.

Monroe and Rogers (1964) also looked at family harmony as measured by the incidence of broken homes. They found separation and divorce were not consistently important in school reading success.
Seigler and Gynther (1960) also studied the reading ability of children and their family harmony. The four areas at which they looked and the results were as follows:

1. Availability of literature in the home (no significant contribution to reading ability).

2. Amount of reading done with the child (significant contribution to independent reading).

3. Reading guidance and encouragement in the home (home literary environment and IQ test showed a significant relationship to reading test achievement).

4. Parents as model reading example (parents' occupation and education were not significant factors and the literary environment was not a valid predirector of reading attitude).

Summary

Prevention of disability and failure can begin with the identification of common characteristics among students in physical, social, mental, and emotional aspects. If these common characteristics can be identified and connected to the students' reading disabilities, then appropriate steps can be taken to remedy the students' problems and expand their capacity to read.

All of the studies in the literature research showed causes or conditions which promoted reading problems, yet only a few directly and consistently related to reading growth or failure. Actual evaluation to diagnose and connect the causes of reading problems to reading failures is continually needed by diagnosticians with broad
training and wide experiences.

An important purpose of this summary is to locate common denominators among the various research findings. They are as follows:

**Physical:** There was a close but no definite correlation established between specific physical problems such as allergic conditions, malnutrition, speech defectiveness, and reading disabilities or between certain physical conditions and poor reading. The physical causes linked to reading disabilities would, in turn, affect school and reading achievement in many instances. The physical illnesses could be matched to probable reading disabilities but not consistently.

**Social:** Robinson's (1946) contributions show that a stable, wholesome home environment exerts a definite influence on the school progress of the child. A child's failure to read well may be due to factors far beyond the control of those who are charged with the responsibility of this reading progress and families may be unaware of or unable to control the conditions favorable to rapid progress.

The research showed evidence that family interest or disinterest in reading has significant impact on reading achievement.

In these studies, many believed that family interest factors, especially parental aspirations, or their lack, exerted a greater influence on their child's reading success than did the precise socioeconomic status of the family, cultural background, or even the child's IQ.
Mental: The past and current researchers who have been examined, seem to have represented a common understanding in that there is misinterpretation of the IQ test when the relationship between mental age and reading is assumed to be on a one-to-one continuum where each child can, and should, read at grade level equal to his or her mental age.

The statistical relationship between reading success and mental age seemed to be very moderate at primary level and only increasing as the grade level got higher. This seemed to be used only in diagnosis and planning with a basal curriculum.

Even though many studies showed a correlation between measures of intelligence and reading achievement, none was able to show a highly significant correlation; therefore, it seems neither can be predicted from the other.

Emotional: Emotional or personality maladjustments were either the cause of reading failure, the result of reading failure, or the interaction and intensifying of both in school. Research indicates that it is possible to help struggling readers improve their reading only when their reading disabilities are adequately diagnosed and remedial steps taken.

Children in the early grades seem to possess positive attitudes because they interpret success and failure of information and conceptions of ability and effort differently than older children.

Attitudes by parents and children seem to have a positive relationship due to the factors not only of the number of books or reading materials in the home, but also the availability of these
books and materials and how they are influenced by the parents' involvement and activities initiated with them.
CHAPTER III

DESIGN, METHODOLOGY, AND FINDINGS

To identify the characteristics of struggling readers, this study was a cross-age design. The study involved 36 elementary students (21 boys and 15 girls) from kindergarten through Grade 5 in the Plainwell, Michigan, Public School System.

The Plainwell Public School System is in a rural community in Michigan situated between Kalamazoo and Grand Rapids. It is a third class school district with a student population of 2,484 students. The students involved in this study were from the largest of three elementary schools in the district, with a student body of 449 students. Six students were chosen from each grade level beginning with kindergarten and ending with the fifth grade. They were selected by their homeroom teachers as those struggling to read in their basal curriculum.

The design of this project was centered around the six broad questions as introduced in the Statement of the Problem in Chapter I. The methodology employed consisted of interviews and surveys. Each was used to answer the six broad questions more specifically according to the research and findings.
Survey Instruments Design

Many students know they have a reading problem but are seldom asked how they feel about this difficulty. Therefore, all students were interviewed concerning their feelings toward reading. The home-room teachers of the students filled out surveys in an attempt to locate common characteristics among the 36 elementary students in the areas of physical attributes, social maturity, mental awareness, emotional tendencies, and reading skills. A questionnaire was sent home to the parents of the 36 elementary students concerning their own views of reading and what they thought about their child's reading progress at school. The survey instruments and their results are located in the appendices.

The surveys to the six teachers included a Personal Characteristic Survey with four categories followed by a series of questions. The categories were physical (10 questions), social (10 questions), mental (9 questions), and emotional (10 questions), with a Student Reading Survey (surveying reading skills mastered) with 17 questions.

All students were interviewed with a Student Interview Survey. Part 1 consisted of "How I Feel About Books" (11 questions); Part 2 consisted of "How I Feel About Reading Class" (10 questions). Part 3 consisted of "Reading and Me" (8 questions).

The surveys and interviews were given in April 1986. The Parent Reading Surveys were sent home on April 17, 1986, and returned by mail.
Data Collection and Results

This section concludes with the answers to the six broad questions followed by recommendations. Due to the nature of this study, it seemed advisable to state the question, followed by a summarization of the responses, as well as an itemized table of significant subquestion responses.

**Question 1**

Question 1: Are there similar physical attributes among those struggling to read?

A profile developed from the teachers' responses indicated the students clearly showed normal physical development in all areas except body size, height, and energy level. Body size and height scores were very close in range with energy level being lower than might be expected for their grade level (see Table 1).

Students and their chronological sibling relationships are addressed in Appendix A.

Figure 1 indicates that even though the children were somewhat older, it was not a wide jump to make any significant conclusions.

**Question 2**

Question 2: For their grade level, are the struggling readers socially mature or immature?

The responses to the questions showed that the students seemed to have developed normal social patterns in most areas challenged
Table 1

Personal Characteristic Survey: Physical Attributes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Key word description of item</th>
<th>Vary from normal</th>
<th>Not answered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Short, average, tall?</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Thin, normal, chubby?</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Poor eyesight, speech, hearing?</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Do well in gym?</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Low, normal, high energy level?</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Apparently healthy?</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Display positive body language?</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

with the exception of a lack of ability or desire to take leadership position and the frequency to tattle. All indications seem to say it depends on the social situation as to whether maturity is evident; and because of this, maturity level is not reliable to predict actions (see Table 2).

Question 3

Question 3: Are there specific, identifiable academic areas of deficiency common to struggling readers?

To answer this question, both the Student Reading Survey and the Personal Characteristic Survey were tabulated and summarized. Together, they showed that in the school setting the students seem to
show a lack of curiosity and a lack of willingness to accept personal challenges. Their work tends to be unfinished, indicating either a lack of organization or a lack of motivation (see Tables 3 and 4).

Question 4

Question 4: When in the process of silent or oral reading, does the struggling reader display a particular emotional reaction;
Table 2

Personal Characteristic Survey: Social Maturity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Key word description of item</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Not answered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Communicate with his or her peers?</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Group of friends over one friend?</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Feel that he or she belongs?</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Play without fighting?</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Assume leadership in play?</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Well-liked by others?</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Interact at recess time?</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Classwork with others over being alone?</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Take turns?</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Frequent tattletale?</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

moreover do struggling readers exhibit any particular emotional pattern?

The results of these questions on emotions indicated that even though the struggling readers displayed a positive attitude about reading, that when self-concept and/or self-confidence were needed and involved, the students scored low in daily academic situations. Their tolerance level showed neither normal nor abnormal levels indicating that struggling readers need very careful guidance in reading situations and decision making as their self-concept and self-confidence are at risk (see Table 5).
Table 3
Student Reading Survey

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Key word description of item</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Not answered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Enjoy reading activities?</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Guess or bluff while reading?</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Uncomfortable while reading?</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Read fluently?</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Apply to other learning situations?</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Satisfactory academic work?</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>Use of school library?</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4
Personal Characteristic Survey: Mental Awareness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Key word description of item</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Not answered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Curious about surroundings?</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Pride in schoolwork?</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>DK or retained?</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Special services now?</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Complete homework?</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Books home to read?</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Quick in math solutions?</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5

Personal Characteristic Survey: Emotional Tendencies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Key word description of item</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Not answered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Happy attitude?</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Normal tolerance level?</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Positive self-concept?</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Accept new challenges?</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Accept criticism?</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Acceptable behavior?</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Answers questions easily?</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Good judgment?</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Question 5

Question 5: Are there positive and negative reading attitudes by those who struggle to read?

From the actual interviews, all but 1 of the 36 students expressed that they enjoyed their school related reading activities, while the tabulations from the Student Interview Surveys scored both positive and negative feelings to reading. It seemed that the students' positive comments were reacted upon due to that day's reading experiences. Negative feelings seemed to be related to interactions with people socially, not their reading related activities.

The positive feelings related to the freedom to choose reading material at school. The negative feelings related to the length of
time in reading classes and having to find a purpose for reading.

The frequency of home reading was low. Could this indicate struggling readers' home reading lessons are for review, practice, and drill rather than for free reading (see Tables 6, 7, and 8)?

Table 6
Student Interview Survey: Part 1: How I Feel About Books and Reading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Key word description of item</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Not answered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Out of school reading?</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Leisure reading?</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Frequent reader at home?</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Books are interesting?</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Question 6

Question 6: Do struggling readers and their parents have similar attitudes toward reading?

Although parents belonged to the local library, they did not make use of it on a consistent basis.

Over half of the responses indicated frequent reading with their child at home (Questions 2 and 3), yet this was not in agreement with
### Table 7

**Student Interview Survey: Part 2: How I Feel About Reading Class**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Key word description of item</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Not answered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Should be shorter?</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Reading class goes slowly?</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Reading lessons are helpful?</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Wants less reading time?</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Wished reading class be skipped?</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Reading books interesting?</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Anxious for reading class to begin?</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Reading lessons are fun?</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 8

**Student Interview Survey: Part 3: Reading and Me**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Key word description of item</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Not answered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Book choice my own?</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Comprehension greater when silent reading?</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Comprehension greater when able to choose story?</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Am a good reader?</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Choice of silent or oral reading available?</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
the students' responses to Question 6 in Part 1 of the Student Interview Survey.

The low number of questionnaires returned indicated a possible lack of parent interest in their child's reading activities or a lack of interest in filling out surveys (see Table 9).

Table 9
Parent Reading Survey

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Key word description of item</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Not answered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Like to read?</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Read with preschooler?</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Read with child often?</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Belong to library?</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Visit library often?</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Subscribe to newspapers?</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Subscribe to magazine(s)?</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Choose reading for leisure family fun?</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Child's reading improved because of school?</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Summary

In many instances an enthusiastic, capable teacher can motivate a student to learn to read, even though the student has inhibiting difficulties. Much time and effort might be saved for learning if
the inhibiting factors were recognized and attended to during lesson preparation. Yes, locating, identifying, or recognizing common characteristics of struggling readers can help all the enthusiastic, capable, inexperienced, and burned out teachers.

Borko, Shavelson, and Stern (1981) found that when forming groups for the purpose of teaching reading, many teachers combine student characteristics into estimates of students' reading abilities. They then form groups on the basis of these ability estimates as well as selected school environmental factors and their own conceptions of reading.

A teaching decision strategy is then made which takes into account both student characteristics and school environmental factors. These both would lead to very different instructional practices, along with their own conceptions of reading. Differing characteristics of the groups would call for very different decisions about appropriate teaching techniques for that group.

This present study helped to show how difficult it is to locate common characteristics of struggling readers in the areas of physical, social, mental, and emotional aspects, just as it did in 1946 when Robinson conducted her study.

The contributions of this cross-age study to locate common characteristics of students identified as struggling readers in their basal curriculum are cited in the following six conclusions:

1. The following six research questions were addressed and studied: (a) Are there similar physical attributes among those struggling to read? (b) For their grade level, are the struggling
readers socially mature or immature? (c) Are there specific, identifiable academic areas of deficiency common to struggling readers? (d) When in the process of silent or oral reading, does the struggling reader display a particular emotional reaction; moreover, do struggling readers exhibit any particular emotional pattern? (e) Are there positive and negative reading attitudes by those who struggle to read? (f) Do struggling readers and their parents have similar attitudes toward reading?

2. A few common characteristics of struggling readers, as shown in the summarizations of each research question, were located and could be useful when instruction is in the classroom and individual reading needs are being challenged. A large number of common characteristics of struggling readers could not be found through this investigation because there was no major discrepancy in the tabulated scores of the specific subquestions under each of the six research questions. This might indicate that further investigation of these same specific subquestions on a larger sample could be pursued.

3. It did support and reinforce the literature research in that no conclusive evidence could be found to indicate that there are definite common physical, social, mental, and emotional characteristics of those who struggle to read, only possible characteristics and they are still dependent on the individual's situation. Further investigation is recommended with a larger sample (more than 36) with input from specialists in the areas of social work, psychiatry, pediatrics, education, neurology, endocrinology, ophthalmology, and reading, as well as an interested investigator.
4. Reading disabilities infrequently have single causes and are usually the result of several contributing factors rather than one isolated cause.

5. Children's school performance seems to be influenced by their parents, peers, teachers, and textbooks.

6. The overall contribution from the findings showed that the educational environment, be it public school or home, does make a difference in the student's attitude toward reading.

The conclusions and interpretations in this section are the investigator's personal observations which are based on the findings of the study and related research.

In ending this paper, the investigator makes the assumption that the student's personal reading success lies in the student's attitude. If the public schools and parents can achieve a common goal in which to provide positive reading situations through such activities as the holistic approach, then this in turn should develop positive reading attitudes, wherein every struggling reader would be able to reach his or her own personal reading successes.
CHAPTER IV
RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations were selected because of their capability to allow for rapid, positive learning with no unpleasant associations. They provide opportunities for increased success for all students, especially those struggling to read, by not separating those who struggle from those who do not, hence maximizing their reading potential.

These recommendations will not single out the struggling reader, only help him or her individually within a regular classroom. The daily demands of an elementary classroom teacher are not only to teach, but to also be a nurse, secretary, judge, social worker, etc., when involved in decisions about his or her students' reading needs.

Most school practices today recognize individual differences and try to reach that differentiation in reading instruction. This instruction, especially at initial stages of the students' reading development, might make the difference between success and failure in reading.

Through good teacher modeling and the selected recommendations, a holistic approach in the classroom will allow all to build positive reading attitudes and eventually reach their own personal reading success, especially those who struggle to read.
This holistic approach is direct, exciting, comfortable, and will fit any reader's personality. It involves little preparation by the classroom teacher.

In addition to the holistic approach, if causal factors are known, common characteristics identified, and awareness of the possible connections between the two are visualized, then improvement for reading can be planned.

For example, correcting a visual difficulty does not teach the child to read but enables him or her to learn with greater ease when he or she is given remedial instruction. Also, psychiatric treatment for an emotional problem results in no reading growth without teaching, but it may remove the emotional block so the child is able to direct his or her attention toward learning. Therefore, locating or being aware of certain possible characteristics of struggling readers will not necessarily alleviate the reading problem, only help to prepare better instruction for the particular need of his or her reading lesson. The selected recommendations for lower and upper elementary teachers would apply here.

If remediation is an answer for some struggling readers, then being aware of their common characteristics would be helpful in early identification and instruction. There may be definite characteristics related to symptoms of reading failure, which were not studied here but could be studied through examinations by specialists in selected and related fields using valid tests. Through these examinations, the characteristics along with the symptoms of struggling readers could be identified and connections made.
The recommendations for parents and administrators can add to the holistic approach for lower and upper elementary teachers in helping struggling readers achieve personal reading success.

Recommendations for Lower Elementary Teachers

Life is filled with many "firsts," first smile, first step, first friend, and first love, to name just a few. Melvin (1986) was also concerned with firsts—a student's first moments in reading. She discussed how reading programs are successful through the first day of each new school year, the first few minutes of every school day, and the first few minutes of each daily reading lesson. The following points suggest how struggling readers can be helped by lower elementary teachers (Melvin, 1986, pp. 632-634).

The first day of each new school year:

1. Have great quantities of appealing reading activities so there are opportunities to read and experience success.
2. Create an atmosphere that invites and encourages students to read by hearing the teacher read.
3. Have an easy book collection that is easily categorized with signs which are easy to follow.
4. Have "welcome" signs to show reading is exciting and important.
5. Have story time not only in the morning, but later in the day, too.

The first minutes of each day:
1. Have independent reading for the first 10 minutes after students are greeted and welcomed to the room.

2. Make sure the students have an independent reading book in their desks at all times.

3. When students are finished with their independent reading book, replace it with a new one immediately. This stops wandering.

4. Make sure students know where they are permitted to sit. Children like to visit, and this is a good chance to chat or read together.

5. Reading to the class at the beginning may be fun if all the students come in together.

The first few minutes of the daily reading class:

1. Start each class with reading independently. Students' first impression of reading as being important and exciting may stay with them a lifetime.

2. Start reading class by reading to the class or by having students read independently instead of completing workbook duties.

3. If the teacher is effective then the children will see the most important feature of reading class is real reading.

4. Other activities related to reading will come after the real reading experience. These activities will be used as tools to help students become even better readers.

5. Allow time for silent reading practice.

6. If students are to value reading as a personal tool for learning and for pleasure, then reading classes need to be scheduled to reflect these values.
7. Choose wisely on how to use time to promote student success in reading.

Recommendations for Upper Elementary Teachers

When constructing ways for the struggling reader to succeed, Heller (1986) wrote that through using techniques entitled "What I Know" is a structured procedure for modeling metacognitive (one's knowledge concerning one's own cognitive processes and products or anything related to them [Flavelle, 1976, p. 232]) strategies in the content area of the classroom.

The teachers comprehend and decide whether the students are understanding or misunderstanding the lesson. Through directed questions, the teachers can prepare lessons before, during, or following reading time and ultimately help the students themselves monitor their own reading.

The following contain selected traditional directed reading lesson procedures entitled "What I Know" (Heller, 1986, pp. 416-421):

1. Read to the students, or read with the students by questioning, predicting, analyzing word meaning in context, and following reading skills set by your curriculum.

2. Choose the lesson by following self-monitoring strategies:
   (a) Choose a lesson that builds upon the students' prior knowledge of the subject. (b) When dealing with an expository text, as typical in content areas, choose chapters or chapter excerpts that have a clear method of development. (c) Keep the modeling part of the lesson brief.
3. Describe the task to the students by distributing "What I Know" sheets.

4. During reading discuss "what I now know" and "what I don't know." Teacher will also do this activity and share his or her answers.

5. Explain the strategy to the students after reading by writing down "knowing what I know."

6. An alternative to the sequence is to have students write "how helpful it was."

Recommendations for Parents and Administrators

Epstein (1987) wrote there are five ways for parents to be involved with schools and the administration of schools. It involves a comprehensive program with five basics (pp. 6-9): (a) obligations of parents, (b) obligations of schools, (c) parent involvement at schools, (d) parent involvement in learning activities at home, and (e) parent involvement in governance and advocacy.

Involvement of parents with their school's reading program can be achieved in the following ways:

1. Encourage parents to read to their children regularly, or listen to them read aloud.

2. Loan workbooks, books, and other materials to parents.

3. Encourage parents to take their children to libraries.

4. Ask parents to get their children to talk about what they did in class that day.

5. Give assignments where students must ask parents questions.
6. Suggest ways parents can involve their children in their own educationally enriching activities.

7. Recommend television shows to watch and discuss.

8. Send home suggestions for games and group activities which are related to their child's schoolwork and can be played by either parent and child or child and siblings.

9. Suggest how parents might use home materials and activities to stimulate their children's interest in reading, mathematics, or others.

10. Establish a formal agreement whereby parents supervise and assist children in completing homework tasks.

11. Establish a formal agreement whereby parents provide rewards and/or penalties based on the children's school performance or behavior.

12. Ask parents to come and observe for half a day, not to help.

13. Explain to parents certain techniques for teaching, for making learning materials, or for planning lessons.

14. Give questionnaires to parents so they can evaluate their children's progress or provide some other form of feedback.

15. Ask parents to sign homework to ensure completion.

16. Ask parents to provide spelling practice, mathematics drills, practice activities, or to help with workbook assignments.

All the above are in addition to the holistic approach and need to be adapted to fit each individual teacher's classroom procedures (except No. 12) and comfortable zone, and some may need to be altered.
to fit certain types of parental needs (except No. 11), yet all can be a basis for a school's own approach.

Concluding Remarks

In Robinson's (1946) research studies on the emotional and personality problems of severely retarded readers, she concluded that "learning was more rapid when the stimulus was pleasant, when the subject had been successful, and had been praised. However, learning was inhibited by indifferent or unpleasant associations and by failure and frequent frustrations with shame and reproval" (p. 77).

As cited in Nolte's (1973) book, the Supreme Court of California stated, "unequal education then leads to unequal job opportunities, disparate income and handicapped ability to participate in the social and political activity of society" (p. 53). Reading is a big part of education and education is indeed the basis of a literate society.

Teachers, administrators, and parents need to be motivators for improvement or change. They must look at their struggling reader and see a unique individual. Only in this way can they help their son, daughter, or student find personal reading success.
APPENDICES

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Appendix A

The Personal Characteristic Survey and Results
PERSONAL CHARACTERISTIC SURVEY

(Most of the questions require only a circled response. Thank you!)

PHYSICAL:

What is the child's sex? M F
What is the child's age? _____years _____months
Is the child short, average, or tall?
Is the child thin, normal, or chubby?
Does the child show poor eyesight, speech, or hearing?
Does the child do well in gym? Y N
Does the child have low, normal, or high energy level?
Where is the child's place in the family? __________
Is the child apparently healthy? Y N
Does the child display a body language that is happy? Y N

SOCIAL:

Does the child communicate with his or her peers? Y N
Does the child prefer one friend or a group of friends?
Does the child feel that he or she belongs? Y N
Is the child able to play with others without fighting? Y N
Does the child assume leadership roles in play situations? Y N
Does the child seem well-liked by his or her peers? Y N
Does the child interact with his or her peers at recess? Y N
Does the child prefer to do classwork alone or with others?
Is the child able to take turns? Y N
Does the child frequently tattle? Y N

MENTAL:

Is there at least one thing the child does well? Y N
Is the child curious about his or her surroundings? Y N
Does the child take pride in his or her school work? Y N
Does the child prefer private conversations or class discussions?
Has the child been in developmental kindergarten (DK) or retained?
Does the child now receive special services? Y N What?
Does the child complete homework assignments? Y N
Does the child bring books from home to read? Y N
Is the child quick to solve mathematics problems? Y N

EMOTIONAL

Does the child display an unhappy, somewhat, or overly happy attitude?
Can the child illustrate a picture with ease? Y N
Does the child have a low, normal, or high tolerance level?
Does the child appear to have a positive self-concept?  Y  N
Can the child accept new challenges with confidence?  Y  N
Is the child able to accept constructive criticism?  Y  N
Is the child's daily behavior passive, normal, or aggressive?
Can the child answer questions with ease?  Y  N
Does the child use good judgment in daily situations?  Y  N
Does the child's career plan include a reading need?  Y  N

Thank you ____________________

Grade _____  Date ____________
Personal Characteristics Survey Results  
(NA = not answered, Y = yes, N = no) 

**PHYSICAL:**

What is the child's sex?  M (18)  F (18)

What is the child's age?  ___ years  ___ months  

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Is the child short (5), average (19), or tall (12)?

Is the child thin (8), normal (19), or chubby (9)?

Does the child show poor eyesight (3), speech (8), or hearing (1)? (24 normal)

Does the child do well in gym?  Y (26)  N (5)  NA (5)

Does the child have low (12), normal (15), or high (9) energy level?

Where is the child's place in the family?  

- Single (2)  
- Youngest (15)  
- Middle (5)  
- Oldest (14)

Is the child apparently healthy?  Y (31)  N (3)  NA (2)

Does the child display a body language that is happy?  Y (26)  N (8)  NA (2)

**SOCIAL:**

Does the child communicate with his or her peers?  Y (31)  N (3)  NA (2)

Does the child prefer one friend (10) or a group of friends (22)?  
NA (4)

Does the child feel that he or she belongs?  Y (29)  N (5)  NA (2)
Is the child able to play with others without fighting? Y (28) N (5) NA (3)

Does the child assume leadership roles in play situations? Y (14) N (21) NA (1)

Does the child seem well-liked by his or her peers? Y (27) N (5) NA (4)

Does the child interact with his or her peers at recess? Y (30) N (3) NA (3)

Does the child prefer to do classwork alone (13) or with others (23)?

Is the child able to take turns? Y (30) N (3) NA (3)

Does the child frequently tattletale? Y (6) N (29) NA (1)

MENTAL:

Is there at least one thing the child does well? Y (26) N (7) NA (3)

Is the child curious about his or her surroundings? Y (19) N (11) NA (6)

Does the child take pride in his or her school work? Y (16) N (19) NA (1)

Does the child prefer private conversations or class discussions? Y (14) N (12) NA (10)

Has the child been in developmental kindergarten (DK) or retained? Y (16) N (21) NA (0)

Does the child now receive special services? Y (25) N (11) NA (0)

Does the child complete homework assignments? Y (14) N (21) NA (1)

Does the child bring books from home to read? Y (15) N (21) NA (0)

Is the child quick to solve mathematics problems? Y (7) N (25) NA (4)

EMOTIONAL

Does the child display an unhappy (8), somewhat (19), or overly happy (6) attitude? NA (3)
Can the child illustrate a picture with ease?  Y (19)  N (13)  NA (4)

Does the child have a low (11), normal (17), or high (6) tolerance level?  NA (2)

Does the child appear to have a positive self-concept?  Y (12)  N (16)  NA (8)

Can the child accept new challenges with confidence?  Y (4)  N (25)  NA (7)

Is the child able to accept constructive criticism?  Y (22)  N (11)  NA (3)

Is the child's daily behavior passive (10), normal (17), or aggressive (4)?  NA (5)

Can the child answer questions with ease?  Y (11)  N (19)  NA (6)

Does the child use good judgment in daily situations?  Y (17)  N (12)  NA (7)

Does the child's career plan include a reading need?  Y (12)  N (7)  NA (17)
Appendix B

The Student Reading Survey and Results
STUDENT READING SURVEY

Name: ____________________________
Date: _____________________________
Grade: ____________________________

(The following questions require only a yes or no answer.)

1. Can the child discriminate all the letters of the alphabet? Y  N
2. Can the child identify sight words? Y  N
3. Can the child attack unknown words? Y  N
4. Is the child able to interpret words in terms of ideas? Y  N
5. Can the child evaluate ideas? Y  N
6. Can the child identify main ideas? Y  N
7. Are reversal tendencies showing? Y  N
8. Does the child enjoy reading activities? Y  N
9. In reading situations, does the child guess and bluff? Y  N
10. Does the child display emotional reactions while in reading situations? Y  N
11. Does the child read fluently? Y  N
12. Is the child showing a comparatively low independent reading level (highest level at which the child can read with full understanding and freedom from mechanical difficulties) in relation to capacity level (highest level at which the child can comprehend what is read to him or her due to adequate experiential background and mental content)? Y  N
13. Can the child apply himself or herself in learning situations other than reading? Y  N
14. Can the child do satisfactory academic work? Y  N
15. Does the child have good verbal ability, yet inability to read effectively? Y  N
16. Is the child interested in books? Y  N
17. Does the child make frequent use of the school library? Y  N

Thank you!
Student Reading Survey Results
(Y = yes, N = no, NA = not answered)

1. Can the child discriminate all the letters of the alphabet? Y (27) N (6) NA (3)
2. Can the child identify sight words? Y (25) N (10) NA (1)
3. Can the child attack unknown words? Y (17) N (13) NA (6)
4. Is the child able to interpret words in terms of ideas? Y (14) N (13) NA (9)
5. Can the child evaluate ideas? Y (16) N (16) NA (4)
6. Can the child identify main ideas? Y (14) N (16) NA (6)
7. Are reversal tendencies showing? Y (10) N (21) NA (5)
8. Does the child enjoy reading activities? Y (18) N (12) NA (6)
9. In reading situations, does the child guess and bluff? Y (13) N (18) NA (5)
10. Does the child display emotional reactions while in reading situations? Y (13) N (18) NA (5)
11. Does the child read fluently? Y (14) N (15) NA (7)
12. Is the child showing a comparatively low independent reading level (highest level at which the child can read with full understanding and freedom from mechanical difficulties) in relation to capacity level (highest level at which the child can comprehend what is read to him or her due to adequate experiential background and mental content)? Y (22) N (5) NA (9)
13. Can the child apply himself or herself in learning situations other than reading? Y (15) N (17) NA (4)
14. Can the child do satisfactory academic work? Y (8) N (23) NA (5)
15. Does the child have good verbal ability, yet inability to read effectively? Y (20) N (15) NA (1)
16. Is the child interested in books? Y (20) N (16) NA (0)
17. Does the child make frequent use of the school library? Y (18) N (11) NA (7)
Appendix C

The Student Interview Survey and Results
How I Feel About Reading

I worry over __________________. I get angry when ____________.
I feel hurt when __________________. I love ____________________.
I make believe that __________________. Most books are ________________.
I feel bad when ___________________. Some teachers are ____________.
I am afraid that ___________________. I come to school _______________.

When I read I _____________________.
I feel ashamed when _________________.
I like to _________________________.
I hate to _________________________.
I brag about my _______________________.
Reading is _________________________.
I become disgusted with _____________.
I am happy when _________________.
I like (boys, girls) who _____________.

How I feel About Books and Reading

1. When I am not in school I like to spend:
   A. Most of my time reading.
   B. Some of my time reading.
   C. Very little of my time reading

2. When I have read a book I want to tell others about it:
   A. Not very often.
   B. Sometimes.
   C. Very often.
3. When someone tells me about a good book:
   A. I hardly ever want to read it.
   B. I sometimes want to read it.
   C. I almost always want to read it.

4. I would like to give my friends books for presents:
   A. Very much.
   B. All right.
   C. Not very much.

5. I read books because:
   A. Someone tells me to read them.
   B. I think I should read them.
   C. I like to read them.

6. At home I read:
   A. Often.
   B. Sometimes.
   C. Almost never.

7. If I had brothers or sisters, I would like to read stories to them:
   A. Often.
   B. Sometimes.
   C. Not very often.

8. Most books are:
   A. Not very interesting.
   B. All right.
   C. Very interesting.

9. I would like:
   A. Less time for reading in school.
   B. The same time for reading as now.
   C. More time for reading in school.

10. I like to read:
    A. Many different kinds of stories.
    B. A few different kinds of stories.
    C. One kind of story.
11. If a friend gave me a book for my birthday:
   A. I would rather have something else.
   B. I would like the book O.K.
   C. I would be very happy with the book.

   How I Feel About Reading Class

1. I wish reading class would be:
   A. Longer.
   B. Shorter.
   C. The same as it is now.

2. The stories we read in class are:
   A. Not interesting.
   B. All right.
   C. Interesting.

3. Reading class seems to go:
   A. Slow.
   B. Neither fast nor slow.
   C. Fast.

4. The things we do in reading class:
   A. Help me a lot.
   B. Help me some.
   C. Do not help me.

5. I would like to have:
   A. More reading time in school.
   B. Less reading time in school.
   C. Just the same reading time.

6. If I could teach, I would like to teach reading:
   A. Best.
   B. The same as anything else.
   C. Least.

7. I wish that reading class could:
   A. Be skipped every day.
   B. Be the same as it is now.
   C. Go on all day long.
8. The books we read in reading class are:
   A. Very dull.
   B. All right.
   C. Very interesting.

9. When I come to school:
   A. I can't wait for reading class.
   B. It doesn't matter what we do.
   C. I wish we could skip reading class.

10. The things we do in reading class are:
    A. Fun.
    B. Just something to do.
    C. Work.

Reading and Me

1. I would rather:
   A. Have my teacher tell me what to read.
   B. Have my friends tell me what to read.
   C. Pick out for myself what I will read.

2. I get more out of reading:
   A. If I read to myself.
   B. If I read to someone else.
   C. If someone reads to me.

3. I get more out of reading:
   A. When the whole room reads the same story.
   B. When our whole group reads the same story.
   C. When we each read different stories.

4. When we take turns reading out loud:
   A. I can hardly wait for my turn.
   B. I don't care whether I read or not.
   C. I wish my turn would never come.

5. I think that:
   A. I am the best reader in my room.
   B. I read about the same as many people in my room.
   C. I am one of the poorest readers in my room.
6. When we have reading class, I would rather:
   A. Read to myself.
   B. Read to my teacher.
   C. Read with a group.

7. I would rather read:
   A. Make-believe stories.
   B. Stories that tell me new things.
   C. True stories.

8. I would rather read:
   A. To myself.
   B. Out loud.
   C. Sometimes out loud, sometimes to myself.

(Author unknown)
The Student Interview Survey Results

How I Feel About Reading

I worry over:

Everyone talking.
Someone scaring me.
Snakes and mice.
Going to the doctor.
Nothing.
Someone being late.
Spelling words.
The nighttime.
Fires.
Classes in school.
The reading teacher yelling at me.
My friends.
Reading.
Tests. (3)
School. (4)
Getting my work done. (2)

I feel hurt when:

Animals get hurt by cars.
I don't get my work done.
I read a story. (2)
My reading time is up.
I don't go to school.
I fall. (2)
I get hurt. (3)
I get hit by a strong boy.
The teachers says I'm "not watching."
Someone gets hurt.
I get in trouble.
I accidentally hurt one of my friends.
Dad yells at me.
Someone says something not nice.
I go home and no one is there.
I'm sick.
A mean person hurts me.

I make believe that:

I'm in stories.
I'm a ballerina.
I'm a policeman.
Mother is a doll.
I'm in second grade.
I'm playing
I'm an Indian.
I'm in bed flying.
I'm in my playhouse.
Things aren't true.
I'm paper.
I'm a good soccer player.
I wasn't there.
I'm a mom. (2)
I read.
I'm Rambo.
I'm married.
I'm in school on Saturday.
I'm talking.
A cat is strong.
It is fun.
My dad isn't my dad.

I feel bad when:

My brother isn't here.
Lots of people get their name on the board.
A dog gets hurt.
I don't get my work done.
I'm talked to.
I am not in school.
I get hit.
Someone pushes me down.
Somebody yells in my ear.
I read.
My brother teases me.
People trip.
My grandpa died.
It is not true.
I get in trouble.
Someone won't play with me.
He yells.
Someone hurts my feelings.
Someone dies.
My mother goes on a trip.
I get hurt.
A new baby is born.
Someone in my class leaves.

I am afraid that:

My teacher is gone.
Someone dies.
Someone will fall on me.
No one will be home when I get home.
Monsters will pick me up and hold me.
My dreams will come true.
[No answer.] (2)
When my brother's late, he won't come home.
I'm going to get into trouble...
My dad will get stuck in the cement.
My dog will die.
The ball might hit me on the face.
I might flunk.
I will get hurt. (2)
I'm not good.
We will move this year.
A storm will hit tonight.
I'm not getting my work done. (2)

When I read I:

Think ahead.
Am very quiet. (2)
Read out loud. (2)
Am so happy. (2)
Like it quiet.
Read to myself. (2)
Read good.
Read.
Read to someone else.
Look at the words.
Feel great.
Think about the story.
Read different.
Whisper.
Have fun.
Like it.
Let others work.

I feel ashamed when:

I was out sick.
I clean the table.
People are real bad.
I do something wrong.
I do something bad.
[No answer.] I go in front of the class.
My sister hits me in the store.
I get in fights.
I cry.
People hurt me.
My mom yells at me. (3)
I read.
My boyfriend kisses me.
I get in trouble.
I don't read books.
I don't get my work done.
I get to go swimming.

I like to:

Go places.
Read after I get my work done.
Read. (6)
Read with my mom.
See my boyfriend.
Play house.
Wrestle.
Have fun.
Be free.
Go away to soccer.
Play. (2)
Play soccer. (2)
Play with friends.
Play with Barbies.
Go home.
Play out on recess.
Play jump rope.

I hate to:

Sweep floors.
Clean my room. (2)
Ice skate.
Get done with reading classes.
Work. (2)
Go to bed.
Set the table.
Play football.
Have to go to WW III.
Kick people.
Be there.
Read.
Do dishes.
Go to school.
Spend up my time.
Spell.
Do work.
Be deserted.
Go shopping.

I brag about my:

Math. (3)
Work.
Brother.
Time.
Eating. (2)
Roller skating. (3)
Reading. (3)
Bangs.
Teacher.
Riding my bike.
My dog.
[No answer.]
Being good.
Play.
Playing soccer.

Reading is:

Good. (4)
Fun. (16)
Neat.
Boring.
Trouble.
Nice.
Wonderful.
Happiness.

I become disgusted with:

People and kids. (2)
Friends.
My sister.
Books.
Math.
My brother. (5)
Getting all the problems wrong.
Reading.
People yelling at me.
Mr. Hogarth.
My bike chain as it scratches the metal.
My mom and dad.
My reading being messed up.
Kicking the ball on the roof.
Bad people.
My teacher.

I am happy when:

My friend can play. (2)
I read.
I’m having a filmstrip.
My mother has a surprise for me at home.
I play and read.
I get to stay up to 11:00.
My brother comes home to play with me.
I do my homework.
I play.
I get to ride my bike.
I'm with my teacher.
I get stuff.
I read. (2)
I ice skate.
My birthday comes.
I see my grandma and grandpa.
I go racing.
I read a good story.
Things are over.
I don't have to go shopping.

I like (boys, girls) who:

Are quiet.
Read. (5)
Nice to me. (8)
Like me. (2)
Don't hurt people.
Play with me. (2)
Are my friend.
Neat.

I get angry when:

My friends always move.
Mom whips me.
Someone does something wrong.
My brother teases me. (2)
People tease me.
I can't read. (2)
I'm bored.
I get in trouble.
People beat me up.
Mom yells at me.
My brother hits me.
I have to do homework.
I read.
I touch electric fences.
Someone kicks me. (3)
I get mad.
[No answer.]

I love:

Mom and Dad. (3)
To read. (6)
A boy.
My mom. (4)
A girl.
Cookies.
My family.
To eat.
Books.
Teachers.

Most books are:

Great.
Fun. (11)
Good. (2)
Fun to read. (3)
Neat.
Pretty okay.
Kind of interesting. (2)
Bogus.
True.
Easy to read.
Good.

Some teachers are:

Nice. (14)
Readers.
Good.
Mean.
Funny.
Great.
Fun to read with.
Happy.

I come to school:

Everyday. (3)
Almost everyday. (3)
To work and play.
Because I like it.
To read. (2)
At 8:30. (2)
Often.
Sometimes.
Too late.
To learn. (2)
At 9:00. (3)
Every week.
Bored.
How I feel About Books and Reading

1. When I am not in school I like to spend:
   A. Most of my time reading. (13)
   B. Some of my time reading. (9)
   C. Very little of my time reading. (14)

2. When I have read a book I want to tell others about it:
   A. Not very often. (7)
   B. Sometimes. (18)
   C. Very often. (11)

3. When someone tells me about a good book:
   A. I hardly ever want to read it. (8)
   B. I sometimes want to read it. (14)
   C. I almost always want to read it. (14)

4. I would like to give my friends books for presents:
   A. Very much. (19)
   B. All right. (10)
   C. Not very much. (7)

5. I read books because:
   A. Someone tells me to read them. (1)
   B. I think I should read them. (7)
   C. I like to read them. (28)

6. At home I read:
   A. Often. (13)
   B. Sometimes. (12)
   C. Almost never. (11)

7. If I had brothers or sisters, I would like to read stories to them:
   A. Often. (10)
   B. Sometimes. (12)
   C. Not very often. (14)

8. Most books are:
   A. Not very interesting. (5)
   B. All right. (13)
   C. Very interesting. (18)
9. I would like:
   A. Less time for reading in school. (9)
   B. The same time for reading as now. (6)
   C. More time for reading in school. (21)

10. I like to read:
    A. Many different kinds of stories. (22)
    B. A few different kinds of stories. (10)
    C. One kind of story. (3) NA (1)

11. If a friend gave me a book for my birthday:
    A. I would rather have something else. (1)
    B. I would like the book O.K. (8)
    C. I would be very happy with the book. (26) NA (1)

How I Feel About Reading Class

1. I wish reading class would be:
   A. Longer. (14)
   B. Shorter. (13)
   C. The same as it is now. (9)

2. The stories we read in class are:
   A. Not interesting. (2)
   B. All right. (13)
   C. Interesting. (21)

3. Reading class seems to go:
   A. Slow. (19)
   B. Neither fast nor slow. (7)
   C. Fast. (10)

4. The things we do in reading class:
   A. Help me a lot. (24)
   B. Help me some. (9)
   C. Do not help me. (3)

5. I would like to have:
   A. More reading time in school. (13)
   B. Less reading time in school. (10)
   C. Just the same reading time. (13)
6. If I could teach, I would like to teach reading:
   A. Best. (18)
   B. The same as anything else. (7)
   C. Least. (11)

7. I wish that reading class could:
   A. Be skipped every day. (5)
   B. Be the same as it is now. (14)
   C. Go on all day long. (17)

8. The books we read in reading class are:
   A. Very dull. (5)
   B. All right. (11)
   C. Very interesting. (20)

9. When I come to school:
   A. I can't wait for reading class. (16)
   B. It doesn't matter what we do. (12)
   C. I wish we could skip reading class. (8)

10. The things we do in reading class are:
    A. Fun. (17)
    B. Just something to do. (4)
    C. Work. (15)

Reading and Me

1. I would rather:
   A. Have my teacher tell me what to read. (5)
   B. Have my friends tell me what to read. (0)
   C. Pick out for myself what I will read. (31)

2. I get more out of reading:
   A. If I read to myself. (16)
   B. If I read to someone else. (5)
   C. If someone reads to me. (15)

3. I get more out of reading:
   A. When the whole room reads the same story. (1)
   B. When our whole group reads the same story. (9)
   C. When we each read different stories. (26)
4. When we take turns reading out loud:
   A. I can hardly wait for my turn. (22)
   B. I don't care whether I read or not. (6)
   C. I wish my turn would never come. (8)

5. I think that:
   A. I am the best reader in my room. (5)
   B. I read about the same as many people in my room. (26)
   C. I am one of the poorest readers in my room. (5)

6. When we have reading class, I would rather:
   A. Read to myself. (13)
   B. Read to my teacher. (8)
   C. Read with a group. (15)

7. I would rather read:
   A. Make-believe stories. (11)
   B. Stories that tell me new things. (5)
   C. True stories. (20)

8. I would rather read:
   A. To myself. (12)
   B. Out loud. (3)
   C. Sometimes out loud, sometimes to myself. (20)

Note. Kindergarten questions were phrased in conjunction to their terminology and reading curriculum.

Author of survey unknown.
Appendix D

The Parent Reading Survey and Results
PARENT READING SURVEY

Name: ______________________

Date: ______________________

1. As parents, do you like to read? Yes No

2. Did you read to your child before he or she entered school? Yes No

3. How often do you read to your child, or with your child now at home? ____________________

4. Do you belong to the library? Yes No

5. How often do you go to the library? ____________________

6. What newspapers do you subscribe to? ____________________

7. How many magazines do you subscribe to? ____________________

8. What clubs or organizations do you belong to? ____________________

9. As a family, when you have time to spend as you please, which would you rather do?
   a. Play games? __________
   b. Watch television? __________
   c. Go to the movies? __________
   d. Watch movies at home? __________
   e. Read? __________
   f. Other? __________

10. What one thing has your school done for your child’s reading? ____________________

Thank you!
Parent Reading Survey Results

(Y = yes, N = no, A-R = responses to Question 10)

1. As parents, do you like to read?  Y (16)  N (2)

2. Did you read to your child before he or she entered school?  
   Y (18)  N (0)

3. How often do you read to your child, or with your child now at home?  
   Every day (5)  
   Three times weekly (3)  
   Once a week (4)  
   Four or more (1)  
   Not often (3)  
   None (1)  
   Once or twice (1)

4. Do you belong to the library?  Y (17)  N (1)

5. How often do you go to the library?  
   Often (2)  Not often (16)

6. What newspapers do you subscribe to?  
   Kalamazoo Gazette (8)  None (10)

7. How many magazines do you subscribe to?  
   One (4)  Six (0)  Zero (2)  
   Two (4)  Seven (1)  
   Three (4)  Eight (0)  
   Four (1)  Nine (0)  
   Five (1)  Ten (1)

8. What clubs or organizations do you belong to?  
   Church (2)  
   Others (3)  
   None (13)

9. As a family, when you have time to spend as you please, which would you rather do?  
   a. Play games?  (10)  
   b. Watch television?  (7)  
   c. Go to the movies?  (4)  
   d. Watch movies at home?  (9)  
   e. Read?  (9)  
   f. Other?  (8) (eat out, homework, sports, read Bible, bowl, travel)

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10. What one thing has your school done for your child's reading?

A. It has improved it a lot. Also built up his self-concept. Has encouraged him to read more and enjoy what he reads. I am very thankful for Chapter One.

B. She enjoys reading more and likes to read.

C. Helped to provide books for her to read where as stated above, we don't get to the library often.

D. Has given her a better understanding of what she has read.

E. I really couldn't say.

F. Helped tremendously on his comprehension and processing of the written word—encouragement—opened doors for him.

G. Increased her interest in good literature and books. Also, made her more aware of other sources such as newspapers and reference books.

H. Improved it greatly.

I. Improved it.

J. Improved her reading a lot.

K. Provided us with concerned and willing teachers.

L. It has really helped in the special class.

M. Took the time and interest in him for the special help he needed to become a better reader.

N. Helped it.

O. Helped them to use it in their everyday life.

P. [Children] got into a special reading class which I believe is a very good program. I'm a very poor reader and I know it is a very important part of life. Hopefully, the kids will do better with this special help.

Q. Has not only improved his reading skills, but has made reading fun. He loves to read and he is improving every day.

R. It has helped him understand what he reads and also helps him read better.
Appendix E

Letters Related to Interviews and Surveys
April 1986

Dear _________________:

This note is in regards to the attached Parent Reading Survey.

I am taking a class at Western Michigan University and am writing a paper on reading. I've conducted a student and teacher reading survey, now with your help, a parent reading survey.

Could you please take a few minutes and fill out the attached Parent Reading Survey. When completed, please mail back to me in the enclosed self-addressed stamped envelope as soon as possible.

I appreciate your time and helpfulness in my study on reading!

Thank you.

Jean C. Hackney
Dear ______________:

THANK YOU for participating in my Student Reading Survey the other day. To help show my appreciation, I hope you enjoy the attached gift certificate. Again, thank you for your time and helpfulness!

Sincerely,

Mrs. J. C. Hackney
May 21, 1986

Dear __________:

This is a small note with a big "thank you" for helping me complete my "Specialist Degree" project. Your kindness has been overwhelming.

Thank you" for completing the "Student Reading Survey" and the "Personal Characteristic Survey" on your ______ graders. It took much time and my appreciation is great!

Please accept the enclosed certificates to help show my thankfulness to you in being so generous with your time. Have a marvelous day!

Jean C. Hackney
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