



Reading Horizons: A Journal of Literacy and Language Arts

Volume 16
Issue 3 April 1976

Article 16

4-1976

Reading Horizons vol. 16, no. 3

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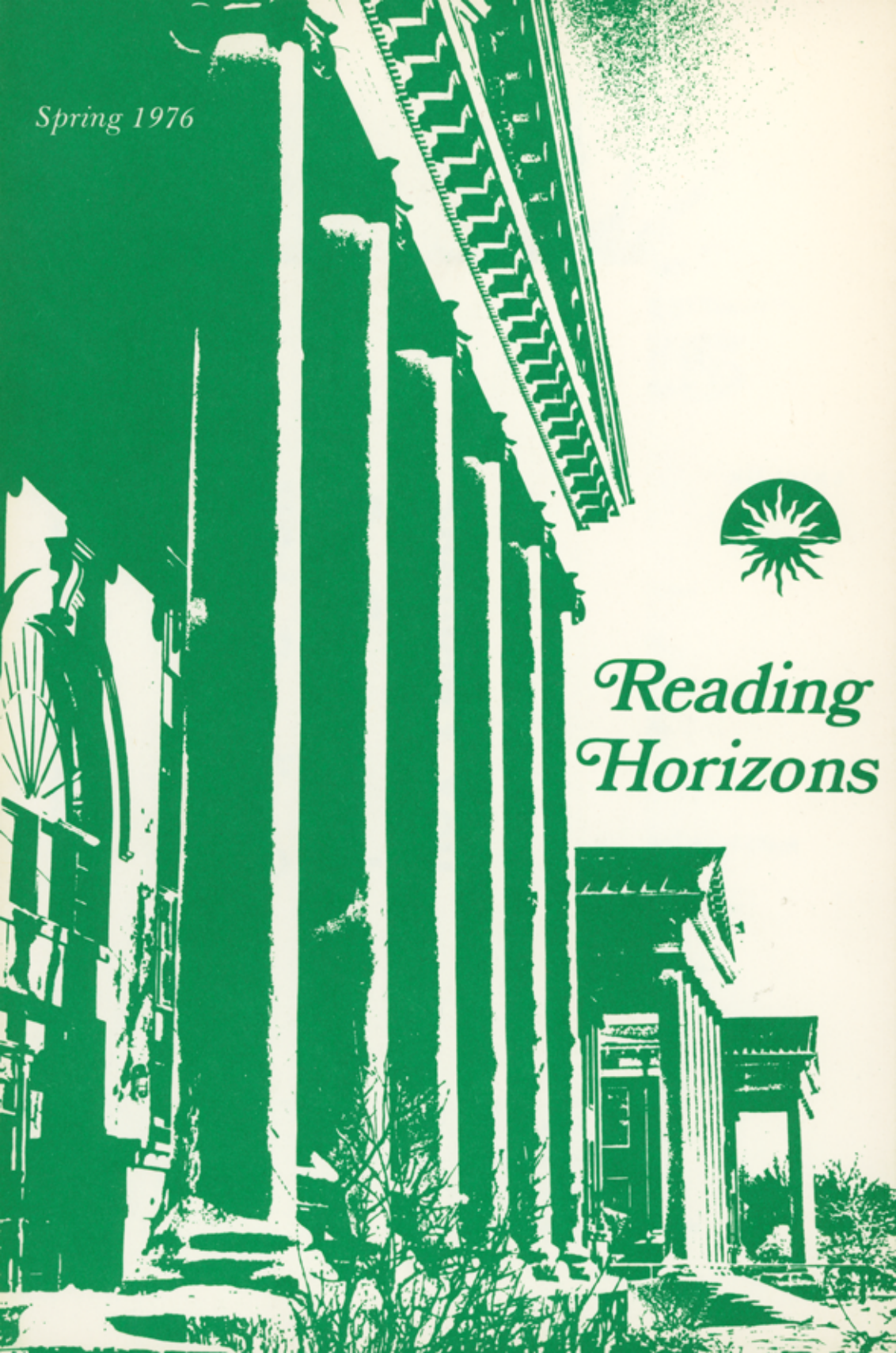
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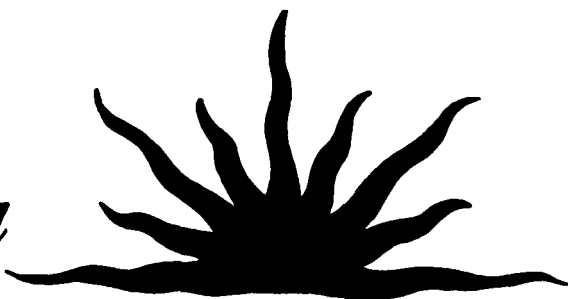
Spring 1976



Reading Horizons



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HORIZONS

VOLUME 16

NUMBER 3

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HUMANISM IN TEACHING

In the past decade we have seen the number of research studies in the teaching of reading grow at an astonishing rate. We have seen many new devices and mechanical approaches to reading put on the market in recent years. We have also witnessed the proliferation of tests and measurement instruments to help make teachers "accountable" for amounts of reading growth that could be seen on a scale and divided into units. And, we have become aware that discussions about teaching reading have begun to include computer-words, mathematical terms, physical science terms, and newly coined terms especially designed for the "science" of teaching reading.

It seems to be time for the teachers to step back from what they are busily engaged in every day, and look at the whole scene of children in school and those charged with their initial, intermediate, and secondary education. If the trend toward viewing teachers as scientists in laboratories continues in the present direction, it will be to the exclusion of the important picture that each teacher must hold of herself or himself, as a person committed to the great humanistic endeavor of teaching children to realize their infinite potential as adults.

We must remind ourselves frequently that teachers are examples of appreciation of beauty in what is being read, examples of strength of character in making decisions, examples of cheerfulness, of positive approach, of curiosity about the surrounding world. Teaching reading is giving students a more generous portion of personal development than one could possibly have without it, and that is not done through treating the individuals as "organisms" responding to printed "stimuli."

Therefore, as risky as it may sound, we propose that all teachers regard themselves as artists, developing the members of each class to the highest degree possible through the sensitive yet powerful *art* of teaching. Twenty years ago, Gilbert Highet wrote *The Art of Teaching*, a book with the high purpose of inculcating this feeling in all his readers; teaching is an improvable art that defies measurement by anyone's ruler. We agree, and find the self-image invigorating and stimulating.

Kenneth VanderMeulen
Editor

A NEW STUDY HABITS INVENTORY: DESCRIPTION AND UTILIZATION

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Study habits inventories have successfully identified a proclivity for academic achievement not accounted for by ability. These inventories may be identifying a motivational trait that is difficult to chart by using traditional ability measures. The concept of motivation is quite difficult to pin down, and professional educators often turn to their particular notions of motivation when explaining success or failure. Motivation has been characterized as a conceptual charlady widely used for sweeping up variance in academic attainment unaccounted for by traditional intellectual or educational variables (Entwistle, et al., 1974).

The rationale for using study habits inventories is to identify certain non-intellectual traits that might influence academic achievement. Lavin (1965) did a massive study on the prediction of academic performance (300 studies reviewed and analyzed), and found ability accounts for 35 to 45 percent of the variation in grades. No other single factor accounts for this much variation, yet more than half remains unexplained. Other researchers, as well as Lavin (1965), have recommended that future efforts be directed to finding variables that are non-intellective in nature to help account for the remaining variation. Study habits and attitudes are considered to be non-intellective factors that do correspond to grades for high school and college students.

This article will report on a new study habits inventory developed in Britain by N. J. Entwistle. The Entwistle Inventory is short (47 true/false items) and is not protected by copyright laws. A brief history of study habits inventories in this country will be introduced prior to a description of the Entwistle Inventory.

Appraisal of Study Methods Inventories

In 1933, Wrenn published one of the first study habits inventories in the United States (Brown & Holtzman, 1955). Wrenn's inventory was originally designed for men, but was modified later for women (Wrenn & Humber, 1941). An attempt was made to determine the extent to which study habit items could be used to predict academically successful or unsuccessful students. Wrenn believed study habits might correspond to academic success if ability was controlled. The work done by Wrenn in the 1930s and 40s has been expanded by other researchers interested in study methods. Brown and Holtzman have concentrated on study methods inventories and found that attitudes toward the academic environment are significantly related to achievement (Brown, 1972). The Brown-Holtzman Survey of Study Habits Attitudes (SSHA) Inventory is generally acknowledged as one of the best study habit attitude inventories in the United States.

Brown and Holtzman introduced a questionnaire concerning study habits and attitudes in 1953; the original inventory had 75 items. There have been several revisions (the most recent in 1967), and the length of the inventory is now 100 items. This inventory which is widely used as a research tool has four scales:

- 1) Work methods—use of effective study procedures, skill and efficiency in doing academic assignments;
- 2) Delay avoidance—promptness in completing assignments and ability to resist distractions;
- 3) Teacher approval—feelings and opinions about teachers, their classroom behavior, and their methods;
- 4) Educational acceptance—approval of educational objectives, practices and requirements.

The scales of work methods and delay avoidance are classified as study habits. Teacher approval and educational acceptance scales are classified as study attitudes.

There have been numerous research studies that link scores on the Brown-Holtzman SSHA with academic success (Holtzman, et. al., 1954; Brown & Holtzman, 1956; Ikenberry, 1966; Pepper, 1970; Phillips, 1970; Brown, 1972; Goldfried & Zurilla, 1973; and Shaffer, 1973). One of the purposes of the SSHA is to identify students whose study habits and attitudes are different from those of students who earn high grades.

The logic for using study methods as a predictive variable in college is related to the environmental differences between high school and college. In public high schools, students receive greater support from their teachers. College teachers present more depth and expect independent work from their students. The need for independent study increases as the student progresses in higher education. It is essential for college and university students to adapt quickly to the new learning environment and to accept responsibility for academic development. The student most likely to be more successful than others may exhibit better study habits, and adapt more easily to academic norms and requirements of the college. Consequently, the student may become more self-confident about his or her ability and have the personality characteristics for successful independent study (Hewitt, 1973).

Informing students of the procedures and techniques used by successful students has helped to improve grade point averages (GPA). These procedures have been packaged in the form of manuals and special courses to be used as required by the student. An emphasis on organization, reading flexibility, note taking, examination technique and regular study habits are usually presented.

How-to-study manuals and study skills courses have been popular for a number of years. Thirty-eight how-to-study manuals were published between 1926 and 1939 (Laycock & Russell, 1941). Brown and Holtzman (1955) stated that more than 200 how-to-study manuals were published between 1926 and 1955. In 1960 Entwistle reviewed the literature, and made evaluations of 22 study skills courses. Entwistle concluded:

- 1) A study skills course will usually be followed by improvement.
- 2) A course will be most beneficial for students desiring to take it.
- 3) Students wishing to take a study skills course but prevented from doing so, and therefore presumably of comparable motivation to those enrolled, fail to show significant improvement.
- 4) Any gains noted will not necessarily be related to either the content or the duration of the course.

In summary, one might conclude that a study habits inventory does provide information about students not indicated by ability measures. This information might be helpful to high risk students. Entwistle, et al., (1971) have developed a study habits inventory for a British population that correlates .77 with the Brown-Holtzman SSHA. This inventory will be discussed and analyzed.

Development of the Entwistle Student Attitudes Inventory

Entwistle has done considerable research in England on the topic of achievement in higher education. Self-report inventories designed to tap the more specific dimensions of academic motivation have been a particular interest of his. The dimensions of academic motivation appear to have been conceptualized in terms of a type of intrinsic motivation which links competitive academic attainment with self-esteem (Entwistle, et al., 1974).

One of the Entwistle's first studies aimed at identifying factors of academic motivation was reported in 1968. This study was conducted at Aberdeen, Scotland, with 2,707 students aged 13, using a self-rating inventory. The inventory was constructed to assess academic motivation and contained 24 true/false items. Entwistle (1968) reported that he was influenced by research in the United States that attempted to relate academic motivation to the more general trait of achievement motivation. He was particularly impressed with the research of Finger and Schlessler (1965) on academic motivation.

Entwistle, Nisbet, Entwistle and Cowell (1971) provided a detailed report on the new study habits inventory developed for British students in higher education. This inventory was called a Student Attitudes Inventory (SAI) and had 47 true/false items with four scales:

THE ENTWISTLE STUDENT ATTITUDES INVENTORY

Motivation (M)	14 questions
Study Methods (S)	14 questions
Exam Technique (E)	9 questions
Lack of Distraction (L)	10 questions

- S Background music helps me to study more effectively. (No)
 M It is most unusual for me to be late handing in work. (Yes)
 E I certainly want to pass the next set of exams, but it doesn't matter much if I only just scrape through. (No)
 L - I haven't had any serious personal problems since I came here. (Yes)
 S My habit of putting off work leaves me with far too much to do at the end of term. (No)

- M — I enjoy the challenge of a difficult new topic in lectures. (Yes)
- E — In exams I start writing almost straight away; there's not time to think out the answers beforehand. (No)
- L — If I have a sudden pain, I always think it may be something serious. (No)
- S — It's rather difficult for me to organise my study time: at school this was done for me. (No)
- M — I usually tackle the easy things first and leave the more difficult ones until the end. (No)
- E — I rarely seem to do myself justice in exams. (No)
- L — Sport or social activities take up a lot of my time. (No)
- S — I seem to have plenty of free time during the week. (No)
- M — I enjoy collecting things such as stamps, minerals, plants, etc. (Yes)
- E — I often find that my mind goes blank when I'm faced with a particularly difficult question. (No)
- L — I like to be in the swim of things: if there is anything going on I like to be there. (No)
- E — In exams I often have little or no time left to answer the last question. (No)
- L — I get depressed easily — too easily. (No)
- S — I don't find much time to study during the holidays. (No)
- M — I play any game to win, not just for the fun of it. (Yes)
- E — A poor first answer in an exam tends to make me panic. (No)
- S — My lecture notes are often difficult to decipher afterwards. (No)
- M — I sometimes wish I had gone straight into work after school. (No)
- L — Worrying about an exam or about work that's overdue often prevents me from sleeping. (No)
- S — I usually plan my week's work in advance, either on paper or in my head. (Yes)
- M — I get disheartened and give up easily if something is too difficult for me. (No)
- L — I enjoy lively parties. (No)
- S — I find it difficult to pick out the relevant points in a lecture unless they are written on the board or in a hand-out. (No)
- M — I can't see any relevance in most of the work we do here. (No)
- E — I feel nervous before an exam, but it seems to make me work better once I start. (Yes)
- S — I need to be in the right mood before I can study effectively. (No)
- M — I'm a pretty average student: I'll never be particularly good, so there's no point in striving to be something I'm not. (No)
- L — Money worries have distracted me from my work. (No)
- S — I find it difficult to keep awake during some lectures. (No)
- M — It is important for me to do really well in the courses here. (Yes)
- L — To work effectively, I need plenty of time for relaxation. (No)
- S — There seems to be little point in following up the references we are given in lectures. (No)

- M — It's not often that I can stick at work for more than an hour at a time. (No)
- E — Low marks in an exam make me ashamed. (Yes)
- S — There are very few of the recommended text-books which are really worth buying. (No)
- E — If I had to state my priorities at present, exam success would be near the top. (Yes)
- M — I hate admitting defeat, even in trivial matters. (Yes)
- S — I don't often join in tutorial discussions; I prefer to listen. (No)
- M — There's no point in trying to do things in a hurry; I prefer to take my time. (No)
- S — I'm rather slow at starting work in the evenings. (No)
- M — My friends always seem to be able to do things better than me. (No)
- L — I believe in taking an active part in societies and clubs. (No)

The items were initially allocated to two scales (motivation and study methods) (Entwistle & Wilson, 1970 and Entwistle & Entwistle, 1970). The items in the examination technique scale had been previously allocated to the study method scale. The questions composing the lack of distractions scale were taken from the motivation scale. Validity was inferred from correlations with the Brown-Holtzman scale (.77), independent measures of hard work (hours studied) and the criterion measure of academic performance.

Entwistle, et al., (1971) used 898 university students, 562 college of education students and 190 students in polytechnics and colleges of technology for the sample. The motivation and study methods scales showed the most consistent relationships with the criteria of academic performance. The lack of distractions scale produced the lowest correlations with the criteria of academic performance.

Some Possible Uses for the Entwistle Inventory

There has been a limited amount of research accomplished with the Entwistle Inventory in this country. A recent study completed with community college students indicated that attitudes toward study behavior, as reported by the Entwistle Inventory, do correspond to degrees of academic success (Thompson, 1975).

If students can be identified by attitudes concerning their study behavior, it may be possible to help them with specific clinical treatments (courses designed to improve their study effectiveness and specific skills such as reading). Thus, the Entwistle Inventory has the possibility of becoming a diagnostic instrument; moreover, it could also be used as a screening instrument for counselors. Additionally, this instrument can be used as a teaching aid by demonstrating to the student that effective study methods and motivational factors are important aspects of academic success.

It is recommended that counselors use the Entwistle Inventory as a clinical measure of attitudes toward study habits. This inventory does contribute measurably to the prediction of academic success. Students with measured low ability and high SAI scales would probably need a different

treatment strategy than students with high ability scores and a low SAI score.

An ability measure along with a study attitudes indicator will help professionals in the planning of remedial programs. This new study habits inventory might help.

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MEANINGFUL VS. MEANINGLESS UTTERANCES IN INVENTORIES AND THEIR EFFECTS ON PUPIL PERFORMANCE

Jerome Axelrod

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

In administering phonics inventories to his pupils, a teacher must be sure he is testing the pupils' knowledge of phonics ("sound sense") and not other or additional knowledge the pupils may possess. Administering this kind of extraneous-free test may be difficult in view of the great ranges of knowledge the students may bring to the testing situation. Therefore, it is the teacher's responsibility to employ in his phonics tests stimuli which he is relatively certain lie outside the ken of the respondents. It would seem, then, that using nonsense syllables (NSS: i.e. meaningless utterances) in phonics tests would be superior to using real words since the latter may be a part of the child's reading, listening or speaking vocabularies. For example, a pupil may not be able to identify the first phoneme in the NSS "moosh" but might be able to call by name that initial letter-sound in the word "mash" because he may have seen the television show or movie by the same name. Using "moosh," thus, may seem more reliable than using "mash" in testing the "m" sound.

A review of the commercial phonics inventories reveals most authors using real words or at best different vocabulary words. The Botel Phonics Mastery Test,¹ for example, uses words like "budge," "fad," "tab," "dude" and "hub" in testing initial consonants. The Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test² uses words like "gun," "plate," "cross" and "string."

Personke has researched the subject. He notes, with regard to one particular recall test of spelling nonsense words conducted by Spaulding, "The nonsense words were employed after a pilot study convinced her that she could not use real words and be certain that she was indeed testing the use of generalizations . . . how does one determine if the subject is actually responding by use of a generalization, or by guessing aided by visual recall, or simply reproducing a learned word?"³ In another study, Aaron noted that "Nonsense words involving the various phonics principles were prepared so that the person taking the test would be forced to put the principles into practice in "recognizing" unknown words."⁴ In comparing NSS to real words in his test, Templin found ". . . significantly higher scores are obtained when the stimulus is a familiar word rather than . . . a nonsense word."⁵

Hypotheses:

1. Pupils taking both a real word phonics test and a NSS phonics test

will yield higher scores in the former test despite the order in which they take the tests. The reasoning is that pupils will be more familiar with the phonics elements in real words than in NSS words.

2. The superior readers will render little disparity between test scores. Reasoning: good readers will perform equally well in phonics whether the stimuli is familiar or not.

3. Inferior readers will render a great disparity in test scores, performing better in the real word test than in the NSS test. Nevertheless, both scores are expected to be low.

4. Intermediate readers will score midway between the superior and inferior readers. However, it is expected that this middle group's ranges of individual scores will be much greater than those of both other groups. The reason is that some intermediate readers read fairly well despite possessing little phonics knowledge and others who have mastered phonics skills do not comprehend material well enough to gain them entry into the superior group.

Procedure:

One hundred sixty-one black, white and hispanic boys and girls in an innercity Philadelphia Junior high were randomly selected to take the Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test, Level Two, Form W.⁶ Three groups of twenty were then formed from these 161 and divided into three additional groups. The poor readers (receiving "Below 2.0" in the Stanford), the intermediate (2.1-5.8), and the good readers (6.0-12.7) were then further divided into six groups and were then administered two different 38-unit, teacher-made phonics tests in the order as explained by the following diagram:

	Group 1 took "word" phonics test first and NSS test second	Group 2 took NSS test first and "word" phonics test second
poor readers	1	2
intermediate readers	3	4
good readers	5	6

The answers to both phonics tests were identical. Each tested the pupils' knowledge of initial and final consonants and digraphs, initial double and triple blends and medial long and short vowels. The only differences in content between tests was that in the word test the teacher emitted real, everyday words (*boy, dog, chip*), whereas the NSS test contained meaningless utterances (*bixt, hoog, ching*).

All data collection and scoring was performed by this investigator. It entailed the handscoring of the 60-point Stanford Test and each of the thirty-eight point phonics test invented by the investigator.

Group	Mean SDRT Grade Scores	Average Real Word Test Scores (%)	Average NSS Test Scores (%)
1	below 22	56.1 (21.3 average number correct)	46.8 (17.8)
2	below 2	41.1 (15.6)	29.2 (11.1)
3	4.1	86 (32.7)	60 (22.8)
4	4.8	89.9 (34.1)	71.8 (27.3)
5	8.2	98.7 (37.5)	85 (32.3)
6	8.6	98.5 (37.4)	90.8 (34.5)

RESULTS

Figure Legend: Variations in Phonics Test Scores Using Nonsense & Real Words.

1. Hypothesis one was supported. Every group did better in the word test than in the NSS test.

2. Hypothesis two was supported. There was only a four point difference on the average between test scores between both superior groups.

3. Hypothesis three was rejected. Like the superior group, there was only a four point difference on the average between test scores between both poor groups. Nevertheless, both poor groups did poorly on both tests, ranging from a low of 29.2 on a NSS test to a high of only 56% on a word test.

4. Hypothesis four was supported. However, the reasoning that the middle group's ranges of individual scores would be much greater than those of *both* other groups was rejected. Individual ranges (not shown here) of the poor groups were from 1-32 correct; intermediate 8-38; superior, 26-38. Thus, the ranges between the poor and intermediate groups were almost equal, with the superior groups revealing a much smaller range.

In testing some of the superior readers on the NSS words (especially when these words were presented before the real words), many pupils registered doubt and confusion as to whether they were putting down correct answers. As it turned out, they were giving correct responses although perhaps none of them would have bet on it. In fact, only two superior readers received as low as a 68% on one test, the NSS test. This point is even less surprising in view of the fact that with identical 6.4 reading scores they had barely made the superior reading group.

Of the sixty pupils used in this experiment, only four students did better in the NSS test than in the word test. It is not only interesting to note that all four were poor readers but that they also came from the same group—group one. Could it be that some poor readers do better in reading tests in which the symbols are new to them than in tests that use familiar symbols which the pupils have for so long found frustrating, confusing and

disgusting? Could it be that while most pupils find NSS strange, some other pupils find them refreshing? Only further experimentation in these areas may yield some answers.

Conclusions

This experiment supports the view that in testing pupils' phonics knowledge, it is wiser to use NSS. Moreover, it suggests that with developmental (i.e. reading level-grade level) readers on the secondary level it is not necessary to give phonics tests, they are beyond that.

Results also showed that some poor reading comprehenders will do well in phonics tests; good reading comprehenders will do well almost always in phonics tests; that intermediate reading comprehenders will yield great ranges of phonics scores, thus making them perhaps the most baffling, interesting, and unpredictable group of all.

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²Bjorn Karlson and Others, *Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test*, (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1966).

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⁴Ira Aaron, "What Teachers and Prospective Teachers Know About Phonics Generalizations," *Journal of Educational Research*, 53 (May, 1960), 323-30.

⁵Mildred Templin, "Phonic Knowledge and Its Relation to the Spelling and Reading Achievement of Fourth Grade Pupils," *Journal of Educational Research*, 47 (February, 1954), 442-54.

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ADMINISTRATORS CAN HELP MEET READING IMPROVEMENT OBJECTIVES

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Total commitment to the improvement of the reading skills of our elementary and middle school students resulted from a performance objective initially set by our Board of Education. In some way all staff members were involved in the improvement of delivery systems and assessment programs.

Each year the members of our Board devise performance objectives for the superintendent, who in turn devises performance objectives for his assistant superintendents and principals. Principals devise objectives for their assistant principals and building coordinators. As the performance objectives are formulated, the person involved is free to suggest revisions, request additional resources to do the job, and help develop the time schedule for data collection and evaluation.

A case in point is the fact that our Board originally set as its primary goal, "To have all fourth graders read at a fourth grade level or above." This is, of course, educationally an unattainable goal. Our Superintendent, however, reacted to this preliminary statement with a performance objective which was more developed, educationally attainable, and it was eventually adopted. It read:

"To decrease by a minimum of 3% the percentage of students whose standardized reading scores fall below grade; and to cause a gain of at least one month beyond the normal reading achievement pattern established by the pupils who remain below grade level within the time period September 1, 1973 to June 30, 1974. These measurable objectives to be limited to grades 2 through 4."

Having reached that initial agreement with the Board of Education, the Superintendent then met with his Assistant Superintendent for Instruction. The objective was expanded to include:

". . . An achievement rate in reading, on a group basis, of at least one month beyond the normal reading pattern achievement by students in grades 1 and 5 through 8 who are below grade level on the original measurement."

Having agreed on the objective, all available resources were recruited and utilized. With the help of the building principals, a total of 250 parents were trained as volunteer tutors. Initial training sessions were large group,

but individual direction was given by the building reading consultants. Volunteers were usually involved extensively with no more than two or three students and most often contact was in a one-to-one situation.

The role of the reading teacher was redefined. Whereas she was formerly a remedial teacher, she now assumed a consultant role. This took better advantage of her special training. While she still involved herself with remedial students through diagnosis and prescription she was, with the availability of the parent volunteers, freed of the actual administration of the activities. Teachers felt freer to seek her advice in reading programs for students of all ability levels.

Using our psychologists, learning disabilities teachers, and elementary physical education teachers, a program was devised whereby the Purdue test was administered to all kindergarteners and first graders. The purpose was to detect, as early as possible, all perceptual problems and treat those problems at an age when we knew our effectiveness was the greatest.

One of the principals devised a handbook for classroom teachers giving some very specific activities which could be used in dealing with the perceptual problems identified. The suggested activities were easy to follow and required the kinds of materials found in any elementary classroom. The most severely handicapped students were screened into one of our two elementary learning disabilities classrooms. This was done only when an integrated problem in the home school appeared inadequate in light of the severity of the handicap.

A special \$5,000 budget was allocated to provide professional reference materials and other materials needed by individual students. This was a very small expenditure, less than \$1.00 per student for additional materials involved in the program. The only other major expenditure was in staffing: the employment of the reading consultants as full-time employees, whereas the previous arrangement provided for something less, usually four days a week. Full-time reading aides were also employed in three of our five elementary schools; one for our largest elementary school and another two where our reading achievement scores were traditionally lower.

Our kindergarten teachers devised a criteria reference test used to identify kindergarteners ready for a formal reading program. Our decision was to individualize as much as possible, allowing those who were ready to proceed as far as possible without pushing too hard. This will, over a period of time, encourage additional efforts to individualize as these students move up in the grades. It also answered a question in the minds of some parents who recognized their child as having superior ability and who had previously advocated a first grade entry position.

All our middle school students were scheduled for reading in addition to the usual language arts classes. The students reading below grade level were scheduled for a full year of instruction; all others had a minimum of one semester. Our biggest job at the middle school level was to convince all teachers of their responsibilities to teach reading. We continually emphasized that; because the tendency of most secondary teachers seemed to be to let a specialist do the job, thereby absolving themselves of their responsibility.

As a measurement of success, the Gates-MacGinitie test was administered in September and May of the school year. The results were gratifying. The first sub-objective was easily met; in all grades, in all buildings, in both comprehension and vocabulary, the minimal 3% reduction in the number of students below grade level was exceeded with a range of 8% to 46%.

In the total group of 381 first graders, 90% achieved at or above the national norm in comprehension. Other than the fact that these are more than respectable percentages, the chief value will be the fact that these data will serve as base line data as the students are followed in the future.

In September, 52% of our second, third, and fourth graders achieved below grade level in vocabulary, and 70% of these achieved below in comprehension. The May test showed that only 23% remained below grade level in vocabulary and 27% remained below in comprehension. In vocabulary the decrease was from 604 students to 268 or a 56% decrease. In comprehension, the decrease was from 800 students to 315 students, or a 61% decrease. Furthermore, 69% of those students who remained below grade level accelerated their growth by at least one month beyond their previous rate pattern of achievement.

Our middle school students also grew significantly. Students in grades five, six, seven and eight, who were below grade level in September, accelerated their rate of growth on a group basis by 2.4 to 14.2 months.

For our own curiosity, we calculated, on a group basis, the growth rate of those students who tested at or above grade level on the original instrument used in September. This was not a requirement of the performance objective. We found that these students also made impressive gains in both vocabulary and comprehension. Out of the 30 sub-groups, 25 groups grew by a year or more, one group of second graders testing out at four years and one month in growth in comprehension. Obviously our attention given to those students below grade level did not detract from the progress made by those at or above grade level in September.

The results were extremely satisfying for staff members too. When we first talked about the Board's performance objective there were some negative reactions from teachers. Some saw it as a management system leading to individual teacher accountability and eventual evaluation. Realizing this we were careful to avoid comparisons between teachers or buildings. Others were upset with the implication that their good work of the past was not appreciated or good enough. As one teacher said, "I gave 110% last year; what do they expect this year?" Before the year was over I think the teachers were convinced that their good work was appreciated. The additional resources provided, the additional volunteer manpower, and general emphasis served to assure teachers that their efforts in reading instruction, past and present, was valued.

For our Board of Education it did stress the importance of team work. It did point out the fact that significant achievement can be realized if our priorities are clearly delineated.

SUSTAINED SILENT READING (SSR) AS IN LET THEM READ

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Sustained Silent Reading is a concept developed and implemented by Hunt (2) and McCracken (3) that has as a fundamental goal the development of proficient readers. Educators in their conscientious efforts to provide direct reading instruction are over-teaching. Because reading is a skill, practice is necessary in order to develop reading proficiency. Sustained Silent Reading (SSR) provides opportunity for the much-needed practice by allowing readers to sustain themselves without interruption in silent reading periods of half an hour or more.

The dialogue in a classroom where SSR is utilized may be as follows:

TEACHER: Students, it is STAR (silent time at reading).

LEE: Can we read any book?

TEACHER: Yes, providing you like it and can read it.

TERRY: I will get a magazine from the pile of books on the table.

LYNN: How long will we read silently today?

TEACHER: I believe we have decided on fifteen minutes. When we get ready to begin, I'll set the timer for 15 minutes.

PAT: Ms. Taylor, what are you going to read today?

TEACHER: I have chosen a book on snakes.

CRIS: Do we have to make a book report?

TEACHER: No. Remember, there will be no reporting of any kind. Does everyone have a book, magazine, or newspaper? Are you ready to take the SRO? (Silent Reader's Oath). Then, everyone stand, raise your right hand and repeat after me:

SILENT READER'S OATH

I/state your name/do solemnly promise/to read silently one book, magazine or newspaper/that I have chosen /until the bell rings./I understand that I cannot change books/so I must choose one/I can read./I further promise not to talk/leave my desk/or do anything that will disturb other readers./I understand/that I will not have to/report/draw/write/or answer questions/about my book./I understand that my teacher/will also be reading a book./She cannot be disturbed./Again, I promise to read/until the bell rings.

TEACHER: Be seated. Remember you have agreed to read silently for 15 minutes. Ready! Begin! (Everyone including teacher begins reading. Some classes invite the principal, secretary and lunchroom personnel to join in. A sign is hung on the door "STAR TIME— DO NOT DISTURB.")

TEACHER: (After 15 minutes the timer rings). Good, you read well. Continue reading if you wish.

After the silent reading habit has been established, with minor changes in procedures, the teacher can be involved with related activities with other children while some are engaged in silent reading. Caution should be taken, however, not to undermine the teacher's primary role of assisting each child to read as much and as long as he can within the designated period of time.

Many teachers conclude the SSR period by reacting to the material that they have read. Following are procedures that may be used effectively:

- (1) Summarizing in one sentence the main idea or theme of the book.
- (2) Reading a paragraph from the book and relating it to current happenings, such as national events or something in school.
- (3) Using a dictionary to check a word in the book and commenting about unusual usage of the word.
- (4) Having the children ask questions about the book and developing models of questioning so that the pupils learn to go beyond simple recall-type questions.
- (5) Collecting a journal of interesting or unusual words, phrases, ideas, etc.

To evaluate the effectiveness of the SSR period, the teacher must ask individual students basic questions like the following: "Did you have a good reading period today? Were you bothered by others or by outside noises? Could you keep your mind on the ideas all the time you were reading?" Questions such as these serve as the essential test for SSR.

Four basic assumptions underlie SSR:

1. *Reading is overtaught and underpracticed.* Much practice is necessary to develop the skills which proficient readers must possess. Mork (4) and others suggest that the ratio should be 80% practice and 20% instruction for efficiency in the application of reading skills.

2. *Contextual reading is more important than skills of recognition at the word-letter level.* It is generally agreed that teachers have been and are now more successful in teaching decoding than in producing readers who make critical responses to ideas in print. A need exists to teach more "meaning emphasis" in reading instruction which probably teaches word recognition as rapidly as does the "code emphasis" approach. If a student cannot pronounce a word, it is generally because the word is unknown in terms of meaning, rather than because of difficulties in decoding.

3. *Silent reading is more important than oral reading.* Many teachers attempt to develop oral fluency first; however, the central thrust should be to develop the power of silent reading, *then* oral reading. Proficiency in silent reading can be developed if teachers provide opportunities to develop this skill.

4. *The learner has a right to read on his own terms in regards to selections, purposes and meaning.* If schools are to develop independent readers who read for information and enjoyment, these students must be taught independence in book selection; they must be guided in their purposes for reading and be given ample opportunities to practice the application of their reading skills. Such independence of purpose and practice can only be

developed if teachers will relinquish some of their control to the learner.

In the Winter-75 issue of *Reading Horizons*, Towner and Evans (5) indicated that SSR may be a powerful technique for reading but the data which support SSR are extremely subjective and leave most questions regarding its assumed effectiveness unanswered. An attempt to evaluate various aspects of SSR was undertaken by Harvey (1). She found that a 60-day in-service program for teachers utilizing SSR concepts did not significantly affect their opinions towards certain factors in reading. This in-service experience did, however, significantly affect teachers' knowledge of certain aspects of reading which relate to the SSR concept. The provision for a daily period of SSR for 30 minutes for two months did not significantly affect the students' expressed attitudes toward reading.

The fundamental goal in reading instruction is to develop life-long readers-learners who are aware of the important contribution the world of literature can make in their lives. For many readers, this goal has not been accomplished. SSR offers opportunities and promise in meeting reading challenges in the future.

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SOME SEMANTICS OF BASIC WORD LISTS

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Lists of words compiled on the basis of their frequency of occurrence in writings of various kinds have long been considered "basic" materials for reading instruction. It is said teachers should use such lists because the child best learns to read if the order of the words presented to him for this purpose is governed by the relative frequency words occur in written materials. Put another way, it is argued that if word *A* occurs more often in written matter of different types than does word *B* it then should be presented for a child to learn to read before word *B* is presented. There is a certain logic to support this procedure. Unknown words that appear frequently in a child's reading material surely pose more of a handicap to his success here than would unknown words that appear infrequently. Consequently, one can agree with Hillerich¹ that "most educators accept the need for a basic list."

The lists of basic words contrived on the basis of the frequency of their appearance have been numerous. Hillerich¹ refers to fourteen of these lists. I noted six others beyond the ones he identified.² Some of these basic word lists are not developed from newly uncovered evidence, but rather from lists that have been previously published. It is held by some that if a word is common to several basic word lists it is more basic than if it were found only in a single list.

Thus, Hillerich¹ contends that his list of basic words, which is constructed from several previous lists, is better than any of the single lists he consulted. This is so, he says, because it is "an updated basic vocabulary that minimizes the bias of individual counts." It is updated, he claims, since it does not include the "rural and childlike words little used today" Hillerich found in prior lists, and because it includes certain modern "technological words." The "bias" of any previous list is held to a minimum in his list. Hillerich goes on, for it is based on word counts which "include the old and new, juvenile and adult writing, and juvenile and adult printed material."

The title Hillerich gives for his explanation of the method he used to compile his derived word list, "Word Lists - Getting It All Together,"¹ implies he believes the decisions he made here are all one needs to make about this matter. Hillerich overlooked one critical aspect of linguistics, however, that should be involved when any word list for teaching reading is put together. This is a consideration of the semantics, or meaning components, of these words. The compilers of word lists so far,³ including Hillerich, generally have not considered the semantics of the words they studied. That is, in collecting these words they ignored the problems of how the varied number of potential denotations of such words might affect a

child's ability to read them. Lorge's semantic word count⁴ is the notable exception to this.

The experts in language who study semantics are quick to remind us, however, that a meaning of a word usually cannot be determined when it is seen in isolation (as is the case in word lists). To understand the peculiar denotation or connotation given a word means a reader must depend on the context in which the word has been placed. Good writers are usually aware of the problems faced by the reader as he tries to get to the author's meaning. We find writers frequently will deliberately repeat a given word, often using a second sentence of a different structure for this. They add words and phrases to the word that modify and describe it. Sometimes synonyms and antonyms of a word are supplied by writers, especially when a word in question is intended to convey an abstract or controversial meaning. Writers of prose even resort to the use of poetic or figurative language in their attempts to get over to the reader the precise connotation for a word they have in mind.

These efforts demonstrate the fact that different writers may use a single word to refer to significantly different things or concepts. Knowing this, the child must be alert to infer or make calculated guesses from the context of a passage what particular shade of meaning of a word its author wishes it to have. He can never be satisfied with a static, generalized, universal or surface interpretation of the meaning of a word although such interpretations of a word do act as the starting point for the child who then must work to find the specific, localized, and deep structure meaning of a word in question its author wanted to express.

It has even been discovered of late the extent to which the context in which a word is found affects its recognizability by children. Goodman⁵ had children read words aloud from word lists, and noted their mistakes. Then he had them read, in sentences, the words they miscalled from this prior reading from lists. He found first graders read correctly in sentences almost two out of three of the words they had misread when reading from lists. Second graders likewise read correctly in sentences three out of four previously missed words. By the third grade, children in this experiment correctly read in sentences four out of five words they earlier had missed when reading from lists. These data strongly suggest that reading by young children is negatively affected when words are out of context. To be successful readers these children apparently need to decide what peculiar meaning of a word is likely called for, something only the context in which a word is found can explain.

Since both linguists and educational researchers attest that a child's ability to gain the meaning intended for a word depends to a great extent on its semantical variation, we can no longer ignore semantics when making up word lists to be used in the teaching of reading. One way to include semantics in the makeup of basic word lists is to supplement the factor of frequency of occurrence (the basis on which these words are now arranged) with an aspect of semantics that is quantifiable. One matter of semantics that can be counted, and therefore is adaptable to the kind of reckoning

presently done with word lists, is the total number of denotations or separate meanings given words by a large dictionary. It seems purposeful to ask: to what extent would the rankings of words based on their frequency of occurrence be changed if the number of meanings given them by a dictionary was combined with their frequency rankings?

To answer this question I added the number of different meanings given by a large dictionary⁶ to each of the ranks of the 200 most frequently occurring words in a recent word list.⁷ For example, in this word list *the* was ranked number one. It was found to occur in writings more often than any other word. The large dictionary I used indicated *the* had fourteen different meanings. So, according to my plan *the* was assigned the adjusted score of 15 ($1 + 14 = 15$). The second most frequently occurring word in the word list I used, *of*, had sixteen dictionary meanings. Its adjusted score therefore was 18 ($2 + 16 = 18$).

To determine the number of dictionary meanings to assign to a word from the word list I used, the following stipulations were kept in mind: a plural word formed with *s* was assigned the number of meanings given its singular form; a past tense word was assigned the number of meanings given its present tense form, plus any unique meanings it had as a past tense form; comparative and superlative forms were handled in the same way as past tense words; and since many words ending in *ing* were not given a separate heading in the dictionary, they were dropped.

To follow are the first 200 words from the word list used for this study (with the above stipulations in effect) rearranged in an order determined by their adjusted scores (their frequency rankings plus the number of dictionary meanings given them). In parenthesis after each word is given its frequency ranking:

- | | | | |
|---------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|
| 1. and (3) | 20. or (26) | 39. them (52) | 57. into (61) |
| is (7) | 21. were (34) | 40. can (38) | will (46) |
| 3. was (13) | 22. I (24) | 41. said (43) | 59. other (60) |
| 4. the (1) | with (17) | she (54) | two (65) |
| 5. he (11) | 24. an (39) | these (58) | 61. no (71) |
| 6. of (2) | in (6) | 44. by (27) | 62. more (74) |
| 7. a (4) | 26. as (16) | 45. many (55) | 63. could (70) |
| are (15) | your (40) | 46. has (62) | its (76) |
| 9. his (18) | 28. their (42) | what (32) | than (73) |
| 10. they (19) | 29. we (36) | 48. have (25) | 66. my (80) |
| 11. you (8) | when (35) | 49. all (33) | 67. who (77) |
| 12. it (10) | 31. but (31) | then (53) | 68. been (75) |
| 13. that (9) | for (12) | 51. some (56) | so (57) |
| 14. from (23) | 33. each (47) | 52. her (64) | 70. would (59) |
| this (22) | if (44) | how (49) | 71. now (78) |
| 16. at (20) | 35. there (37) | 54. him (67) | 72. do (45) |
| not (30) | 36. one (28) | 55. had (29) | 73. may (89) |
| 18. be (21) | which (41) | about (48) | 74. first (74) |
| to (5) | 38. on (14) | | 75. only (85) |

76. like (66)	108. long (91)	140. great (150)	172. often (190)
77. see (68)	109. down (84)	141. between (157)	173. off (146)
78. very (93)	110. time (69)	made (81)	under (168)
79. people (79)	used (110)	143. tell (151)	175. go (105)
80. find (87)	112. over (82)	144. big (162)	176. read (169)
81. much (103)	man (112)	never (171)	177. last (170)
82. after (94)	114. why (138)	146. old (148)	178. together (191)
just (96)	115. must (128)	us (172)	179. large (189)
our (109)	116. think (119)	148. come (124)	left (173)
85. know (99)	117. different (143)	149. came (123)	181. asked (192)
most (98)	such (135)	own (167)	182. until (200)
where (97)	119. again (145)	151. does (130)	183. going (196)
88. me (111)	here (136)	work (125)	important (199)
use (88)	years (142)	153. right (117)	185. want (197)
90. little (92)	222. around (121)	still (156)	186. end (174)
91. too (113)	223. look (118)	155. small (153)	187. give (163)
92. before (104)	word (127)	156. found (155)	school (198)
93. out (51)	225. get (100)	place (133)	189. world (195)
94. any (114)	good (106)	158. might (177)	190. saw (181)
new (107)	227. make (72)	name (159)	thought (183)
96. also (120)	228. called (95)	next (178)	192. looked (187)
97. same (116)	even (132)	put (141)	193. show (188)
through (101)	230. away (144)	while (176)	194. sound (179)
99. another (122)	every (154)	163. both (184)	195. house (193)
100. write (108)	things (139)	something (182)	196. went (147)
101. day (115)	233. help (140)	165. air (164)	197. don't (194)
water (90)	Mr. (160)	along (175)	line (165)
way (86)	235. back (102)	home (161)	199. take (137)
104. because (129)	236. well (134)	168. always (186)	200. set (166)
did (83)	237. say (152)	few (185)	
three (126)	should (159)	170. below (180)	
up (50)	239. part (131)	number (149)	

This rearranged list of basic words indicates that the input of only one factor or semantics (the number of dictionary meanings) causes changes in the rankings of the words determined from their frequency of occurrence alone. For example, *made* moved from rank 81 on its frequency list to 141 on my adjusted list, *up* changed from rank 50 to 104, *had* from 26 to 55. It becomes clear that the addition of a single aspect of semantics can radically change the rankings given words in basic word lists, as they are now constructed.

The discrepancy shown here between a word's ranking based on its frequency of occurrence alone, as versus this plus the number of meanings given it, can be demonstrated in yet another way. I obtained a rank correlation coefficient⁸ between two sets of ranks of the 200 basic words I studied: (a) their frequency of occurrence rankings, and (b) their number of different meanings rankings. The degree of correspondence between these

two variables is very low, as indicated by the positive correlation of only .10, a figure that suggests an "almost negligible relationship" between them.⁹ We can safely say that a basic word's rank in a word list as based on the frequency of its occurrence alone gives us virtually no indication of the number of meanings a large dictionary gives it. These word list rankings therefore give little evidence as to the different kinds of semantical situations a child potentially will face in attempting to read a given word.

It becomes apparent, as well, that the adjustment made here to the ordering of words on the basic word list I used is only one way word counts such as this can be treated with semantics. Knowing that some basic words have a larger number of semantic differentials than do others could be of help in deciding what constitutes the readability of a written passage. This is but a preliminary step in the reformation we should give the current lists of basic words. The next stage of application of semantics to today's basic word lists might be to determine which dictionary meanings given these words are the same (or at least highly common) meanings held by young children. As Wardhaugh¹⁰ puts it, "It is far more important to know what speakers share in the semantic realm than what separates them, since any understanding of the latter is completely dependent on the former."

So, beyond a simple calculation of the potential meanings a word could engender in its reader, as I have done here, we need to identify which meanings of which words are commonly known to young children. Or which words have several meanings commonly known to children. Then, we could assign these words greater importance in making up lists of basic words than we would assign frequently appearing words whose various meanings are only partially held in common by beginning readers. It seems logical to assume that a word which appears relatively infrequently but whose various meanings are commonly held by most young children would be less difficult for these pupils to learn to read, all other factors being equal, than would a frequently appearing word which has several meanings that are not known to most children.

That this semantic breadth or depth of words is not adequately tested is in evidence in typical vocabulary tests "requiring only a superficial recognition of its (a word's) closest synonym."¹¹ Nonetheless, few attempts have been made to find if certain meanings of words are understood better by children than others.³ Unfortunately, what evidence there is appears somewhat contradictory. Russell and Saadeh,¹² for example, discovered that in grade three children chose "concrete" definitions of words significantly more often than "abstract" definitions of them. By grade six the reverse of this was found to prevail. Lundsteen's findings³ were different from this. The third graders who read her experimental "choose a meaning test" chose "best" definitions of words equally from among the "abstract," "functional," and "concrete" lists of definitions Lundsteen provided in her test. This test was made up of isolated sentences. On the other hand, she found these children chose significantly more "abstract" than "concrete" definitions for words on her experimental "creative and critical paragraph test." This suggests the meanings for words in

paragraphs given to them by children will be more intellectually complex than the meanings they give to words in isolated sentences.

As Lundsteen¹³ rightly says, "the first function of reading instruction is not to impart the maximum number of facts, but to develop a repertory of various kinds of meanings, and to encourage use of them in seeking and finding answers to problems." To what extent does the manner in which current basic word lists are compiled contribute to the accomplishment of this crucial goal? The present discussion bears witness that present basic word lists serve this objective very little, if at all. Accordingly, the semantic components of words must be involved in the construction of future word lists if we are to continue to honor them as "basic" to the first function of instruction in reading. It is now almost forty years since Lorge demonstrated that relative frequency "is but a small part of the information needed about words."¹⁴ We should no longer allow his advice to go unheeded.

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WE SUGGEST

Eleanor Buelke

Carroll, John B., and Chall, Jeanne S., Editors

Toward A Literate Society

New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1975. Pp. xiii + 370.

The reading problem is not just one problem; it is many problems, with a multiplicity of causes and manifestations that are beyond any cold statistical reckoning. . . . It is not only from a sense of sympathy or high-minded altruism that we should show concern. To the extent that illiteracy is significantly present in our nation, the options and resources available to the literate citizen are thereby abridged.

This volume, *Toward A Literate Society*, has grown out of a plan for a comprehensive national effort to achieve universal literacy in the United States, proposed by James E. Allen, Jr., former United States Commissioner of Education. In developing a strategy for implementing his plans, Allen asked for assistance from government, from industry, and from leaders in the academic world. Asked to help, the National Academy of Education responded by authorizing and appointing a Committee on Reading. Committee members have addressed their study and writings to questions concerning a reasonable conception of functional literacy; scientific and technological knowledge we have and need, to make universal literacy a reality; research and development to provide an effective base for reading program efforts; and political and economic dimensions of an all-out effort to achieve literacy during the 1970s.

The book consists of two main parts. Part I is the "Report of the Committee on Reading, National Academy of Education," together with an Appendix concerning "Personnel for the Teaching of Reading." Part II is comprised of the papers commissioned to be written by a number of eminent scholars and participants in new approaches to the teaching of reading. Each paper is insightful, well-documented, and comprehensive. Some of them have been prepared in the nature of reports of research findings and implications. Others are concerned more with theoretical and philosophical rationale, and include inferential conclusions and suggestions for further productive inquiry. Like most studies of complex problems in human behavior and learning, serious, in-depth encounter with many variables leads to some solutions, but inevitably, uncovers other problematic areas, open to debate and pursuant study.

Defining and assessing reading literacy has proved to be just such a problem area. It must be remembered that "reading is an artifact of man and not a product of nature," that at some point in their development humans invented it as a tool to serve their needs. Thus, the acquisition of

literacy skills should consume the least amount of resources to accomplish the maximum attainment of goals. Further, it must be recognized that literacy skills are cognitive processes, not directly observable or interpretable, and, therefore, difficult to assess. Claims of literacy are limited/upheld by manifestations in a person's overt behavior. In this country where efforts are made to serve, simultaneously, the needs of individuals as well as the needs of society, a criterion model for literacy *must* consider characteristics of the individual. Three factors seem relevant: native capacity to learn, environmentally acquired capacity to learn, and motivations. Consequently, a person's literacy is jointly determined by his/her reading ability and the readability of the materials he/she needs to read.

Review of current practices in teaching of beginning reading show that materials, methods, and learning environments are diverse. Trends which emphasize reading instruction as only one component in language and communications areas, and these areas as only part of a child's total development, signal the need for changes in training for teacher expertise. Awareness of other influential variables from the environmental milieu of school children must be considered, too, as part of the greater concerns of education for literacy.

At the other end of the scale, viable programs for adult literacy are certainly warranted, and long overdue. Recent efforts in this area have produced no clear evidence as to the superior effectiveness of any one set of materials, programs, or instructional procedures. Pervasive problems appear to be that present programs nurture the stereotype of the adult literacy student as a person of low self-esteem; that instruction has failed to relate consistently, and on a large scale, to personal as well as occupational needs; and that it is difficult to find qualified teaching personnel. For adult basic education to become a universal reality, some shifts in thinking about its value and the way to achieve it are essential.

Study of programs for literacy training within industry, the armed forces, and penal institutions reveals some measure of success, but the results are hard to assess because most of them have been of short duration. Financial support has not been consistent, and motivation of trainees is hard to maintain. In these categories, literacy programs live and die by economics. Federal funds create or save projects; when institutions must take them over as federal monies are cut off, no one cares enough to see them continued. The most promising programs appear to be found within industry where job opportunities are linked to successive steps of basic education.

On the field of illiteracy, another front of attack that has promise, with concomitant frustrations involving sufficient funding, plus finding effective personnel, is the role of television in the teaching of pre-reading and reading skills. Two chapters of this text are devoted to examination of the special values of this medium. Because it is familiar and usually pleasurable to children, it is acceptable and non-threatening to them. The writers of these chapters believe that television, as a teaching tool, has scope, power,

and sophistication. However, they caution that it has limitations for literacy training in that it is not easily adapted to individual differences in readiness, in rate, and in depth of learning to read. They also suggest that to involve television in a successful major effort to improve literacy will necessitate huge investments in people, equipment, and funds.

Perhaps, for classroom teachers, one of the most interesting, challenging sections of the book is the chapter on “motivational aspects.” Both authors of this chapter have a deep commitment to find ways of educating all children, and they deplore the ways in which the American educational system has masked its mechanism of social selection. They maintain that educational practices and research have been undertaken as if motivation were a personality trait, rather than a result of the environment. They argue that “perseverance at learning is not a function simply of inheritance, early socialization, or current cultural conditions, but, rather, of an interaction of these factors with key aspects of the educational environment.” Deep and extensive modifications of teachers’ attitudes in day-to-day conduct with children, with use of teaching experiences themselves as means of facilitating changes in teacher attitudes, are advocated. Teachers are seen as key persons to set “conditions under which learning can eventually be motivated largely by the expectation of continuing success.”

The last two chapters, dealing with political implications and economic perspectives of a national reading effort, leave the reader with a less than optimistic picture of prompt, effective action in the years ahead. If the project reported here has produced no final solutions, it may, at least, have cast some light upon possibilities for productive inquiry and action, or raised some tentative hope for affirmative answers to some further questions like these:

1. Could this attack on illiteracy force recognition of many endemic symptoms of economic poverty/environmental penury that result in learning difficulties/disabilities?

2. Can government response to very human needs for clean, safe environments, adequate prenatal and childhood nutrition, and consistently good personal and medical care help expedite the nation “toward a literate society?”

3. Will progress toward this goal be characterized by attitudes affirming that the learner’s needs precede those of the delivery systems and institutions which supply the programs?

Whatever directions are taken in the Right-to-Read effort, to settle for anything less than a literate society is to render large segments of the population unable to satisfy their personal needs and to preclude them from full participation in that society. Human future will be only the richer when reading and learning throughout life widens human “capacity to perceive and act upon the openness of the race, the interdependency of all life.”¹ The memorial, frontal page of this book puts it succinctly:

To teach someone to read is to
give him a new world—
a new life in which to grow.

¹Benjamin DeMott, "‘Adult Ed’—The Ultimate Goal," *Saturday Review* (September 20, 1975), p. 29.

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UNCONDITIONAL MONEY-BACK GUARANTEE

SOME REASONS FOR ORAL READING

R. Baird Shuman

DUKE UNIVERSITY

Few would question the appropriateness of oral reading in the first and second grades. Most experts feel that reading aloud is a worthwhile activity in the earliest years of school because the students have not yet developed sufficient speed in silent reading to make silent reading a valuable enterprise for them. Lewis and Sisk (1963) caution, however, that "from the time a child's silent reading rate overtakes his rate of oral reading, usually during the second or third grade, too much oral reading has the adverse effect of slowing down the rate of silent reading and encouraging unnecessary lip movement, thoughtless word calling, and daydreaming on the parts of other pupils, who neither follow the printed text nor listen to the reader."

What Lewis and Sisk contend is true for some students and, at the time that they said it, made more sense than it does today when the primary grades are generally ungraded, allowing students in the 5.5 to 8-year-old age range to progress at more individualized rates than were possible in graded primary schools. Lewis and Sisk were also writing before widespread busing caused schools to have the diverse populations which one characteristically finds in them today.

Despite the changes which have occurred, many teachers cling to the notion that oral reading should be phased out from the third grade on and should be virtually non-existent in the secondary school, particularly in the senior high school. Such teachers, it would seem, have failed to realize some basic facts which, if considered in depth, might lead them to revise their thinking on the subject.

The School Population

The base of education is ever broadening, the school population at any given level becoming ever more diverse. Ironically, schools are producing more good readers than ever before while simultaneously sending from the primary grades into the upper elementary grades more and more students who cannot read well. While high school populations are generally reading more effectively than ever before, most high schools must also face the fact that some of their students are unable to read. Many schools try to sweep this latter fact under the carpet, because they are supported by communities that expect them to process students, much as meat packers process beef, rather than deal professionally with students as doctors or lawyers deal with their clients.

The teacher who cannot teach a teen-ager to read is often viewed as a failure by people who forget that other professionals have been trying to teach this teen-ager to read since he was five or six years old. Such critics may also forget that the school deals with the youngster for only a small

portion of the 168 hours that each week contains. And such critics nearly always fail to realize that the teacher must sometimes be judged by standards similar to those used to judge the physician treating a terminally ill patient who is not judged by whether the patient lives or dies, but is judged rather on the appropriateness and judiciousness of the treatment provided; and it might be added that some of the best trained physicians — neurosurgeons, for example— experience very high death rates among their patients merely because they tackle some of the most difficult cases in the field of medicine. It must also be remembered that if a physician is accused of malpractice, the case is usually decided on the basis of expert testimony given by his peers, the only people who are really competent to judge his performance. All physicians are accountable, but not in the same way that many teachers in today's schools are held accountable. Teacher accountability is often determined by laymen's standards rather than by the standards of the teaching profession.

When Dorothy Tally found herself dealing for the first time with the diverse sort of school population that busing brought about, she was hard put to know how to meet the demands of her situation. She made some generalizations which helped her— and her students—through what might have been an impossible situation: "Most of the students in this class were from homes where verbalization was at a minimum. They simply had not heard many words common to the average student. Their attention span was so short as to be negligible. I met this problem by reading to the class every day from one of the books I had suggested for their reading. I brought three or four books to class, spoke briefly about each, and then let the class vote on the one they wanted to hear" (Tally, 1972).

Following Ms. Tally's lead, teachers can do a great deal to work on vocabulary building, on recognition and appreciation of literary style, on comprehension, and on students' enthusiasm for reading by making oral reading a part of every day's classroom activity for students who do not use the language comfortably and who do not read well. It is best to read from selections of which students have printed texts before them so that they can follow, an activity which will in many cases help them increase their own reading skills.

Jack Schaefer, the celebrated author of *Shane*, demands that teachers read to their students: "She (the teacher) is a fake, a swindler not earning even her relatively low salary, if she simply assigns outside reading for her students and then gabbles about it in class. She should often read aloud to them" (Schaefer, 1975).

Certainly well-read selections from carefully selected books can do a great deal to promote reading among students. It matters little whether the oral reading in class is done by the teacher or by students as long as it is done with sufficient volume and expression as to make listening to it a pleasurable experience.

Oral Reading by Students

Nearly everyone, at one time or another, has sat through oral reading

sessions that were painful and labored. Some students are better silent readers than oral readers and vice versa. But even students who read haltingly and uncertainly aloud should be encouraged to read orally and should be coached in the most effective means of doing so.

Two of the four basic communication skills—listening and speaking—are given short shrift in most schools. This is probably because most youngsters enter the first grade with considerable ability in these two skills and the teacher views it as his primary duty to help students gain mastery of the two skills which most of them do not yet possess, reading and writing. A not inconsiderable number of primary school teachers fail to realize the full extent to which all four communication skills are interrelated. By the time the typical student has learned to read and write, the school has moved even further away from stressing listening and speaking than it did at the primary level.

Actually, the teacher should encourage oral activities—which, incidentally, involve the class as a whole in listening activities as well—as much as possible, viewing this as a fundamental part of teaching communication skills. To teach such skills in a compartmentalized way is to deny their interrelationship.

Oral Reading as a Diagnostic Technique

It is doubtful that there exists any better way to diagnose some types of reading problems than by having students read orally. Sometimes a student should be asked a day in advance to prepare a short reading for the class, while at other times the teacher may have a class read a selection by having each student read a paragraph—the teacher should read an occasional paragraph, too—until the selection has been completed.

If the class contains non-readers, they should be passed over so that they will not be embarrassed. When this is done, it is very important that they be involved in the discussion of the reading, an activity which must follow every oral reading activity class. Emmett Betts tells of the grace with which this was done in one demonstration of which he was a part. A seventh grader was virtually a non-reader. He could recognize no irregularly spelled words. But “he could understand what was read to him from a seventh grade book. That is, he had the necessary hearing comprehension—verbal ability and concepts to understand what was in his textbooks, although he was a total nonreader. Finally, he opened up in a big way—much to the astonishment of the conferees—when he contributed significantly to the discussion of what the higher achiever read to the group” (Betts, 1972).

It is particularly important for the teacher to realize on the one hand the need not to embarrass the deficient reader in the classroom setting and on the other the need to involve him as fully as possible in the intellectual activity which reading generates. Don Wulffson tells of an informal survey conducted by one of the students in his reading improvement class in which seventeen students were enrolled. The student’s questions and the answers he received to them are as follows: “Do you like to read? Fifteen ‘no.’ Does reading make you nervous? Sixteen ‘yes.’ Do teachers sometimes make

assignments you can't read? Seventeen 'yes.' Does being nervous sometimes make it harder for you to read? Thirteen 'yes.' Would you rather work with your hands than try to read something? Fifteen 'yes.' Do you like pictures better than words? Sixteen 'yes.' " (Wulffson, 1971).

As unscientific and limited as this brief survey was, it is indicative of the types of problems underlying some widespread reading deficiencies. The poor reader often develops a fragile ego, and the fragility of his ego increases as he moves further and further along in school and fails to master the skill essential to much learning at the secondary level.

Miscalling in Oral Reading

If oral reading is to serve a valid diagnostic purpose, the teacher must be trained in what to look for. At least a rudimentary knowledge and understanding of the dialects which his students use is essential for the teacher. William Labov writes, "Teachers of reading must begin to make the *fundamental distinction between a mistake in reading and a difference in pronunciation*. . . . For the teacher to make this distinction, it is necessary that he know what correct reading sounds like." Labov continues, "If a Negro child reads *He always looked for trouble when he read the news* as *He a'way' look' fo' trouble when he read* (rhyming with *bed*) *de news*, the teacher should be able to judge that he is reading correctly" (Labov, 1970. Labov's italics). Labov goes on to say that if the reader pronounces *read* so that it rhymes with *seed*, then he must be recognized as reading it incorrectly. Labov cautions the teacher not to assume that his students' sound systems match his own.

Akin to what Labov has said, Shuman, in an article dealing with student writing, contends, "If *preacher* is rendered *preeger*, *with* rendered *wif*, and *someone* rendered *some un*, one can assume that the student is giving an accurate graphic representation of the word as he usually hears it. In that sense, at least, he is spelling correctly, but he is spelling within the confines of a dialect which is non-standard" (Shuman, 1975. Shuman's italics).

Lipton contends that "children miscall words because in their encoding process (defined here as oral output after decoding) the language they use is more coherent and meaningful to them than the language of the author. For example, children will often call out words like: 'a' for 'the,' 'was' for 'were,' 'do' for 'does,' 'in' for 'at,' 'can't' for 'cannot.' In calling out these substituted words in place of the words printed, it is not often clear to the teacher whether these miscallings are misperceptions or more a function of dialectal development. As children call out substituted words," Lipton continues, "they *may* actually *see* and *know* the words as they are written, but find it more linguistically comfortable to say the words as they do" (Lipton, 1972. Lipton's italics).

Certainly the reading teacher must be competent to differentiate between the student who is miscalling and the student who is misperceiving. Lipton points to the extreme necessity for the teacher to be able to make such differentiations in his statement, "In many instances in forcing a child

to call words accurately by continual reference to his errors and correction of them, we deny him the opportunity to read within the framework of his own language development. This condition has caused many children to avoid reading and to become failures with the reading process" (Lipton, 1972).

If the teacher considers seriously the interrelatedness of the communication skills, he will allow the child to read in his own dialect, realizing that a valuable learning process is taking place. Levine is correct in his contention that "every child achieves communication in oral language because his parents expect him to experience a long period of two to four years learning to pronounce words and formulating phrases and sentences. They would never dream of interrupting the child to teach him to correctly pronounce every word he uses and every phrase he fumbles with" (Levine, 1972). If the relationship of parents to children who are learning to speak were like the relationship of teachers to students who are learning to read, one might ponder whether our citizenry would be as articulate as it is.

Appropriate Types of Oral Reading Activities

The types of oral reading activities that one can use successfully and productively will vary with the abilities, interests, and backgrounds of the students being taught. But some oral reading activity should be a part of every language arts class every day.

Students in the primary years should be read to a great deal. Teachers and their aides may read to these youngsters. Recordings of poems, stories, and plays may also be of great benefit at this point in a child's development. Students at all levels should be read to occasionally, sometimes by teachers and sometimes by other students. They should also be exposed to oral English through recordings. Students with reading problems should be encouraged to follow the text of what is being read, trying to read along.

It is a very valuable experience for students to do interpretive readings of familiar passages from poems and plays and then to listen to the same passages as they are read by four or five professional actors or actresses. It is also interesting to compare a poet's reading of one of his own poems with the interpretation of one or more professional actors or actresses. And through all of this experience, the student, if he is following the text, is learning a broad range of reading skills, from word attack to comprehension and interpretation.

Students should be encouraged to read passages into cassette recorders so that they can hear how they sound and so that they can share some of their readings with their classmates in this way. It is useful occasionally for the teacher to have every student in the class read a brief, familiar poem or dramatic passage into the cassette recorder and then play back all of the readings to compare interpretations.

In a mathematics or science class, a similar technique might be used. For example, a fifth grader, after having been introduced to long division, might be asked to explain the principle of long division in terms that a second or third grader could understand and to record this explanation.

While students should be encouraged to read aloud in class, the teacher must be sensitive enough to the students' feelings that they will know when not to insist that someone read aloud. In many cases, the best material for students to read aloud is material which they have written themselves, since the vocabulary range, sentence structure, and reading level will all be appropriate to the level of the reader. I recently observed a seventh grade social studies class in which each student had read a brief biography and had then written a first person account of the person they had read about. Each student read his first person account to the class, and this was an excellent language arts exercise as well as a good social studies project. The exercise involved the four basic communication skills—speaking, listening, reading, and writing.

Some students are uncertain and unsure of themselves when they are asked to read before a whole class, but when paired with another student will read easily. Therefore, especially from grade 5 on, students should occasionally be paired for oral reading. It is also useful in situations where the logistics can be worked out to have fifth or sixth graders paired regularly for short periods with primary school youngsters to whom they read (Gartner, Kohler, and Reissman, 1971).

As one approaches the middle school and high school levels, reader's theater activities are also useful both in awakening students' interest in dramatic literature and in helping them to polish their reading skills. Some reader's theater should be done spontaneously in English classes, using such plays as Thornton Wilder's *Our Town*; some should be done more elaborately, possibly recorded on a cassette with appropriate musical background and sound effects.

The teaching of reading cannot be approached narrowly. Too much reading instruction has lacked interrelation with the other communication skills and, in some cases, even with books. Margaret Early cites an 18-year-old Yale freshman, Joyce Maynard, who reports, "There were no books in the Developmental Reading room—the lab. Even in English class we escaped books easily. . . . All through high school, in fact, I read little except for magazines. . . . My eyes have been trained to skip non-essentials (adjectives, adverbs) and dart straight to the meaty phrases. But—perhaps in defiance of that whirring black rate-building projector—it takes me three hours to read 100 pages" (Early, 1973).

If the reading experience is a sterile and isolated one, a clinical and compartmentalized one, even the student who masters the skill will not have the motivation to practice the skill once he has attained it. In teaching students to read, teachers must keep constantly before them the *long range* goals of reading instruction.

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TAKE A READING VACATION— GO DRP (DIRECTED READING PLAN)

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While vacationing may seem a remote thought from directing a reading program, effective implementation through daily lesson planning does require an analogous sequence of activities. Just as thoughtful preparation helps to make the trip successful, thoughtful planning for reading instruction can contribute toward more effective reading skill development with elementary level students.

For example, in preparing for the family vacation to Grandma's—two-thousand miles distant—there is more than one major route that can be taken (across the desert, up the coast, through the mountains). Immediate objectives, such as places to stop for the night or to camp for a few days, are also selected. Side trips to out-of-the-way places can be planned in advance to provide opportunities for individual members of the family to pursue special interests.

Mom and Dad study road maps in an effort to plot the most interesting, yet most efficient route (remember gas costs?) to take, while the children read about some of the places they'll be seeing.

Still, the "best laid plans . . ." never seem to provide for a lazy day or an unexpected attraction which mandates a pause in the journey. Such stopovers sometimes are occasioned by the loss of a suitcase, or a child, and require backtracking to pick them up again.

Although the family may have prepared for the trip, the parents don't expect the children to remember everything. The more mature members of the family may anticipate particular points of interest while the younger children are continually being reminded: "There's the Grand Canyon! Remember when we saw it in the book?" By sharing ideas and information there occurs a continual process of group recall in which each person contributes special bits of information that may not have been remembered by others.

After the trip each member of the family recalls in a very personal way their shared experiences. The slides taken and souvenirs gathered provide many opportunities to re-experience the trip and to learn even more about the important points as well as how they were related along the roads travelled.

Planning and executing the reading program through directed reading activities is in many ways a similar experience to the trip just described. The "trip" is the total reading program, while each day's itinerary is the directed reading plan (DRP) in operation. To make the "trip" a rewarding and successful experience, most educationists agree that planned instruction is both essential and helpful for effective teaching. Recent articles by Thompson (1973) and by Durkin (1974a; 1974b; 1975a) have stressed the

need for thoughtful, systematic instruction which is sensitive to the individual strengths, weaknesses and interests of children.

Like parents studying road maps and planning to visit particular places of interest, the teacher relies on her maps—a scope and sequence chart, a teacher's manual and her own experience—to plan the instructional route to be taken. Teachers who are comfortable with their reading instruction and who know well what to teach and where they're going instill a sense of confidence and security in their pupils—as do the parents on vacation who seem to know where they're going. Careful planning frees the teacher to focus attention on the pupil's performance and to continually evaluate each child's growth in reading proficiency. For these teachers the goal (Grandma's) is never lost. Each day's experiences focus both the teacher's and the pupils' efforts on developing fluent readers—people who know how to read effectively and critically to gain understanding and for enjoyment.

Like many repetitive operations (including hours of travel over quite similar terrain) the directed reading plan (DRP) runs the risk of becoming routine—almost ritualized in some classrooms. Such routinization, while it may insure coverage of the material in a reasonable order and at a comfortable pace, can lead to inflexible, uninteresting, unmotivating and purposeless instruction which is not sensitive to the individual needs of students. In such a climate, side excursions to interesting places, or going back to pick up someone left behind, seldom occurs. Some children are lost—they fail to attend to instruction and cease to be curious, excited learners.

To avoid becoming locked into a rigid instructional scheme, the teacher might consider more than one format for the DRP. While there are real differences between some plans, most seem to incorporate these procedures: preparation (background, motivation, vocabulary, purpose), silent reading, discussion (include purposeful rereading, oral and silent), skill development/maintenance, individualized instruction or practice, and knowledge application through enrichment activities. (Harris, 1970; Burron and Claybaugh, 1972; Wilson and Hall, 1972; Bagford, 1975; Karlin, 1975). The DRP listed below is a consolidation of these various plans.

Elements of a Directed Reading Plan

A. Preparation

1. Provide a *brief* description relating the story setting to the child's background and experiences
 - through discussion (pull from the children)
 - through pictures
 - through examination of concrete objects
 - through direct experiences
 - through use of a brief overview of the story
2. Motivate the child to read the selection
 - make it relevant
 - make it somewhat familiar, yet still intriguing

3. Introduce new and/or difficult vocabulary
 - in story context
 - based upon the child's oral language
 - choose words that are *significant* in the story
 4. Clarify difficult or unfamiliar concepts
 - through discussion
 - pictorial aides
 - direct activities
 - student testimony
 5. Establish the main purpose for reading
 - by the teacher
 - by the pupil
 - B. Silent Reading
 - assign the whole story for advanced groups, and portions of the story for specific purposes for less advanced groups of students. Note-taking may be involved.
 - C. Discussion and Purposeful Rereading (silent or oral)
 - to recall facts
 - to clarify recall
 - to verify recall and opinion
 - to check comprehension
 - (oral rereading) to diagnose fluency and word attack skills
- Note: It is seldom advisable to have even primary students reread the entire story orally, unless it is dramatic or poetic in character.
- D. Development/maintenance of skills
 - teacher-directed skill lesson
 - workbook exercises
 - vocabulary practice
 - testing
 - E. Follow-up practice
 - to provide for *individual* differences through supplemental instruction and practice, and pupil interaction
 - F. Knowledge Application and Enrichment
 - related readings
 - creative activities, such as plays and creative dramatics construction and writing projects
 - activities which reflect student thought, interpretation of the story, and application of information from the story in novel settings.

An alternative approach, sometimes viewed as more appropriate for advance readers, is the Directed-Reading-Thinking-Activity (DR-TA) developed by Stauffer (1970; 1975). The elements of the DRTA are: 1) developing purposes for reading, 2) developing habits of reasoning, and 3) developing habits of testing predictions based upon reading. Pupils are expected to set their own purposes for reading and the teacher functions as a "cognitive agitator." Through teacher use of "provocative questions" the student is directed to clarify and verify his own understanding of what was

read through discussion, purposeful rereading, and enrichment activities intended to extend his comprehension and appreciation of the readings.

The numerous components within the general DRP are meant to be used *flexibly* and *selectively* by the teacher to develop lessons which focus on important relationships and skills of value to the pupils in the reading group. For a particular story, not all DRP components are emphasized; in fact, some procedures might be omitted altogether.

While pursuing the ultimate destination for reading instruction—reading fluency and personal enjoyment—numerous intermediate objectives must be attained. Some objectives, like decoding skills, adequate sight vocabulary and the ability to locate stated facts, need to be acquired by every student. Other objectives, such as broad reading experience, flexible use of reading speeds, and detailed knowledge of phonics rules, may be like side trips—varying in interest and accessibility to class members. For some students many of these skills will require explicit instruction; other students will acquire such skills through their own reading. The amount of teacher time needed to develop fluent readers, then, will vary for individual children and should be planned with this in mind.

In the DRP the teacher prepares students to reach these objectives by setting background, introducing new and/or difficult concepts and by helping them to anticipate a pleasurable experience (motivation). Unfamiliar terms or facts may be presented in the hope that difficult relationships can be understood, but these may have to be reintroduced and discussed once the children have read the story. By helping the children to attend to important events and features of the story the entire experience may be more clearly understood (setting a purpose).

Next, the children silently read the story. More capable students may read the entire story, while less able pupils may read only parts of the story before discussing what was read.

Silent reading (for a purpose!) prior to oral reading prepares the reader to read aloud. The pupil is in a better position to utilize context clues and his own experiences to decode difficult words and comprehend complex passages. For example, if the child has not seen the new vocabulary item *horse* in the story prior to reading orally, he may be forced to rely heavily on his decoding skills and be unable to utilize story context to help attack the word.

Example. The big h_____ . . .

If, on the other hand, the child has been allowed to read the section silently beforehand, his general understanding of the story together with the fact that he has already seen *horse* in this context, may facilitate accurate decoding of the new word.

Example. The big h_____ is in the barn.

Teachers' questions before, during and after the story may help the readers to better understand the material, just as parents' questions and comments when sight-seeing help the children to better understand what is being experienced. As on the trip, if important points are not overlooked, the

group may talk about what they learned. Understanding parents may even turn the car around and drive back through the place to help their children understand more clearly what they saw and thought—understanding teachers may have the children reread orally or silently to clarify and verify their understanding of what was read silently. Having pupils retell earlier experiences, discuss what they read and thought, and reread help to refresh the child's memory and to encourage relearning when important experiences have been forgotten or not put into perspective, just as an event of some significance during a vacation usually elicits discussion. It may even prompt the parents to help their children develop more effective observation skills or identify relationships which they may have overlooked. On the other hand, the events may have been understood well enough such that further discussion or analysis might spoil the entire experience.

In the DRP the teacher may or may not provide for skill development, since some stories may not lend themselves to further instruction, while student performance on other stories indicates that the planned skill lessons are unnecessary. When warranted, skill instruction may be for all the pupils in the group, or limited to those children who appear in need of additional instruction. Supplemental worksheets and exercises, like slides taken on a trip, can provide opportunities to review previous experiences and to renew and strengthen skills. Such individualized instruction should have, as its goals, a deeper level of pupil understanding of the material presented, an opportunity for the teacher to evaluate the skills of the pupils, and an estimate of the degree to which the instructional plan was successful.

Provisions for students to pursue special interests and to demonstrate their understanding of the story are represented in the DRP through enrichment activities. Like side excursions on the vacation, special projects allow for individual differences in interest and expertise among pupils in the same reading group. The learning that can occur at this time may surpass in both depth and importance the stated objectives of the reading lesson.

A word of caution, however, might be warranted at this point. While it is not imperative or expected that every member of the family will understand all that is encountered on the trip, pupils are expected to understand and utilize much of the material presented in the reading program. For this reason it is essential that the teacher progress at a rate appropriate for the learning capacities of her students. To miss major sights on a trip can be excused; failure to acquire important skills in reading, however, is not acceptable. The law to follow in teaching applies as it does: when driving a car: The maximum speed limit is the rate at which one can progress safely toward one's destination. And it is the driver (teacher) who is held accountable for careless driving (teaching).

It has been proposed, then, that the reading program must be structured, like a vacation, to insure direction, sequence, and success. Rigid adherence to one daily plan, however, can never successfully meet the needs and interests of each pupil or teacher. Having a thoughtfully prepared instructional plan will permit sensible deviations sensitive to pupil's needs

and interests. Such flexibility will help make the directed reading plan more like an interesting day's travel than a tedious experience. It may be the best approach to helping young readers become confident, experienced, curious travelers of books—independent seekers who know what to look for in their reading and how to incorporate it meaningfully into their lives.

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ERIC/RCS REPORT: RETRIEVING INFORMATION FROM ERIC

Rodney J. Barth

CLEARING HOUSE ON COMMUNICATION SKILLS

The Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) is a national information system currently consisting of sixteen clearinghouses under the sponsorship of the National Institute of Education (NIE). Each clearinghouse is responsible for obtaining the educational literature within its area for evaluation, indexing, and abstracting into the ERIC data bank, and also for providing information analysis materials and various user services based on the information contained in ERIC. Transcripts of speeches, topical papers, program descriptions, inservice and preservice workshop materials, curriculum guides, research reports, conference proceedings, and educational journal articles are among the documents indexed in the ERIC system. As one of the sixteen clearinghouses, the Clearinghouse on Reading and Communication Skills (ERIC/RCS) is responsible for resources, information, and materials in reading as well as in the other communication skill areas—English, journalism, speech, and the theater. The data collected in reading by ERIC/RCS are available in at least 600 ERIC microfiche collections for use by reading coordinators, reading consultants, teachers who stress content reading, and other educators.

In order to use the ERIC system to best advantage, each individual needs a working concept of how to retrieve information. It does not take the skills of a librarian to acquire valuable information from the ERIC system, although a brief explanation from a librarian may be in order for a beginner. The effective user of ERIC will need to be familiar with the tools of the ERIC system, including the *Thesaurus of ERIC Descriptors*, *Resources in Education*, and *Current Index to Journals in Education*. The following descriptions and definitions of ERIC tools and terms should help the beginning user of the system to find needed information. A hypothetical case study, which follows the definitions, provides an illustration of how to use ERIC.

TOOLS OF THE ERIC SYSTEM

The *Thesaurus of ERIC Descriptors*, the key to the entire system, is continuously updated to maintain accuracy and serves as the source of all subject terms (descriptors) used for indexing and for retrieval of documents and journal articles in the ERIC collection (see Figure 1). Each item entered in the ERIC system is assigned several descriptors selected from the *Thesaurus* that reflect the essential subject matter contained in the document. Descriptors marked by an asterisk (*) indicate the major con-

Figure 1. Extract from *Thesaurus of ERIC Descriptors*

Used For	<i>Reading Instruction</i>
Narrower Term(s)	UF Teaching Reading
Broader Term(s)	NT Language Experience Approach
Related Term(s)	BT Language Instruction
	RT Adult Reading programs
	Braille
	Content Reading
	Directed Reading Activity
	Early Reading
	Experience Charts
	Individualized Reading
	Initial Teaching Alphabet
	Kinesthetic Methods
	Large Type Materials
	Miscue Analysis
	Oral Reading
	Phonics
	Readability
	Reading
	Reading Games
	Sight Method
	Silent Reading
	Structural Analysis
	Talking Books
	<i>Content Reading</i>
	BT Reading
	RT Interpretive Reading
	Reading Comprehension
	Reading Instruction

USING THE ERIC SYSTEM

The ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading and Communication Skills is sponsored by the National Council of Teachers of English in cooperation with the National Institute of Education, U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. ERIC's objective is to keep educators informed about current developments in education. Information collected by the ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading and Communication Skills and the other ERIC clearinghouses can be ordered from the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS), P.O. Box 190, Arlington, Virginia 22210. For complete ordering information consult the monthly issues of *Resources in Education* (RIE) or contact the ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading and Communication Skills, 1111 Kenyon Road, Urbana, Illinois 61801. Documents with ED numbers are indexed in *Resources in Education*. Those with EJ numbers are indexed in *Current Index to Journals in Education* (CIJE). And those with CS numbers are recently acquired materials; ED or EJ numbers will soon be assigned.

cepts of the document, while the unmarked descriptors denote concepts of only minor emphasis in the document. In cases where no descriptor term adequately describes some important feature of a document, an *identifier* term may be assigned in addition to the descriptors. Any word, name, or phrase may be an identifier, thus any concept not covered by a descriptor may be indexed through an identifier.

Abstracts of documents are printed with appropriate descriptors in *Resources in Education* (RIE), which is published monthly by NIE through the Government Printing Office. Monthly volumes and yearly compilations of RIE are available in many college and university libraries as well as in some special libraries. About 1,000 documents from the sixteen ERIC Clearinghouses are indexed and summarized in each monthly volume. Each volume contains the main entries and subject, author, and institution indexes.

The subject index is arranged alphabetically by descriptors. Documents which have been assigned a particular term as a major descriptor—and there can be up to five—are listed in the subject index under that term (see Figures 2 and 3). Thus, the title of a document which has been assigned five major descriptors will be listed in five places in the subject index. In addition to the title, a six-digit ED (for ERIC Document) accession number is listed. While documents indexed in RIE are available at microfiche collections in various libraries, most can be purchased on microfiche (MF) or in a hard copy (HC) from the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS), P.O. Box 190, Arlington, Virginia 22210.

Articles from nearly 700 educational journals are indexed in the same manner in another ERIC publication, *Current Index to Journals In Education* (CIJE), (see Figure 4). These articles are assigned a six-digit EJ (for Educational Journal) accession number and are annotated in most cases. Semiannual and annual compilations of CIJE are available. There is no need to refer to the monthly issues of CIJE to read the annotations—each cumulative volume also contains a Main Entry section. Each entry lists the complete title, the author, the source (journal title, volume number, date, and page numbers, assigned descriptor terms, and particularly in cases where the content is not clear from the title, a brief annotation. Copies of journal articles indexed in CIJE are not available from ERIC. They must be obtained from a library collection or from the publisher.

A hypothetical case study on content reading which incorporates the previously introduced tools, terms, and diagrams in a search of the ERIC system follows.

SEARCHING ERIC: A CASE STUDY

Bob Jones recently became the reading coordinator at the high school where he had been teaching for several years. During his tenure as a language arts instructor, he learned that one of the biggest problems students face is comprehending what they read. As a reading coordinator he feels that more materials are needed on how to improve reading skills in the content areas. Jones knows of the ERIC system and decides to spend

Figure 2. Subject Index from RIE

Descriptor Term	<i>Content Reading</i>
Subject Heading	Aiding Secondary Subject Teachers in Guiding Reading Growth.
Document Titles	ED 092 887 A Classroom Reading Program.
	ED 089 198 The College Commitments to Attainable National Goals—Learning Support Services for Open Admissions Students.
	ED 085 664 The Contribution of Reading Instruction to Success in the Content Areas in the Secondary Schools.
	ED 083 546 The Development of Learning Modules for the Training of Content Teachers in Reading: A Focus on Process.
	ED 085 667 Differentiating Instruction to Improve Comprehension in Middle School Content Areas.
	ED 092 882 The Effects of Different Content Area Materials upon the Comprehension of Eighth-Grade Students.
	ED 085 670 Every Teacher a Teacher of Reading—For Only a Week.
	ED 080 971 Improving Reading in Every Class: A Sourcebook for Teachers.
	ED 089 235// An In-Service Program Designed to Improve the Teaching of Reading Study Skills.
	ED 080 962// Preparation of Reading Content Specialists for the Junior High School; Teaching Reading in the Content Areas at the Junior High School Level: Strategies for Meeting a Wide Range of Individual Differences in Reading Achievement. Final Report.
	ED 088 003 Reading in the Content Fields; An Annotated Bibliography.

Figure 3. Main Entry from RIE

ED Number ————— ED 092 887 CS 001 151

Author ————— *Courtney, Leonard*

Title ————— **Aiding Secondary Subject Teachers
in Guiding Reading Growth.**

Date ————— Pub Date Sep 73

Availability
and Price ————— Note—19p.; Paper presented at the
International Reading Association Far-
West Rocky Mountain Regional Con-
ference (Victoria, B.C., September 1973)

Descriptor Terms ————— **EDRS Price MF-\$0.75 HC-\$1.50 Plus
Postage.**

Abstract ————— Descriptors—*Content Reading, Critical
Reading, Reading, *Reading Develop-
ment, Reading Improvement, *Reading
Instruction, Reading Programs, *Reading
Skills, Secondary Grades, *Teaching
Techniques

Described in this paper is a technique for reading instruction at the secondary level which emphasizes paragraph-passage examination and is intended to fit into any content teacher's daily work. The technique described provides occasion to establish purpose in reading-study assignments, utilize experience and previous background to develop meaning, introduce new vocabulary, determine word meaning from context, intensify levels of comprehension from literal to evaluative, examine semantic and literary nuances, and study paragraph structure and internal paragraph relationships. Three different kinds of passages, chosen principally for their illustrative value rather than for any direct practical transfer to a particular classroom, are presented. Passage one briefly describes New York City; suggestions for teacher use include discussing general background relative to the passage, use of questioning to facilitate understanding, and identifying the main idea. Passage two is a social studies passage and is presented to demonstrate multiple word skills and demonstrate a shift from literal to critical reading. The third passage presented is the opening lines from "Dandelion Wine" and is intended to serve as an example of introducing a story and as an exercise in entry to imaginative language. (WR)

Figure 4. Main Entry from CIJE

EJ Number	EJ 103 969	CS 701 344
Article Title and Author	Sources for Teaching Reading in the Content Areas. Sanacore, Joseph,	
Journal, Volume	<i>Reading Improvement</i> , v11 n1, pp 54-57, Spr 74	
Descriptors	*Reading Instruction, *Content Reading, *Educational Resources, *Instructional Materials, Secondary Education, Bibliographies, English, Social Studies, Sciences, Mathematics	
Annotations	Fifty-four sources are listed for the teaching of reading in the content areas of social studies, English, science, and mathematics. (RB)	
	EJ 105 640	CS 701 443
	Shock Treatment Inservice Program Adds New Life to Reading. Osborn, Bess, <i>Journal of Reading</i> , v18, n2, pp 122-26, Nov 74.	
	*Inservice Teacher Education, *Content Reading, *Reading Instruction, *Reading Skills, *Program Descriptions, Secondary Education	
	Describes a teacher inservice program designed to help secondary teachers improve reading skills in the content areas. (RB)	

some time investigating it with the hope of uncovering some information that will help teachers in the content areas.

Jones's first step is to phrase, as narrowly and accurately as possible, the question he seeks to answer: "What materials are available that content reading teachers can use to improve the reading skills of high school students?" The key concepts to be used in locating descriptors should be evident if the question is precise enough.

The next step is for Jones to determine the descriptors he will use to conduct his search. He goes through the *Thesaurus of ERIC Descriptors*, looking first under the term "Reading." He finds a list of terms under "Reading" which are categorized according to the notations NT, BT, and RT, indicating that those terms are narrower than (NT), broader than (BT), or related to (RT) the term "Reading." Each of the terms listed under these abbreviations is a descriptor, with the exception of those listed under UF (Used For), a notation which leads the searcher to other terms. This cross-listing of descriptors enables a searcher to identify other descriptors that might be useful.

In this case, Jones picks "Reading Instruction," "Reading Comprehension," and "Content Reading." He also adds the leveling term "Secondary Education," which is the appropriate grade level for materials as expressed in his question. By searching through the subject index of RIE, Jones should find a number of documents which might be relevant. The ED numbers of these documents should be recorded under column headings with the appropriate descriptors:

Reading Instruction	Reading Comprehension	Content Reading	Secondary Education
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Since there is an abundance of information in RIE on content reading, the above descriptors should enable Jones to retrieve the most relevant and useful materials.

The document resume provided as a sample in Figure 3 reflects Jones's selection of descriptors for retrieving information from RIE. From the title of the document listed in the subject index, Jones determined that he was interested in reading the abstract of ED 092 887. By reading this abstract and others which interest him, he can decide which ERIC documents he wants to read in their entirety. Jones can read those documents available on microfiche on the microfiche reader in his library. If he wishes, he can order either microfiche or paper copy reproductions using ordering instructions available in each issue of RIE. By reading the abstracts of documents *not* available on microfiche, Jones can determine if he would like to purchase copies of these documents, too. If so, he can order them from the publisher by using the ordering information that accompanies each abstract.

Jones can also obtain a list of references from educational journals relevant to the search topic by using the same descriptors in searching the *Current Index to Journals in Education* (CIJE) as were used in searching RIE. CIJE entries include brief annotations whenever an article's title is not indicative of its content. However, in order to read the entire article, Jones must either obtain it from the library or order it from the publisher. Since the contents of journals are copyrighted, copies of articles are not available through the ERIC system.

By now, Jones has obtained a significant body of information on the subject he is investigating. He may continue the search or decide that what he has found is sufficient.

SEARCH SUMMARY

1. State your question as accurately and precisely as possible.
2. Consult the *ERIC Thesaurus* for descriptors related to your question.
3. Look under the selected descriptors in the subject index of *Resources in Education*.
4. List those documents that are related to your question, noting those that occur under two or more descriptors (these will probably be related most directly to your question).

5. Read the abstract of each document to determine its significance to your question. (Entire documents may be read on microfiche or ordered from EDRS.)
6. Using the same descriptor terms, consult the subject index of CIJE. (Relevant journal articles may be read at the library.)

OTHER RESOURCES

Low cost computer searches of the ERIC system are available throughout the country from both public and private search services, and Jones could have used one of these services had he so desired. For availability of these computer search facilities, contact your local or state board of education, a nearby college or university library, or a school of education.

Another source of information is the ERIC Clearinghouses, each concerned with information analysis in a specialized field of educational interest. The staff of ERIC/RCS, for example, produces short, current bibliographies on selected topics and articles for a number of professional journals in the communication skills field. The Clearinghouse also commissions information analysis monographs analyzing and reflecting the current state of knowledge in specific areas. Other Clearinghouse publications include longer bibliographies and annotated topical indexes.

If you are near one of the Reading Resource Centers (RRC)—mini-clearinghouses affiliated with ERIC/RCS located at 56 teacher-training colleges and universities—check their facilities for information on topics of interest to the reading profession. The staff of each RRC in operation is able to answer your questions regarding the use of the ERIC system.

If you are still unsure of how the ERIC system works and how it can help you, ask the librarian at the ERIC collection for assistance, or write to ERIC/RCS at NCTE, 1111 Kenyon Road, Urbana, Illinois 61801.

ECHOES FROM THE FIELD

Ernie Adams

TEXAS A & I UNIVERSITY



Reading instructors have been using the language experience approach to teaching reading for a good many years. Philosophically, this approach to reading instruction like all others has been debated.

Many argue that, while it is instructionally helpful to utilize materials that are meaningful to the pupil, the clerical time involved in developing language experience stories is too great. This argument is not altogether hollow. Quite often a teacher can be seen with seven stories to prepare for her pupils by tomorrow or at least by day after tomorrow. The clerical task involved not only takes its toll in times, but it also takes a toll in the teacher's enthusiasm for using the materials. Teachers are supplied with enough record keeping and paper shuffling without the added burden of spending several hours printing or typing pupils' creations.

This echo from the field offers a solution to these clerical woes for the language experience enthusiast.

Step I

Enlist the services of a high school shorthand, typing class. This should be a group of second term stenography students.

Step II

Record the pupils' experience on tape.

Step III

Transport the tapes to the stenography students. These students will practice their shorthand from the tapes and their typing from the shorthand notes. Their finished product will consist of a completely typed story and a set of vocabulary cards created from the words in the story.

Step IV

Retrieve the tapes and the typed materials.

Step V

Use the materials for instruction.

Advantages for this procedure are listed below:

1. Teacher is no longer saddled with typing load.

2. This conserves energy for instruction and helps sustain enthusiasm for language experience activity.
3. Helps to motivate the stenography student. This presents the "real world" of working for accuracy and time because the material will be used. How exciting can it be to type "Now is the time for all good men to sue Adam?"

Disadvantages also exist.

1. It takes time and patience to convince a typing instructor that this procedure is worthy of the effort necessary to have the idea be successful.
2. Someone must transport recordings to and from the typing service.

This is not a scheme born out of an ivory tower, but a procedure that has been tried and shown to be successful in aiding teachers of reading and typing. It is not an echo that will cause McGuffey to rise and recite from his reader, but it will increase enthusiasm for helping students express themselves orally.

PROFESSIONAL CONCERNS

R. Baird Shuman

EDITOR

Professional Concerns is a regular column devoted to the interchange of ideas among those interested in reading instruction. Send your comments and contributions to the editor. If you have questions about reading that you wish to have answered, the editor will find respondents to answer them. Address correspondence to R. Baird Shuman, Department of Education, Duke University, Durham, North Carolina 27708.

Professional Concerns is a column new to the pages of *Reading Horizons*. Its purpose is to promote dialogue and an exchange of ideas among those concerned with reading instruction at all levels. Comments about reading instruction are invited. Those who have questions which they would like to have answered by someone uniquely qualified to provide answers are urged to send their questions to the editor who will pass them on to an expert in the field for response.

This column will attempt to treat reading from a broad perspective and to consider it from the standpoint that reading is a skill which cannot be separated from such areas as linguistics, sociology, psychology, and physiology. Contributions that consider the interrelatedness of reading to other fields of research and study will be particularly useful to the readership of the column, as will be suggestions for the training of reading teachers.

Perhaps some readers will wish to share with others ideas about models for teaching reading as one of the language arts, considering, as James Moffett recently has, the appropriateness of some commonly accepted models in use in today's schools:

Let me give you a model of growth. I think we've used for a long time a metaphor or model of language learning, language growth, that probably came from an antiquated, 18th century billiard-ball type of physics, the old Newtonian physics with the particles colliding. This had to be abandoned when they got into relativity and they had to add other dimensions—neutrinos, etc., colliding. Following on the old assemblyline notion, you take the pieces and you make subassemblies. Then the subassemblies are further

assembled; then off plomps the new product at the end of the line. In that sense, the parts add up to the whole—it works with inorganic matter. Now you may feel sometimes that you're working with inorganic matter; the student is utterly inert. However, you're dealing with a biological person; they're ert; and you need an organic language learning to go with that.

I draw my model from the embryo. You've all seen books with a series of drawings or photos of the embryo or fetus at different stages; at a few weeks, a few months; and they show it growing from a single cell. Just fertilized, it's a simple circle; then the circle begins to change shape slightly into the fetal position. Then the fetus gets more complicated. You begin to see gradually the limbs, the head, the neck, and the organs and veins, the pulmonary and vascular systems. The point is that it's never anything less than a whole, no matter which drawing or photograph, no matter which stage you take the photo of. You never see a part; it's always a whole. This is the thing about organic growth—it's not pieces put together; they don't add up like that.

From James Moffett, "On Language,"
North Carolina English Teacher, 33
(Winter 1976), pp. 11-12. Quoted
by permission.

READING AND THE BICENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

Nicholas P. Criscuolo

NEW HAVEN (CONN.) PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Real functional American citizenship should be appreciated and stressed more in our schools. Many children lack an understanding of the history and government of their city, state and nation. Our National Bicentennial Celebration is a very appropriate time to instill in these youngsters this knowledge in a fascinating manner. It is a time to motivate them to read the stirring accounts of our country's past. It is a time for awareness of the significant contributions of prominent leaders and their impact upon our present city, state and union.

At Quinnipiac School in the New Haven public school system an innovative program has been initiated with fifty fourth-grade children. The emphasis of this program is to develop, through reading, an understanding of American historical contributions capitalizing on the Bicentennial Celebration.

The three major objectives of the program are the following:

1. To develop an understanding of local, state and national history
2. To reinforce reading skills as it interrelates with other disciplines particularly Social Studies
3. To foster independent and creative reading

Bulletin board displays show twelve Bicentennial ships proudly floating into Historic Harbor. Each vessel suggests special intriguing reading activities for a fourth grade student to master at various levels. The student selects and reports on at least six in order to be decorated a Bicentennial Hero.

These are some of the vessels:

Warring Waldo – War accounts 1776-1976

Frontier Fred – Westward movement during these years

Educated Edna – Schools and scholars

Gold Rush Gertie – Significance of gold discovery in 1848

Explorer Ed – Territorial expansion

Leader Larry – Presidents (1776-1976) and their achievements

Farmer Frank – Agricultural development

Manufacturer Mel – Industrial progress

After the Hero has accomplished his mission, he or she is entitled to visit Happy Town. This is a special fun room where a variety of interesting and Bicentennial activities are in progress. The student then selects his or her favorite group, participates in the procedures and reads, listens or writes for pleasure. Dramatization is an inherent part of the program. Children write their own scripts based on their readings and then perform the skits for the rest of class.

At Happy Town, these are some of the choices:

Craft Cranny - Weaving, sewing, embroidering, book-making and simple carpentry tasks.

Story Stall - Related stories, books and kits at various reading levels.

Art Nook - Famous reproductions of the period and explanatory readings; also materials for original work.

Writers' Camp - Tent for original poetry and story writing; also newspaper accounts for the school edition.

Listening Post - Appropriate tape recordings and records.

Play Palace - Collections of dramatic productions and selections for puppet shows; also choral speaking at various reading levels.

Three forty-five minute periods weekly are scheduled for fourth graders to engage in the various phases of this project. Creativity and innovation are encouraged in all the undertakings. Records are kept of all independent reading done as part of the program. In addition, journals are kept in which children note dates and events of historical significance. The children are supervised by their teachers and school aides. Individual and group reports of continuous progress are shared frequently in the classrooms. Maps, charts, dioramas, and numerous multi-media activities have given evidence of the program's success.

READING IN THE SECONDARY SCHOOL: STUDYING SPELLING SUCCESSFULLY

Kenneth Vandermeulen

Accurate spelling is obviously an important outcome of every student's elementary and high school education. It is true that some research indicates a very low correlation between spelling ability and reading or verbal background. However, it is also true that correct spelling in the world of business is emphasized, perhaps out of proportion to the rest of the graduate's educational attainments. We cannot deny that prospective employees are measured on the basis of some first impressions. His appearance, however superficial that may seem, his conversation, and his letter of application or sample of writing in his resume—these are still the basic ingredients for employment.

If the candidate's spelling is as inadequate as we have seen spelling *can* be, no matter how great his potential contribution to the company, the decision may go against him and preclude his attaining a place in which to make his contribution. In no single area of business or cultural pursuit is inaccurate spelling tolerated for long. And, since the step from newly appointed member of a business team to the executive post where misspellings may be blamed on secretaries is a long step, we believe that teaching spelling is an educational duty, and a problem we must deal with at the high school level.

English teachers know that teaching spelling is a mammoth undertaking because they are aware of the many languages which have contributed to modern American English. In no other language is there as much difficulty incurred in teaching a child to write his native language. And in no other age has accurate communication in written form become as crucially important as it has in this one.

When we look around to see what is being accomplished in schools to make accurate spelling a guaranteed outcome for all graduates, we find some dismaying evidence that the teaching of spelling is the neglected step-child of overburdened English departments, and totally ignored in most of the other academic departments. Critics of our educational systems have had a field day writing articles in popular magazines about the poor spelling demonstrated by the graduates of our nation's schools. We have all seen a host of editorials, cartoons, and whole books devoted to presenting evidence that high school graduates cannot spell. While a lot of other shortcomings may be overlooked, and the positive growth and emotional maturity *are* often overlooked, the deficiency in spelling is pounced upon as the obvious evidence.

Teachers can cite reports to show that students will learn to spell

correctly when and if they are convinced that such improvement is important to them. Teachers also know that in any given class only about one quarter of the students really need corrective spelling at basic levels. The teachers also may state justifiably that spelling study is a bore, difficult to individualize, and not at all sure of any degree of permanence.

The problem was not as acute in past generations for the simple reason that fewer students managed to stay in school through twelve grades. Nor was the problem handled with great insight by teachers of early America. When schoolmasters of the 1800's worked with the problem of spelling, they used the *spelling bee* as a means of culling the hopeless from the hopefuls. Those students who were most in need of assistance were the first out of the game. There was *no* attention to the methods of studying spelling. Those who had mastered the techniques went on to represent the school in area contests. Furthermore, the words used to test the spelling attainments of contestants were gleaned from the dictionary without consideration for or reference to their frequency of occurrence in the everyday printed uses of the language. Thus, all the worst educational practices seemed to have been gathered together and employed in the *spelling bee*; yet, that ancient institution has persisted without interruption and without much loss in reputation to this day.

Research has given us sufficient background information to improve on the methods of teaching spelling, and our single most pressing problem today is simply finding the time and opportunity for putting these good methods into practice. We know, for instance, that about 2500 to 3000 words and their derivatives constitute almost 97% of all our daily communication. We know what the most frequent spelling errors in these words are, and we know some of the factors which are causative in the errors.

Studies made on various methods of teaching spelling have helped us cull out the approaches which do not work. For instance, there are no results indicating a positive relationship between the number of times a student writes a word and his ability to spell it correctly at random times. It is a deplorable fact that knowing certain principles in the field of education does not guarantee employment of those principles; as in other places, the law of inertia seems to have operated in the field of education. Multiple studies indicate that there is little correlation between mental age and spelling ability, which leads us to the conclusion, also well documented in the literature, that student attitude and pedagogical approach are the two main reasons we have so many poor spellers in our nation and in our local schools.

The Spelling Lab

In view of the foregoing information and implications, it seems necessary for each teacher to do the following things to help eliminate poor spelling at the high school level:

- 1) bring about a recognition of the importance of accurate spelling, as it affects the future success of every student
- 2) institute a practice of having each student record the words he has difficulty in spelling correctly

- 3) set up a self-help spelling facility that will allow each class member analyze his troubles and learn a new system of studying spelling.

Selling students on the multi-sensory approach to studying spelling requires a demonstration or lecture-to-convince. As a contribution to the cause for improved spelling, the following ten-minute script can be read on a cassette tape and used as the initial tape of a spelling series. From that beginning, each student may have his own spelling study cassette made from his list of words, tailored to suit his own needs.

A Demonstration Tape

This is Cassette Number One — Spelling Study Series.

For just a few minutes, listen please to this background information before you begin the first spelling lesson. People very often refuse to think along with a person talking about spelling, because they think themselves “born” poor spellers. “Lessons won’t help me,” they say, “I’m just a poor speller, and I’ve *always been* a poor speller.” Sometimes they even excuse themselves for their poor spelling, saying, “Spelling is *all* memory work, and I have a poor memory,” or, they may even go so far as to claim that the English language is so mixed up and illogical that *no one* can be expected to learn it.

The news I bring you on this taped lesson may surprise you, but please believe it, because it’s true—you *can become an almost perfect speller*. Don’t smile in disbelief; science has learned a lot about how we acquire knowledge, and this tape may be your new running start toward perfection.

We might label these lessons “Immediate improvement guaranteed, *if* taken as directed.” Now, the only unknown quantity in this guarantee is you. *If* you pay close attention to directions, and *if* you take the trouble to check your work, and *if* you are careful as you write—then the guarantee stands.

Of course, this is not a magic formula dreamed up by the thinking computer. What this is, is a description of a method—a right way—that we will use in studying spelling. By remembering that you *can* improve, and by following directions, you may look forward confidently to much improved spelling records.

Now let’s get right down to work on the first of the three approaches. Suppose we demonstrate all three ways to remember the correct spelling of a word by taking an example which is regarded as a difficult spelling challenge—the word *chrysanthemum* stumps a lot of people. In this demonstration lesson, then, you are going to learn the method for study by which you can spell and retain the correct spelling of this word. Let’s emphasize the word *retain*; the purpose is permanence.

You should have a sheet of notebook paper for this lesson, and in the middle of the top line, write the letters of this word as I give them to you. Ready: *c h r y s a n t h e m u m*. All right? I will spell it again to make very sure you have it. Look at it with me. C-h-r-y-s-a-n-t-h-e-m-u-m.

The multi-sensory method of studying spelling capitalizes on the fact that we have more than just our eyes for studying a word. They are first, however. In the visual approach, we do more than merely look at the word.

We think about what the word *looks like*. You may see that the first part looks like *chris*, with a y, or the first part of Chrysler, or you might decide you'd compare the first part with the beginning of Christmas, with a y. The reason for seeing what each part looks like is to help your memory in associating what you are trying to learn with something you already know. It is the most effective way of learning. If you can visualize *chris* with a y, you have made the necessary connection and your memory will bring up the image of c-h-r-y-s whenever that part of the word is pronounced. All right, we have the first part.

The next part of the word is easily remembered because you can see two small words there—*ant* and *hem*. Ant is the small insect, and hem is a sewed-up folded edge of a piece of cloth. Or, if you would rather see it in a larger sense, the word *anthem* appears here, as in National Anthem. Finally, we see *u-m*, which we may hopefully believe everyone can spell. Let's review the visual step—*chris* with a y, *anthem*, and *um*.

Now the second approach, *auditory*. Many people seem to forget that when they study they have a memory for the sounds of things as well as for the look. The best method for using the auditory memory is to vocalize the letters in their order, so that you will be able to retain the order of the sounds, the inflection of the letters, and the rhythm with which you pronounce the letters. This is an individual matter, and one needs to listen to himself say the letters in their order a few times. Some people remember the *sounds* in their proper order better than by the visual approach. I'll pause while you say the letters in their order a couple of times.

The third approach is called the *muscle memory*, or kinesthetic method. In this step, you write the word, not with your pencil on paper, but merely tracing the letters in exaggerated motion with your fingers on the desk. The object here is to develop a certain muscle memory by forming the letters in their proper sequence. Maybe this sounds funny to you, but I'll bet you've known people who had to write a word out on paper before they could tell you how to spell it. This is muscle-memory, the memory of touch typing, the memory that you use when you tie shoe-strings, ride a bicycle, and so on. You can't remember how to tell someone which motions come in which order, but you could demonstrate it. Take the time right now, to trace the letters of the word chrysanthemum on your desk. Look at your source word as you think and "write" the letters.

In the last couple of minutes you have practiced the three approaches to studying a spelling word. Now let's put them together, by writing the word once in the left hand column of your paper. Say the letters quietly as you write them, and look at the word in the middle column as you write, to be sure of having the correct spelling. In doing this, you are combining the three methods of sight, sound, and muscle-memory into one. This is the reinforcement which helps to impress the correct spelling in your mind. I'll pause as you do this.

The final step in any study procedure is, of course, testing yourself, to see whether or not you managed to nail down the right spelling by your practice. To do this, you fold the left hand column of your study sheet over

the middle, so that only your right hand column is visible. I'll name the demonstration word, just as I would do in the regular study sessions, and you will write the word in the Test Column without looking at the word. Ready? Write *chrysanthemum*. (pause) Now, check your paper by opening the folded side.

At this point a very important part of spelling study should occur. If you did not have the word correctly spelled, note exactly which letters were misspelled. Analyze the error; take note of the kind of mistake, and try to learn from the mistake so that you will not be likely to make it again.

And, if you missed the word, write it correctly below the first word in the middle column, and give the process another try. Don't let yourself be discouraged – one does not always succeed on first tries. Just remember that you will gain more by a single careful rewriting of the word you miss than by the mechanical process of writing it over and over.

This is the end of lesson one in spelling study. You should go immediately to the regular series of learning to spell your words by cassette, so that you may put the principles of spelling study into practice.

The above taped cassette can be used as the initial tape of a series, which the student may use in an individual setting. Many teachers do not feel inclined to retravel the same old roads of drill in spelling when only certain people have forgotten the generalizations they were taught. For a limited cost in time and materials, the drill and the words may be preserved for replay each time the situation seems to require it. When students join a class by transfer, the taped drill may help to bring him up to date in this area. Students who have a need for familiarizing themselves with English as a second language often welcome the self-help concept in spelling practice.

While the use of spelling lists is not much better than a blanket prescription, there are a few basic lists which help teachers locate their students in relation to a norm. One such list may be found in William S. Kottmeyer's book *A Teacher's Guide for Remedial Reading*, the words being those which represent basic spelling conventions that students should know by the time they reach junior high. Another list is called "The One Hundred Words Most Frequently Misspelled by Educated People," which is always a challenge to the best students. Between the two far points on the continuum of difficulty, there are many spelling approaches, workbooks, lists, and other materials. However, the reader is cautioned to keep the spelling task fitted closely to the spelling problem of the individual. Solutions are closer when that philosophy prevails.

TEN-SECOND REVIEWS



SPRING '76

Allington, Richard L., "Book Banning: No Easy Answers" *Journal of Reading* (December 1975) 19:201-204.

This writer urges the establishment of sound policies for book selection in schools, as he describes the increased number of censorship problems in the country. The article outlines a few of the most advisable procedural steps which should be taken, safeguarding against the emotional trauma of such confrontations, causing "epidemics of fear."

Ammon, Richard, "Generating Expectancies to Enhance Comprehension," *The Reading Teacher* (December 1975) 29:245-249.

To avoid the many limitations of having students merely say the words in reading, relying too heavily on word structure, Ammon introduces the idea of using a modified cloze procedure. The method is to generate sentences with single deleted words; thus, with the addition of syntactic and semantic clues, students are guided to more independent reading for meaning.

Artley, A. Sterl, and Veralee B. Hardin, "A Current Dilemma: Reading Disability or Learning Disability?" *The Reading Teacher* (January 1976) 29:36k-366.

With the new attention focused on LD, confusion is rising about the roles of the reading specialist and the learning specialist. Artley and Hardin present the background of the situation to the reader, showing that the Association of Learning Disabilities was organized to meet a need for treating non-reading related disabilities. Despite the statement of distinctions and definitions made by the Office of Education in Washington, the problem persists as costly duplication of effort and an obstacle to progress.

Bragstad, M. Bernice, "Teaching Students How to Learn" *Journal of Reading* (December 1975) 19:226-230.

Here is more proof that knowing the tools can influence the quality of the job. Bragstad, a reading consultant in a large high school, demonstrates through convincing evidence and conclusive results of experimental research, that teaching students about the process of learning pays large dividends. Listing her strategies, the author shows how students may become more effective in any content area.

Brennan, Susan Warfield "Publishing Children's Writing" *The Reading Teacher* (February 1976) 29:447-449.

The obvious reasons for publishing children's writings are motivation and satisfaction. This author furnishes the classroom teacher with names and addresses for sending creative works by young people. Fourteen publishers are listed, with descriptions of kinds of materials accepted. An excellent section on guidelines for writers follows the list.

Cohen, Judith H., "The Effect of Content Area Materials on Cloze Test Performance," *Journal of Reading* (December 1975) 19:247-250.

The article describes in detail the set of tests given and procedural steps taken to compare cloze tests with readability measures. Findings of the author indicate that criteria for independent and instructional levels vary with the content area material being used. For example, while the Dale-Chall scale might find a literature and a social studies text to be the same in difficulty, cloze tests find the literature book to be much more difficult.

Cooke, Bridget L. and William R. Farrow, "Needs, Materials, Curiosity: A Difficult Combination" *Journal of Reading* (December 1975) 19:214-217.

Faced with the task of helping innercity enrollees become effective readers of college texts, these reading specialists turned away from workbooks and reading kits, having found them to be "simplistic" and "sterile." To teach a reading process that will result in thinking and organizing ideas, the authors use interesting articles chosen from the daily papers and news magazines.

Criscuolo, Nicholas P., "Mag Bags, Peg Sheds, Crafty Crannies, and Reading" *The Reading Teacher* (January 1976) 29:376-378.

The author is supervisor of reading in New Haven, Connecticut,

and has here taken the time to describe some creative ways to make the classroom an exciting and stimulating place for young minds. To bring variety and enthusiasm into the atmosphere, devote corners and edges of the classroom to activities that include everything from plant care (Table Top Acres) to original writing (Writer's Camp).

Downing, John, "The Bullock Commission's Judgment of i.t.a." *The Reading Teacher* (January 1976) 29:379-382.

Although originating in Great Britain, this evaluation of i.t.a. and the long-haul results attained in its use will be welcomed by many concerned teachers. While it cannot be considered conclusive, the indication is that i.t.a. produces good readers, has few failures, causes no transition problem, and continues in good repute.

Duggins, James, "Teaching Reading to High School Students for Human Values" *The High School Journal* (November 1975) 59:83-90.

We are only now, in the current decade, becoming aware that reading is humanistic and not scientific. We are realizing that we have to recover from a generation of the philosophy that said "If you can't count it, it doesn't count." The reasons for teaching reading, the author says, have changed from utilitarian to the development of the person—with feelings and emotions. The relevance of the materials to the experience of the person reading has more effect on the performance than does the degree to which each reading skill has been taught, declares this writer.

Dupuis, Mary M., "Diagnostic Teaching for Every Teacher" *The High School Journal* (November 1975) 59:65-76.

In support of her belief that every teacher can do much to help secondary students read more effectively, the author demonstrates (through descriptions) some ways to build comprehension in text reading. The article includes rationale and procedure for assessing students' needs in specific subject vocabulary, and ideas for raising student level of concept understanding.

Johnson, Laura S., "Bilingual Bicultural Education: A Two-Way Street" *The Reading Teacher* (December 1975) 29:231-239.

The article is a comprehensive description of how monolingual USA was forced to learn new concepts about bicultural education. Practical ideas are included for persons who have suddenly become teachers of international classes. Also, for those who need help in specific areas, names and addresses of agencies are included.

Lamb, Pose, "How Important is Instruction in Phonics?" *The Reading Teacher* (October 1975) 29:15-18.

In answering the title question, the author quotes many important reading experts, to come to the conclusion that phonics should be taught only as it is needed, and that knowledge of children's individual needs in learning is more important than sole emphasis on teaching generalizations of word structure.

Palmer, William S. "Reading—A Thought and Language Process." *The High School Journal* (November 1975) 59:50-59.

Some explanations and descriptions of the reading process are compiled here from several of our foremost reading specialists. The author attempts to line up the terminology with the skills involved, so that the reader may see in comparison the experts' perception of reading, and a ladder of reading stages as seen by each expert. Palmer has designed the article for readers who have not worked with the technical aspects of reading to any great extent.

Powers, Hugh W. S., Jr., "Caffeine, Behavior, and the LD Child" *Academic Therapy* (Fall 1975) 11:5-19.

Adolescents and preadolescents are consuming large quantities of caffeine in the chocolate they eat and the Pepsi and Coke they drink. Evidence indicates that the drug operates in the system to adversely affect physical coordination, visual discrimination, and sense of well-being. Citing previous research on the effects of overloads of sugar and carbohydrates in the system of children, Powers asserts that this addition of caffeine "places the child in double jeopardy."

Rudman, Marsha K., "Standardized Test Taking: Your Students Can Do Better" *Learning* (February 1976) 4:76-82.

All teachers who have administered standardized tests will see the wisdom of this approach. Rudman describes the positive and constructive things teachers can do to help students perform their best on tests, without the negative factors of emotion and confusion that keep them from showing up well, as might normally be possible. Some of the steps described in the approach are: giving students practice in reading directions, skimming for information, using charts or graphs (if tests use them). More important, students are helped to gain an attitude that these tests are opportunities rather than crises.

Schumacher, Gary M., Dale Liebert and Warren Fass, "Textual Organization, Advance Organizers and the Retention of Prose Material" *Journal of Reading Behavior* (Summer 1975) 7:173-180.

The authors describe the research conducted on the effects of the pattern of organization of materials in textbooks, and the interrelationship of advance organizers (or preview of materials). The conclusions reached are somewhat surprising, since we have tended to believe that the better organization of textual material will result in better retention. The authors found that whatever organization "Induced (readers) to actively interact with material presented to them, they are more likely to remember that information."

Shepherd, David L., "Individualizing Reading Instruction for High School Students" *The High School Journal* (November 1975) 59:77-82.

After describing the general hesitation of teachers to undertake individualization of reading, the article outlines the practical ways teachers may implement the realistic policy in this direction. Each stage and level is explained and described in some detail. Areas previously left vague in articles on individualization, such as grouping and materials to be used, are discussed comprehensively here. The author introduces ways of keeping oneself aware of performance levels of individual students.

Schreiner, Robert, and Linda R. Tanner, "What History Says About Teaching Reading" *The Reading Teacher* (February 1976) 29:468-473.

As one reflects on this article, he may be struck with the realization that new labels have been applied to old methods *throughout* the long history of teaching reading. Some issues are clarified by means of this historical perspective. For example, the authors suggest that teachers spend more time with *oral language skills* in beginning instruction in reading, citing supportive research.

Sims, Dr. Rudine, "Miscue Analysis—Emphasis on Comprehension" *The New England Reading Association Journal* (December 1975) 11:6-10, 46-50.

This article examines the evolution and the rationale of the *Reading Miscue Inventory*. There is a definition of "miscue" as used in this context, followed by a list of implications that researchers have drawn from the studies of errors made in oral reading. The practical use that teachers can make of the knowledge gained from this research is important. It would seem that the greatest resultant values are to be found in the changes in the teacher rather than in the students. For example, one who studied the RMI would tend to

stop correcting children who make mistakes while reading for them. One would recognize reading in a new light, and encourage the learning process through the context of experience instead of "correct" pronunciation of words.

Smith, R. Kent, Robert J. Drummond, and Clayton A. Pinette "Reading Attitudes and Interests: Their Importance In Community College Reading Instruction" *Reading World* (October 1975) 15:38-44.

There is an implication in this research report that establishing a developmental or corrective reading program has little hope of success unless one finds ways to alter the attitudes and interests of the students taking the instruction. Two groups of students were questioned about their knowledge of good reading techniques, but which group was remedial could not be discerned by the differences in the responses. Only when attitudinal questions were asked could one tell the successful college enrollee group from the group required to take reading improvement.

Strickland, Edward, "Stages of Assignment Mastery I: A Reading and Study Guide Based on Cognitive Psychological Research" *Reading World* (October 1975) 15:4-9.

Citing several research studies and reports, the author has compiled the most effective ideas from many sources into a detailed formula for study. He tested his formula in experimental projects, with open-enrollment students as his population, and found a significant gain of 11 percentage points over the control groups. Keys to the successful use of the guide are the detailed descriptions of each operation and the feedback the student receives as he tests his mastery at each step. This is a programmed refinement of the SQ3R.

NEW MATERIALS NOW AVAILABLE

READING IN THE CONTENT FIELDS—IRA Annotated Bibliography Series. Leo Fay and Lee Ann Jared. International Reading Association, 800 Barksdale Road, Newark, Delaware 19711.

SEARCHING THE PROFESSIONAL LITERATURE IN READING—IRA Reading Aids Series. Joan F. Curry and William P. Morris. International Reading Association, 800 Barksdale Road, Newark, Delaware 19711.

PEABODY ARTICULATION CARDS (PAC) and PEABODY ARTICULATION DECKS (PAD)—Developed by James O. Smith, Ed.D. and Deborah Deutsch Smith, Ed.D. In collaboration with Lloyd M. Dunn, Ph.D. and Kathryn B. Horton, M.S. American Guidance Service, Inc., Publisher's Building, Circle Pines, Minnesota 55014. No. 7445 Complete Peabody Articulation Cards Kit . . . \$37.00. No. 7501 Complete Peabody Articulation Decks Kit . . . \$24.00.

STANDARD REBUS GLOSSARY, REBUS GLOSSARY CARDS, PORTFOLIO OF RUB-ON REBUSES—Charlotte R. Clark, M.A., Richard W. Woodcock, Ed.D. American Guidance Service, Inc., Publisher's Building, Circle Pines, Minnesota 55014. Glossary per copy . . . \$4.50. Glossary Cards per 1100 . . . \$65.00. Portfolio of Rub-on Rebuses . . . \$16.50.

A TEACHER'S NOTEBOOK: ALTERNATIVES FOR CHILDREN WITH LEARNING PROBLEMS—Cynthia A. Clarke, Jeanne F. Cullander, Sherry R. Migdail of the Beauvoir School, Washington, D.C. National Association of Independent Schools, 4 Liberty Square, Boston, MA 02109. Per copy . . . \$3.00.

From SEDRE, 315 Seventh Avenue, New York, NY 10001, Community development pamphlets: PROBLEM SOLVING FOR GROUPS . . . \$1.00. NEGOTIATION: A TOOL FOR CHANGE . . . \$1.00. HOW TO APPLY FOR GRANTS . . . \$1.00. PUBLIC RELATIONS: HOW TO USE IT . . . \$1.00. HOW TO RAISE MONEY FOR COMMUNITY ACTION . . . \$1.00. SOME ABC's OF COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION . . . \$2.50. ONE BATTLE IN THE WAR ON POVERTY, Documentary Study . . . \$5.00. Training manual . . . \$3.00.

